

**The Yizraelite – No 2242 Date: 30.1.26**

**Kibbutz Yizrael**



**Great sadness has descended upon our home**

**with the passing of our dear resident**

**Natalie Baum**

**The family and Beit Yizrael**

## **Kibbutz Obituary - In Memory of Natalie Baum**

Dear family, friends, and the community of Kibbutz Yizrael,

Today we bid farewell to Natalie. She was a woman with life pulsing through her—striding briskly along the kibbutz paths, greeting everyone she met with a warm, open smile, and carrying the curiosity of a child who never stopped asking questions or learning.

Natalie was born the eldest of four siblings—Ivan, Sharon, and the late Yonatan. Her childhood was not easy, and the years she spent in boarding school likely shaped the independence and determination that accompanied her throughout her life. At fourteen, still a young girl, she met the late Harris and joined his family in Johannesburg. At nineteen, they married and began their shared journey as a young couple.

In South Africa, foundations were laid: Natalie worked as a laboratory technician in a biological lab, and the family grew with the births of Shaul-Steven, Rafi-Russell, and Lian. In 1973, following the unrest of the Black uprisings in South Africa, the family made the courageous decision to immigrate to Israel.

Their journey began at Mishmar HaEmek, studying at ulpan together with the Penn family, on the eve of the Yom Kippur War. Yet the heart pulled towards Yizrael. Through their family connection with Cora and Henry, they chose to move to Yizrael—because it mattered deeply to Natalie that her children be with her at home, and Yizrael offered family sleeping arrangements.

On the kibbutz, we came to know Natalie in many roles: a devoted metaplet in the nursery and kindergarten, and an efficient secretary at the Elex factory. Even when her path and Harris's diverged in 1980—when he moved to Netanya and Natalie remained on the kibbutz with the children—she stood firm.

But Natalie's spirit extended beyond the boundaries of the kibbutz. In 1990 she took a year off from the kibbutz and moved to Givatayim, and from there embarked on another journey—back to her roots in South Africa. Over fifteen years she reinvented herself as a successful saleswoman of natural vitamins and minerals. Together with partners she founded the company “Yourlife,” lectured, led workshops, and showed everyone that she was a woman who never gave up—sharp, resourceful, determined, and ambitious.

Those who remember Natalie, remember a woman of body and spirit. An athlete at heart who competed in triathlons in Israel and South Africa, an excellent swimmer who

also taught swimming, and an English teacher who always sought to share knowledge. In 2006, when longing for family outweighed everything else, she returned home—to Yizrael.

Back on the kibbutz, we met a remarkably active woman—always ready for a sidewalk conversation, with an inviting presence and a willingness to offer wise counsel as a personal coach.

In recent years, even as words became harder to find, Natalie's light did not dim. Aviva and Biff speak of a woman who cooperated with every exercise, who loved dancing to lively music, and whose face lit up whenever Gerli, her caregiver, entered the room. Gerli cared for Natalie in her final years with exceptional sensitivity and warmth; between them grew a bond of deep love and endless giving.

Natalie was immensely proud of her children and her six grandchildren—Gabi, Marley, Zohar, Einav, Yonatan, and Maayan.

You leave behind a legacy of vitality, achievement, and an uncompromising love of life.

Rest in peace, dear Natalie. We will always remember you in motion—curious as a child, with a radiant face and a heart-warming smile.

May her memory be a blessing.

Inbal Adler on behalf of the kibbutz



### **Eulogy by Rafi**

What a journey you made through life — from the young girl sent to a girls' boarding school in South Africa, through earning a university degree and building a family. You made Aliyah because you were a Zionist and believed deeply in your path. On the kibbutz you worked in early childhood education, and mainly in the factory. In everything you did, you invested fully — there were no shortcuts.



After separating from Dad, and after we had grown up, you went back out into the world to realise your abilities. Once again, you gave it everything, and once again, you succeeded.

Life always has its ups and downs, but with you there was no such thing as “giving up”. You were a true fighter.

You returned to Yizrael after many years in the world, and I am glad that the grandchildren also got to know their grandmother. I hope they will remember you in your better days.

Ima, it wasn't easy for you with me, and you always said that no one teaches you how to be a parent, and that you had no one to learn from.

Ima, you did well. Despite the difficulties, you succeeded. Despite the challenges, you taught us never to give up.

Even in your final days, you did not give up — you fought until your very last breath.

Now I tell you to let go. Move on, and continue to fulfil your dreams.

I love you,  
Rafi.



## Hallelujah . Leonard Cohen

### **In memory of Natalie Baum, of blessed memory**

Now I've heard there was a secret chord  
That David played, and it pleased the Lord  
But you don't really care for music, do you?  
It goes like this, the fourth, the fifth  
The minor falls, the major lifts  
The baffled king composing Hallelujah

Your faith was strong but you needed proof  
You saw her bathing on the roof  
Her beauty and the moonlight overthrew her  
She tied you to a kitchen chair  
She broke your throne, and she cut your hair  
And from your lips she drew the Hallelujah

Well, maybe there's a God above  
As for me all I've ever learned from love  
Is how to shoot somebody who outdrew you  
But it's not a crime that you're here tonight  
It's not some pilgrim who claims to have seen the Light  
No, it's a cold and it's a very broken Hallelujah

Well people I've been here before  
I know this room and I've walked this floor  
You see I used to live alone before I knew ya  
And I've seen your flag on the marble arch  
But listen love, love is not some kind of victory march, no  
It's a cold and it's a broken Hallelujah

There was a time you let me know  
What's really going on below  
But now you never show it to me, do you?  
And I remember when I moved in you  
And the holy dove she was moving too  
And every single breath we drew was Hallelujah

Now I've done my best, I know it wasn't much  
I couldn't feel, so I tried to touch  
I've told the truth, I didn't come here to London just to fool you  
And even though it all went wrong  
I'll stand right here before the Lord of song  
With nothing, nothing on my tongue but Hallelujah

## Rest in Peace, Natalie



### Reut's Editorial:

Natalie Baum passed away this week. A few years ago, Natalie came to the library several times to help and dust the shelves. It was very helpful assistance. She loved talking about her grandchildren and was very proud of them.

