INSIDE

YAD SARAH
SPRING 2019

A HEALTHIER COUNTRY FOR ISRAEL’S BUILDERS

FRIENDS OF YAD SARAH

FriendsOfYadSarah.org
Branching Out
Remarkable stories from volunteers across Israel.

Interview: Shani Rosenfeld
Meet Yad Sarah’s encyclopedia of life-changing care.

Honoring Israel’s Builders
They built our nation. Now it’s our turn to take care of them.

Change Is In Your Hands
Breaking the cycle of domestic violence.

Dear Friends,

Israel was willed into existence by generations of dreamers – women and men driven by a pioneering spirit and unyielding sense of purpose.

Today, Yad Sarah continues to work to make that dream possible by supporting a healthier and safer country for those builders who shaped Israel’s past – and will determine its future.

Builders like Moshe Ashkenazi, an 86-year-old man who turned to Yad Sarah’s Home Hospital Program for urgent help when his wife of 60 years, Ruth, suffered a stroke and he wanted to care for her at home.

Builders like Ahava Litvak, a 32-year-old woman who works with special needs families at a community center in Ramot and found hope in Yad Sarah’s rehabilitation program after her congenital spine disorder worsened.

Future builders like Yitzhak, a little boy who needed the Yad Sarah Play Center’s help with impulse control, and now is calm, happy, and confident.

Whether the people of Israel need accessible transportation, physical rehabilitation, legal services, dental treatment, medical equipment or friendly visitors to brighten their days, Yad Sarah is here for them.

In this newsletter, we will explore the ways Yad Sarah continues to honor the legacy of Israel’s builders like Moshe, and then Ayala, and now the next generation, and the hundreds of thousands of other men and women who built and will sustain the Jewish homeland.

I’m grateful to our community of supporters who allow Yad Sarah to continue our work to honor the past, and come together to plan for the future.

Thank you so much for helping to make this work possible.

Adele Goldberg

Yad Sarah’s impact is wide-ranging, from providing basic and vital health supplies to those living in the periphery, to helping elderly and disabled people access medical care. This rating is confirmation that Friends of Yad Sarah supports those services with purpose, trust, and integrity, and demonstrates strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.
I was trained as a technician and worked as a remodeling contractor. In the military, I examined weapons for efficiency. At Yad Sarah, I bring these decades of experience to various jobs to help people in need. For the past five years, I have volunteered every morning repairing an array of equipment used to heal people in our community.

In the past year, I’ve suffered a stroke and a heart attack. But that hasn’t stopped me. I continue to volunteer at Yad Sarah’s Petah Tikvah branch with joy and gratitude.

I love helping people, like a woman who came into Yad Sarah with a broken breast pump last month. She had been trying to repair it on her own for weeks when a friend suggested she visit us. We had her on her way home with a functional breast pump in two hours. She thanked me for helping her child get the nutrients he needs.

I love the excellent atmosphere at our branch, where a small, united team works around the clock. This place feels like home.

I’ve been at the Nahariya branch of Yad Sarah for five years. Because of the high quality of our services, we’re known throughout town, from the mayor’s office to the streets. Everybody in need in Nahariya knows that they have a place to go. A lot of early German settlers landed in Nahariya, and many of the people we serve are Holocaust survivors. After having endured so much, these people deserve the best care possible.

They include survivors like Ruth, who came into our branch last week because she was having trouble breathing. Already on oxygen, Ruth suspected it might be a problem with her tank. And she was right: her tank needed repair. Without that specific model’s part on-hand, I made a call to another Yad Sarah branch where I found the part and then called a friend in the mayor’s office to help get the part here. Within a few hours, Ruth’s oxygen tank was repaired and we drove her home.

The people who volunteer in this branch give everything they’ve got. Helping people like Ruth gives me tremendous satisfaction and fills my day with joy.

