

Wednesday August 16, 2006



Dear Parents,

This will be our final update for the summer.

Yesterday in Eilat was a real highlight of the trip. About 35 kids got up at 4:30 to climb Har Zefahot above Eilat for Netz. They climbed from the west and, as they came up over the summit, they were met not only by an incredible view, but by the sun as it rose over Jordan/Saudi Arabia. They davened and then were given an explanation of the area, in addition to the Gulf of Eilat, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Those who climbed had a really amazing experience.

After breakfast the group split into boys and girls. Girls went snorkeling at a coral reef and were able to see the incredible marine life off the coast. Boys went to the northern beach and took part in three activities: kayaks, paddle boats and banana boats. The motorboat driver pulling the banana boats tried to do figure 8's to get the group to fall off. (Don't worry- everyone wears a life jacket!).

After about 2 hours they switched and the boys went snorkeling and the girls went to the north beach.

They had free time to shop in the mall in Eilat and then ate lunch. They enjoyed an I-Max show and departed for the north. They got into Masada after 9:00 and had dinner.

Wakeup was at 4:00 AM so that they could climb Masada at sunrise. Everyone got up without a problem and made it in time. They then returned to Yerushalayim for their final hours of the trip.

Their final hours included lunch, evaluations, free time for shopping, a final view of Yerushalayim and a farewell banquet. One group is eating at a restaurant near Heichal Shlomo and the other at the banquet hall at the Ramat Rachel Hotel. Afterwards, both groups are going to the Kotel for their final farewells and then off to the airport.

The group flight number is El Al # 001 and will arrive Im Yirtzeh Hashem at JFK Airport at 5:30 AM tomorrow (Thursday morning August 17th).

On behalf of camp Morasha, I would like to thank you for entrusting your children to us for the past six weeks. During the registration process, orientation and certainly throughout the summer, I probably spoke to each of you individually about the trip, security, Israeli, politics and the war as well as logistical issues. For those of you who were concerned about the safety and quality of the trip during this Middle East crisis, I hope that at the end you will have appreciated the uniqueness of this trip. Your young men and women, having seen the actual effect of the war on their trip, the drafting to the army of their counselors, technical coordinators and group head, attending a funeral of a fallen soldier, visiting soldier graves at Har Hertzl, and doing chesed relating to the war gave them a perspective and a strong feeling for Israel that will last them a lifetime. Greeting the Nefesh B'Nefesh flight and seeing the new olim come on aliyah during this period gave them a feeling of what Am Yisrael and Medinat Yisrael are all about. This is a trip they will long remember and we hope will greatly strengthen their ties to Israel for life.

We hope that you all enjoy the remainder of the summer and thank you again for sharing the unique Morasha experience during the summer of 2006.

Let us hope that very soon we will merit the coming of the "geula" and be together as one in Yerushalayim Habenuya.

Kol Tuv,

Rabbi Ira Spodek

Executive Director