

World Times

Educating for Life

Autumn 2003



New Year Message from Justice Richard Goldstone, President of World ORT

I AM pleased to have this opportunity to send Rosh Hashanah greetings to the members of the worldwide ORT family. The coming year is significant for me, personally, as I shall be coming to the end of my six-year tenure as president of World ORT.

These have been six exciting years during which we have streamlined the governance and administration of World ORT and greatly expanded our operations – especially in the Former Soviet Union. We have coped with the many exigencies that we have faced, in particular the ongoing terror in Israel. We have done so because we are an organisation that draws strongly on our traditional values of generosity and mutual concern. I hope that, for all of us, the coming year will be fulfilling and that we will see the peace and tranquillity in Israel and throughout the whole world for which we all yearn.

New school year in Israel formally opened at ORT Henry Ronson



Left to right: Limor Livnat, Minister of Education; Ariel Sharon, Prime Minister of Israel; Shabtai Tsur, Mayor of Ashkelon and Zvi Peleg, Director General of ORT Israel at the ceremony.

THE 2003/2004 school year was formally opened in Israel at the ORT Henry Ronson High School in Ashkelon by Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and Minister of Education, Limor Livnat.

During the ceremony Prime Minister Sharon emphasized the need for high motivation amongst Israeli youth on joining the military and enlisting into top combat units, and mentioned Ashkelon's vulnerability as a target for "Kassam" missiles fired from the Gaza Strip.

Minister Livnat stressed her admiration for ORT

Ronson's efforts in the field of technology alongside Jewish heritage projects. Livnat also emphasized student achievement in competitions in fields such as Chemistry, Physics and Computer Studies, in addition to the overall improvement in matriculation results.

The ceremony was attended by Mayor of Askelon, Shabtai Tsur; Amanda Ronson, granddaughter of the late Henry Ronson and daughter of the school's founders, Gerald and Gail Ronson; Zvi Peleg, Director General of ORT Israel; Timora Shiri,

Principal of ORT Henry Ronson and other dignitaries.

In addition to ORT Henry Ronson, Gerald and Gail have endowed two further ORT schools in Israel; ORT Afridar Ronson, also in Ashkelon and ORT Daliat El Carmel, a school for Druze students in Usefiya. In recognition of their tremendous support for Israel through these projects, the Ronsons were honoured at British ORT's Annual Dinner in London in September, where MK Avraham Burg was guest speaker.

World ORT extends New Year greetings to the UJC and the US Federations

WORLD ORT is grateful to the following Federations for their recent support of our projects:

The Jewish Federation of Greater Atlanta: for its support for the ORT Yigal Alon Comprehensive School in Yokneam, Israel and also for support towards meals, tuition fees, and books for students at ORT schools in Argentina.

The Jewish Federation of Central New Jersey: for its support once again for the ORT Comprehensive High School in Arad, Israel.

The Princeton-Mercer-Bucks County Federation (as part of the New Jersey Consortium): for its support for the ORT Comprehensive High School in Arad, Israel.

The Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County: for its support for a project at the ORT Hannah Senesh School in Haifa, Israel.

The Jewish Federation of South Palm Beach County: for its support for a project at the ORT Kiryat Bialik School in Israel.

The Combined Jewish Philanthropies of Boston: for its support towards tuition fees for students at ORT schools in Argentina.

The Jewish Federation of Greater Houston: for its support for a project at the ORT Harmatz College, Givat Ram, Jerusalem, Israel.

The Jewish Federation of Palm Springs: which built a multimedia learning centre at the ORT School in Bat Yam, Israel.

HOLD THE DATE

From 1-3 May, The World ORT General Assembly will convene at the Grand Hyatt in New York City.

Join us for three days of informative sessions, keynote speeches and a special opening ceremony with ORT student dancers from Israel, France, Russia and Argentina.

For registration please contact your national ORT organisation or local ORT office.

For further details and registration information please contact Kim Ross at the New York office on 212-353-5833.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Message from the Director General

Each year, Rosh Hashanah – coinciding with the beginning of the academic year in the Northern hemisphere – provides us with the opportunity to review the year just past and to reflect on our aspirations for the upcoming twelve months. The confluence of the Jewish and academic annual cycles is significant for ORT as we are a unique organization that combines the teaching of skills that sustain life with the transmission of those Jewish values that enhance and enrich life. Our assessment at this time thus evaluates how well we are able to blend our involvement with the ever-moving, fast-changing technological world, with our commitment to the constant, unvarying principles of personal and communal responsibility that are a part of our heritage and our way of life.



In reviewing our achievements in this regard, I believe that ORT has a lot to be proud of. In addition to the high standard of education and training that we provide, there is a spirit of generosity and *chesed* that pervades our organization. This emanates from our donors and lay leaders who willingly give of their time and their resources, and is emulated by our students and professional staff, many of whom make it their business to provide extra help and support wherever it is needed – both inside and outside of ORT.

In this edition of the World ORT Times, alone, we can see several examples of the breadth of involvement of members of the ORT family: these include ORT Braude honoured by the Council for a Beautiful Israel; the Executive Director of British ORT undertaking a sponsored bike ride in Russia; archive material showing how ORT students rallied to volunteer 30 years ago at the time of the Yom Kippur war; and the award to our President, Justice Richard Goldstone, of an honorary degree by Princeton University in recognition of his work for the promotion of international human rights. These examples illustrate how serious we are about our commitment to making the world a better place to live and work in.

I am pleased to welcome new leaders to the ORT family in Switzerland, Chile, Holland and the United States. Selfless individuals who have demonstrated their dedication to ORT's ideals and who will continue to inspire those of us who work and study within this organization.

When the leaders themselves require motivation, all they have to do is to meet with our own students and witness their intensity and their enthusiasm. A recent encounter between British ORT lay leaders and ORT Israel students in England to participate in the World ORT Rosner English Summer School – reported on in this issue – left the British ORT delegation inspired not only by the students' command of English but also by their maturity and their determination to "make a difference".

The path to our success is not always smooth. A major feature of our work during the past year has been a continuation in the need to take emergency action to maintain our operations in Argentina in the wake of that country's economic crisis, and in Israel as a result of the continued social, psychological, economic and physical effects of the security situation. The struggle has been a tough one but, as the year turns, we do see a glimmer of hope in both these areas: the economic situation in Argentina is showing definite signs of improvement, and despite the tumultuous events in Israel the world is hoping that Middle East peace initiatives will eventually bear fruit.

