



# THE volunteer CONNECTION

## From Pamela, Our Program Coordinator

I want to thank all of our summer volunteers for their dedicated service to Sar-El, and I especially want to commend those volunteers who were serving in the south during the recent terrorist attacks on August 18. Although those volunteers had a choice to change bases, they all opted to return to their southern bases the Sunday after the attacks. They exemplify the Sar-El volunteer — we never give up. We are here to stay and to help the IDF remain strong. With the help of our volunteers, the IDF can do what it does best: defend and protect our country and people.



President Shimon Peres said, “Without volunteers, Israel would never have been established, and without volunteers, Israel cannot exist. Whoever volunteers becomes a partner in the effort to fix the world.” I say to all of you, as my cousin, a retired general, said to me when I was a Sar-El volunteer, “Now you are a partner with us.”

Summer is always busy, but we need more volunteers during the winter. Since Ray Teyken has taken over management of Beit Oded, it is a great place to stay and we welcome you to try it.

Pamela Lazarus, Sar-El Program Coordinator

## The Situation Room — Israel Is Under Siege and The Middle East Beat Goes On

Reports coming from Israel’s neighborhood have been laced with threats. Here is merely one short slice of time:

- **Sept. 9:** A violent mob attacked the Israel Embassy in Cairo, forcing evacuation. Egypt has been at peace with Israel for 45 years.
- **Sept. 8:** Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan threatened to use warships to escort the next flotilla attempting to break the blockade of Gaza. Turkey, a member of NATO, has been an ally since 1949.
- **Sept. 4:** The Palestinians reject another U.S. appeal to resume peace talks with Israel and abandon their bid at the U.N. to recognize a Palestinian state within the pre-1967 borders and with Jerusalem as its capital.
- **Sept. 3:** The U.N.’s nuclear agency said it is “increasingly concerned” that Iran has conducted experimental work to develop nuclear weapons.
- **August:** More than 200 rockets and mortars were fired into Israel from Gaza, and eight Israelis were killed in a terrorist attack launched from Egypt’s Sinai Peninsula.

Like many pro-Israel Americans watching these dangers unfold, you may have heightened concern for Israel’s survival. Be prepared for new powder-keg issues to arise in the weeks and months ahead.

It is important to remember that there is something you personally can do to help keep Israel safe, and this is where VFI comes in. We can always donate money to some good cause, but maybe it’s time to step up and volunteer your time and physical presence.

You can also help ensure that our leaders in Washington speak out clearly for Israel. The highest order strategic answer to the threats facing Israel is for America to express its unwavering, unshakable commitment to Israel through diplomatic support, congressional support, security assistance for FY 2012, and relentlessly restating the message that America stands with Israel.

Steve Plotkin



# VFI National President's Message

## Vade's View, November 2011

Happy Holidays to all volunteers and families. May 2012 be a good year for you and a good year for Israel. Thanks to all of you who have volunteered during 2011 and those planning to go in 2012.

I want to thank those of you who have made a contribution to VFI's Annual Appeal. As you know, we are an all-volunteer organization that relies solely on volunteer fees and donations to send volunteers to Israel, as well as providing this outstanding newsletter. We need your help to keep all this going so please make a donation at our web site at [www.vfi-usa.org](http://www.vfi-usa.org), or contact me at my e-mail address below.

I am sure you, like me, wake each morning to learn the news coming forth from the Middle East and specifically from Israel. The recent news from a number of sources is getting more intense. Who knows what will unfold this month or next? Will Israel bomb Iran's nuclear facilities? However, one comfort is that I know Israel is strong and militarily ready whatever the future holds, thanks to a number of strategic reasons of which you are one. You provide the dedication and hard work and

make the personal sacrifice and travel to Israel to work and support the IDF.

I will repeat myself. I thank all of you for making this commitment in 2011 or before. And, to those who have not participated recently, now is the time to plan your next venture; 2012 is your time. We need you, and VFI representatives across the country stand ready to assist you to get to Israel during the coming year.

Please check the VFI web site and the "Contact Us" link where you can locate your regional representative. You can also contact us directly by calling 866.514.1948, or contact me directly at [vadebolton@comcast.net](mailto:vadebolton@comcast.net).

Our work is never-ending. Now more than ever we need volunteers in 2012.

