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2012/5773
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**Chief Rabbi
Warren
Goldstein's New
Year Message:
Together we
stand**

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GOLDSTUCK: The Day the Music Arrived

A decade after iTunes demolished the traditional music industry, the arrival of Simfy Africa finally gives South Africans a legal equivalent.

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Delicious Rosh Hashanah recipes from our leading rebbeztens to try for this Yomtov



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SAKS: Rethink practical alternatives to university education

Those who thought pursuit of knowledge in a university would help uplift the rank and file, didn't anticipate the opposite: an influx of intellectually docile, unadventurous conformist learners undermining bold, critical thinking in the very institutions supposed to nurture it.

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**Wishing all our readers
and advertisers Shana
Tova Umetuka; a sweet
and happy new year!
Owing to Rosh
Hashanah, our next
issue will be on
September 28.**



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

BLUMENTHAL: Misconception that Jews are unemployable in SA because of BBBEE

What can you personally do in your company to create employment parity between the races, without sacrificing your self-interest, namely ownership and equity?

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Myths and debate about circumcision, locally and abroad

The false account of the components of a Jewish circumcision indicates the increasing intolerance toward the ritual, couched in xenophobia in several countries.

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US-Israel tensions on Iran are boiling over

Between the red lines, the deadlines, the diplomacy and the dress downs, the vaunted co-operation between Israel and the United States on whether and when to strike Iran, seems to be in a free fall.



6, 16

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Shabbat Times

Sept 14 / 27 Elul

Sept 15 / 28 Elul

Parshat Nitzavim

Candle-lighting/Shabbat ends		
17:43	18:32	Johannesburg
18:15	19:12	Cape Town
17:30	18:21	Durban
17:50	18:40	Bloemfontein
17:51	18:43	Port Elizabeth
17:42	18:33	East London

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Sunday Sept 16 / 29 Elul

Candle-lighting		
17:43	Johannesburg	
18:15	Cape Town	
17:31	Durban	
17:51	Bloemfontein	
17:52	Port Elizabeth	
17:43	East London	

1 st Day Rosh Hashanah

Sept 17 / 1 Tishrei

Candle-lighting (from a pre-existing flame)		
18:33	Johannesburg	
19:13	Cape Town	
18:22	Durban	
18:41	Bloemfontein	
18:44	Port Elizabeth	
18:35	East London	

2nd Day Rosh Hashanah

Sept 18/ 2 Tishrei

Yomtov ends		
18:33	Johannesburg	
19:14	Cape Town	
18:22	Durban	
18:41	Bloemfontein	
18:45	Port Elizabeth	
18:35	East London	

Fast of Gedaliah

Sept 19 / 3 Tishrei

Fast begins/Fast ends		
04:52	18:21	Johannesburg
05:25	18:59	Cape Town
04:38	18:09	Durban
04:58	18:28	Bloemfontein
04:57	18:31	Port Elizabeth
04:48	18:21	East London

Sept 21/5 Tishrei
Shabbat Vaylech Shabbat Shuva

Candle-lighting/Shabbat ends		
17:46	18:35	Johannesburg
18:15	19:16	Cape Town
17:34	18:24	Durban
17:53	18:53	Bloemfontein
17:56	18:48	Port Elizabeth
17:46	18:38	East London

Yom Kippur

Sept 25/9Tishrei

Sept 26/10 Tishrei

Fast begins/ Fast ends		
17:47	18:37	Johannesburg
18:15	19:19	Cape Town
17:36	18:27	Durban
17:55	18:45	Bloemfontein
17:58	18:51	Port Elizabeth
17:49	18:41	East London

Past, present and future

On a pre-Rosh Hashanah visit to Sandringham Gardens to blow the shofar for a past congregant, I had a touching experience. The lady I went to sound the shofar for, shared a room with another older woman.

After blowing several notes, the roommate started to wave her hand very energetically in my direction. I thought that perhaps I was disturbing her and she wanted me stop, so I paused.

“Vonderful, vonderful,” she exclaimed in her Yiddish accent.

I resumed blowing the shofar. As I continued, she removed her thick, black-framed glasses and dabbed the tears falling from her eyes with a tissue.

I imagine that, with a sense of loss, she was thinking about Rosh Hashanahs past: the stirring sounds of the shofar resonating in the shul she attended for many years, the tefillot (prayers) and sermons, and a large family and many guests around a Yomtov table.

On the way out of the home,

I encountered a group of men and asked if they had heard the shofar that day. One had not, so I blew the shofar for them.

When I finished, one of the old-timers commented,“That was very good. You should become a rabbi.”

One experience, two reactions. One thought of the past and the other of the future. One of what had been lost and the other of what could be gained.

In Parshat Nitzavim, Moshe presents a sweeping overview of the past, present and future. He renews the covenant of Mount Sinai, for all those present and for future generations, while reviewing the past and looking forward to the future, as the renewal of a covenant with G-d is only meaningful when seen in the context of past achievements and shortcomings and future aspirations.

Moshe does not give a history lesson, a dry recounting of past and present dates and events



ROSH HASHANAH SERMONETTE

Rabbi Pesach Fishman
Northcliff Shul

and prophecies regarding the future. Rather, his focus is on the relationship of the Jews to G-d; the times that relationship has soared, and the times that the Jews, individually or collectively, had stumbled and how it will again soar.

He speaks of the future In-gathering of the exiles, when all Jews will return home, geographically to Israel, and metaphorically to the Jewish People.

Moshe looks at the Jewish People, with the vision of a Moshe, and sees the good within each, the innate affinity to G-d’s Torah and the natural inclination to choose good over evil and positive action over indifference.

Parshat Nitzavim is always read on the Shabbat that precedes

Rosh Hashanah and the parsha’s themes and messages are a preparation and springboard for Rosh Hashanah.

On Rosh Hashanah we renew our personal covenant with G-d. It is a time to reflect on our actions of the past year and on the nature of our relationship with Hashem (and others), a time to contemplate where we are headed in the future, a time for Jews to come home to the Jewish People and a time to reveal our true selves and aspire and recommit to doing greater good in the future.

May we all succeed in achieving these goals and merit a good and sweet year.

Wishing you a Shabbat Shalom, a meaningful Rosh Hashanah.

Rosh Hashanah greetings from Bryan Silke, publisher, SAJR

It is with great pride that I welcome you to the first Rosh Hashanah edition of the South African Jewish Report of my tenure. Firstly, a debt of gratitude to my editor Geoff Sifrin and



debate in the opinion pages of our paper.

