

Happy Chanukah



Showing mettle with the pedal

More than 100 cyclists – 60 from North America and 50 disabled Israeli veterans – recently took part in Courage in Motion, a five-day cycle-a-thon in northern Israel. The cycle-a-thon supports Beit Halochem, the Israeli organization that cares for disabled soldiers of the Israel Defence Forces. Cyclists chose one of two routes for their charitable pedalling: one over 300 kilometres and the other more than 500 kilometres. The group raised in excess of \$350,000 (Cdn) for the Beit Halochem Centres in Israel. At the end of the five-day marathon, the 60 North American cyclists donated \$15,000 for the purchase of three tandem bicycles.

One of the participating disabled veterans, Edov Toren, wrote the following letter about the annual event.

“This was my third year participating in Courage in Motion. It is a heartwarming special experience for everyone and a unique opportunity to discover what Israel and its people are about.

“The spirit of the people who come from abroad to cycle with the Beit Halochem members is more than inspiring. While Courage in Motion provides significant funds to Beit Halochem, it is about more than fundraising, it is about love.

“When I cycle with Courage in Motion, my love for sports, Israeli history and the beauty of the land develops a new meaning. As we cycled through the Golan Heights, I thought of the bitter battlefield it has been, in contrast to the peaceful and beautiful place it is now, a land of advanced agricultural settlements, wineries and cycling paradise!

“At night when we sat on the balcony of our hotel in Tzfat, looking east I could see the army base where my 20-year-old son, Tal, is serving as a tank commander. To the west I could see the shore line and border of Israel. That is how small this country is. But it is the only country we have!

“Israel is our country and vital to our existence as a people. Courage in Motion is about saying thank you for your sacrifices to those heroes who have been injured, ensuring that our country continues to be here for us.

“I want to thank everybody from abroad who came to Israel to ‘just do it’ and express their love and support by cycling with us. I encourage everybody to join us in 2011 and experience this unique and special opportunity.”

Above is a photo of the Courage in Motion participants. [Beit Halochem photo]



A HAPPY,
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