

## WELCOME

Welcome to the 2nd edition of a newsletter which reports on the activities of SYL (Sderot Young Leaders).

The purpose of this newsletter is to provide the friends and supporters of SYL with greater insight into our current and future activities.

# FRIENDS OF NEWSLETTER



## SYL is volunteering in the community

One of the regular activities of SYL is volunteering in the community. On October 2nd a group of SYL members led by Raz Elkayam, including Yael Angadya, Maayan Froim, Ron Markovich, Stav Huato, Noy Belokon and Tamar Alon, set out to improve the public areas of an old people's home in Sderot. The money that they used was left over from a fund from a Salsa club in the center of Israel called Amigos who raised money to support small business in the south during the last war.

The SYL team cleaned carpets, washed floors, cleaned graffiti from walls and placed flowers in pots and mats all around the entrances to the home.

As you can see from the photos they did a great job and well deserved their pizzas at the end.

As Ron, one of the participants, said: "The best part of the project was when we met the people and they thanked us for cleaning and

beautifying the buildings and they told us that it was an amazing gift from the youth of Sderot."



## Computer Club Opening

On Sunday 26th October we opened the new SYL computer club. Thanks to the generosity of our joint sponsors Amdocs and The Oxford and St. George's Jewish Trust we have a brand new state of the art computer lab with 15 workstations, high speed internet and fast networking which will offer courses in hardware maintenance and software programming to 30 new students. Those studying hardware maintenance will as part of their activities repair second hand computers and

supply them to families in Sderot that cannot afford one. Those doing software development will study an on-line course at home and practise their skills in the lab and help maintain the SYL website [www.syl.org.il](http://www.syl.org.il) .

The hardware maintenance program and overall strategic planning of the new lab programs is led by Zachi Avatichi, the software programming course is being led by Nir Naor and Ron Peretz is responsible for the administration of the lab and the day to day management.

The opening ceremony was attended by 50 people including Amir Amar - IYA Israel Chairman, Eddie Dagan headmaster of Gotwirth school, Simon Hoffman of Oxford and St George's Jewish Trust, Miriam Sassy from the Municipality, Eddie Azran from Magbit Canada, Ayelet Yagur from Amdocs and many others. This addition to the SYL program will add a high tech component to the wide range of new skills offered to help develop the life skills of the youth of Sderot.



## Record 2014/2015 new intake

Each year we go through a recruitment process to identify new members of SYL for the coming year. The process starts by existing members visiting the local schools in Sderot and presenting the SYL program to the kids in the 8-9 grade. This year we made 10 presentations to 3 schools covering the main youth program and the new computer club. The presentations are made by the first year leader and senior leader and this year resulted in 130 young people asking to join SYL.



## SYL- catalyzing community change

The second phase of the recruitment program is to interview each of the applicants individually to ensure that there is a good match between the individuals and the organization. Main things we are looking in a new recruit are: a passion to volunteer, the capacity and desire for personal development and a willingness to lead others. New applicants were interviewed and about 50 were accepted into the program for 2014/2015, our largest ever intake. Starting this month we will have 25 new members of the computer club and 25 new members of the youth club. This will be a very challenging year for the young managers of SYL, but, if successfully executed, will launch SYL to the next level in terms of size, scope and quality of delivery.



## MEET ONE OF THE EXECUTIVE TEAM: HERB LEVINE



Herb along with Boris Halfin was a major driving force in the establishment of SYL. He worked with the original group of kids to start the club and has been a tireless promoter of SYL both within Israel and around the globe. Herb is responsible for establishing connections with overseas communities and arranging the trips that the kids take to the USA, UK, and Hungary etc. Herb still has very "hands on" contact with SYL and leads many of their activities.

Herb Levine was born in 1943 in Boston, Massachusetts. His love of Israel started when, as an undergraduate he spent a magical summer as a volunteer on Kibbutz Kfar Hanasi, a summer which changed his life. The following year, he enrolled as the only American student in Israel's Wingate Institute, played for the college's basketball team and Maccabi Haifa basketball Club.

Herb then served four years in the US army as an officer in the elite Green Berets and did a combat tour in Vietnam.

In 1975, he made Aliyah and began by teaching and coaching in the Northern border city of Kiryat Shmona, then a beleaguered and impoverished border city, which was being constantly rocketed from Lebanon.

After 2.5 years in K.S, he was called to serve in the Israeli Army, received a direct commission and served as a combat training fitness officer in the IDF training center at Wingate. He moved to the center of the country, where he met and married Ruti. Together they have four children, eight grandchildren and one more on the way.



To become involved please contact David Aminzade, "Friends of SYL" UK Coordinator  
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