



Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel

Gloria Bieler Earl Greinetz
Masorti Foundation Co-chairs

David H. Lissy
Executive Director & Chief Executive Officer

A Special Bat Mitzvah Benefits Children with Special Needs



"I knew I wanted to help these girls and boys," Rachel said. "I couldn't imagine not being able to have a Bat Mitzvah, and I wanted to make sure they could have this experience."

As Rachel Fayne prepared for her Bat Mitzvah in Florida, she asked her mother how she could help children less fortunate. She and her mother began looking online for a program that involved children and Judaism. Rachel then chose the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for Children with Special Needs because the program was the only one in Israel to help children with serious disabilities prepare for and celebrate Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Rachel eventually shared her Bat Mitzvah with two girls from the Onn School in Tel Aviv, a school which works with children who have cerebral palsy.

Now in its 11th year, the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for Children with Special Needs annually prepares about 250 children for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Since its inception, the program has served more than 2,000 young Israelis and their families.

"I wanted to accomplish two goals: first, to educate the other kids at Hebrew School and the members of the congregation about this program, and second, to raise money for the Program," Rachel said. "I wrote a letter about the Program and sent it to every member of our congregation and to everyone we invited to my Bat Mitzvah."

"This experience helped me understand what these kids have to go through for a Bar or Bat Mitzvah and appreciate how lucky I am," Rachel said. "I feel that I helped people learn about this program and hopefully they will give – and continue to give throughout the years. When I was sending out those letters, I wondered if it would really make a difference. Now I know what a big difference one letter can make." ♦

visit our website at www.masorti.org

Recovering from the War



Ramah NOAM Campers Before Nearby Rocket Landing Forced Closure of Camp

Our Masorti leadership in Israel more than rose to the occasion this summer. As most readers should know, in the north our rabbis worked with local elected officials and visited regularly in shelters to provide comfort and aid (both spiritual and, where needed, financial).

Throughout Israel, Masorti communities took in families from the north. In the south, our kehillot also hosted children from Sderot.

With the war's end, Masorti communities continued to provide assistance as Israelis began to renew their lives. Many Masorti rabbis spent a day at a special training program so they would be better equipped to provide counseling.

The Masorti Foundation's Emergency Campaign was able to provide funds to support the work being done in Israel. The Foundation is especially grateful to Rabbi David Wolpe and Sinai Temple in Los Angeles for a very generous contribution to the Emergency Campaign. ♦



Masorti Foundation

For Conservative Judaism in Israel

Ten Years of *Simchas!*

This coming May, the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for the Special Needs Child will celebrate its tenth anniversary with a festive program in Jerusalem.

During its first decade, the program served more than 2,000 children throughout the country. Under the guidance of current National Director Zivah Nativ, a teaching staff of rabbis, cantors and educators from the Masorti Movement and Marom (the Masorti organization for students and young adults) are involved in programs that serve children with special needs in some 40 schools.

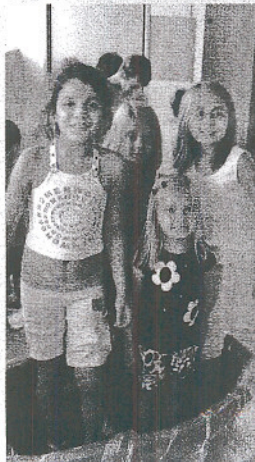
Wine Making in Northern Israel

The Children of Ve-Ahavta Congregation in Zichron Yaakov recently welcomed the Sabbath with homemade "wine." The congregation purchased 32 kg. of grapes, and the children did the stomping! The community recited kiddush for Kabbalat Shabbat over the grape juice and drank it from their own homemade kiddush cups.

The Ve-Ahavta Congregation has both native-born Israelis and many new *olim*. Ve-Ahavta was founded in 2003 by eight families, and has since blossomed into a congregation of 50 dues-paying families and at least 100 additional active non-member families.



Children stomp grapes



475 Riverside Drive Suite 832 New York, NY 10115-0122
t: 212.870.2216 f: 212.870.2218 www.masorti.org

A Meaningful Bat Mitzvah



Abigail Smul of New York increased the joy surrounding her Bat Mitzvah this September by inviting her family and friends to direct gifts to the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for the Special Needs Child. Abigail's mom, Karen, explained that her daughter chose this program because it enables Israeli children with special needs to experience their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Along with the invitation to her Bat Mitzvah, Abigail enclosed information explaining the significance of the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program. We encourage other families to increase the meaning of their own Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrations by following Abigail's example and including information about this program in their B'nai Mitzvah invitations.

To obtain more information about how to support the Masorti Bar/Bat Mitzvah Program for the Special Needs Child, please contact our office at 1 (212) 870-2216 or e-mail us at info@masorti.org. You can also write to us at: Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832, New York, NY 10115-0122