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# Jewish Report



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Volume 15 Number 21

## UJ law professor says academic boycotts are unconstitutional PAGE 3



### 30 000 MARCH IN NEW YORK'S ISRAEL PARADE

Marchers representing the Jewish Agency for Israel, were among the 30 000 people who marched in the Celebrate Israel Parade in New York City on June 5. (JEWISH AGENCY FOR ISRAEL)

Theatre buff Maurice Podbrey builds SA / 4

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"By the time a man realizes that maybe his father was right, he usually has a son who thinks he's wrong." Charles Wadsworth

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# Academic boycotts are unconstitutional, says Bilchitz

ALISON GOLDBERG

ACADEMIC BOYCOTTS, if they were to be effective, violated fundamental rights and thus were prima facie unjustifiable, morally and legally, according to Dr David Bilchitz, associate professor of law, at the University of Johannesburg (pictured).

Addressing a Union of Jewish Women meeting on Monday on the morality and legality of academic boycotts, Bilchitz said the claim that such boycotts were a non-violent strategy, did not render them justifiable, because of those very violations.

The issue was of course highly topical given the recent campaign to have his university impose an academic boycott against Ben-Gurion University in Israel.

To make out his case, Bilchitz considered two rights in the South African Constitution. Section 16 (1) of the Constitution protects the right to freedom of expression, which includes “academic freedom and freedom of scientific research”.

He argued that this right needed to be understood in light of the central values underlying the academic enterprise, which involved the pursuit of truth, knowledge, individual wellbeing and understanding about the world. Collaboration and engagement between academics were central to achieving these very purposes.

Academic boycotts, by their nature, were designed as a strategy to discontinue relations with certain academics, thus impeding the free flow of information and collaborations that were productive from a research point of view. They thus prima facie violated the fundamental right to academic freedom.

Academic boycotts also abrogated another right, namely, the right to equality as contained in Section 9 of the Constitution. This right required that no person be unfairly discriminated against on any ground such as race, gender and ethnic origin.

Importantly, South African courts had, in certain cases, extended these grounds to include the national origin of a person. An academic boycott that targeted individuals for prejudicial treatment because they were of a particular nationality or, even that they belonged to a particular institution, was prima facie discriminatory.

Proponents of the boycott, Bilchitz contended, would argue that these rights were not violated as the proposed boycott was not directed at Israeli individual, but Israeli institutions.

Bilchitz argued that the distinction between individuals and institutions did not hold up to scrutiny, since individuals were affected by an institutional boycott. He contended that the very aim of the boycott must



also be, ultimately, to target individuals who were in fact the actors who could bring about the desired changes those proposing the boycott wished to achieve.

He also argued that the Constitution did not simply ban discrimination against individuals, but also against institutions: targeting

Israeli institutions could thus constitute discrimination in itself.

Bilchitz recognised, however, that rights were not absolute and that there would be circumstances in which some form of academic boycott could be justifiable.

The most important moral criterion here was that academics might legitimately refuse to collaborate on research that had a likelihood of leading to human rights violations.

It was hard to see how UJ’s water research with BGU could harm individual rights and, would have benefitted individuals.

However, one could imagine that it would clearly have been legitimate for a university in South Africa to refuse to conduct research into poisonous gases with an Iraqi university during the reign of Saddam Hussein.

More generalised boycotts, Bilchitz argued, faced a heavy burden of justification that it was unlikely could be discharged.

Firstly, it would be necessary to show that any policy adopted by a university did not single out any specific country and would be applied consistently to every country where there were human rights violations or military links. He argued that “it is quite clear that too wide a policy on academic boycotts would undermine the very academic project itself or create significant harms to the notion of a universal academic community”. Secondly, Bilchitz argued that the boycott would have to be shown to be an effective means of achieving its purpose. As academics and universities were likely to be the sites of social change, building bridges with them was key to bringing about such change; isolation of academics seemed likely to render a society more insular.

Institutional boycotts were even less likely to have any effect. “There is a real dilemma for those favouring general boycotts. On the one hand, the more impact there is on individuals, the more academic freedom rights are violated and boycotts are discriminatory. The less impact there is on individuals, the less likely boycotts are to achieve any of their stated aims.”

He argued there was also a readily available alternative of constructive engagement with academics and others which was much more likely to bear fruit. Deepening institutional links rather than cutting them off, could help build momentum towards a solution rather than being part of the problem.

# Don’t judge Iranians by actions of their president

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MOIRA SCHNEIDER  
CAPE TOWN

THE PRESIDENT of Iran was anti-Israel, anti-Semitic and a Holocaust denier, but “to judge the people of Iran in this light would be wrong”, said Meir Javedanfar, Iranian-Israeli Middle East analyst, at a breakfast meeting held under the auspices of the SAZF (Cape Council) at Café Riteve.

“The people want better relations with the West and a democracy, they don’t want Israel to be wiped off the face of the earth,” the Tel Aviv-based expert maintained. He noted that, thanks to President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Iranians now knew a lot more about the Holocaust.

“He’s so unpopular that, whatever he says, they want to do the opposite. He denies the Holocaust and suddenly there’s a massive interest in Iran to learn about it - some accuse him of being a ‘closet Jew’,” he joked.

Describing the situation in that country as a dictatorship, including extreme abuse of human rights, Javedanfar called on the South African government to intervene. “Your government has got wonderful relations with the government of Iran and is in a good position to help.”

As to the future for Iran and Israel, Javedanfar opined that the two countries had “tremendous areas of common interest”, claiming that “Iran would be Israel’s best ally. It has also been attacked by Arab nationalists,” he said, alluding to the 1980 Iraqi invasion.

The Iranian government, he ventured, recalled the Soviet experience in taking on the Jewish community, resulting in American and Jewish communities abroad rallying, pressurising and sanctioning that country. “I think that’s why Iran has left the Jews alone.”



Meir Javedanfar, Iranian-Israeli Middle East analyst.

# History made with ‘Generation Sinai’

ALISON GOLDBERG

THROUGHOUT the country last Friday morning, Jewish day school learners and their parents engaged in Torah learning to honour 1 Sivan 5771. This is the same day Jews arrived at the foot of Mount Sinai 3323 years ago; six days prior to the momentous event of receiving the Torah.

This joint initiative between Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and 18 participating schools, called “Generation Sinai”, is the first of its kind in the world, the Chief Rabbi believes.

The special bond between parent and child, between one generation and the next, ensures G-d’s word passes from one to the other. It is the lifeblood of the Jewish people.

In schools throughout the country thousands of parents and children gathered to learn together.



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and his son Levi study together.

ILAN OSSENDYVER



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# Strange mix of sport and theatre all in a day’s work for Maurice

**MOIRA SCHNEIDER**  
**CAPE TOWN**  
**PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN HIGGS**

MAURICE PODBREY wakes up every morning with “a sense of happy expectation and excitement about what I’m going to do”. After a lifetime in the theatre, the Durban-born director and actor, returned to South Africa from Canada in 1997, rolled up his sleeves and is making his mark not only in this field, but in the development of sport - his other passion - in the Cape township of Khayelitsha.

Although he still has the “unsolved problem” of his family remaining in Montreal and having to commute, which is becoming less “comfortable” as time goes on, he says he doesn’t think he could leave South Africa. “I’m so much taken by this country - I love it here!” he exclaims.

The City Masters Football Club was started five years ago by two brothers in Makhaza, Khayelitsha, with “almost no resources” as a “response to the poverty, neglect and violence”. Adds Podbrey: “They had over a period of time built up this remarkable going entity of over 100 members and teams, playing every weekend and registered with Fifa.

“They were desperately in need of development and some financing and I stepped in,” he recalls. The Pauline Podbrey Clubhouse has recently been completed and named as a token of Maurice’s love for his “marvellous, beautiful” older sister who passed away two

years ago and who he describes as having been “one of the great influences in my life”.

Pauline was a political activist in South Africa in the 1940s and ‘50s who was forced into exile with her husband, H A Naidoo. Both were trade unionists and members of the Communist Party who “soon fell foul of the new legislation and were hounded by the police”, Maurice remembers.

He recalls an “unfortunate incident” with the Jewish community when Pauline had tried to enroll her daughter at the local Jewish school and was advised by the rabbi to rather send her to Israel for her education. “Pauline told him where to get off,” he says, adding that “general timidity reigned in the country among the Jewish community” at the time.

“Although she didn’t know a football from a rugby ball, she would have loved to know that we were helping young people,” he ventures.

At Pauline’s memorial service, someone approached Maurice and suggested the football club as a way to commemorate her life here. “I thought it was a neat idea and I went to investigate the club and just fell in love with them, their dedication, their integrity...”

“It’s cost me a pretty penny,” he laughs, “but I love them and I love the work they’re doing. Beautiful young people - just to go there and to see the enthusiasm and the talent! They just need some structure and some help in getting their act together.

“We set up the Pauline Podbrey

Foundation and very soon we struck gold,” he recalls. Maurice had spent 30 years in Canada, having founded the Centaur Theatre in Montreal and been awarded the Order of Canada, the country’s highest civilian honour, for his services to theatre in that country.

Now was the time to call in his contacts. “I spoke to the newly-appointed Canadian High Commissioner who was very responsive and within a short time, they announced that we were getting enough money to build a clubhouse which was finished within two months and officially opened in February, and now we have to fill it with equipment, including washing machines.”

Maurice is soliciting private donations for this purpose. The clubhouse already has three computers and an almost-stocked kitchen, as well as showers. He is also trying to upgrade the quality of the coaches.

The Pauline Podbrey Foundation oversees the activities of the clubhouse and raises funds.

Theatre is of course his prime interest and occupation and one in which he has made his mark internationally. Since returning to the country, he has also assisted in contributing to the development of the art form, more recently concentrating on the previously disadvantaged.

Under the aegis of the MoPo Cultural Trust that he set up, he has completed over 30 projects. “I think we’ve made a difference - we’ve really tackled and done things in almost every aspect of



**Maurice Podbrey with committee members of the football club he assists in Khayelitsha, in front of the (then) almost-completed Pauline Podbrey Clubhouse.**

theatre development in this country and we’re almost alone in doing that, offering our services to young emergent talent, to help them structure themselves, raise funds, give them advice on how to proceed, to help them tour.

“We’re trying to develop more indigenous work and work in the other languages.” Podbrey has just toured KZN with a play in Zulu and has done plays in Xhosa and Afrikaans in the Northern Cape.

“We’re trying to extend that because I think it’s important for young black actors to work in their own language as well as in English and that opportunity hasn’t presented itself. In fact, speaking to some of the great actors like John Kani, you find that they’ve never performed in their own language,” he says incredulously, “and that’s a terrible disadvantage for an actor.”

Just in Time Productions, recently started in Durban by Maurice and Bheki Mkhwane under the MoPo umbrella, has already put on three works and has “all sorts of marvellous plans” to produce other Zulu and non-Zulu work.

“It brings people together, fueling a common vision,” he says of indigenous theatre. “We just have to start wanting to go and see each other’s work - it still operates in separate communities, separate packages, that’s the problem.”

Podbrey says he has never regretted his decision to leave Canada. “I knew I’d be coming back here.

“It was the (1995 World Cup) rugby game where Nelson Mandela stepped forward (to present the trophy) that clinched it for me. The general manager at my theatre said he knew from that day onward that I was going back to South Africa,” he chuckles.

## Zimbabwe’s Jewish community still needs assistance

**DAVID SAKS**  
**PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED**

THE LATEST trends tentatively suggest that Zimbabwe may at last be in a period of recovery after years of economic turmoil. Despite this, there remains an ongoing need for Diaspora Jewry to assist many elderly members of the small Jewish community, particularly with essential medication still unobtainable in the country.

At the end of May Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, spiritual leader and executive director of the African Jewish Congress, spent a Sunday in Harare to oversee the distribution of medication, as well as Israeli foods, brought from South Africa. This was preceded by the AGM of the Harare

Hebrew Congregation, which he also attended.

