

# THE Pulse

JUNE 2023

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**MDA teams treat 77 people as more than 1,000 rockets are fired into Israel.**

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**Magen David Adom** is Israel's national emergency medical service and the country's representative to the International Red Cross. A world leader in mass-casualty response and EMS technology, MDA treats and transports nearly 1 million people to hospitals every year; collects, tests, and distributes blood to Israel's hospitals; and responds to disasters around the world. **American Friends of Magen David Adom**, MDA's sole fundraising representative in the U.S., is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization and MDA's largest charitable supporter, providing emergency vehicles, equipment, medical supplies, funding for capital projects, and more.

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## As rockets are fired from Gaza, MDA again assumes its role as Israel's national lifesaving organization.



Two people were killed in Israel during the hostilities. An 80-year-old woman in the midst of wheeling her disabled husband to their safe room was fatally injured when their apartment in Rehovot was struck by a Qassam rocket. The woman's husband was moderately wounded.

Also killed was a Palestinian construction worker who was in Israel on a work permit and fatally injured when he was caught in an open area near his work site. Another Palestinian construction worker was

The EMTs and paramedics of Magen David Adom recently found themselves in an all-too-familiar position, responding to people injured in rocket attacks as Gaza-based terrorists sent repeated fusillades into communities throughout Israel, particularly in the South.

On May 2, terrorists from Islamic Jihad initially fired dozens of rockets into the southern city of Sderot, sending Israelis scrambling to safe rooms in their homes and to public bomb shelters.

A week later, Israel launched Operation Shield and Arrow, targeting Islamic Jihad senior operatives in the Gaza Strip who were responsible for many attacks and planning others. During the entirety of the conflict that ended on May 13 with a cease fire, Islamic Jihad launched 1,469 rockets toward Israel.

MDA treated 77 people, 32 of whom were hurt by shrapnel or debris or sustained injuries in the mad dash to shelter. Others suffered from acute anxiety prompted by the Red Alert sirens and relentless rocket explosions.

"The response of MDA's EMTs and paramedics was nothing short of heroic," said Eli Bin, Magen David Adom's director-general. "When other Israelis were taking shelter amid the rocket attacks, our men and women were risking their lives to save the lives of others, while rockets continued to rain down around them."

critically injured in the same blast, but received lifesaving aid from MDA paramedics, curtailing what otherwise would have been a higher death toll.