That is it. The symbol of the hostages has been removed from the weekly editorial and from the end of the newsletter, from its place beside "Shabbat Shalom" and the lit candles. The IDF symbol will remain in place, because without the IDF, how could we have a Shabbat Shalom?

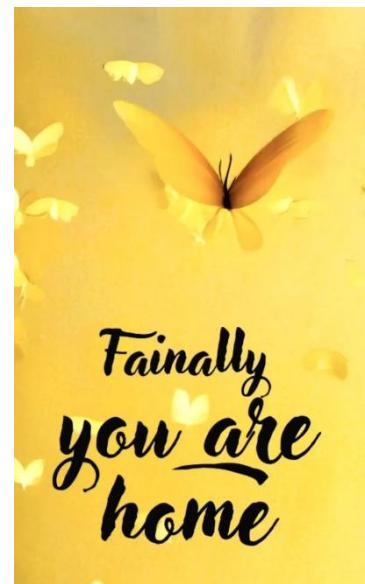
**Edi-torial:** It is too much for the mind to fathom. Ran Gvili is back! The people of Israel are united in joy and sadness and relief that the hostage saga is finally over. Our Prime Minister does not have unity or gratitude or brotherly love on his agenda. He is hellbent on hurting and insulting his citizens and our friend in the United States just because he not called Trump, and I am sick to the stomach. And there is a lovely armada sailing merrily on the way to the Middle East. May God have mercy on our souls. Edi-tor

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## The Final Yellow Flag-Lowering Ceremony, 26.1.26

On Monday evening, we held a short and moving ceremony to mark the return from captivity of the body of the last hostage, Ran Gvili, of blessed memory, and the lowering of the yellow hostages' flag from the roof of the dining hall. Members and children gathered for a modest event that included musical pieces and readings, the Shehechiyanu blessing, and the flag-lowering ceremony. After 843 days, Ran Gvili, the last hostage, was brought home to burial in the soil of Israel.

The painful circle has closed.



The Yizrael Protest Headquarters

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## A Letter of Thanks to the Kibbutz Community

**Hadas Matalon Federman**

I would like to take this community platform to once again thank everyone who touched my mother's life — *our* mother's life — over the past seventy (!) meaningful years. And especially during the period when she was less independent and relied so much on the *Or B'Giv'a* team, the Health and Veterans Committees, and the clinic staff. Dear men and women — you touched our hearts, and hers, very deeply. Her "final journey," as they say, was accompanied by immense love and a sense of fulfilment for those who walked it with her.

Shiva is a very special time — a time to meet, to be moved, to laugh, and to remember so many meaningful and precious moments from my mother's life and from our own lives with her. During this shiva we were also fortunate to meet the sons, and especially the daughters, of the neighbours — the daughters of Mirik z"l, of Pnina z"l, and the children of Bini z"l and Steve (to whom we of course wish many long years). It was a meeting that reminded us almost of the very beginnings of the kibbutz (the dinosaur era, according to my mother's grandchildren), and of the transition from communal sleeping to family living in 1970 — a move from cave dwellers to mud-and-straw houses...

I vividly remember the day of that move (and there is even documentation of it by one of my parents in the booklet marking 50 years of the kibbutz): the 54-square-metre house (truly a tiny desert house), with its small veranda — remnants of which still exist at my mother's home — where muddy boots were kept in winter so they wouldn't get wet (because there were hardly any paved paths on the kibbutz), the dogs, and the lawn that surrounded it.

The lawn was our entire world. In the afternoons, all the children of the neighbourhood would gather there, usually around the large plane tree (Dolev) by the Yuval family's home. A hammock once hung there too, and games from the "hothouse" — which used to be our home. We also reminisced about the communal sukkah built near the plane tree (Dolev) — the neighbourhood sukkah (there was a competition for the most beautiful sukkah, and truth be told, we never won) — and about the shared Hanukkah celebrations, from torchlight processions to kibbutz-wide parties in the (old!) dining hall. We remembered the joyful neighbourhood gatherings with latkes and doughnuts, alongside scones — Shimona's Scottish baking, with butter and strawberry jam — and hot punch, which felt like the most indulgent thing in the world.

A few years ago, during one "Operation Grandma," all of my mother's grandchildren came to help build the large garden, following the renovations to the houses and the expansion of private gardens at the expense of the public gardens and lawns that once lay between the homes. The plane tree "moved" into Mirik's garden, and my mother's narcissus garden disappeared, replaced by shrubs.

So, this deeply moving shiva also marked the end of a chapter for us — the emptying of the houses, and with them a farewell to the world of childhood. And together with that, I believe those layers that were "cast" within my heart and soul have become building blocks of values — of community and partnership, of love and lifelong friendship.

We'll see one another on the (newly paved) paths of the kibbutz... Hadas.

# Thank You and Farewell from the Meir Family

Dear Community, Just over two years ago, we arrived in Yizrael all of a sudden. Kibbutz Yizrael opened its heart and its doors to us, without questions and without expecting anything in return. You opened your home to us, at a time when the state was in complete dysfunction.

For the first time in our lives, we found ourselves on the receiving end rather than the giving one, a feeling that was unfamiliar and deeply uncomfortable. The community managed to contain and care for the needs of more than 100 evacuees, without anyone ever feeling like a burden. This is no small thing, and we do not have enough words to express our gratitude. Beyond our integration into community life, the hospitality of this strong and cohesive community also influenced our desire to stay and to be part of it.

**We thank the Yizrael community, and each and every one of you personally, also for the privilege of being accepted into the community.** This, too, is not taken for granted.

“We shall sit and sit with willing hearts, for our neighbours are good in our eyes.”  
(Naomi Shemer)

Two years have passed since we landed here in a small one-room flat, with a small bag for each child. So much has changed over these two years, and here we are already in the absorption process, living as kibbutz members. We have all taken root and integrated, each in our own way and at our own pace.

We felt that the community accepted us as we are, with all our uniqueness and complexity, our strengths and our shortcomings. We were always given the feeling that we are equals, even though we are not yet full members.

Due to circumstances entirely unrelated to Yizrael, we have chosen to end the absorption process and to leave.

