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We’re in a constant battle to match our enemies’ determination to take lives with our innovations to save them. MDA is more important than ever, because we use every resource at our disposal to find new ways to shorten critical response times, ensuring that more Israelis survive their attackers.

Our state-of-the-art command-and-control center, the Mamlam, continues to coordinate, dispatch, and track every emergency response vehicle in Israel — whether MDA ambulances or any other private EMS company’s resources. And thanks to our partners in America, we’re able to demonstrate our proprietary dispatch and tracking technology to communities all over the U.S. in the hope that Americans can benefit from our technological innovations too.

The My MDA app has revolutionized how patients interact with our emergency dispatchers and first-responders. Our Life Guardian Program enlists — and deploys to emergencies — tens of thousands of everyday Israelis to help administer basic CPR. And the new Marcus National Blood Services Center will be the world’s first subterranean blood-processing and storage facility. These are just some of the innovations that complement the world-class training our EMTs and paramedics receive before they ever set foot out in the field.

Your support makes it all happen. We are partners in saving lives, and your generosity is the cornerstone of every lifesaving act we are honored to perform.

Todah rabah,

ELI BIN
Director-General, MDA

People support MDA for many reasons: to stay connected to Israel, to recognize MDA’s heroic first-responders, or to keep family traditions of philanthropy thriving. In most cases, it’s a combination of all three.

Whatever brings you to MDA, you’re part of community — indeed, a family that extends across oceans — that’s bound by a deep commitment to saving lives.

Since the current wave of terror began in September 2015, 62 innocent people have been killed in terrorist attacks with nearly 900 wounded. MDA’s world-class paramedics respond to every attack. And they’re first on the scene of daily medical emergencies like car accidents, or sudden illness.

Think about how much worse the numbers would be if MDA didn’t arrive instantly to save these innocent people. This recent wave of terror is hard to stop, but we can make a difference by helping MDA in its effort to keep people alive — often under seemingly long odds.

So, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you for your unwavering support of MDA’s lifesaving work. Families in Israel are intact today because of your support. We hope we can continue counting on our fellow Americans to not just dream about saving lives, but also act on this truly sacred mission.

MARK D. LEBOW
National Chairman, AFMDA

DAVID M. FRANKEL
CEO, AFMDA
Since the wave of terror began in September 2015, 62 innocent people have been killed in terrorist attacks, with another 898 wounded. There have been 190 stabbing attacks and 139 attempted stabbings; 171 shooting attacks; and 61 car rammings.

As long as there are Israelis in need, wherever they are, MDA and its world-renowned first-responders will be there to save them. Here are some of the most recent incidents:

• In December 2017, security guard Asher Elmaliach, was stabbed in the heart during a terror attack at Jerusalem’s central bus station. A team of MDA first-responders, including Senior EMT Rivka Or (read her story on Page 9) rushed to the scene, treated Asher, and quickly evacuated him to Shaare Zedek Medical Center. Asher survived the attack.

• MDA emergency responders, with the assistance of the IDF medical force, successfully treated and transported a 34-year-old man who was stabbed in the hand in February 2018.

To learn more about these items or any other funding opportunities, contact your regional AFMDA office (see Page 19) or AFMDA Chief Development Officer Catherine Reed at CReed@afmda.org or 866.632.2763.
MDA inaugurated 14 new Medicycles — including its 500th — in a festive ceremony at its Tiberius medical station on January 17. The newest Medicycles will be deployed to northern Israeli regions, including the Golan Heights, the Galilee, and the Jordan Valley.

Medicycles are specially designed motorcycles that shorten valuable emergency response time by weaving through hard-to-navigate places in Israel — such as congested highways and narrow streets — ahead of incoming MDA ambulances.

AFMDA National Board Member Barry Feldman was the first American to sponsor a Medicycle in 2013.

“To me, saving lives in Israel means we should try almost everything,” Feldman said. “These vehicles are amazing innovations, and I’m especially proud that so many other people are answering the call.”

By the end of 2018, MDA expects to have approximately 700 Medicycles in operation to complement its fleet of 1,100 ambulances.

MDA to Roll Out eCall Sensors in April

MDA will be able to respond to car accidents, even when the driver is unconscious and no one witnessed the crash, thanks to new technology rolling out in Israel starting in April.