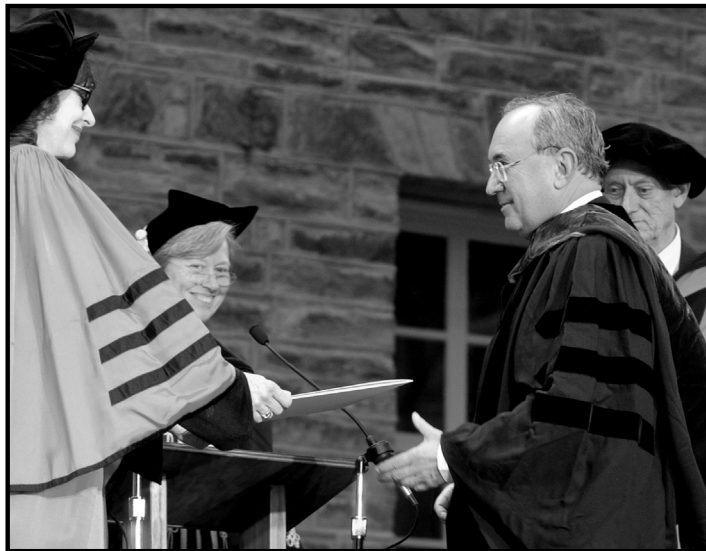
But even in these hard times, we can report that we have scored notable successes. In Argentina, despite the crisis, with seven months to go before the next academic year our schools are already overbooked; in Israel, at the request of local authorities and the Israeli Ministry of Education, four new schools are joining the network; and in the Former Soviet Union working with the Jewish Agency we are taking 15 schools into the network. In the USA, ORT has joined the JDC and JAFI as a primary agency eligible for Jewish community funding.

We have achieved much, but there is much to be done in the coming year. By remaining true to our guiding principles we will continue to provide our unique service to the global Jewish community, making a difference to so many lives.

שנה טובה

ORT around

World ORT President, Justice Richard Goldstone, receives Honorary Doctorate from Princeton University



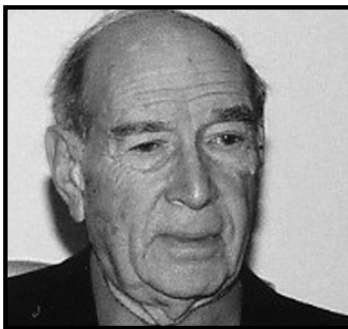
WORLD ORT President, Justice Richard Goldstone, has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate by Princeton University for his contribution in the field of international and human rights law. The degree was awarded at the university's 256th Commencement.

Honorary degree recipients are elected by Princeton's Board of Trustees, and a trustee committee solicits nomination from the entire University.

ORT France First Vice President, Jean-Hugues Leopold-Metzger, honoured as Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur by Council of Europe

ORT France First Vice President, Jean-Hugues Leopold-Metzger, has been honoured as Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur by the Council of Europe. Leopold-Metzger is also a member of the World ORT Board of Directors, and the World ORT International Cooperation Standing Committee, and the World ORT representative at the Council of Europe.

The title was awarded to Jean-Hugues Leopold-Metzger in view of his important work for ORT.



ORT South Africa National Chairman, Dorianne Levitt, honoured with Humanitarian Lifetime Jewish Achiever Award



DORIANNE LEVITT, National Chairman of ORT South Africa, received the Humanitarian Lifetime Jewish Achiever Award at a prestigious annual ceremony.

The honour, awarded to members of the South African Jewish community who have made a significant contribution to the community, was presented to Dorianne Levitt for the important work which she conducts on a voluntary basis for ORT.

Dorianne Levitt has been part of ORT since joining Johannesburg Women's ORT in 1986 and today serves as National Chairperson of South African ORT and is a member of World ORT's Board of Directors.

ORT Braude College honoured by Council for a Beautiful Israel

ORT Braude College of Engineering has been honoured with the Magshim Award by the Council for a Beautiful Israel. The honour, announced at a ceremony held in June in the presence of the President of the State of Israel, Moshe Katsav, was bestowed upon the college for its development of environmental awareness, and its application of modern, aesthetic architecture and design.

At its annual ceremony the Council for a Beautiful Israel honours organisations which have contributed towards the promotion of environmental awareness and have significantly improved the quality of life. Participants in the ceremony included President of the State of Israel, Moshe Katsav; Lt. Gen. (res.) Amnon Lipkin Shahak; Minister of Science and Technology, Eliezer Zandberg; Chairman of the Board of the Council for a Beautiful Israel, Aura Herzog; and President of ORT Braude, Shmaryahu Rosner.

In accepting the award on behalf of ORT Braude, Shmaryahu Rosner said, "It is vital that students study in aesthetically pleasing surroundings in keeping with the academic environment of the college. I believe that an educational campus which has been well cared for increases staff and student motivation."



Shmaryahu Rosner, President of ORT Braude, accepts the Magshim Award by the Council for a Beautiful Israel from Moshe Katsav, President of the State of Israel.

ORT returns to Australia

AFTER an absence of several years World ORT has resumed activities in Australia. In 2002 Iris Colyn, National Director of ORT South Africa, made two initial visits to Sydney and Melbourne to study the feasibility of re-establishing ORT's presence there. In August 2003, following the success of Colyn's visits, World ORT signed a contract with Australian firm Plum Partnerships to help create an Australian ORT organisation and establish a long-term financial support base in Australia.

"This is a very exciting development for ORT," said Bob Golbert, Coordinator of Activities for North American Federations and the UJC. "Australia is often overlooked as a potential source of funding, but in reality the Australian Jewish community raises more per capita for Israel than any other country in the world, and in real terms is second only to the US Jewish community in donations to the Jewish Agency and Keren Hayesod. It really is an untapped market that has huge potential in terms of supporting and increasing the profile of ORT and our activities worldwide."

"Australia has a very high percentage of both immigrants and Holocaust survivors, and they, more than anyone else, understand the importance of helping their fellow Jews in Argentina, the Former Soviet Union, Israel and other parts of the world in their time of need," added Golbert.

Cheryl Mariner, Co-Director of Plum Partnerships, enthused, "ORT does such important work and provides academic and vocational opportunities to so many communities and for so many people throughout the world. We are very excited about making Australia a vital part of ORT's worldwide network."

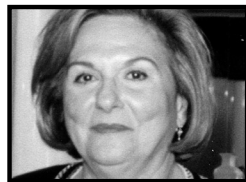
Steve Denenberg, Mariner's Co-Director, has already begun meeting with prominent members of the Jewish communities in Sydney and Melbourne to secure their involvement in ORT's new Australian organisation. Contact has also been made with young professionals in both cities with a view to forming Young Australian ORT committees which will promote ORT in Australia through events geared towards a younger age group.

"As a result of our meetings, interest in affiliating with the World ORT network has already been expressed by several Jewish schools in both Sydney and Melbourne, and several Australian philanthropic foundations have shown interest in providing financial support for ORT projects," said Denenberg. "All of this has been accomplished within the last month or so, and I'm looking forward to what we will achieve in the months and years ahead."



Members of the committee to establish Young ORT in Australia: Dan Goot (left), Deb Kaplan, Roni Guralnek and Tammy Rosman (not pictured).

Women's American ORT



INA GREEN (pictured left) was appointed Executive Director of WAO. Ina is a veteran employee of WAO. Among the many projects in which she has been involved, Ina was the professional behind Regeneration 2000, the successful project in the CIS.

ORT Netherlands

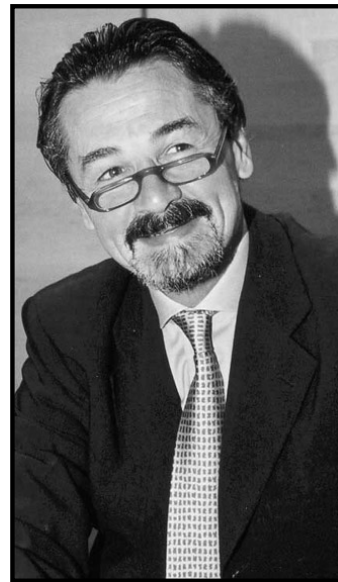
ROBERT BARUCH was elected President of ORT Netherlands, taking over from Ernst Sittig who has stepped down after years of support and assistance.

