

The Survivor Mitzvah Project

Jewish American Heritage Month



2011 Local Hero: Zane Buzby



Zane Buzby honored with Local Hero Award by KCET & Union Bank for her humanitarian efforts to help elderly Holocaust survivors.

"The real triumph for me is the discovery that one can dramatically change a person's life with a simple act of kindness ... To have created a warm and loving family of strangers where before there was only isolation and hopelessness."

KCET and Union Bank honor local heroes for their dedication and commitment to enrich the lives of others. Zane's award was conferred in recognition of her 10 year effort to sustain the lives of Eastern European Survivors of the Holocaust through founding of *The Survivor Mitzvah Project*.

Zane Buzby is a successful television director, producer, and committed humanitarian. She has directed over 200 episodes of network television including such hit comedies as "Golden Girls", "Newhart", and "Married...with Children". She has produced and directed television series and pilots for CBS, ABC, NBC, HBO, FOX, Columbia Pictures, Warner Brothers, Universal Pictures, Disney, Comedy Central and Paramount Pictures.

Ms. Buzby began her professional career as a classically trained actor in New York. After being discovered by **Carl Reiner**, she was cast in the feature films *Oh God* and the cult classic, blockbuster hit *Cheech & Chong's Up In Smoke*. Her performance as hippie groupie Jade East received rave reviews from critics. Ms. Buzby co-starred opposite **Jerry Lewis** in *Cracking Up*, and she also appeared in **Rob Reiner's** *This Is Spinal Tap* as the hip *Rolling Stone* reporter.

Ms. Buzby's life took a dramatic turn during a "roots" trip that she made to Eastern Europe in 2001. Behind the "Iron Curtain", with help from **Professor Dovid Katz** in Lithuania, she connected with elderly Holocaust survivors in their eighties and nineties who were ill and alone, living in poverty. She was shocked to see their dire circumstances. They were struggling to survive, lacking the means to buy even the most basic of human necessities: food medicine, heat and shelter. Zane felt compelled to help. In concert with Professor Katz, they expanded the search for other survivors in dire need. Her initial aid efforts served as the catalyst for the creation of "*The Survivor Mitzvah Project*".

Partnering with **Chic Wolk**, a local Los Angeles philanthropist whose support continues to be instrumental in this urgent humanitarian effort, the SMP grew to help more and more survivors. In 2008, with the pro bono help of **Moshe Kushman**, partner at Skadden Arps law firm, it became a 501c3 non-profit public charity that now helps over 1000 survivors monthly in seven countries in Eastern Europe. *The Survivor Mitzvah Project*, a grassroots organization, is the only organization worldwide that provides direct and continuous financial aid to these last survivors of the Holocaust who receive no financial aid from any other organization. *The Survivor Mitzvah Project* is their only lifeline.

"There are thousands and thousands of Holocaust survivors living in horrific conditions, still waiting for aid. I have to believe that there are enough good people out there who will stand up for these survivors and say, yes, I will help."

Using her directorial skills and story-telling abilities, Ms. Buzby aspires to impart the history and the plight of these survivors to the local community, inspiring people young and old to participate in this urgent humanitarian effort. In constant correspondence with the survivors the SMP helps, she has created *The Survivor Mitzvah Project's* educational archive of their life histories and Holocaust testimonies. Buzby is currently making a documentary, "FAMILY OF STRANGERS", about the survivors she visits on SMP's humanitarian aid expeditions.

In a tireless effort, *The Survivor Mitzvah Project* helps elderly Holocaust survivors live out their final years with dignity, and with the knowledge that people far away have not forgotten them.

"Together we can write a more hopeful final chapter to the Holocaust, one of friendship, love and kindness."

"Due only to your help, your generosity, and your kind hearts, are we able to help elderly Holocaust survivors. Each and every one of you is a remarkable individual who has saved lives and dramatically changed lives for the better. You are my heroes." – Zane Buzby

Who saves a life, saves the world entire ...

www.survivormitzvah.org *The Survivor Mitzvah Project is a 501 c 3 non-profit organization*

[Watch the video](#) to see those whose lives have been dramatically changed by your kindness.



<http://youtu.be/5Rna8e4Fkco>



The Survivor Mitzvah Project • 2658 Griffith Park Blvd. Ste.#299, Los Angeles, CA 90039