I live walking distance from the center and I spend six-days a week here for nine hours per day. This is my second home. I’ve been volunteering at Yad Sarah since retiring from a 40-year career in the Office of Government Accountability 13 years ago. I am responsible for all of the medical supplies and inventory here at Bnai Brak’s branch. I also help repair equipment.

My desire and passion to help people started when I was a little girl. I grew up in a small house on the beaches of Tel Aviv. At the age of six, I learned how to help other people. I watched refugees coming to Israel before 1948 get off little boats, arrive at the shores, and run from British soldiers who had blockaded the beaches. We hid a few of them in our home until they were able to settle. I gave up my bed to older refugees and I slept on the floor.

In the military, I worked in the paratroopers unit folding parachutes. After the service, I served six years as a police officer and at the same time, I volunteered in a shelter for young female victims of domestic violence. I was taught by my dad that there is nothing more important than protecting people who need help.

I am the “can-do” person of this branch – or so everybody here calls me.

I have been a resident of Dimona for the past 55 years and I’ve volunteered for the Yad Sarah branch for the last 18 years, every Thursday. We opened 22 years ago. Today, there isn’t a person in Dimona who doesn’t know about us or hasn’t used the services at our Yad Sarah branch at some point.

Our manager, Rabbi Raphael Hed-Olef, connected me with Yad Sarah years ago when we worked together at the Nuclear Research Center. I started volunteering here after I retired. I spend every Friday and most evenings doing quality control for our inventory and supplies. The work is never-ending and always rewarding.

We make sure that we are always open, even during holidays and national crisis. We take pride in that. Everyone in Dimona knows that they can rely on us, no matter what.

When I started to volunteer at Yad Sarah, I was repairing equipment. Now, I also do home visits with the elderly. We spend time with them and tell them funny stories, and expect nothing in return. Doing good is enough of a reward.

My connection to my other volunteers and our patients is bigger than just the work that we do. Under our manager’s leadership, volunteers and visitors get together once a week to study Torah. In each of those discussions, we are reminded how important it is to help others. It is so powerful to actually practice what the Torah is teaching us by making a difference in people’s lives.

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Healthcare is expensive, even here in Israel. Some families cannot afford or do not have access to adequate equipment to recover in a healthy and dignified way. That's where Yad Sarah steps in. People in Israel come to one of Yad Sarah's resource centers all across the country for a wheelchair, a walker, a bed, or another piece of medical equipment, where they come face-to-face with dedicated and passionate professionals and volunteers, led by Shani Rosenfeld.

We sat down with Shani to hear, in her own words, what it’s like to touch so many lives each day and why she believes in Yad Sarah’s mission.

YS: SHALOM, SHANI. YOU’RE A VERY BUSY WOMAN – THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO SPEAK WITH OUR READERS. CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT YOURSELF AND HOW YOU CAME TO YAD SARAH?

Shani: Nonsense, I’m always happy to talk to our friends and supporters. After all, none of this work can be done alone. It requires the support of an entire nation and our friends abroad. The thanks go all to you. A little about me: I as an occupational therapist in the United States and came to Israel with the World Union Jewish Students (WUJS) on a program that allowed me to study and work at the Arad Absorption Center, which was then administered in the Negev. Afterwards, I started looking for work. I know some ole chadashim [new immigrants] worry about finding work. I never did. As an occupational therapist, there was no shortage of work for me here. I started in home care, working with stroke patients and home modifications for Kupat Cholim Klali [Israel’s national health insurance].

YS: AND HOW DID YOU GET INVOLVED WITH YAD SARAH?

Shani: Well, it’s actually a funny story. While I was at Kupat Cholim Klali, I got a call from someone asking me to go over to this old building and answer questions about accessibility for disabled people. The man on the phone mentioned something about Yad Sarah. At this point, I was already somewhat familiar with the organization as I had used their services, so I went. When I showed up, a Haredi man was standing outside of the building with a blueprint plan in his hand. He wouldn’t let me into the building and instead, spread out the plans across the hood of his car.