The SAJR carries with it the unenviable burden of being the sole weekly Jewish newspaper in this country. Our task to provide meaningful and relevant content to our broad audience, is a unique challenge embraced by our editorial team - and it is precisely under these pressures that a publication thrives.

Since our demographics are so varied, we try to cater for all the content needs of our constituency where requests range from politics and business, to the arts, to Torah content. A challenge indeed!

Rosh Hashanah is meant to be a time of severe introspection - analysing our own personal deeds of the past year, putting in effort to “rectify the wrongs” by doing a sincere teshuvah and making resolutions to improve in one’s behaviour in the coming year. But make no mistake: it is also a Yomtov - a period of joy, and with this I would like to wish our loyal audience a sweet, successful and productive year!

Silberhaft’s long-awaited book on his life’s work, finally launched



Photo: Mike Belling

DAVID SAKS

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft ‘s book was launched at Beyachad last Sunday, by the publishers, and at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre the following Wednesday, by the Union of Jewish Women. In the picture Rabbi Silberhaft signs a copy of the book, while Suzanne Belling – who co-authored the book - publisher Mike Martin and Gus Silber, guest speaker at the first launch, look on.

For journalist, author and filmmaker Gus Silber, the SAJBD’s “Travelling Rabbi” Moshe Silberhaft has a job to be envied. Few people have the opportunity of visiting so many remote corners of the country and establishing a rapport with SA’s multifaceted communities.

Silber was speaking at Sunday’s launch at Beyachad of “The Travelling Rabbi: My African Tribe”, Rabbi Silberhaft’s book recounting his 18 years as spiritual leader to the SA country communities and also to the countries affiliated to the Afri-

can Jewish Congress. The hefty 360-page tome, which includes numerous colour illustrations, is replete with insights and anecdotes that bring alive not only aspects of Jewish country and small town life, but life outside the main urban centres in general.

As such, it will make enjoyable reading for anyone interested in getting to the tachlis of what it means to be a South African. It was co-written with journalist and Jewish communal professional Suzanne Belling.

Rabbi Silberhaft’s forthright, no-nonsense approach to his work, combined with an approach to those he ministered to, including those who were intermarried, that was completely non-judgemental, were identified by Silber as reasons for his success. In addition, he had the instincts of a true sleuth in his ability to track down a Jewish link in the places he visited, be it a living individual, a grave or a building. Through his work, he had become the public face of the Jewish world for innumerable people living far from the Jewish population centres and for many Jews their only link with their Jewish heritage and the greater Jewish world.

He has succeeded in imprinting his own vision and personality on the position that has created for himself a unique profile, not just in SA but across the Jewish world.



Design and layout: Bryan Maron/Design Bandits – bryan@designbandits.co.za • Website: Ilan Ossendryver • Subscription enquiries: Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860-13-2652.
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Shana Tovah from the SA Jewish Report
The directors, management and staff wish the Jewish community and our advertisers, Shana Tovah and a meaningful Fast.
May you be inscribed in the book of life for a sweet year.

A wide-ranging and stimulating SAJBD Cape conference



Khaya Langa and Brenda Stern participated in a conference session.

**MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN**

There would always be bullies, bigots and racists who enjoyed hurting and taunting other people and the only answer to this was: “No-one can make you feel inferior without your consent.

“These are tough words, but in my lifetime, I have found them to be true,” said Western Cape Premier Helen Zille, the keynote speaker at the Cape conference of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, held on Sunday. The conference theme was Freedom of Expression and Hate Speech in South Africa today.

No people had suffered “more racial oppression, more racial insults or bigotry than the Jewish people. They were victims of the worst crime in history”, she added.

Zille said she had always found it very striking that “anti-Semitic bigots try to find the most offensive name they can, usually use the name ‘Jew’, but the self-confidence of Jews turns the intended insult into a term of praise. For me, that is a great sign of psychological liberation which we all have to work our whole lives to achieve.”

The premier said that to make it illegal to deny the Holocaust would “curtail freedom of speech and simply give credibility to the claptrap of Holocaust denial as if there was something to hide that was being covered up”.

Should blasphemous cartoons be banned? “No, that would only encourage accusations of religious intolerance. A much better sanction is the disapproval of decent people.

“I do not think a society that is seeking cohesion should simply trample on the articles of faith that shape and guide the lives of their compatriots, but doing so should not be illegal,” she stated.

The following session consisted of case presentations on controversial issues which were then judged by a panel. Tackling the question of whether Zapiro’s cartoons constituted hate speech, Lance Katz maintained

that the cartoonist had “conducted an active propaganda campaign aimed at delegitimising Israel and the local Jewish community”.

Comparing Zapiro’s work to the Nazi propaganda machine’s portrayal of Jews, he said the cartoons employed classic anti-Semitic themes. “The false comparison of Israel with Nazi Germany belittles the Holocaust, minimises its victims... and is tantamount to Holocaust denial.”

Panelist Jacques Rousseau of The Daily Maverick said that while he was sympathetic to the case being presented, he felt that to stop Zapiro would “stifle debate unacceptably”.

Brenda Stern said that while she felt the cartoons were “deeply irresponsible”, they did not fall into the category of hate speech. While she disagreed that they amounted to Holocaust denial, she found the comparison of Israel to Nazi Germany deeply offensive.

Writer Khaya Dlanga said he would find the AWB more dangerous than Zapiro’s work. “I don’t find this hate speech at all,” he said.

“He’s a jester, sometimes he’s really shocking, but I don’t think we need to take him that seriously as to prevent him from publishing.”

Speaking from the floor, Holocaust survivor Miriam Lichterman said the current “onslaught” was a “repetition of what I lived through and saw in the late 1930s. I beg you not to be too complacent, particularly the young people, who out of very high moral standards, but not really understanding the background of the issues involved, offer high and mighty ideas.

“Let’s not mix up the underlying ideas with morality, with freedom of speech. This is more than hate speech. This is propaganda with the intention of destroying the Jewish State and the Jewish people.”

Dlanga said he found listening to Lichterman “amazing and pretty humbling. Who’s to fight with Miriam’s experience? Who can say that it won’t happen (again) when she can see the parallels?” he asked.