Vade Bolton, National President, Volunteers for Israel  
[vadebolton@comcast.net](mailto:vadebolton@comcast.net)

***"What we think or what we know or what we believe, is, in the end, of little consequence. The only thing of consequence is what we do."***

—JOHN RUSKIN

## **WHAT WILL YOU DO IF:**

- You have to bunk or work with someone you really don't like?
- Someone has to sleep on the top bunk?
- You have a work assignment you don't like?
- It is very hot and there is no air conditioning?
  - The clincher: You must bring three copies of your paperwork?

**WELL, MOST VOLUNTEERS SAY "BRING IT ON!"**

## VFI Officers and Board Members for 2011-13

### Officers:

- Vade Bolton, National President, VA  
703.405.3164, [vadebolton@comcast.net](mailto:vadebolton@comcast.net)
- Larry Feldman, Vice President, MD  
410.486.6876, [lf730@aol.com](mailto:lf730@aol.com)
- Jonathan Bruce, Treasurer, MA  
508.395.0111, [jbruce@armidainc.com](mailto:jbruce@armidainc.com)
- Dina Fisher, National Coordinator, CT  
860.521.3246, [dfisher@rc.com](mailto:dfisher@rc.com)
- Jay Bernstein, Recording Secretary, NJ  
201.447.2166, [caribou@optonline.net](mailto:caribou@optonline.net)

### Board Members:

- |                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| Renee Bassell, CA  | Gail Mirrow, OH    |
| Carole Couzens, NJ | Steve Plotkin, DE  |
| Steve Kapnik, CO   | Marian Sacks, MD   |
| Ed Kohl, MI        | Barry Stein, PA    |
| Anna Krasko, MA    | Carol Stein, PA    |
| Karl Kwiat, CA     | Eric Steinberg, NY |
| Steve Litwok, NJ   | Mark Werner, NC    |
| Alan Mintz, GA     |                    |

# Letter From a Very Happy Volunteer.

Dear Mr. Bolton,

I would like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to join this volunteer program; it truly changed my life. This program has opened my eyes to a world where men and women of all ages come together with a single purpose: to volunteer and work for the State of Israel and its IDF.

I feel privileged to have volunteered at my young age of 16. My volunteering for 3 weeks quickly escalated to 7 weeks. Every time I finished a 3-week program, I simply could not part from it. It had become a part of my life, a part of which made me smile every morning as I got ready for flag-raising.

For anyone considering this program, do not hesitate one bit as the program is rewarding in many ways. You make friends

that will last you a life-time, you work alongside Israeli soldiers, and most importantly, the work you contribute to the IDF is valued more than one can imagine.

This program has affected me positively and helped spark the Israeli inside me. After my immersion, I am considering returning back to my home and serving in the IDF in the hopes of one day being a madricha for the most amazing, satisfying, and rewarding program I could of have ever joined: the VFI/Sar-El program.

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Ariela Nijamkin, June 2011  
[arielanjamkin@gmail.com](mailto:arielanjamkin@gmail.com)

## THE VFI PROGRAM

*Freedom, discovery, encounters,  
Escape, mystery, exploration, service.  
Have it all in one place: Israel.*

*Volunteers for Israel –  
specialists in life-changing,  
tax deductible, events.*

## MY WAY TO THANK ISRAEL'S SOLDIERS

My goal was participation in a contributory program for Israel. I never considered what that might return to me, other than meeting new people and keeping me off the beach in Tel Aviv.

Having previously completed the Birthright and befriended some soldiers, I chose the VFI program for 2 weeks and observed the day-to-day life of my Israeli peers. This would be the perfect way to express my appreciation for their efforts in protecting the homeland.

In June, I met 12 other Sar-Elniks from France, Australia, etc., and bused to our new home in the North. As we neared the base, I was excited to be issued my uniform that so many of my family members had worn. I didn't think about the standard issue rickety bunk beds and thin mattresses; I was thrilled to be getting an authentic IDF experience.

The next morning, we began our daily work in nearby outposts, fixing camouflage netting or working in the kitchen. But, as I soon realized, it wasn't just the work we were doing that made this program important.

In the evenings we mingled with the soldiers, and our group leaders, or madrichot. I have relatives serving in the IDF; however, this experience was unique. The soldiers were in uniform, half uniform, or just toting their weapons on their backs, so it was impossible to forget that our new joyful friends are also responsible for the safety of this amazing country. I was driven to tell them how incredible a job they do, even if it doesn't seem that way to them.