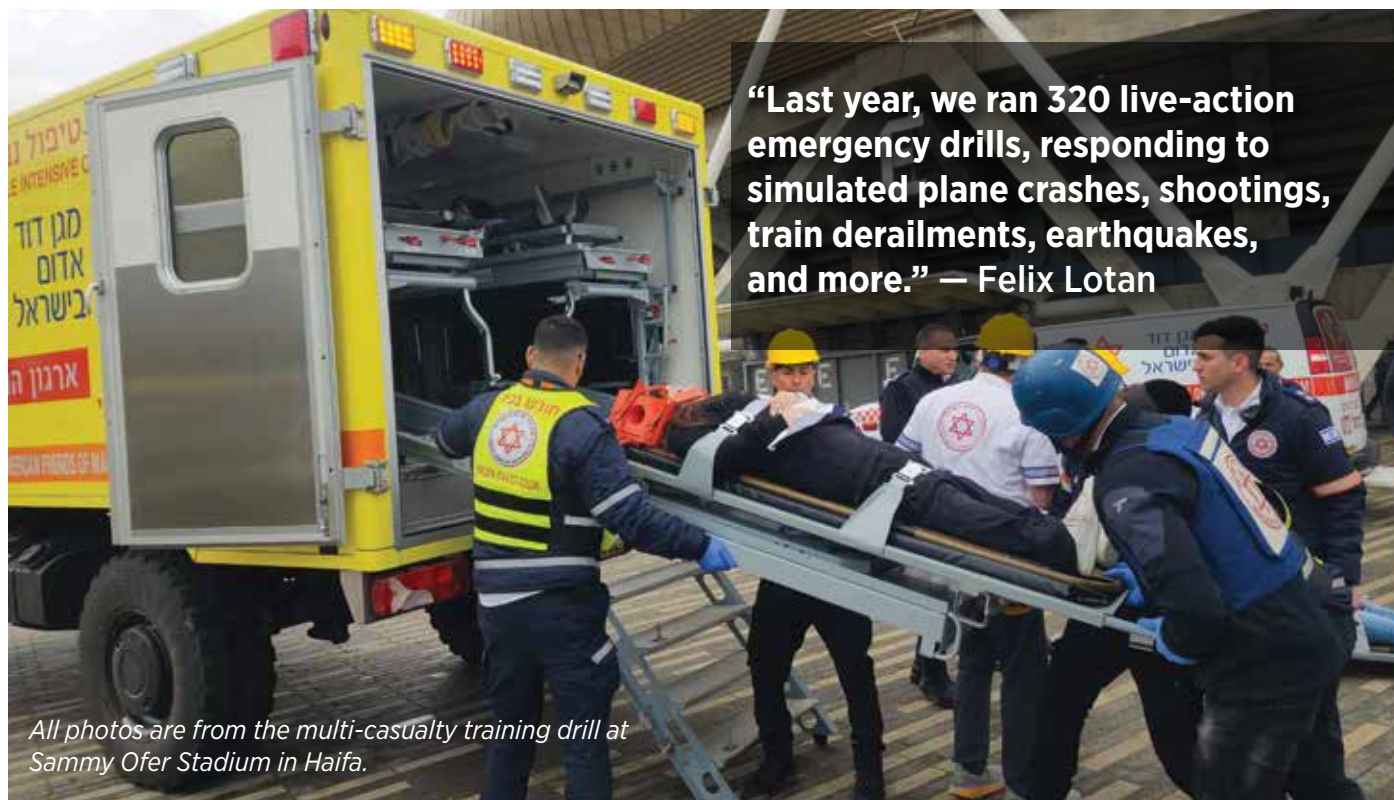
**They risk their lives to protect others.  
Now let's protect them.**

In the aftermath of rocket attacks and with terrorist stabbings and shootings on the rise in Israel, AFMDA has launched the Protect the Protectors campaign, a program to provide additional protective ballistic vests to EMTs and paramedics in Israel and Ukraine.

For information about how you can help save the life of an EMT, visit [afmda.org/protect-the-protectors](https://afmda.org/protect-the-protectors).



## MDA leads Haifa training drill, intensive preparation for when the attacks are real.



MDA led a three-day training drill, culminating in a simulated multi-casualty event replicating missile attacks from Hezbollah. The drill took place in March at the Sammy Ofer Stadium in Haifa, a 30,000-seat arena.

The simulated attack began with two large explosions accompanied by smoke and the screams of a panicked public one would expect at such a scene. It involved more than 50 ambulances, 200 MDA paramedics and EMTs, a special IDF reserve unit composed of MDA EMTs, police, and fire rescue personnel, and 150 teens who served as stand-ins for injured people.

Even though this has never happened, “that’s not to say that it never will,” said Magen David Adom’s head of disaster response, Senior Paramedic Lt. Col. (res.) Felix Lotan.

“An important part of our job is to prepare for crisis. We’re charged by Israel’s 1950 Magen David Adom Law to help manage the medical response to any type of disaster affecting the country’s population, whether because of extreme weather, fire or flood, earthquake or hazmat, terror or war.”

While the three-day Haifa exercise was the largest MDA has ever led, cross-agency drills feature regularly on its annual calendar. One held last November addressed the threat of a chemical attack.

“Mindful of the sarin released in a Tokyo subway in 1998, we held a drill in a Tel Aviv railway station, three levels below ground,” said Guy Caspi, MDA’s director of hazardous materials, exercises, and operational training.

“The police cleared the scene following the simulated attack, security personnel tracked the ‘perpetrators,’ Israel Railways staff handled the rail traffic, and we took care of the emergency medical intervention and getting the ‘casualties’ up to street level, where our ambulances took them to the hospitals.”