Following the AGM and distribution, Jewish community members gathered in the Rhodes Hall for a Yom Ha’atzmaut function. Sam Benatar, president of the Zimbabwe Jewish Board of Deputies, delivered the welcoming message and pledged, to great applause, the solidarity of the Zimbabwe Jewry to the State of Israel.

Rabbi Silberhaft and David Millard, a Christian Zionist activist for Israel who accompanied him to Harare, then addressed the audience. Millard, in addition to refuting some of the accusations commonly made against Israel, stressed the religious significance of its restoration as a Jewish state for believing Christians like himself.



**Peter Sternberg, vice president AJC; Phillip Hasson, president Sephardi Community; Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft; David Millard; Sam Benatar, president Zimbabwe JBOD; Arnold Joffe, president Harare Hebrew Congregation.**

## In search of King David alumni

**RONEL ZEFF**

ELLIOT WOLF, executive director of the King David Schools’ Foundation, and Fundraising Director, Raelene Tradonsky, recently returned from a two and a half week trip to New York, Philadelphia, Chicago and London.

Their aim was to reconnect with former King Davidians and to introduce the Dor le Dor - Generation to Generation Campaign - which aims to build an endowment fund for the sustainability of King David Schools which they believe will ultimately secure the future of the Johannesburg Jewish community.

Dor le Dor focuses on the continuation of our subsidy programme (financial assistance for Jewish learners in need); enhanced development of our teaching programme (attracting and retaining quality teachers); expansion of our learning programme (strengthening academic, religious, cultural and sporting curricula); and

support of our outreach programme (enhancing our commitment to previously disadvantaged communities).

Wolf says the trip “can only be described as emotionally overwhelming; how remarkable it was to witness the meteoric careers of so many of our Davidians and to observe their successes and recognition in their present habitat. King David has certainly made its contribution over a wide variety of fields to the world.”

Tradonsky adds that “Davidians the world over have a strong and proud connection to their former school, remembering it with great fondness and pride”.

When asked if the trip was successful, she says: “It was a great start - fundraising is all about relationships, building and nurturing relationships over a long period of time. We have made a fabulous beginning and established relationships with a number of alumni which will stand us in great stead for the future.

“We have many commitments from former Davidians who are willing to partner us and support our cause, and with more and more families requiring financial assistance to afford King David School education, we need all the help we can get.”

It is the King David Schools Foundation’s hope that together with local and overseas alumni, current and former parents, and the broader local and overseas Jewish community, a substantial endowment fund will be created so that the King David Schools can continue to offer a world-class King David experience to all Jewish children.

For photographs, more information on the trip or the Dor Le Dor Campaign, please fill in your e-mail address at [www.kdsf.org](http://www.kdsf.org). In addition, you will then receive regular e-newsletters about interesting former Davidians, as well as invitations to reunions and other events.

On the website you can also send e-KarDs, post KlassifieDs, search for long lost classmates.

### AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

#### TEL AVIV DEMONSTRATORS CALL FOR PALESTINIAN STATE

JERUSALEM - About 5 000 people last Saturday night marched through central Tel Aviv to express support for a Palestinian state based on the pre-1967 borders.

The march was sponsored by several left-wing political parties and organisations, including Peace Now, Meretz, Hadash, the Labour Party, Gush Shalom and Other Voice. Israeli media outlets estimated the number of protesters at about

5,000; organisers said 20 000 participated.

The march was called “Netanyahu said no - We say yes to a Palestinian state”.

Marchers carried signs reading “Palestinian state - An Israeli interest”, “Jews and Arabs refuse to be enemies”, “Bibi, recognise the Palestinians”, and “Yes, we KEN”. Ken is Hebrew for “yes”.

Several dozen right-wing activists held a counter-demonstration at the start of the march. (JTA)



# Ackerman gets honorary doctorate from Unisa

MOIRA SCHNEIDER  
CAPE TOWN  
PHOTOGRAPH  
COURTESY UNISA

RAYMOND Ackerman, founder and former chairman of Pick n Pay, was “very, very thrilled” to have been awarded an honorary doctorate in education by Unisa at its graduation ceremony held at the Cape Town International Convention Centre here last Saturday.

This is the latest in a long list of accolades, which now include five honorary doctorates, but he has “certainly not” become blasé.

“It was fantastic - I sometimes feel a little embarrassed because I’m really just a grocer at heart,” he modestly told Jewish Report in a telephonic interview. “They wrote to me about it virtually on my 80th birthday, so that came as a birthday present that I did not know about,” he added.

“It was a lovely afternoon - I had my family there, all my children and half my grandchildren and it was great.”

He is quick to say that the credit is not all his, though. “My wife and my kids have done so much on education through the foundations we have, so I said (at the ceremony) that I was accepting it on their behalf as well.”

Ackerman’s wife, Wendy, has, in fact, been running a bursary scheme since 1967, creating graduates in every field from medicine to the arts, he noted.

Ackerman has a long relationship with the institution dating back to at



Raymond Ackerman and Prof. L Molamu (Registrar of Unisa) at the graduation ceremony.

least the 1980s, including having served on the board of the Unisa Foundation for many years. “It’s quite an amazing university,” he says, “because in the ‘80s they used to have about 80 000 students - they now have 300 000. It’s one of the biggest in the world.”

The supermarket supremo, who retired last March, has always placed a high premium on education, holding the view that it is the only guarantee of a secure future in this country. In his reply at the ceremony, Ackerman recalled his first day at university as an 18-year-old.

“I got a message from the professor of commerce at UCT, that actually changed my whole life. He said something to me on that day that helped me run Pick n Pay and build my company.

“I just wanted to say how important education is, even if it’s working night and day like these poor people do at Unisa. It’s the answer for our country and the answer for the individual to feel that he can make a place in the world.”

Referring to the Ackerman Family Educational Trust, Professor Loyiso Jita, acting deputy executive dean of the College of Human Sciences at Unisa, commended the Ackermans for “creating such a foundation that continues to assist the less fortunate in our communities with funds for their education.”

Justice Bernard Ngoepe, chancellor of Unisa, capped Ackerman.

# Netanyahu adviser stresses importance of SA Jewry

IN THE course of participating in the recent IUA-UCF Chairmen’s Mission to Israel, SAJBD National Chairman Zev Krengel met for an hour with Ron Dermer, senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Discussion ranged from Netanyahu’s recently concluded trip to Washington, Middle East peace prospects, the global campaign aimed at isolating Israel and the relationship between Israel and the South African Jewish community.

Krengel expressed his concern over ongoing efforts to turn Israel into a pariah state in the same way as apartheid South Africa was isolated.

Dermer said that while this was obviously of concern to Israel as well, he believed that the apartheid system was self-evidently an unjust one and therefore indefensible. The same could not be said about Israel’s cause, which fundamentally was about seeking to live in peace and security with its neighbours.

With regard to Netanyahu’s US trip, Dermer said that it had been a very tough and challenging one, but it was generally felt to have been successful. The bonds between Israel and the US remained very strong, and Israel’s needs and concerns were well understood by the Obama administration.

Krengel reiterated how the



SAJBD National Chairman Zev Krengel (right) with Ron Dermer, senior adviser to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

great majority of South African Jews were both loyal South Africans and deeply Zionist. As a Diaspora community, they did not presume to involve themselves in Israeli politics, but in broad terms would always support Israel’s right to exist in peace and security as a democratic Jewish state.

In turn, Dermer stressed the high esteem in which South African Jewry was held in Israel, not least for what its members had done for the Zionist cause over the decades. He said that the Prime Minister’s door was always open to its leadership whenever it had important issues it needed to raise.

## AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

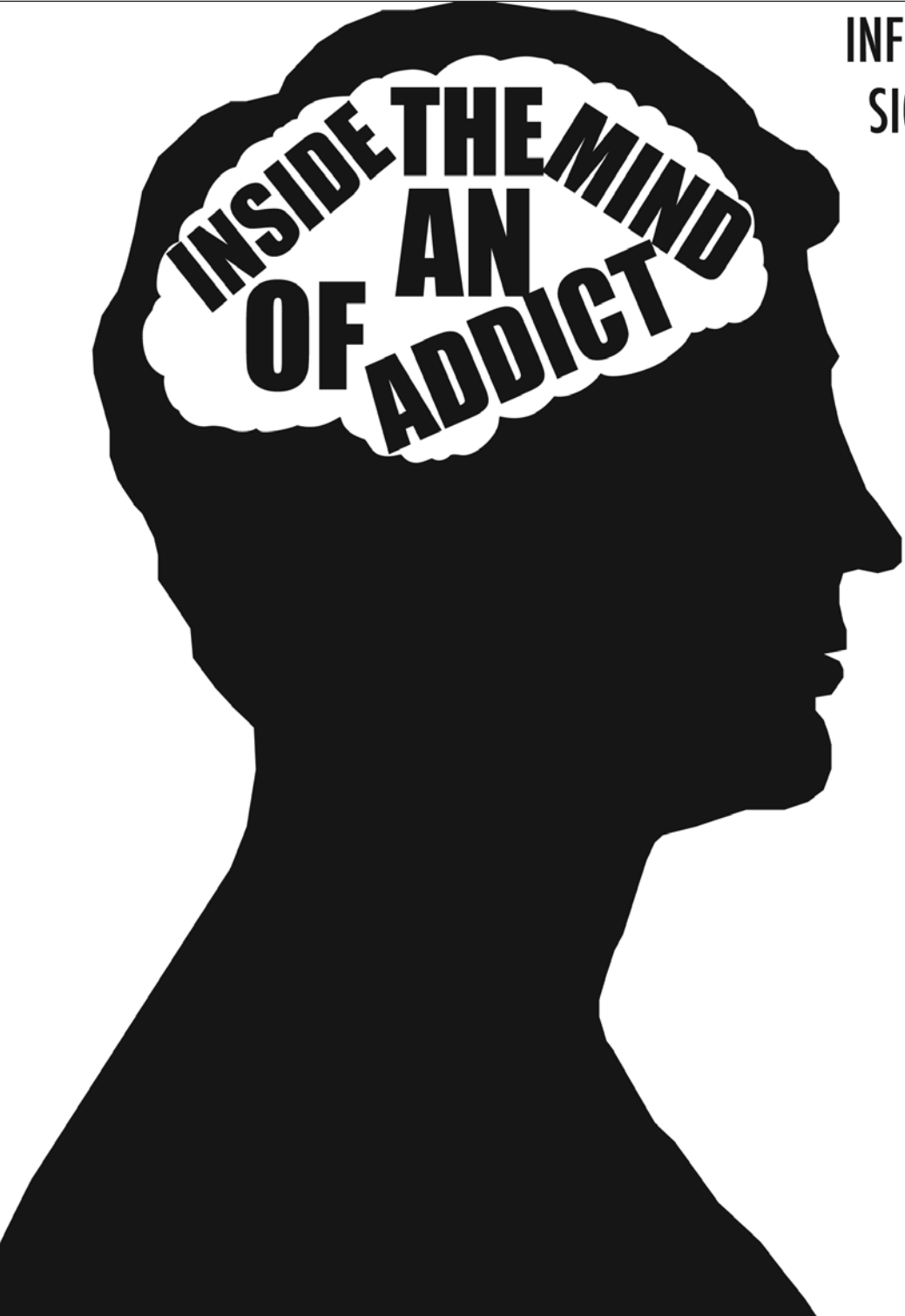
### THOUSANDS VISIT KRAKOW SYNAGOGUES

KRAKOW, Poland - Thousands of people visited Krakow’s seven historic synagogues in an event aimed to foster Jewish identity among Krakow’s small Jewish community.

Called Seven at Night, the June 4 event also was designed to educate non-Jewish Poles about contemporary Jewish culture. Sponsored by the Krakow Jewish Community Centre, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee and the Krakow Jewish communal organisation, the event started with a public Havdalah ceremony in the courtyard of the JCC, and then the seven synagogues in the city’s historic Jewish district, Kazimierz, were opened.

Each synagogue hosted an exhibit, concert, panel discussion or other activity highlighting Jewish life and culture as lived today. All events were free. They ranged from talks on “the ABCs of Judaism” by Krakow Rabbi Boas Pash to a concert by an Israeli rock band and a panel discussion on Polish Jewish youth.