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Only by recognising the greatness in ourselves and all the things we do right, can we appreciate the difference between the things that we do wrong and rectify them. This is how we effect real change within ourselves, so as to be able to live up to who we really are.

If as leaders we only see the darkness, the corruption of our people, we are not fit to lead. To cause their light to shine, we must see their infinite light.

This was the message of world-renowned speaker Rabbi Yossi Jacobson (pictured), who delivered a New Year address to a Johannesburg audience of some 500 recently at the Sandton Convention Centre. It was titled: “Saying ‘yes’ to a better year”.

Rabbi Jacobson was the first rabbi invited by the Pentagon to address its 4 000 military chaplains.

He asks that if we consider ourselves wholly unworthy, what difference does another failure make? And ironically, it is those who say, “I am always wrong” who actually believe they are always right.

Why on Yom Kippur, do we sing the confession or Vidui?

In the confession of tithing - Vidui maaser - which we are commanded in Ki Tavo in the fourth year of the sabbatical cycle, we are called on to give an account of our annual gift of a percentage of our produce to those who do not have, including the poor, the convert, the Cohen and Levi. In this confession is a confirmation to G-d that we “have given it

all away, forgetting nothing, doing it exactly as You commanded us to do. Now look down from Heaven and bless me.”

Where is the confession, asked Rabbi Jacobson. If this is what confession is, we would do it every Sunday. To understand what we are doing wrong, we have to know what we are doing right.

And within this are valuable lessons. To parents: Highlight the successes in a child’s mixed school report. The stereotyping of others: How we deprive the other of expanding; how much richer our lives become when we can peek into another’s soul.

In the Talmud story of one of the greatest leaders in Jewish history, Tractate Yuma (Page 39b), about Shimon Ha Tsadik, the Kohen Ha Gadol of the Second Temple, do we understand Torah’s perspective on true growth and transformation. It was he who stated that the world stands on three pillars: Torah, prayer and acts of goodness and kindness.

Shimon recounts to his followers how, when he entered the Holiest of Holies only on Yom Kippur, he had a vision of a man dressed all in white accompanying him, except for one year, when he appeared dressed in black, and Shimon knew that his end had come and died shortly afterwards.

To see only a gloomy, dark future, you cannot serve as leader, mentor or teacher. You must be able to see in your environment, as did the late Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson ztl, its potential for rehabilitation and spiritual refinement. No matter the odds.

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Together we stand

Rosh Hashanah message from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein

"It is not good for man to be alone." (Bereishit 2:18). G-d created us to live as social beings, who interact with one another in communities. The most basic community is the very first one formed in history, that of the marriage between Adam and Eve.

We all operate within some sort of community: some are very small, like a marriage, or slightly larger, like the family unit comprised of parents and their children. Some communities are much larger, such as a shul or a school.

Then there is the national Jewish community and, of course, the broader global Jewish community. As we prepare for a good new year, it is vital that we rededicate ourselves to nurturing and strengthening all of these communities.

One of the outstanding features of South African Jewry is the fact that we go to and are involved with our shuls in much higher proportions than in similar Jewish communities around the world. The first shuls in South Africa were set up as soon as Jews began to arrive. Cape Town's first shul was established in Gardens in 1863 and Johannesburg's, on President Street, in 1887.

We, the descendants of the brave pioneers who started our first congregations, have inherited their passion and commitment to our shuls. A shul is much more than the sum of its parts. It is comprised of individuals who join together to form a community or, in Hebrew, a kehilla. Thus, a new entity is formed, unifying people around the eternal Divine values of our faith.

The secret to successfully creating and sustaining all these different types of communities, such as marriages, families, shuls or schools, is the same; as the Mishnah in Pirkei Avot (4:14) says in the name of Rabbi Yochanan HaSandlar, "Any community dedicated to Heaven will endure forever."

What is "a community dedicated to Heaven"? The Tosfot Yom Tov, a classic commentary on the Mishnah, says that dedication to Heaven means putting aside personal interests. A community can thrive only if its members are able to rise above their ego, pride, jealousy and selfishness. The focus has to be for the sake of Heaven and the upholding of Hashem's values; without this, communities disintegrate.

If people are in it for themselves, their interests compete and the resulting tensions place enormous strain on the community, preventing it from achieving success, and even, possibly, destroying the community, completely.

A marriage is successful when both husband and wife are dedicated to Heaven, committed to doing the right thing and caring for one another, and are not in it merely for what they can take for themselves.



When husband and wife compete with each other for the fulfilment of their personal interests, their marriage will not endure happily. The same applies to the family. It, too, cannot endure if its members go their own selfish ways; but when unified in their dedication to Heaven, the family unit can hold together all its members.

So too, a shul or any community organisation can only be successful if there is a willingness to work for the sake of the cause, putting aside petty selfish interests and aspiring to be truly "dedicated to Heaven".

Another explanation offered by the commentaries is that a "community dedicated to Heaven" refers to the Jews who stood at Mount Sinai when G-d revealed the Torah, and to the successive generations of Jews who have received it and passed it on. Living with Torah values is the formula which has withstood the test of time as the only way to ensure vital and dynamic Jewish communities.

This applies broadly to the Jewish people as a national entity, as well to our personal communities, namely, our families. We are well aware of the generation gap between parents and children, and there surely are differences - in tastes of music and clothing, in worldview and technology, and in many other trends and fads.

But if the family's value system is anchored in Torah, then our eternal Torah values have the ability to hold the family together, no matter the differences and no matter the place, time or circumstances.

As we approach the New Year, we as a community and as individuals, face many opportunities and challenges, locally in the South African context and more generally as members of the global Jewish people - especially in Israel. In order to meet these challenges and maximise these opportunities, we need to stand together to create and nurture families and communities "dedicated to Heaven".

Gina and I would like to take this opportunity to wish the entire community a good Yomtov. May Hashem inscribe and seal us all in the Book of Life, and bestow upon us all His abundant blessings for a good and sweet New Year. www.chiefrabbi.co.za



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Who’s who in the debate on Iran

The debate over an Israeli strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities has heated up. Here are some of the debate’s most prominent figures.



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Benjamin Netanyahu
Prime Minister of Israel and most important person in the decision on whether to strike Iran. A security hawk, Netanyahu has made combatting Iran’s pursuit of nuclear weapons the defining issue of his tenure.

Position on a strike: Experts have written many pages about Netanyahu’s thinking regarding a strike, since he took office in 2009. Many analysts consider him more supportive than other officials of a strike, several experts have floated the possibility he is bluffing in an attempt to spur the international community to stand up to Iran and have it stand down from its nuclear aspirations.

