



United Hatzalah of Israel

Highlights of the week in Israel

30 April 2009

Dear Friends and Supporters,

Happy 61st. I share with you United Hatzalah perspectives on this year Yom Ha'atzmaut and Yom Hazikaron observances. I share with you a personal remembrance of one of the pioneers of Hatzalah.

Have a safe week.

Sincerely,

Eli Beer

Chief coordinator

“I am in the west, my heart is in the east”

Though I am in the US, my heart is with the people of Israel as they celebrate the State of Israel's 61st year of independence. Throughout Israel people are flocking to nature trails, army bases and parks for the traditional Israeli Independence day celebrations. I hear from our volunteer dispatchers that the type of calls and the broad geographic range is consistent with our annual preparedness planning.

Medics on hikes or in public areas were urged to keep their walkie-talkies and first-aid kits handy. Numerous times today calls went out “Anyone in Park so-and-so please report to the entrance to respond to a fainting or other thankfully minor injuries”. Including a scary minor MCI HAZMAT event at a pool with 17 lightly injured from a chlorine gas leak.



Swine Flu In Israel

Aside from the quibbling about the name of the flu (in Israel it is called Mexican Flu). Response to the few cases in Israel has been rapid and professional. United Hatzalah senior medical staff have been in close consultation with the Ministry of Health. At the moment with 2 identified and treated cases and one more suspect case, Israeli officials are keeping a cautious eye on the situation.

At United Hatzalah we are ramping up our procurement plan for protective gear for our medics. We would like to have a 1500 kits for immediate distribution, 3000 as replacements and reserve. Kits include a medic's N95 respirator mask, eyeshield, patient surgical mask, disposable jacket, 2 pairs of gloves, sanitizing gel w/cleanup wipes and a biohazard bag. Each kit costs around \$10.



Yom Hazikaron - Memorial Day



The day preceding Yom Ha'atzmaut is of course, Yom Hazikaron (Memorial Day). It honors the memory of all people killed by Israel's enemies in battles and terror incidents. I can't help but recall the horrors and heroism of volunteers and donors during and after the Jaffa Street tractor terror attack last year. I think it truly epitomizes the strength, resiliency and unity of Jews worldwide. Following the horrible attack which took place when I was in Chicago 3 people in that community took upon themselves to honor the memory of the victims by donating 3 ambulances in their memory.

My Personal Yom Hazikaron

He was my friend, my lifesaving buddy, my inspiration -Akiva Pashkus. It was a time when Hatzalah volunteers were on the scene nearly daily from terror attacks in the form of bus bombings, shootings and knife attacks.

When the call came through regarding a shooting in the Atarot industrial area we all geared up for yet another frighteningly common attack. When the medics arrived on scene they noticed the stickers, vest and emergency medical kit of a fellow hatzalah volunteer.

With a heightened sense of urgency the medics carefully performed a



rapid extrication and began advanced life support treatment on him. More medics streamed into the now secured area anxious to find out what was the situation with “their” Akiva. One of the many bullets that had been sprayed at Akiva’s car struck him in the head. Unable to stabilize him for transport to the trauma center the field team had to pronounce him dead on the scene.

Akiva left behind a wife and five children along with a legion of admirers and fellow Hatzalah volunteers. It is in his memory and with his inspiration that I strengthen my resolve to ensure that all medics have the equipment, training and support that they need to help more people live long, healthy and happy lives in Israel.

**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.