



First grade class



Mental health workers program



Children of the Primary School

Dear Friends,

2011 was a tumultuous year for the Middle East, where old dictatorships were toppled, and for America, where economic uncertainties grew. Worldwide, people have been taking to the streets and Israel too has been shaken by ongoing social protests.

Israel's leaders and lawmakers have reacted by building new walls and proposing bills to curb the power of the courts, Israeli human rights and social justice organizations.

For 40 years, Neve Shalom/ Wahat al-Salam has shown that though Middle East dynamics change, one truth remains unchanged: **Arabs and Jews can live side-by-side, can develop a community based on mutual respect and can conduct successful programs for peace and social justice.** We continue to do so despite an unfavorable political climate and economic adversity because we know that the way of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is the hope-giving alternative.

Our vision does not ask that our community members or our supporters all share the same politics. Instead, **we pledge to respect one another with all our differences and imperfections, to share responsibility,** and to work through the enormous difficulties in a spirit of cooperation, **so that our children and grandchildren will be able to inhabit this land together and enjoy the benefits of peace.**

There have always been many Israelis, Jewish and Arab, who have wanted to become part of our living example. Our community of 60 families is now ready to welcome 34 new families – half of them second generation community members who grew up and attended our Primary school – and we are preparing the way to accept another 56 families in the near future.

The **Primary School** at Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam has applications from a wide area and we are limited in our enrollment only by our financial constraints. This year the school has 204 pupils; your donations can help it flourish and grow.

Since September, the American Friends of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is sponsoring, with your generous support, the 26 children of the first grade class! Together we will follow the progress of Rafael and Yaara, Naomi and Samer, and the rest of the class under the tutelage of their two teachers, Yasmin and Ira. We warmly encourage you to visit [www.oasisofpeace.org/classblog](http://www.oasisofpeace.org/classblog) to learn more about the class and its activities.

The **School for Peace**, responding to an increased demand for its seminars, workshops and courses, has continued to create and deliver innovative programs for national and international groups. With a small staff and financial support that has come mainly from donations like yours, as well as support from USAID and the European Union, the School for Peace has developed a reputation for producing maximum impact among influential professionals in healthcare, education, journalism and the environment, and is working on more projects to be implemented – with your help – next year.



Mediation in Acre



Opening night at the Nadi



Inauguration of the Friendship Library

The **Pluralistic Spiritual Center** has three main programs: a community mediation project that helps residents deal with tensions in mixed towns (this year the program is in Acre); an exciting program bringing inter-religious education into religious seminaries; and a program for young people: "The Massa-Massar Journey." You can learn more about these projects on [www.oasisofpeace.org](http://www.oasisofpeace.org).

The community's **Youth Center** – the **Nadi** – organizes activities for 56 young people of the village, from age 7 to 18. It enables them to maintain close relationships and bilingual skills long after they leave our Primary School. The programs and activities train these young people to be leaders and ambassadors of the message of the community, while helping to develop their sense of responsibility and belonging to the village and to shape their outlook on issues like social justice, gender, care for the environment, etc.

This year, with the enormous help of the American Friends, we have been bringing to life our long-held plan to connect all of our programs, projects and institutions into a **Peace College**. We are building relationships with several colleges and universities in the US and abroad. At the heart of the Peace College is the Fred Segal Friendship Library, inaugurated in 2010. In 2011-2012 we will further equip the Library and widen the impact of Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam's educational institutions in the region, in the United States and Europe.

Neve Shalom/Wahat al-Salam is a community formed from the collective dreams of its members. But **the educational work of the community owes its existence to the loving involvement and support of thousands of people like you** around the world who see the "Oasis of Peace" as a way to create a better Israel, a better Middle East and a better world. It is a great privilege and honor for us to be part of this project and we hope the same is true for you.

**Please consider making the most generous gift you can today. Together we can achieve wonders and bring many more dreams to fruition.**

With sincere thanks from:

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Principal of the Primary  
School

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