



# Larger Than Life

## Newsletter Fall 2009

## Life is Worth Fighting For

### Our Mission

Larger Than Life strives to help seriously ill Jewish and Israeli children with cancer cope with their fear, treatments and social isolation through Dream Trips, family activities and lifesaving medications.

Sometimes, suddenly and unexpectedly, our lives can change completely. When a child has cancer, the suffering is unimaginably great and the entire family embarks on a difficult journey of pain. We are here to help, to bring a smile to a tired face and to give hope that this illness can be fought.

This year, we have been able to do many wonderful things for the children and their families: Dream Trips, summer camps, a new van ambulance, laptops for hospitals in Israel, and so much more! All these have been made possible due to the hard work of hundreds of contributors and volunteers - we thank them profoundly! In these challenging economic times, we count our blessings daily for what we have and are grateful for the opportunity to help those children and families who need us so greatly.

As the Jewish New Year approaches, I wish everyone hope, health and happiness from the entire board. **Shana Tova!**

Netta Nathaniel  
Executive Director

### Board of Directors and Advisory

Avi Cohen, Chairman  
Dr. Shulamit Katzman, Director  
Chaim Ben Simon, Director  
Albert Nassim  
Sandra Divack Moss  
Dr. Alexander J. Chou  
Dr. Hadar Spivak  
Dr. Tamir Miloh



### The New Van Ambulance Has Arrived!



We are proud and excited to present the new van ambulance, donated by Shoshana and LeRoy Schecter, which will benefit the children of Larger Than Life in Israel.

The van provides vital transportation to and from the hospital, and is a significant help to children receiving treatment for cancer, especially those from a low-income bracket.

As children with cancer often have compromised immune systems, they should not be exposed to a public transport environment, so traveling by bus or shared taxi is not an option. This is particularly the case for children who need to remain in isolation after receiving a bone marrow transplant.

The van is also being used to bring children to Larger Than Life programs and activities. We pick them up from their homes and provide them the opportunity to join our summer and spring camps, Shabbat family trips, Eilat child and family vacations and many more programs around the country.

# First Gala Benefit in New York City

Earlier this past March, 350 guests attended the first annual Larger Than Life Gala Benefit at New York City's Tavern on the Green in Central Park.

The festivities commenced with a cocktail reception and a silent auction, followed by dinner and entertainment. We honored Dr. Shulamit Katzman, founding member and volunteer for over six years, and Gila Almagor, the first lady of Israeli stage and film. Many guests arrived to honor Dr. Katzman and her family.

Our Master of Ceremonies, Mike Burstyn, kicked the evening off in fine style, followed by greetings from Asaf Shariv, Consul General of Israel in New York. Shalva Berti, Israeli opera and soul singer, gave us the pleasure of some of her world-renowned songs. Avi Cohen and Oren Heiman led the live action. Last but not least, the after-party featured a unique fashion show.

Stav Alon Korpel and Tal Bibi, both age 12, arrived with their mothers from Israel to tell their inspiring stories of fighting and beating cancer.

A big thank you to the great group of people who pulled together to insure the success of the event! These volunteers help with the decoration of the venue, marketing efforts, journal, press, the silent auction and fashion show. They deserve a warm hug and applause: **Ilene Weinkle** for the stylish chocolate: **Galit Aboodi, Michal Amir, Kobi Benbenishti, Mor Ben David, Ron Ben David, Orna Benor, Ofira Dackar, Anat Erez, Anat Fanti, Dahlia Fishman, Ilanit Habot, Orly Kadosh, Carmeli Kaspi, Tali Levy, Rotem Lindenberg, Daniel Meidan, Tali Naveh, Ed Neiger, Tammy Noam, Dr. Zvi Osterweil, Michal Saad, Amir Shriki, Moria Tzur, Michal Zaiden, Gal Zak and Yasmin Zohar.**



LeRoy & Shoshana Schecter, Mr. Gabriel Erem



Mike Burstyn with Tal Bibi & Stav Korpel



Stav Korpel, Tal Bibi, Dr. Sulamit & Chaim Katzman



Stav Korpel



Dr. Shulamit & Chaim Katzman



Mike Burstyn & Netta Nathaniel



Avi Cohen

# Super Summer Camp

Free summer camp for 100 children in July

One hundred children aged 9-18 enjoyed a free of charge happy week at our summer camp in northern Israel which took place July 5-9, 2009.

The children participated in many activities at this sleep-away-camp and were cared for by a dedicated medical and nursing staff. They all had a great time playing challenging sports, paragliding, taking field trips and much more.

Every night, the group watched live performances by Israel's best celebrity artists.

"Thanks so much for including Ron-Chaim and his brother Ariel in the summer camp and for the fun days at Shefayim and at Cinema City. A heartfelt thank you for your warmth and caring. Keep up the good work!"

Nitza Ohav



## Dream Trip to Orlando

Twenty children ages ten to eighteen participated in the annual Larger Than Life Dream Trip to Disney World. The children were accompanied by a team of medical professionals from Israel. "The idea is that a child who is happy and filled with joy and hope probably will be better able to fight and overcome cancer," says **Dr. Shulamit Katzman**.

Shoshana and LeRoy Schecter visited the kids in Disney's parks and celebrated Shabbat together with the children. Shoshana and LeRoy stated that they would sponsor next year Dream Trip for 30 Israeli children, which was extremely exciting news!! These trips provide a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to escape from the daily routine of hospitals and radiation and they returned home reenergized with renewed optimism.