These have been two of the most significant years in our family’s life, complex and challenging, with many changes, yet at the same time interesting and imbued with a different kind of meaning. Two years during which many people entered our hearts and will remain there forever.

We will continue to live in the area, the children will remain in the same schools, and we would be very happy to stay in touch. The Meir Family: Shir, Shahar, Omer, Shimrit, and Dagan

*(Dear Meir family. We wish you the best of luck and may you find happiness. Our thoughts are with you – Ed)*

## **Invitation to the Economic Council + Assefa**

**(Two for the price of one – Ed)**

**Monday 02.02.26 at 20:00**

**Where?** In the Moadon and on Zoom

### **Economic Council Agenda**

1. Election of Udi Shani as Chair of Teldor
2. Approval of the energy storage project
3. Approval of alternative locations for the agro-solar system

### **General Assembly**

Appointment of “Magal Internal Audit and Consulting Services Ltd” as the new internal auditor for the kibbutz

## **Summary of the Human Resources Management Meeting - 25.01.26**

**Participants:** Peter Pezaro, Eddie Solow, Irit Shemesh, Shlomo Cohen, Ilan Sadur, Limor Griman, Erez Peleg, Rochela Matalon, Kinneret Govrin.



### **Failure to Meet the Work Obligation**

As every year, at the end of the year a review is conducted regarding their annual work performance of each member and the

number of absences. A significant improvement in members' work patterns is evident, and most members are working full-time. In addition, there has been a reduction in the time members spend between jobs, and almost everyone who is eligible signs on for unemployment benefits, with an allowance from the National Insurance Institute received while the member is seeking work.

This year, approximately 5 members out of 199 who are subject to the work obligation were found, apparently, not to have met the obligation, either in terms of insufficient workdays or in terms of not reaching the minimum annual average position standard of 85%. Some did not meet both criteria, and some met only one. According to the work procedure, a shortfall in workdays will result in a fine of up to 10,000 NIS. Failure to meet the position standard will result in a proportional reduction in the work and profit bonus, and the year will not be counted towards seniority.

#### **Points Raised in the Discussion:**

- If a member fails to meet the work obligation more than twice, further handling should be transferred to the Management Committee.
- Since, according to the work procedures, a deficit in vacation days is reset at the beginning of the year, it follows that in cases where a fine is imposed for insufficient workdays, the vacation days will remain in the member's vacation balance.
- It will be necessary to manually update, in the work-recording system, the remaining vacation days of those members who were fined for insufficient workdays and were recorded as having exceeded their vacation usage.

#### **Decision:**

Members who, based on the data, are found not to be meeting the work obligation will be notified. Members will be given the opportunity to review the data before decisions are made. In addition, when and if a fine is imposed for insufficient workdays, the vacation days will remain in the member's vacation balance.

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## **Demography Cluster Updates**

### **Updates from the Housing Committee**

- **Mavis Kaplan** has moved into the former home of **Zimra (z"l)** in the eastern housing area. (This house does not meet the criteria of the Housing Procedure as a permanent home, and is therefore not opened to tender, but allocated according to the committee's considerations.)

- **Mavis's house** in Upper Tzameret is now being offered by tender as a permanent home. Size: approximately 90 sqm, without a safe room. The house is open and can be visited. Offers should be submitted to **Nitzan Kamilian** by **13.02.26**.
- **Shachaf and Tzach Sassi** have moved into the former home of **Dina Bookman (z"l)** in the Hod neighbourhood.
- **Alon and Maayan Matalon** will soon be moving into the home vacated by **Shachaf and Tzach** in the Hod neighbourhood.

## **Eligibility for Permeant Housing**

- **The list of eligibility for permanent housing for 2026** can be found in the Hebrew newsletter (We will spare you the trouble trying to make head or tail of the numbers – Ed). The data in the list is correct as of 01.01.26 and is valid until 31.12.26.

### **Calculation details:**

- One point is awarded for each year of seniority of each member of the family.
- A single kibbutz member in a household who has not previously received a permanent home will receive a 50% addition to their years of seniority.
- One point is awarded for each child who has not yet completed Year 12 / moved to the Young Generation (up to a maximum of 3 points).

Eligibility to enter the threshold for a permanent home will apply only after four years have passed from the calendar year in which at least one of the couple was accepted into kibbutz membership.

In the event of a tie in points:

1. The total number of seniority years of both partners will determine the ranking.
2. If there is still a tie, the number of children will determine the ranking.
3. If there is still a tie, the average age of the couple will determine the ranking.

## **Allocation list for stage A in the Rugby Neighbourhood (Houses Nos. 1–10, first stage of the project)**

1. Amir and Tal Darom
2. Axel and Butzi Levin
3. Eviatar and Daniel Asaf

4. Barry and Joe Feldman
5. Oren and Mor Broadhurst
6. Adi Goldstein and Elad Ilan
7. Tali and Yoni Brauman
8. Sarit and Adi Laviv
9. Yishai and Michal Levy
10. Omri Zelas

### **Allocation list for stage B in the Rugby Neighbourhood (Houses Nos. 11–22, second stage of the project)**

11. Sharon Langberg
12. Itai and Einav Nagar
13. Nitzan and Rotem Kamilian
14. Ben and Danit Kirshberg
15. Shahar and Bar Levy
16. Oded and Jid Fink
17. Itzik and Naomi Shechter
18. Anat and Eli Friedman
19. Moran Kuperman
20. Reut Shaliv and Achi Levin
21. Tzafnat Mor
22. Ofri and Ohad Ziv
23. Ofri and Ohad Ziv





## **Yizrael Music Academy celebrates 30 years of Musical Excellence.**

### **A series of interviews with the Teachers**

#### **Interview with Nativ Balyo– French Horn and Trumpet Teacher**



##### **Where were you born and raised?**

In Kiryat Yam, where I also studied music.

##### **What is your earliest musical memory?**

When I was a child there was a children's TV channel, and when I was three years old they broadcast a classical music programme in the evenings. I waited all day for that hour. By the way, I remember that at home it was said that my great-grandfather sang in the synagogue choir in Budapest in the 1920s.

##### **When did you start playing, on which instrument, and who was your first teacher?**

I started playing the piano at the age of four at a community centre that offered group lessons, which I enjoyed very much. My first teacher was Yossi Nashkes, who taught French horn, and that was exactly the instrument I wanted to learn.

