

THE Lifesaver

CHANUKAH 2023

Newsletter of Australian Friends of Magen David Adom Limited



MDA MOURNS



Saar Margolis HY"D



Amit Mann HY"D



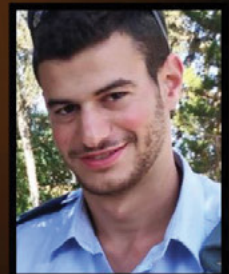
Aharon Haimov HY"D



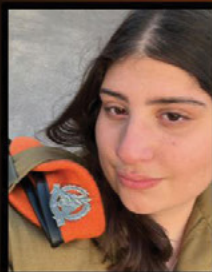
Uriel Bibi HY"D



Amir Tzur HY"D



Lior Arazi HY"D



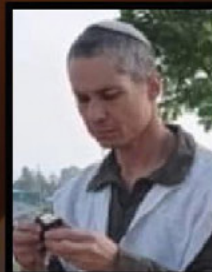
Lior Levy HY"D



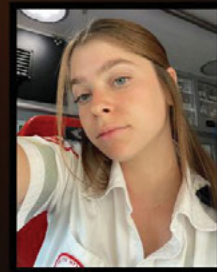
Shir Bitton HY"D



Avia Hezroni HY"D



Dr. Eytan Neeman HY"D



Yarin Peled HY"D



**MAY THEY REST IN PEACE
BARUCH DAYAN HA'EMET**

President Tony Ziegler reflects on the past year & tragic events in Israel

On October 7, Simchat Torah, the worst disaster befell Israel and the Jewish people in 50 years, and the worst loss of Jewish life on a single day since the Holocaust.

More than 1200 Israelis and foreigners from about 40 countries were murdered in several attacks that day. Tragically, numerous Magen David Adom drivers and paramedics including volunteers were murdered that day. Some were drivers who were shot dead in ambulances enroute to saving lives.

Others were paramedics such as Amit Mann, a 22 year old, who was a trained first aid instructor, a singer and actor from Kibbutz Be'eri. On the morning of October 7, Amit quickly went to the dental clinic and started treating the wounded, dispensing lifesaving first aid and medical care, whilst calling for backup which unfortunately didn't get there in time. She was saving lives for more than six hours, some of it which she livestreamed with her family and Magen David Adom offices, waiting for the army to rescue them. Tragically before that could happen, she and her patients were discovered and were all shot dead. Amit was still wearing her medical gloves, pleading for the shooting to stop. Listening to her last moments is just heartbreaking. May her memory be a blessing.

Many other Magen David Adom staff and volunteers were wounded or killed on or after October 7, in their active or reserve duty in the IDF

or while saving lives with MDA. See the image on the front page of *The Lifesaver* which shows some of our team who have given their lives for Israel, truly the ultimate sacrifice.

Sadly, several ambulances and Medicycles were destroyed and damaged, intentionally burnt to the ground or riddled with bullet holes. We urgently need funds to replace these lifesaving vehicles, as well as all the medical equipment for them.

Our Patron Mr Bob Magid, together with several other major donors, helped us purchase a Skoda bullet proof armoured command and control vehicle which is already now in service in Israel.

Many supporters came to Temple Emanuel for a Benefit Concert for Israel, organised by Wolper Jewish Hospital with all ticket sales coming to Magen David Adom. We especially thank the teams at Emanuel and Wolper, particularly Richard Glass, Rabbi Kamins, Lina Saffro and Nora Goodridge for bringing it to fruition. We also thank our world-class performers, pianist Simon Tedeschi and soprano Eleanor Lyons who filled the room with their music.

At this time of year, we have our annual Membership Campaign. We thank all our members for

your ongoing love and support. Please join or renew your Membership to continue your support of Magen David Adom.

Bequests are an important way for you to support Magen David Adom into the future. Many people leave funds for an ambulance, or for a new MDA Ambulance station. Please contact Tamara Lowbeer for a confidential chat about leaving a bequest to Magen David Adom.

As always, I ask that you support our corporate sponsors if you can. They give generously to Magen David Adom and we should all reciprocate and give them our business whenever possible.

I would like to thank our many Christian Friends for their support of donations and messages of solidarity over this tragic time in Israel.

As the year draws to a close, I would also like to thank my Board for their assistance during the year, to the staff and to the volunteers who so willingly give their time. We have moved to a new office in Bondi Junction, we ask you to please call before visiting.

Wishing you all Chag Chanukah Sameach! Am Yisrael Chai!