ORT Switzerland

ROBERT EQUÉY was elected President of ORT Switzerland in early 2003, taking over from Philippe Nordmann.

A lawyer by profession, Equey is a committed philanthropist and an active figure in the Jewish world, serving as President of the French Chapter of the Swiss-Israel Chamber of Commerce. Robert Equey is also a member of the Boards of Governors of the Ben Gurion University of the Negev, and the Weizmann Institute of Science, and on the committee of Keren Hayesod amongst other organisations in both Israel and Switzerland.

"I hope that under my leadership, the organisation will see yet another record breaking year of raising the much needed funds for ORT operations around the world," Equey said.



ORT Switzerland will hold its annual gala dinner on October 9th. Taking place in Geneva, funds raised at the event will go towards helping ORT's students in Israel. As part of the event President of Christie's Europe, François Curriel, will hold an auction. Organisers are expecting some 250 guests.

ORT Basel

JUDITH ASCHWANDEN has taken over from Patrick Loeb-Meyer as interim president of ORT Basel.

the world...



ORT Bern

ORT's Bern committee has celebrated 50 years of activity. Lead by Denise Loeb (*left*), the committee has 100 members, 10 percent of the total Jewish community in Switzerland's federal capital.

Denise Loeb has been President of ORT Bern for 40 years, devoting her time and efforts to ORT's causes.

American ORT

ORT students, teachers and administrators from Israel and Argentina participated in a speaking tour of the US in May and June when they took part in a variety of meetings and special events, and addressed large audiences. During their six weeks in the US they met with American ORT's members, supporters, prospective donors, and Regional and Chapter Directors from Atlanta, Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Florida, Los Angeles, New York, Philadelphia and Washington.

American ORT arranged the visits to raise awareness of ORT and to make its programs, teachers and students tangible to an American audience.

The visits also complemented Atlanta Chapter's recent study program, which brought 19 students from ORT Argentina to the Alfred and Adelle Davis Academy in Atlanta in order to give them a reprieve from their country's economic collapse. Davis Academy parents acted as host families and each student was paired with a school mate.

ORT Argentina

DESPITE the continuing economic crisis in Argentina, over 420 students have already registered with ORT Argentina for the new school year which commences in March 2004.

IN MARCH 2003 ORT Argentina students presented the F. Gatti School of Special Education with special models they had created to help Gatti's blind students grasp spaces and environments in their school.



Students testing the ORT technology.

ORT Argentina's students have again participated in international olympiads around the world:

Gabriel Alejandro Abelof, was awarded 3rd prize in the 14th International Olympiad of Philosophy for his paper on the subject of "The New Meaning of Ethics and Citizenship in the 21st Century". The contest took place in Buenos Aires in May.

Martin Valdez de León is one of four members of the Argentinean delegation to the 15th International Olympiad in Informatics.

PABLO THALER, recent graduate of ORT Argentina, has received a scholarship for Dickinson College Pennsylvania where he will study International Relations.

ORT Argentina's students have been honoured while representing various countries in the 7th Buenos Aires Model of the United Nations (OAJNU).

The delegation representing the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland: Gabriel Levita, Ezequiel Fogel, Orly Zaidenknop, Ariel Neisen, Johann Elebaster, German Feldman, David Mielnik, Daniel Vexlir and Manuel Saralegui and Analía Fukelman was awarded first distinction.

Students Celeste D'Aleo Terbalca, Walter Vulej, Esteban Yona, Andrés Osinski, Nicolás Butler, and Micaela Grimberg representing the Popular Democratic Republic of Korea were awarded a special mention.

IN MAY Escuela Técnica ORT No. 2 held a chess contest for students and teachers with renowned chess masters, including Great International Master Oscar Panno, as guests.



THE MASS Media Department of Escuela Técnica ORT No. 2 has produced a video titled "AMIA" on the attack on the headquarters of the Buenos Aires Jewish community. The video was screened

on Argentinean state television on July 18, the anniversary of the 1994 attack.

AN AGREEMENT has been signed between Escuela Técnica ORT No. 2 and the Language Laboratory of the School of Letters of the University of Buenos Aires, whereby university certified English language courses are now being offered to ORT's educational community, as well as to the community at large.

ONCE again the Construction Department of Escuela Técnica ORT No. 1 will hold an exhibition of the work of some of its students. To mark this year's 40th anniversary of the school, some 50 of the most important companies in Argentina's construction industry will be involved, taking part in lectures, videos and technical exhibits.

AN AGREEMENT with the University of CEMA (Centre of Macroeconomic Studies in Argentina) was signed by Escuela Técnica ORT No. 1 in early August. The agreement of cooperation and reciprocity will allow for joint projects such as, amongst others, teacher training seminars, research projects, short courses for students, and teachers' guidance for the implementation of projects with students.



CEMA Rector, Carlos Rodriguez (*left*) Escuela Técnica ORT No. 1 Principal, Aliza Tokar and ORT Argentina National Director, Baruj Zaidenknop sign the agreement.

AT A CEREMONY at the end of August, ORT Argentina inaugurated its Multimedia Centre for Educational Resources housed in Escuela Técnica ORT No. 2. The centre will form the starting point for a new approach to the teacher-learning process and will also include video-recorded classes, external access and teledirected laboratories.

ORT Chile

SONJA FRIEDMAN (*in picture with Marcelo Leukow, ORT Chile National Director*) was named President of ORT Chile taking over from Isidore Gorodischer. Gorodischer has been a true friend of ORT over the years.



ORT Chile has been named a leader in reading, writing and mathematics skills problem solving in schools in deprived areas in Chile. In a special project, overseen by the country's Minister of Education, Dr. Sergio Bitar, the country's most prestigious educational institutions proposed strategies to improve the quality of education in fifty-five schools in the most deprived areas of Santiago. ORT Chile's proposal was hailed as effective and efficient, and the Santiago schools which made use of the strategy exhibited the highest level of improvement.

ORT Uruguay

A TWO-DAY seminar in Jewish Studies took place on August 26th and 27th at the ORT Uruguay University.

The seminar, the first ever in Jewish Studies at ORT Uruguay University, was presented by Professor Haim Avni, Emeritus Professor of Modern Jewish History of the Hebrew University, and was a joint project of ORT Uruguay University and the International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem. Participants included representatives of all major Jewish organizations in Montevideo, in particular teachers in Jewish day-schools and leaders of Jewish community institutions.

ORT Uruguay University is planning further activities in the field of Jewish studies, including the possibility of an on-line postgraduate diploma to be taught jointly with the Hebrew University's International Center for University Teaching of Jewish Civilization.

ORT CIS and Baltic States

IN JULY the UJC held a mission to Moldova where participants visited ORT schools in the region. This was the first time since the establishment of relations between ORT and the UJC that its members had visited ORT schools in the CIS and Baltic States. During their visit the participants visited ORT KeshetNet, a project which helps single mothers to return to employment and met with graduates of ORT schools in the region who have made aliyah. Participants took advantage of ORT's cyber café, located in their hotel in Moldova, through which they were able to learn about ORT and its activities throughout the world.