So, there we were, in the middle of Jerusalem, discussing ways to make apartments more accessible for people in wheelchairs, the elderly, and more. I told him, you need this many bathtubs, this many ramps measuring this long. I must have talked his ear off! Then I left. A week later, the same man called me and offered me a job creating model apartments designed for better accessibility. That man was Uri Lupolianski – the former mayor of Jerusalem who founded and chairs Yad Sarah.

YS: THAT’S AN AMAZING STORY. YOU HAD NO IDEA WHO HE WAS?

Shani: Not a clue.

YS: SO THESE WERE THE EARLY DAYS OF YAD SARAH. CAN YOU TELL US A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT IT WAS LIKE THEN?

Shani: You wouldn’t believe it. Our organization today reaches more than 50% of Israel’s population. Back then? Rain used to pour into the building, and I had to work on the floor. The building was one big mess. But we were determined to make it better.

YS: SO WHAT KIND OF WORK DID YOU DO AT YAD SARAH?

Shani: We did everything from helping families with medical equipment to creating model apartments to show how accessibility can be improved. It was a challenging but rewarding experience. We worked with families to figure out what they needed and how to make it work in their homes.

YS: WHAT DID YOU LEARN FROM THIS EXPERIENCE?

Shani: I learned a lot about patience and persistence. It’s not always easy to get people to see things your way, but we had to keep pushing and working. And in the end, it all paid off. We were able to improve the lives of so many people and that’s what it’s all about.

YS: WHAT DID YOU DO AFTERWARDS?

Shani: After that, I went on to work with Yad Sarah full-time, coordinating resource centers and helping families in need. It’s been a rewarding career, and I’m glad I was able to make a difference.
our facility and we had to attach umbrellas to the top of power wheelchairs to keep our clients dry. Our facilities were separated by a fifteen-minute walk and we didn’t even have a photocopy machine.

**YS:** NOW, YAD SARAH HAS EXPANDED. WHAT’S WORKING THERE LIKE TODAY?

Shani: We’ve grown so much. When families come to our facility, I have two volunteers to guide them around just so they don’t get lost! Today, we have ten exhibition centers [at Yad Sarah branches] spread across the country. Each one is staffed with great people - therapists and managers who really know what they’re doing and who really want to be there. And that’s because we all believe so deeply in what we are doing here. We believe in helping our friends across the country and doing everything we can to help make Israel a healthier place. Where else can you find people like that?

For example, the other day I got a call from a 42-year old man suffering from prostate cancer. I knew immediately that he needed a special diaper, but he was too embarrassed to go to the store to buy one. I understand - it’s not an easy thing to do. So, Yad Sarah took care of it for him, bringing the diaper to his home.

Another example: last week a friend of one our volunteers came to see me. Her father is 95 years old and was hospitalized for a serious spinal injury. He needed to be in bed for a month, but the hospital was planning to discharge him the next day. The family did not even have a bed for him at home yet. This kind of thing happens all the time. Families come to us in a panic. They need our help. I helped her pick the right hospital bed for her father and sent her home with a portable overbed tilting table that would allow him to use the computer in bed. I knew that the man spoke a few languages, so I recommended she pick up some books on tape in different languages from the National Library to keep his mind active while recovering. This is the kind of help I offer to people calling or visiting our center for help.

**YS:** CAN YOU TALK A LITTLE ABOUT WHAT YOU DO FOR YAD SARAH TODAY, DAY TO DAY?

Shani: At Yad Sarah, I wear many hats. But mostly, I listen to people’s problems and offer solutions to make their lives more comfortable. Most of my work deals with getting the right equipment to people in need. I’m sort of an encyclopedia when it comes to this work. Someone tells me what’s wrong, I think, I recommend a wheelchair or a walker or a lifestyle change. It’s ever-changing and always rewarding work.

YS: WITH COUPLES LIKE THAT, IS IT A ONE-TIME MEETING OR DO YOU HAVE ONGOING RELATIONSHIPS?

