

# Amcha Newsletter

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



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Issue: 5

"If..."

August 2010

**If** you were born into a world where Jews were systematically persecuted.

If you had suffered from hunger and thirst for many years...

If you had lost your family without a single word of farewell...

If you had been yearning for your parents and for someone to protect you, but felt completely powerless...

If you had spent years in camps...

If you happened to be one of the very few who miraculously survived...



**If**, after the war, you immediately started a new life and had to put the needs of your country before your own needs...

If you had to learn a new language and find a way to support your family...

If you had to work hard to build a better future for your family but never demanded anything for yourself...

If you had constantly tried to keep everybody else happy...

If you had felt a cloud in your heart, but could not shed tears..

If you wanted to share your inner life with another human being, but felt that the words you were about to express were stuck in your throat, or even when you did try to talk with someone, they would not or could not really understand...

If you had the need to reveal what nobody had ever heard...



**If**, as you grew older, you felt that you did not want to become dependent on anyone - or become a burden on your children...

If you had lived such a life of sacrifice and never asked for anything in return...

**Would you not be entitled** to a little support in old age?  
**Would you not be entitled** to feel that you also belong to the human race for once in your life?

**Would you not be entitled:**

... to learn how to cry again?

Ruti

Join Our List

Join Our Mailing List!

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- ... to start to remember and also to forget?
- ... to receive a friendly hug?
- ... to have someone who listens when memories overwhelm?
- ... to get a visit when you feel lonely?
- ... to celebrate your very survival?

**Amcha** is doing just that - we assist the survivors in surviving their survival!

### Issachar Y. sings on the web



When the Nazi's approached the small town of Brzozów in southern Poland, *Issachar's* mother gave him some bread and told him to escape in the direction of the Russian border. The last sentence she told him was: "*Shochi, Zey nit fargessen zoy yiddishkeit!*" (Issachar, don't forget your Jewish roots!). That was the last time he saw her. He heard that she was killed together with the rest of the family in Auschwitz. But these last words continued to follow *Issachar* during his entire life until today and he views it as a precious legacy from her. He learned the Holy Scriptures, practiced righteousness and was also a cantor in the local synagogue for many years. Today, however, *Issachar* is not able any longer to care for himself. After five strokes which left him almost totally paralyzed, he is totally dependent on the help of a Philippine caretaker. But when he gets home visits from **Amcha (Beer Sheva)**, he lightens up and gets the spark back in his eyes. As the old legacy of his mother is translated into action, he finds expression for his *Yiddishkeit* again. It helps him to find a meaning with life despite all his difficulties, and helps him continue to survive for another day. In the film (click on picture above), *Issachar* is sitting in his wheelchair, singing a *hymn* in which he appeals to the Almighty: אל נא רפא נא לה!

### Amcha programs for the orthodox community



For many years, we wanted to reach out also to Holocaust survivors from the religious and ultra-orthodox Jewish community who had previously not joined our various programs. As a result of our efforts, the Jerusalem branch of Amcha founded a womens group within the Bayit Vagan religious neighbourhood that meets once-a-week. Except for sharing common experiences, they take part in three kinds of activities: a mutual support group, a memory improvement program, and a bibliotherapy group. The group has become a very significant source of support for its female participants.

## Amcha in Nahariya



An informative [video clip](#) was recently uploaded in a local web site on the work of Amcha in Nahariya (in Hebrew). **Moses Emanuel** who survived the Holocaust and enjoys Amcha services and

**Dganit Adan** (director of Amcha in Nahariya) explain the various services provided in the north of Israel. The center was created with support from the [UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey](#) and the Busher Fund from Holland.



## Holocaust Survivors Rights Authority

One of the main partners of Amcha in Israel is the [Authority for the rights of Holocaust Survivors](#), who refer eligible Holocaust survivors to us for treatment. According to data revealed during a meeting of the [Knesset's Immigrant Absorption Committee](#), some 87,000 survivors are now eligible for support from this authority within the Finance Ministry of the State of Israel. Many of these have been recognized as such only during the last year.



## Claims Conference



Claims Conference ועידת התביעות  
The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany

2010.

The [Claims Conference](#) has enhanced its ongoing support of AMCHA, with generous grants for

## The UJA-Federation of New York

**UJA Federation**  
*of New York*

With the vision of actualizing a more caring, inspired, and renewed Jewish community, the [UJA-Federation of New York](#) is continuing to allocate generous grants to Amcha for the following programs: (1) house visits to homebound elderly survivors by professionals, (2) training caregivers in end-of-life care, and (3) the social club in Beer Sheva. These grants help promote dignity and sustain the human spirit of thousands of vulnerable survivors in Israel.

## ICEJ

In June, a group of volunteer youth from the [International Christian Embassy in](#)



[Jerusalem](#) visited Amcha Jerusalem's social club to sing and dance with the elderly survivors. ICEJ-Aid confronts hatred and responds to the pressing needs in every sector of society by supporting a variety of humanitarian programs in Israel. As an act of reconciliation, Christians around the world get an opportunity to comfort the people of Israel and show their support.

## Amcha friends in the Netherlands

**Roel van Praag** from the [Friends of Amcha in the Netherlands](#) reported that Amcha was presented at two events: (1) An outdoor fair at the occasion of 'Liberation Market', May 5th in Leeuwarden city, and (2) An indoor fair with the yearly [Limmoed Netherlands](#) meeting, with over six hundred participants, in Amsterdam, on May 24th 2010.



## Adopting a Holocaust survivor for life

A childless Holocaust survivor couple from Romania applied to Amcha in Jerusalem for a volunteer and was contacted by Ms. Rachel Rozen who started to visit them in their home on a weekly basis. The contact intensified gradually and developed into a fifteen-year old close relationship. Ms. Rozen and her family cared for them, invited them for holidays and supported them in many ways, until the death of the old lady not long ago. At her funeral, there were only a few attendants; the director of the old age home, the Amcha coordinator, and Ms. Rozen's family, including her own children who had, in effect, adopted the childless couple as their new grandparents.

## Ruti

**Ruti S.** from Kiriath Motzkin was born in May 1944, while the family was hiding in Czechoslovakia. The family was found and sent to Theresienstadt concentration camp, and then to Auschwitz. She was put in the children's camp, where she received a tattooed number. One of the quasi-medical experiments by Dr. Mengele that she participated in was how long infants can survive in ice cold water. Somehow she and her parents survived and they were released at the beginning of 1945; later immigrating to Israel in 1949.



During the last years, she has been active in various social activities in Amcha, including an art-class. "Amcha is my home," she said, "the only place where I feel understood - here I get support. I do not know how I would have managed without Amcha." She shows a large tattooed

number on her forearm which has grown because she was only an infant when it was made.

She wrote in the Haifa branch newsletter "*Etzlenu beAmcha*" - January 2010, p. 8: "I, Ruti Sharon (nee Levi), was born on May 1944. It was not a good time to be born, in hiding, and to arrive in Auschwitz at the age of 4 months! True, for those who know me, see how lucky I've been, and how much I have achieved in my life. I am the grandmother of four wonderful grandchildren. It is a wonder and my whole life is a miracle." And she adds: "Amcha does not only help us to remember, but also to forget..."

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We rely heavily on our private and institutional supporters and take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support. [Please click here to see how you can help.](#)

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Earlier issues of **Amcha's Newsletter** can be found [here](#):