ORT's Technology College in Moscow marked ten years since the establishment of its design diploma, an experimental programme established in the 1990's, at the graduation ceremony of its design faculty. The ceremony took place at Slava Zaitsev's Fashion House, compered by one of the most renowned Russian designers, Slava Zaitsev; and with the participation of the vice-president of the



Moscow Union of Designers, representatives of the Russian Ministry of Education, representatives of the Russian Jewish Congress and international Jewish organisations, the President of ORT Russia, Prof. Alexander Asmolov; Director of ORT Russia, Miron Lahat; graduates, and students.

The ORT Technology College in Moscow uses the most advanced technology available to educate its over 500 students. Using its wide knowledge and expertise, the College has developed its design faculty and offers its students the opportunity to gain considerable experience in fashion design by studying the complete process from the first rough sketch through dress making to the creation of an entire collection. Students at the ORT College have already gained acclaim at a number of professional competitions for young fashion designers.

As part of the ceremony, a fashion show took place illustrating the collections of 19 graduates. The show demonstrated unique and bold designs, heralding a new generation of Russian designers.

During the ceremony prizes were presented by a leading Moscow clothing company to outstanding graduates, Arevik Simonian, Anna Shaforostova, and Zhenia Kondrashova, and it was announced that graduate Nastia Neroeva has become a member of the Moscow Union of Designers.

In praising the work of the 140 graduates, the President of ORT Russia, Prof. Alexander Asmolov said, "I am stunned by what I have seen...We were not shown secondary vocational education but one of a very high professional standard. Thank you for this feast of art."

ORT CIS held a seminar in Kiev, Ukraine for the principals of its schools in the CIS and Baltic States. The seminar, which took place in early July, allowed for important dialogue between the management of ORT CIS and the principals, as well as between the principals themselves. This was the first time that an Israeli principal had participated in such a seminar and the experiences of being part of a large educational network in Israel had been shared.

During the seminar, attended by ORT CIS staff members Vlad Lerner, Director of ORT CIS and Baltic States; Miron Lahat, Director of ORT Russia; and Vladimir Dribinskiy, Head of CIS, Baltic States and Eastern Europe Unit, participants were presented with a wide range of topics including: World ORT's mission, goals and strategy; an overview of ORT CIS and ORT Israel; forthcoming changes in the structure of the Heftziba system – which is the framework for the management, financing and activities of some 40 Jewish schools in the CIS and Baltic States overseen by Israel's Ministry of Education and Lishkat Ha'Keshet; public relations and local fundraising. In addition to the discussions, participants were addressed by a number of speakers including Israeli Ambassador Anna Azari, and ORT Lod principal, Gita Goldberg.

The seminar provoked an interesting and relevant exchange of opinion and increased levels of cooperation between everyone in attendance.



Gita Goldberg, Principal of ORT Lod gives a presentation to the group.

ORT India

THE ORT Manipur Computer Centre was inaugurated at the end of June. The centre, located in the province of Churachandpur, in the north east Indian state of Manipur, consists of a computer laboratory with 6 terminals and a classroom, and can accommodate up to 18 students at any one time. ORT Manipur will provide important skills for the local Jewish and non Jewish community.

The centre, which opened its doors to students in early August, already has a full student roll. Courses currently offered at the centre include a six month Higher Diploma in Computer Management; a three month diploma in Desktop Publishing; a diploma in Computer Management; and a one month crash course in computer programming.



ORT cyclists go back to their roots



Jon Benjamin (forth from left) takes a well earned break with his fellow cyclists en-route to St. Petersburg.

IN JULY Jon Benjamin, Chief Executive of British ORT, joined a group of cyclists in Russia to ride 300 miles (480 km) to St. Petersburg, birthplace of ORT in 1880 and now home to the ORT de Gunzburg School #550. Here he describes a trip through parts of Russia seen by few tourists.

By July, Moscow has long since shrugged off the intense cold that grips the city for many months of the year, but none of us was expecting the extreme heat - over 90°F (35°C) - that we encountered on our arrival.

Fourteen of us had travelled to Russia to take part in a week-long cycle trek to St. Petersburg. The group consisted of nine Britons, four South Africans (two of whom live in England) and an Israeli (who lives in South Africa). Truly an international cast. Eight of the cyclists, including myself, were taking part in the bike ride to raise money for ORT.

Throughout our travels we were looked after by four Russian guides who helped maintain our bikes, pitch our tents and even render the occasional massage of cramped muscles. We were led by the two Ilyas, "Big" Ilya and "Little Ilya", both natives of St. Petersburg and engineers by training. "Little" Ilya was already familiar with ORT, as his 14 year old daughter attends the ORT de Gunzburg School.

A number of cyclists in our group were charity bike ride veterans. I had cycled in Israel, Jordan and Vietnam and others had been on treks to Cuba and Spain. This trek would be an adventure taking us off the tourist trail and through the heartland of Russia to places that really capture the essence of the country in which so many of our kinsfolk still live.

After a day of sightseeing in Moscow, where we eagerly awaited the delayed arrival of our luggage, we embarked on an overnight train journey from Moscow to Vologda some 375 miles (600 km) to the north. On arrival the next morning we were greeted by brilliant sunshine, bird song and flowers in full bloom. Vologda, however, was not a pretty sight. As in many of the towns and cities we would visit in the next week, Vologda had an ancient history with a church and Kremlin (fortress) to match. The 'modern' city was characterised by crumbling concrete buildings and deeply pot-holed roads which made us wonder what the "off

road" portions of our ride would be like in comparison.

Few Jews would have lived in this part of Russia in Tsarist times as they were for the most part confined to the Pale of Settlement in modern day Poland, Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova. Nevertheless, seeing the conditions today, we could all too easily imagine the hardships and challenges that they faced all over Eastern Europe a century ago.

Our cycling schedule that day and in the days to come consisted of covering 50 to 60 miles (over 80km) through mainly woodland and marshland and, less frequently, agricultural areas. Towns were few and far between and the villages consisted of little more than a bus stop and a cluster of timber houses with carefully tended vegetable gardens and often a sauna outhouse also attached. On several occasions we crossed canals that had been carved through the swamps by prisoners of Stalin's Gulags who were worked to death in order to link the main waterways of northern Russia with the sea.

The reflection of the birch and fir forests in the swamps and lakes was magnificent, but the prevalence of water contributed to the large number of mosquitos which appeared at every

rest stop. We were joined by giant hornets whose aerobic prowess impressed us when they managed to fly in circles around our heads despite our efforts to escape them!

Meals for the most part consisted of an impromptu simple buffet set out on a trestle table. With all our exertions on the bikes however, a stop was always welcome and the chance to eat whatever we were given was anticipated keenly. Most of us also rewarded ourselves with 'western' chocolate which was mercifully readily available in even the smallest shops.

Whilst meal times brought rest and sustenance, night time did not necessarily promise sleep. Two nights on the ride were spent under canvas. While the idea of camping by the side of a lake may sound idyllic, with no washing or toilet facilities other than the lake and nearby bushes, any romantic notions of getting back to nature proved to be rather too literal. Chances of sleep were also diminished by the fact that at that latitude in July there is very little, if any, darkness. Even at midnight one can sit outside one's tent and read a book.