On my final day, standing in line at the flag-raising ceremony, my uniform just thrown on, I felt an enormous sense of unity. Watching the blue-and-white flag rise in the morning sun, I felt humbled by the dedication of the soldiers, now friends, and I realized that there was no better way I could have spent my time in Israel.



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Michelle Bitran, August 2011,

Michelle is a senior journalism student at Ryerson University and plans to pursue a Master's degree in Israel.

## Donations Received by VFI (to November 17, 2011)

### Donor

Michael Coplan  
 Renee Feinswog  
 Kenneth Frishberg  
 Moshe Finsburg  
 Ann Green  
 Kenneth Kabb  
 Ed Kohl  
 Irene Lillebo  
 Sheila Mangel  
 David Maryles  
 Barbara E. Moore  
 Ben Morrow  
 Michael Pecullan  
 Milton Pincus  
 Glauco Romeo  
 Arthur Simon  
 Regina & William Stinger  
 Marie Wagner

### In Honor of

Mr. & Mrs. David Coplan  
 Eugene Gottlieb's Recovery  
 "Class" of August 1984 & 1987  
 Vade Bolton & Pam Lazarus  
 Steve Plotkin  
 Helen Croce 95th BD  
 Linda Stulberg  
 5 years as a volunteer  
 Jaquelin Mangel  
 Bernard & Lean Weinberger  
 My Foster Mom Irene Puckett/Lillebo  
 Pam Lazarus  
 Melissa Pecullan  
 Janet Bertman  
 Richard Bernstein  
 Dedicated VFI Work  
 Steve Plotkin  
 Clayton and Keiala Cowan

### Donor

Irene Boscoe  
 Gladly Ellinport  
 Frank Alison  
 Susie Friendland  
 Richard Gaines  
 Jeffery Gurock  
 Paula & Gary Hochman  
 Betty Jacques  
 Jerry & Linda Koenig  
 Donna Stein Korn  
 Debbie Kull  
 Spencer Low  
 Cary Mack  
 Adrienne Mannis  
 Michelle Matti  
 Ronald Maus  
 Rose Lisa & Douglas  
 Joyce Schneiderman  
 Margery Schwartz  
 Andy Uhr  
 Andy Uhr  
 Marilyn Weiss

### In Memory of

Norman George Tyre  
 Len Ellinport  
 Norman Tyre  
 Norman Tyre  
 Ali Ganezer  
 Norman Tyre  
 Rosaline Millman  
 Jackie Roush  
 Bryan Kraus  
 Norman Tyre  
 Her mother  
 Norman Tyre  
 Gabriel Frank  
 Newsletter appeal—Kay Vlasak  
 Norman Tyre  
 Norman Tyre  
 Sylvia Zipkin  
 Stanley Schneiderman  
 Arthur Schwartz  
 Annette Schwartz  
 Ben Sassoon  
 Norman Tyre

## Volunteer Program Schedule for End of 2011 and 2012

Programs start only on the Sunday and/or Monday shown below. Volunteers can join for 1, 2, 3, or more weeks. Hebrew classes for beginners (the Ulpan option) are designated.

### **2011 SCHEDULE — 29th Anniversary Year**

Dec. 4-Dec. 22, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Dec. 25/26-Jan. 12, 2012, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"

### **2012 SCHEDULE — 30th Anniversary Year**

Jan. 15/16-Feb. 2, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Feb. 5/6-Feb. 23, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Feb. 26/27-March 15 (March 8-Purim), 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Feb. 26-March 1, Special 1-week program (must be at airport 8 a.m.)  
 March 18/19-April 5, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan,"  
 (4/7-13-Pesach-Beit Oded closed)  
 April 15/16-May 3, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan,"  
 Yom Hazikaron is 4/25; leave base Wed.; Yom Haatzmaut 4/26  
 May 6/7-May 24, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 May 6-10, Special 1-week program (must be at airport at 8 a.m.)  
 May 20/21-May 31, 2-week program, (Shavuot-May 27; return to base Monday, 5/28)  
 June 3/4-June 14, 2-week program  
 June 17/18-July 5, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 June 17/18-July 5, International Youth Program, Special 3-week program for volunteers ages 17-25 from around the world.  
 July 8/9-July 26, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"

