

~ JEWISH FEDERATION NEWS ~

**Our Family in Israel During COVID19**

By P2G Staff (written on April 2)

We are currently undergoing a symmetrical crisis. The whole world is facing an epidemic and economic crisis at the door. People are lonely in homes and afraid of the future. We wanted to bring you some of the voices and stories from our partnership region of Hadera-Eiron in Israel.

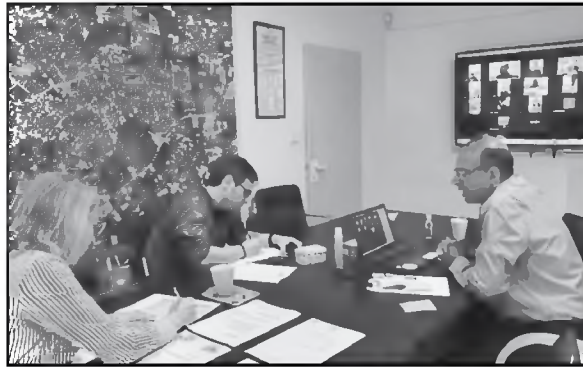
It seems like all the people in Israel are either working from home, being laid off temporarily, or being sent home on unpaid vacation. Since the children are on forced leave from school, on the one hand, it is convenient and it is better to be home with them. On the other hand, there is a serious concern about the economic price we will all have to pay, as a society and individuals.

Many walk around with a feeling that they have no grip on reality. And in the meantime, there is a kind of balance that is immersed in a lot of Jewish-Israeli humor, about the reality forced upon us to be with the children 24/7, workers not working from home, or how fun it is to not have to host the mother-in-law for a Seder dinner this year.

Cheli Hakimi, an owner of two local businesses who took part

two years ago in a Partnership Leadership Mission describes the situation: "Businesses have closed down however their outgoing cash flow continues as usual (with the exception of a few state provisions to ease their situations). Suppliers are being paid even though there are no revenues coming in. Small businesses will survive this month of March since they were able to operate for half a month, but if April continues to witness a shutdown, many business will collapse financially and, with that, entire families who depend on the income. Unfortunately, this is the same situation for all businesses and people. We're all in the same boat. Until last week, the country was allowing businesses to decide whether to remain open or not. I, like many others, decided to close my businesses a week ago in order to assist in the general effort to stop the spread of the virus and to protect my own employees and customers."

The most difficult thing these days is the feeling of uncertainty. Instructions to the public change from day to day and are sometimes unclear. We don't know how long this situation will con-



Eliyahu Krav with the Mayor of Pardes-Hanna.



Chelmi Halimi's closed store.

tinue and how much more serious it will become. Another serious concern is the generation of older parents in Israel who have seen wars and recovery, economic and political crises.

Efrat Lapid, a math teacher at Katzir School: "My parents aren't alive today but I'm happy they don't have to experience this feeling of isolation that I'm experiencing. This almost complete shutdown and not being able to go to work is forcing me and everyone else into social isolation. I'm used to being around my fellow teachers at school and taking part in folk dancing twice a week. Now I'm limited to giving assignments online to my students at home. On the bright side, I've learned to cook a more varied menu for my teenage kids who remain with me (unless they're glued to their screens playing Minecraft or Fortnite). I 'meet' my friends online including Gery, who hosted me last summer in Richmond and who told me about the situation there, which is virtually the same. Her husband is in the medical profession and works long hours while Gery's routine hasn't changed radically since she works from home while raising her small children."

At present, the unemployment rate reached

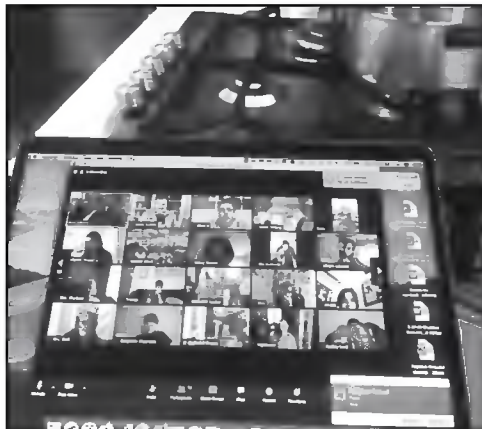
22% of the workforce, however some employees are considered essential in emergency situations. One such person is Eliyahu Krav, who took part in our Young Leadership Mission last year. Eliyahu works in the Local Council as director of the Community Security Authority. Only several weeks ago Eliyahu got married in a ceremony that was viewed live online by many "guests" from our SE Communities. He and his wife were on their way to their honeymoon when the coronavirus crisis erupted, thus changing their plans entirely. Today, Eliyahu works round the clock and under tremendous pressure with little sleep in order to carry out all of his emergency tasks. He is being swamped with calls amid this hectic situation which is dynamic

and changes from day to day.

All of the children are at home these days. The older ones are studying online, the younger ones are not. The hardest thing for the children is being away from their friends and not being able to go to parks or take part in extracurricular activities. So naturally they're bored. It's even harder for parents who need to keep their children occupied and maintain the family's morale, even though some of them are working from home while others are seeking some sort of income and trying to fathom what's happening in this new "age."

Our P2G team created a number of alternative projects online that will offer encouragement to our communities in the U.S. and Israel. Our overriding guideline, as always, is the relationship between us.

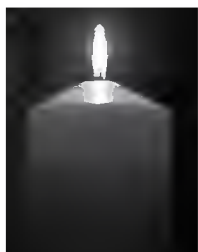
On the bright side, we all have more time to spend with our immediate families and we're learning to appreciate the simple things in life that we took for granted in the past. Despite the feeling of isolation - away from family relatives, parents and friends - as a Partnership staff we are busy trying to continue strengthening our relationship with the Jewish community overseas amid this new reality of virtual meetings and activity.✧



The P2G Partnership connected Temple Beth El's 6th grade class to a Passover cooking lesson with Neta Silberg in Hadera.

**Shabbat and Holiday Candle Lighting for May 2020**

- Friday, May 1, 7:51 PM
- Friday, May 8, 7:57 PM
- Friday, May 15, 8:02 PM
- Friday, May 22, 8:08 PM
- Thursday, May 28, First Night of Shavuot, 8:12 PM
- Friday, May 29, after 8:13 PM



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