

Community of the Month

Throughout January...

CFOIC is taking a look at Tekoa...

Dear Friend of Israel,

In January we are featuring the Biblical town of Tekoa, first built by King Rehoboam as a city of defense in Judea. How interesting that what was needed in Rehoboam's time is still needed today!

2 Chronicles 11:5-6 So Rehoboam dwelt in Jerusalem, and built cities for defense in Judah. And he built Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa...

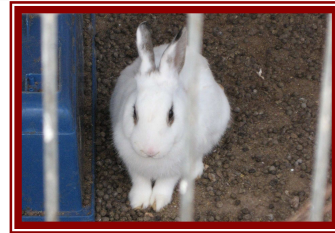
The brave people who have chosen to make Tekoa their home today know that they are on the front lines of defense for Judea and Jerusalem. They know that security is one reason why it is so important for them to continue living there. However, they are not only interested in surviving; they have their eyes focused on a higher goal, on thriving! They want to make the community of Tekoa a place where their children are encouraged to grow and excel. One way they have chosen to do that is to create a special Animal Corner where students can get a hands-on approach to learning.

Please join me today in sending a message of support to the families living in this historic Biblical town. Your gift today will infuse them with a sense of hope as they are strengthened by your care for them.

Shalom,

Kimberly

Kimberly Troup
Director, US Office
Christian Friends of Israeli Communities



What Does Tekoa Need?

The outbreak of the violent war of terror in 2000 has affected the residents of Tekoa profoundly. The community was subjected to the supreme test in 2001 when two boys – barely teenagers – were brutally murdered by Arab terrorists in a ravine adjacent to their homes. Numerous residents have been shot at on the way to work or on the way home. The isolated community has had to deal with the threat of terrorist infiltration, and security on the roads, leading to and from the community. Miraculously, though, life goes on, and always with the joy that comes from settling their land and raising their children, the only true guarantees for Biblical Israel's future.

Children, and especially children with special needs, are so often on the receiving end of help and care. Teachers, counselors, parents and therapists are always teaching, guiding, and advising. Sometimes children need to be the ones who reach out, to be on the giving end... to be the nurturers. In the past few years there has been tremendous research on the connection between children and animals and the influence it has on healthier childhood development, focusing on the natural connection people have with God's creations. The community of Tekoa has decided that they want to take their existing Animal Corner, connected to the local elementary school, expand it, and build a Resource Center in its midst.

The Center will be able to offer so much more to so many more children. With the proper guidance the children can learn rules, how to work as a team, how to develop concentration and curiosity and an awareness of the environment. And the self respect and confidence a child develops is boundless. Caring for the animals, even just playing with the animals--- holding a sweet soft rabbit close to your heart and feeling its warm heart beating close to your own, is soothingly therapeutic. There has been wonderful success in the attitude and behavior of students who participate in such a program. The successful connection with another living being, the trust of an animal and being loved in return, has proven to encourage self-confidence, empathy, cooperation, patience and responsibility.

The people of the community and the Community Council have contributed towards the project, allowing some purchasing of animals, and covering the costs of some of the gardening, fencing, food, and veterinarian visits. Everyone wants to make this happen and it can... with your help.

Total Funds Required: \$8,925

Where is Tekoa?



Tekoa, a thriving community located in the eastern Etzion Bloc area, just south of Jerusalem, is one of the communities that defends the southern approaches to Israel's capital. Tekoa was founded in 1977 by new immigrants from the Soviet Union. These pioneers were soon joined by native Israelis and immigrants from other countries to create a

community that is as varied in background and personality as it is in lifestyle. Both religious and non-religious Jews live together in Tekoa to promote tolerance and mutual understanding between the diverse individuals that make up its population. Today, Tekoa numbers close to 300 families, more than 1,200 people, and it continues to grow.

How Can I Help Tekoa?

Your donation will provide a tool to teach, guide and help develop the children of Tekoa.

You may donate by calling 1-800-647-3344, emailing info@cfoic.com, donating online at www.cfoic.com, or mailing a check made payable to CFOIC (with Tekoa in the memo) to:

Christian Friends of Israeli Communities, PO Box 50833, Colorado Springs, CO 80949-0833

all donations are US tax-deductible