July 8/9-July 26, International Youth Program, Special 3-week program for volunteers ages 17-25 from around the world.  
 July 29/30-Aug. 16, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan,"  
 July 28-Tisha B'Av  
 Aug. 19/20-Sept. 6, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Sept. 9-Sept. 13, 1-week program (must be at airport 8 a.m.)  
 (9/17,18—Rosh Hashana; 9/26—Yom Kippur; Oct. 1—Succot)  
 Oct. 14/15-Nov. 1, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Oct. 14-18, 1-week program (must be at airport at 8 a.m.)  
 Nov. 4/5-Nov. 22, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Nov 4-8, 1-week program (must be at airport at 8 a.m.)  
 Nov. 25/26-Dec. 13, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan,"  
 Chanukah-Dec. 9-16  
 Dec. 16/17-Jan. 3, 2013, 2- or 3-week program, "Ulpan"  
 Dec. 23/24-Jan. 3, 2013, 2-week program

### **Ulpan Practical Hebrew Class**

Classes are taught 2 nights a week by experienced professionals. The one-time fee of \$50 covers up to 3 weeks of classes. Sign up at the time of your volunteer registration. Minimum class size is 10.

Please visit our web site at [www.vfi-usa.org](http://www.vfi-usa.org) for frequent special programs.

# NEWSBYTE CORNER

## **Trip Alert! Central Jersey Chapter Group Volunteers in February**

The Central Jersey chapter is meeting the challenge of volunteering with an eye toward forming a regional volunteer group next year. We are targeting 2 weeks in Israel, with the first week (starting Feb. 26, 2012), as army base volunteers, and touring the second week. Already, volunteers from 40 to 80 years old are filling out applications. Some are VFI returnees, but most are first-timers. One planned highlight is to meet with a 20-year-old "lone soldier" – Steve Litwok's daughter, who is beginning her 2 year national service.

If the 1-week volunteering followed by a 1-week tour interests you, please contact us so we can count on you. Contact Steve Litwok at 732.861.0734 or [slitwok@netw1.com](mailto:slitwok@netw1.com)



## **Sale Price on VFI Travel Journal**

The VFI Travel Journal is a 40-page spiral bound information book for travelers to Israel. It makes a great gift and is now sale priced at only \$10.00 per copy. Call 866.514.1948 to order.

## **VFI Social Networking Report**

Visit the VFI homepage: [www.vfi-usa.org](http://www.vfi-usa.org)

Become a Fan on Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/VolunteersforIsrael](http://www.facebook.com/VolunteersforIsrael)

Follow VFI on Twitter: [www.twitter.com/vfi\\_usa](http://www.twitter.com/vfi_usa)

See our Youtube Channel:

[www.youtube.com/volunteersforisrael](http://www.youtube.com/volunteersforisrael)



VFI's web site at [www.vfi-usa.org](http://www.vfi-usa.org) receives just over 100 visitors every day. The average visitor stays for over 4 minutes and visits 4.4 pages. The most popular web pages are the Programs followed by the FAQs and the Schedule.

VFI's Facebook page has about 900 active users. VFI's YouTube channel has shown over 15,000 views.

## **The Masada Protocol**

Volunteer Lee Broad, a business consultant from NY, has written a book placed in 2014 titled "*The Masada Protocol*." It deals with a nuclear armed and economically powerful Iran that has annexed Iraq while the Arab states have fallen to extremists led by the Muslim Brotherhood. This riveting adventure has a female Mossad agent and American agent teaming up to deal with an incendiary Middle East. The book is available at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com).

## **Special Doctors Volunteer Program**

This new program is for doctors in the specialties of orthopedics, dermatology (skin) or neurology. This program lasts 1 month, with 1 week of training and 3 weeks of actual work. The volunteer doctors will assist the doctors on the bases; the volunteers will not serve as the primary. Volunteers must apply for this program at least 2 months in advance. Please contact Vade Bolton at [vadebolton@comcast.net](mailto:vadebolton@comcast.net)

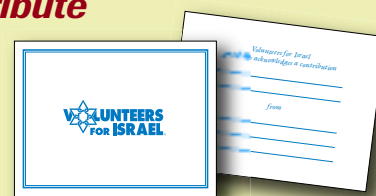
## **Shop on Amazon and Support VFI**



We all shop Amazon.com. Now there are two ways you can help support VFI at the same time at no additional cost to you. The VFI Amazon Store carries an enticing assortment of travel, Israeli, and other Jewish products. Check it out at [www astore.amazon.com/vfiusaorg](http://www astore.amazon.com/vfiusaorg)

For regular Amazon shopping, when you shop through VFI, we receive a small percentage of your final purchase price. This does not affect the price of your purchase. Check it out at [www.amazon.com/?tag=vfiusaorg](http://www.amazon.com/?tag=vfiusaorg).