I have been teaching for 11 years. I studied at the Krayot Conservatory, then pursued academic studies at the University of Haifa and later at Ono Academic College.

##### **What do you remember about your first student?**

A fourth-grade student came to me with severe anger outbursts. With the little experience I had at the time, I managed to help him love playing and to calm down.

##### **Who is your favourite composer and what is your favourite piece?**

As a listener, I would choose Bach, and as a French horn player, Mendelssohn.

##### **When did you start teaching, and where?**

Already in high school I had several students who came to the conservatory where I studied, so I gained teaching experience while I was still a student.

##### **How did you come to our music academy, and is there something special about it?**

I resigned from my previous workplace following an unfortunate event and was

looking for a conservatory to work in. I met Stas Gavrilov. I have been here for three years now and feel very connected to, and truly enjoy the Music School.

**What is your message to music lovers?**

The most important thing is to cherish the love of music.

**Which musician has influenced you the most?**

The deputy director of the conservatory where I studied, Ami Naveh, was and still is a musical father figure to me. His field is saxophone and clarinet. When he became aware of my compositional abilities, he invited me to join as a listener and arranger for chamber ensembles. Later, he taught me how to coach performance ensembles, a process that advanced me greatly. At a certain stage I composed an original piece for a clarinet ensemble, with which I later participated in a composition competition in the United States and won first place.

**Which musical work would you take with you to a desert island?**

Wow, an interesting and challenging question. In the end I would choose Mendelssohn's Fourth Symphony. It is a work I know very well both as a listener and as a performer. On the one hand it is delicate, with a regal character. The first three movements convey an elevated feeling, and then the final movement is truly stormy. For me, listening to it is deeply meaningful.

**What, in your opinion, is most important in teaching?**

First and foremost, patience and love. It is also important for a teacher to have a forward-looking, long-term perspective.

**Do you play for pleasure on your own or in an ensemble?**

In the past I played with many orchestras in Israel and abroad. Today, teaching takes up most of my time.

**Finally, could you comment on your work at the Music House?**

Happily. There is a very pleasant sense of family here. I feel that every teacher is truly seen.

Thank you, Nativ. Through your stories, we have come to know you a little better.

**Interviewer:** Ilana Peleg



## Patchi Turns 90... cont.

**Forward:** On the occasion of Patchi's 90th birthday, at the beginning of January greetings by **Muki Tzur and Karni Am-Ad** were published on the website "*Bein Chaverim (Between Friends) – for Democracy, Culture and Social Equality*".

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### A Dreamer with Eyes Wide Open (Patchi at 90) / Muki Tzur

The fellow is ninety. You read and realise that you yourself are no longer twenty-six. But behind Patchi there is not only a long deep trail; he bears abundant fruit.

Patchi is an editor-creator. An editor-creator is someone who chooses whom to edit: stands by their side, fights for them, formulates the questions that set their writing in motion, sends literary sources that can converse with their work, consoles them in hard times, and ensures their creation is echoed. Both mother and father.

Patchi was the editor of *Shdemot*. He often wrote under pseudonyms, publishing various pieces, quoting intellectuals, giving voice to young counsellors. He was also an important editor at Am Oved publishing house, where he fathered significant projects. For many years Patchi has walked as a man of spirit alongside men of action, demanding much of them, yet never relinquishing partnership with his comrades labouring in the field and the factory. He does not hesitate to burn what appears to him as the altars of the priests of Baal, as befits a man of Yizrael. Knowing that there are souls in the world who require protection and cultivation, he is a fierce opponent of spirit-breakers.

The academic world, to which Patchi devoted years of his activity, understood his path only indirectly, sometimes even recoiling from it.

The spring of Patchi's creativity, burst into the public sphere with *Siach Lochamim*, but the idea that members of kibbutz movements, who for years had built dividing walls, could work together, preceded the book's publication. It was a diverse group whose disagreements did not align with the movement origins of its members. It included people of the security forces and education, artistic creators and social navigators. To a great extent, it was the fruit of Patchi's work as a youth-movement guide and as someone who absorbed conflicting spiritual currents and knew how to weave them into action.

He was a man of the United Kibbutz Movement who refused historical leadership; a man of emotional dialogue from the Hashomer tradition; a man of the ethos of fulfilment and political sensitivity of Kibbutz Meuhad. Yet he recognised no boundaries of the kibbutz movement. His antennas were high. They picked up messages from the

Conservative movement in the United States. They searched for paths paved by thinkers and writers in Jewish life and Hebrew literature, but above all, sought to discover creators and modes of thought just beginning to sprout.

Although he always emphasised his ties with A. D. Gordon, especially in light of Gordon's openness to Jewish tradition, he was also always a Brenner-type figure: a man of spirit who cries out through standing behind people, tearing away masks. His studyroom on Kibbutz Yizrael bears witness to a broad spiritual spectrum, its colours sharp and distinct.

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These days, Tom Navon's book on Yariv Ben-Aharon has been published. If there was one person whom Patchi knew how to discover, protect, support, and believe in, it was Yariv Ben-Aharon. Many loved and learned from Yariv Ben-Aharon, but Patchi's embrace was unique — a fortified wall.

Such a steep path exacted heavy personal costs, but that is the nature of a lone individual's steep path within a collective society, when he feels compelled to place his finger in the bursting dam of false progress.

A great secret in the work of Patchi the editor of words — a secret not yet fully revealed — is the editor of light in his home: Iris, the photographer at his side. She is the mother who grants him what lies beyond words — the light and the garden, without which words lose their message.

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## **“The Young” Patchi at Ninety / Karni Am-Ad**

The culture and literature supplement of *Haaretz* did well to devote prominent space to Avraham (Patchi) Shapira of Kibbutz Yizrael on reaching the age of ninety. As for Patchi — indefatigable and curious like a child who reinvents himself again and again — age is only a number, and many more years of learned activity still lie ahead.

