



Spotlights

❁ Swedish Musicians Capture Spotlight

Israel hosted the celebrated Eurovision music festival this year in Jerusalem and journalists from all over the world converged to report on the happenings. Swedish journalists from Arbetet Nyheterna came to visit the Institute during their stay in Jerusalem. Not only did they report on their musicians who won the prestigious contest, but they reported on the Institute as well. Our students were thrilled to also receive a disc of the Swedes winning song.

❁ Impressive Bar Mitzvah Ceremony

A meaningful bar mitzvah ceremony was held at the Western Wall in Jerusalem honoring Laite Eileen, a new immigrant from Ethiopia who turned thirteen this year. Not only were his family and friends honored at the gala celebration, but the entire community of the Institute took part in this festive occasion.

❁ Summertime Fun

Long summer days aren't the same without watermelon or summer camp activities. In order to enable blind Israelis and their spouses or one partner to maximise their vacation time, the JIB sponsored two week- long vacation retreats in Jerusalem at the Waterman Wise Guest House in Bayit Vegan. Over 100 people enjoyed this retreat.

In another camp experience, blind Arab children from Jerusalem and nearby villages were treated to sport days at the Institute's Sport Center, where they enjoyed sports activities and pool facilities.



Director's Corner

The Institute is continuing in developments for the youngest members of society as well as the oldest of our students. Although most blind youngsters can be mainstreamed into a normal nursery school framework with the help of a good special education teacher and mobility specialist, there is still work to be done at the Institute.

Programs are being developed in which small groups of children are brought to a rehabilitation seminar at the Institute where their needs can be intensively addressed. Lots of tactile stimulation and games on a specially adapted computer can help them in developing their concepts of self. Sport and movement are emphasized in order to help the children function better in daily life and special attention is given in these important therapeutic seminars at the Institute.

Our older students will also continue in their quest for independence at the Institute. As the special education law now permits an integrative program of study until age 21, our students from 18-21 years of age will be integrated into study or the work force and helped to live independently. At present, we are starting to refurbish a wing in the dormitory to be fitted out as small efficiency flats complete with kitchenettes to enable older students to be as independent as possible before leaving our care and going out on their own.

We wish you a happy and healthy New Year and we hope this is the year that we continue to foster more and more independence in both the young and old.

Chaim Reshelbach,
Director

Enjoying a hike in the Galilee

