

FAREWELL 2008 – MAKE WAY FOR 2009

Hi Everyone

The fortnight has been pretty predictable with sunshine and some rain but never enough.

At the Ballot Box: Kibbutz members went to cast their votes for prospective candidates for membership of the kibbutz.

Our congratulations to our new member Einav and Eran Rosenthal with their two children and Ilana and Yair Chen an older couple who have been with us on the hill for a number of years. Two descendants of deceased members were also accepted as members – the two heirs are Yossi Dagan son of the late Hadassa and Yaacov Dagon and Or Rosenfeld a grandson of the late Davey Sivan. All were accepted with comfortable majorities.

On Saturday last glasses were raised in honour of our newest members.

On a personal note, I was also voted in to take up the reins at the kibbutz archives on a part-time basis replacing Shimshon Cochavi who retired after decades of dedicated work in the archives.

Archives: The archives are located in the building next to the hall. It contains a wealth of information including lists and details of every one of the 50 or so Ulpan courses. Unfortunately, there isn't very much data regarding volunteer guests and this is a great pity. Everything is in hard copy except for the last nine issues of the Alon Matzuva (bi-weekly newsletter) that has been launched over the web.

My immediate goal is to try and bridge the gap of inactivity since Shimshon's retirement and begin to prepare data and items for the 70th Anniversary of Matzuva in 2010. The intention is to set up a Virtual Archive with all new items being computerized and available to members on their personal home computers.

Education: Fanny Cohen, a member of the kibbutz committee, airs some of her views about education.

Questions of identity are not exclusive to modern society – it has accompanied mankind from the very beginning.

These days and especially at the Matzuva community we have people who grew up here and built their houses and based their lives on values and norms that are an integral part of the kibbutz society. On the other hand there are residents of the community village and also new members who have arrived from urban centres. They find themselves in a settled community system of norms and values that the kibbutz is interested in preserving. Maybe a conflict will arise and

perhaps create a situation of conceding and/or dispute regarding the existing and important values.

In order to ensure successful integration and preserve important values and systems it is incumbent on us, the older members to guide the new members and make them aware of how the system works. This means acquainting them with the system, assisting them with integration and a friendly word of advice when required while providing creative solutions to values dilemmas and other difficulties.

Today the education system at Matzuva is once again on its feet. Special thanks are due to Hava Cohen and Ronit Dangoor.

The kindergarten and toddlers education system has grown considerably with quality kindergarten teachers and assistants in place in renovated children's houses. All this to the satisfaction of both the staff and parents as well as the kids themselves.

Informal education for 1st – 12th grade children who enjoy a system working in the afternoons and is new to a lot of new members and residents from urban areas. A lot of work is involved in devising programs of this type that are suited to the needs of the target group.

The Matzuva education system is geared to prepare these young people in a democratic environment for a better life and as a future leadership in our society. The aim is to develop their personal skills and to accept responsibility for their peers and whatever society they choose to be part of in the future.

Fanny also points out that these children are our future and thus the importance of our informal education system that reflects our desire to see all the children participate and gain from it.

Signposting: These days a lot of new and unknown faces adorn the scene at Matzuva. Veteran member Dr. Zvi Am-Ad points out that the "intimate society" of the 'classic kibbutz' is no more and not only do members not know whether the person they meet on the path is a member, a resident to be at the community village or just a visitor but we only have a vague idea where new members live on the kibbutz. Zvi maintains that 68 years after the founding of Matzuva it's high time that we think about investing in street signs - at least we'll finally find the way home!

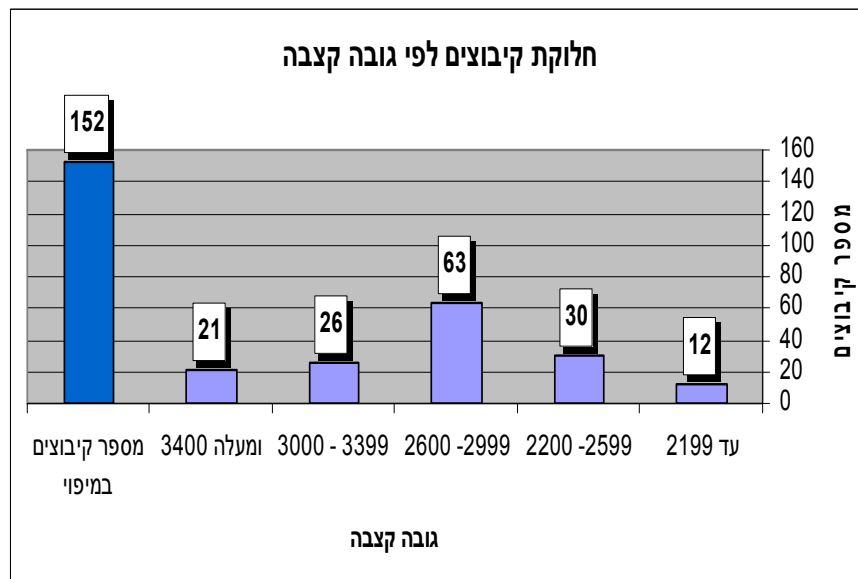
Pensions: The issue of pensions does not go away and it shouldn't. Veteran member Dan Carmi takes issue with the fact that while our agricultural branch grows produce and produces profits funds are not channeled into pensions. It is true that no one is actually on the breadline but does the kibbutz ensure that all the needs and requirements of 70,80 and 90 year olds are met. Are the decades

