



Eye on Israel
by Carol Greenberg
BQLI Region Israel Affairs and Advocacy Chair
Gift a Book to Neve Hanna and Help Build a Library



Books have the magical power to nourish the soul and stimulate the intellect. Books introduce us to unforgettable lifelong friends. As a young girl, I was delightfully transported to the Swiss Alps with the book Heidi. Reading this book, I learned the value of compassion as the orphaned Heidi cares for her aged gruff grandfather and her wheelchair-bound friend, Clara. Another book, Black Beauty, narrated by a horse, taught me about the Jewish value of kindness to animals, tza'ar ba'alei chayim, literally “the sorrow of living creatures.”

In junior high, I loved reading Pride and Prejudice. I remember cheering for Elizabeth Bennet and her independent spirit, yet vulnerable, romantic heart. I am sure this early feminist would have been drawn to Women's League!

Today, as an adult, I crave books about all periods of Jewish history—Biblical times, Talmudic times, Israel's struggle for independence, the Holocaust, and Israel today.

I have always marveled at the concept of a public library. All those shelves filled with wonderful books just waiting for me to open them, gateways to adventure and knowledge.

Here's where you, the reader, enter my narrative. You can have the opportunity to be the heroine in your own story and enrich the life of a young person. Let me explain.

As “People of the Book”, it is my delight to invite you to participate in a special project sponsored by American Friends of Neve Hanna called [Buy a Book, Build a Library](http://www.afnevehanna.org/library). (www.afnevehanna.org/library)

Now that a beautiful new library has just been constructed and half the books have been purchased, the focus of this campaign will be to:

- Stock the shelves with 500 more books to fulfill the goal of 1,000 books
- Purchase tablet computers
- Hire a librarian to set up the library, educate children and offer student assistants
- vocational training in cataloguing and caring for books
- Provide a quiet refuge for reading and dreaming about the future

Your contributions will benefit the residents of Neve Hanna, a unique Masorti kehillah located in Kiryat Gat, Israel, which serves as a children's home to a total of approximately 80 children and teenagers, ages 6-18.

The wonder of Neve Hanna is that they welcome youngsters of Russian, North African, and Middle Eastern immigrants as well as native born Israelis. Unfortunately, these kids have been traumatized by a disturbing list of abuses within their dysfunctional families. Here at Neve Hanna, they live in a loving atmosphere where they receive individualized therapy and remedial teaching, and, importantly, learn to develop trust.

Here's how you personally or your Sisterhood or synagogue can participate. You can purchase books for \$18 each. (Books will be bought in Israel.) Each book comes with a bookplate honoring a person, special occasion, organization or in loving memory of someone. Both the donor and the honoree or honoree's family will receive a letter of acknowledgement. (Contributions are tax deductible).

This will make a great Hanukkah gift to each of my five grandchildren. I imagine that buying books for Neve Hanna would also be a perfect Sisterhood, Hebrew school and Bar and Bat Mitzvah tzedakah project for your children and grandchildren.

In 2016, the Neve Hanna Children's Home received the [Golden Dove of Peace Award](#) in recognition for outstanding work in educating children "in accordance with the principles of tolerance, democracy, and love for fellow man."

To donate, please send your check to:

American Friends of Neve Hanna (Write Library on the memo line)

P.O. Box 640685

Oakland Gardens, N.Y. 11364-0685

Questions? Call 347-836-8118

For more information on Neve Hanna and their other amazing projects, check out their website, where you may also donate online: <https://afnevehanna.org>