

April 20, 2018

Dear BQLI Region Friends,

"Today is just a normal day full of miracles, gifts, and opportunities."
Robert Holden

These are...The *Yoms* of Our Lives! *Yom*, Hebrew for day, is everywhere we turn lately. Last Wednesday, April 11th, I made sure to place our lit yellow candle in the window to mark the beginning of *Yom HaShoah*, Holocaust Remembrance Day, observed as Israel's day of commemoration for the six million Jews and five million others who perished in the Holocaust. This past Tuesday, April 17th, was *Yom HaZikaron*, Israeli Memorial Day. More than 23,000 Israeli soldiers have fallen in defense of the country, in defense of our legacy. In Israel, everyone knows someone who has died in battle and, even here in the United States, we stop to remember and recognize the sacrifices so many have made. Just one day later, on Wednesday, April 18th, came Israeli Independence Day, *Yom HaAtzma'ut*, celebrating the declaration of the sovereignty of Israel in 1948! Yes, Israel is 70 years young! Finally, on May 12th, *Yom Yerushalayim*, Jerusalem Day (the most recent addition to the Hebrew calendar), will be celebrated to mark the municipal unification of the two sections of the city after the Six-Day War in 1967.

Jewish holidays provide an opportunity for us to celebrate our Jewish identity. Celebrating and observing the holidays helps create a sense of pride in being Jewish. To experience first hand the joys of *Yom HaAtzma'ut* (as it corresponds on the civil calendar date, May 14, 2018), and *Yom Yerushalayim*, I will be traveling to Israel for my first time! I cannot express my excitement adequately! I haven't even gotten there yet, but I pray this will be the first of many trips to Israel.

I'm counting the days to my departure, but I will stop to remember that each *yom* is a blessing that should be fully recognized and appreciated.

B'Shalom,
Grace