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Ketura Highlights

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Don Tocker Memorial Day Celebrating his life!

30th Yahrzeit Thursday April 20, 2006

by Mike Solowey

Sometimes, when you are waiting in the parking lot for the regional bus, you may see a stone inscribed with the words "Don Tocker Memorial Garden". Or, on your way to the library, to take out a book or use the computer stations, you pass the sign indicating that "This library was donated by the Tocker Family Fund in Memory of Don."

Do you ever ask yourself : Who was Don Tocker?

A partial answer to this question . . .

Don died in a tragic car accident on the Arava road.

He was born in Texas and had been a Young Judean and a Madrich.

Don was a founding and leading member of Garin Hashachar. Our first Mirakez Meshek (business manager) of Ketura. A young man of vision, achievements, and great personal charm.

There is some doubt if Ketura would have been established without his efforts on the social, economic and ideological planes.

There are still some copies of the memorial booklet which has letters, pictures and remembrances of Don. This booklet (available from Judy Barlev) may help us get a partial answer to the question: Who was Don Tocker?

In the Hebrew edition of Ketura weekly newsletter "Kol Eleh" excerpts from the booklet will appear until the 30th Yahrzeit observance so that as a community made up of many people who never knew Don personally we can learn from his legacy.

2006 MEMORIAL FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

Again Ketura served as host to the area's Football Competition In Memory of Pini Lutman, during the first week in March. Lemonade and popcorn added to the excitement, but---unlike 2005 results, no

Ketura team earned a trophy. The high school team, again, did reach the Friday finals. Unfortunately, their best efforts were not good enough.

A NEW HEALTH PROGRAM

With the closing of the nurse's office, Ketura's residents must look elsewhere for medical treatment. The answer was found by adding a national, but private insurance, yet immediately operative provider system to the Kupat Holim Moatza based clinic program.

The current assessment is that the new approach, when added to active, good dental care may be an improvement on the past.

A detailed review of the new system follows below.

NEW PATHWAYS TO HEALTH

Interview with Mark Lewi by Irving Kessler

Providing health services may not be as simple or effective as having a full time nurse living in Ketura. The alternatives, in place, seem to be working. This assessment by Mark Lewi, the member charged with tis responsibility, sums up the current situation.

The structure is built around the central clinic by the Moatza (municipality): a comprehensive dental service in Yotvata, and an insurance program to provide emergency consultation by telephone which could lead to transportation to a medical facility.

So far, members' needs have been met by planning and follow-up, using one afternoon weekly for dental work, preventative as well as emergency, for example. Meeting a crisis situation like a bout with cancer still means providing full support services, then fighting for Kupat Holim's necessary financing.

Obviously there are may be unexpected problems down the road. These should be minimized by the Sharap insurance program now covering every member. Its experts are showing the skills to operate the region whose nearest hospital, with limited resources, is almost one hour away. Waiting for medical test results, or being able to fill prescriptions expeditiously are problems to be worked on.

I was pleased to note that a good friend, Michelle Sampson, who has battled cancer for more than a year, received her medical care during this change-over period and is in remission.

We should also remember that Hadassah and its glorious history of providing world class medical services has always had a close relationship with the kibbutz.

THE CAMOUFLAGED ZOO

Interview with Mark Lewi by Irving Kessler



You will find it at the northeast corner of Ketura on the perimeter road. Palm fronds intertwined in a fence form the camouflage. Four tamarisk trees shade the zoo inhabitants and visitors (Ketura members of all ages). They can sit on a large rug or at the edge of a blue plastic backyard pool.

Into the pool one can place a hamster or two, gerbils, a ferret if you wish, or rabbits. However, the pool is too small for the miniature black and gray mountain goats.

Enjoy! As the children do with their teachers.

TU B'SHVAT

by Greta Kessler

Erev: In the hadar ochel the holiday decorations included tables filled with flowers and dried fruit: dates, apricots, bananas, raisins, almonds. Bill Slott was the Master of Ceremonies, which he led with a special script or Haggadah for Tu B'Shvat

The main event was prepared by the kindergarten children who marched in as "trees and fruits".