Organisers estimated that more than 5 000 people visited the synagogues. “It far, far exceeded our expectations,” JCC director Jonathan Ornstein told JTA. (JTA)



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Watching over the fruit and vegetables are Oscar Koren, Adam Shneier and Sybil with their driver Joseph Masumise in the background.



Ian Shneier and Rodney Wainer filling the air with the appetising aroma of boerewors.

# Another JWBS Morning Market success story

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPHS BY RITA LEWIS

AFTER WEEKS of rain followed by a freezing cold snap heralding the start of winter, the weather suddenly turned pleasant for the annual Jewish Women's Benevolent Morning Market held recently at the Jabula Recreation Centre in Sandringham, Johannesburg.

The market is the JWBS's main fundraiser and members of the organisation spent many hours collecting and collating the hundreds of items on sale on this - and of course on previous - morning markets.

In these times of a growing reliance by many of the general Jewish public on organisations such as the JWBS for various kinds of support, it is important that these occasions should be well supported.

In order to ensure that the revenue raised at the market was kept at a high level, several new stalls were introduced, selling different items which had not been introduced previously.

These included a fruit and vegetable stall which was virtually sold out by the end of the morning.

Likewise, the idea of a new stall to sell plants and seedlings, was auspiciously chosen as it took advantage of the time of year when people are buying their winter seedlings and plants.

For a "first-timer", it did very well, offering a wide variety of popular plants and trees.

The stall selling hand-knitted jerseys, hats, scarves, etc, seemed to have taken the day off, but was replaced with a host of brand new blouses selling at the great price of R20 each!

As usual the literally thousands upon thousands of books in crates and boxes at the Book Fair, collected by a resilient Sonya Bernstein, were perused by all those wanting some of the latest novels, cookery books, etc.

The proceeds from the sale of books make up a large sum of the market's takings.



A happy couple enjoying their day out.



Elaine Kessel and Merle Zar holding warm scarves, ponchos and blankets for sale.



Mike Baum and Heather Kalmonowitz manning the kitchen.



Rita Woolf and Myrna Gordon doing a roaring trade selling their bric-a-brac.



Engrossed in watching the children's activities.



At the costume jewellery stall are Vivian Meyer, Rosa Barnet, Sarah Pincus, Heather Shapiro and her granddaughter, Danit.



Some of the crowd enjoying the cordial atmosphere while eating their lunch.







Jewish Report

Another giant of the Struggle leaves us

AFTER EVERY revolution comes the next generation, those who were not yet born or too young to appreciate the courage of the activists who fought it, often at great personal sacrifice. They grow up benefiting from their elders' achievements, yet often don't have the patience to listen to their stories as they are too busy building their own lives.

Many giants of the anti-apartheid struggle have died; others are old and frail. We bid farewell this week to another, Albertina Sisulu - who passed away on June 2 at the age of 92.

Not everything in South Africa is on the right track, nor does this nation quite match up today to what Sisulu's generation had in mind. But there is enough that is on the right track for us to be profoundly grateful for her contribution to it. She leaves a country whose politics, business and society are bursting with young energy.

A glimpse of its progress could be seen last Saturday night at the posh Lyric Theatre at Gold Reef City in Johannesburg, where legendary jazz trumpeter Hugh Masekela and his band played to some 2 000 mostly black fans. Many came in top-of-the-range cars that filled the parking area, were dressed smartly and exuded confidence, wellbeing and an air of success - a far cry from the old South Africa of Hendrik Verwoerd.

An indicator of this was the fact that the evening was not dominated by "protest" or "liberation" songs, as it might have been some 15 or 20 years ago. Just great music by an outstanding musician in a plush auditorium vibrating with African soul.

In the middle of some songs, Masekela - with just an upward flick of his hands - caused the entire audience of some 2 000 music-lovers to instantly rise from their seats, singing and dancing in the rows with an infectious vigour which made even normally reserved people join in.

No-one can deny the country's huge problems - unemployment, poverty, corruption and crime; the beggars knocking on the windows of those smart cars at every intersection.

Sisulu was eminently aware of this. Yet the positive vibe and appreciation of excellence permeating the Lyric that night would also have persuaded her that there is hope.

She epitomised quiet dignity based on inbred, rock-solid values - similar to Nelson Mandela. Even her marriage to Walter Sisulu seemed like an old-world fairytale, despite the fact she was deprived of him for so many years while he was jailed on Robben Island with Mandela. She, too, spent time in jail and endured being banned and harassed by police.

With that era gone, her children will be the torch-bearers of her poise and integrity - a huge responsibility. Children of great people cannot always carry the best with them - there are unfortunately many examples of offspring of heroes who are anything but heroic.

In African culture, it is not unusual for women to play important roles in both practical and inspirational terms. Over the decades, many have kept homes running and raised children while their men were incarcerated or in exile, or were away for long periods as migrant labourers in the mines and elsewhere.

Jews can identify with this "strong woman" ethos - it is also a familiar tradition in the Jewish world, where over the centuries such women have held families together in the most desperate situations while their men were out scraping together a living.

The admiration for Albertina Sisulu has no ethnic borders - she is mourned in all places and facets of the country. She represents a kind of enduring value system we sometimes feel slipping away in our land. Sadly, the crudeness of some contemporary South African politicians contrasts starkly with the stateliness of the Sisulus.

We salute a great African woman - an exemplar of what this country can and should be - and hope we can emulate her brand of courage and determination to stand up for what is right and reject what is wrong.

OPINION AND ANALYSIS

FORUM FOR DIVERSE VIEWS

Father to son, Netanyahu's legacy in Washington

RAFAEL MEDOFF  
WASHINGTON

THE ENTHUSIASTIC response Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu received when he addressed the US Congress on May 24 came from both sides of the aisle. Democrats and Republicans both took part in standing ovations. Afterward, Democrats and Republicans made statements criticising President Barack Obama's positions and supporting Israel's.

But perhaps it is not so surprising the prime minister attracted such bipartisan support. His father did something similar 67 years ago. In the summer of 1944, 34-year-old Benzion Netanyahu was the executive director of the American wing of Ze'ev Jabotinsky's Revisionist Zionist movement.

One of his tasks was to help mobilise support in Washington for free Jewish immigration to Palestine and the creation of a Jewish State. That was no small job at a time when the British opposed Jewish immigration and statehood, and the Roosevelt administration preferred not to intervene.

The Revisionists often used tactics that mainstream Zionists considered too aggressive. Netanyahu and his colleagues repeatedly placed large advertisements in The New York Times and other leading newspapers with headlines such as "The White

Paper Must Be Smashed, if Millions of Jews Are to Be Saved!" and "Is America to Be a Party to the Palestine Betrayal?"

These challenges to Allied policy did not sit well with mainstream Jewish leaders such as Rabbi Stephen Wise, who was deeply loyal to President Roosevelt, the New Deal and the Democratic Party.

Much to the Jewish establishment's chagrin, Netanyahu actively cultivated relationships with Republican members of Congress and party leaders. For Wise, building friendly relations with FDR's political foes was inconceivable. For Netanyahu it was political common sense. Roosevelt had no incentive to address Jewish concerns if he believed Jewish votes were in his pocket.

Only if there was a credible threat of Jews voting Republican would FDR see a reason to reconsider his cold policy toward Jewish refugees and Zionism.

In the months leading up to the June 1944 Republican National Convention, Netanyahu and his colleagues undertook what they called "a systematic campaign of enlightenment". They met repeatedly with former President Herbert Hoover, 1936 GOP presidential candidate Alf Landon and influential Republican members of Congress such as Representative Clare Booth Luce (wife of the publisher of



Benzion Netanyahu, left, the prime minister's father, in 1940, and a copy of a newspaper ad he wrote in 1943. WYMAN INSTITUTE FOR HOLOCAUST STUDIES

Lull at Syrian border merely be a false 'Arab Spring'

OWN CORRESPONDENT

THE "ARAB Spring" which has spread across the Arab world in a quest for democracy, has left a ripple effect also in the stable democracy of Israel, with unrest and brutal suppression in a country such as Syria, threatening Israel's borders and sovereign integrity.

The unrest, which has seen a number of Syrian "protesters" killed as they challenged Israel's sovereignty, has been skilfully used by Syrian dictator Bashar al-Assad to divert attention from his brutal oppression and murder of pro-democracy protesters.

Iran, the arch-Anti-Israel instigator, has been stoking the unrest fire by (for the first time) sending submarines into the Red Sea on a so-called "reconnaissance mission."

Iran has done it purportedly to collect information and identify other countries' combat vessels. This is a move that will obviously anger Israel, where security tensions are already running high.

Two Iranian warships passed through the Suez Canal in February, the first such move since the 1979 Islamic Revolution, en route to Syria. Tehran said the mission was one of "peace and friendship" but Israel called it a "provocation".

Iran has deployed warships further afield, as far as the Red Sea, to combat Somali pirates, but has not previously said it sent submarines to those waters.

Tuesday marked the 44th anniversary of the battles over East Jerusalem in the Six Day War, as the Israel Defence Forces prepared for rallies in the Golan Heights, West Bank and East Jerusalem.

The IDF this week continued to amass forces on the border between Israel and Syria, mainly in response to warnings of further protests to mark the 44th anniversary of the battles over East Jerusalem in the Six-Day War.

Monday saw a lull in the riots on the border, after several protesters were killed by IDF gunfire the day before. But the situation remained fluid, with the IDF prepared for any eventualities.

Quiet reigned on Monday on the southern outskirts of the Druze town of Majdal Shams, which overlooks the Syrian border and was the scene of last Sunday's shootings and protests. Nahal soldiers were watching the Syrian side of the border. Later, media reported that Syrian security forces had blocked the access road to the fence, and had stopped buses with demonstrators from Palestinian refugee camps near Damascus, from reaching the border.

While it remained unclear to what degree the Syrian regime was involved in organising the protests and urging participants to try to cross the border, on Monday the regime showed that it could prevent the protests if it wanted to. Just two roadblocks had been all that had been needed to prevent any clashes near Majdal Shams.

It is believed the combination of the internal strife in Syria and the run-up to the mooted Palestinian declaration of independence in September, have created a new situation in the Golan Heights. This puts the IDF in an uncomfortable position. Four battalions are now spending their energy preparing for future border incidents.

The 36th Division is meant to be trained

Time and Life).

At a Revisionist dinner that spring, Luce said Great Britain's blockade of Jewish refugee ships bound for Palestine was to blame for the fact that "Jewish blood stains the blue Mediterranean red".

In their meetings, the Revisionists asked the Republicans to include a pro-Zionist plank in their 1944 platform. Neither party had ever formally endorsed the cause of Jewish statehood, but the GOP leaders clearly were sympathetic.

Meanwhile, an additional lobbying effort was undertaken by Abba Hillel Silver, the activist Cleveland rabbi who in 1943 had been elevated to the co-chairmanship of the American Zionist movement alongside Wise. Silver, who enjoyed a close relationship with Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, lobbied Taft and other leading Republicans on the platform issue.

The GOP's final platform not only endorsed Jewish statehood in Palestine, as Silver wanted, but also criticised Roosevelt, as Netanyahu wanted.

Furious and embarrassed, Wise dashed off a letter to the president declaring that he was "deeply ashamed" of the "utterly unjust" wording of the Republican plank. In the pages of the Revisionist journal Zionews, Netanyahu commented: "It seems that to Dr Wise and his friends, partisan politics are more important than truth and the interests of their people and their country."

The Republican Party's move had an important consequence: It compelled the Democrats to compete for Jewish support and treat the Jewish vote as if it were up for grabs. The Democratic National Convention in July 1944 for the first time endorsed "unrestricted Jewish immigration and colonisation" of Palestine and the establishment of "a free and democratic Jewish commonwealth".

These events helped ensure that support for Zionism, and later for Israel would become a permanent part of American political culture. Every subsequent Republican and Democratic convention has adopted a plank supporting Israel. To do less became politically unthinkable. (JTA)

(Medoff, director of *The David S Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies in Washington*, is historical consultant to Israeli filmmaker Moshe Levinson's forthcoming documentary on Benzion Netanyahu.)

for war, rather than border patrols - on what was until recently Israel's quietest border. If the situation continues, the IDF will need to redeploy and possibly even create new Border Police units.