Defining quote: “I think it’s important to do everything in our power to prevent the ayatollahs from possessing the capability. We have to be honest and say that all the sanctions and diplomacy so far have not set back the Iranian programme by one iota... that’s why I believe that we need a strong and credible military threat...”

Ehud Barak
Israel’s defence minister, also served as prime minister from 1999 to 2001, and head of the Israel Defence Forces from 1991 to 1995. He is the second most important figure in the internal Israeli debate after Netanyahu.

Position on attack: Until this week, Barak’s position appeared to be supportive of a potential strike. But in a statement last week Thursday, he hinted - according to Haaretz - that

the buildup of American forces in the Persian Gulf might obviate the need for a unilateral Israeli strike. Lately, Barak also has focused his statements on Iran’s “zone of immunity”, the point when Iran’s nuclear programme becomes impenetrable.

Meir Dagan
Led the Mossad from 2002 to 2011. As head of Israel’s foreign intelligence service, Dagan focused on disrupting Iran’s nuclear programme - the Mossad was credited with assassinating Iranian scientists and launching cyber attacks on Iran’s nuclear facilities.

Position on attack: Opposed. After leaving the Mossad, Dagan spoke out publicly against a strike, calling it a “stupid idea”.

Yuval Diskin
Head of Shin Bet, Israel’s domestic intelligence agency, from 2005 to 2011. While he didn’t speak out against a strike until last April, Dagan had claimed that Diskin also opposed an attack while in office.

Position on attack: Opposed. In his first public comments on the issue, at an event in central Israel, he castigated Netanyahu and Barak for misleading the Israeli public.

Benny Gantz
Chief of the IDF General Staff, a key player in the discussion on whether to strike Iran’s facilities.

Position on attack: In April, Gantz said that Iranian Ayatollah Ali Khamenei “would be making an enormous mistake” by developing a bomb, “and I don’t think he will want

to go the extra mile.” In July, Gantz was opposed to an attack before the November 6 US elections.

President Barack Obama
President of the USA, Israel’s closest ally, whose military could do greater damage to Iran’s facilities than Israel.

Position on attack: Opposed, for now. Has declared the US will not allow Iran to possess a nuclear weapon and no options are off the table. Views military action as a last resort, and wants more time to let diplomatic and economic efforts work.

Defining quote: “I think both the Iranian and the Israeli governments recognise that when the United States says it is unacceptable for Iran to have a nuclear weapon, we mean what we say.”

Mitt Romney
Republican nominee for president, more hawkish on Iran than Obama.

Position on attack: Like Obama, Romney has declared he will take no options off the table in halting Iran’s nuclear weapons quest. During his July visit to Israel, his adviser, Dan Senor, said Romney would “respect” a unilateral Israeli strike; Senor clarified later that Romney “recognises Israel’s right to defend itself”.

Martin Dempsey
Chairman of US Joint Chiefs of Staff

Position on attack: Opposed. Dempsey said that a premature attack could undo international sanctions against Iran and would “probably not destroy” the nuclear programme. (JTA)



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8	SA JEWISH REPORT	News	14 - 28 September 2012
The Jewish World		The Jerusalem Post, Jerusalem, Israel: www.jpost.com “Obama, Netanyahu reaffirm ‘united determination’ on Iran” Phone call between Israeli PM and US president follows announcement that Obama will not meet Netanyahu when he’s in US; earlier Netanyahu declared that those who don’t place “red lines” on Iran have no right to give Israel “red light”.	
in seven seconds		The Jewish Chronicle, London, UK: www.thejc.com “Hague warns of cost to academic ties as Israel backs West Bank college upgrade” The British government has responded furiously to a decision by an Israeli committee to agree to grant university status to a college in the West Bank. In strongly worded remarks after the Israeli Cabinet approved the move to upgrade Ariel College, Foreign Secretary William Hague expressed disappointment at the creation of “an additional barrier to peace with the Palestinians”.	
The Jewish Week, New York, USA www.thejewishweek.com “Agudah preparing to sue City over metzitzah informed consent” The haredi umbrella organisation Agudath Israel is planning to sue the City of New York, should the Board of Health pass a law this week requiring mohels to obtain informed consent from parents whose infant sons are due to undergo metzitzah b’peh.		Jewish Telegraph, London, UK: www.jewishtelegraph.com “Britain against Israel boycotts” According to Britain’s consul-general in Jerusalem, Sir Vincent Fearn, Britain is against any kind of Israel-boycotting. Fearn told a Burnley audience that Britain sought to increase trade, academic, scientific and cultural exchanges with Israel. He added that Britain would not speak to Arab terrorists until they denounced violence.	
Jewish Journal, Los Angeles, USA www.jewishjournal.com “Iran moving along on ability to build nuclear weapons” Iran has moved along in its ability to build nuclear weapons, according to some diplomats, who say intelligence provided to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the nuclear monitor of the UN, shows Iran has advanced its work on calculating the power of an atomic warhead.		Ynet news, Israel: www.ynetnews.com “MI6 chief urges Netanyahu not to strike Iran” Head of the UK’s MI6, the Secret Intelligence Service, Sir John Sawers has visited Israel to urge PM Benjamin Netanyahu not to give the go-ahead to bomb Iran, in an indication that the Government believes a strike on Tehran’s nuclear programme could be imminent.	
European Jewish Press, western Europe: www.ejpress.org “White House denies Obama rejected Netanyahu’s demand of a meeting” The White House has denied reports that Pres Barack Obama has rejected Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu’s demand to meet with him in New York. “No such request was made or rejected,” White House spokesman, Tommy Vietor said. Obama and Netanyahu spoke on Tuesday; “they reaffirmed both countries’ commitment to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon”.			

COMMUNITY NOTICE: JHB JEWISH CEMETERIES

*It is a time-honoured custom to visit the graves of parents and families before Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur.
At the time one visits the graves, it is appropriate to give some tzedaka in the name of the deceased.
This mitzvah benefits the soul of the departed.*

Visiting Times:

West Park: Sunday - Friday from 07:00 - 16:00.
Private motor access into West Park cemetery will be restricted on Sundays and public holidays from 08:00 -13:00 or until after the last funeral. The cemetery will, however, provide transport during these times.