With eCall, sensors on new vehicles will capitalize on MDA’s cutting-edge geolocation capabilities — a feature most American 911 centers don’t have, alerting MDA EMTs when a car has been involved in an accident. Dispatchers will then be able to use a cellular connection in the car to talk to the driver and send an ambulance if the driver is unresponsive or says they’re injured.

ECall is one more example of how MDA is using technology to get to the sick and injured more quickly, begin treatment sooner, and ultimately save more lives.

MDA To Open Israel’s First Breast Milk Bank

MDA’s National Blood Services Center recently announced it will soon open Israel’s first breast milk bank to allow nursing mothers to donate surplus milk for babies who don’t have access to it. Approximately 500 milk banks exist around the world, but this will be the first in Israel. It is scheduled to begin operation in April 2018.

MDA is working in conjunction with Israel’s Health Ministry and the Israel Milk Bank, a nonprofit organization that works toward creating a human milk bank in Israel.

MDA FUN FACT

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MDA STORIES FROM ISRAEL

MDA Remembers Raziel Shevach, z”l

On January 9, the men and women of Magen David Adom lost a brother.

Raziel Shevach, a Magen David Adom volunteer first-responder and senior EMT, who was recently honored for his lifesaving response to a terror attack, was himself killed in a drive-by terrorist shooting just outside Hovat Gilad, where he lived in Samaria.

Raziel was driving in his car when it was riddled with more than 20 bullets fired from a passing vehicle, at least three of which struck him. The 32-year-old father of six was able to call MDA for medical assistance, but had already lost consciousness when MDA and IDF medics arrived just minutes later. He was pronounced dead on arrival at Meir Hospital in Kfar Saba.

Two Babies, One Shift

On January 12, a team from MDA’s Modi’in station was called to two separate emergencies of women in labor. In both cases, the women gave birth in the ambulance as they were being rushed to area hospitals. While MDA paramedics deliver more than 200 babies every year, delivering two in one shift is indeed an unusual occurrence.

MDA’s first-responders are prepared for anything, whether it’s a terror attack or a heart attack. Or the kind of calls MDA’s EMTs love: a chance to welcome new life into the world.

MDA Honored with Rabin Award

MDA recently received the Rabin National Award for Quality and Excellence in the Public Sector. The award, named after Israeli statesman Yitzhak Rabin, z”l, and issued by the prime minister’s office, is given to organizations that achieve the highest quality standards in service to the general public in Israel.

The award committee reflected on MDA’s exceptional level of quality in emergency medicine and response times, the breadth and scope of its national services, its innovation and technological capabilities, and its unique volunteer infrastructure.

Spotlight on a Hero: Rivka Or

In the past few months, MDA Senior EMT Rivka Or has responded to two of the most brutal terrorist attacks in Israel. In each instance, she’s rushed to the scene instinctively and without hesitation — and in the process saved lives. So what motivates Rivka and countless other MDA emergency responders to run toward danger to help others?

“‘In that moment, every person imagines their own life or their own home,’” she says.

Rivka, a longtime EMT based out of MDA’s Jerusalem region, was among the first to arrive on the scene in Halamish in July 2017, when a Palestinian man stabbed several members of the Salomon family at Shabbat dinner. Three family members died, but Rivka was able to treat Tova Salomon, the family matriarch, who survived her injuries.

“‘When you enter a scene like that, you hope and pray you’ll be able to save the patients. That’s why you do everything you can,’” Rivka says.

In December 2017, Rivka’s rapid response helped save the life of 25-year-old Asher Elmaliach, a security guard who was stabbed at Jerusalem’s central bus station. Rivka and her team immediately took measures to stanch his bleeding and got him into surgery within 10 minutes from the time of the attack.

Spotlight on a Hero: Rivka Or

Cristiano Ronaldo Supports MDA

Cristiano Ronaldo, the Portuguese national and Real Madrid soccer star considered one of the best players of all time, is now an ambassador for MDA’s blood donation campaign.

Ronaldo, a regular blood donor whose Be The 1 campaign aims to raise awareness of the need for blood donations, has teamed up with MDA and Abbott Israel, a world leader in infectious disease detection, to encourage Israelis to become regular donors.

“‘It is within our power to bring about change by donating blood,’” Ronaldo said. “‘This is why I’m excited about joining forces with Abbott Israel and MDA’s campaign.’

