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# Bar Mitzvah Boy Celebrates With IDF

By Amichai Bacharach | February 18, 2016

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The Simpson family with IDF soldiers. (Credit: Mordy Simpson)

PREV 1 of 3 NEXT

His bar mitzvah approaching, Uriel Simpson of Teaneck decided he wanted something more meaningful than just a party for family and friends. He elaborated, “Since the State of Israel was created in 1948, way before I was born, there has been a need for soldiers to fight for our country against its many enemies. They are fighting not just for our country, but the survival of the Jewish people. Without Israel, Jews around the world would not have a homeland to go to.”

He and his family decided to run a campaign to raise money for IDF soldiers through the non-profit Yashar LaChayal organization. As Uriel explained, “For my bar mitzvah, I wanted to find an organization that would help these soldiers and give every penny that we raise directly to help them. Yashar LaChayal is an incredible organization that has zero overhead and delivers every dollar that is raised directly to the IDF soldiers that need supplies.” This is made possible by the generosity of a donor family who pays for all of Yashar LaChayal’s operating expenses.

For months, the Simpson family raised funds through a campaign page on Yashar LaChayal’s website. They were able to meet their goals for the campaign ahead of the family’s visit to Israel last week to celebrate Uriel’s bar mitzvah. Finally, the time had come for the culmination of Uriel’s bar mitzvah project.

Yashar LaChayal brought Uriel and his family to the Nahal Brigade’s training base in Israel’s arid Arad Plain. The soldiers were excited to welcome their guests, and gave them a VIP tour of the base. After dancing with the family in celebration of the bar mitzvah, the 120 soldiers of the platoon were presented by Uriel with water backpacks. The IDF provides its soldiers with basic canteens which are cumbersome, and the cool water they are filled with quickly turns warm in Israel’s blistering summers. The water backpacks provide easy access and insulation, and are highly in demand by IDF combat soldiers.

After parting with Nahal, the family was taken to the nearby Nevatim base of Israel’s Air Force. The base houses, among



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planes such as the F-16 jet flown by Israel’s legendary combat pilot and only astronaut, Ilan Ramon, in the destruction of

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Iraq's nuclear reactor in 1981. Uriel distributed backpacks and thermal shirts to a platoon of soldiers who are tasked with defending this vital air base. The shirts in particular were greatly appreciated by the soldiers, who received them at the height of the winter. Barely several miles from the base, in the south Hebron hills, there was an unusual amount of snow, and the cold weather was felt in the Nevatim area and beyond.

Thus ended Uriel's successful campaign. Two platoons of deserving soldiers were thrilled to receive the donations made possible by the Simpsons' family and friends, and Uriel experienced an incredibly meaningful and unique bar mitzvah which he and his family will never forget.

To find out more about the important work being done by Yashar LaChayal, visit their website at [www.yasharlachayal.org](http://www.yasharlachayal.org) (<http://www.yasharlachayal.org>).

By Amichai Bacharach

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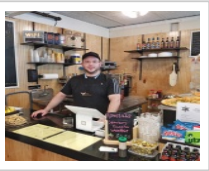


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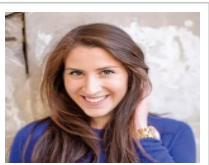
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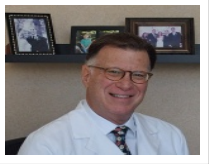


