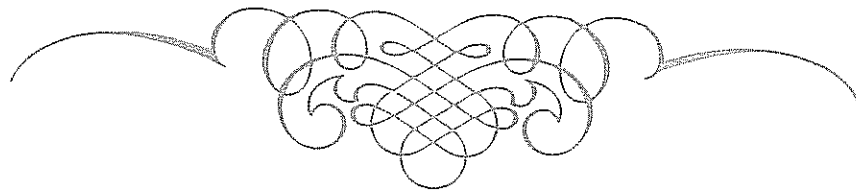


DEEDS AND DREAMS

*Shari Arison and a simple idea that
might change the world.*



By Marc Weisblott

Good Deeds Day seems like an obvious-enough concept based on the idea that every single person can do something good, be it large or small, to improve the lives of others and thus change the world. It took businesswoman and philanthropist Shari Arison to turn this simple idea into a reality.

More than 70,000 people in Israel and thousands more all over the world came out to do a good deed for others on last year's Good Deeds Day, which was initiated by Arison five years ago and has since become an annual tradition with an ever-expanding number of participants. This massive response, both in Israel and internationally, reflects how Arison's vision has provided people with a much-needed opportunity to give of themselves and help create a better world.

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She's been looking forward to this year's Good Deeds Day, when more than 100,000 volunteers are expected to take part in 1,500 different projects in Israel and thousands more will take part in hundreds of projects in other countries around the globe. The day of volunteering, held under the auspices of the Arison Group's Ruach Tova (Good Spirit) organization, will take place internationally on Sunday, April 3, 2011, and in Israel on Tuesday, April 5.

Born in New York and raised in both America and Israel, Arison is imbued with a truly global perspective, based on her belief that all of us are interconnected—we are all one. The owner of the Arison Group, a global business and philanthropic group headquartered in Tel Aviv, had her first book, *Birth - When the Spiritual and the Material Come Together*, published in Israel in 2009. It tells the story of Arison's spiritual and business journey, culminating in her selection by a leading financial magazine as Israel's most influential woman and the country's top philanthropist. An instant best seller in Israel, *Birth* was translated into English and published in the United States the same year, with further editions expected soon in Indonesia and other countries.

Then, in April 2010, she ranked second on a list of the world's greenest billionaires, which cited "her contribution to the environment in Israel and in the world that is expressed also in terms of business activity and because of the 'journey to transform the world' in which she is engaged."

Despite her extensive business activities, Arison's career actually began in the field of philanthropy, when her late father, Ted Arison, who founded Carnival Cruise Lines, proposed that she set up a family philanthropic foundation. "I started to establish the foundation from nothing," Arison recalls. "It was clear to me that there's no reason why a philanthropic foundation cannot be run according

to the same standards as a business enterprise, so I carefully researched the large philanthropic organizations in Miami, where I was then living. I was also helped by the business knowledge I had absorbed at home when I was growing up, and so I set up the Arison Foundation according to the highest-possible criteria."

In 1993, after she emigrated from Miami to Israel, Arison established the Ted Arison Family Foundation in Israel. "The Ted Arison Family Foundation is managed today by my son, Jason, who serves as its chairman and CEO, and

is thus responsible for the Arison Group's entire spectrum of philanthropic activities," Arison says.

"Each year, the foundation contributes to hundreds of nonprofit associations and organizations in Israel and throughout the world in fields ranging from helping the elderly, people with disabilities, and children with special needs to funding projects in education, health and the arts. The foundation relies entirely on funding from the family and does not raise money from external sources," she notes.

Today, in addition to the foundation, the Arison Group's philanthropic arm includes Essence of Life, an organization founded by Shari Arison with the aim of heightening awareness and providing tools for attaining inner peace, and All Or

which works to generate a global conversation about a new reality whose message is, "We are all connected. We are all part of one." In addition, Ruach Tova, which was adopted by the Arison Group, works to encourage volunteerism by providing comprehensive assistance to connect those interested in volunteering with those in need of volunteers. Arison is also the founder and former chairwoman of Matan - Your Way to Give, an affiliate of United Way International.

Alongside these wide-ranging philanthropic activities, the Arison Group owns Arison Investments—Israel's la



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est private investment group. Operating in 38 countries on five continents, Arison Investments' main activities are finance, real estate and infrastructure, water, and energy.

