



United Hatzalah of Israel

Highlights of the week in Israel

5 February 2009

Dear Friends and Supporters,

This week we «ride along» with a medic who treated a patient with care and concern far beyond the scope of the medical response. We also follow the ambucycle medics who proved their value in an MCI (mass casualty incident) at a UNWRA school in East Jerusalem. Read about how the IDF Home Front Command plans to integrate United Hatzalah into their lifesaving plans. Have a great weekend.

Sincerely,

Eli Beer

Chief coordinator

There until the end...

United Hatzalah Senior Medic David Birnbaum has seen his share of serious accidents, but the horror and intensity of this weeks car crash was one that will stay with him for a while. David was driving along the coastal route (Route 4) when the United Hatzalah Moskowitz Command Center alerted him to a car accident in his immediate vicinity. David turned on lights and sirens and rapidly made his way to the scene.

The pickup truck was still smoking from the impact. A quick survey of scene indicated that it was safe to approach and that there were 2 conscious injured individuals. It took a moment for David to comprehend the scene. Apparently the driver lost control of the vehicle, it then sideswiped the guardrail loosening one of the rails. The loose rail penetrated the vehicle on the passenger side impaling the passenger even as the vehicle continued for an additional 50 meters (over 160 feet)!

David radioed for additional resources including heavy rescue equipment. The patient was conscious and fully aware of the extent of his injuries. The medical treatment protocol was clear, staunch the bleeding, administer oxygen and begin fluid replacement therapy via a large bore IV line. The wait for heavy rescue was maddening, the few minutes seemed like a lifetime. In truth, the injuries were so massive that even had they happened inside a Level 1 Trauma Center the chance of survival would have been nil.

David held the patients hand and tried to reassure him as hope and consciousness began to fade. With tears forming in his eyes, David asked the patient if he wished to recite





the Shema. Fully aware of the seriousness of his situation the patient thankfully nodded to David to begin. Together word for word the men recited the Shema together. The ancient prayer seemed to calm the injured man as he closed his eyes at its conclusion. Hardened cops, medics and passersby who stopped to assist sobbed together as they became aware of what had just transpired.

HFC and United Hatzalah

This week United Hatzalah senior staff met with IDF Home Front Command (HFC) General Yair Golan. General Golan mentioned that United Hatzalah once again proved their mettle and provided invaluable assistance «under fire» during the recent war in Southern Israel just as it had during the Second Lebanon War.

General Golan expressed interest in establishing working groups with the HFC and United Hatzalah because «United Hatzalah knows their communities and their communities know United Hatzalah».

In addition, General Golan explained that in times of widespread serious home front disruptions the local emergency resources, like United Hatzalah, will have to be self-reliant for the first 24-48 hours of the situation.

Having trained local resources with nationwide distribution is an asset that we have a responsibility to recognize and integrate into our operational planning.



The Other UNWRA School Incident

This week United Hatzalah beepers urgently reported: ### MCI in the Givati Lot (in East Jerusalem). Building Collapse. Medics and paramedics to the scene, drivers and incident commanders to the base ###. United Hatzalah medics and other rescue personnel throughout the city dropped whatever they were doing and raced eastward.

The fact that it was a crowded UNRWA school that collapsed into the ancient structure upon which it had





been built added to the urgency of the situation. United Hatzalah ambucycles led the way as the winding roads around East Jerusalem rapidly became clogged with rescue vehicles. Within minutes of the call over 15 ambucycle medics were on-scene!

It was these ambucycle medics who «saved the day» as they waded into the panicked crowd of schoolchildren, assessed the scope of the disaster and downgraded the incident as thankfully only 14 children and staff were lightly injured.

Members of the UN staff were amazed at the rapid response of United Hatzalah and other rescue services first responders.

**Thank you to all who have given us the opportunity to continue our work.
We hope you will continue to support us in the future.**

United Hatzalah is the largest emergency rescue volunteer organization in Israel which, working hand in hand with MDA has the endorsement of the leading Rabbis in Israel.
United Hatzalah has branches in almost every city in Israel from the Golan Heights in the north to Eilat in the south.