



Update . . .

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Firefighters respond to a ketusha attack on Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona.

Supporting Lonely Soldiers Together

by Linda Stern

The Love for Israel Relief Fund and Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona connected in the wake of the Lebanese War last year. Among the soldiers who received your care packages were students from our yeshiva. These were soldiers without family in Israel and ones who lived below the poverty level.

All Israeli boys must serve in the IDF when they turn 18. Imagine your son serving in mandatory army service. Wouldn't you be excited each time he comes home for the holidays? Now imagine he must live alone in another country while serving in the army. We call these "lonely soldiers" in Israel.

A small number of lonely soldiers are enrolled at our yeshiva. It is especially significant for them to receive packages at Passover time because this festival is very family oriented. Whereas all the other boys go home and are engulfed in the warmth of their parents and siblings, our lonely soldiers feel the absence of family very badly at this time. That extra bit of attention they get from receiving something personal from someone who cares, does much to improve their sense of well-being.

We should be especially proud of these boys like our own sons. Out of pure idealism, they decided to come to Israel, to leave their loved ones, and to serve the Jewish nation in the most positive way.

They are indeed the epitome of “Love for Israel”.

Kiryat Shemona suffered severely during the recent Lebanese War. When the war began, we had the choice of leaving town like many of the residents, or staying to help those who remained. The same student-soldiers you helped also know that in emergency situations they stay put and assist their community. Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona became a veritable anchor in a bombarded sea of frightened, abandoned citizens.

We worked as a team to coordinate, store, and deliver tons of food, toys, and all kinds of aid to hundreds of residents. We went from one bomb shelter to the next as the sirens blared and ketushas exploded all around us. In such times, though, helping our neighbors is more important than helping ourselves.

Without humanitarian help, the local municipality would have found it almost impossible to supply Kiryat Shemona’s massive emergency needs. So many friends like the Love for Israel Relief Fund came to support our community. You became our neighbors as we helped our besieged community.

Starting this Passover, the Love for Israel Relief Fund and Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona

would like work as partners to help lonely soldiers and soldiers living below the poverty level in our yeshiva. Through the Love for Israel Relief Fund you can sponsor a soldier at our yeshiva. Thank you so very much for your generous support.

Linda Stern is the Overseas Administrator and Liaison Officer at Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona. 300 young soldiers study the scriptures at Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona during their mandatory army service. Most student-soldiers serve on the front lines of the Israel Defense Forces. Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona hosted the Giladi unit after 12 of their soldiers died in battle this past summer.

In addition to studying scriptures, students at Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona volunteer regularly with new immigrants and children with learning disabilities; help the disabled, as well as work with “Kav LaChaim” (Lifeline) - a program for children with chronic and life-threatening illnesses. For 30 years Yeshivat Kiryat Shemona has played a vital humanitarian role in the northern Galilee.

You can donate online at:

<http://www.love4israel.org/donate.html>

Send checks to:

Love for Israel Relief Fund
2020 Pennsylvania Ave., NW
Suite 445
Washington, DC 20006