in which these members have worked in the various kibbutz branches has not been taken into account. These are members that waived personal gain in order to develop the kibbutz and its branches. The state pension is far from being at a level in which an individual can enjoy his or her golden years. On the other hand other younger members working outside the kibbutz will enjoy external pensions on retirement. Dan touches on the lack of equality and the ever growing differences between those that have and those that have to try and make ends meet.

The kibbutz movement has set out criteria under the slogan "Pensions for All" and have also set a minimum figure for each kibbutz to meet. Matzuva has, until now, been unable or willing to release funds to supplement the state pension with a further NIS.1,500 per veteran member. Dan recommends that this sum should appear in the financial program for 2009.

The following diagram in Hebrew illustrated in the graph shows results from 152 kibbutzim regarding the pensions amounts for seniors:

The permanent population of kibbutzim is approximately 100,000 persons with approximately 12,000 senior citizen members. 72% of the kibbutzim provide pensions of at least NIS.2,640 (not including the state pension).



- 21 kibbutzim provide a pension of over NIS.3,400
- 26 kibbutzim provide a pension of NIS.3,000 – 3,399
- 63 kibbutzim provide a pension of NIS.2,600 – 2,999
- 30 kibbutzim provide a pension of NIS.2,2000 - 2599
- 12 kibbutzim provide a pension up to NIS.2,199

\$1= NIS.3.67 £ 1=5.69 €= 5.36 (Bank of Israel Rates 18/12/08)

To our Friends who are today also members of Kibbutz Matzuva

(Dedicated to Ilana and Yair Chen on becoming members of Matzuva)

*After the congratulations, cakes and greetings for success
A big hug and an outpouring of joy
So don't be coy (unlike the decorations committee) 'cos
You should know that being a kibbutznik is not all joy*

*To be members is to pay dues to the local committee
To be members is to ask me "How are you my friend?"
To be members is to prepare and dismantle, to make the tea
Then argue with your neighbor, gossip with the dame next door
But never never ask for more*

*To be members you complain to the Trustee or whine
About the property tax (that's always on time)
To be members is to demolish, build and comply
'Cos the water and electricity is the highest to buy*

*To be members is to be chosen and choose as a factor
To wake up early to the sound of a tractor
To be members is to "suffer" another member
And to fill up the graves and also remember*

*And, after all this you wanted to be members and swallow the pill
Now we'll open a file about you with Noam and council
We know you're determined and brave of heart
Despite all the apprehension, suffering and hurt*

From us, Anat and Karni Am-Ad

Chanukah at Matzuva: Our cultural committee has been active as always and when it comes to the Chagim (Festivals) it's a flurry of activity. On December 27th all residents (members, community villagers, tenants) are to gather together at the entrance to the kibbutz (the guard's hut) at 10:30 for the traditional Chanukah Torch race that this year will pass through the community village stage A (with numerous houses under construction) and through the kibbutz up to the Tzur auditorium (next to the pool) where the Chanukah party is to take place. The route is suitable for every age and physical state and one can run, walk, drive their "kalnoit" (electric buggies) or in prams (intended for babies only) – the committee hopes that as many of our veteran members as possible participate. The torch will be passed on in a relay with predetermined stops for explanations about the community village and finally to the hall.

At the hall there will be a social get-together, creative games for the children, festive songs led by our teenagers and the mandatory Chanukah gastronomic fare.

** Should it rain (please, please!!) the torch race will be cancelled unfortunately and everyone will gather at the hall at 16:30.

New Year Party: On January 2nd 2009 there will be a dance ball to celebrate the new year. The party will begin at 22:00 and is open to 18 year adults and above. There will be plenty of dancing and free drinks. Entrance fee is NIS.20. Our youngsters will collect alcoholic drinks from houses and we are asked to open our hearts and cocktail cabinets and give forth. Members will be informed when the collection for the party is to take place. One more thing, come to the party in a partying mood.
The Cultural Committee

Finally, I wish all Ulpan alumni, volunteer guests, kibbutz sons and ex-members Seasonal Greetings, Chanukah Sameach, Merry Christmas, a Happy New Year and Peace in this troubled world – here's hoping
Take Care
Baruch