The concise memoir he himself wrote about his life, published last weekend in its first part and this coming Friday in its second, surprised me greatly. As a teenager from Haifa, he learned from a teacher who became a “spiritual father,” Baruch Kurzweil, alongside a classmate named Dahlia Rabikovitch. Later, as a student of Judaism and philosophy at the Hebrew University, he gained knowledge from giants such as Professor Gershom Scholem and Professor Nathan Rotenstreich, and became a dialogue partner of Martin Buber. During his two years of study in Jerusalem, he met Professor Bergman, a youthful friend of Kafka, who, like him, pursued knowledge and attained it.

All this he did while also serving as a shepherd on the kibbutz, devoting one day a

week to a life project called *Shdemot* (originally *Shdemot for the Guide*), which he founded without backing and in the face of the kibbutz movement's overt indifference. For ten years he edited the quarterly journal from which *Siach Lochamim* later emerged, documenting the harrowing experiences of fighters in the Six-Day War. Patchi was the chief editor of the foundational document mockingly titled "Shooting and Crying." Alongside him on the interview work were Amos Oz, Yariv Ben-Aharon, Avishai Grossman, Amram HaYisraeli of blessed memory, and Muki Tzur, may he live a long life. Three doctoral dissertations were written on this non-warm discourse, as well as a documentary film titled *The Hidden Reels*.

In one of my brief encounters with Shapira — I was closer to his son, the curator Yaniv Shapira, as I served as an arts correspondent for the kibbutz newspaper *K.A.* — he told me that my father, Zvi Am-Ad of blessed memory, long-time editor of the United Kibbutz Movement weekly *Igeret*, was not among *Shdemot*'s admirers and even described its writers as people who "walk a metre above the ground." Yet he acceded to Patchi's request and gave him substantial assistance in producing *Shdemot* and *Siach Lochamim*.

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**Avraham Shapira** himself moved me to tears after I was dismissed from writing at *Yediot HaKibbutz* after some thirty years. I wrote a sombre column about the circumstances of my departure and the harassment by the movement's leaders, and dear Patchi wrote me a letter expressing sorrow over the ending imposed upon me and wishing that I would continue to write and reflect as I had over the years. This was especially striking given the silence of the movement and its readers. Apart from the late writer Yifrah Haviv, there was an oppressive, painful quiet.

Much of my envy of Patchi's legacy stems from the fact that he wrote a comprehensive article on an exhibition titled *The Breaking of the Vessels* by the artist I so admire, Anselm Kiefer, and even met with him many times. The exhibition took place in 2011 at the Tel Aviv Museum. Though it struck me as more mystical and symbolic than his earlier exhibitions, it nonetheless projected the monumental power and hypnotic materiality of this gifted creator. At this very moment, an impressive work by Kiefer is being shown at the Jerusalem Museum under the title *The Ages of the World*.

A rare and beloved man, the "maturing child" Avraham Shapira knows how to combine secular life on a kibbutz with sustained engagement in the study of Judaism and Kabbalah. His infectious curiosity and love of humanity promise that he will continue to live long and enrich our lives here — lives that have grown, through the fault of leaders, impoverished in both substance and spirit.

**Source:** "Bein Chaverim (between Friends) – for Democracy, Culture and Social Equality", 01.04.26

## New (English) Books in the Library

*Edi-torial Note: We do not publish the names of the new Hebrew language books because we assume those who can read in Hebrew are not in need of our services*

### 1. **Career of Evil – Robert Galbraith**

A serial killer with a personal vendetta targets detective Cormoran Strike by sending his office a grotesque package. As the threats escalate, Strike and Robin Ellacott must dig into Strike's own past to identify the culprit. Darker and more psychological than earlier instalments, the novel probes trauma, misogyny, and power. It's tense, unsettling, and deeply character-driven.

### 2. **Lethal White – Robert Galbraith**

What begins as a confused young man's story about a childhood murder unfolds into a complex case spanning British politics and aristocratic privilege. Strike and Robin investigate blackmail, corruption, and long-buried secrets. The novel balances a slow-burn mystery with major developments in the detectives' personal relationship. Elegant, layered, and sharply observed.

### 3. **Out of Love – Hazel Hayes**

This novel traces a relationship from first spark to final fracture, told in reverse chronological order. It captures the quiet moments, miscommunications, and emotional compromises that lead love to erode. Hayes writes with intimacy and restraint, letting small details carry the weight. A poignant meditation on how love can fade without either party being cruel.

### 4. **The Mysterious Bakery of Rue de Paris – Evie Woods**

Set in Paris, the story centres on a hidden bakery where recipes seem to carry a touch of magic. As strangers are drawn to it, each confronts unresolved grief, longing, or hope. Blending gentle fantasy with romance and self-discovery, the novel is warm and escapist. A comforting read about second chances and quiet transformations.



## From the Desk of the Emergency Response Team (Tzachi)



Hello everyone,

**We share everyone's joy at the return of all the hostages.**

After a relatively long period of near-calm, we are returning in full force to training and drills.

About two weeks ago, we took part in an MDA First Responder refresher course which even touched on managing mass-casualty incidents.

Last Thursday week, a large exercise of the Tzachi headquarters took place, simulating a missile impact event in our area. We very much hope it will remain at the level of an exercise only.

On 04.02.26, a new course for the Gilboa Fire and Rescue Unit will open. *Kohach* stands for Firefighting and Rescue, a volunteer force operating under the Gilboa Regional Council, while strengthening the internal emergency infrastructure in each community. The course is interesting and will be held here on Kibbutz Yizrael.

Some of us also took part last week in a live earthquake drill at the Dead Sea.

Following a review of our conduct during the incident at the Tel Yosef junction, we concluded that in future such events will first be communicated via an initial message in the kibbutz WhatsApp group. Further updates will be published on Kehilanet. Of course, any emergency message with direct relevance will be sent via WhatsApp, and the "Aviya" system will be activated if necessary.

We make an effort to avoid unnecessary disseminating stories circulating on social media or in the general media, and to pass on to you only information that has been verified and approved, and that is geographically relevant to us.

A quiet Shabbat to us all (hopefully — written on Tuesday 😊),

Lilach Ron Harpaz

**“A clear conscience is usually the sign of a bad memory.”**

**Steven Wright**

## Ducks, ducks, come home - Tzach Sassi



One Saturday, a hundred rubber ducklings and a crowd of bright-eyed children were launched on a mission.