An initial inquiry found the IDF only fired several dozen sniper bullets at the protesters. A senior officer told Haaretz that only those who actively tried to uproot or cut the fence were targeted.

The army also said that the IDF had nothing to do with the deaths of at least eight protesters who were killed when demonstrators rolled burning tyres and threw Molotov cocktails onto a minefield on the Syrian side of the border, setting off several mines.

Patience in the West for such incidents is beginning to wear thin. The only reason such incidents don't have greater ramifications is because they occur against the backdrop of the Syrian regime relentlessly butchering its opponents. Israel, however, will find it very difficult to come out looking good from further clashes between unarmed civilians and soldiers, if the number of casualties increases.

It stands to reason that the violence on the Syrian border actually leaves Israel in a no-win situation.

The IDF has no real way to estimate, in real time, the number of fatalities on the other side. But the Syrian government - through its media - has a clear interest in exaggerating the number of casualties to have the border incidents overshadow Assad's ongoing massacre of anti-government protesters.

Earlier this week, according to opposition forces in Syria, at least 35 Syrians were killed by their own security forces during protests in the north. During last weekend, more than 70 were killed across the country.

Continued on page 9



# Palestinian denialism about Israel is a worrying factor

SOBERING THOUGH this may be, consulting the reports regularly released by Palestine Media Watch is essential for any-one wishing to get a sense of what is happening between Israel and its neighbours.

Through this monitoring and translation service, one can learn what Arab intellectuals, religious spokesmen and political leaders are saying about Israel, Jews and the peace process - in their own language, to their own people and when the CNN TV cameras are pointing elsewhere.

Even allowing for the fact that PMW is primarily concerned with exposing anti-Israel incitement and anti-Semitism, the message that consistently comes through is disheartening in the extreme.

One of the most common themes that emerges from the PMW reports is how entrenched is the notion that Jews are an entirely foreign implant in the Middle East, without any connection to the area prior to the Zionist “bandit” invasion.

A typical example is the assertion in the official Palestinian daily Al-Hayat Al-Jadida (November 2, 2010) that with the Balfour Declaration the British colonialists “gave to those who had no connection to the land, neither near nor distant - the Zionists - in order to realise a colonialist aim, in the service of the objectives of the colonialist West in the Arab region”.

Rejecting the historicity of Jewish roots in Israel became official dogma nearly half a century ago with the adoption of the Palestinian National Covenant, Article 18 of which states: “The claims of historic and spiritual ties, ties between Jews and Palestine are not in agreement with the facts of history or with the true basis of sound statehood”.

Such denialism is a comparatively new phenomenon. During the exile period, when “Palestine” was under the rule of a series of (mainly Muslim) colonial powers, there was never any serious attempt to negate the territory’s Jewish past.

Apart from anything else, to do so would be to go against what both the Christian and Islamic religions explicitly recorded. Nor did one find claiming that the Jews of their particular era were unconnected with those



BARBARIC  
YAWP

David Saks

who once lived as a sovereign people in the Holy Land.

So long as Jews were a powerless, second-class minority, it was not necessary to deny them their history; if anything, the contrast between their august past and miserable present augmented their abject status.

However, with the re-establishment of a sovereign Jewish presence in the Arab-Muslim heartland and the humiliating Arab failure to prevent this, a need has arisen to “revise” the historical record.

It is hard to see how such absurd notions have been able to take root, even in the context of totalitarian societies where any deviation from the official line is outlawed.

If, after all, today’s Jews are unrelated to those of the Biblical and immediate post-Biblical era (that is up until around 150 CE), then there must have been a time in the intervening period in which the original Jews disappeared and a new, unrelated group of people calling themselves Jews emerged.

Of course, no such hiatus can be found. There is a continuous, documented Jewish history stretching back over three millennia.

To that, it might be argued that the fact of their having lived among non-Jews far from their ancestral homeland will inevitably have resulted in constant intermarriage, thereby diluting the original Jewish stock to the point where effectively the Jewish exiles eventually lost their ethno-racial identity altogether.

So one would think under normal circumstances, but for the fact that up until very recently in the Diaspora, what defined Jewishness was religion, not ethnicity. The only thing that could make intermarriage with members of the host populations possible, was conversion to Judaism, and that was

effectively impossible in Christian and Muslim societies where such apostasy was outlawed on pain of death.

Living under highly oppressive conditions, in which even being allowed to practise the Jewish faith in private could never be taken for granted, Jews themselves would not have dared to proselytise among their gentile neighbours.

In any case, even before the dispersion, Judaism was never as geared towards active proselytisation as its Christian and Islamic offspring were. The result was that Jews intermarried exclusively among themselves, and are therefore to this day overwhelmingly direct descendants of the pre-exile Jewish population of Israel.

Today, it is not even necessary to refer to the historical record. Modern-day genetic studies, which can accurately map the development of diverse population groups over thousands of years, conclusively demonstrate that the great majority of Israeli Jews, whether they arrived from Europe, Central

Asia, the Middle East or North Africa, have a common Middle Eastern ancestry that can be traced back to Biblical times.

None of this matters to Palestinian ideologues. For them, negating Palestine’s Jewish past is a political-ideological exercise, not an academic one. Unfortunately, it cannot simply be shrugged off.

Most people are ignorant even about the history of their own countries and hence can be made to believe just about anything. At the very least, Jews need to familiarise themselves with their own history, so as to be able to refute attempts to deny it.

The most worrying thing, though, is what such denialism says about Palestinian intentions. If their leaders and opinion makers cannot bring themselves even to acknowledge the antiquity of the Jewish presence in the area, how far they must be from seriously wishing to live in peace with a reconstituted Jewish state on land they claim as their own?

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**Applications including CV and References should be sent as soon as possible to Jonty Cohen at [execd@sydshul.co.za](mailto:execd@sydshul.co.za).**

## Lull at Syrian border...

Continued from page 8

It was difficult to take seriously the accusations on Syrian television of an Israeli massacre while, day after day, the deaths caused by the Syrian government are ignored. Apparently at least some of the fatalities in the Golan Heights were injured by a fire in the Golan town of Quneitra a few hundred metres from the border and were not directly related to the IDF.

All the same, the Israeli approach seemed designed to be in a sense self-defeating. The IDF is trapped between two contradictory goals: preventing the border from being breached and Israeli sovereignty from being impinged upon (although the rest of the world doesn’t recognise the Golan as Israeli land), and keeping enemy casualties to a minimum when civilians are involved.

To the extent that the border clashes can be judged, the Northern Command by and large retained control over events. Snipers fired at the legs of those who attempted to breach the border fence or were identified as “primary inciters” in the rally.

At least for now, the population of the West Bank doesn’t seem enthused about the possibility of a third intifada. However, if Israeli security forces take a hard line in the territories, that could change significantly.

The differences between the Syrian front and the Palestinian front are directly related to the various interests of the Syrian and Palestinian leaders. Assad is desperate to heat up the border, while the Lebanese leadership isn’t interested in taking unnecessary risks that could harm tourism.

As long as Syria sees continued confrontations as a way of diverting international pressure from Damascus, the clashes could continue over the next few weeks.

September sees the Palestinian bid for statehood and presumably there will be other additional clashes.

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week prior to publication

**Adler Museum of Medicine, Parktown:** “Reflect”, an exhibition by Elaine Hirschowitz, until July 11, (011) 717-2067.

**Circa, Rosebank: two exhibitions:** “Weapons of Mass Destruction” by Ronit Judelman; “Living on a Horizon” by Ann Gollifer, June 14 - July 10, (011) 788-4805.

**Foxwood Theatre, Houghton:** “De Pinna’s Dinner Detectives”, with Michael de Pinna and Lolly Somnez, an evening of food, comedy, cabaret and murder, each Wednesday and Saturday evening in June, and on June 17, (011) 486-0935.

**The Greenside, Greenside:** “Biltong and Potroast”, with Eddie Eckstein, Cyril Green, Mel Miller and Alain D Woolf, June 15, (011) 880-5720.

**Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg:** “A Fearless Vision”, major retrospective of the late Alan Crump, until June 12, (011) 726-3130.

**Joburg Theatre Complex, Braamfontein:** In the Nelson Mandela, SA Ballet Theatre performs “Romeo and Juliet”, until June 19. In the Fringe, “Doo Bee Boobies”, until June 26, (011) 877-6800.

**Linder Auditorium, Parktown:** On June 12, Odeoin String Quartet and Green-Harrold Piano Duo, collaborate for JMS’s annual Nabarro concert, performing works by Schubert, Schumann, Mozart and Shostakovich, (011) 728-5492.

**Market Theatre, Newtown, Johannesburg:** In the Laager, “A Teacher in the Bushveld”, based on the writings of Herman Charles Bosman, performed by David Butler, until June 12, (011) 832-1641.

**Montecasino, Fourways:** In Teatro, “Jesus Christ Superstar” by Andrew Lloyd Webber, until June 26, (011) 511-1988.

**Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton:** Gilbert and Sullivan’s “Pirates of Penzance” directed by Greg Homann, from June 14; the Sunset Serenade performs on June 10 at lunchtime; on June 17, Isabel Bradley (flute), Peta-Ann Holdcroft (‘cello) and Susan van der Wat (piano) perform, (011) 883-8606.

**Standard Bank Gallery, Johannesburg:** “Listening to Distant Thunder”, a Peter Clarke retrospective, until July 2 (011) 631-1889.

**Wits University Campus, Braamfontein:** In the Origins Centre, “A Stone Carpet Reflected: Fragments from a Glacial Pavement”, an exhibition by Chonat Getz and Collin Cole, until June 30, (011) 717-4700.

TAPESTRY

ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

A bit greyer and wider, but Potroast team back

ROBYN SASSEN

WHAT ROSE to prominence as one of South African TV’s most popular comedy shows, began life at a “stag show”, according to veteran comic Cyril Green.

“Someone made a bootleg recording of a performance we did at a private party in Durban in the early ‘70s; it’s conservative to say 200 000 copies of it got circulated.”

Biltong and Potroast became an immediate hit, shaping South African comedy. This week, you can take a trip down memory lane to see the same comics; they might be a little wider, a little greyer, but they’re as funny as ever, still doing their shtick.

Green, Mel Miller - who in January received the First Annual Comics Choice Lifetime Achievement award - Eddie Eckstein and Alain D Woolf, are part of the original cast that saw South Africans staying home on Tuesday nights to get their weekly fill of gags.

It was thanks to Biltong and Potroast that pubs began getting TV sets, according to Green. “They realised they were not getting patrons on Tuesdays.”

And the idea of the easily “haveable” joke is

something they continue to punt, 36 years after the show was born. “It’s humour one can repeat,” says Green. “These are not jokes touting political diatribe or ones that are time specific.

“I was in Disneyland in 1979,” he remembers, “A guy in the queue got chatting with me, because of my South African accent. He told me about these six South African comedians who were the funniest he’d ever seen. I just smiled.”

In the ‘70s the show was heavily censored: this was the height of apartheid. “The show at the Greenside is a different,” Green warns. “We have a no holds-barred policy on language. It’s not gratuitous swearing; we’re telling stories as they are.

“The show is not rehearsed. In this version, Joe Parker takes the moderating role that the late Clacky McKay played in the TV show. What you will see at the Greenside is a replica of that: It was a game in which points were allocated to the best gags. But the score was the least important part of the show. Over the years, give and take from the five of us taught us beautifully what to do to make a



The Biltong and Potroast team: Eddie Eckstein; Mel Miller; Joe Parker (the moderator); Cyril Green; and Alain D Woolf. (PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED)

show work.”

The name of the show arose from the provenance of the comics (and their gags): the Biltong team were South African; the Potroast blokes had British roots.

Green, who started professional life as a pianist, branched off into radio and humour early. “My career has been blessed. We were contemporaries of shows like ‘Take it From Here’ and the Goon Show. But we were completely unique as satirists.