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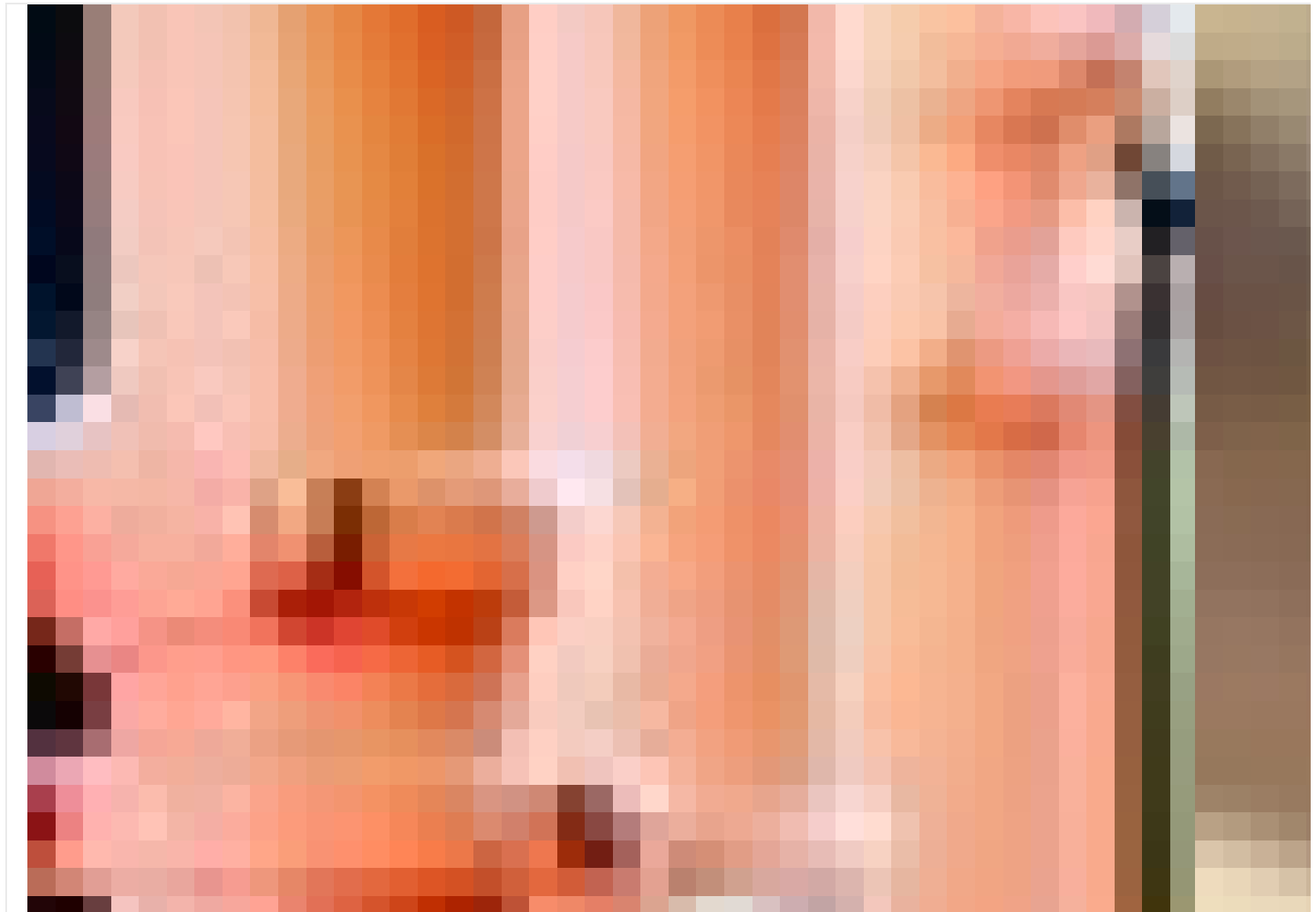
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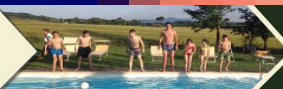