When we did stay in a hotel we were immediately reminded of the still dogged attachment to Soviet ways. Our passports were taken from us on arrival, sinks had no plugs, psychedelic swirls of brown and orange appeared on the mismatched wallpaper and curtains and towels were postage stamp size. Our penultimate day of riding was the toughest. It was our only day of rain and it rained all day. Once again we had to cover over 50 miles (80km) and very soon we were soaked, not only from the rain and puddles, but also from the spray emanating from large logging trucks hurtling up and down the rutted roads. This was the day that our rugged Israeli fellow traveller, Ido, decided to cycle in shorts, sandals and a string vest, much to the locals' astonishment. Our last day of cycling started in Pushkin, the location of the Summer Palace of Catherine the Great. The ride took us through the countryside surrounding St. Petersburg, its suburbs, past Stalinist apartment blocks and into the heart of the city, which is celebrating its 300th anniversary. The ride officially finished at the Statue of the Bronze Horseman, a well known St. Petersburg landmark situated just yards from the building in which ORT was first established in 1880. After a welcome from staff from the ORT office in St Petersburg and toasts in astoundingly sweet Russian "champagne" we made our way to the plaque commemorating ORT's establishment for a photo call. Later that evening we visited the ORT offices to hear about their activities, the refurbishment of the school and to see some of their programmes and projects in action. It being a Friday evening, a number of us then visited the synagogue for a very *bainishe* service. The Bike Ride was a real challenge. Some \$20,000 was raised for ORT and the participants felt that they worked for every penny. Through our short sojourn in Russia we came to appreciate not only the conditions in which ORT was established almost a century and a quarter ago, but also the conditions in which our fellow Jews still live, work and bring up their children in that part of the world. The challenge for ORT is just as real now as it was at the end of the 19th century and the support from our friends and benefactors around the world is just as vital.



The plaque commemorates ORT's founding in 1880 in St. Petersburg.

FROM THE ARCHIVE

ORT during the Yom Kippur War - Marking 30 years

2003 marks 30 years since the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War. An event of historic proportions, the Yom Kippur War began at 14:00 on 6 October 1973, when the Egyptian army launched an assault across the Suez Canal. Caught by surprise, approximately 6,000 Israeli soldiers were killed or wounded in 18 days. Israel's economic losses were equivalent to its annual GNP. This tragic assault dislocated all phases of life in Israel and triggered reverberations that were felt throughout the Jewish world.

From the day the war began, ORT assumed large responsibilities on the home front, while striving to maintain normality under circumstances that were far from normal. Joseph Hartz, ORT Israel Director General, was called up to war and Max A. Braude, ORT Director General arrived from ORT's international office in Geneva to provide help and support. On October 17th Braude wrote: "The situation in our schools is simple, more than half of the ORT staff has been sent away to war. About a third to a half of our 11th and 12th grade students are either in defense industries, in public utilities, in the maintenance of vital services or in the hospitals."

Behind the words of Max Braude are stories of the courage and bravery of our ORT students, who responded to the state of emergency with remarkable calm and willingness to help.

An example of such incredible volunteering spirit was exhibited by the students of the ORT-Lyddá [Lod] Vocational High School. Teams of six worked at Tel Hashomer Hospital on a rotating basis, some assigned to kitchen duty as cooks and helpers; while others helped the nursing staff or acted as stretcher bearers. "When we learned from the civilian manpower office that help was needed in two nearby hospitals caring for the wounded, we gladly offered to serve in any way we could," explained Dora Berman who

took charge of the school when the principal was called up.

ORT Lydda's many Arab students also participated in the school's volunteer programme serving alongside their Jewish classmates in hospital kitchens, cafeterias, laundries and cleaning departments. Another important contribution by the school was that of the eighty students who worked in a meat processing plant producing exclusively for the army.

Despite all the difficulties and lost hours, ORT students did not lose sight of their ultimate goal: to graduate. Immediately following the ceasefire, ORT and the Ministry of Education established tutorial programmes and longer school days. The volunteering students lost classroom time but gained much in maturity and in learning how to take responsibility. They learned more about the meaning of active citizenship and fellowship than they would ever have learned in the classroom.

The spirit of commitment and volunteering is still at the core of ORT's educational programmes. ORT's philosophy is that moral values are a personal responsibility and that their realization connects individuals and groups to their community and their nation. The State of Israel was built by dedicated individuals, who gave of themselves to create a Jewish homeland. We, who inherited their legacy, can do no less than follow in their footsteps and emulate their example. ORT feels it is both a responsibility and a privilege to instill these values in our students.



ORT Lydda [Lod] student helping out in the chicken run of a family whose son, who ran the farm, was killed in first week of the Yom Kippur War.



ORT Lydda [Lod] home economics student distributes blintzes made in the school kitchen to a wounded Israeli soldier at Sheba Hospital in Tel Hashomer. This service was provided twice a week.