The goal of these drills is to learn and be ready for whatever scenario may arise. “If you find nothing to learn, then either the drill is badly designed or its evaluation is poor,” said Caspi. MDA’s evaluation of each drill is comprehensive.

Caspi and his team examine how well each entity works together, how closely procedures and protocols are followed, crowd control, equipment and personnel availability and management, decisions made, and, of



course, the performance of first responders, paramedics, and EMTs.

“Our culture of ongoing training equips our paramedics and EMTs to cope with any catastrophe, whether naturally occurring or man-made,” explained Lotan. “Last year, we ran 320 live-action emergency drills, responding to simulated plane crashes, shootings, train derailments, earthquakes, and more.”

This past February, Lotan joined Israel’s delegation to Turkey after that country’s earthquake and helped pull a 12-year-old boy and a 23-year-old woman from the rubble. Both had been buried for almost 48 hours, and both were alive.

There are lessons taught by every drill, Lotan said, and MDA is especially encouraged by what it was able to test and learn from the simulated soccer stadium disaster.

“We’ll be holding another large-scale multi-casualty exercise like this in a different part of the country in a few months’ time,” said Caspi.





## Begin Family — Encino, Calif.

The Begin family dedicated a Life Support Ambulance in memory of Abraham Begin, z"l. Rebecca Begin Davenport and Judy Begin, their mother Anna Begin, and Judy's daughter, Sarah, celebrated this tribute on Abraham's *yahrzeit*.



## Helene and Elliot Brody — Boca Raton, Fla.

Helene and Elliot Brody proudly dedicated their second Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance in the presence of their children.



## Howard Berger — Naples, Fla., and Denver, Colo.

Staff Sergeant Howard Berger, a WWII hero, dedicated a Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance with AFMDA's Tammy Karu and the students of Denver Academy of Torah.



## Jane Cornell — Boca Raton, Fla.

Jane Cornell honored Alan Cornell's legacy by dedicating a Medicycle in his memory.



## Margaret and Robert Blume — Boynton Beach, Fla.

Margaret and Robert Blume invited the schoolchildren of Temple Beth El to participate in the dedication of their second ambulance.



## Dr. Jerome and Phyllis Dolinsky & Michael and Barbara Gable — Delray Beach and Aventura, Fla.

Michael and Barbara Gable and Phyllis and Dr. Jerome Dolinsky dedicated a Life Support Ambulance in honor of their beloved parents. This is the family's second ambulance.



## **Gail Edelstein — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Surrounded by friends and family, Gail Edelstein dedicated a Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance at the annual AFMDA Boca-Delray Community Event.



## **Elaine and Harold Friedland — Delray Beach, Fla.**

Elaine and Harold Friedland dedicated a Medicycle with family at the annual AFMDA Boca-Delray Community Event.



## **Judi and Maurice Falk — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Judi and Maurice Falk of the Michael David Falk Foundation dedicated a Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance in loving memory of Maurice's parents, Anne and Isidore Falk, at the annual AFMDA Boca-Delray Community Event.



## **Lynn Fuente — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Lynn Fuente dedicated a Life Support Ambulance in honor of the heroic men and women of Magen David Adom for their lifesaving work in Israel.



## **EJ and Blair Flicker-Borrack — Boca Raton, Fla.**

EJ and Blair Flicker-Borrack dedicated a Medicycle at the annual AFMDA Boca-Delray Community Event.



## **Meryl and Ron Gallatin — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Meryl and Ron Gallatin celebrated the dedication of their newest lifesaving Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance with Uri Shacham and Prof. Eilat Shinar, M.D., of MDA and Tammy Karu of AFMDA.





**Lester and Iris Grayson and Family — Boca Raton, Fla.**

The family of Lester and Iris Grayson sponsored a Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance. The MICU was dedicated in honor of their parents and grandchildren.



**Thomas Guttman — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Thomas Guttman, alongside his wife, Miriam Salazar, and MDA's Uri Shacham, Prof. Eilat Shinar, M.D., and Ido Rosenblat, dedicated his second and third Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulances.



