



## NEWS FROM JERUSALEM HILLS

MAY 27, 2018

### Purim Festivities

Purim is the happiest time of the year at both the Children's Home and the Kemper Group Home. At the Children's Home the Keshet group (our youngest children) kicked off the Purim celebrations, days in advance, by parading around the school and offices, dressed in costumes, singing Purim songs and spreading the joy of the holiday that was soon to come. In the days that followed, everyone was busy preparing for the Purim festivities; making costumes per each child's request, preparing the decorations for each cottage, the prizes, etc. Finally, the day for celebration arrived. The festivities began with the traditional Purim parade, followed by performances by the different groups. Next on the agenda, the children visited the different unit cottages for games, competitions and activities. The cottages and the staff transformed themselves into different fantastic worlds according to each unit's choice. The Sahar group turned their cottage into a Mexican restaurant where they prepared and served dinner to all the other children in the Home.

The festivities continued on Tuesday when everyone ate breakfast together in the big dining hall. The junior unit set up a carnival for the other children with games and competitions and then everyone ate a festive lunch together. The Purim festivities ended with a Disco party for the older children in the dining hall.

Celebrations at the Kemper Group Home were no less exciting. The Home was turned into the magical world of Harry Potter and was decorated accordingly. Even the staff dressed up as characters from the series. Keeping up with tradition, the boys planned and created their own costumes. The festivities included a Harry Potter themed party, a costume competition and giving out Mishloach Manot to the neighbors.





## Beit Kemper student wins the President's Award for Excellence at a ceremony at the President's Residence

There was great excitement at the Kemper Group Home after A. received an award for academic excellence from the ministry of education at the President of Israel's Residence. A. is one of 70 students selected from 24,000 students nationwide to receive the President's Award along with 70 teachers in honor of 70 years to the State of Israel. This award expressed the ministry's appreciation for the work of teachers and students who excel in achievements and their contribution to society and the community. Congratulations to A. on his outstanding achievements.



## Eitan Bar Mitzvah

Last month one of the boys in the Eitan group (4th year) celebrated his Bar Mitzvah.

As his Bar Mitzvah project, N took on a volunteering commitment. Once a week during school recess N would go to the Keshet group (our youngest children) and would play games, organize sport activities, or help prepare food with the kids in the group. N took this responsibility very seriously and would prepare something new each week and he prepared all the activities on his own without the help of his immediate staff. A special connection formed between N and the Keshet children during this time.

In preparing for his Bar Mitzvah celebration party N prepared a movie along with his counselor, which he called a blog and screened it for all the guests at the Bar Mitzvah party. In the movie he told his journey since arriving at the Children's Home. N joined the Eitan group only in their second year and his integration was very difficult. It started with him breaking his leg while trying to run away. N has come a long way since his first days at the Children's Home and now is even talking of wanting to stay on here next year.

At the end of the party the other boys in the group presented N with a blanket they prepared for him. The blanket was made up of stars that the children made. They explained that they chose a star because each child is a star.



## Annual Staff trip



Once a year, during the Pesach vacation, all the employees at the Children's Home go on a staff trip. The trip is for all the counselors, teachers, cleaning and kitchen staff, psychologists, social workers and administrative staff. This is a wonderful opportunity for all the employees to take a break from the intensive work and enjoy some quality time together. One of the goals of the trip is to have the staff from different departments mix, mingle, and get to know each other better. In the past the trips included nature hikes or a tour of different cities. These past few years the activities have been based in the desert and included workshops and lunch. This year

we went to a Khan in the Judean desert. Each employee chose two workshops to attend, instructed by one of the staff members; sketching, jewelry, yoga, board games, a lecture on the surrounding area and a singing workshop. The workshops were excellent and presented in a professional manner. When everyone gathered for lunch, the singing workshop performed their song.



## The Jerusalem Marathon

This is the 3rd year running that a group of children ran in the Jerusalem Marathon. The preparations started at the beginning of the school year with weekly training to raise the fitness level. Each child was paired with a staffer and they ran together each week. A few weeks prior to the marathon each pair started running every day and gradually ran farther and farther, raising the difficulty level and their stamina. Besides the physical readiness, all the runners also went through an emotional process, preparing themselves to run alongside thousands of strangers, in a very crowded place, outside of the comfort zone of the Children's Home. 19 children from the Children's Home and the Kemper Group Home ran the 5 k leg of the Jerusalem Marathon alongside teachers, counselors and other dedicated employees of JHTC. This year the group was joined by Bank Jerusalem's running team. The marathon was a wonderful and empowering experience for all.

A special thanks to all the companies and individual donors who supported the marathon this year. Thanks to the donations we were able to purchase new shoes, sweatshirts and hats for all the runners.



## Vacation Group

This last Pesach vacation we had a group of 20 children that could not return home for the holiday. Each child has his and her personal story why they remain in the Children's Home while their friends go home.

As in any vacation, we invest a great deal of thought and effort in creating an embracing experience for all the "Vacation Group" children. In preparation for the long vacation, the staff purchased brand new board games and toys which were placed in a special box, specifically for the vacation group. What seems like a simple act was so meaningful to these children. Knowing that someone thought of them and took the time to buy games for them made them very happy.



The vacation was filled with excursions and wonderful activities. In the Home itself a group of teachers from the neighboring Alon School spent the morning with the children in various activities, the children had a basketball workout with a coach from Hapoel Jerusalem youth department, they had a balloons workshop and more. Excursions included going bowling, swimming, a visit to an amusement park, a day at C Hotel and a visit to the Children's Museum in Holon. These activities were possible thanks to the generous donation of the Jewish Federation of Western Connecticut.



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JHTC is committed to restoring to each at-risk boy and girl under our care their faith in themselves and their belief that the world is meant for them as well. The success of our highly personalized long term treatment program depends to a large extent on the generosity and support of our friends and supporters all over the world. Your support will make a real difference and a lasting impact

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