The oldest children acted out the Ten Plagues of the Environment:

1. Air pollution
2. Water pollution
3. Noise pollution
4. Land pollution
5. Global warming
6. Overuse of earth's resources
7. Too much waste, mechanical, chemical, atomic

8. Chemicals in food

9. Overbuilding

10. It didn't make a difference to me, but now it does!!!!

On Tu B'Shvat: The next day after four PM, when children could participate, planting of pomelo trees took place near the entrance gate. There was a refreshment table filled with dried fruit. A bracha was recie as the children and parents dug holes and put in their saplings. They encircled the gardens with stones.

HORSEBACK RIDING

Horseback riding takes place late Wednesday afternoons. A fire is built for making pitot (from scratch) while children wait their turns. Even the youngest child loves to ride these big animals! They are led by their parents after getting into the saddle.

More experienced children may ride on their own around the corral and up and down the raised platforms, gaining skills in controlling the horse's direction.

NINETY MINUTES WITH SETH

by Irving Kessler



I found my son, Seth, during my daily walk, outside the newly constructed Keren Kolot tourist facility. At a hurried breakfast, he had noted that three contractors were already waiting for him. Exactly a year ago, I met the local builder who would erect the new tourist rooms. This time, they were checking the dimensions of an extensive parking area. Seth adjusted site markers and observed the spreading asphalt gravel mix. It was the accidentally bent segments of a large shade frame that required agreement on repairs.

We next checked out the old turkey run where new offices for the Arava Institute are being built.

The southernmost space of the same building contain the pub and kibbutz auditorium. The walls of the Institute's headquarters are bales of hay, strengthened by steel rods and covered by a mud stucco. The builder, selected for his environmental sensitivity, was urged to complete his contract asap.

Nearby, Seth reviewed work details with electrical engineers responsible for providing power in the Algae plant's expansion.

From this roadside metal control shed, I was directed to seek my son off the northern road. Seth arrived before I did, and introduced me to Achmed who had helped provide needed welding to keep kibbutz water flowing. A final touch required the installation of an air vent. I watched as Seth wrapped caulking around the threads. I remembered when Greta and I had agreed that our son spend the last semester of high school as a volunteer at historic Mystic Seaport Museum. His first work responsibility there was as part of a small crew, recaulking the seaport's oldest wooden whaling ship.

I looked at my watch before heading back to our apartment where our friend Florence once lived. Only ninety minutes had gone by. Next year, G-d willing, we'll visit a slightly larger Ketura, home of Seth, Susie, and their beautiful family and their chaverim!

ALGAE - - PRODUCTION AND PROSPECTS

Interview with Ed Hofland by Irving Kessler

The newly increased production of Astaxanthin by Alga Technologies, doubling of its growth system, should project Ketura's latest venture into industry leadership. After moving sheds and small buildings, the asphalt flooring was poured in early 2006. A roller



skating party inaugurated the site and full installation should be ready in the spring.

Ketura, a junior partner with the Jewish Colonial Association of Great Britain (the former Baron de Hirsch Fund) provides a number of key employees, site maintenance, as well as owning 20% of the plant. According to Ed Hofland, Chair of this new venture, the potential for sales is unlimited in the vast non-prescription health field.

The product, a powerful anti-oxidant, is expected to receive regulatory approval in the United States after its recent acceptance by the European Union authorities.

Those who watched this investment's development remember that expected sales were to be aimed at the farm-

raised salmon industry to assure the pink color of this food. By year's end, with a massive increase in production and reduced unit cost, both markets could be supplied. Ed will be visiting Chile, the world center of salmon culture, this year.

Meanwhile, consider the following: "Astaxanthin (the final product) as an anti-oxidant has demonstrated numerous beneficial effects including: enhancing eye health, protecting skin from premature aging, and aiding in indigestion." Help and suggestions for penetrating the vast distribution field in North America will be considered.

First NATO Sponsored Conference in Israel Held at AIES

by Sharon Ben Haim

From February 6th through the 17th, Ketura was visited by academics from places as diverse as Moldova, Canada, Armenia, Jordan, Portugal, the Palestinian Authority, and many more. The occasion was the first ever NATO-sponsored "Advanced Study Institute" held in Israel. The conference was entitled "*Integrated Water Resources Management in the Middle East*", and lectures covered subjects ranging from water and security issues, environmental issues to gender and water management.

