

FRIENDS OF NEVE MICHAEL in the news

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We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to our dear friends and supporters for always keeping the children of Neve Michael in their hearts. and the children happy in our home.

Neve Michael's Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebration Under the Shadow of COVID-19

In these trying and uncertain Corona times, we wish to reassure our dear friends and strong supporters that our deserving Neve Michael children are still sending out a bright light of hope for a better future.

This was shown clearly in the annual Bar/Bat Mitzvah Celebration which was held recently at the Neve Michael Children's Village.

Our Bar Mitzvah boys: Menachem, Elimelech, Eliyahu, Yehuda, Daniel and Maksim, and our Bat Mitzvah girls: Daniel, Hodaya, Tehila, Talia, Chanel, Priel, Noy, Bat El, Sinai, Krina, Shirel, Michelle and Nitzan are grateful to their counselors, teachers and therapists at Neve Michael. And also to the many good people behind the scenes who have taken their well-being to heart.



While it was uncertain what we would be able to do to celebrate this year, one thing was for sure, our annual celebration of 400 people at Neve Michael was not going to happen.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration is the highlight of every boy and girl who crosses our threshold. Each year a special event is held, reinforcing to Neve Michael's children how very important and special

they are. It is a night where they are in the spotlight, receiving all the attention.

Although the Corona Virus made this year's celebration different, our coming of age children participated in many special events during their months of preparation. One highlight was a series of lectures on Jewish belief, spirituality and tradition, which all imbued the children

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with a strong sense of awareness of their Jewishness.

Our Bar-Mitzvah boys learned how to put on tefilin and read from the Torah; our Bat-Mitzvah girls learned how to light the Shabbat candles and recite the blessings. Our youngsters attended “What it Means to be a Bar-/Bat-Mitzvah” workshops in order to receive instruction on performing basic mitzvot and, above all, taking responsibility as young Jewish men and women.

Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, the monthly B’nei Mitzvah trips throughout Israel stopped in March. However, the children did manage to visit the Haifa University on December 4th, 2019 and participated in a game, “Looking for Your Identity through Adolescence”.



Midreshet Tiferet Beit Shemesh invited Neve Michael’s Bat Mitzvah girls to do an arts and crafts project with them.

To their utter delight, our boys and girls were given the chance to choose and buy new clothes for the big event: pants, shirts, and kipot for the boys; dresses, blouses and hair bands for the girls – and new shoes for all.

While the annual event in June was cancelled due to COVID-19 and social distancing regulations, Neve Michael’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah children celebrated on Tuesday,

June 23rd in a new and different way.

At 12:00 noon, the children were led, under a tallit and accompanied by the blowing of a shofar, in song and dance to Neve Michael’s dining room. The procession was joined by David Frydman, Neve Michael’s Director, and Yechiam Sherlo, Neve Michael’s Deputy Director, staff members and a limited number of other Neve Michael children.

The dining room was decorated beautifully and large blown up pictures of Neve Michael’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah

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(Bar Mitzvah - continued from front page)

children were placed on the tables. At the entrance of the dining room there was a table piled with presents for our children.

A delicious meal was served and the celebration continued with the screening of a movie about Neve Michael's B'nei Mitzvah, wonderful speeches, a musical performance staged by our children who participate in the Sulamot music program and culminating with the children being led with song and dance to the bus that would take them to Tiberias and Zefat.

Shlomo Gabai, a tour guide, actor and musician who is famous for his theatrical-musical trips inspired by Jewish motifs, was waiting on the bus to make sure that this day would be even more memorable and enjoyable for Neve Michael's children.

The first stop was Tiberias where the children went on a boat ride on the beautiful Sea of Galilee as the sun was setting. As they danced and sang with Shlomo, it was wonderful to see and feel their joy.

When this part of the celebration was over, our children re-boarded the bus and were taken to Zefat, which is renowned as the birthplace of the Kabbala. There they wandered down the colorful cobblestone alleys, paused to visit the historic sights and learned from Shlomo's entertaining explanations. They breathed in the atmosphere of Zefat and concluded this memorable day with dinner

in one of the city's fine restaurants.

The B'nei Mitzvah celebration is one of the biggest events in the lives of our children. A day they will always remember and cherish. It signifies their coming of age as B'nei Mitzvah and it marks a major milestone on their road to recovery.

We spent these past months assuring our children that nothing – not the traumatic circumstances of their childhood years, nor the Corona pandemic – would stand in the way of their special celebration.

Our children have been through so much in their young lives, more than enough to reach an age of awareness – of their misfortunes and disadvantages, of the hope we give them at Neve Michael, and also of their right to rejoice.

As always we thank you, our dear friends, for helping us make this day a truly special celebration for our children.

We would also like to take this opportunity to express our thanks for helping the many boys and girls who go through the long haul at Neve Michael and come out as productive young adults. This year we are proud to send five Neve Michael graduates into the world to face new challenges: pre-military training, IDF service and National Service. We, and they, are grateful for all the support you have given them over the years.

We urge you to stay safe this summer and wish you the best of health during these difficult and challenging times.

Love, Hava

