

# Amcha Newsletter

National Israeli Center for Psychosocial Support of Survivors  
of the Holocaust and the Second Generation



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**Amcha**  
23 Hillel St,  
PO Box 2930  
Jerusalem, Israel

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Holocaust Day -  
April 2010

## Israel's Moral Test

Yom Hashoa - Holocaust Memorial Day - is a time of reflection for the whole country. For Amcha and our survivors it is a day when the memories and wounds of the past are even more real, more painful. It is also a day when these same survivors can be proud of their life's achievements, on both a personal and State level. They have given so much to Israel, yet have received so little in return.

For many years Amcha has been the only professional organization throughout Israel supporting Holocaust survivors in a unique combination of three main services:

- Post-traumatic psychotherapy
- Volunteer home visits to Survivors
- Rich cultural programs in social rehabilitation clubs

Through the generous help of our donors we can ensure the continuation and expansion of the psychotherapy and volunteers programs for the years to come. However, the future of our social clubs is not that clear.

The Israeli government, at least since 2006, is aware of the special needs of Holocaust survivors. Nevertheless, the important connection between the mental and social aspects of the issue has not yet become clear to the decision makers. The Israeli government is still looking for creative ideas that will enable the future existence of the Amcha Social Rehabilitation Clubs that are so vital to the emotional health of the survivors. We believe that this is one of the most important moral tests of our country.

Let us hope that our government, together with our friends around the world, will support us and thereby enable our survivors to visit an Amcha club a few times a week - a place to get together with people of similar background as well as with Amcha's caring staff, and feel they are not alone.

*Aryeh Barnea, Chairman*



## Israeli Airforce hosts Amcha

[amcha@amcha.org](mailto:amcha@amcha.org)

tel: 972-2-6250634

fax: 972-2-6250669



"It is only because of you - Holocaust survivors who fought for the State of Israel - that I am here today," said the air force squadron commander to the group of 100 Holocaust survivors from Amcha Ashkelon.

In a special event in honor of Holocaust Martyrs' and Heroes' Remembrance Day, 12 April 2010, the Israeli Airforce base in Hatzor hosted members from Amcha Ashkelon for the day. The day started with a moving official ceremony with participation of both soldiers and Amcha survivors. Yoel Levinger, originally from Hungary, told the audience of his special story of survival, arrival in Israel and then his army service. Yoel spoke directly to the hundreds of young soldiers "to think of the road I have taken from Auschwitz to be standing here in front of you today - our country's future - is like a dream."

Dalia Azoulay, was only a young child, when she and her sister were hidden by a Catholic run dormitory with 33 other Jewish children from her town in Northern France. Through her personal story, Dalia paid tribute to the Righteous Among the Nations. In 1944, the nuns again endangered their own lives when they helped Dalia and her sister over the border to Switzerland. "It is only because of the kindness of these people that I am standing here before you today," said Dalia. After the ceremony, the soldiers and survivors broke up into smaller discussion groups where both were given the opportunity to express their thoughts and feelings on this very special day. A recurring theme from the soldiers was their thanks and admiration of the survivors for all they had gone through and then achieved for the State of Israel. The day was sealed with a tour of the base, including the officers' quarters, the debriefing rooms and even a close look at fighter planes. Both the soldiers and survivors expressed their wish that this would be the first meeting in a long cooperation between the Airforce and Amcha.

## Intergenerational Meetings on Yom Hashoa

The Haifa branch of Amcha commemorated Yom Hashoa together with the wider community. 55 soldiers from the Navy and Prison Services participated in an intergenerational meeting with 25 survivors. Together they watched a documentary about



Yehuda Poliker, singer and 2nd generation Holocaust survivor, where he speaks openly of his life growing up in the shadow of the Holocaust. Following the movie, the soldiers and survivors were broken up into discussion groups where individuals were given the opportunity to share experiences and thoughts. For some of the soldiers, including new

immigrants from Ethiopia and Circassians, it was the first time they had heard Holocaust testimony. For the survivors it was interesting to hear of these same soldiers struggle and journey to Israel.

Various intergenerational meetings with survivors, their children and grandchildren, were also held on Yom Hashoa in other Amcha centers around the country.

## Amcha in the Media

Amcha received extensive media coverage on Yom Hashoa, including:

- Channel 10 morning program "[The Professionals](#)"  
Roni Frishof, a Clinical Psychologist from Amcha Tel Aviv explains how Amcha helps survivors laugh and be happy(Hebrew).
- "[Trapped Sounds - Brundibar](#)" on Channel 1  
An article about an emotional meeting between Holocaust survivors and teenagers performing in a play about life in a ghetto, with Amcha Beer Sheva director, Bela Cantor. (Hebrew with English subtitles)
- Channel 2 morning program "[Living Well](#)"  
Amcha Tel Aviv director, Hani Oron, speaks about the different perceptions of the Holocaust & survivors for 2nd & 3rd generations. (Hebrew)
- The "[Today](#)" show on Alhurra television  
Yona Altshuler, a survivor from Amcha Jerusalem is interviewed as part of an article about Yom Hashoa. (Arabic)
- Amcha Netanya on [Radio 90FM](#)  
Marga Ganon-Junowicz, Amcha Netanya director, and Lea Shimoni, Amcha Netanya Social Club Director speak about Amcha's unique services for Holocaust survivors. (Hebrew)
- "[Voices from the Past](#)" - article in Tzomet Hasharon newspaper. (Hebrew)
- "[The lost home is returned to Holocaust Survivors by Amcha](#)" - article in Maariv newspaper (Hebrew)

Reshet Alef, the State run Radio station is broadcasting a first of its kind hour long weekly magazine program "Memory Forever" dedicated to the Holocaust with personal stories, research, art etc. Each week another survivor from Amcha branches around the country will be interviewed.

## In Brief

- Amcha Co-founder and President **Prof. Haim Dasberg**, has recently released his autobiography with the support of Amcha. The Hebrew book called "Sefer Haim" (Book of Life) tells of his fascinating life story, from hiding with a Christian family in Holland to rebuilding his life in Israel and setting up Amcha.
- The new Amcha office in Ramat Gan will be officially opened by Mayor Zvi Bar on May 12, 2010.
- "The Second Generation & Transfer Between Generations - Artistic Expression & the Art of Treatment" A one day Amcha [professional staff conference](#) to be held on Monday 24 May 2010.
- The official dedication of the Ashkelon branch of Amcha, the **Margaret Busher House**, will be held on June 7, 2010 at 18:00.



Amcha's services are made possible through the generosity of supporters in Israel and around the world. Please [click here](#) to see how you too can help.