The purpose of the conference was to introduce participants to the water and security issues in this part of the Middle East. By the end of the conference, participants were exposed to the geopolitical and hydro-political motivations of Israel, the Palestinian Authority, and Jordan.



Danielle Saranga

Both participants and kibbutz members were delighted with the conference. Some participants noted that it was "*the best, most exciting and stimulating conference that they had ever been to*". Two cultural evenings, during which the participants presented their home countries with film, song and traditional refreshments, and a "poster session", when participants displayed their

own research and had a chance to discuss it with others, were high points for everyone. Another highlight for all was the two-day trip. The original

plan was to visit the Dead Sea, on both the Israeli and the Jordanian sides. Due to logistical and bureaucratic issues, it proved impossible to continue on the second day to Jordan. Bill Slott led a tour of Jerusalem for 50 people of 3 faiths and 15 nationalities and did a superb job combining important elements for all participants.

The conference was organized by Danielle Saranga, wife of ben meshek Yoav Marom. Danielle worked long and hard hours for many months on organization, contacts with participants, visa and travel arrangements, and the countless other matters that are involved in the coordination of such an event. Yoav and Danielle are in the middle of a stay on Ketura, following their degree studies at Ben-Gurion University in Beer Sheva.

ARDAG'S FUTURE

Interview with Ed Hofland by Irving Kessler

Since the government's ruling that Ardag must cease using Eilat's waters for the final stages of denise growth by 2008, its management has been seeking alternatives. According to Ed Hofland, Chair of their board, hopes are high that their last-stage facilities in Ashdod, which now provides 50% of the Eilat based annual output, might be permitted to double.

Today, other possibilities on the coast and Cyprus are in abeyance, but a new fisheries program is ready to take off. Ardag is a partner in a fish hatchery in Kibbutz Dan, currently raising sturgeon for caviar. When we factor in the

European Union's ban of sturgeon caught in the Caspian Sea as a source of caviar, this venture has every prospect of capturing a share of the market!

Caviar wholesalers have tasted the Dan product and ordered significant amounts. Sales of fifty kilo last December have led to confidence that we can expect an increase in 2006 at a price of 1000 Euros per kilo. If caviar taste results remain positive, the kibbutz Dan partnership and Ardag's domination of the denise sales would lead to increased income.

We intend to eat our annual fish meal at the Ardag Restaurant for years to come.

VITAL STATISTICS

(till April 1, 2006)

Born

Iris: daughter to Ily and Micha

Yonatan and **Suzanna:** son and daughter to Martine and Evan

Lilach: daughter to Michelle and David

Danielle: daughter to Natasha and Sasha

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Natan Breizblatt

Shani Kagan

Binyamin Rosenzweig

Carmel Lutman

Yuval Moosnik

Snir Siboni

Shai Ramos

Idan Erez-Slott

Roi Hill-Cohen

Rafael Lewis

On Shanat Sherut:

Yonatan Musnikow

Ariella Borkan

In College:

Asher Whitman

Levy Solowey

Ayala Pagelson

Avital Nusinow

Einat Harris

Dafna Falkof

Adam Solowey

Eran Friedman

Binyamin Rosental

Anat Whitman

Lila Pons

Ayelet Harris

Ami Finkel

Elisha Slowey

New Civilians:

Mati Solowey

Hila Rosenzweig

Noga Musnikow

In the Army:

Hagi Hofland (officer) Tal Shein

Chen Goldstein Matan Hoffman

Sagui Lutman Gil Harris

Avishag Debowy Liat Hofland

Sigal Cohen Noam Ben Yosef

Aviram Morris Zev Rosental

Amir Bellman Oded Friedman

Arianna Lehr

Studying at Kibbutz Givat Hayim Ichud

Yaniv Rosenzweig

Studying for 2nd degree

Nadav Solowey

Danielle Merom

Weddings:

Yizhar and Keren

Yuri and Tanya

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