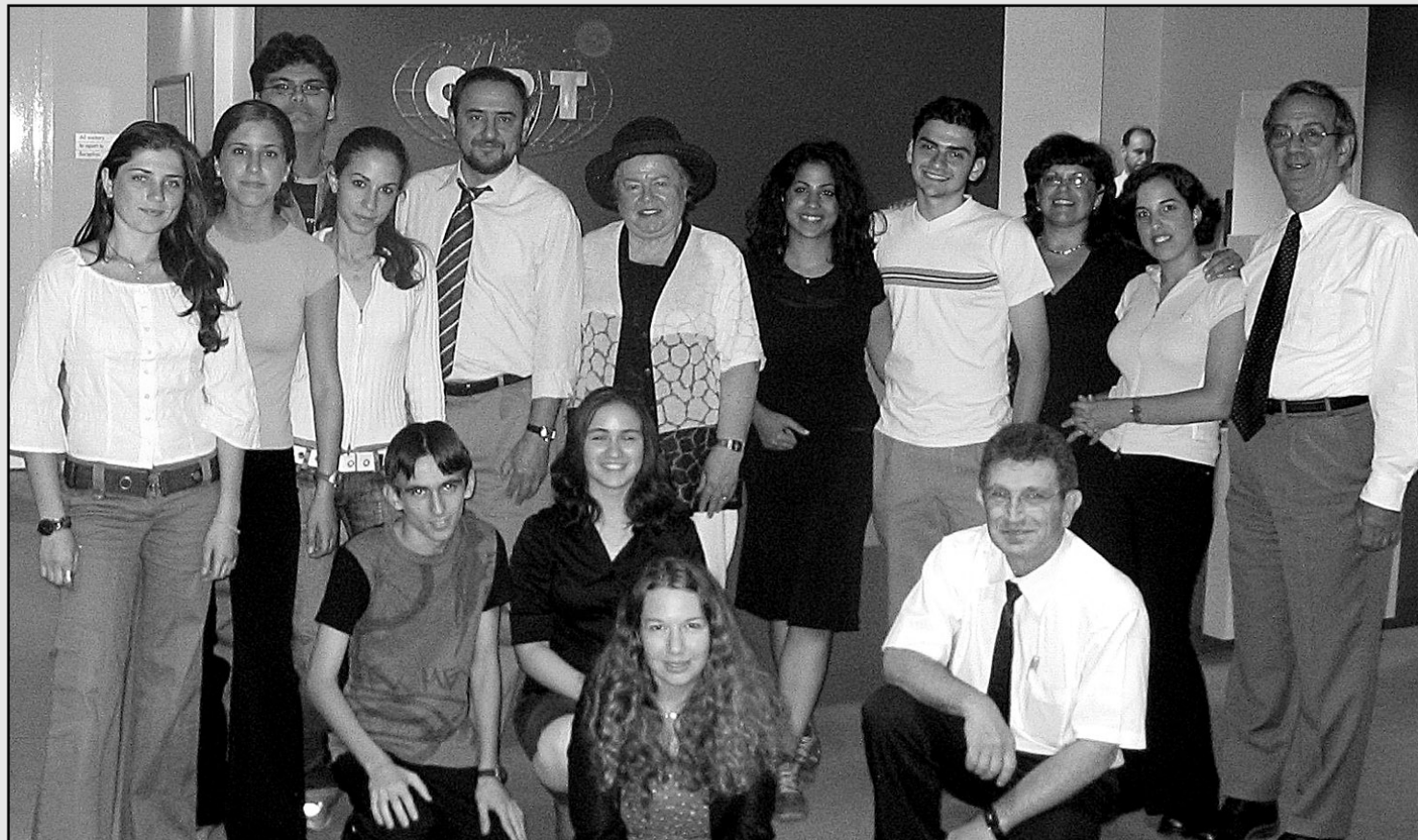


ORT Lydda [Lod] home economics' student serves as a wartime volunteer in the Shmuel Harofeh hospital canteen.



ORT Lydda [Lod] wartime volunteer students at work in a meat packing plant producing exclusively for the IDF. (Woman with head covering is a plant inspector)

Israeli Students attend World ORT Rosner English Summer School



Summer school staff and students at ORT House together with, from left to right: Robert Singer, Director General, World ORT; Jenny Rosner friend of World ORT and supporter of the Summer School; Dr. Gideon Meyer, Deputy Director General, World ORT; Dr. Moshe Fass, Head of Education and Technology Department, World ORT and Michal Eisenberg, Summer School Coordinator.

NINE students from ORT schools in Israel took part in the first annual World ORT Rosner English Summer School at ORT House in London, held this year in July. Selected by a special ORT committee in Israel, the students spent three weeks in London studying English and Advanced Astronomy, visited a number of cultural, historical and scientific sites, and met ORT leaders and members of the London Jewish community.

"I feel so lucky to have been selected and am grateful to have been given this once in a lifetime opportunity."

Ron Adler

The World ORT Rosner English Summer School was initiated and is supported by Jenny Rosner, a close friend of ORT. "I feel that there is a real need to give Israeli students the chance to improve their command of the English language and wanted to help ORT's students on the way to a better start on the path to their eventual career," said Mrs. Rosner.

The Summer School participants are students at ORT Syngalowski, Tel Aviv; ORT Yad Levovitch, Netanya; and ORT Holon and were chosen to participate due to their leadership skills, educational excellence and commitment to volunteer projects including ORT's Sunflowers project. "I can say that it is a great honor to represent my country and my school in this kind of event. I am proud to be one of the nine pupils who were chosen for this delegation," commented Dolya Rossov, a participant from ORT Holon, on being selected to take part.

Each morning the students studied English at the Hampstead School of English, where they received high grades in their weekly assessments, while a number progressed to higher levels of study. In addition to their high standard of English the students were commended on

their conduct, with the principal of the School, Kevin McNally, describing them as "extremely good ambassadors for the youth of Israel whose participation in the Hampstead School of English contributed enormously to the school's secondary function of aiding the understanding and communication between young people of all races, cultures and backgrounds."

Astronomy was a large focus of the Summer School programme as World ORT wanted the students to be given an introduction to scientific English using themes of interest to teenage school children. As astronomy is both a complex and intriguing subject, allowing for interactive study such as through visits to the IMAX centre, the Greenwich Observatory etc, the students were given the opportunity to learn a subject which would open their minds to a new way of study.

"I feel that since I got to London I really improved my English. I learned new vocabulary and new grammar rules. With my new knowledge of English I'll be able to help other students younger than me who need to improve their English. I really want to help other students improve their English, like ORT is helping me improve my English by sending me to London and to the summer school."

Rotem Feldman

One of the highlights of the Summer School was the presentation given by World ORT's Head of Jewish Education, Judah Harstein, titled "Judaism in the Modern World". Through multimedia interaction Judah motivated the students to acknowledge and cherish their heritage and Jewish roots, and helped the students to feel more connected with the Jewish communities in the Diaspora. During his presentation Harstein showed the students a number of ORT websites,

"I think I speak in the name of the entire group in saying that we are all honoured to be here and representing ORT Israel."

Michael Shwartzman

relevant to the Jewish community, including one which deals with commemoration and remembrance. This site inspired a group discussion on the importance of remembering the past or focusing upon the present and future.

The students were also given the task of researching well known Jewish personalities, an experience which allowed the group to appreciate the achievements of the Jewish community at large.

"As a teacher in Israel we usually meet the students in a totally different environment, the summer school has given me the opportunity to see other sides of the students, and I find this very interesting. As a teacher I had great satisfaction watching our students cope with studying a new language and being part of a new culture, and seeing how they interacted with and helped each other. I believe this has been an experience which they will never forget and one which will enrich their lives," summed up accompanying teacher, Sima Ederly of ORT Holon.

The students have taken back the skills learnt in London and will give something back to their community by providing youngsters at their schools with English tuition.

"I feel that I have really made progress since I came, and have developed my English in many ways. I think that this programme has been a great success and I hope it will continue."

Lina Bonar



MY PERSONAL EXPERIENCE IN LONDON

By Slav Leibin

THIS was my first time abroad since I left Belarus for Israel.

I found London overwhelming and amazing with plenty possibilities and places to learn and explore. I really enjoyed my time here and found the experience enriching and fruitful.

I have improved my level of English through the intensive course at the Hampstead School of English. The lessons were taught in an interesting way, different from our ordinary lessons in Israel. I enjoyed studying with people all over the world and learning about new cultures and customs. I made some new friends, with whom I intend to stay in touch. The experience helped me to overcome my fears and change my perspective about the world. There is a huge world out there, to visit, see and experience. London for me will always be a great part of it. Here, in London, I gained experience in practical and spoken English and became more aware of the language importance.

In addition I have become more open to other people's opinions and ideas. During the lessons, I didn't see any difference between me and the other students. We were all in school for the same reason, the desire to know and to succeed. The learning method was clear and understandable for all. Each morning, I came to class with a smile, expecting another fun lesson.

I am glad that I have taken part in the project and the greatest achievement is the growing knowledge of English.

In addition, we visited many sites in London; learning about its history, without even opening a book. I felt excited to walk through amazing places, which I had seen before only on television. I was also impressed by the breathtaking parks, placed in the centre of an enormous city. It was great to walk through the streets, which are screaming history. The visits in the museums were enriching and I have expended my horizons in many aspects and areas.

From each place, each experience and each street I have learned something new; something that made me even more attracted to the wonders of London.

