

# Village News

January 2010

הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל  
Jewish Agency for Israel

80



United Jewish Federation  
of San Diego County



Sha'ar Hanegev  
Regional Council



## Connecting to the Future

Ibim was happy to host the San Diego Birthright program. These enthusiastic young adults and future leaders listened to an overview of the various programs at Ibim, saw a Kassam rocket up close, and heard about the security situation in our region. They also paid their respects at the Marla Bennet (z"l) Memorial corner. There is no doubt that visits of this kind reinforce the special relationship between San Diego and Ibim for now and for the future.

Dear Friends,

January marks the start of the Gregorian calendar as well as the unique new year for the trees celebrated in Tu Bishvat. Our new immigrant families from the FSU together with the more veteran Ethiopian students honored the trees and our environment by planting a grove of Galilee pines on the grounds of Ibim. The grove is called "Nitzanim" for the name of our immigrant family program. Next to each tree is the name of the family or student who planted it so next year and in the coming years, each participant can monitor the progress of his or her investment in the Land of Israel.

Thirty-nine Ofek 7 students began their studies at Sapir College. They can look forward to two and a half years of intensive studying at the summation of which they will be prepared for university studies. We can look forward to watching their growth in knowledge and confidence.

We are waiting eagerly for the visit of Steven Morris, the new Federation Director, so we can show him up close the work we are doing.

All the best

Soni Zinger  
Director,

Ibim-San Diego Student Village

## Seventh Season of Success

Ibim is proud to announce that the seventh season of the Ofek program is underway. Ofek, a follow-up to the Kedma program, enables young Ethiopians to continue studying at the Sapir College in a two and a half year program at the end of which they receive a full Israeli matriculation. With these credentials in hand, they, like other Israelis of their age, can continue on to higher education and from there the sky's the limit.



## Bucking the Trend

Israel is the only country in the world which entered the 21st century with more trees than it had entered the century before. This glorious achievement of the Jewish people and the State of Israel is continued and honored by Ibim residents. Students in the Ofek 7 program celebrated Tu B'Shvat with a tree planting in Park Canada. Their more veteran colleagues in Ofek 5 and 6 were taking their matriculation tests and we wish them the best of luck. Ibim families and ulpan students planted a grove on the grounds of Ibim.

For more information about the San Diego-Ibim Student Village, contact Soni Singer, Director: [SoniS@jafi.org](mailto:SoniS@jafi.org) or visit the JAFI Aliyah and Absorption website: [jewishagency.org/aliyah](http://jewishagency.org/aliyah)

## Taking Security Seriously

Although we have enjoyed relative quiet over the past year, we recognize the need to be prepared at any time. To this end, we participated in an emergency exercise conducted by the Shaar HaNegev Regional Council with the Homefront Command and security forces. The exercise was successful and various scenarios were covered. We all hope that this will remain theoretical, but are satisfied that the comprehensive exercise ran smoothly.

**Ibim Staff - on alert:**  
**left to right: Soni Singer, Director of Ibim; Dalia Yeshurun, Administrative Assistant; (standing) Valeria Tzalman, Social Worker; Zion Ben Hanan, Grounds and Maintenance**



The Jewish Agency is funded by The Jewish Federations of North America, Keren Hayesod, major Jewish communities and federations, the International Fellowship of Christians and Jews, foundations and donors from Israel and around the world.