

Amcha Newsletter

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



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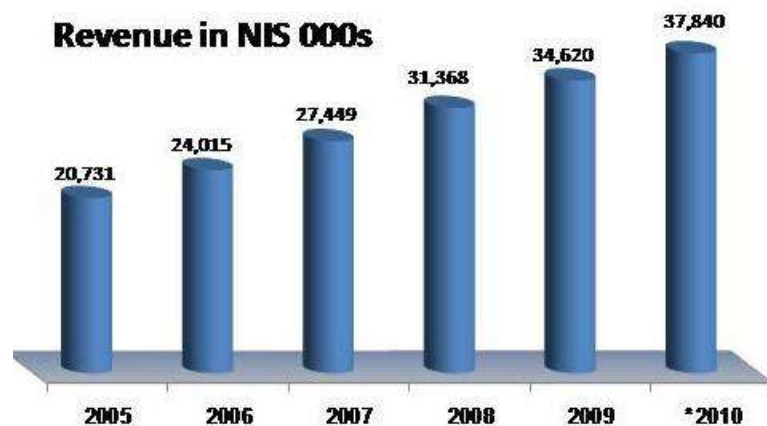
Dear friends and colleagues!

On behalf of Amcha clients, staff and board of directors, we send you our very best wishes for a **Happy New Year for Rosh HaShana!**



Dan Waldman,
Executive Director

As we mark the end of the old year, we express our deepest gratitude to everyone who has worked hard to create this dynamic organization which has succeeded to transform the lives of so many elderly survivors in Israel. Next year, we will intensify our efforts to provide even more services, both in our centers and in their homes. With a record number of service hours provided, new centers opened and a larger number of clients served, our budget has also increased significantly. In fact, during the last six years, Amcha's revenue has almost doubled, which can be seen from the graph below (in NIS 1000s):



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Celebrating Bar Mitzva at age 83

For Zvi and Yechiel, nobody thought of celebrating their Bar Mitzva at the age of 13 because they were in concentration camps. They lost their childhood during the war. At the beginning of August



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Major Foundations Supporting Amcha



UJA Federation
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about 70 years later, they decided to close the circle, and finally celebrate this important event. The idea came from a support group in Amcha Pardes Hanah, led by Elisheva Rapaport and Sarah Ayalon, which has been running for over 12 years. The moving event was filmed and broadcast on prime time in Israeli TV. The entire report (in Hebrew) can be viewed;[here](#).

Zvi and Yechiel always say that they do not feel as *survivors* of the Holocaust, because then, as children, they were not saved by anyone. The actual saviors, from now, stood next to them in the synagogue; their friends from Amcha, spouses, children and grandchildren who surround them with much love.

Yoga and Tai Chi: Treatments of Choice for PTSD

Yoga and **Tai Chi Chuan**, both based on traditional eastern medicine, are treatments of choice for traumatized Holocaust survivors and they are offered in various branches of Amcha, including Tel Aviv, Holon, Rehovot, Jerusalem, Petach Tikva, Beer Sheva and Ramat Gan. Dr. **Bessel van der Kolk**, one of the world's leading authorities on the treatment of PTSD, recommends the use of Yoga. He [says](#): "*Yoga helps regulate emotional and physiological states. It allows the body to regain its natural movement and teaches the use of breath for self-regulation.*" An important advantage of Yoga and Tai Chi is that they combine key elements of exercise; aerobic, strength training, stability, flexibility and balance, into a unified approach. Certain benefits, particularly stress reduction, can be seen and people report better sleep and better digestive health. Practiced regularly, yoga and tai chi may help reverse some effects of aging, such as restricted movements. In addition, those who practiced yoga saw improvements in anxiety and depression and they can also improve bone density, cardio-vascular health and decrease blood pressure.



Amcha Netanya Excursion

Social Club members in Amcha **Netanya** enjoyed a wonderful week-end in Nir Etzion. They were accompanied by coordinators Lea, Yael and Rina who organized a rich program each day, with physical exercise, tours, music, yiddish theatre and lots of games and fun. Their yearly Rosh HaShanah celebration will be held on September 5, at Beit Kneset Beit Israel, at 10.00. Monthly programs are listed





Margaret Busher Fond



SIDNEY E. FRANK FOUNDATION

Friends of Amcha in the Netherlands, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Australia and the US

[here](#). A local newsletter is written and published by members and every month, there is a birthday party for members who were born during this month. Amcha Netanya is supported by the [FMS](#).

Telling the Pain and Editing Life

With funding from the [EVZ](#), the Haifa branch of Amcha has been hosting a project of inter-generational meetings between elderly holocaust survivors and soldiers from the IDF navy's submarine training course. The project



assists Amcha's community members by having them share their painful past-experiences with a group of people who realize the command to live and the continuation of Jewish existence. The project incorporates a unique technological innovation which increases the activity's effectiveness. The project was initiated by the course's commanders, who wanted to incorporate social and communal work within its activities, in association with *Anat Turner*, assistant director of Amcha's Haifa branch.

Simon Wiesenthal Honored

Karl Semlitch from the friends of **Amcha in Austria** informed us that the [Viennese Jüdisches Museum](#) presented a "Simon-Wiesenthal-stamp" which can be used in both countries. The special postage stamp was issued in honor of **Simon Wiesenthal** who after surviving five death camps helped track down Nazi war criminals and then spent the rest of his life fighting anti-Semitism. What only a few people know is that Mr. Wiesenthal was also a long-time supporter of Amcha, and that our center in Tel Aviv bears his name. In a historic [video clip](#), filmed on the occasion of the opening of the center, he reaffirmed his support of Amcha and made a call to give financial support to this organization.



Dancing at Auschwitz?

Who has the right to dance at Auschwitz? A [home video](#) that has been uploaded on the Internet showing a Holocaust survivor dancing at Auschwitz and other Holocaust sites to the disco classic "I Will Survive" with his daughter and grandchildren has brought such questions to the fore. To some, images of



Adolek Kohn and his family shuffling off-beat at such hallowed places is an insult to those who died; to others a defiant celebration of survival. The incongruous juxtapositions have struck many viewers as funny and chilling at the same time. >>[More](#).

Dan Chanoch, the well-known Israeli survivor featured in [Pizza At Auschwitz](#), and a friend of Amcha, said some viewers were disturbed at seeing him eat pizza while lying on a spot where skeleton-like prisoners once lay before being killed in gas chambers. But he argues that in confronting tragedies like the Holocaust, *"Every person is allowed to react individually - one person cries, one person laughs. It's a way of dealing with it."*

Social Club in Rehovot Celebrate 10 Years

On August 19, the social club of **Amcha Rehovot** celebrated 10 years of wonderful activities for the elderly survivors in this town. More than 200 participants came to enjoy the performance of Mazal and Jack, the local choir, and dancing in a large town hall. We congratulate *Yoram Amit, Tami Hayut* and the entire staff for their extraordinary achievements during these years.



Photography Competition

Amcha friends in the Netherlands participated in a photo competition, organized by the [Foundation 'Remembrance, Responsibility and Future'](#) (EVZ). This b/w picture of A.R. taken in Amcha Tel Aviv 2009 by [Bert Nienhuis](#), won the 4th prize. We congratulate him for this fine achievement. Perhaps it is time also to organize a photo exhibition of pictures taken in Amcha over the years?



It is now possible to [donate online to Amcha](#) through



Earlier **Newsletters** can be found [here](#).