MDA FUN FACT

+500

Medicycles in service
Work on the world’s first underground blood bank and processing center is now well underway. Magen David Adom’s new Marcus National Blood Services Center is located in Ramla, the capital of the region during the Ottoman Empire, and a burgeoning high-tech hub today.

The massive job of excavating the site has begun in anticipation of the more than 11,000 truckloads of soil that will be removed from the site to accommodate the three floors of the facility that will be built underground, each with footprints that will dwarf the floors above ground. To facilitate the excavation, contractors have constructed slurry walls, essentially retaining walls built in place by digging deep, narrow trenches. They’re filling them with a loose water and clay mixture to exert pressure on the trench wall, preventing it from collapsing into the gap, and then pouring concrete into the trench, which displaces the clay slurry. The slurry is recaptured by pumps to use elsewhere on the site.

When the concrete hardens, it forms a subterranean wall outlining the excavation area, enabling construction workers to dig out the site without the soil collapsing into the hole. Slurry-wall technology, in fact, is what was used to create “the bathtub,” the retaining walls that hold back the water table at New York’s World Trade Center site and which famously survived 9/11, averting what would have been an even greater disaster. Slurry walls are also currently put in place by the Israel Defense Forces to block Gaza terrorists from building tunnels that can breach Israel’s borders.

After more than five years of painstaking planning, the dream of building the world’s first underground, reinforced blood bank to protect Israel’s national blood supply from rocket, terrorist, chemical, and biological attack is becoming a reality.

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Much of the publicity surrounding the design of the Marcus National Blood Services Center has focused on the fact that it will be the world’s first underground, shielded blood center, designed to safeguard Israel’s national blood supply. But from a medical standpoint, the center’s most important feature is its blood-processing floor, about 23 feet underground, which will increase Israel’s blood-processing capacity nearly twofold to accommodate Israel’s rapidly growing population. Here too, the blood will be safety-tested for pathogens, sorted by blood type, and labeled and tracked using a highly secure computer system to ensure patient safety.

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MIDWEST REGION IN ACTION

MIDWEST REGION IN ACTION

MAGEN DAVID ADOM DETROIT GALA

The annual Magen David Adom Detroit Gala was both a celebration of MDA and a tribute to one of its biggest benefactors, Manny, z’l and Natalie Charach. Manny, who passed away in July 2017, was remembered as a silent but relentless leader who never sought the spotlight, instead casting it on the heroes at MDA.

Al Muskovitz hosted the event, Sandy Danto made a compelling request for support, and new ambulance sponsorships were announced by Beverly Baker and the Morris and Beverly Baker Foundation; Sy and Judy Berman, with Shelly and Jody Mendelson; and Mynetta and Adrian Christie. Keynote speaker Jonathan Medved discussed how Israel’s thriving tech economy affects the world and saves lives.

LOUIS T. ROTH FOUNDATION

AMBULANCE DEDICATION — CINCINNATI

Former American MDA overseas volunteers spoke at the gala. From left, Stephanie Schulman, Lauren Goldstein, and Samantha Katz.

WEINSTEIN/BERGER MICU DEDICATION — CHICAGO

Rabbi Herschel and Shirley Berger.

MDA Volunteers Speak at Detroit Gala

Veronica Roth, Andrew M. Roth, and Judy Roth.

Ambulance Dedication at Detroit Gala

An MDA Life Support ambulance, sponsored by Jody and Shelly Mendelson and Sy and Judy Berman, was dedicated at the Detroit gala.

From left, David and Sarah Waldshan, Dr. Tammy and Dr. Scott Cooper, Jody and Shelly Mendelson, Leah Berman, Sy Berman, Erica Mendelson, Melissa Mendelson, and Judy Berman.

MDA Claims Technology at Detroit Gala

The Detroit Gala highlighted Magen David Adom’s world-class technology with demonstrations of the command-and-control center, known as the Mamam.

MDA FUN FACT

7–8 YEARS:
Average lifespan of an MDA ambulance, primarily due to wear and tear.

From left, Dr. Jay Edelberg, Dr. Helen Edelberg, Dr. Adrian Christie, Mynetta Christie, and Gavin Christie.

MDA Fun Fact

From left, Stepfnie Schulman, Lauren Goldstein, and Samantha Katz.
MIDWEST REGION IN ACTION

Cleveland’s Barry Feldman leads charge as MDA puts 500th medicycle into action in Israel

Barry Feldman loves a new challenge. So when the Cleveland resident and national board member of American Friends of Magen David Adom told his fellow AFMDA officers in 2013 that he would be the first American to sponsor an MDA Medicycle, it was not an unexpected show of leadership.