Many thanks to the Culture Committee for a simple, creative, and spot-on activity that brought a great deal of joy to the kibbutz.

Dor and I joined the search, like many other families, and enjoyed genuine quality time together, very much in the kibbutz spirit.

The hunt was adventurous, leading us to familiar and less familiar corners of the kibbutz, and even revealing hidden spots we do not usually reach, with especially inventive hiding places that were sometimes quite a challenge.

Activities like this remind us how much power there is in simplicity, creativity, and a community that does things together.

Huge thanks to the Culture Committee for the initiative, the creativity, and the small surprises that make a big difference.

Yasher koach, and well done for the investment, the thought, and the execution.

Tzach Sassi

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## Phil-osophia – Kidnap

Kibbutz Yizreel

Eretz Hakodesh

27/1/2026

Dear Donald

I hope this letter finds you well - from what I see in the news you are in fine form and if I may so you are only getting handsomer as the years go by. Your hair is looking great and if you have time, I'd be happy to know what shampoo and conditioner you are

using and whether you blow dry your hair after showering. Let's face it, you are one hell of a guy and in Israel (not only) we love you.

I was glad to hear that you enjoyed the photos I sent you from Laos and yes, I did send you that T- shirt you admired – actually I sent you three in your favorite colors red white and blue. I included a case of Lao beer as well for you to enjoy on the patio at Mar-a-Lago after yet another game of golf – you make Tiger Woods look like an inept amateur (you pulled more women than he ever did as well).

Holidays are a good time not only to relax but to take stock. As I was canoeing down the Mekong the thought struck me that if you could arrest (kidnap is such a hard term) Venezuela's Nicolas Maduro (you are all-powerful) then no one is immune from America's mighty arm of justice. Keeping that in mind, I wondered if you had considered removing our Prime Minister and putting him into the arms of the justice system or immigration or any system outside our borders?

I know that you are on good terms with Bibi, so the upside for you would be that you would see more of him and his much-loved family and for us he would be out of sight and out of mind. Consider how much fun it would be playing a round of golf together with Sara caddying for you and Yair or the ex-prime minister of Israel. With those two you wouldn't lack for advice as you are standing over the ball.

You won't have to worry about sending in troops to keep the peace – we will all be out in the streets celebrating – probably for several days if not weeks. Being a democratic country (as of the date of writing) we will elect a new government within months we will be fine, so just go ahead and start planning.

If I may perhaps, invite them all over to the White House and just have them quietly removed from there – we won't object too much – just enough for the sake of protocol probably on MTV.

If we're chatting, I know how you like a good real estate deal - may I suggest there are other countries that are worth a look (other than an island off Denmark's coast) – Lebanon for example boasting precious metals, major gas reserves that rival those of Greenland but with a much warmer climate. Most importantly they have a wonderful international standard golf course just out of Beirut.

Gaza is another investment option. There is no golf course but they have an internationally renowned tunnelling industry and magnificent beaches.

In anticipation. Your potentially biggest fan – Phil Adler.

## Academia on the Bar

### Reflections on Yaniv Shapira's Lecture - Alona Granot

#### **"The Road to the Exhibition – *The Movement: Kibbutz in Israeli Art*"**



Last Thursday 22.1.26 we gathered in our local pub for a heart-warming evening with **Yaniv Shapira**. Yaniv, one of the most prominent figures in the field of Israeli curatorship and formerly chief curator of the **Mishkan Museum of Art, Ein Harod**, is responsible for a long line of significant exhibitions that have helped shape Israeli art and cultural discourse. Among them: *The Meir Agassi Museum*, *We Will Clothe You in a Robe of Concrete and Cement*, *A New Horizon for New Horizons*, *Naked Soul: Chaim Soutine and Israeli Art*, and many more.

*In a Robe of Concrete and Cement*, *A New Horizon for New Horizons*, *Naked Soul: Chaim Soutine and Israeli Art*, and many more.

Curatorship, in its deeper sense, is not merely the act of selecting, classifying, and arranging artworks in a space. It is an intellectual, creative, cultural, and social practice—one that dares to ask questions, brings issues to the fore, and organises identity, perceptions of reality, and memory. Yaniv embodies this role in an inspiring way: with humility, sensitivity, passion, intellectual sharpness and a rare commitment to artists, audiences and culture.

In this context, it was especially moving to hear about Yaniv's new, emerging exhibition at the **Ramat Gan Museum of Israeli Art**, titled *The Kibbutz Movement in Israeli Art*. There is no doubt that an exhibition dealing with the contribution and image of the kibbutz in Israeli art—presented outside the yellow gates, about two years after 7.10, and within the complex political and social climate of Israel in 2026—cannot be merely an artistic event. It is inevitably charged with the urgent and painful meanings of the present moment: a renewed examination of what home is, what a kibbutz is, what security is, what borders are, and what vulnerability means. Alongside these, it asks: what is pioneering spirit, what is mutual responsibility, what is solidarity, and what does ideological fracture look like? It becomes an artistic space through which one can reflect on Israeli identity as a whole—past, present, and future.

I also felt that an additional, deep layer of meaning is added to this exhibition by virtue of the fact that it is curated by a kibbutz member—collaborative, and one of our own. In today's unsettled reality, the choice to engage with and foreground the kibbutz not only as an artistic subject but as a critical social and cultural space is an ethical, political, and courageous act. Pride and joy that you are ours—a voice that grew from within the community and brings its story to the forefront of Israeli artistic discourse.

# My Second Nature

## Counting Birds in the Immediate Surroundings



This column is dedicated to Michal Sadur, who loved birds and nature.

As mentioned in the column last week, the second half of January each year is devoted to counting birds found in the immediate surroundings, carried out by the general public. The kindergarten children of Yizrael take part in this important initiative. In addition, at least once a month I wander along the kibbutz paths, count the birds around me, and report my observations via an app called eBird, which serves international citizen science focused on nature conservation in general and birds in particular.

About two weeks ago, during one such routine count, I encountered a pleasing variety of birds in our cemetery, among them this beautiful male of a bird known as the European Serin. An attached photograph accompanies this.