The Shabbat dinner with a Jewish family was very pleasant and warm. We were greeted with a big smile that expressed their joy at meeting Israelis. I felt like coming home. Coming home to mum's food and smell and atmosphere. The service in the local synagogue was also a nice experience, through which I have learned about the differences between the religion in Israel and abroad.

It was an honour to meet with leaders of ORT, and I felt like an ambassador of my country. I have learned a lot about the roots of ORT and its significance.

I am also glad to be able to help students next year with English and give them valuable tools, which I have acquired here.

It has been a remarkable trip, one which won't be forgotten.



Sunflowers warms up the summer for young patients

ORT Israel has once again held Sunflowers summer camps for young cancer patients. The summer camps took place at ORT Braude in Karmiel for four days at the beginning of August.

Taking part in the summer camps were sixty cancer patients, aged from 7-15, who are currently receiving treatment at hospitals throughout Israel, accompanied by family members. The children were also joined by ORT students who volunteer for the Sunflowers project throughout the year in twelve Israeli hospitals and medical centres, giving practical support and encouragement to the young cancer patients, as well as providing them with computer training.

Zvi Peleg, Director General of ORT Israel said, "I have met with children whose medical conditions have deteriorated during camp. The mother of a young girl confided in me, admitting that her daughter would not have much longer to live, but that she would have such fond memories of the fun and laughter at Sunflowers Summer Camp to take with her to heaven. Our ORT students work hard to give these young children happiness and to help them to switch off from reality."

During their four fun filled days the children took part in a wide variety of activities including creative workshops in origami, science and technology, theatre and cinema. They were also treated to an 'Indian experience' and were taken swimming, sailing, skating, and on various cultural trips.

At the end of the camp families of the patients paid tribute to the staff, "To the hard working staff, you have been so patient making such an effort to look after and spoil our children. You made this camp different from other camps. This is an incredible initiative that deserves to continue."

ORT KeshetNET



Yevgenya Sokolova (left), administrator of the ORT KeshetNet Centre in Rybinsk, Russia, works with a student.

NATALYA VASUTINA was in a quandary. The 30-year-old divorced mother of a three-year-old couldn't get a job until she got a degree, but didn't have the skills to find work to support herself and her child while attending university.

That's when Natalya found out about the ORT KeshetNet Centre that had just opened in her city, Tula, Russia. Natalya attended classes at the vocational computer centre and upon graduating received a position as a bookkeeper at a major Tula company. She now works during the day and takes classes in the evening.

Natalya's story is not unique. She is one of 91 graduates of Tula's six-month-old ORT KeshetNet Centre, all of whom have received salary increases, new jobs or were able to retain jobs that were in jeopardy. The centre has partnered with a placement agency in Tula called Fortune which refers the centre's students and places them upon graduation.

The Tula centre takes applicants based on their need and level of motivation. There are currently 165 people on a waiting list for the course. However Tula is just one of 15 communities across the CIS and Baltic States (CIS) which have opened ORT KeshetNet Centres in the last two and a half years.

So far 1,811 women have graduated from the centres - a partnership of World ORT and Project Keshet, a grassroots organization operating in the CIS, dedicated to rebuilding Jewish life, empowering women financially and securing women's health and safety.

An online poll conducted by *Monitoring.Ru* in 2001, revealed that 48 percent of Russian men and women believe that a woman's primary role in Russia is as a mother. So it may come as no surprise that when 33-year-old Galina Dudina took maternity leave after she had her baby, she was replaced. Galina was told that she would only be able to get a job at the company if she had computer skills.

Galina went to the ORT KeshetNet Centre in Volgograd and upon graduation got a job at her old company. She is now taking an advanced accounting class and will get a promotion once she graduates.

Although the ORT KeshetNet Centres primarily teach basic computer skills such as word processing and spreadsheets, more established centres, like the one in Yalta, Ukraine, have begun to expand their curriculum. Anton Prokofiev, a furniture maker, was one of the first to take the Yalta centre's graphic design course. Because of the skills he learned at the centre, Anton now also designs furniture and his company is building his design models.

The ORT KeshetNet Centres accept applicants of all nationalities and religions. But, once at the centres, students are taught about the concepts of *tzedaka* (charity) and *tikkun olam* (repair of the world). The classes are an entry point in to the Jewish community for many of the women and men (who make up approximately 10 percent of the centres' graduates) who take courses there.

Students often enter the centres marginally identifying themselves as Jewish and leave with a greater understanding of Judaism and a desire to learn more. Many graduates become very active in their Jewish communities and often non-Jewish students become advocates for the Jewish community.

"The centres play an important role in bringing an understanding about Judaism to communities which have a tradition of anti-Semitism," says Project Keshet Executive Director, Karyn Gershon. "The communities now see that Jews don't just want to help themselves, they want to ensure their neighbours' success as well."

Belarus' first ORT KeshetNet Centre just opened in Gomel. That community is looking forward to replicating the success of the 14 centres operating in Russia and Ukraine.



Deputy Director General, World ORT Representative Office for the CIS and Baltic States, Dr. Sergey Gorinskiy, left, with graduates Grigiriy and Olga Galkiny, and Leonid Soifer proudly fly the ORT flag before departing Moscow for their new life in Israel.

ORT's pre-aliyah course graduates start their new lives in Israel

ORT pre-aliyah courses for new *olim* from Kiev, Moscow, St. Petersburg, Argentina and France ended in late August and graduates are starting their new lives in Israel. This unique programme was implemented in conjunction with the Jewish Agency and is supported by Israel's Ministry of Labour. It offers courses in both academic and non-academic subjects to give the new *olim* skills to find employment in Israel and the potential for easier absorption into Israeli society.

ORT offers pre-aliyah courses to anyone deemed eligible for aliyah by the Jewish Agency, and accepts potential candidates between university graduation age and fifty years old, the Ministry of Labour's stipulated maximum age for entry into such programmes. In addition, the pre-aliyah course requisite is a background in mathematics, computers or technology. The courses offered for academics are computer related, and the non-academic courses include electronics, refrigeration and air conditioning maintenance which are considered vital skills in Israel.

This year the eight-month courses took place in the CIS (Kiev, Moscow, and St. Petersburg) with a total of 75 students, in France with a total of 24 students, and in Argentina with a total of 35 students. Together with their families a total of some 140 people will make aliyah through ORT's courses this year.

At an emotional farewell ceremony at Moscow airport the new *olim* expressed their hopes and aspirations for their new lives.



Konstantin, Larisa, Eugenia, Artem and Viktor Koslovy at Moscow Airport.

"We have a whole life ahead. Everything was nice in Russia, but we want to live even better. We are going to take our son to Israel [where] I am sure he will have a lot of opportunities to live a good life."

Upon arrival in Israel, the new *olim* will spend an additional six months at special Hebrew *ulpanim* in Karmiel, Hadera, and Raanana.

WAO's Annual Meeting



Judy Levin (left), Rabbi Karyn Kedar, Gail Greenspahn and Carol Linch at the Annual Meeting of Women's American ORT.

WOMEN'S AMERICAN ORT held its Annual Meeting at the Westin O'Hare in Chicago in late July.