## **Purchase VFI Tribute Cards for All Occasions**



Our attractive Tribute Cards are a thoughtful way to pay tribute in memory of a loved one, send congratulations, send as note cards, and they are a terrific fundraiser at Jewish events and fairs.

The cards cost less than most greeting cards, while they also support your organization – a win/win for everyone.

Please tell your friends so they can order some, too. VFI cards are 4½" by 5½". You can order them in sets of 5 (the minimum order) for \$12.50 each set, including postage.

To order, mail a check for \$12.50 per set, payable to Volunteers for Israel, to VFI New York, 330 West 42nd St., Suite 1618, New York, NY 10036, Attention: Jessica Bernstein.

## **Tell a Friend About VFI**

A recent survey reminds us that 42 percent of potential volunteers hear about the VFI program from a friend. Are you sharing with your friends? You can point them to the VFI web site, our Facebook, Youtube, etc. or share this newsletter.

# VFI HAPPENINGS AROUND THE COUNTRY

**Atlanta/South Region (8 States)** — Trip Alert! Following 2010 & 11's exceptional group of volunteers, another South Region adventure is planned, starting Feb. 26, 2012. We will be requesting a physically demanding, strenuous assignment this time around. Interested in learning more? Visit [www.vfi-usa.org](http://www.vfi-usa.org) and then call Tim at 770.887.1336, Steve at 678.566.0674, Leon at 770.328.4573, or Alan at [agmintz@mindspring.com](mailto:agmintz@mindspring.com).



**Boston Region** — VFI participated in the Israel Summer Programs Fair for teens and their families at Hebrew College in Newton. For information on local activities, contact Howard Passman at 617.571.7373 or [hupassmanvfi@ix.netcom.com](mailto:hupassmanvfi@ix.netcom.com).

**Central Jersey Region** — An alumni meeting was held at Congregation Sons of Israel in Manalapan on November 14. We are assembling a volunteer group for a 2-week tour, 1-week volunteering on an army base, and 1-week touring. Scheduled for Feb. 26 to Mar. 11, 2012, a number of people have expressed interest. If the 1-week volunteering followed by a 1-week tour interests you, please contact me, Steve Litwok at 732.861.0734, [slitwok@netw1.com](mailto:slitwok@netw1.com).

**Chicago Midwest Region** — We have experienced a steady flow of Volunteers to Israel! If you have ideas to promote VFI, contact Charlotte at 888.246.3037 or [chicago@vfi-usa.org](mailto:chicago@vfi-usa.org).

**Dallas Region** — Contact Valerie Carlone at [valcarlone@gmail.com](mailto:valcarlone@gmail.com).

**Great Lakes Region (IN, MI, OH, WI)** — Contact Ed Kohl at 248.420.3729 or [michigan@vfi-usa.org](mailto:michigan@vfi-usa.org).

**Las Vegas Region** — Contact Fran & Jerry Gardberg at 702.914.6863.

**Los Angeles Region** — VFI participated in the Israel Expo at the Samuel Jewish Campus in Irvine. We are seeking past volunteers in the LA area to promote VFI and request they take a local role. We would like to hear of planned events so we can alert others to participate for VFI. This is a great and very rewarding way to get the word out about VFI! Contact Karl Kwiat, LA Coordinator at 805.204.6418 or [kkwiat1@netzero.net](mailto:kkwiat1@netzero.net) or Renee Bassell at [rgbassell@vfi-usa.org](mailto:rgbassell@vfi-usa.org).