**Yizre'el, North / District 1 (32.565, 35.232)**

Duration: 0:46:33

Observation date: 17.01.26

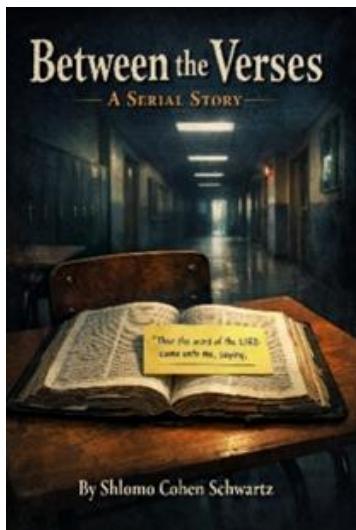
### Species observed:

- Eurasian Collared Dove – 2
- Rock Dove (Feral Pigeon) – 1
- Hooded Crow – 2
- Common Redstart – 1
- Common Chaffinch – 2
- House Sparrow – 2
- Eurasian Blackbird – 2
- House Martin – 10
- Great Tit – 1
- European Robin – 1
- White Wagtail – 1
- Eurasian Jay – 6
- European Goldfinch – 1
- Eurasian Serin – 5

**Total species recorded: 20**

# Between the Verses – A Serial by Shlomo Cohen Schwartz

## Chapter Three: The One Who Stayed After the Bell



### Summary of previous chapters:

Jeremy, a Bible teacher, discovers a sequence of notes, quotations, and verse adaptations appearing in the staff room and in students' notebooks. The hints are too precise, the timing too perfect, and the feeling grows sharper: someone is testing him, and perhaps all the teachers. Not as an overt threat, but as an ongoing experiment.

On Thursday, Jeremy decided to stay after the last lesson. Not out of courage, but out of fatigue. Sometimes the only way to stop thinking is to stop running. He sent a brief message home: "Late today." He didn't explain why. There was nothing to explain.

By three thirty the school had emptied out. The sounds of students faded, and the silence returned—the heavy kind that fills spaces instead of leaving them empty. Jeremy sat alone in the staff room. The Tami 4 water machine released a final sigh and went to sleep. He opened an exam paper of an eleventh-grade student, ostensibly to mark it, in truth to look busy.

After a few minutes he heard movement. Not clear footsteps, but the scrape of a chair. He looked up. No one. He stood, went out into the corridor. The doors were closed. He returned. On his desk lay another notebook. Not belonging to any of his students.

The notebook was blank. No name. No class. On the first page, a single imperative word was written: **Write**.

Jeremy felt heat rise in his neck. Not fear. Insult. Whoever it was assumed he would co-operate. That he would enter the game. He closed the notebook and slipped it into his bag—not to write in it, but out of an urge to preserve evidence.

As he was about to leave, he heard a voice behind him: "You're still here?"

It was Ronit, a biology teacher. She too had stayed late, she said. "I find it hard to concentrate at home."

"So do I," said Jeremy. They exchanged a brief smile, partners in exhaustion.

“Have you seen anything strange lately?” he asked her.

“What do you mean by strange?”

“I don’t know... messages. Notes.”

She was silent for a moment. A moment that lasted too long. “There are things,” she finally said, “that it’s better not to start talking about.”

That sentence lodged itself in him. Not because of its content, but because of its tone. It wasn’t fear. It was resignation.

On his way out he noticed the teachers’ duty rota pinned to the board. Names, break times, locations. Beside his name, a small black mark had been drawn, almost invisible. Beside other names—nothing. Someone had marked him.

At home he opened the notebook he had found. On the second page appeared a new sentence that had not been there before:

“True prophets write even when it is uncomfortable for others to read what they have to say.”

He snapped the notebook shut. Suddenly he understood something he had not wanted to understand before: whoever was doing this was not hiding. They were moving among them, testing how willing the teachers were to look in the mirror.

And for the first time, a sharp, clear thought arose in him: this is not a game. And it is not a warning either.

It is someone’s initiative. But what is the message? And why now?

**To be continued next week**

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## **Biblical Background to “Between the Verses”**

**Edi-tor:** Hi Chat. Is there a biblical background to this week’s chapter?

**ChatGPT:** Yes — very much so. This chapter is steeped in **biblical resonance**, even though no single weekly parashah is named outright. A few strands stand out clearly:

## Prophecy and discomfort

The line “*True prophets write even when it is uncomfortable for others to read what they have to say*” echoes a central biblical idea: the prophet is not a comforter but a disturber. This aligns strongly with **Jeremiah (Yirmiyahu)** himself — not coincidentally the protagonist’s name — who repeatedly protests that he is being watched, tested, and isolated for speaking truth (Jeremiah 1, 15, 20). Prophecy as burden rather than privilege is a core theme.

## Writing as destiny

The command “*Write*” recalls moments where writing is imposed rather than chosen:

- “*Write the vision, make it plain*” (Habakkuk 2:2)
- Jeremiah dictated to Baruch because the words had to exist beyond speech (Jeremiah 36).  
Here, writing becomes an act of accountability, not creativity.

## Being marked

The small black mark beside Jeremy’s name quietly invokes **Ezekiel 9**, where a mark is placed on those who see and know — not necessarily those who act. Being marked is not protection here; it is exposure.

## Silence and resignation

Ronit’s line — “*There are things it’s better not to start talking about*” — is almost an anti-prophetic stance, reminiscent of the tension in Ezekiel between those who “hear but will not act,” or Amos’s world where silence becomes survival.

## The mirror motif

Prophets in the Bible function as mirrors to society, not planners of reform. The idea that the teachers are being tested on whether they will “look in the mirror” fits squarely within prophetic literature rather than wisdom literature.

So, while this chapter doesn’t anchor itself to a specific parashah, its **biblical background is unmistakably prophetic**, with Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Habakkuk hovering in the wings. It asks the same ancient question, relocated to a teachers’ room:

Who is willing to speak — or write — when everyone else has learned to live with resignation?

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**“I can resist everything except temptation.” —Oscar Wilde**

## Jezebel Talks to a Chair

Have you ever found yourself talking to a chair? Metaphorically or literally? Take a moment to think about it...