MDA treats the wounded under fire

On the morning of October 7, 30 minutes before the night shift was about to end, MDA emergency phone operators began receiving calls of injuries along the Gaza strip and kibbutzim in the Western Negev, under the cover of rocket barrages.

MDA teams immediately started responding to hundreds of emergency calls along the front lines, arriving in ambulances, medicycles, specialty vehicles and their own private vehicles.

In besieged areas, the phone operators – experienced EMTs and paramedics – provided medical instructions for initial self-rescue and treatment for hours until MDA teams were able to reach them.

Amit Mann, 22, MDA paramedic, was treating the wounded at the community clinic on Kibbutz Be'eri. She was able to contact the MDA call centre, reporting she was trapped with the injured and the dead, as terrorists attempted to break into the clinic, before she was shot and killed.

Tragically, Amit Mann was not the only medic lost during the early attacks.

Senior EMT Aharon Haimov, 25, was shot and killed in an MDA ambulance on his way to treat the wounded in his city, Ofakim, during a surprise attack.

Senior EMT, Avia Hezroni, 69, was shot and killed by terrorists in Kibbutz Be'eri.

IDF soldier and MDA volunteer, Lior Levy, 19, was killed in a battle in the Gaza Envelope.

MDA volunteer Staff Sergeant (res), EMT Saar Margolis, was killed in action while serving as a member of the security standby team in Kissufim.

IDF soldier and MDA volunteer, EMT Shir Biton, 19, was killed in battle in the Western Negev Communities.

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Responding units found themselves targeted by the terrorists who ambushed them on their way to treat the wounded.
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MDA paramedics were targeted on October 13 when a rocket fired from Gaza hit the fence of the MDA station in the city of Sderot, destroying four ambulances. Additionally, nine MDA ambulances and one medicycle were hit by shrapnel.

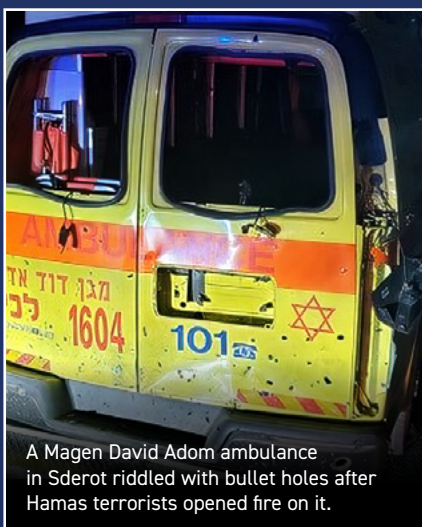
Hundreds of staff members and thousands of MDA volunteers were called up for emergency reserve duty in the IDF, MDA is on the highest alert all over the country ready to respond on any front – along the Northern border, Eastern borders, in the areas surrounding the Gaza Strip and on the home front.

Since the initial attack on October 7, MDA personnel saw more violence and casualties, and used up equipment worth tens of millions of dollars.

Evacuation teams continue to work non-stop to transport the wounded to hospitals in the centre and northern areas of the country, by helicopter, ambulances, MICUs and special vehicles, allowing hospitals nearer to the conflict zone in the south to continue to receive further casualties.

In addition to the ongoing medical response, MDA launched massive logistical coordination to continue providing services during the conflict. The organisation's teams are prepared for about 3 months of fighting.

Damage to ambulances and equipment



A Magen David Adom ambulance in Sderot riddled with bullet holes after Hamas terrorists opened fire on it.

Since the beginning of the war, many of MDA's ambulances were intentionally damaged and torched or blown up by Hamas terrorists to prevent any attempt to save victims. An enormous amount of medical equipment has been consumed including stretchers, bleeding control devices and blood collection equipment.

Our community has been extremely responsive to our many emails and calls for support. To date we have sent \$3 million to help replace helmets, vests and extensive medical supplies and equipment.

Additionally, MDA Israel sent out an urgent request to Friend Societies around the world asking for three armoured command and control vehicles.

We are proud to say that four Australian Friends of Magen David Adom donors have generously stepped forward to finance one of these vitally important vehicles. Other donors have enabled us to send orders to replace five First Responder Medicycles and a Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance and the phone continues to ring with donations and messages of support.

Fortified underground blood bank processes unprecedented quantities

Hours after Hamas militants attacked southern Israel on Oct 7, the country's new fortified, subterranean blood bank kicked into action.

Prof Eilat Shinar, director of the national blood services division of Magen David Adom said the centre provided tens of thousands of units of blood in the days that followed the Hamas attacks.