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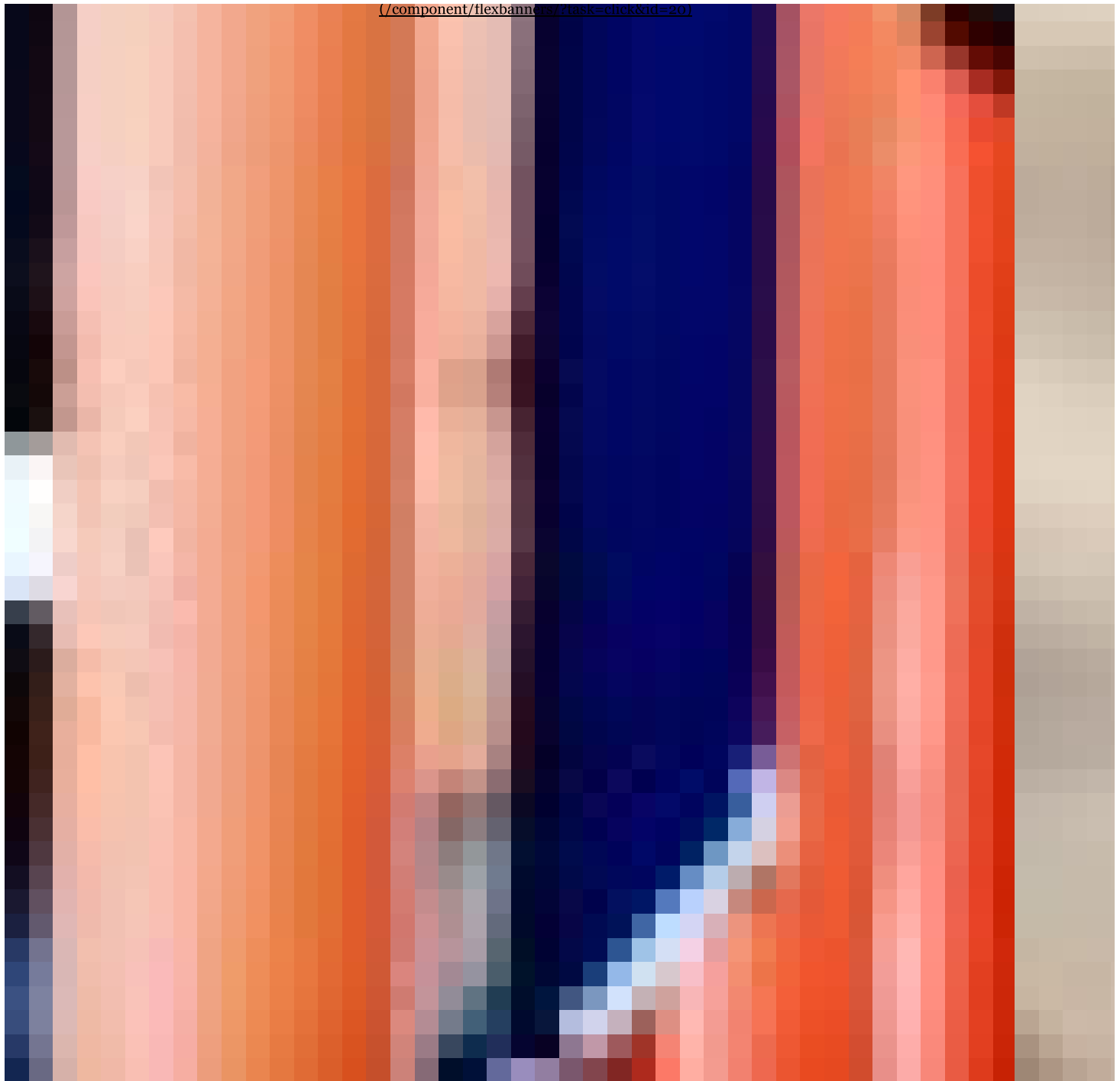
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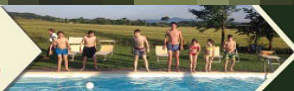