“Tragically, not one piece of footage of Biltong and Potroast has been preserved. We all loved it while it lasted. We earned next to nothing for doing it, but the message we come away from it all? Not to take life too seriously! We all need a good laugh.”

“Biltong and Potroast” is at The Greenside, Chester Avenue, Greenside, June 15. Part of the proceeds goes to CHOC, Childhood Cancer Fund SA, (011) 880-5720.

Very special concert wows Pretoria audience

**Concert:** Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra (ZK Matthews Hall, Unisa, Pretoria)  
**Conductor:** Bernhard Gueller  
**Soloist:** Avigail Bushakevitz, violin  
**Programme:** Music by De Falla, Prokofiev and Mozart

REVIEWED BY PAUL BOEKKOOI

KINDLY ALLOW me to jog your memory on Avigail Bushakevitz, last Sunday’s soloist with the JPO, during the third performance of this programme. She also gave us Sergei Prokofiev’s Violin Concerto No 2 in G minor in the Linder Auditorium, Johannesburg, on June 1 and 2. She is the Israeli-born South African violinist who won first prize in Unisa’s National Violin Competition in 2009.

She was our star competitor in last year’s Unisa International Violin Competition, reaching the penultimate round. Ms Bushakevitz is currently doing her postgraduate studies at the Juilliard School, New York. Between 2000 and 2007 she studied under the renowned Prof Jack de Wet in the Cape.

It is clear that his tutorship had a great influence on the all-round musician she is. Her impeccable and fluent bowing technique, her extremely developed sense for colouristic variety, as well as intonation that is rock solid, are just some of her greatest artistic assets. She steered through the unending challenges of this score with ease.



Violinist Avigail Bushakevitz. (PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY BLACKDOGGMEDIA. BLOGSPOT.COM)

Especially at this Pretoria performance, she and the conductor, Bernhard Gueller, let the listener forget about concepts such as “solo virtuoso” or “orchestral accompaniment”, focusing instead on a single phenomenon: the composer. This time it was as if the soloist, orchestra and conductor connected with such unerring intuition, that the music itself could be treated with overpowering naturalness.

Already at the broad, magical melodic line for unaccompanied solo violin which opens this concert, the listener was held in a spell, a kind of mysterious touch, transforming every phrase with barely perceptible rubato, while also giving

the movement its heartbeat through rhythmic pointing and bite.

There is no lack of an extra element of individuality: the ability within Prokofiev’s often volatile moods to change face instantly with seeming spontaneity.

Avigail Bushakevitz’s tone already has that cutting edge to suit the work’s ironic, slightly acid humour. In the arioso-like second movement, marked Andante assai, it was that ravishing moment of modulation (from E flat major to B major) near the beginning, which reflected a kind of ecstatic frisson that was sustained throughout.

In complete contrast, the finale, Allegro ben marcato, is one of Prokofiev’s spiky and even cackling movements. It makes deliberate but not ineffective gestures on the side of

harshness. The soloist attacked them with intensity, panache and good taste throughout. The JPO’s ensemble was much tighter than on the Wednesday. What a difference a hall can make.

In Falla’s Three Cornered Hat Suite No 1, Gueller exemplified a chamber-like quality in the detail and precision of the evocative writing, even if not all sections sounded idiomatically Spanish.

With Mozart’s Symphony No 39 in E flat major concluding the afternoon, we experienced an exceptionally lively performance, alertly phrased and often with positively bouncing rhythm, executed with very great skill. Pretoria loved this very special concert.



FELDMAN ON FILM

Peter Feldman

PICK OF THE WEEK

X-Men: First Class

**Cast:** James McAvoy; Michael Fassbender; Kevin Bacon; Rose Byrne; Jennifer Lawrence; January Jones; Nicholas Hoult  
**Director:** Matthew Vaughn

MARVEL COMICS did extremely well out of its X-Man saga, but the last permutation, “X-Men Origins: Wolverine”, lacked magic and drive. It was sorely in need of a revamp.

Now director Matthew Vaughn, with a fresh batch of faces, has fashioned an ambitious and enthralling escapade in which the story travels back to the ‘60s and the very beginning.

It is shaped with great style and the kind of insouciant wit which was in evidence in the first two offerings.

“X-Men: First Class” focuses on the rise of Professor Charles Xavier (James McAvoy), Magneto (Michael Fassbender) and the earliest mutant disciples who were only starting to mas-

ter their various “gifts”.

The story cleverly manipulates the Cuban Missile Crises to its own advantage, stoking the Cold War paranoia that existed. It’s difficult to judge how Stan Lee purists will react, but Vaughn has not lost sight of new audiences, or those familiar with the X-Men mythology, dishing up commendable fare that bares his very own signature.

It’s interesting to note that Bryan Singer, who directed the first two in the series, is back as a producer and is also credited with writing the story with Sheldon Turner.

The opening shots take us into a Nazi concentration camp where we meet a young, distressed refugee, Erik Lensherr, whose intense anger enables him to bend metal with his mind. Dr Schmidt (Kevin Bacon), a Mengele-type doctor, spots the enormous possibilities of the boy’s “talent” and attempts to harness it in a most horrifying way.

Erik’s ghastly experiences instil in him a life-long thirst for revenge and this state of mind makes him incapable of using his gifts without becoming enraged.

In sharp contrast, is Charles Xavier, a dashing Oxford academic, with an ability to read minds. This well-spoken intellectual envisages a utopian world order in which mutants are able to control their superhuman gifts and coexist with the rest of mankind.

He has an adoptive sister, Raven (Jennifer Lawrence), a shape-shifter, who has a problem keeping her natural blue-skinned appearance hidden.

Charles is recruited by Moira MacTaggart, (Rose Byrne), an attractive and courageous CIA agent, who suspects that there is some malevolent outside interference in the escalating US-Soviet conflict, a move that is not wholly endorsed by the Agency.

A dramatic development in the story sees the future Professor X and Magneto thrown together for the first time and, despite their ideological differences, they decide to build a stronghold of young mutants. Here mutants such as the plasma-blasting Havok (Lucas Till), the sonic screamer Banshee (Caleb Landry Jones), the adaptive Darwin (Edi Gathegi), and the bookish, big-footed Hank/The Beast McCoy (Nicholas Hoult), learn their trade

While Charles and Eric are assembling their motley crew, Dr Schmidt has resurfaced as a villain called Sebastian Shaw, who has his own gang of renegade mutants under his control.

Shaw is cunningly manipulating the situation for his own evil purposes with the help of a mutant sidekick, Emma Frost (January Jones).

The stage is now set for an explosive confrontation, with the missile crises as a backdrop, and mutant power pitched against mutant power. It’s a sleek production that captures the youthful energy of the team - and it works.



TAPESTRY - ART, BOOKS, DANCE, FILM, THEATRE

# This bleak novella is strictly an acquired taste

Point Omega by Don DeLillo  
(Picador, R108)

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY

DIGESTING DON DeLillo's works is never easy; nor - until one's second or third reading of them - do they become rewarding. For this most economical, cryptic and allusive of writers, who has said that the greatest influences on his style are "abstract expressionism, foreign films and jazz", loads each sentence with the weight of multiple meanings and intensely inferential language.

The reader must proceed literally word by word, tracking the thread of thought.

Appropriate to this book's central concerns, its prelude describes an exhibition in New York's Museum of Modern Art, where Alfred Hitchcock's iconic horror movie "Psycho" has been slowed down to take a full 24 hours to screen.

Spectators see every frame frozen in detail, then infinitesimally evolving into action, grain by celluloid grain.

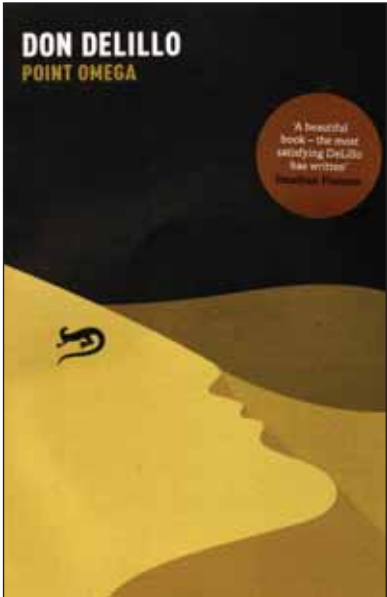
The novel proper relates an encounter between Richard Elster, a retired secret war adviser for the Pentagon, and Jim Finley, a young filmmaker.

Finley has been invited to his home "somewhere south of nowhere", deep in the desert. The two men drink heavily, with Elster discoursing on the issues which preoccupy him: the teleological progression of America, the implications of warfare versus peace, and the country's rampant consumerism and modernity versus the intrinsic isolation of its citizens.

On a wider metaphysical scale, Elster (and DeLillo) probe existential questions, employing the same homiletical devices one might find in the frontier novels of Cormac McCarthy.

The book is also an enquiry into the slats of perception which are necessarily missed in the pace and noise of daily life. The faculties of speech and hearing detract from, rather than enhance, the full meaning of what we are, and - crucially - what we do.

"The true life is not reducible to words spoken or written, not by anyone, ever. The true life takes place when we're alone, thinking, feeling, lost in memory, dreamingly self-aware, the submicroscopic



moments... We do this all the time, all of us, we become ourselves beneath the running thoughts and dim images, wondering idly when we'll die," Elster tells Finley.

Finley's visit - intended to last just a day or two - drags out to a full month or more, because temporal time barely exists for his host. Instead, Elster's focus is on the larger, cosmic scale of events: sunsets occur every 24 hours, denoting not the passage of a day, but an adventure of the elements.

When Elster's daughter, Jessica, arrives for a visit, Finley is intrigued by her ethereal inwardness, and by her father's great love for his child - possibly his only passion.

"We're a crowd, a swarm. We think in groups, travel in armies. Armies carry the gene for self-destruction. One bomb is never enough... Now comes the inversion... the omega point. A leap out of our biology.

"Ask yourself this question. Do we have to be human forever? Consciousness is exhausted. Back now to inorganic matter. This is what we want. We want to be stones in a field," declares Elster.

This is the almost Buddhist thrust of the book: the idea that human consciousness has depleted itself into futility, and that what comes next will be sublimely unapologetic for, or even aware of, its own existence.

Another theme of the book is immutability. Jessica tells Finley that in New York, she cares for an aged couple who spend most of their time watching TV. Each part-

ner steals regular glances at the other during a programme to gauge their reaction to what they are seeing - but no reaction is ever visible.

The watched partner is not even aware of being watched. This, Jessica says, is what most marriages - indeed, most relationships - are like: a domestic arrangement between two people who are essentially alone, existing in an impermeable cocoon of their own.

"Haiku means nothing beyond what it is. A pond in summer, a leaf in the wind. It's human consciousness located in nature. It's the answer to everything in a set number of lines, a prescribed syllable count," says Elster.

"I wanted a haiku war... A set of ideas linked to transient things. This is the soul of haiku. Bare everything in plain sight. See what's there. Things in war are transient. See what's there and then be prepared to watch it disappear."

When personal tragedy suddenly strikes Elster, he is capsized into panic, then the ineffable pain of grief. And, in agony, he learns the great lesson: that loss - not war - is the ultimate haiku. Finley, equally stricken by the calamity, walks in a nearby ravine and is struck by "the heartbreaking beauty of it, the indifference of it". So much for Elster's acateleptic ideal.

Plumbing this bleak novella requires hard work and considerable tenacity. Using deceptively simple constructs, DeLillo makes us squint, demanding that we attune our vision to his metaphysical acuity. The lack of action adds to the work's heaviness, so that the reader risks becoming mired. The text continually enters and exits abstraction, forcing shifts of consciousness on the reader's part, while its intense, unrelenting intellectualism can be draining.

DeLillo is considered one of the leading USA's leading post-modernist authors and has received, among some 34 literary awards, the PEN/Saul Bellow Award for Achievement in American Fiction, as well as a Guggenheim Fellowship.

