



## Spotlights

- ✿ Shavuot, the festival celebrating the giving of the Torah, was observed with a special emphasis on the Bible this year at the Institute. The pupils spent weeks preparing for an exciting Bible quiz this year, and the winner of the educational competition was Altash, a 15-year-old girl from Ethiopia.
- ✿ Institute students and staff received a special invitation by the general of an Air Force base in the south of the country to witness the festive celebrations concluding a pilot's course. The exciting Air Force Day celebrations included demonstrations of all of the latest planes and helicopters in breathtaking flyovers.
- ✿ The end-of-year tour was enjoyed by students, volunteers and educators as bus loads toured the Carmel mountain range and Western Galilee. The pupils, even those who need a great deal of assistance, toured mountain trails and valleys. The hikes were led by Israel's Society for Protection of Nature, and they were enriching as well as enjoyable.

### Training Center *cont. from page 1*

independent all of their lives. Often-times, they are bitter and it is difficult to integrate them into the work force. Horesh speaks very positively about his work experience, however: "We have built up a trust with the director, and work here helps me pass the time constructively and independently," he explains only several years after losing his eyesight.

During the academic year, the Training Center also serves as a place for the apprenticeship of Institute pupils who cannot work outside. The Center is vital for teaching organizational skills as well as good work habits, and the students enjoy working in a real industrial environment.

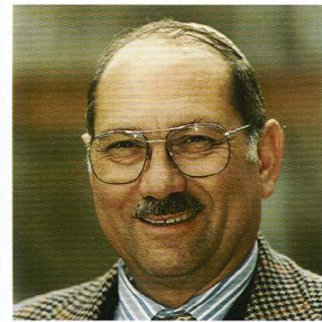
"I don't like to sit in one place for too long," says Gideon Shabtai, an employee of six years. One of the counselors has designed a holder for different pages so Shabtai can collate them easily, and he literally runs the length of the table picking up pages. "I like to keep moving, so this is great work for me. Sitting in one place all day, I find back-breaking." An average work day is 7:30 — 3:30, but the commute by public bus can lengthen that day by another two hours. Not only are the workers prompt, but they are an efficient and active group and lasting friendships have developed.

"What would I do with my day, if it wasn't for my job here?" asks Shabtai. And he echoes the words of the Center's Director Ya'acov Lachmi: "We can do the same jobs as anyone else with the right preparation."

### Yossi Samuels *cont. from page 2*

would be a pupil with whom we could not communicate," explains Tali. "Yossi was just so curious, and he wanted to know everything." Today, Tali has completed her degree in special education, and she has come back to the Institute as a teacher. Part of her job description includes hours that she devotes entirely to Yossi. She says that he is progressing well, and he shows a great deal of interest in his studies. There is a gap, however, between his emotional maturity and his academic level.

Tali is full of hope that Yossi's future will incorporate a combination of study as well as work in a rehabilitation center. "Yossi will need guidance all of his life," she says. "Despite the frustration that he sometimes feels, he has made incredible progress along his path to maturity. And he is certainly a source of encouragement to all of those who know him."



## Director's Corner

Shalom! This new year we are proud to acquaint you with one of our long term projects, the Industrial Training Center of the Jewish Institute for the Blind. Helping to further our goals of education for independence, the Training Center was founded almost 30 years ago.

The Training Center serves as a large factory workshop complete with necessary machinery. A complete kitchen, showers and changing rooms improve work conditions, and today 30 blind or partially sighted workers are employed. In addition to Institute graduates, a varied group of employees includes new immigrants.

The Training Center provides jobs for graduates who cannot be absorbed in a regular framework, and in the past few years more and more of our students suffer from multiple handicaps which already ensures their job search will be more difficult. Institute students also spend several months yearly in a work-study project at the Center, and they are prepared for industrial jobs.

We find the goals of the Training Center as well as the goals realized by the workers to be very high. We are proud that this project has continued growing and developing over the years, and we would be happy to show you the work being done in a visit to the Jewish Institute to the Blind. May this be a year of happiness and peace for you and your family as well as the family of Israel.

שנה טובה,

Chaim Reshelbach,  
Director