

# JEWISH TRIBUNE

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PHOTO: MANUEL VILCKA PHOTOCORP/PT

At the Hatzoloh Evening of Appreciation were (front row, from left): Hatzoloh Responder Chanan Sturm; Dave Ralph, Toronto EMS; Toronto EMS Deputy Chief Allan Craig; Toronto Fire Chief Bill Stewart; Sheryl Jackson, Toronto EMS; Norm Barrette, York Region EMS; Tim McMullen, York Region EMS; Sgt. Bill Scholfield, Toronto Police department; Toronto EMS Deputy Chief Wayne Vibert; Hatzoloh Responder Moshe Zippin. Also on photo: Rabbi Hershel Weber, founder of Hatzoloh; David Stein, Hatzoloh EMS liaison; Saul Anisfeld, evening co-chair; Mark Mandelbaum, co-chair; Israel Zlotnick, co-chair; and Moshe Sigler, president, Hatzoloh Toronto.

Following are the volunteers honoured at the Dinner (not all are on the photo): Responders Baruch Felsner, Avrumy Friedman, Yisroel Dovid Goldstein, Moshe Joseph, Ari Kalifon, Yossi

Kass, Avrumy Kletski, Moshe Krygier, Joshua Kuhl, Heshi and Bayla Kuhnreich, Yisroel Lauterpacht, David Manheimer, George Markus, Baruch Merzel, Yisroel Nadoff, Shemtov Ouzzan, Yossi Phillip, Yaakov Rabinowitz, Moshe Rubelow, Meyer Salczer, Shuie and Chaya Skalist, Ithiel Snyder, Dovid Stein, Heshy Steinmetz, Chanan Sturm, Chaim Weinberger, Chaim Weinman, Aaron Wenick and Moshe Zippin.

Dispatchers Itty Bixenspanner, Chana Leah Glancz, Annie Heber, Chaya Esty Kessler, Moshe Lebovits, Shuly Mamostein, Bruchy Schik, Brenda Schild, and Estee Zlotnick. The evening also recognized past volunteers.

See Hatzoloh story, page 8.

## Hatzoloh volunteers honoured for selfless commitment to saving lives

By Tribune Staff

TORONTO – “These are the people who make a nation great,” said Stockwell Day, Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness.

Almost 900 people attended Hatzoloh Toronto’s first dinner in honour of the dedicated volunteers who go beyond the call of duty to respond to emergencies in the community.

Day was the keynote speaker at the ‘Evening of Appreciation’ at Paramount Conference and Event Venue in Vaughan. He extended the Canadian prime minister’s sincere greetings and said he “was very proud as a Canadian last January when Prime Minister [Stephen] Harper was the first world leader to say no Canadian dollars, no Canadian resources, no aid to a group whose aim is the destruction of Israel.”

Hatzoloh Toronto is a non-profit organization that came into existence almost 10 years ago to provide quick response to the Jewish community’s medical emergencies. It complements the ambulance service by providing quick, high-quality, non-transport care within minutes of being called.

Zale Newman, who presented awards to the volunteers, said that today there are 2,500 Hatzoloh members around the world and that Toronto responds to about 800 calls a year.

Praising the efficiency of the response team, Day said these volunteers have “so much that all of us can learn from,” adding that their training in physical matters as well as their sensitivity to “spiritual and religious needs in what may be a person’s darkest hour is incredible.”

The event was held recently during National Police Week. Day said that the police, fire fighters and volunteers are “potentially putting themselves in harm’s way for us” 24 hours a day, seven days a week. “We only hear about good things sometimes, but any mishap is on the front page. What you do deserves headlines every day.”

“These are the types of people that make a nation great and strong,” he added. Addressing the volunteers, he said that “by doing the things you do, you make not only your community safer and stronger, but our entire nation.”

Special guest was Rabbi Hershel Weber of Williamsburg, NY,

founder of Hatzoloh in the late 1960s, who spent countless hours helping Toronto.

The dinner honoured the memory of Shmulik Reichmann, co-founder of Hatzoloh in B’nei Brak, Israel, who was instrumental in bringing the organization here. A father of five, he passed away two years ago of a heart attack at the age of 44. “When a *tzaddik* (righteous person) departs, his *chesed* (kindness) lives on,” stated Neil (Moshe) Sigler, president of Hatzoloh Toronto. Reichmann “dedicated his life in such a quiet way to doing chesed.”

The launching of a program that will benefit the Toronto community greatly is also in memory of Reichmann: High school students will be trained to administer CPR and first aid in medical emergencies. Initiated by event committee member Goldie Hauer and made possible by the contribution of the Reichmann family, it’s modelled on a successful program in Seattle, where, as a result, there’s a 30 per cent survival rate among victims of cardiac arrest; elsewhere in the US, the rate is 2 per cent.

Chief Bruce Farr, head of Toronto EMS, was unable to attend. He addressed the crowd



Minister Stockwell Day received a framed ‘Prayer for Success’ at the recent Hatzoloh Toronto Evening of Appreciation. From left: Ephraim Reichmann, Moshe Rubner, Day and Mordechai Mandelbaum.

from Denver through a video presentation, emphasizing the important role Hatzoloh plays.

“I join all of you in paying respect to the memory of Shmulik Reichmann,” he said. Hatzoloh and EMS began working together in the spring of 1998. “Nine years later, we can celebrate an excellent working relationship,” Farr said. Bill Stewart, chief of the Toronto Fire Department, and Police Chief William Blair were present and received the award for Farr.

“Hatzoloh could not do what it does without the cooperation of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), the police department and the fire department. It’s very important to us in the Jewish community to salute them for all they do for us,” stated emcee Mordechai Mandelbaum.

He also welcomed Councillor Mike Feldman, who “has helped Hatzoloh many times,” and B’nai

Brith Executive Vice President Frank Dimant, “who stands up for the interests of the Jewish community so ably.”

A video presentation included people who told how Hatzoloh literally saved their lives or those of loved ones by arriving so quickly and providing the urgent care necessary until the patient could be transported to an emergency ward. According to testimonials, many times the responders even call the next day to check on the patients.

The audience was warned not to wait until after the Sabbath or Holy Days to call Hatzoloh, if there’s any concern at all. “Statistically, we get more calls on Motzei Shabbat [when the Sabbath ends],” said Sigler. The evening also recalled Eli Horowitz, a committed Hatzoloh volunteer who went missing last summer. In aiding with the search, the OPP “did not just

respond as police, but as true friends,” stated Sigler, adding his appreciation to Inspector Mark Andrews and Sgt. Det. Jeff Day.

The gathering was told about the responders’ arduous schedule. They begin with 250 hours of training, spend six months as observers, and every three months serve for 12 hours at the York Central Hospital emergency room with Dr. Debra Kiez, the organization’s medical director. “There are no words to describe our thanks to her,” said Mandelbaum.

They also attend lectures by Rabbi Miller every three months and a monthly Continuous Medical Education class. Hatzoloh volunteers often miss weddings and other social functions because of their commitment. In fact, several missed the dinner in their honour because they were on duty.