Brixton & Braamfontein: Security will be provided on Sunday 16 September and Sunday 23 September from 09:00 - 13:00. If you wish to visit at other times please contact the West Park cemetery office for information. The community is encouraged to visit these cemeteries in groups of at least two.

Reserved Graves:

If you are aware of family who have emigrated or for any other reason no longer require their reserved plots, please cancel the reserved grave/s and release the plot/s to the Chevrah Kadisha.

Grave Repairs:

Minor repairs should ONLY be done by approved Chevrah Kadisha workers.
Please contact the West Park cemetery office to arrange these repairs or for more information on the Eternal Care project.

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World News in Brief

County Democratic chief in Florida resigns over remarks about Christians

PALM BEACH - The chairman of the Palm Beach County Democratic Party has resigned after saying that pro-Israel Christians want to see Jews “slaughtered and converted”.

Mark Alan Siegel resigned last week Friday, a day after he apologised for the remarks he had made two days earlier during an interview on the sidelines of the Democratic National Convention.

“My comments merely served as a distraction to the good work of Democrats in Palm Beach,” Siegel said in a statement released last week Friday by the state party, according to the Palm Beach Post. “Again, I express my deepest apologies to anyone I may have offended.”

Siegel, an attorney, had apologised the day after making the comments but reportedly refused to resign, instead offering to take an extended leave of absence.

Siegel had told the conservative Patriot Update website that as a Jew, he was “not a fan of any religion other than Judaism”. Asked if he was a fan of Christianity, Siegel responded, according to the Palm Beach Post: “No, I’m not. The Christians just want us to be there so we can be slaughtered and converted and bring on the second coming of Jesus Christ.”

He also added the following: “They’re not our friends. They want Israel to pursue policies which are antithetical with its security and existence.

The worst possible allies for the Jewish State are the fundamentalist Christians, who want Jews to die and convert so they can bring on the second coming of their L-rd. It is a false friendship. They are seeking their own ends and not ours.”

Siegel moved to Boca Raton in the 1990s after having serving in the New York state Assembly from 1975 to 1990 as a representative of a Manhattan district. (JTA)

Pope Benedict says his Lebanon trip will promote peace in the region

ROME - Pope Benedict XVI has said he regards his upcoming trip to Lebanon as a visit aimed at promoting peace and dialogue in the entire Middle East. Benedict is scheduled to visit Lebanon from today, September 14 - 16.

“My apostolic visit to Lebanon, and by extension to the Middle East as a whole, is placed under the sign of peace,” he said last Sunday, addressing the faithful gathered at his summer residence outside Rome.

Benedict said he was “aware of the often dramatic situation experienced by the people of this region, too long torn apart by incessant conflicts” and that he understood “the anguish of many Middle Eastern people immersed in daily sufferings of all kinds, which sadly, and at times mortally, plague their personal and family life”.

The pope did not name any specific country, but his words seemed to refer to several ongoing situations, including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, the persecution of Christians in areas of the Middle East and the crisis in Syria.

Benedict said his “concerned thoughts go out to those who, in search

of a place of peace, leave their family and professional life, and experience the precariousness of being exiles”.

He added: “Even though the search for solutions to the various problems affecting the region seems difficult, we cannot resign ourselves to the violence and exasperation of tensions.

“A commitment to dialogue and reconciliation must be a priority for all parties involved, and must be supported by the international community, increasingly aware of the importance of a stable and lasting peace in the region for the whole world.” (JTA)

Jordan’s King Abdullah set to address British Jewry

LONDON - King Abdullah of Jordan is to address the Board of Deputies of British Jews at its annual dinner, the Jewish Chronicle reported.

The theme of the November event is multiculturalism, interfaith and world peace, according to the newspaper.

King Abdullah’s father, the late King Hussein, attended the board’s annual dinner more than a decade ago.

The Board of Deputies is the representative organisation of British Jewry.

Representatives of Britain’s Jewish community met in June with King Abdullah. (JTA)



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Building South Africa People doing remarkable things

Michelle helps change the world through her passion to learn

ROBYN SASSEN

"It is not about selling computers," says Michelle Lisssoos (44) (pictured, inset), MD of Think Ahead Education Solutions, a company of her own development, and the educational partner of Core Group (the exclusive distributor of Apple in sub-Saharan Africa).

A big part of Think Ahead is iSchoolAfrica, mooted in 2009. "It aims to give all South Africans access to the best education and technology practices in the world.

"We strongly believe that funding lowest-common-denominator situations forges a culture of mediocrity. Our people must have what the rest of the world uses, which right now is Mac."

iSchoolAfrica caters to children in private schools, in city centre-based schools and schools in rural areas. It also caters to special needs children.

"We reach 150 schools nationally, so far. We cater toward teacher training, offer funding

models and partners: it's a whole model. It's about making sure solution meets the needs of the children, teachers and schools."

With a background in advertising, 16 years in educational technology and a relentless passion to learn, Lisssoos is contributing to changing the world.

"These iPads replace access to conventional knowledge, which a lot of schools struggle with, like science laboratories, musical instruments, numeracy and literacy skills. In the case of special needs children, we work with the therapists and engage with the children. It enables them to overcome misconceptions and improves their capabilities and confidence."

Think Ahead has produced education app guides for iPad, iPhone and iPod touch. Here, you can access everything from geometry to grammar, the solar system or the digestive system.

Browsing its pages reveals that if this technology infiltrates successfully nationally, a textbook crisis of the dimensions of



Children from Sacred Heart College in Johannesburg working with the iSchoolAfrica programme.

Michelle Lisssoos

that which affected much of this country's learners recently, need never happen again. Indeed, the concept is set to leapfrog over the inadequacies in the current school system.

iSchoolAfrica comprises a mobile lab for rural areas and financially stressed schools. "No-one wants to miss an iPad class," says the principal of Ndlelenhle Primary School in Vosloorus. "It has to do with the engaging nature of the device." Watching a toddler playing on an iPad, one can see it is more than a game.

"The technology is second nature to them."

"We do not donate computers. Our business is not about the equipment. It's about the educational solution. It's a combination of the benefits of the Apple brand with SA educational contextual requirements. We work with partners. The project is growing all the time; its impact is immediate. Teachers who have been dampened become motivated again.

"I love seeing the difference it makes to people's lives," Lisssoos

says. "It makes me love my job. The impact is so tangible. The risk is small: there is no infrastructure, no need to buy textbooks."