"We worked very hard to supply everything they needed," she said. "We had many injured and we had to treat them." The Marcus Blood Services Centre has the capacity to store almost twice the amount of blood of its predecessor at Tel Hashomer — half a million units a year compared with 270,000 — and has processed more blood than has ever been held in Israel's reserves.

“ Since the war began, thousands of people have stood in line for hours to donate blood. ”

In early October, the centre received 5,000 units of blood in one day — five times more than usual. The ideal blood donors are those with Type O, which can be given safely to anyone and can help people more quickly. Once blood is donated, it is transferred to the hospitals and given



Preparing and packing blood supplied for distribution

directly to the Israeli military to treat wounded soldiers on the battlefield. During war, blood is part of the resuscitation process and the idea is to have a stock, to be able to give blood as soon as it's needed," said Prof Shinar.

Photos of the hostages on back of ambulances

In solidarity with the pain felt by the families of those kidnapped, Magen David Adom decided to place posters on the rear windows of all the ambulances and MICUs across Israel, with the names and faces of those being held in captivity in Gaza.



Without hesitation Michael ran into danger to save lives

Michael Levi, EMT and ambulance driver from Netanya MDA station is one of the many MDA heroes. This is his story.

"I woke up at 6:30 to the sound of a siren, and immediately started going over the reports, realising something abnormal is going on. I texted my station, offering to help, and a few minutes later, my team and I were in an ambulance on our way to the south.

“ I didn't hesitate, I had to do it, despite the clear danger awaiting. ”

Multiple sirens were sounding as we got closer. There were smoke stacks all around us, and horrific reports just kept coming in... those were the moments when I realized I might not be getting back home. I buried the thought and kept on going.

We reached MDA's Ofakim station and begun setting up a mass-casualty evacuation station, all while sirens are sounding. The casualties kept on coming, and soon the severity

of the attack dawned on me. I attended multiple casualties, yet one stands out in my mind: a member of the security forces with severe gunshot wounds was brought in to us. We quickly moved him into the ambulance and while evacuating to hospital we performed lifesaving treatments including stopping his severe bleeding.

He grabbed my hand tightly and looked at me while tears welled up in his eyes: "I have a family, please save me, don't leave me." I promised him that I would do everything in my power to treat him and stabilize his condition. I treated soldiers, young soldiers, who gave their all to protect us and paid a heavy price.

The incident and sights will be forever imprinted in my memory, yet I'm fully prepared for the difficult mission up ahead, and am fully planning on staying and being there for my friends in MDA, for the citizens and the soldiers. Because that's what I must do."

Paramedics meet brave 6 year old they saved

A month after “Black Saturday”, Magen David Adom paramedics Gali and Yarin reunited with six-year-old Ofek, whom they rescued.

For the meeting, they brought Ofek a gift of a unicorn doll on which was written “To Ofek the heroine, with great love, Gali and Yarin from MDA”

Yarin Shetrit, MDA Paramedic treated 6-year-old Ofek from Holit on Black Saturday and he recounts the events of that day:

“That Saturday, I was on night shift. At 06:30 am, we heard the Red Alert sirens and started receiving the reports of the terrorist infiltration.

We realised that something serious was going on and immediately headed to the southern region as part of a reinforcement team with a mobile intensive care unit (MICU). We were in the Ofakim area and treated quite a few casualties. At a certain point, we were called to a border crossing next to the Gaza border. A military vehicle arrived with soldiers and when the back door opened, we saw Ofek, a 6-year old girl, with a gunshot wound to her leg, wrapped

in a tourniquet. We understood that every minute was critical to prevent an even more serious injury.

“
To Ofek the heroine, with great love, Gali and Yarin from MDA
”

Ofek had lost quite a bit of blood, she was calm, not crying. We transferred her to the intensive care unit and began medical treatment. The soldiers who had brought her said that her parents and grandmother were also injured by gunfire, but they didn't know what condition the family was in.

We realised that more injured people were expected to arrive at the junction, and requested the MDA dispatch centre should send helicopters and intensive care vehicles to us.

We took Ofek to hospital in a serious condition. Sometime later, we heard that the whole family was injured when a grenade was launched at their house. We were relieved to hear they had all survived.”

Gali, the EMT who saved Ofek said during the meeting: “What stuck about Ofek was her calmness, a little girl who was badly injured and was so calm, it's not something trivial. Meeting her here today, walking on two legs and smiling, is very exciting.”



Massacre at the music festival

Na'ama Gal was shot by terrorists at the party in Reim on Saturday October 7.