Nevertheless, while his concerns affect each of us - particularly in a world where terrorists and soldiers have replaced artists as the agents of social change - his writing is strictly an acquired taste.

## AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

### UK TIMES: OFER BROS SHIPS CARRIED RECONNAISSANCE EQUIPMENT

JERUSALEM - Cargo ships owned by an Israeli company ferried US Air Force Blackhawk helicopters and Mossad commandos to Iran for reconnaissance missions against nuclear sites, a British newspaper reported.

The helicopters were concealed in special containers for infiltration into Iran, Britain's Sunday Times reported last week. The ships were owned by the Ofer Brothers Group. Two companies owned by Sami Ofer,

who died on June 2, and his brother, Yuli, appeared last month on a US list of entities to be sanctioned for dealings with Iran's energy sector.


The Ofer group was sanctioned for its role in providing a tanker valued at \$8,65 million to an Iranian shipping company. The Ofer brothers, who hail from one of Israel's wealthiest families, denied knowledge of involvement in the sale, saying the ship had been sold to a third party before it was sold to Iran. (JTA)

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LETTERS

The Editor, Suite 175, Postnet X10039, Randburg, 2125 email: carro@global.co.za

<b>Guidelines for letters:</b> Letters up to 400 words will get preference. Please provide your full first name and surname, place of residence, and a daytime contact telephone or cell number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.	<b>Disclaimer:</b> The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report
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PLAYS ABOUT CONVICTED SPY JONATHAN POLLARD CLARIFIED

I REFER to a letter by Matla Sarkin in your issue of May 27, which has only now come to my attention. Sarkin refers to a play named “Pollard” which she says was reported as having recently been produced in Pretoria, but which she produced 15 years ago. I think what Sarkin is referring to is my play called “Pollard’s Trial” which is currently on in Israel at the Cameri Theatre in Tel Aviv. This is a new play and the Israeli production in Hebrew, is its premiere. The

Jewish Report published an article about it a few weeks ago,which is probably what Sarkin read. The only play called “Pollard” of which I am aware, was written in the early 1990s by the renowned Israeli playwright, Motti Lerner and is, in all probability, the play that Sarkin has in mind. If another play by this name has been written, I would be most interested to learn about it.

**Victor Gordon  
Pretoria**

THOSE WHO CAN’T REMEMBER PAST, ARE CONDEMNED TO REPEAT IT

I WANT to compliment the editor on the editorial of June 3, “On justice and closure”, but on a point of clarity, while the South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation (SAHGF) lauds the inclusion of the study of the Holocaust into the South African National School Curriculum, we cannot take the credit for its inclusion in the first place. There is no doubt that the impact of the work of the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, from when it opened in 1999 on school groups and teachers and the close association it enjoys with the Western Cape Department of Education, did impact on the department’s decision to include Holocaust studies. However, it was the fact that our school curriculum is based on our Constitution and Bill of Rights (based on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights so strongly influenced by the knowledge of the Holocaust) and infuses human rights into all learning areas, that led the curriculum designers to include the Holocaust as a key case study of gross human rights abuse. Every grade 9 learner in the country is required to study a 15 hour unit on the Holocaust in social studies and should history be elected as a matric subject, there is a further 16 hour unit in grade 11 on the Eugenics movement and how it played out in Nazi Germany. The SAHGF has conducted teacher training workshops for over 4 000 government teachers all over the country since 2007 when the teaching of the Holocaust unit became compulsory. The classroom support materials “The Holocaust: Lessons for Humanity” developed by the SAHGF, are at the core of these workshops and are supplied to all teachers who attend. The implication of this is that we are helping to ensure that teachers have access to appropriate and accu-

rate information, as well as the methodologies for teaching this complex area of the curriculum. These teacher training workshops remain a major focus of our activities. The development of the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre (JHGC) , under the auspices of the SAHGF, is a crucial development in ensuring that the, “next generation can take something positive from this history... in an attempt to address the dangers of ethnic hatred”. Although the JHGC is still under construction, it is still running a most effective office under the expert guidance of the director, Tali Nates, and is actively involved in facilitating the teacher training, especially in Gauteng, North-West and Mpumalanga provinces. The Durban Holocaust Centre is our partner in KwaZulu-Natal and is taking on the enormous challenge of supporting schools and training teachers in that province as well as joining the national team as it provides this key service even in the most rural parts of the country. This groundbreaking work is all a massive undertaking, as you can imagine, but it is heartening that the SAHGF is seen as the provider of choice when it comes to teacher training and materials for the teaching of the Holocaust in South African schools. The support of the Jewish community has been crucial to this enterprise. There is no doubt that the study of the Holocaust provides a potent prism through which to look at the challenges of our own society. As George Santayana is often quoted as saying, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

**Richard Freedman  
Director  
South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation  
Cape Town**

NOT MOZZARELLA PRICE BUT CHICKEN BREASTS THE CULPRIT

I WOULD like to appeal to Julio Woznica regarding the discrepancy between kosher and non-kosher mozzarella (SAJR June 3), to verify the facts before writing to newspapers. The price at a leading supermarket for non-kosher mozzarella is R99,99 per kg - which makes the discrepancy 10 per cent. I would love to know where to get any non-kosher cheese for R45 per kg. Those who buy kosher products and complain about genuinely high prices, will not be taken seriously if incorrect prices are quoted. If you want to complain about pricing, then compare kosher and non

kosher chicken breasts - at another leading supermarket the discrepancy is huge - R39,99 for non-kosher as compared to R160 for kosher. That needs explanation, but despite the fact that a commission was supposed to look into this, nothing has yet been done to bring prices down. Rather the opposite - the price of kosher meat and chicken has continued to rise out of all proportion. Now that needs a valid answer or reason. **Monica Solomon  
Sandton** supplied us with his Australian details. His postal address is PO Box 732, Maroubra, NSW, 2035, Australia and his e-mail address, harvon59@pivit.com.au

SYRIA LEADS WORLD MEDIA BY THE NOSE REGARDING ‘ATROCITIES’

THESE PAST months have seen our screens and newspapers ablaze with reports of the death of thousands of peaceful protesters in the streets of many Syrian towns. Many of these reports emanate from The Reform Party of Syria, a Syrian opposition group which seems to have been the international media’s main source of these catastrophic events. Clearly the world’s media have confidence enough in this source to report on these events. All media in Syria is state controlled, yet not one report of the violent crackdown on the protest that has been ongoing there for months, has been reported by any of the controlled media. However, this week the leading news networks and newspapers of the world all reported on the “brutal” deaths of 22 Syrians trying to infiltrate the border crossing between that country and Israel - and what was their reliable source? None other than the state-controlled Syrian media. Foreign correspondents are not allowed into Syria, yet these major networks glean their reports from the Syrian media on the events of “Naqsa Day”. Their reporters, while not being allowed into Syria, report with all conviction as if they were witness to the deaths of these people and splash headlines across the world, only to foment further hatred for Israel. Yes, the world media has clearly demonstrated in the crudest fashion just how biased they are when it comes to reporting on Israel. They will accept the Syrian state-controlled reports of Israeli actions, but does not point out that this self same media machine does not report on the

killing of thousands of its citizens by their dictator Bashar al-Assad. Notwithstanding all this, CNN, BBC, The New York Times, The Times (of London), The Telegraph, etc have all displayed their bias in two ways. One as mentioned above, but more blatant is the fact that their normal and reliable source, that of the Syrian opposition, reported only this week that the Syrian dictator had paid a bunch of “demonstrators” \$1 000 each plus \$10 000 to the family of anyone killed, yet the world’s media ignored this! Just how can these reliable and reputable international news sources report with such conviction what the Syrian-controlled media puts out, when attacking Israel and at the same time ignore a far more reliable source that has been their main conduit of information for months and simply ignore the report of paid protesters? But better still, not one international paper or network mentioned that it was Israel’s territorial integrity that was being violated by crashing through an international border and invading another country – this is nothing short of an act of war. One must wonder what the reaction - no, the outrage of the world would be - if it were Israel breaking down an international boundary? So much for honest reporting. Not only have they lost their pants but their moral integrity as well.

**Allan Wolman  
Norwood, Johannesburg**

MULTI-ETHNIC SOCIETIES WITH EQUAL RIGHTS, MY ISRAEL-PALESTINIAN VIEW

DAVID HIRSH (SAJR June 3) does not think that “wording” and “who said what” are important. This is curious for an academic who deals with little else. But words do matter: contrary to his claims, I support peace between Israel and Palestine, conceived as democratic, multi-ethnic societies, which guarantee equal individual and collective rights to all their people. I said that at the University of Johannesburg seminar and in my letter. If words (and reality) mattered to Hirsh, he would understand that “dismantling” apartheid meant the creation of a democratic state in South Africa, not the destruction of white people. Not only do I not want to “dismantle” Israeli Jews, but I wish for them to live and prosper as equal citizens, together with their fellow residents of the land. Why is the spectre of equality and democracy haunting Hirsh? The real challenge facing us is to find ways to reach that goal. Certainly not by using violence to attack civilians (a practice employed to a far greater extent, resulting in far greater destruction, by the State of Israel than by Palestinians). Rather, it is by waging non-violent campaigns, peaceful protests, legal challenges, educational initiatives and, yes, sanctions as well. These have been used in many cases and constitute one important peaceful tactic, among others. Are Israelis singled out here? Hirsh seems unaware that his own country has imposed severe sanctions and used violent means of censure against numerous targets in the last two decades: PLO,

Hamas, Burma, Sudan, Zimbabwe, Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Belarus, Serbia and, most recently, Libya and Syria, have been subject to sanctions and military campaigns far more aggressive and violent than Israel is likely ever to face. Israel has been singled out indeed, for receiving vast sums of military and financial aid that allow it to entrench the occupation, and diplomatic immunity by the USA for its acts of violence against civilians. Instead of pursuing his campaign of manufactured hysteria and distortions against those working for justice and democracy, Hirsh could support the thousands of Palestinians and Israelis who protest peacefully in Bil’in, Ni’ilin, Sheikh Jarrah, and elsewhere in Israel/Palestine. These young activists do not support one national group against another, but campaign for members of both to unite in order to stop oppression and create a secure democratic future for all. This is my goal as well, and should be supported by all progressive people wherever they are.

**Prof Ran Greenstein  
University of the Witwatersrand**

*We take note of Prof Greenstein’s correspondence with the Jewish Report and accept that he has excluded armed attacks against civilians in the campaign against Israel, and that he did not advocate that “everything” was legitimate. - Editor*

IT’S TIME THE SAJBD IS ELECTED DEMOCRATICALLY

THIS LETTER is in support of Evan Seligmann who called on the SAJBD to hold democratic elections for “representatives” within that organisation. (SAJR June 3). For too long have the self-appointed “leaders” of the SAJBD untruthfully and misleadingly claimed representative status via a faulty proportional representative process, whereby faceless and nameless and unqualified people are suddenly in a position deciding what is good for the Jewish community. When one elects candidates to a shul or club committee, it is with the exclusive intent that these office bearers are elected with the sole purpose of seeing to the successful day-to-day running of that particular shul, etc. In no shul constitution that I have come across is allowance of complicity made to elect anyone from the SAJBD to speak on my behalf to government or to represent me without my consent. Serious questions and fears exist that our wellbeing and future, stands or falls with such people. Have these candidates - prior to being “elected” - identified the issues facing the community and spelling out where they stand on such issues? Having confronted SAJBD “leadership” over a number of years, both publically and in various meetings held with them, either through the SA Jewish Defence League or under my private banner, I have come away both angered and frustrated. The smugness and self-approbation which one

experiences, is frightening. I have had to take on many cases that they either shied away from or were not prepared to bleed for. At the time of the launch of the ANC government, the Jewish community was urged by the SAJBD that we were to accept the then new dispensation and embrace democracy without fear;– this was accompanied at the time with assurances that they (the SAJBD) would be our umbrella. Some umbrella! Democracy is not merely a device for “leaders” to seek or manufacture more photo ops - whether posing with a broomstick at some unfortunate public hospital, or banging a big drum about distributing blankets to the needy. Not that there is anything wrong with this, but the Torah injunction is to take care of your own first. And there are usually far more urgent Jewish community concerns that need to be resolved. It is time that they gave us what we want and need, not what THEY think we want and need, which seems largely to be the case. To the “leadership: You are little more than a lobby group - live with and operate within those parameters. My thanks to Evan Seligmann for publically raising this important matter. It is high time that a misled community take both heed and action.