Shortlisted for the entrepreneur of the year in this year's Jewish Report Jewish Achievers event, Lisssoos' philosophy is: "Love what you do; people are more important than goods."

• The youtube link for iSchoolAfrica is at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NI5_puX7YbU



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Leigh Nudelman – all for dirty hands and richer hearts

ROBYN SASSEN

“The inner-city has always been part of my world,” says 28-year-old Leigh Nudelman 2012’s recipient of the Caring Joburg award, one of the Johannesburg Development Agency’s Halala Awards, celebrating innovation in the city.

“When I was little, my dad had a clinic in the Lister Building, which is today used by the arts community.”

The award was for her work in Anstey’s Building, the majestic art deco building, on Joubert and Jeppe Streets, downtown. Today, it’s not only home for some 200 people, it’s also a heritage site.

Nudelman has spearheaded the rendering of the children who live in this building and its surrounds a community fuelled by art. “I became involved by mistake,” she smiles. “My friend, Brian McKechnie is a member

of the board of directors of the building. I was introduced to this building at a party thrown there.

“But I realised the potential it embraces as an arts platform. Many art initiatives are happening in the city in contested spaces, which have low rent.

“A lot of initiatives in rejuvenating the city as a residential space are very successful, under people like Renney and Wayne Plit, who act as corollaries against slumlords and their hijacking of buildings. It’s about enabling the community to take ownership of their own lives.

“This is my city too,” she comments on the stand anyone must take in urban rejuvenation, with reference to opportunistic crime. “You’ve got to be streetwise.

“I met some of the residents of Anstey’s: there are several economic strata of people living there – those in the upper floors, own; those living lower down, rent – and they are hungry for



Leigh Nudelman (second from left, middle row) in the Urban Arts Platform T-shirt with the Anstey’s Kids.

the arts. There are about 25 kids living there, aged between 6 and 16.”

Built in 1937, this building used to be the Norman Anstey & Company department store, famous for its elegant window-dressing. There was a tea terrace on the fourth floor and an elegant foyer, replete with floor-to-ceiling mirrors.

“Urban Arts Platform’s aim is to get kids off the streets. With Gina Cooperman, Brian McKechnie and Tebogo Motlana, as well as Anthea Pokroy and

her art-based NGO Assemblage, and independent curator Portia Malatjie, we facilitate workshops run by artists for the kids: everyone emerges with dirty hands and a richer heart.

“We listen to what the children want to do, and develop it from there. It empowers the children, it opens the minds of the adults involved.”

Involved in a range of creative arts initiatives from dance to directing, Nudelman read for a master’s degree in performance making at Goldsmith’s College,

London, after her Wits drama degree.

“One of the courses I followed was in applied drama. It’s a field which offers a focus on negotiation ethics and the politics of narration. The concept of giving ‘help’ is fraught with complication.”

Acknowledgement is important, as is sponsorship. Sustainability is down the line; hopefully Anstey’s Kids will catch on in other buildings. “It’s a start. It’s important for us, as South Africans to have shared experience.”

Rosh Hashanah e-cards



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World News in Brief

Agudath Israel contemplates lawsuit against NY over circumcision ritual

NEW YORK - Agudath Israel of America reportedly is planning to sue the city of New York if its health department passes a law requiring parental consent for the circumcision ritual known as metzitzah b'peh.

The New York Jewish Week reported the development based on an e-mail forwarded to the news outlet sent originally from the account of Agudah's general counsel, Mordechai Biser.

According to the e-mail, the haredi Orthodox group is seeking a New York law firm that would work pro bono or on "a reduced rate basis" to bring "a lawsuit against the City of New York to prevent the City from issuing a regulation that would require written parental consent for an aspect of bris milah ('metzitzah b'peh')."

The city is expected to pass the measure this week requiring parents to sign off before the direct oral suction procedure. Metzitzah b'peh is not used in most Jewish circumcision ceremonies, but many in the haredi community still adhere to it. Haredi leaders have resisted calls to replace direct oral suction with the alternative approaches.

A statement by the Orthodox Rabbinical Council of America on Monday noted: "Many Jewish legal authorities have ruled that direct oral suction is not an integral part of the circumcision ritual and advocate the use of a sterile tube to preclude any risk of infection."

Like Agudah, however, the RCA expressed opposition to the proposed measure, citing "concern about government regulation of religious practices".

"There is no safe way to perform oral suction on any open wound in a newborn," Samantha Levine, a spokesman for New York Mayor Michael Bloomberg, told The Jewish Week via e-mail on Monday, citing leading medical authorities.

The health department's vote represents the culmination of a year of debate surrounding the practice, which was sparked by the death of an infant in Brooklyn last September and the subsequent revelation that a mohel who performed the ritual on the infant had tested positive for herpes.

In June, New York City Health Commissioner Dr Thomas Farley condemned the practice of direct oral suction. (JTA)

Israel Action Network making High Holy Days outreach effort to 5 000 rabbis

NEW YORK - The Israel Action Network is reaching out to 5 000 rabbis during the High Holy Days season as part of an ongoing campaign to counter the delegitimisation of Israel.

The network, a project of the Jewish Federations of North America in partnership with the Jewish Council of Public Affairs, announced the initiative on Monday.

It will include sermon inserts and a resource guide for educating congregants that will promote peace between Israel and its neighbours.

Among the rabbinic organisations partnering in the distribution of material, are the JFNA Rabbinic Cabinet, The Association of Reform Zionists of America, the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue for Conservative Judaism. (JTA)

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What is Rosh Hashanah?

The anniversary of Adam and Eve’s creation, day of judgment, sounding of the shofar...

The festival of Rosh Hashanah - the name means “Head of the Year” - is observed for two days beginning on 1 Tishrei, the first day of the Jewish year. It is the anniversary of the creation of Adam and Eve, the first man and woman, and their first actions toward the realisation of mankind’s role in G-d’s world.

Rosh Hashanah thus emphasises the special relationship between G-d and humanity: our dependence upon G-d as our creator and sustainer, and G d’s dependence upon us as the ones who make His presence known and felt in His world.

Each year on Rosh Hashanah, “all inhabitants of the world pass before G-d like a flock of sheep”, and it is decreed in the heavenly court “who shall live, and who shall die... who shall be impoverished, and who shall be enriched; who shall fall and who shall rise”.