**Metro New York** — A "Meet & Greet" for past and potential volunteers was held on Oct. 26 at the newly redecorated National VFI office. The social program offered good food and chit chat. Vade Bolton, Jaclyn Mishal, Jessica & Richard Bernstein and Eric Steinberg updated the group including "A Day in the Life of a Volunteer." A special Yashar Koach goes to Jessica and Richard for all of the hard work expended in redecorating our NYC office. VFI participated in the Celebrate Israel Parade 2011 in June. Please contact us at 212.643.4848 or [rbernstein@vfi-usa.org](mailto:rbernstein@vfi-usa.org).

**Mid-Atlantic Region** — We are seeking local organizers willing to organize meetings in their communities.

Contact Marian Sacks at [mbsacks31@hotmail.com](mailto:mbsacks31@hotmail.com) or Vade Bolton at [vadebolton@comcast.net](mailto:vadebolton@comcast.net).

**New York State & Long Island Region** — An alumni meeting is scheduled. Contact Eric Steinberg, LI Regional Coordinator, at 631.816.3530 or [ESteinb173@aol.com](mailto:ESteinb173@aol.com).

**Upper Mid-West Region** — Minnesota, SD, ND is handled by Jodi Upin at 612.432.9630 or [jupin@comcast.net](mailto:jupin@comcast.net).

**Pacific Northwest Region** — OR, WA, ID, MT, AK, HI is handled by the San Francisco Region. Contact Kay Warren at 510.339.0183 or [vfi5000@hotmail.com](mailto:vfi5000@hotmail.com).

**Philadelphia Region** — At our Sept. 14 meeting, Andrea Gottlieb, Executive Director of Jerusalem Online University, discussed a DVD program to counter rampant campus bias regarding Israel. Sally Mitlas, a renowned musician and movie maker is featured at our Nov. 30 meeting. Our next scheduled meeting is March 15. Meetings are held at the Klein Branch JCC, Red Lion Rd. and Jamison Ave., Phila., starting promptly at 7:00 p.m. Contact Bev Cohen or Carol Stein at 610.584.0468 or [bevcohen@comcast.net](mailto:bevcohen@comcast.net).

**San Francisco Region** — We are starting a "Mini-Reunion Campaign." If you can host or find a venue for a small reunion in your area, we will provide you with ideas, posters, and brochures, and will e-mail an invitation to your event to all of the returned volunteers in your area. Contact Kay Warren at 510.339.0183 or e-mail [vfi5000@hotmail.com](mailto:vfi5000@hotmail.com).

**Ruth Rennie Christian Group** — Under Suzy Douma's leadership and in conjunction with VFI, they focus on Christian interests in addition to organizing volunteer programs. Contact Suzy Douma at 909.558.8179 or [SDouma@llu.edu](mailto:SDouma@llu.edu).

## Do you know the VFI work program includes:

**FREE room and board, plus**

**FREE three kosher meals every day, plus**

**FREE military work uniforms, plus**

**FREE lectures, possibly guided trips, plus**

**FREE travel to bases, plus**

**FREE the adventure of a lifetime, plus**

**Earned Immense  
Personal Satisfaction.**

## We Volunteered on an IDF Base for My Birthday

Last year for Joyce's birthday we took a Federation tour of Israel. We both had a fantastic time and really made a connection with the homeland. This year for my birthday I wanted to go back but do something different — involving volunteering.

Somewhere along the line, the VFI/Sar-El program resonated with us. My wonderful wife Joyce said, "Sure, that sounds like a real adventure." VFI does a thorough job making sure that applicants are suited for the program and have a clear sense of what they are getting themselves into. Volunteers pay their cost to get to Israel, but room, board, and clothing are supplied by the Army while volunteers are on the base. Our program lasted 1 week, however many volunteers sign up for longer sessions.

Our group of 25 volunteers was assigned to two madrichot, Amit and Jessica, who were fantastic and a HUGE part of our positive experience. They were happy, engaging, and interesting, and got us on our buses on time. We arrived at our base in the southern desert and were issued our army-green fatigues uniforms. I swapped my large pants with a bunkmate whose was too small. Luckily, our barracks had a bathroom attached.

We ate in the mess hall where you get three kosher meals a day. Breakfast and dinner are dairy meals and lunch is a meat meal with lots of dishes consisting of vegetables, including breakfast. While I'm not a coffee drinker it appears that the Israeli army runs on coffee.

