

Editorial

SEPTEMBER 2006

From the editor

Israel

Thanks to Ophir Optics, in June I had the opportunity to visit Jerusalem where the company's main manufacturing plant is located. Ophir makes the vital lenses and mirrors needed by lasers to focus the light beam and to transit the light. Seeing what it takes to produce a lens was quite fascinating. Ophir starts with a raw piece of zinc selenide, grinds it or turns it to the needed specifications and then coats it with various substances to provide enhanced performance and scratch protection .

After seeing the company's manufacturing facility and also interviewing a user of Ophir's new Black Magic lens, I had the opportunity, along with Ophir's U.S. marketing manager Dianne Devereaux-Michael, to see some of the Holy Land. We visited Old Jerusalem, the Dead Sea, Jericho and Masada. In Jericho I had the distinct pleasure of riding a camel. I would hope that everyone has this pleasure someday. One thing I noticed was that the camel got very testy if you failed to tip its owner.

From what I was told, there are only about 80 metal-fabricating job shops in all of Israel. Because it has no natural resources except the capability of its people, the country relies on exporting high-technology products to keep manufacturing alive and to create jobs.

If you were wondering about our safety while visiting Israel, I found out that much of the violence happens near the Gaza Strip, which is about 100 miles south of Jerusalem. And, the recent tragedies occurring in Israel and Lebanon didn't start until two weeks after my departure.

I am so grateful that I was able to experience the people and the culture of Israel, and I hope that peace can soon be restored to that part of the world so that others can have the same opportunity.

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