Terrified, Na'ama hid in a garbage container for 3 hours after she was shot 4 times when she was finally rescued and brought in a serious condition to MDA teams. Noam Waisbuch, MDA paramedic and Noa Shimoni MDA EMT treated her and took her to hospital. After she recuperated and was discharged from the hospital, Na'ama met the MDA team who came to her house in Haifa.

Noa recalled: “When we first met Na'ama she had been shot multiple times and her condition was critical and unstable. She spoke a few words to us and then lost consciousness. At that time, we didn't realise what she had been through.

During the horrendous massacre Na'ama and her friends hid inside a garbage container, some were

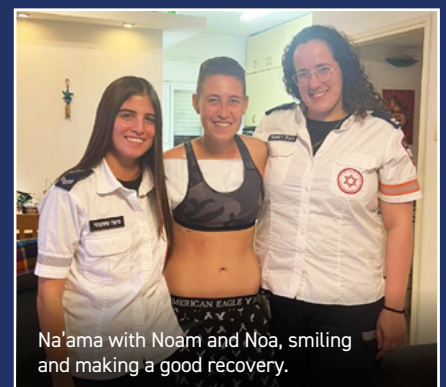
injured and bleeding, others were murdered. We worked on her all the way to hospital, there was not a moment to waste. We immediately returned to the field and continued attending to other victims where we saw sights that we will never forget; all of us were in danger.”

Noam and Noa recalled, “Still, Na'ama was the one who caught our hearts and thoughts, we wondered how she was and if she had survived. By chance we heard that she was looking for her rescuers.

Na'ama's story became our point of light in all of this darkness. We were so moved to hear that not only is she standing on her own two feet but was also recovering and had returned home. It is a real medical miracle.” Noam and Noa visited her

for an emotional reunion and said: “We finally meet, for a change not surrounded by blood, sand and smoke.”

Na'ama was so excited to meet the MDA team said: “You are my angels, even a thousand words won't express how grateful I am to you, I'm alive thanks to you. I am so grateful.”



Wolper hospital concert for MDA

On Sunday 29 October the Wolper Jewish Hospital thoughtfully and graciously hosted a Concert for Israel with all the proceeds going to Australian Friends of Magen David Adom.

The Emanuel Synagogue Woollahra generously provided the venue for this wonderful concert which featured two of Australia's finest musical artists, world renowned pianist Simon Tedeschi and

international soprano Eleanor Lyons, who performed a selection of vocal and instrumental favourites.

The event was very well attended and provided an uplifting and welcome interlude at this stressful and worrying time for our beloved Medinat Yisrael and for Jewish communities everywhere. Thank you Wolper Jewish Hospital, President Richard Glass and staff and Emanuel Synagogue, Rabbi Kamins and staff!



Tony Ziegler, Melissa McCurdie, Richard Glass

EMTs make time to help farmers



In addition to treating the casualties, MDA personnel carried out extensive humanitarian activities: delivering medications to households, collecting food and essential equipment for residents displaced from their homes and for soldiers and ambulance teams in combat zones. MDA personnel also assisted in moving the bodies of those killed in the attacks and in notifying families of the fallen.

Others are helping farmers around the country with produce that desperately needs harvesting.

After answering emergency calls from residents in the south on that Black Saturday, these five EMTs from MDA's 101 Emergency Call Centre travelled to Moshav Ohad in the Western Negev to help pick tomatoes. Proud to help in any way they can.

Moriah College raises money for MDA

On MDA Day the years 8-12 Moriah students raised \$2,100 for MDA's war effort, in a very creative way.

Organised by Davi Smith, the students took turns to collectively run 88km (Golan Heights), row 110km (Lake of Galilee), cycle 156km (Haifa to Jerusalem) and hike 30km (Jerusalem Trail) on gym equipment to raise money and awareness for Magen David Adom.

The MDA medicycle was there to add to the atmosphere and the students were given MDA wrist bands and memorabilia. Thank you to everyone who participated, it's a great effort and truly appreciated.



Ruby and Zara try out the First Responder medicycle

MDA Tzedakah boxes

Having a Tzedakah box in the home is a reminder of the importance of giving charity to a worthy cause like Magen David Adom which saves lives in Israel every day. It is a good way of introducing children to the concept of giving and starting a conversation about MDA. Colourful MDA Tzedakah boxes are FREE.

If you have a tzedakah box which is full or would like to have one or, maybe you have a business and would like to display a box for customers or clients. Whichever it is, please phone the MDA office on **02 9358 2521** and a volunteer will make arrangements to collect the full box or drop one off.

If you would like to offer your time as volunteer collector for a few hours, please let the office know. Every coin and every minute of your time makes a difference.