Shani: There are families I’ve worked with for more than 14 years! These relationships start with a problem - a broken leg, a stroke, some sort of injury - and blossom into a lifelong friendship with Yad Sarah, where we are always there for them to help meet their changing needs. You know, when someone gets sick or hurt, chances are they’ll get sick or hurt again in their life. And that’s where we come in. Sometimes things get intense, like a woman who recently came in panicking about her husband’s heart attack. Other times, it’s more out-of-the-box work, like a man I spoke with recently who needed to figure out how to get his household chores done while recovering from a broken foot. There’s no limit to what I and Yad Sarah can do for our friends across Israel.
HONORING ISRAEL’S BUILDERS

of Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow

Israel wasn’t always the nation of start-ups, life-saving medical advances, and revolutionary approaches to agriculture and conservation. It took years of ingenuity, struggle and perseverance to build Israel into the nation it is today. This success required an entire generation of builders - Israel’s greatest generation, now well into their 70s and 80s, to sacrifice for themselves, their families, and their nation.

At Yad Sarah – Israel’s largest volunteer-staffed social service organization – we come face-to-face with disabled, sick, or otherwise at-need members of Israel’s greatest generation every day as we fulfill our commitment to providing hope and care for these builders.

BLOOMING IN THE DESERT: A NATION AND A MARRIAGE

“I know this is the sixth time I am calling,” says Moshe Ashkenazi, 86, speaking to a Yad Sarah volunteer, “but I do not know how else to thank you for saving the love of my life.”

Moshe was referring to Ruth, an 82-year-old woman living in Jerusalem who is a part of Yad Sarah’s Home Hospital Program. Ruth, who has early signs of Alzheimer’s, was hospitalized after having a stroke. She struggled to get comfortable in unfamiliar surroundings.

That was the first time Moshe called. “I need your help,” Moshe said. “I’m afraid my wife will not recover anywhere but in our home, but I can’t afford a private service.”

Within two days, Yad Sarah’s Home Hospital program stepped up and provided them with the equipment Ruth needed to heal at home.

Ruth and Moshe are two of the hundreds of thousands of clients Yad Sarah supports each year. Both immigrants, Ruth and Moshe met over four decades ago as new immigrants or olim chadashim on a kibbutz, where they were both working to build the State of Israel. The Ashkenazis were unable to have a family of their own, but instead, Ruth and Moshe became parents to the dozen or so kids who often came through their Tel Aviv apartment.

“Our home was like a train station for kids while their parents worked,” Moshe says. “Now those kids are grown up, and they bring their children to visit us!”

It was one of these “kids” who recommended Moshe get in touch with Yad Sarah for help after Ruth’s stroke. And just like that, Moshe’s family grew a little more to include Yad Sarah.

THERE FOR EACH OTHER

Ahuva Litvak, 32, Director of Special Needs at the Ramot Community Center, considers Yad Sarah her family too.

Ahuva, while serving people with special needs, contends with one herself: a spinal cognitive disability that confines her to a wheelchair. When she looked for physical therapy and strength classes, only Yad Sarah could accommodate her busy schedule.

Sharona Sherman, Yad Sarah’s Director of Rehabilitation Services, worked with Ahuva to create an evening program for working women.

“She made me feel like her daughter,” says Ahuva, referring to Sharona. “She wouldn’t turn me away.”

Sharona hears from women like Ahuva every day - women living with disabilities, young and old, who struggle to balance a professional work or school schedule with physical therapy and body care.

“Our backgrounds are different,” Sharona explains. “Some suffer from disease, some from birth defects, some have been in accidents, but they all want one thing: to live normal lives and take care of their bodies.”

The evening program fills many needs, as instructor Rita Paran integrates mind and body care through a comprehensive and flexible program of physical therapy, fitness classes, yoga, art, and more.

“Women like Ahuva are making Israel strong,” says Sharona. “Of course Yad Sarah is here to help them!”