**Professor Adi Milman** organized wonderful hospitality for the groups, together with **Harris Rosen** and a group of fabulous people who made it a true "Dream Trip". The children greatly appreciate your support! Thank you to: the **Quality Inn Orlando**, the wonderful team from **Airport Bags**, **Compassion Partners**, **Chefs de France (Epcot)**, **Wonder Works**, **Taverna Opa Restaurant**, **Pirate's Dinner Adventure**, **Arabian Nights**, **Rain Forest Café**, **Orlando Magic**, **Planet Hollywood**, **Jeannie Lee**, **Jillian McRae**, **Stu** and his wife for **Balloons & Makeup**, **Tova Fischtein** and all the volunteers.

## Giving in Miami

Though the children did not visit Miami on this trip, a group of dedicated volunteers prepared surprise "cheer up" packages for the kids in Orlando which included t-shirts, hats, bags, electronic games, special bandanas and much more. The personalized packs were ready for the kids when they arrived in Orlando and the children's happiness was a joy to see.

Thank you to the devoted volunteers and companies who generously donated items: **Moshe and Tova Yemin**, **Aurora Vidaca of Original Buff**, **Shaul Ashkenazy**, **Joshua Glickman**, **Uzi Saig** and **Inbar Lankri of Exist, Inc.**, **Yehuda Haviv**, **Vered Chehebar of Deco Beach Las Olas**, **Nissim Ben Shmuel of European Electronic**, **Miami Club Members of "Sky Is The Limit"** and **Sasson Jury**.



A letter from  
**Shira Lithman**  
(16 years old)

"... The flight to Orlando gave me back my independence, some of which I had lost recently because of my treatments. The chance you gave me to spend two weeks without my family, with kids my own age, on my own, helped me to feel self-sufficient again, not dependent on those around me, and to escape to a place all children dream of, and for a full two weeks!

I came back from the flight renewed. I understood that it doesn't matter what happens; after every difficult time there comes a much better future. I felt that life has warmed me again, that happiness has filled my heart, and that it is truly possible to have a wonderful time.

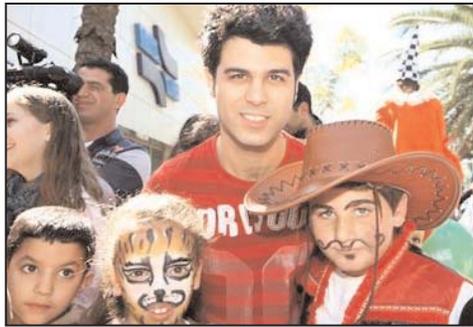
After the trip I decided that I can and want to return to my normal life. I knew I could be that girl who goes to school, who sees friends every day, who does whatever she likes, like everybody else."



## "Smile Train" in Israel



Every year, Larger Than Life Israel invites all children with cancer and their families to come aboard a special train from Haifa to Beer-Sheba, sponsored by the Israel Train Authority. This is the ninth year of the Smile Train and hundreds took part in this journey. During the trip, clowns magicians and celebrities entertained the guests. The trip's purpose is to cheer up the children and their families at this difficult time in their lives.



## Making Noya Smile

Noya Dovganik is only three years old and is battling a cancerous tumor in her brain stem. Her continuing struggle has touched so many of us.



Thousands of people came to a special fundraiser held for Noya in Tel Aviv this August, where countless artists participated to raise money for Noya's treatment. Miri, Noya's mother, said, "These people have touched my soul. They heal the sadness in my heart."

Noya needs highly expensive treatments in Israel and in Germany, treatments that could potentially save her life. Larger Than Life has donated \$10,000 to help pay for advanced surgery for Noya.

## Larger Than Life Expands to Montreal

The Jewish community in Montreal has embraced Larger Than Life and is already up and running planning its first event. A group of volunteers is busy organizing its first fundraising event, with many more to follow. According to **Linda Balass**, the area president, this will be an important event that will teach the younger generation to donate and share. Each and every activity we undertake help contribute to another child and another family in need. It is a blessing to succeed in supporting and cheering up these children.



The committee includes: **Ariella Gotlieb, Cipi Kedem, Danielle Mashaal, Galit Segev, Gilda Abdulezer, Grace Lawee, Irene Buenavida, Liliane Levy, Martha Twik, Ora Strolovitch, Ruth Reuben, Sabrina Lawi, Sandra Mashaal, Simona Parynte, Yael Shahin and Yvonne Shashoua.**

## Ten Laptops for Hospitals Purchased



Your donations enabled us to purchase ten laptop computers, valued at \$8,000, which have been donated to the pediatric oncology departments at Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem, Soroka Hospital in Beer-Sheva and Tel Hashomer Hospital in Ramat Gan. **Dr. Yosef Kaplushnik**, the director of the Hematology and Pediatric Oncology

Department at Soroka Hospital:

*"The donated computers have improved the mood of kids who must stay at the hospital for long stretches of time, and generally improved their outlook on life. The internet and the wireless link have enabled them to keep in touch with the outside world, and especially with their friends at home, and for that, we thank you."*

## Upcoming Events (2009)

- \* Dream Trip to Disneyland for 30 children, **L.A, September**
- \* Kick-Off Event - **Texas**: hosting Gutman family, **September.**
- \* Holiday Boutique - **Tenafly, NJ, October.**
- \* Bike-A-Thon **Central Park, New York, October.**
- \* LTL Israel Gala Benefit **Tel-Aviv, October.**
- \* Family Getaway Vacation in Eilat for 50 families. **Israel, October.**
- \* First Gala Benefit in **Montreal, Canada, November.**
- \* Moms' Empowerment Trip **Israel, November**

Visit our website @  
[www.largertanlifeusa.org](http://www.largertanlifeusa.org)

Graphic design and Layout preparation  
by [www.CarmeliStudio.com](http://www.CarmeliStudio.com)  
201-773-8813

Printed by: Sumo Graphics New York, NY  
212-966-3556