Making a timeless investment in Israel

A bequest to Magen David Adom embodies a deep commitment to saving lives and providing vital healthcare services in Israel.

As the national emergency medical, disaster, ambulance, and blood service, MDA plays a pivotal role in ensuring the health and well-being of the people in Israel. A bequest to MDA serves as a lasting testament to an individual's dedication to the preservation of life and ensuring that Magen David Adom is able to continue to provide cutting edge healthcare services in the years to come.

By choosing to include Magen David Adom in your will, individuals contribute to MDA's capacity to respond swiftly and effectively to emergencies, accidents, and terror across Israel. MDA's extensive network of ambulances, blood donation centres, and medical professionals relies on philanthropic support from around the world to maintain its lifesaving operations.

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A bequest to MDA is a timeless investment in Magen David Adom.

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It ensures that the organisation can continuously upgrade its facilities, acquire advanced medical technologies, and train healthcare professionals and volunteers to meet evolving healthcare challenges.

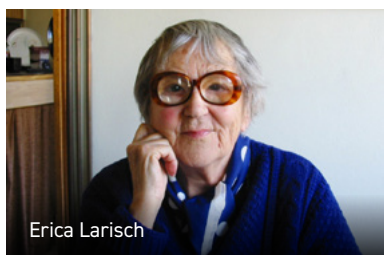
Your bequest to Magen David Adom reflects a deep belief in MDA's dedication to humanitarian values, including impartiality, neutrality, and volunteering. It underscores the importance of supporting an organisation that transcends political and social divisions, focusing solely on the noble mission of saving lives and providing healthcare services to all those who need it, when they need it.

Magen David Adom today is benefitting from the generosity of past bequestors, such as Roger Benou, Erica Larisch and John Rector.

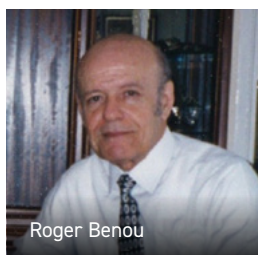
For enquiries or a confidential talk about leaving a bequest, please contact Tamara Lowbeer on 0413 084 994 or complete the Confidential Response Card included with this mailing.



John Rector



Erica Larisch



Roger Benou

Make a double Mitzvah with with e-cards & peer to peer campaigns

Many of you may wonder what you can do for MDA day to day.

Rather than giving chocolates or flowers for a birthday or simcha or when you are invited, why not give a colourful e-card which you can access via our website, <https://www.magendavidadom.org.au/e-cards>. There is a wide choice of images and it is a quick and easy way to honour family and friends. It's a double mitzvah – your friends will appreciate it and MDA certainly will.

With a few clicks you can select a design, write a message, pay and receive a receipt, it's easy! The card acknowledges that a donation has been made to Magen David Adom but not the amount.

Another option when planning a simcha, is to set up a Peer to Peer campaign on the Keela database. You can add a bit of information about the simcha, set a target and your relatives and friends can see who has already given and whether the target is close. You might decide to set a goal to fundraise for something for MDA like a Defibrillator. You can liaise with the MDA office on 02 9358 2521 and once you know how much the item costs, you can then offer it as an option to your family and friends. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible. Contact the office if you need help setting it up.

Every donation large and small makes a difference.

www.magendavidadom.org.au/e-cards



With thanks to our sponsors & supporters



To register your interest in becoming an AusFMDA sponsor, please phone the MDA office on 02 9358 2521 or email admin@magendavidadom.org.au

Membership 2024: it's that time of year

This is the Membership issue of *The Lifesaver*, newsletter. Now more than ever, your membership is vital, showing your belief and loyalty in Magen David Adom's mission to save lives.

You are "ambassadors" in the community who can share reliable and up-to date information about MDA's lifesaving heroes, with family, friends and colleagues.

Last year many of you selected to automatically renew your membership and since membership is for the calendar year, January to December, it will be deducted soon, unless we hear otherwise. For those of you who did not opt to automatically renew, please consider going online to www.magendavidadom.org.au/MEMBERSHIP or complete the enclosed membership and donation form and post it off in the reply paid envelope included in this mailing.

Family membership is \$95
Individual membership is \$65

Once again, this year a very successful Members only First Aid Course was held in July focusing

on basic first aid in the home and community and a Member discount was offered for tickets to the Annual Movie Night held in December.

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Please renew or become a member today and be part of the next lifesaving miracle. What could be more important than helping to save lives in Israel?

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Free Member First Aid Course earlier this year

AusFMDA Our people

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