Our day started at 7 a.m. with breakfast followed by flag raising and singing Hatikva alongside the regular soldiers. From here we split up into work details. There were a variety of jobs and each day we had a chance to select a different job.

One day I worked in the kitchen where the soldiers excelled at keeping us busy and, overall, it was a lot of fun. Another day I worked in Hannan's "shop." Hannan is one of those guys that can make anything from anything. Out in a desert base you are far from the nearest Home Depot, and recycling takes on a very large meaning. I spent one day swinging a sledge hammer to take apart wooden beams to salvage the boards for reuse, and using a claw hammer to pull out all the nails. Meanwhile, our other guys were quickly redeploying my boards to be sides of new storage bins.

Our volunteers came from across the U.S., Canada, and Europe, and were great to be with. We will maintain future connections. Each evening Amit and Jessica had an activity for the volunteers, which helped us to get to know each other, taught us a few Hebrew words and gave us a better understanding of Israel's place in the world.

If you think the Sar-El program would be good for you, I urge you to apply. We had a great time on this trip, and both Joyce and I would like to return and do it again.

Allen Miller, November 2011

## Editor's Corner — A Brief History Lesson from 1948

***Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.***

— George Santayana, *Reason in Common Sense*, page 284, 1905

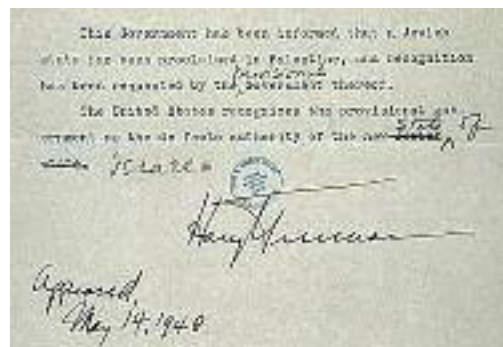
It was the spring of 1948. The State of Israel was not yet born. In spite of Jewish support for the British against the Palestinian Arabs who actively supported the Nazis during WWII, the British did not support partition of Palestine or recognition of Israel and acted to cruelly restrict Jewish immigration.

At the very end of 1947 a civil war broke out in Palestine. On May 15, 1948, the British occupiers were scheduled to withdraw, their mandate having expired. However at midnight on May 14, in Jerusalem, the Provisional Government proclaimed independence and Israel was born. Eleven minutes later the U.S. recognized the State of Israel. On May 15, four neighboring armies invaded and fought for a year until a cease-fire was in place.

U.S. recognition of the new State of Israel was definitely an unpopular move. General George Marshall and his U.S. State Department, the U.S. War Department, much of President Truman's cabinet, the oil companies, and of course all the Arab countries, were loudly hostile to the idea. General Marshall offered particularly defiant rhetoric.

Acting on consistent and deeply held personal beliefs, President Truman ignored advice from trusted friends, moved against the entire American foreign policy establishment, and immediately recognized Israel. He released this proclamation to the press, which raised a row because he hadn't bothered to inform his own diplomats.

Thus, President Truman acted independently against a politically unpopular idea and recognized the State of Israel. I often wonder what an alternative history would look like today if President Truman was not the righteous Gentile and great man he was in his time?



Steve Plotkin, Editor

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steveplotkin@erols.com,

# DEED FOUND

Whereas, Israel has been granted her lands under and through the oldest recorded deed as reported in the Old Testament, a tome of scripture held sacred and revered by Jew and Christian, alike, as the acts and words of God; and Whereas, as the Grantor of said lands, God stated to the Jewish people in the Old Testament; in Leviticus, Chapter 20, Verse 24: "Ye shall inherit their land, and I will give it unto you to

possess it, a land that floweth with milk and honey"; and "Whereas, God has never rescinded his grant of said lands; and...

Israel is a 63-year-old state, and yet a 2,000-year-old country... It is pocket-sized, but it takes more than a lifetime to see it all... And the morning paper can turn into history by the afternoon.

## The Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Project

The Dead Sea Scrolls Digital Project provides access to high-resolution images of the scrolls and surrounding data. A collaboration of the Israel Antiquities Authority and the Google R&D center in Israel, five scrolls have been digitized: the Great Isaiah Scroll, the Community Rule Scroll, the Commentary on Habakkuk Scroll, the Temple Scroll, and the War Scroll.

See — <http://dss.collections.imj.org.il/>

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