But this is also the day we proclaim G-d King of the Universe. The Kabbalists teach that the continued existence of the universe is dependent upon the renewal of the divine desire for a world when we accept G-d’s kingship each year on Rosh Hashanah.

The central observance of Rosh

Hashanah is the sounding of the shofar, the ram’s horn, which also represents the trumpet blast of a people’s coronation of their king. The cry of the shofar is also a call to repentance, for Rosh Hashanah is also the anniversary of man’s first sin and his repentance thereof, and serves as the first of the “Ten Days of Repentance” which culminate in Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

Another significance of the shofar is to recall the Binding of

Each year on Rosh Hashanah, “all inhabitants of the world pass before G-d like a flock of sheep”.

Isaac which also occurred on Rosh Hashanah, in which a ram took Isaac’s place as an offering to G-d; we evoke Abraham’s readiness to sacrifice his son, and plead that the merit of his deed should stand by us as we pray for a year of life, health and prosperity. Altogether, we listen to one hundred shofar blasts over the course of the Rosh Hashanah services.

Additional Rosh Hashanah observances include:



a) Eating a piece of apple dipped in honey, to symbolise our desire for a sweet year, and other special foods symbolic of the new year’s blessings.

b) Blessing one another with the words “Leshanah tovah tikateiv veteichateim”, “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.”

c) Tashlich, a special prayer

said near a body of water (an ocean, river, pond, etc), in evocation of the verse: “And You shall cast their sins into the depths of the sea.” And as with every major Jewish holiday, after candle-lighting and prayers, we recite kiddush and make a blessing on the challah.

• From the Chabad website

World News in Brief

ISRAELI GAY COUPLE SEEKING DIVORCE FROM RABBINICAL COURT

JERUSALEM - The first Jewish Israeli male couple to marry has filed for divorce in a Tel Aviv rabbinical court that never recognised the marriage.

It is unknown if the rabbinical court will provide a divorce for Uzi Even, the first openly gay Knesset member, and Dr Amit Kama, Ynet reported. They were married in Canada in 2004 after living together for more than a decade.

Even, a professor of physical chemistry at Tel Aviv University, and Kama - the first same-sex male couple in Israel to have their legal right of adoption recognised - split three years ago. Even now wants to marry another man abroad, but cannot until he is divorced from Kama, according to Ynet.

Under Israeli law, the rabbinical court is the only body authorised to annul the marriage of Jewish citizens in Israel. The Interior Ministry will not dissolve the marriage without an order from the rabbinical court. Only Canadian citizens can be divorced in Canada, Ynet reported.

A separation agreement has been approved by the Ramat Gan Family Court.

Even and Kama filed a lawsuit with Israel’s Supreme Court that forced the Interior Ministry to register their marriage in 2006, recognising the marriage abroad.

In 2009, a Tel Aviv court gave them the right to adopt their 30-year-old foster son, whom they took in 15 years earlier after he was kicked out of his home for revealing his homosexuality. (JTA)

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A close-up photograph of various pieces of jewellery, including a diamond necklace and a bracelet, resting on a red velvet surface inside a vault.

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A close-up photograph of several gold Krugerrand coins, showing the 'KRUGERRAND' inscription and the South African coat of arms.

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A close-up photograph of the front of a dark-colored Rolls Royce car, featuring the iconic Spirit of Ecstasy hood ornament and the 'RR' logo.

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Ringing in the new?

Anyone who follows Middle Eastern politics is aware of the ominous question hanging in the air as we enter this Rosh Hashanah period: will Israel attack Iran to destroy the nuclear reactors which are providing it with the capacity to attain nuclear weaponry, as some key Israeli leaders – including Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu – are threatening? And if Israel does this, will the United States and other Western countries support it?

It goes without saying that behind the simplistic version of events that the general public is aware of, lie more complex political, military and other forces.

We know little of what is going on behind the scenes, but we do know that the possible repercussions for the region and the world of an attack on Iran are unpredictable and potentially horrendous.

Starting a war is easy, but you never know where it will go or how it will end – especially if a nuclear element is added. And today’s wars are fought not only on the main battlefield, but also in terrorist acts all over the world.

Israel must do what it needs to protect itself. Let’s pray that this will not necessitate starting a war in Iran – that other means will prevent it becoming a nuclear threat to Israel and the world.

This past year has been characterised by a feeling of worldwide instability. This applies also in South Africa – on a smaller scale, but crucial for us living here. The upcoming ANC conference at Mangaung in December is already having a big effect on SA politics.

President Jacob Zuma is growing increasingly unpopular, adding to the sense of insecurity and instability. Nobody knows what our political landscape will look like after Mangaung.

How should the ordinary person live from day to day, when there is this sense of apprehension in the air? He cannot directly influence the macro events. There is no dynamic mass movement to join; the governing party in South Africa is so strong that even if many black South Africans come out in protest against the ANC on various issues, when they have to make their crosses on the ballot paper, they will still vote for it.

What the ordinary person must do is carry on and try to make as positive a contribution as he can at his own level - the grassroots level - whether individually or as part of the large number of superb outreach and development projects such as MaAfrika Tikkun and others.

It is often the grassroots contacts and friendships established and fostered in this way which hold things together and reveal their true worth when things go bad at the macro level.

In tense times there is the tendency to withdraw from broader society into an isolated community; a “shtetl” or laager. While understandable, that approach brings many problems, especially in this country with its history of division and mistrust between racial and ethnic groups, and the separate, isolated pockets in which we have lived for so long, in a sense creating our own “virtual reality”.

The warning of the sage Hillel (Avos 2:5), “Do not separate yourself from the community”, referred to the Jewish community. But in our South African context, the same principle should apply to the broader community. Perhaps our local version of it would be the African ubuntu concept: “I am what I am because of who we all are.”

Ask the average white South African – including Jews – if he or she really knows their black countrymen, the domestic helper in the kitchen, the ordinary men in the street. Does he or she know how their families are, how and where they live, what they desire, their dreams and aspirations?

To a large extent, the answer will be “no”: the divisions of apartheid still exist. Our contribution at the grassroots level can be to cross these divides- or to blur them - and get to know our fellow citizens.

As we take stock at this Rosh Hashanah, let’s hope that the tensions which characterised the past year will subside, and that the one which is beginning will bring greater peace and stability.



Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; President Barack Obama; and Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad addressing the UN General Assembly in 2011, in this composite photo. Israeli officials told the Israeli media that Obama’s refusal to meet with Netanyahu at this this year’s General Assembly was a sign of tension over the Iran policy.