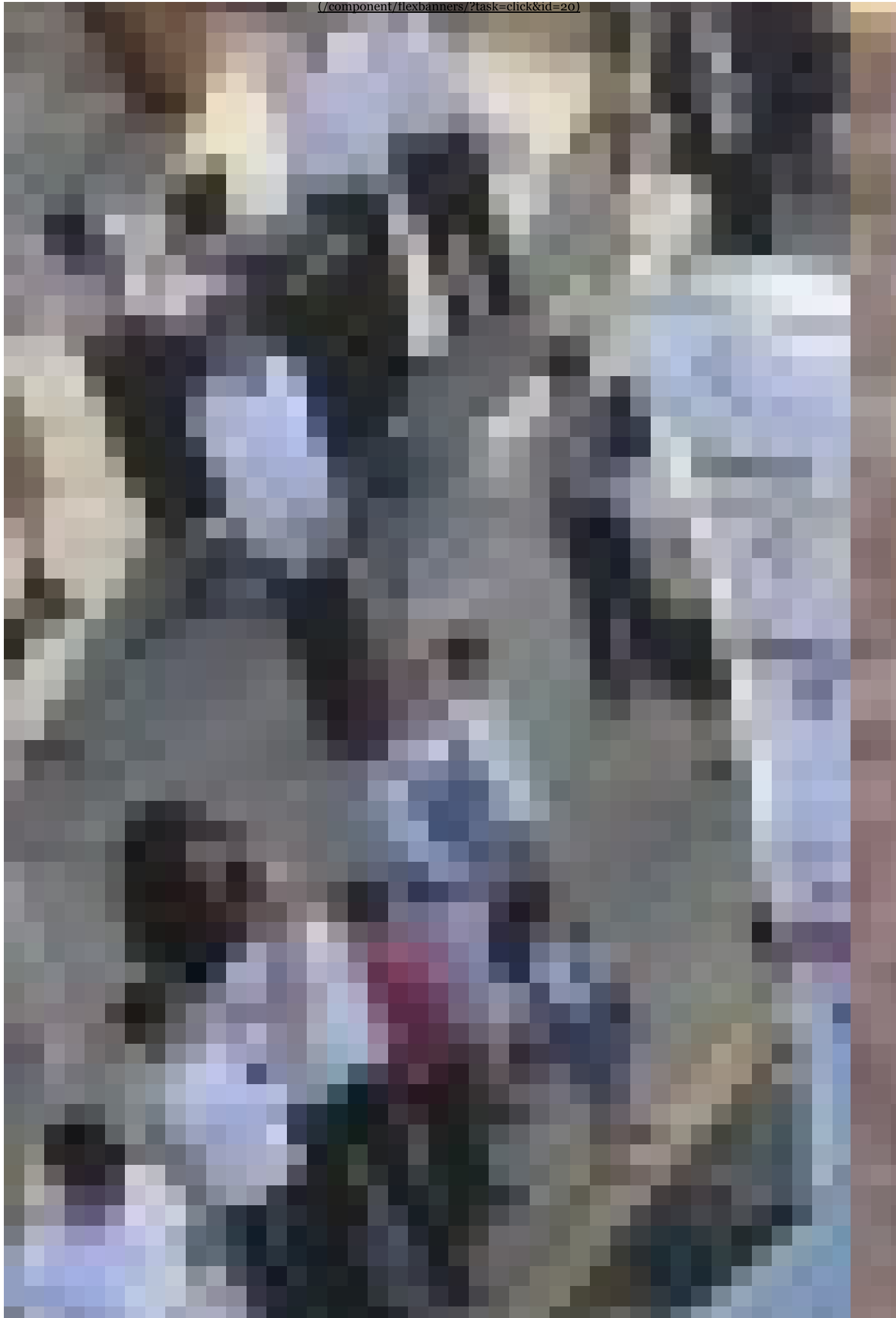
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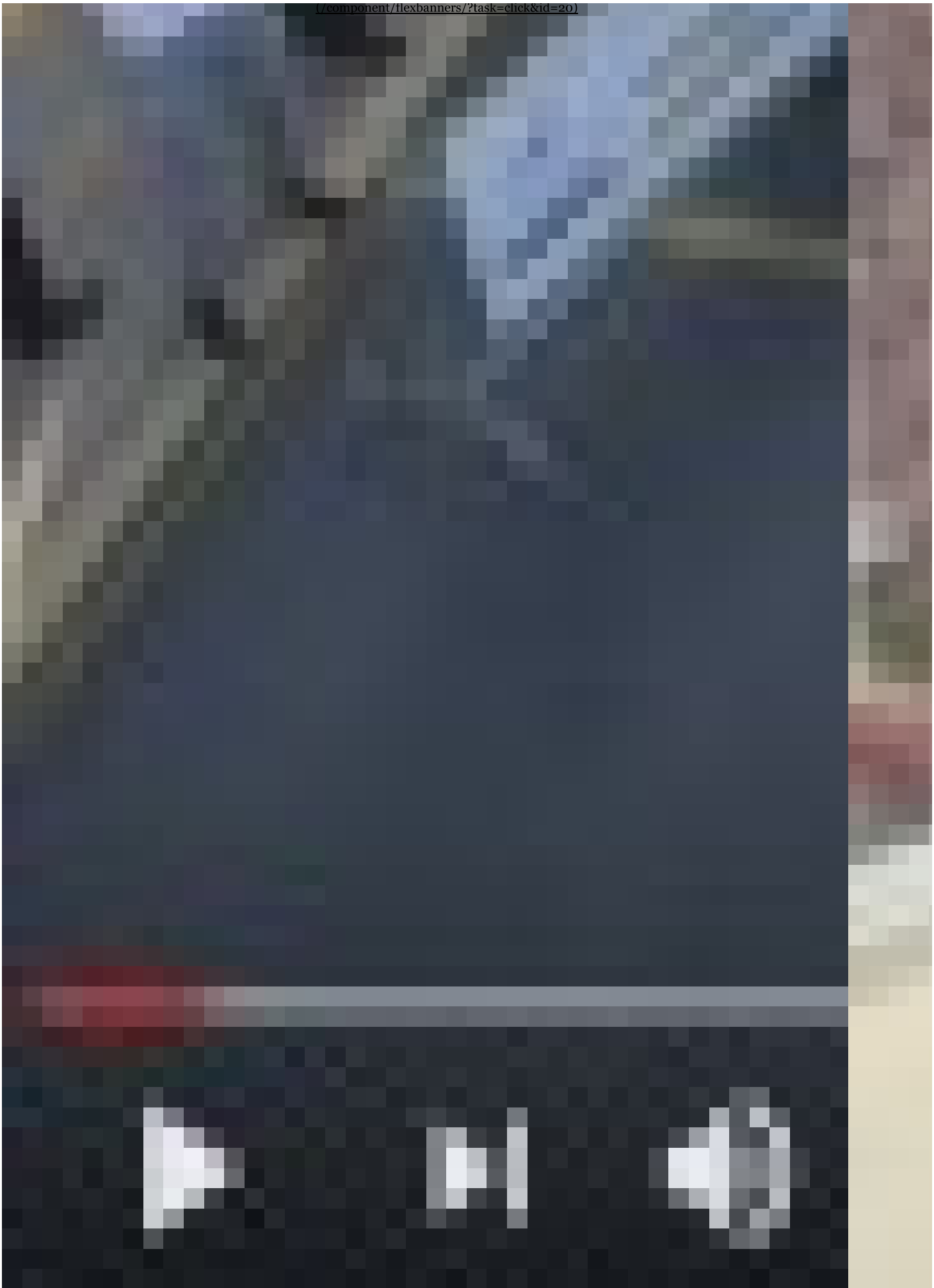
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