THE NEXT GENERATION OF BUILDERS

Yad Sarah supports the health of the next generation of Israel’s builders, too. So, when a miracle occurred at Rambam Hospital one day, Yad Sarah jumped into action.

Three women – Maayan, Aliyah, and Inbal – each gave birth to a preemie, each weighing less than 4 lbs., all on the same day. Doctors recommend breast milk to provide optimal nutrition for these tiny ones and strongly advised using Medela breast pumps as soon as possible. But the hospital was out of them. That’s where Yad Sarah stepped in.

Staff and volunteers specializing in newborn care sprang into action, making calls across the country to track down three pumps. Within record time, volunteers from Yad Sarah hand delivered the pumps to Rambam Hospital where our volunteers, specially trained to handle preemie health and breastfeeding, coached the new mothers on best practices for breastfeeding their new babies.

Who knows what contributions to Israel these babies will make one day? They are part of Yad Sarah’s mission to provide “help and hope to the people of Israel,” and each individual counts.

Three different stories. There different communities. Three different generations of Israeli builders. All connected by a common truth: Yad Sarah makes the people of Israel stronger and healthier together.

Ensuring a thriving Israel is at the heart of what we do—and your generous support enables us to sustain and grow these vital programs.
YAD SARAH’S ART EXHIBIT AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

THE CHANGE IS IN OUR HANDS

Is it graffiti? Is it street art? Or is it...activism?

Last week, a group of men took to the streets of Jerusalem to spread a message of love and tolerance. On Kiah Street near the Mahane Yehuda market, men who had been trapped in the cycle of domestic violence spray-painted a graffiti wall to mark the 2018 International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women. The art installation is available for viewing over the next few months.

"Change is in Our Hands" is a remarkable piece of street art designed by once violent men, now working to end domestic violence in Israel.

These men are currently undergoing treatment at Yad Sarah's Family Center, where they are inviting others imprisoned by domestic violence to break out and seek help - just as they sought treatment at Yad Sarah's Family Center.

What began as an attempt at dialogue turned into an art project that is transforming a street in the heart of Jerusalem. Violence is an inherently silent act of expression and that same silence characterized the early days of this group's conversations. Quickly, however, the men realized that what could not be said in words, could be said in art.

They took to the wall to break through the shame and anonymity of violence and to express how they felt. Day by day, they filled the wall with a world of feeling, regret, hope, and so much more.

The project is based on the notion that domestic violence is a universal, multi-generational social disease that crosses all social divides. When such a systemic problem affects a large group of people, it takes working together as a group in dialogue and treatment to eradicate it.

"Violence is not a decree of fate," said Jonathan, one of the group's members. "It is a reality that can be changed and rehabilitated." Since Jonathan began treatment at the Family Center, a judge has closed his file without conviction and has begun the process of reuniting Jonathan with his family.

Many men who come to Yad Sarah do so by a judge’s order, like Isaac. At first resistant, Isaac now considers the men in the group as his second family. "It hurts me to know that I hurt those close to me. My second family at Yad Sarah is helping me learn to confront my past and to close the circle of violence with my own family."

Some men, however, are here on their own accord, like Uri, who sought treatment at Yad Sarah in the middle of his divorce. "I needed tools for coping both with my violent tendencies and also my divorce," Uri said. "I've now realized that if you're violent, it means you are lonely. Believe that you can change, and you will. If I can, anyone can."

This approach, unique to Yad Sarah's Family Center, offers those accustomed to violence an alternative channel to expressing emotions in ways other than aggression. Today, the sounds of their artistic expression are heard louder on Kiah Street than the muteness of violence that previously dominated their homes – thanks to the treatment they're receiving at the Yad Sarah Family Center.

The Family Center is designed to empower women, men and children to cope with abuse and heal from the trauma and pain of domestic abuse. Working across the country, the Family Center continues to serve people in need – Jews and Arabs, from the most religious to the most secular – drawing on a team of uniquely qualified professionals to assist former victims and perpetrators of domestic violence on the road to recovery and rehabilitation.