**Roslyn Haskell-Greenberg — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Roslyn Haskell-Greenberg dedicated a Medicycle at the annual AFMDA Boca-Delray Community Event.



**Norman Himelberg — Scarsdale, N.Y.**

Norman Himelberg dedicated two Life Support Ambulances in memory of David and Rose Himelberg, bringing The David Himelberg Foundation's total number of sponsored ambulances to 11.



**Eleanor Jaffe — Delray Beach, Fla.**

Ellie Jaffe dedicated a Life Support Ambulance in honor of Bernice Friedman's milestone 90th birthday.



**Marjorie and Sheldon Konigsberg — Palm Beach, Fla.**

Marjorie and Sheldon Konigsberg dedicated a Medicycle at the AFMDA Palm Beach Gala.





## Karen and Gene Kroner — Palm Beach Gardens, Fla.

Karen and Gene Kroner celebrated the return of MDA's Palm Beach Gala with the dedication of a Medicycle.



## Debbie Minas — Reseda, Calif.

Debbie Minas dedicated a Life Support Ambulance in memory of her beloved husband, Allen Minas, z"l, and in honor of her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. Friends and family celebrated this tribute on Allen's birthday.



## Lorraine and Herbert Podell — Palm Beach, Fla.

In honor of Herbert's 90th birthday and their anniversary, Lorraine and Herbert Podell dedicated a Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance, surrounded by loving family and friends.



## Toby and Sherwin Pogrud — Chicago

Toby and Sherwin Pogrud dedicated their fourth Life Support Ambulance in memory of their parents, Carl and Bella Pogrud and Ida and Meyer Urkov.



## Sydney S. Ross — Lake Worth, Fla.

Sydney Ross dedicated her third lifesaving vehicle to MDA in memory of her father and in honor of her mother, surrounded by family and friends at the AFMDA Palm Beach Gala.



## Slater Family Foundation — Northridge, Calif.

The Slater Family Foundation sponsored an Emergency Rapid Response Vehicle (ERRV) in memory of Gene N. Slater, M.D. The dedication took place in Israel and was attended by Gene's granddaughter. Family in the U.S. watched via Zoom.

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## Honoring the Memory of Bernard and Sally Marco



Ben (Bernard) Marco is remembered for the twinkle in his eye, for his incredible generosity to those he knew and didn't know, and as a fierce protector of his family and lifelong Zionist. Born in Poland, he was the eldest of six and the only one to survive the Holocaust. He endured numerous concentration camps and was liberated on a death march. He met Sally in a displaced persons camp.

Ben and Sally married and made a new life in Los Angeles. They had two children, Estelle and Noachim, and seven grandchildren.

Ben's honesty, artistic talent, and fierce loyalty combined with Sally's business skills made for a perfect partnership. They became the owners of a premier custom upholstery shop, garnering an extensive list of celebrity clients and top designers frequently featured in *Architectural Digest*.

Their philanthropic endeavors established the UCLA Holocaust Studies Chair, a peritoneal dialysis unit, a recreation center for Israeli soldiers, and a founding membership of Holocaust Museum LA. Ben was moved to tears when learning about the opportunity to sponsor an ambulance for MDA. Unfortunately, illness prevented him from achieving this dream.

Following their parents' death, Estelle and Noachim knew the best way to honor their memory was to fulfill this dream and sponsor a lifesaving Mobile Intensive Care Unit ambulance. They also donated a state-of-the-art defibrillator and chest compressor. Estelle and Noachim believe these acts of *chesed* (kindness and love) — principles their parents lived by — for the people of Israel are the most meaningful and impactful way to honor their legacy.

## Karen Posner: Fulfilling a Family Tradition



When AFMDA reached out to Karen Posner to thank her for 18 years of ongoing contributions and to welcome her to the MDA Loyalty Circle, she corrected us by saying it was "more like 118 years of giving." Karen, of Foster City, Calif., considers her support a continuation of her father's commitment to always keep Israel and MDA a philanthropic priority.