Keynote speaker at the meeting was lecturer and author Rabbi Karyn Kedar. Ordained in 1985, Rabbi Kedar has the distinction of being the first woman rabbi to serve in Jerusalem. The Senior Rabbi at B'nai Jehoshua Beth Elohim in Glenview, IL, Rabbi Kedar is the former Director of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, and author of two books: *God Whispers: Stories of the Soul, Lessons of the Heart*, and *The Dance of the Dolphin: Finding Prayer, Perspective and Meaning in the Stories of our Lives*.

Gail Greenspahn received the Women's American ORT Tikkun Olam Award, presented annually to an individual or individuals who has been an active and committed member of the Jewish community. A true visionary and leader, Greenspahn has dedicated more than a quarter of a century of active service to the Jewish community.

An informative update as to the organisation's activities was presented by National President, Carol Linch; Vice President, Patti Aaron introduced the new projects to be supported by WAO this year, and words of support were given by First Vice President, Judy Menikoff.

EVENTS September - December 2003

SEPTEMBER

7th - 13th: Top Layleaders of American ORT mission to Argentina and Uruguay

11th: Women's American ORT - Special event for major donors in the Chicago area

OCTOBER

3rd - 5th: Seminar for Senior World ORT and CIS staff, London
24th: Inauguration of the Lauder ORT Technology Centre at the Jewish High School in Sofia, Bulgaria

25th - 26th: World ORT Executive Committee Meeting, Kiev
28th - 30th: World ORT Mission to Lithuania

NOVEMBER

1st - 2nd: Meeting of World ORT Strategic Planning Task Force, London

3rd - 7th: Hatter Technology Seminar, London

9th - 19th: Women's American ORT Mission to London and to Israel (GA)
16th - 19th: UJC General Assembly, Israel

DECEMBER

3rd - 5th: World ORT Chief Financial Officers' Conference, London

7th: International Cooperation Standing Committee Meeting, London

TBA: Seminar in Ukraine for Heads of Technology Centres in CIS and Baltic States

TBA: Bernick Fundraisers Seminar

Why not join our mailing list and receive up to date information on upcoming missions? Further details can be obtained by emailing int.liaison@ort.org

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ORT International Cooperation Update

Hewlett Packard and ORT: an ongoing partnership

HEWLETT PACKARD Europe recently approved two new ORT projects for digital villages in Tula, Russia and Slavutich, Ukraine allowing the two organisations to work together once again. The HP Digital Village programme provides the tools for learning and competing in the digital economy into communities with the greatest need. Both projects will be implemented together with the regions' local universities. The latest partnership with HP comes after a successful joint venture between ORT and HP in Johannesburg.

Slavutich is a city of some 250,000 residents located in the Chernobyl area. Many of the residents are survivors of the 1986 Chernobyl disaster and many still work at the site. It is for this reason that this specific location was chosen. As Chernobyl is still considered a disaster area, tremendous efforts are now underway to ensure that life for the Ukrainians in this area will eventually return to normal.

Tula is a city of 500,000 residents, located around 200km from Moscow. It has received acclaim for being the home of the inventor of the Kalashnikov rifle and where, for many years, the famous

weapon was produced. Many of the city's residents are academics, a large number of whom lost their jobs when the marketing of heavy military industries products decreased. This area is considered the heart of Russia, and extremely important both politically and economically.

The projects will be implemented in January 2004.

Chad Improved Agriculture Programme to continue

A CONTRACT extension with ESSO, to increase funding for ORT International Cooperation's Chad Improved Agriculture Programme, has been signed after its first year of success. The programme in Chad provides training, technical assistance and credit to local farmers and families to purchase oxen, plows, carts and other essential tools.

The programme, which has proved increasingly popular, has now been expanded to serve three additional cantons in the south of Chad, and many farmers have expressed interest in taking part.

A soil expert travelled to Chad in September to conduct tests on the poor soil and make recommendations for fertilizers and other nutrients.



The trainers and farmers in Chad.

NGO's develop skills in Montenegro

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION in Washington is providing training and grants in Montenegro. This is being carried out through two USAID-funded programmes - Montenegro Advocacy Program and Akcija Reforms for a Healthy Society, to support and promote important governmental reforms, and to empower Montenegrin nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to tackle public policy concerns through grassroots initiatives.

ORT's programme in Montenegro enables NGOs to develop the skills, expertise and credibility to advance public policy dialogue and strengthen operations according to international standards of transparency and accountability. ORT grantees are working on issues such as media reform legislation, rights for disabled youths, crisis hotlines for women and children, issues related to AIDS and HIV testing and legislation, and regulations on open-air market vendors.

Educational needs of adult students in South Africa addressed



Participants of ORT South Africa's Adult Basic Education and Training Courses.

ORT South Africa is currently conducting a series of 11 week Adult Basic Education and Training Courses (ABET) in three South African provinces: the Western Cape, the Limpopo Province and in Gauteng. The courses were set up in response to the growing number of adults in the country without formal schooling, and enable students to qualify for a General Education and Training Certificate (GETC).

As a result of their lack of high school education and GETC qualifications, thousands

of South African adults are unable to find employment today. ORT South Africa has responded to the educational needs of this sector of the population by providing a variety of courses, including Combined Science, Technology Education, and Economic and Management Sciences. Upon completion of the courses, graduates receive credits enabling them to qualify for a GETC after which they may continue on to further education. With the skills and qualifications obtained, graduates

have a better chance of securing employment and thus improving their standard of living and that of their families. Graduates are also able to implement problem solving and thinking skills into day to day life.

ORT South Africa has received positive feedback from employers of its graduates who have remarked that those particular employees are more productive, show higher levels of initiative and have higher problem-solving skills than their colleagues.



A group of ORT's graduating students at the ceremony in Kosovo.

The JDC, World ORT and the AJC cooperate in Kosovo

The American Joint Distribution Committee, World ORT and the American Jewish Committee have completed an important educational project for deprived ethnic Albanian communities in Kosovo. Started in 1999, more than 6,000 adults and children have studied computing, English and vocational subjects in laboratories and classrooms maintained by the three organisations.

In 1999 Eli Eliezri, the JDC and World ORT representative in Kosovo, discovered a severe lack of educational establishments in Kosovo. After meeting with government representatives, two disused schools were reopened and former teachers reappointed. Using the schools as models for an education system in Kosovo, the government requested that ORT take over Pristina's 14 schools. Each was equipped with computer laboratories and staffed with teachers who were given appropriate training. Courses offered included English, computer studies, welding, sewing and mechanics, at the end of which students were examined and presented with an ORT diploma. Despite 85 percent unemployment in Kosovo, many of ORT's graduates have now found employment, and some have opened their own successful businesses.

In addition to the schools ORT, the JDC, and the AJC have established a state of the art computer lab in the Mitrovica cultural centre under the supervision of Eli Eliezri. In a city divided by the River Ibar into separate sections for the Serbs and the Albanians, Eliezri has successfully convinced both Serbians and Albanians to use the computer lab together, in a unique show of unity. This project has affirmed the necessity for ORT to continue educating and training disadvantaged people all over the world.

At the final school graduation ceremony, attended by over 200 students of English, Dr. Gideon Meyer, Deputy Director General of World ORT said, "Over my long career with ORT I have visited many schools, laboratories, and graduation ceremonies. In Kosovo, however, I saw first hand the hope of those Muslim and Serb graduates as a result of the special assistance they have received from the Jewish people. Something I feel to be unique."