Yad Sarah’s Family Center is one of the only programs in Israel to run a domestic abuse division geared to the Haredi community.

Our most recent center, opened last year in Sderot thanks to the support Rosenbojm-Komor Foundation, is currently the only comparable professional facility addressing domestic violence in the region. This new center is expanding our mission to end domestic violence in homes across the country.

"I hope that the project will raise awareness of this importance issue," says Dr. Shlomit Lehman, director of the Yad Sarah Family Center. "If we encourage just one person suffering from the cycle of violence to turn to Yad Sarah or any treatment center for help, then we have succeeded."
Yad Sarah, Israel’s largest volunteer-staffed organization, provides a vital array of compassionate health and home services for people of all ages. Yad Sarah’s free services are delivered by more than 6,000 volunteers in more than 100 branches.

The people of Israel — and people with special needs traveling to Israel — rely on Yad Sarah to help them remain independent, healthy and at home.

**OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES INCLUDE:**

**Medical Equipment Lending Centers**
An inventory of over 350,000 items to be loaned out at no cost to the borrowers.

**Guidance and Exhibition Centers**
Displaying equipment and daily living tools available to help people live independently.

**Day Rehabilitation Centers**
Physical and occupational therapy; computer, art, drama and gardening therapy; meals and social events for young and old recovering from strokes, surgery, illness and injury.

**Geriatric Dental Clinic**
A full range of specialized care for the elderly provided by volunteer dentists and including mobile treatment for the homebound.

**Yad Riva Legal Aid**
Legal services, legal counseling, legal representation and social assistance for the elderly provided by volunteer lawyers.

**Emergency Alarm Center**
Peace of mind for the elderly, 24 hours a day, with two-way transmitters connected to Yad Sarah’s national computerized system.

**Outreach to the Homebound**
Visits and projects to activate hands and minds and raise morale of people isolated at home.

**Play Center and Toy Library**
Providing a safe and supportive environment for children with special needs to learn and develop through play.

**Transportation Services**
Wheelchair-accessible rides to work, school, medical appointments and social occasions.
LEAVE A LEGACY FOR ISRAEL – AND RECEIVE HIGH, FIXED-RATE, LIFETIME INCOME

Providing for Yad Sarah is providing for Israel. Improving the lives of more than 420,000 people in Israel every year, Yad Sarah represents what is best about Israel and its people.

A YAD SARAH GIFT ANNUITY – GET INCOME FOR LIFE AND A CHARITABLE DEDUCTION.

A Yad Sarah Gift Annuity pays high, fixed-rate, lifetime income for one or two individuals. May we calculate the annuity rate, tax deduction and tax-free income portion for you? For many individuals, a gift annuity is an especially valuable retirement planning vehicle.

A SAMPLE OF YAD SARAH’S HIGH GIFT ANNUITY RATES

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* A final calculation of the tax-free portion will be made for the month of the gift, based on IRS rules.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN ISRAEL AFTER YOUR LIFETIME

Leaving a bequest in your will or trust for Yad Sarah provides much needed funds for the important work of Yad Sarah in Israel. You might also consider including Friends of Yad Sarah as a beneficiary of your IRA or of your life insurance policy. Your after-lifetime gift may be designated for programs of Yad Sarah in Israel that are dear to you or entrusted to Yad Sarah for use where most needed to assist in helping Israel’s most vulnerable people.

LET US SHOW YOU HOW

We can provide you and your advisors with language for your will or trust. We can help you set up a fund to benefit Yad Sarah in Israel. We can show you how to memorialize your gift.

TO BE A YAD SARAH PARTNER

Please contact Adele Goldberg, the Executive Director of Friends of Yad Sarah, at 1-866-YAD-SARAH or by email at adele@friendsofyadsarah.org.

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