**Frank Startz  
Johannesburg**

FOR THE RECORD

HAROLD BERMAN’S AUSTRALIAN DETAILS

LAST WEEK, we carried an article about Harold Berman of Australia, asking if any of our readers had any knowledge of his family in South Africa. We supplied a South African e-mail address, but Berman has now



# Focus on: Father’s Day

Compiled by Marlene Bilewitz. Contact (011) 023-8160, Cell 083-475-0288 or e-mail: marlene@sajewishreport.co.za

## Famous fathers and famous sons

*Sons often go into the same business or profession as their fathers, with varying amounts of success. Maybe it’s genes or perhaps influence at an impressionable age or probably a combination of both.*

*We at Jewish Report, wish all our dads a ‘Happy Father’s Day’*



George Bush Snr.



George W Bush.

### BARRY BILEWITZ

ISSUR DANIELOVITCH was born in Amsterdam, New York, but grew up as Izzy Demsky when his father changed the family name. He was a good student at cheder and members of the community wanted to collect money to send him to a yeshiva to become a rabbi. However, he wanted something else.

He joined the navy shortly after the USA entered the Second World War in 1941 and was medically discharged in 1944 due to war injuries. During his stint as a sailor he married his first wife and they had two sons, Michael and Joel Douglas. (He legally changed his name to Kirk Douglas when going into the US Navy).

While Kirk Douglas received an honorary Oscar in 1996, he has never won a competitive Oscar. Son Michael won a Best Actor award for

his part in “Wall Street” and also got one as the producer of “One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest”.

Another son that did better than his father in the same profession is Richard Petty. His father Lee Petty was a stock car racing driver who won the inaugural Daytona 500. Son Richard won this race seven times and is in the Guinness Book of Records for having won the most motor races ever in the history of the sport - 200.

Changing names has been a popular pastime in Hollywood since the days of the silent movie. Charlie Sheen and Emilio Estévez are brothers and film/TV stars, the sons of Martin Sheen (born Ramon Estévez) whose last major appearance was as President Bartlett in the TV series “The West Wing”. Martin Sheen is, however, only his stage name - he has never legally changed it.

On July 20, 1973, Bruce Lee died

in Hong Kong at the age of 32 from a cerebral oedema caused by a reaction to the painkiller Equagesic, just before he was to meet George Lazenby to discuss a movie they were planning to do together. On March 31, 1993 - almost 20 years later - his son Brandon Lee was accidentally shot and killed on the set of the movie “The Crow”.

Perhaps the closest emulator of his father is George Walker Bush. He followed in his father George Herbert Walker Bush’s footsteps by becoming a fighter pilot, going to Yale, becoming president of the United States and going to war with Iraq.

Anton Edward Rupert was one of the great entrepreneurs of South Africa. He dropped out of university due to a lack of funds and started a dry cleaning business. His extraordinary marketing eye soon caused him to change his career and with a loan of

£10 he began producing cigarettes in his garage. This venture grew into one of the biggest luxury and branded goods conglomerates in the world.

Johann Rupert is continuing the tradition created by his father in business, conservation and philanthropy. He started his career as a banker, working in New York for Chase Manhattan and Lazard Freres. Back home he headed the international arm of Rand Merchant Bank. Upon joining the Rembrandt Group, he began to diversify from the group’s base in alcohol and tobacco by forming Compagnie Financière Richemont in Switzerland, the umbrella of brands like Alfred Dunhill, Cartier, Montblanc, to name a few. Today, the Rupert conglomerates Remgro and Richemont of which Johann Rupert is chairman and CEO respectively, have annual sales of over \$10 billion.

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FOCUS ON: FATHER’S DAY

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gifts anywhere in South Africa (terms and conditions apply). And as the temperature drops this winter, ensure you zip-up and step out in K-Way technical apparel. Visit your nearest Cape Union Mart store for a wide range of winter warmers. Our technical apparel range, including fleece, rain

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FOCUS ON: FATHER’S DAY

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# Little ones at KDL just loved the davening

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MELANIE DICK

THE CHILDREN and parents from King David Linksfield grade R, spent some quali-

ty time together during the Torah learning of “Generation Sinai”. It was a very meaningful experience and a warm atmosphere was in the air.

# Standing room only at KDVPP’s Generation Sinai davening

FIONA LEVY  
PHOTOGRAPH: LUCY SIMMONDS

THE HISTORIC learning experience, Generation Sinai, at KDVPP, last week, began with a spirited davening session in the packed hall. There was standing room only as many parents could be seen singing along with the children.

After a rousing Adon Olam and messages from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Rabbi David Shaw, the children couldn’t wait to accompany their parents or special person, to their classrooms.

It was gratifying to see the number of fathers who had taken time off work to be part of this uplifting experience with their children.

I was facilitating the programme in a grade 3 class. There was a full-house of committed Victory Park parents, crammed into the little desks with their children.

It was a wonderful sight to behold - children confidently and animatedly discussing the learning material with their parents and

the parents, in turn, engaging with their children in such a meaningful way.

It was, for me, an incredibly moving experience. There was a palpable sense of history being made; a sense of being part of the chain of learning and teaching, of something bigger than ourselves.

Being witness to parents and children exchanging blessings, was a hugely emotional aspect of this unique experience. The look of love and admiration on the children’s faces as they blessed and thanked their parents, painted a beautiful picture.

After the learning, the parents accompanied their children, bikkurim in hand, down to the soccer field. En route, parents were overheard continuing the discussions with each other and with their children.

Comments such as “incredible”, “awesome”, “amazing” were heard. In a fit, tangible ending to such a beautiful experience, children placed their bikkurim on the giant Chai on the field, proud of their heritage in performing the mitzvah of giving tzedakkah - a mitzvah so close to the hearts of the children and parents at Victory Park.

The whole experience left everybody feeling proud, special and truly a part of history. Parents left, feeling perhaps a little bit closer to their children and more aware of the need to continue the chain.

Sincere thanks to Kareen Sandler and everybody who played a role in ensuring the success of the Chief Rabbi’s unique initiative at King David Victory Park Primary School.



Donated food placed on the field in the shape of a Chai (eighteen).

# Yom Yerushalayim celebrated across YC

OWN CORRESPONDENT  
PHOTOGRAPH SUPPLIED

ON WEDNESDAY June 1, Yeshiva College commemorated Jerusalem’s 44th year as a whole and unified city. Exciting festivities took place across all Yeshiva College schools within the campus

The day began with inspirational davening, followed by Hallel in the main shul for the entire campus. The Yeshiva College High School then enjoyed breakfast, inspirational shiurim and a multimedia presentation.

The Yeshiva College Primary School programme began with all the pupils congregating in the quad where Rav Natan Alexander spoke about the “Kedusha” of Yerushalayim and the gratitude that we show Hashem for having free access to this special city.

Following the shiur, the grade 6s, under the supervision of Morah Bender, organ-



Rabbi Avraham Tanzer addresses the school.

ised a magnificent carnival. The Primary School children all had an opportunity to participate in the exciting activities. After that, the whole school washed and received falafel, and had a “Big/Little Buddy” picnic. While they were eating, Morah Bender told the children a story about Yerushalayim.

The Yeshiva College Pre-Primary and Playschool, also enjoyed a wonderful Yom Yerushalayim experience - the roggelas and flags were a real treat! The

grade Rs joined the Primary and High Schools in the big shul to daven Hallel, and on their return “flew” to Eretz Yisrael.

Yom Yerushalayim was an outstanding day for all, and the celebrations were testimony to the ongoing commitment and close connection that Yeshiva College has towards our beloved State of Israel.

## YOUTH TALK Alison Goldberg youthsajr@global.co.za

# Generation Sinai sweeps through Jewish day schools

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY  
SUZANNE BELLING

THERE WAS an amazing turnout of parents and relatives at all four schools on the Torah Academy campuses last week Friday, Rosh Chodesh Sivan, when the BHS, GHS, primary and nursery schools participated in Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein’s pre-Shavuot learning programme - “Generation Sinai - sharing our legacy”.

In keeping with learners in all the Jewish day schools in South Africa, they had one hour of co-ordinated learning with parents, grandparents and family members, who paired up with children in the primary or high schools to study specially prepared texts.

Nursery school children and parents or family representatives, worked on crafts. Teachers assisted learners who did not have a family member present.

Rosh Chodesh Sivan was the day that we first arrived at Sinai to receive the Torah. We stood there “as one man with one heart” –



Torah Academy Primary School mother Ilana Smith studies with her daughters Kayla (grade 6) and Shayna (grade 2).

united and focused on receiving the Word of Hashem.

It is estimated that 9 000 South African Jewish children took part in Generation Sinai. With the participation of parents and family it is possible that 18 000 people joined together in an hour of Torah learning and inspiration – an event unprecedented in South Africa.

# Ganeinu Nursery School joins Chief Rabbi’s Sinai request



Ganeinu Principal Michelle Prager overseeing the parent and children learning.

DIANE WOLFSON  
PRETORIA

LAST WEEK Friday, a request went out from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, for a joint parent-child Torah learning project in South Africa.

The parents and children at Pretoria’s Ganeinu Nursery School on the Pretoria Hebrew Congregation campus, took this seriously.

Coinciding with their Rosh Chodesh programme, all the parents shared a delicious breakfast with their children and the teachers, before bonding and then sharing quality one-on-one Torah learning for almost an

hour.

Principal Michelle Prager read out the message from the Chief Rabbi requesting the first ever “Generation Sinai”, with parents and children from all Jewish day schools coming together in their thousands to learn Torah at one time on one day in a spirit of unity and inspiration.

This was a most meaningful and uplifting morning, where congregants were privileged to be able to “adopt” a child whose parents could not be there, and to share this moving moment.

Prager said she hoped that this would be only the first of many future events of this nature.

# Jerusalem strikes gold at KDHL

KEREN ZWICK  
PHOTOGRAPHS: GARY BLOCK

28 IYAR annually marks the reunification of Jerusalem and every year on this date King David High School Linksfield, has a commemorative Yom Yerushalayim ceremony.

This year, because the day fell on the school’s “Open Day” for visiting grade 7s, the hall was packed to the beams with KDHL learners and staff, the grade 7 learn-

ers, Mrs Frankel and all the visiting soon-to-be-grade 8s.

Head boy and head girl, Gabriel Smith and Kate Berkenfeld, introduced the event with the Miami Boys’ Choir singing “Im eschkachech Yerushalayim/If I ever forget thee Jerusalem”.

Our own KDHL dancers performed poignantly in front of the screen. To further reiterate the noble moment of historic love between Jews and Jerusalem, marked by reunification after the Six Day

War, Devin Krok and Gaby Hyan recited a Hebrew/English translation of poetry.

Finally, with Ruby-Ann Birin on violin, Alex Wolman, Talia Chertkow and Talya Michaels sang a medley of “Yerushalayim shel Zahav/Jerusalem of Gold”.

The day was organised by Gary Block, without whose assistance none of the beautiful ceremony would have been possible.



Alex Wolman; Talia Chertkow; and Talya Michaels.



COMMUNITY COLUMNS



ABOVE  
BOARD

Zev Krengel,  
National Chairman

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

ALBERTINA SISULU, who passed away last week at the age of 92, was one of the iconic figures in the annals of South Africa’s liberation struggle. The week prior to that, Arthur Goldreich, a legendary name in the early history of Umkhonto we Sizwe, died in Israel.

One by one, we are seeing the remaining members of an extraordinary generation of liberation leaders pass into history. On each sad occasion, we are reminded of what they fought for, what they achieved and what we need to do to preserve their legacy.

Like her legendary husband Walter, Albertina Sisulu devoted her life to the cause of tolerance, equality and reconciliation for all South Africans. Essentially a humble woman, she was motivated by her strong ethical principles, not by any desire for personal gain.