But Feldman didn’t expect to be a trendsetter. In January 2018 — only five years after Feldman’s sponsorship — MDA inaugurated its 500th Medicycle.

For Feldman, the chance to save lives in Israel in a new and unique way presented a thrilling opportunity.

“To me, saving lives in Israel means we should try almost everything. So when I learned about MDA’s Medicycles, I jumped at the chance to sponsor one,” Feldman said. “These vehicles are amazing innovations, and I’m especially proud that so many other people are answering the call.”

Medicycles are specially designed motorcycles that shorten valuable emergency response time by weaving through hard-to-navigate places in Israel — such as congested highways and narrow streets — ahead of incoming MDA ambulances.

By the end of 2018, MDA expects to have approximately 700 Medicycles in operation to complement its fleet of 1,100 ambulances.

“MDA EMTs and paramedics riding Medicycles save lives at all hours of the day,” said MDA Director-General Eli Bin at a special inauguration ceremony on January 17 in Israel for the 500th Medicycle. “There is no doubt that these Medicycles are a power multiplier that enables us to provide faster lifesaving services.”

The latest Medicycle will be deployed to the Jordan River region in northern Israel, thus continuing MDA’s dedication to Israeli communities that do not have traditional medical services.

For Feldman, it’s a particularly satisfying feeling to have Cleveland and northeast Ohio lead such a pioneering effort to save lives in Israel.

“Our community has always been one of the strongest Israel supporters in America,” Feldman said. “We love being out of the gates first when it comes to supporting the Israeli people, and sponsoring these Medicycles is just an extension of that feeling.”

MDA’s Stork Club: Saving — and delivering — lives in Israel

MDA ambulances are routinely called to help transport women in labor to hospitals. Sometimes the babies decide not to wait, and so the ambulance becomes a de facto delivery room.

AFMDA salutes the American sponsors whose ambulances helped bring new life into our world in the last three months.

DECEMBER
- Rose Goteiner — girl
- Vera and Paul Guerin — boy
- Rubin Family Foundation — girl
- The Joan and Phil Berger Charitable Fund — boy
- Gaby and Mark Lehrer — boy
- Alice Bushinsky — boy
- Estate of Lona Moroz — girl
- David Wiener — girl
- Lois Pope — boy
- Gilberg and Minerva Rosenberg — girl
- Lois Pope — girl
- Vision for Israel — girl
- Cyrus Dean Agoss — boy
- Boca Pointe — girl
- Arlene Sardell — girl

JANUARY
- Elsa Sheldon — girl
- Gertrude Jaffe — boy
- Boca Pointe — girl
- Porto Vita Community — girl
- Bob and Robin Berman — boy
- Wolfson Estate #2 — boy
- Wolfson Estate #2 — boy
- Martin and Ruth Clayman — boy
- Maitland Minyan #1 — boy
- Zila Besner — boy
- Alan and Lucia Rosenfeld — boy
- Bob and Robin Berman — girl
- Hague Ministries #2 — boy
- Crown Foundation — girl
- Kevin and Masha Keating — girl
- Lilian Rothberg — boy
- Nathan Wolfson #2 — girl
- Ira Hoffman — boy

FEBRUARY
- Cecile Mory — girl
- Boca Pointe – Burt Goodman — girl
- Vera and Paul Guerin — boy
- Audrey Goodfriend — boy
- Estate of Robert Rimer #1 — girl
- Nathan Wolfson #2 — boy
- Joyce Goodwin — boy
- Joseph Gypgosy — boy
- Blasi & Gallitzer — boy
- Bitton & Hirschmann — boy
- Fink & Hefter — girl
- David Wiener — girl

MDA Fun Fact

15,000 volunteer first-responders, EMTs, and paramedics
A First Shift Brings New Life

Amanda Klestzick
New Rochelle, New York

Everyone expects their first day to be boring. I knew I definitely was ready for at least an unexciting first call. This is what I was thinking as I got into the ambulance for my first shift as a m’aar, first-aid responder. Our first call was to pick up a pregnant woman and take her to the hospital. We were told that she still had time and would make it to the hospital. I eased her into the bed and into the ambulance, and off we went. Fifteen minutes in, her contractions were long and very close together, and we knew she wasn’t going to be able to wait until we made it to the hospital. We stepped in to help — We prepped for the worst. We knew that the baby was crowning — And right after, out came the baby! It was a beautiful event to witness, and I will never forget my first-ever shift with MDA.