"Business was always part of my DNA as far back as I can remember," Arison says. "I grew up in a house where I ate, drank, and breathed business all the time. It was part of the atmosphere around me."

Arison Investments was founded by Ted Arison in 1991. When he was nearing the end of his life in 1999 and asked his daughter to take charge of Bank Hapoalim, she demurred, citing her qualifications. "You have intuition," Ted Arison told her. "And that's all you need." And indeed this intuition has successfully guided Arison as she developed and grew her business empire to its current stature.

Arison Investments' current holdings include the controlling stake in Bank Hapoalim, the leading financial institution in Israel; the controlling stake in Shikun & Binui, Israel's leading real estate and infrastructures company, recognized as a world leader in the field of sustainability; and several other privately owned companies, including Israel Salt Industries, the country's largest salt producer.

Miya, a global company aimed at providing solutions to maximize water-use efficiency, was founded by Shari Arison in 2006 and has grown to establish itself as a world leader in its field. Miya's goal is set high: the reduction of underground pipe leakage that wastes water at a cost of \$18 billion to utility companies.

"To me," she explains, "business and philanthropy are a platform for doing good, for making our world a better place to live in. I believe in businesses that care not only for the bottom line, but also for the future of our children and our planet. This is the way to create a better world—a world that has a strong economy and equally strong moral values. We've seen enough evidence that running a busi-

ness without values doesn't work in the world anymore. Anything you do that is harmful to others will eventually come back to harm yourself."

Arison has been instrumental in shaping and directing Bank Hapoalim's vision—Financial Freedom. This has led the bank to prioritize the goal of better educating its customers about personal financial planning, providing them with money management tools and other products that will benefit them over the long term.

Another great example of Arison's vision is evident at

Shikun & Binui, which means housing and construction. Arison was a pioneer in making sustainability an unshakable pillar of the company's vision and ensuring that it was subsequently put into practice—a shopping mall recently built in the desert city of Be'er Sheva was designed to exploit natural lighting and ventilation.

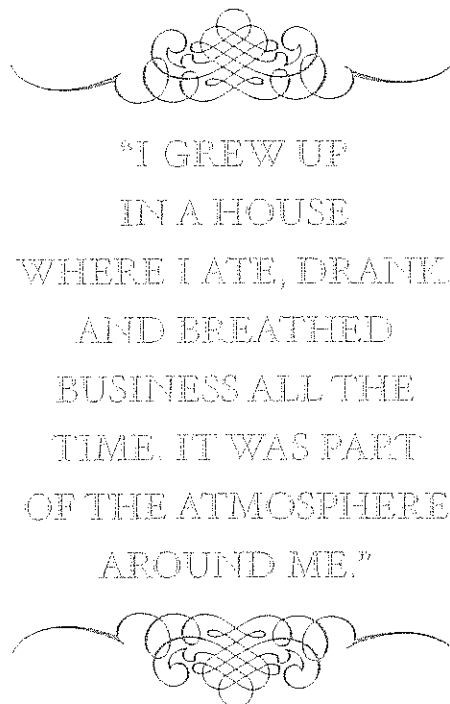
"Shikun & Binui built the largest desalination plant of its kind in the world, which has been supplying 20 percent of Israel's home water consumption since last year," Arison notes proudly, describing one of the company's recently completed projects.

Seeing the material and metaphysical as two sides of the same coin has made Arison a unique person-

ality in the corporate world; not surprisingly, the publication of *Birth - When the Spiritual and the Material Come Together* aroused a great deal of interest, both in Israel and internationally.

"I was very, very introverted and shy growing up," she writes in the book. "I had to work hard on making connections. But there was also an inner voice bringing it outward, pushing me, and driving me."

Arison feels that the greatest reward for her high-visibility public profile is the feedback she constantly gets from those inspired by her journey—and that's why she aspires to further extend Good Deeds Day to every willing nation



on the planet, hoping to bring on board as many people as possible to join her in doing good.

“Everything is generated through choice and will—the will to make a difference. When one leader chooses to make a difference, he or she creates circles around them that grow and grow, and that difference is felt widely and deeply,” she says.

“I believe everyone can be that leader. It doesn’t matter if you are a businessperson, a philanthropist, a teacher, or a farmer. Each and every one of us can make a difference.”

As Arison says simply, “The main goal is to have the circles keep growing—growing the good in the world.” **LM**