

## “I Was Once Like You”; How Argentinian Jews Rebuilt Their Lives in Kiryat Bialik

This article is the second by Scott Gorelick and Sue Littauer, who traveled to the Former Soviet Union and to Israel in July.

When we recall our trip this past summer, our first thoughts are always of our visit to Kiryat Bialik, a safe haven in Israel for Argentinian olim (immigrants). The incredible story and message of the Argentinian olim is: “Once I was able to help, now I need to be helped.”

Twenty years ago, the Jewish community in Argentina, very much resembled our active and charitable community here at home. During the past nine years, major traumas, both psychological and financial, have devastated the Jewish community. Bombings (including their Federation building) killed eighty-six of the leaders of the Jewish community. Armed guards now stand outside every Jewish institution. Many of the formerly prosperous Jewish families have been forced to sell their homes and to move into deprived neighborhoods. The future is bleak for their children, and anti-Semitism is widespread and growing.

On the morning of our visit, Sue discovered that she was assigned to a site visit at an aluminum factory. Disappointed, as were the others in her group, Sue thought she'd be spending a rare, boring morning. As it turned out, she and her group were about to embark on an unforgettable experience.



Roberto Kaufman, a former attorney, now works in the aluminum factory at Kiryat Bialik.

“At the factory, we observed laborers making skylights and aluminum windows. Then we were led to a big empty room, where we were joined by a group of male workers and by Raoul, the factory owner, who previously owned the biggest Renault dealership in Buenos Aires. Raoul has enough work at the factory to stay busy for the next six months, and he employs newcomers who don't know much Hebrew. In time, each man spoke emotionally of his and his family's experience resettling in Kiryat Bialik. Korquez was an architect who has been in Israel for two years. Edwardo owned a leather factory in Argentina with twenty-three workers. Willy had an artistic library and was a painter and graphic artist. Roberto, a sixty year old lawyer who cried as he spoke of the future

he wants for his eight-year-old child, is doing manual work for the first time in his life. When asked if they knew why our group was there, Korquez replied, ‘I know what it feels like to give, because in Argentina, I was like you.’ These stories touched our hearts as no others had, because we saw ourselves in the faces of the Argentinian olim,” explained Sue.

Scott had the distinct honor of introducing each of the speakers and performers at the luncheon held at Kiryat Bialik's community center. “I don't think I'll ever forget the wonderful sound of the teenagers singing ‘Kiryat Bialik,’ a song about their community, which they performed earlier that week for Prime Minister Ariel Sharon,” said Scott.

Argentinian Rabbi Mauricio Balter spoke of his now-realized dream of building a community in Israel as a safe refuge for the besieged families in Argentina. He convinced the Mayor, Danny Zach, to travel with him to Argentina to speak one-on-one with families encouraging them to resettle in Kiryat Bialik. Today 141 families (comprised of 340 children, 600 people total) have come. “If you really want it, it will be more than a fairy tale,” said Rabbi Balter.

Danny Zach, the charismatic and remarkable mayor, spoke with great pride and compassion about his community. Our hearts went out to him when we visited a



Scott Gorelick was honored as chair of the luncheon at Kiryat Bialik.

memorial chapel illuminated by 124 candles, representing the sons and daughters whose lives were cut short as they served their country. One of the flickering lights was for Mayor Danny Zach's son, killed in battle.

Kiryat Bialik is able to offer a future to its children, just as we in our own community of Charlotte, North Carolina, are able to provide a future for our children. Kiryat Bialik will stay in our hearts, in our thoughts and in our prayers. Each of the 140 members of our group had the same thought during our visit, “There but for the grace of God, go I.” ☆

### HOUSE FOR SALE

in Blowing Rock, NC

\$100,000 below appraisal. 4 bedrooms, 3 baths, 2 kitchens, 6 garages w/ efficiency apt. Sits on over 1 acre. \$850,000.

Evenings: 336-982-7642

### YOUR “RESULTS” SPECIALIST



**ANN LANGMAN**

“Serving your real estate needs since 1972”

Multi Million Dollar Producer



6618 Fairview Rd. Charlotte, NC 28210

704-364-6400 (O)  
704-364-1691 (H)

Toll Free 1-888-364-6401 ext. 240

## The Jewish Women's Network to Participate in National Business Women's Week



National Business Women's Week  
Charlotte, North Carolina



National Business Women's Week (NBWW) was created in 1928 to recognize and honor the achievements of working women throughout history. Over the years, NBWW has become an event widely recognized by public and private institutions and local communities. And while the opportunities for women are more prevalent, many of the challenges women face are the same as in 1928. This year NBWW will be held the week of October 15 - 19.

Each year, leading women's organizations in the area team up to bring the Women's Expo to Charlotte. Not-for-profit and governmental groups come together to distribute information to women and alert them to networking opportunities in the area. Each year something new is added to improve the event, and to greater serve the Charlotte area women, constantly striving to promote and enhance the professional development of women.

This year's National Business Women's Week Expo is scheduled for Tuesday, October 16 at Founders Hall from 11 AM until 2 PM. Part of this year's program is a Fashion Show exhibiting “What is Business Casual?” The event is free and open to the public.

Among this year's participants is the Jewish Women's Network, part of the Women's Division of the Jewish Federation of Greater Charlotte.

For further information on how

to get involved in the NBWW, please call Marnie Moskowitz, Director of Program Development, in the Federation office at 704-944-6764. ☆

- Individual Life, Disability & Health Insurance
- Long Term Care Insurance
- Group Medical, Life & Retirement Programs
- Estate & Personal Financial Planning
- Voluntary Employee Benefit Programs

Keith Greenspon Stan Greenspon

125 Cottage Place

Phone: 704-376-7434

Fax: 704-342-3855

visit us at [www.greensponinsurance.com](http://www.greensponinsurance.com)

## AS REWARDING TO BUY AS THEY ARE TO DRIVE.

Polished wood interior. Available buttery leather trim. Marvels of engineering throughout. In short, we build every Lexus automobile to uncompromising levels of luxury. Including every attempt to make certain that even your wallet is well peddled. Visit Hendrick Lexus today for a test-drive.



ES 300



GS 300



IS 300



LS 430



LX 470



RX 300



SC 300



[www.hendricklexus.com](http://www.hendricklexus.com)

#1 Selling Luxury Vehicles In The United States