"Our family's support of Magen David Adom began when my father realized that at the time the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement did not recognize Israel," explained Posner.

Karen has strong memories of watching her father, a modest man who strongly believed in helping others, at his desk

writing checks for Magen David Adom. She follows his quiet and generous approach to her own philanthropy and love for Israel. She participated in AFMDA's mission to Israel last spring and the dedication of MDA's Marcus National Blood Services Center.

Recently, Karen decided to sponsor the family's second ambulance. Her brother, Marc, and his wife, Barbara, sponsored one many years ago. She will honor her late parents' memory with this significant contribution and looks forward to seeing their names, Richard and Miriam, inscribed on the ambulance doors.

Continuing her family tradition was one of the many reasons Karen promised to bequeath a quarter of her estate to AFMDA. She is also inspired by MDA's response to international disasters.

"MDA has never failed to reach out to people in need of medical help around the world regardless of whether they are Christians, Muslims, or Jews. I encourage everyone to join my family in generously supporting MDA's mission that has helped so many."



## NORTHEAST REGION

### Western Massachusetts launches community ambulance campaign.

In honor of Israel's 75th anniversary, the Jewish Federation of Western Massachusetts has launched a campaign to raise \$115,000 to sponsor an ambulance. The workhorses of MDA's fleet, Life Support Ambulances carry the essential equipment and specially trained EMTs and paramedics to treat all types of emergencies, from a fall in the home and a woman in labor to a child in anaphylactic shock. To learn how you can participate, contact Monique Martin at [mmartin@afmda.org](mailto:mmartin@afmda.org) or 781.489.5166.



### MDA visits Boston.

Professor Eilat Shinar, M.D., director of MDA's Blood Services Division, visited generous supporters in the Boston area in March. She also held a special meeting with Ambassador Meron Reuben, consul general of Israel to New England. They discussed the current challenges facing Israel. Ambassador Meron shared his gratitude for the brave men and women of Magen David Adom who save lives throughout Israel every day.



### Israel Bonds partners with AFMDA to save lives in Israel.

The first Israel Bonds ambulance was dedicated at the home of Pennsylvania Bonds Chairman Glenn Segal and his wife, Daryl, in Huntingdon Valley, Pa., on April 16. The event was the culmination of a multiyear double mitzvah project and the kickoff of a second Israel Bonds ambulance. The many donors who participated purchased bonds as a gift to AFMDA. Israel Bonds uses the funds to reinforce all sectors of Israel's diverse economy until the bonds mature, at which time the income goes toward a lifesaving ambulance. With the tremendous success of the partnership between AFMDA and Israel Bonds, the project will be replicated in other states to save many more lives in Israel.



*From left: Ari Sirner, executive director Israel Bonds Pennsylvania Region; Glenn Segal, campaign chair Israel Bonds Philadelphia; Daryl Segal, past chair Israel Bonds Philadelphia Women's Division; Mitchell Gerson, Ambulance Campaign chair; Terry Auerbach, incoming chair Israel Bonds Philadelphia Women's Division; and Harold F. Marcus, executive director emeritus, Israel Bonds Pennsylvania Region.*

## SOUTHEAST REGION

### Two beloved events return to S. Florida.

#### Boca Delray Community Event

More than 330 people from across Boca Raton and Delray Beach gathered at St. Andrews Country Club on March 21 to celebrate the heroic work of Magen David Adom. The event, the first since 2020, included nine ambulance and seven Medicycle dedications, each with its own ribbon-cutting and award ceremony. Scott Pelley, host of “60 Minutes,” delivered keynote remarks about the war in Ukraine, highlighting MDA’s humanitarian aid there. Pledges were made by guests in attendance to sponsor four ambulances and one Medicycle.



