

October 2016

An October Full of Happenings and Outings!



Cooking Workshop for Children at the Les Cigognes After-School Home



Park Outing at the Franck Levy After-School Home



Trip to Jerusalem Biblical Zoo



Empowerment Biking Program for Teens



Tribute to Professor Benno Gross, Of Blessed Memory, Former Member of Negba's Honorary Board of Directors



It has been a bit over a year since Professor Benno Gross left this world, leaving a huge void for his many students who attended his classes. Benno wrote many books about education and teaching. One of them, a small, little-known booklet titled "*Receive, Celebrate, and Transmit: Journey of a Teacher*," exposed me the special pedagogic mind of this exceptional teacher. Being an educator myself and presently involved with the formative education of Negba's children, the booklet inspired me to learn more about Benno's educational methods. His

wife, Myriam, kindly met with me to talk about his approach. In the limited space here, I will share just two of Benno's central beliefs which provide insight why Benno so strongly advocated for Negba, where he served as a member of its Honorary Board of Directors.

The first idea I gleaned from my conversation with Myriam was that Benno's foundation for "Jewish education" was the provision of an overall hierarchic structure, which he implemented at the Aquiba School in Strasbourg, France which he founded at the young age of 23. Beyond providing a practical framework for students, Benno felt this hierarchy would later allow them to understand that it extended beyond the classroom and physical realm into the spiritual realm and to a belief in a Master of the universe. This unique existential approach he utilized as a young educator foreshadowed the internationally renowned professor of philosophy that he would become, ultimately serving as the Deacon of Bar Ilan University.

The second of Benno's principles was that he was a born teacher, always utilizing pedagogic methodologies in his dealings with all his students, no matter their age or level of intellect. Benno always customized a plan for each, creating for his students an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect which allowed them to ask the right questions, set goals, and be challenged deeply so that they could advance in life. This principle greatly resonated with me, because this is a fundamental approach also employed at Negba.

This idea of continuous advancement- to strive to do more and more, and not to complacently accept the world as it is- was a special attribute of Benno Gross, and of the Jewish people. It was a recurring theme at the Friday morning classes of his that I was privileged to attend. At the end of each class, we left feeling proud to be Jews in Israel, energized and revitalized by the contagious optimism and love for life which embodied Benno Gross.

May his memory be a blessing, and continue to be an inspiration for us.