It's okay if you think I'm mad, I have a doctor's note to prove it 😊  
A chair, a table, Bob, or the voices in my head, yes, I've talked to them all and still do, on a regular basis (some more, some less).

I got stuck in one place, life caught in an endless loop of thoughts, beliefs and behaviours, so I turned to other entities, ones that can answer and ones that cannot. Maybe they would have a better solution, a different thought, another way of acting; probably not. The voices in my head, on the other hand, have lives of their own. Sometimes they drift off to absurd distances, sometimes they stay close, but they always create another, parallel reality; one in which there is movement this way or that, and the possibilities are unlimited, because after all, this reality is entirely imagined. And sometimes it's nice to dream of other lives. Of another world.



But then I returned to reality, to the chair and to the 'stuckness', to the jealousy of movement that has disappeared from my life.

Jezebel 🌻

Tzafnat Mor

“Talking with a chair  
about hatred for the table,  
and jealousy of the sofa,  
feelings of standing still.”  
(Gilad Kahana)

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**“If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will take you there.” — Lewis Carroll**

## Tu B'shvat Celebrations

**Friday 06.02.26 | 18:45**

Tu B'shvat ceremony and Friday evening meal in the Dining Hall.

**Saturday 07.02.26 | 10:30**

Planting in the Butterfly Garden,  
and creative stations, hot tea, and cakes.

**Tu B'Shvat team:**

Hannan Shaliv, Tali Brauman,  
Noam Grinshpon, Tzach Sassi, Shulamit Wittelson



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## The Return of the old Tradition

**Restoring the crown to its former glory!**

**Birthday celebration in the moadon**

**For those born in the month of January**



**Friday 30.1.26**



## The “Harvest” Festival Day is approaching!

Did you know? The Food Branch purchases new utensils every year at a cost of tens of thousands of shekels!

Have you also forgotten to return utensils you borrowed from the dining hall?



No worries! The Environmental Quality Committee is mobilising to collect everything and return it.

During the coming week, a neat box will be placed next to the rubbish stations in your neighbourhood.

Please place the utensils there, and we will come by and collect them on Saturday, 31.1.2026.



Many thanks in advance –  
Environmental Quality Committee

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## Bar Talk – The Democrats

**11.02.26 | 20:00 | In the pub on Kibbutz Yizrael**



Danny Elgart – Retired Superintendent (Israel Police), bereaved brother.

Inbar Bezek – Former Member of Knesset, CEO of the Upper Galilee Development Company.

Ram Shefa – Former Member of Knesset and former Chair of the Education Committee.

Please register for the event using the link below so that we know how many participants to expect. If it appears that many people will attend, we will reconsider the venue.

Registration link:

[https://e.democrats.org.il/Democrats\\_OpenHouses/246620](https://e.democrats.org.il/Democrats_OpenHouses/246620)

Nitzan Rivlin Feldman

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Day and Date	Time	Activity
Sunday 1.2.26	7:00	Walk with Shlomit and Peter
	9:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation, and board games
Monday 2.2.26	8:00	Pedicure with Limor Moalem (appointment required)
	9:00	Joint Tu B'shvat activity with the veteran women of Moshav Avital
Tuesday 3.2.26	9:00	Gathering with coffee, cake, conversation, and board games
	9:30	Lecture + thinking games with Galia Shemi
Wednesday 4.2.26	10:00	Working together at ORBA
Thursday 5.2.26	9:30	Film with Galia Shemi

**Every day, 8:30–12:00: coffee, cake, conversation, and board games.**

## ENGLISH IS FUN with Rahel

### Subject: CHIASMUS (cont.)

(a rhetorical device in which the structure of a phrase is reversed in the second part, creating a mirror-like effect)

- *He knowingly led, and followed unknowingly.*
- *Those who mind don't matter, and those who matter don't mind.* (Bernard Baruch)
- *It is not truth that matters, but who can tell the truth.*
- *I am stuck on Band-Aid, and Band-Aid's stuck on me.*
- *The instinct of a man is to pursue everything that flies from him and to fly from all that pursues him.* (Voltaire)
- *The value of marriage is not that adults produce children, but that children produce adults.* (Peter De Vries)
- *We eat to live, not live to eat.* (Socrates)
- *Love as if you would one day hate, and hate as if you would one day love.* (Bias of Priene)
- *Let us never negotiate out of fear, but let us never fear to negotiate.* (John F. Kennedy)
- *What is learned without joy is forgotten without sorrow.*
- *A fool thinks himself to be wise, but a wise man knows himself to be a fool.*  
(William Shakespeare - *As You Like It*)
- *The absence of evidence is not the evidence of absence.* (Carl Sagan)

- *Power corrupts, and absolute power corrupts absolutely.* (Lord Acton)
- *Do what you love, love what you do.*
- *Speech is silver, but silence is golden.*
- *He does not possess wealth, but wealth possesses him.*
- *Work to live, don't live to work.*
- *It's not about having what you want; it's about wanting what you have.*
- *Don't run from fear; let fear run from you.*
- *You can stand up to your enemies, but sometimes it's harder to stand up to your friends.*
- *We didn't cross the border; the border crossed us.*
- *People don't care how much you know, until they know how much you care.* (Theodore Roosevelt)
- *It's nice to be important, but it's more important to be nice.*
- *To lead the people, walk behind them.* (Lao Tzu)
- *I know what I like, and I like what I know.*

- *I meant what I said, and I said what I meant. (Dr. Seuss)*

... more next week 



## Credits:

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**Disclaimer 1:** The Edi-tor and translator does his best to provide an accurate reflection of the Hebrew Alon. Please be warned that it is not a direct translation. The original Hebrew text is the official version. This is of particular importance when it comes to decisions and procedures! Not all the material published in the Hebrew newsletter appears in “The Yizraelite”. Considerations of length, readers’ interest and the Edi-tor’s ability to grapple with the subject matter, determine what is included.

Please take into account that we use AI when translating. We proofread and correct the texts but errors may be overlooked. Be warned!

**Disclaimer 2: “English is Fun”:** At the request of the author, this column is not proofread or edited in any way. Content and format are at the discretion of the author.

**Note: The readers are encouraged to submit for inclusion “letters to the editor”, photos and material that does not appear in the Hebrew Alon.**