*Neil and Ina Rae Fox, who have chaired the Boca-Delray event for some 20 years and are stepping down, were presented with an appreciation award.*



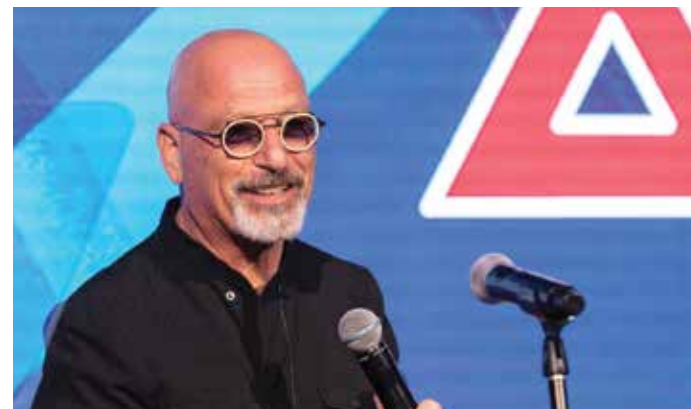
*From left: Haley Milowitz, Brett Gottsegen, and Boca-Delray Event Co-chair Lori Gottsegen, with Scott Pelley of “60 Minutes.”*

#### Palm Beach Gala

After a three-year pandemic hiatus, the Palm Beach Gala returned to The Breakers Palm Beach on April 16. More than 400 people attended the event that honored Lois Pope, who was presented with the Humanitarian of the Year Award for her outstanding support of MDA and Israel. Howie Mandel, comedian, actor, and television host, was the featured entertainer. Mandel surprised guests and event organizers by auctioning off tickets to the grand finale of “America’s Got Talent.” The impromptu auction added \$46,000 to the nearly \$6 million raised by this event. Special thanks to event chairs Laurie and Kevin Luskin and Karen and Gene Kroner.



*Lois Pope — flanked by Tammy Karu, AFMDA director of the Southeast Region, and Uri Shacham, MDA deputy director-general and chief of staff — announced her 16th ambulance for Israel.*



*Comedian Howie Mandel entertained guests and raised funds for MDA.*



## SOUTHEAST REGION

### Synagogues and friends open their doors to MDA.

**Temple Beth El of Boca Raton** graciously invited Magen David Adom over a Shabbat weekend in January to showcase its lifesaving work. More than 1,700 families were invited to attend Margaret and Robert Blume's second ambulance dedication on Friday morning. The preschool children had the chance to go inside the ambulance and learn how the mitzvah of *tzedakah* makes the lifesaving work of MDA possible. Friday night following Shabbat services, Sgt. Ben Anthony shared his story of surviving a brutal anti-Semitic attack that inspired his making aliyah and joining MDA and the IDF as a combat medic.

AFMDA was honored to be invited back by the Israel Solidarity Committee of **Temple Dor Dorim** in Weston, Fla., for a conversation with tech columnist and adviser, Hillel Fuld in February. Fuld had recently toured MDA's Command and Control Center and the new Marcus National Blood Services Center. He shared with the audience how he was "blown away" by MDA's technology and how MDA is leading the world in emergency medical service innovation.

While in South Florida to attend AFMDA's annual Boca-Delray Community Event, Prof. Eilat Shinar, M.D., director of MDA's national Blood Services Division, gave two special briefings in Miami. Thank you to Mazal Yehezkely, vice president of IDB Bank and a member of AFMDA's Miami Advisory Council, and to Miami Advisory Council Chairwoman Shari Lombardi, who hosted an inspirational brunch at her home. Prof. Shinar shared many heartwarming stories of families saved by MDA's blood services at both meetings.

### More ambulances are on the way to Israel.

AFMDA is grateful to the following supporters from Boca Raton who have sponsored vehicles shipped directly to Israel:

- Tamara and Richard Morgenstern sponsored an ambulance.
- Elaine and Norton Sarnoff generously sponsored their third ambulance.
- Shirley Weisman sponsored a Medicycle in loving memory of her husband, Bart Weisman.