Tribute to two Struggle heroes

The price she paid, particularly when her husband was in jail and she herself was subjected to constant harassment by the apartheid state, was a heavy one. She, too, was detained for long periods, as were her children.

She could have made things a great deal easier for herself by staying in the background and dissociating herself from the broader struggle for democracy, but this she never did. Instead, she was at the forefront of that struggle, inspiring an entire generation by her brave example.

What is so striking about Albertina Sisulu’s life is how little bitterness she displayed, despite the injustices she suffered from. One sees a similar refusal by other resistance leaders, most notably by Nelson Mandela himself, to allow past wrongs to divert them from making their vision of unity and national reconciliation a reality.

At the forthcoming National Conference of the Board, we will be posthumously honouring Arthur Goldreich by bestowing on him the SAJBD Human Rights Award. Through this award, instituted in 1999, we

pay tribute to Jewish South Africans who have made a significant contribution to the struggle for human rights in our country. Previous recipients include Albie Sachs, Helen Suzman, Isie Maisels and Arthur Chaskalson.

Like Albertina Sisulu, Goldreich risked his freedom, and even his life, in confronting the injustice of the apartheid state. Very nearly did he suffer the fate of his comrades Walter Sisulu, Nelson Mandela and others by spending many long years behind bars.

As it was, he was forced to flee into exile, leaving behind the successful life he had built for himself in his South African birth-

place. He spent the remainder of his life in Israel, whose independence he fought for as a volunteer in the 1948 War.

**SAJBD National Conference 2011: Save the date**

The opening night of the 46th SAJBD National Conference, which is open to the wider public, will be taking place at the Sandton Sun on August 27. Further updates will be featured in future issues of the Jewish Report.

In the meantime, I urge everyone to save the date and hope that as many of you as possible will join us for what is shaping up to be another rousing occasion for our Jewish community.

This column is paid for by the SAJBD

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NEWS IN BRIEF

OBAMA EXTENDS ISRAEL EMBASSY WAIVER

WASHINGTON - President Barack Obama has extended a waiver for an additional six months delaying moving the US Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem.

Obama's waiver, issued on June 3, follows in the footsteps of predecessors Bill Clinton and George W Bush, who also extended the waiver every six months since a law was passed in 1995 mandating moving the US Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem. Presidents are permitted to delay the move on national security grounds.

Some Jewish groups have pushed for the United States to move the embassy as a way to bolster Israeli claims to the city. Those favouring the use of the waiver say that moving the embassy would anger the Arab world and put the United States in the position of taking sides on an issue that should be settled in peace talks. (JTA)

JOHANNESBURG PROGRAMME - Sandton Sun Hotel

SATURDAY 18 JUNE		SUNDAY 19 JUNE								
20.00 - 22.00	3 Chief Rabbis	10.50 - 10.00	<b>Happiness in a sad world</b>  Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz	<b>From India to Israel:</b> <i>A Bumpy Spiritual Journey</i>  Sara Rigler	<b>Panel Debate:</b> <i>Secularism, Palestinian state &amp; Iran. Israel's way forward?</i>  Rabbi Laurence Perez Jonathan Rosenblum Rabbi Moshe Taragin	<b>BEIT MIDRASH SESSIONS</b>				
	Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein Chief Rabbi of South Africa									
	Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks Chief Rabbi of the UK -video message	Break					10.00 - 11.30	<b>What are the limitations of honouring parents?</b>  Text learning and shiur with <i>Professional Beit Midrash</i> led by Rabbi Avigdor Blumenau		
	Keynote Address: Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv	11.00 - 11.50	<b>Modern ills – Torah cures</b>  Jonathan Rosenblum	<b>Jewish Intimacy:</b> <i>The Sensual, Spiritual and Sublime</i>  Bronya Shaffer	<b>Investec Business Ethics Forum:</b> <i>The employer, employee relationship</i>  Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein Rabbi Moshe Taragin					
	Break					11.30 - 13.00	<b>Confidentiality:</b> <i>when is there an obligation to reveal sensitive information?</i>  Text learning and shiur with the <i>Toras Chaim Ohr Somayach Kollel</i> led by Rabbi <i>Yechezkal Auerbach</i>	<b>Can you turn people away?</b> <i>Understanding the mitzvah of tzedaka</i>  Text learning and shiur with the <i>Beit Mordechai Campus Kollel</i> led by Rabbi <i>Levi Wineberg</i>		
	How Torah talks to me 5 minute messages	Rabbi David Ordman Jonathan Rosenblum Sara Rigler Bronya Shaffer Rabbi Moshe Taragin Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz	12.00 - 12.50	<b>Chosen people?</b> <i>Jewish identity in a multi-cultural society</i>  Rabbi Yossi Jacobson	<b>Facts and faith:</b> <i>Prophecy fulfilled?</i>  Rabbi Ordman		<b>A Child- gift &amp; responsibility:</b> <i>Interactive workshop for moms</i>  Sara Rigler, Bronya Shaffer, Mashi Lipskar & Joanne Zagneov			
				13.00 - 14.00	<b>Lunch &amp; a choice of 3 films</b>  Pre-ordered box lunch R65  2 Wholesome sandwiches, salad & a fruit	<b>Documentary</b>  The Ochberg Orphans <small>Documentary about a South African business man who helped rescue children orphaned during the brutal aftermath of the Russian Revolution, bringing them to a safe-haven in Cape Town.</small>	<b>Drama</b>  The Journey <small>A young Russian boy and an American Jewish engineer meet in Leningrad during World War II and form a friendship that changes both their lives &amp; understanding of Judaism.</small>	<b>Documentary</b>  1948-1957 (Rabbi Berel Wein) <small>Faith and Fate/ The Story of the Jewish People in the 20th Century. A New Beginning- 1948-1957.</small>		
					14.00 - 14.50	<b>Journey of the soul:</b> <i>What happens in the after-life</i>  Rabbi Yossi Jacobson	<b>Does religion stifle our humanity?</b>  Rabbi Moshe Taragin	<b>The media's obsession with Israel:</b> <i>an optimist's view</i>  Jonathan Rosenblum	<b>Discovery Medical Ethics Forum:</b> <i>Risk and danger in medicine &amp; Surgery</i>  Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz	
				Break						
				15.00 - 15.50	Men and Women-together & apart: <i>Secrets of Successful Relationships</i>  Rabbi Dr Akiva Tatz	Sinai Revelation: <i>historical proof</i>  Rabbi David Ordman	Vanquishing negativity & guilt  Sara Rigler	Why do bad things happen to good people?  Rabbi Yossi Jacobson		
Break										
Seats limited BOOK NOW		R100   R80								
071 484 2709		Closing Address  Chief Rabbi Yisrael Meir Lau  Followed by Communal Mincha, Tehillim and Ma'ariv		16 June DBN Durban Jewish Club  18; 20 June CT Albow Centre						
sinai-indaba.co.za		SINAI INDABA Torah talking to a modern world  <small>A united community project of The Office of the Chief Rabbi, other leading Rabbis, Shuls &amp; Outreach Organizations Programme is subject to change</small>								







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*Only short-listed applicants will be responded to.*

**Interested candidates, please forward a current C.V. to hr@jhbchev.co.za or Attention HR Dept, Private Bag x1, Sandringham, 2131, or Fax 0866327774**



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# sport

The Annual **sasfin bank** Sports Quiz Evening 2011

In aid of the Selwyn Segal Society for the handicapped

**Date** Thursday 30 June 2011 **Time** 19h00 for 19h30  
**Venue** Maroela Room, Sandton Sun, Sandton  
**Dress** Smart Casual **Cost** R12 000 per table (incl. VAT)  
**Contact** Danny Blumberg  
**Tel** 011 646 7340/1 **Fax** 086 632 4903  
**E-mail** [danny@mscsports.co.za](mailto:danny@mscsports.co.za)



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Team members and supporters.

## Kirsten sees potential in SA cricket’s young players

STAFF REPORTER  
PHOTOGRAPH: JANINA BOTHA

THE HIGHLANDS Tigers, a young, up-and-coming Jewish cricket club, recently hosted a breakfast with Gary Kirsten, who this week was announced as the Protea’s new coach and world-renowed former cricketer, Dr Ali Bacher.

The event was sponsored by Ram Couriers and organised by MSC Sports, which sponsors the Highlands Tigers, and was held at the Sandton Sun. It proved to be a great success as a question-and-answer session, with Bacher asking Kirsten questions about his cricketing career and the recent failure of the Proteas to make the final of the Cricket World Cup.

The event was timed to coincide with the end of Kirsten’s tenure as the successful coach of the Indian cricket team’s victory during the recent 2011 World Cup in India.

Bacher, in welcoming Kirsten, said he was one of greatest players in the South African history of cricketing. Kirsten, he said, played 101 test matches and 185 one-day internationals for South Africa between 1993 and 2004, mainly as an opening batsman.

Kirsten made his test debut against Australia in 1993. He retired from international cricket in 2004 after crafting a match-winning 76 in his final innings, against New Zealand. He had made histo-

ry by becoming the first-ever Protea to play in 100 Test matches.

After he retired from cricket, Kirsten started his own cricket academy in Cape Town. In 2008, he got the post of Indian coach.

“Gary Kirsten has been praised by all players for improving and enhancing their playing techniques, motivating them and discussing tactics that can be deployed on the field. The results could be clearly seen within months. He is considered the key force behind the clearly visible performance improvement in all players he coaches,” Bacher said.

Kirsten said that, in a way, he was pleased that the Proteas got knocked out.

“We were in India, with billions of supporters, on home turf. It would have been difficult for South Africa, although it (the result from a South African perspective) was disappointing,” he said.

The role of a cricket coach has changed, he told his audience.

“In the past, it was teaching cricketers how to hold a bat and throw a ball. Now, youngsters are taught that. The role of coach is implementing plans for the game and involving all team members. I cannot, as coach, alone tell the team how to play. It is a team effort which is planned, involving all the players,” he stressed.

The South African side, said Kirsten, was still a young and relatively inexperienced one, but could improve significantly.

## Glorious 35-year milestone for Vic



JACK MILNER

THERE USED to be a radio programme called “Beyond our Ken” in the 1960s which had a sketch every week with Kenneth Williams, one of the “Carry On” actors. There was always a question in there as to how long he had been in his job and the answer was always the same: 35 years.

If you had put the question to Vic Boston as to how many times he has run the Comrades Marathon, the answer would be the same: 35 years. Vic is the youngest athlete to have achieved this milestone.

Vic, a product of King David High Linksfield, started running with his dad when he was four years old. He ran his first race - a 10 miler - at age 15, in 1985. He competed in his first marathon - The Jackie Gibson - a year later and when he was 17, completed his first Comrades.

Since then he has successfully completed the Comrades every year for the next 35 years. He has earned silver in 18 of those.

This year, now 51 years old, Vic finished in 8 hours 13 minutes and 12 seconds.

**Vic Boston became the youngest person to complete 35 consecutive Comrades Marathons this year.**

## Edenvale women bowlers win Garrun Trips

IN THE current economic climate it is an amazing achievement to fill four bowling greens in any tournament. On Thursday May 19, more than 150 women bowlers played in the Garrun Trips annual charity tournament held at the Killarney Bowling Club in Houghton.

A media release stated that players came from many clubs in and around Johannesburg and, without exception, all enjoyed the excellent weather, the friendly atmosphere and the competitive spirit in which the games were played.




The winning team: Eileen Burt; Sheila Buncombe (skip); and Maureen Scott.

The tournament is sponsored by the Garrun Group and is in its 28th year having started at the Emmarentia Bowling Club in 1983, moved to the Beaconsfield Bowling Club and then to Killarney, where it will, hopefully, remain for many more years.

The amount collected will be distributed between Hatzolah, Choc and Hospice, all

deserving local charities. The tournament was won by Sheila Bunscombe and her team from Edenvale Bowling Club and in second place the Killarney team skipped by Annette Dimant. Every player received a prize and congratulations must go to Sheila Shear and her team of dedicated helpers for convening and administering the day without fault.



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