Of all the ways you can support the lifesaving work Magen David Adom performs in Israel, perhaps none is as personal as the topic of legacy gifts. When you do your estate planning, you first want to ensure the well-being of your family and loved ones. That is as it should be.

At the same time, many of our donors are deeply committed to MDA and have made provisions in their estate plans to continue their support even after they’re gone.

Amanda Klestzick, New Rochelle, New York

At the break of dawn is the welcoming and friendly group of workers that greet me and forward to coming to work day after day. I knew that the importance of a call or the difficulty of a case does not change, but the people at MDA create a comfortable and enjoyable environment in which I can grow, learn, and enjoy. When I wanted to learn more about the ambulances, the paramedics always talk to the other volunteers about their past experiences or life in Israel and anything in between.

My favorite day with MDA was a week and a half into my volunteering. I had been volunteering the longest out of the high school students, so I was the unofficial No. 2 of the ambulance. I taught the others how to check the ambulance properly and, when we received our calls, they all looked to me for direction. I took charge of the tablet and helped them with checking the vitals. I was proud that I was able to take on this role after being the follower in my previous shifts. I was able to prove to myself that I was learning and really contributing in a meaningful way. It isn’t the importance of a call or the difficulty of a challenge that determines your role; rather, it’s one’s approach toward every call that will create a meaningful MDA experience.

Of all the ways you can support the lifesaving work Magen David Adom performs in Israel, perhaps none is as personal as the topic of legacy gifts. When you do your estate planning, you first want to ensure the well-being of your family and loved ones. That is as it should be.

At the same time, many of our donors are deeply committed to MDA and have made provisions in their estate plans to continue their support even after they’re gone.

If you’re planning to make a legacy gift to AFMDA, please let us know, so we can welcome you to our MDA Legacy Circle. Legacy gifts provide tangible support to the people of Israel, whose lives depend on the vital services MDA provides every day.

There are many ways you can provide lasting support, and some of these options may even offer current benefits. Simple bequests (in your will, trust or as a beneficiary from your tax deferred account), establishing a designated fund, gifts of appreciated assets, and charitable gift annuities can provide both immediate and long-term benefits.

For more about MDA’s Legacy Circle, please contact Jeff Lipkin at jlipkin@afmda.org or toll-free 866.632.2763.

MDA Legacy Circle

If you’re perplexed by the new tax reform law enacted in late December 2017 — the first major tax overhaul in more than 30 years — you’re not alone.

It is difficult to predict exactly how the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act will affect philanthropy and planned giving. Charitable giving has never significantly decreased due to changes in the U.S. tax system — in fact, the only downturns in charitable giving occurred in 1932 and 2009 — both as a result of unstable economies.

So while the fate of donor-supported organizations like MDA does not appear to be in danger, there are some changes worth noting for donors:

• The standard deduction has doubled from $6,000 to $12,000 for single filers and $24,000 for married filers.

• Limits on state, local and sales taxes are now capped at $10,000.

• In 2015, 70% of tax filers used the standard deduction. With the new changes, it’s estimated that an additional 15% to 20% of filers will also use the standard deduction.

• The new tax act may be helpful to higher-income filers interested in increasing their giving. The tax act drops the Pease Amendment, which reduced deductible benefits for filers with incomes over $318,000. Donors may now have more disposable income to make charitable gifts. And with fewer deductible items available, charitable giving may be an incentive for filers to increase their giving.

• The maximum adjusted gross income (AGI) limitations on charitable gifts has increased — from 50% to 60% of cash gifts annually. There is no change in the limits on giving of appreciated assets (still 30% of AGI).

• Significantly, donors over the age of 70½ can still make gifts of up to $100,000 annually directly from their IRA without paying income taxes on the withdrawal.

These are among the basic changes donors can anticipate. To discuss how the new tax reforms may affect your charitable contributions to AFMDA, contact your tax advisor or Jeff Lipkin at jlipkin@afmda.org or 866.632.2763.

A Beginner’s Guide to the New Tax Reform Act

MDA FUN FACT

1,094 active ambulances