*AFMDA's Yishai Mizrahi and Tammy Karu talk to Temple Beth El's schoolchildren about MDA's lifesaving mission.*



*Mark Winepol, Simone Karp, Amy Gould, and Wayne Gould hosted an outreach event in Highland Beach, in March, where more than 75 people gathered to learn about Magen David Adom. Sgt. Ben Anthony (center) shared his story about surviving a brutal anti-Semitic attack.*

## MIDWEST REGION

### **Marcus Center plaza is named for the Charach family.**

In early January, before a gathering of MDA officials and invited guests, the main entry plaza of the Marcus National Blood Services Center was named in honor of the Charach family of West Bloomfield, Mich., with deep appreciation for their enduring commitment to Magen David Adom.

Natalie Charach and her husband, Manny, who died in 2017, have supported MDA for decades. Along with their daughter, Janice, and son, Jeffrey, both now deceased, they generously sponsored 40 ambulances — the most any one donor has provided. They also sponsored two Medicycles and made numerous other lifesaving gifts.

Eli Bin, MDA director-general, and Catherine Reed, AFMDA chief executive officer, expressed their gratitude to Natalie Charach on behalf of the people of Israel with the following words: “In recognition of the impact you and your family have had, and in honor of all the lives you have helped save, we are proud to dedicate the plaza at our latest lifesaving venture, the Marcus National Blood Services Center, in your honor and in loving memory of Manny, Janice, and Jeffrey, with our greatest appreciation and with our affection for all you’ve done.”



### **Anshe Emet Synagogue honors its rabbi by sponsoring an ambulance.**

To honor Rabbi Michael S. Siegel’s 40th anniversary at Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago, his loving congregation generously sponsored a Life Support Ambulance for the people of Israel. An anonymous member took the lead in sponsoring half of it and then challenged fellow congregants to match his contribution. Significantly, Anshe Emet undertook many mitzvah projects to recognize the rabbi’s devoted years in the pulpit, but this was its one gift to Israel. Given Rabbi Siegel’s deep love and commitment to the Jewish State, they decided that saving lives through Magen David Adom was the most meaningful contribution they could make.



*From left: Aryeh Myers, MDA Department of International Relations; Richard Zelin, AFMDA Midwest director of strategic philanthropy; Jennifer Schnepfer, AFMDA senior development executive; and Rabbi Michael Siegel. Photo credit: Neil Stern*



## WESTERN REGION

### Social media influencer keynotes Arizona Leadership Tea.

AFMDA's Phoenix Women's Division hosted a Leadership Tea in Scottsdale, Ariz., in April. The event featured Lizzy Savetsky, a social media fashion influencer, who in recent years has taken an active role in speaking out about increasing anti-Semitism in the United States and throughout the world. Stacie Brockman, an award-winning brand builder, journalist, serial entrepreneur, and investor, facilitated the discussion. More than 150 women, girls, and significant others attended and were inspired by Lizzy's passionate voice for Israel, the Jewish people, and Magen David Adom.



*AFMDA's Phoenix Women's Division leadership, from left: Rachel Scotch, Jessica Rosenblum, Lizzy Savetsky, Lauren Tinker, AFMDA Major Gifts Director Elana Michael, and Courtney Kaplan.*

### Uri Shacham visits Los Angeles.

Uri Shacham, MDA deputy director-general and chief of staff, visited Los Angeles in March to spend time with supporters. He shared stories about his service with Magen David Adom, including a touching tale about a boy he helped during MDA's disaster relief efforts in Haiti following the 2010 devastating earthquake. Uri was honored to address the Sinai Temple congregation in Westwood, in addition to attending several meetings and dinners.



*Uri Shacham with sisters Ruth and Susan Slater.*

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### Dedications continued from page 9.



#### **Leon Szlezinger — Brooklyn, N.Y.**

Leon Szlezinger gathered with his father, wife, and sons to dedicate a first-responder Medicycle in memory of his mother, Kathrin Jane Szlezinger.



#### **Phyllis Wachtel — Boca Raton, Fla.**

Phyllis Wachtel was joined by her adoring grandchildren as she dedicated a Medicycle at AFMDA's annual Boca-Delray Community Event.



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## **There is good news!**

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