US-Israel tensions on Iran are boiling over

Between the red lines, the deadlines, the diplomacy and the dress downs, the vaunted co-operation between Israel and the United States on whether and when to strike Iran seems to be in a free fall.

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

In an unusually blunt outburst, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Tuesday blasted the “international community” - widely seen in Israeli media as code for the Obama administration - for refusing to set red lines in its effort to keep Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

“The world tells Israel: ‘Wait, there’s still time,’” Netanyahu said in English at a ceremony in which he greeted Bulgaria’s prime minister. “And I say: ‘Wait for what? Wait until when?’ Those in the international community who refuse to put red lines before Iran, don’t have a moral right to place a red light before Israel.”

That appeared to refer directly to the rejection of deadlines by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton on Monday in an interview with Bloomberg News.

“We’re not setting deadlines,” Clinton said. “We’re watching very carefully about what they do because it’s always been more about their actions than their words.”

The comments were made a day after Netanyahu in his weekly Cabinet meeting called on the international community to “set Iran moral and practical red lines, lines that will stop its race to achieve nuclear weapons.”

In another sign of increasing tension over the Iran issue, people close to Netanyahu leaked to the Israeli media that President Obama would not meet with the prime minister when they both address the UN General Assembly later this month.

Tommy Vietor, a spokesman for the National Security Council, dismissed the account, noting that Obama and Netanyahu would not be in New York at the same time.

“The prime minister doesn’t arrive in New York until later in the week. They’re simply not in the city at the same time. But the President and PM are in frequent contact and the PM will meet with other senior officials, including Secretary Clinton, during his visit.”

Netanyahu reportedly offered to come to Washington to speak with the president. By then, Obama will be deeply involved in his presidential campaign, and White House officials have said he has scheduled no bilateral meetings during the General Assembly week.

Netanyahu wants a clear sign from Obama that he will strike if Iran is poised to acquire a nuclear bomb. The Obama administration has said it is keeping all options on the table, including the possibility of a military strike. But the administration will not make clear in public or private what the trigger for a strike would be.

Israeli anxieties are exacerbated by reports out of Iran that the Islamic Republic’s suspected nuclear weapons programme is accelerating.

On Tuesday, The Associated Press quoted unnamed diplomats as saying intelligence provided to the International Atomic Energy Agency showed that Iran had advanced its work on calculating the destructive power of an atomic warhead through a series of computer models.

Iran denies it is working on a nuclear weapon. The IAEA would not comment, but four of the six diplomats who spoke to the AP on the issue, said the new intelligence was alluded to in an oblique passage in the IAEA’s August report on Iran saying “the agency has obtained more information which further corroborates” its suspicions.

Netanyahu last month dressed down the US ambassador to Israel, Dan Shapiro, over the Iranian nuclear issue at a meeting between the Israeli leader and Representative Mike Rogers (Republican Michigan), chairman of the US House of Representatives Intelligence Committee.

“There was no doubt,” Rogers told WJR, a Michigan radio station. “You could not walk out of that meeting and think that they had not lost their patience with this administration.”

Israel’s US ambassador, Michael Oren, played down the tension in an address on Monday to B’nai B’rith International’s

annual policy conference.

“Not everything you read in the newspaper is true,” he said. Disagreements were natural because Israel is “located in the backyard of Iran” and is threatened daily, whereas the US is a “big country located far” from Iran and has “vastly better” weapons.

Obama’s chief of staff and his informal top liaison to the Jewish community, Jack Lew, assured pro-Israel Democrats at a private lunch last week in Charlotte, North Carolina, where the Democratic National Convention was being held, that Israel was up to date on US plans.

“We have made it clear to others what we think that time horizon will look like” regarding an Iran timeline, Lew said.

The Obama administration has made clear its preference to exhaust diplomacy and sanctions before considering a military strike - a preference that Clinton reiterated in her Bloomberg interview.

“We have always said every option was on the table, but we believe in the negotiation, the diplomatic effort through the P-5+1, but also pressure. And we are working to increase that pressure.

“The sanctions, we know, are having an effect,” Clinton said. The P-5+1, the group leading negotiations with Iran, are the permanent five members of the UN Security Council - Russia, China, Britain, France and the United States - plus Germany.

Israeli and US officials have emphasised the close consultations between the two countries on Iran, which Clinton noted in her own interview. “They’re more anxious about a quick response because they feel that they’re right in the bull’s eye, so to speak, if this doesn’t end up changing Iranian behaviour and their nuclear weapons programme,” she said of the Israelis.

“But we’re convinced that we have more time to focus on these sanctions, to do everything we can to bring Iran to a good faith negotiation.” (JTA)

• Suzanne Pollak of the Washington Jewish Week contributed to this report.

The directors, management and staff of the SA Jewish Report, wish our readers and advertisers Shana Tovah Umetukah, G’mar Chatima Tovah. May the year 5773 be a very good one for all.

Rethink practical alternatives to ‘varsity education



BARBARIC YAWP
David Saks

It is something of a truism that young people think that they have all the answers to what their parents’ generation have struggled with and are impatient to get into the driving seat as soon as possible to put things right.

Certainly, this is true of those privileged enough to spend a few years at university before confronting the realities of adult life. Those studying the harder sciences like medicine, physics and chemistry, have less time for wondering how best to fix the world, and in any case know very well how little they know, compared with their professors.

Those doing politics, sociology, media studies and the like, have the luxury of being more opinionated since the boundaries between right and wrong, fact and theory, are much less clear.

The remarkable English polymath Paul Johnson writes scathingly about what universities have become. He was specifically thinking of the UK institutions, which remain among the world’s best, but the malaise he identified, was present throughout the free world’s academic institutions.

Rigid conformity of thought, enforced by Group Think, political correctness and turf-protecting faculty members intent less on teaching their students how to think than in telling them what to believe, had created an environment that stifled free, innovative thought rather than stimulating it.

All this had come about largely as a result of a mistaken, if well meaning, assumption that as many people as possible should be given a university education. As a result, numbers of students skyrocketed, with the parallel mushrooming of new institutions of higher learning, fulltime academics and a range of new academic courses, often incorporating the word “studies” (“gender studies”, etc).

Those who thought that the pursuit of knowledge in a university setting would help uplift the rank and file did not anticipate that the opposite might occur, for instance that an influx of intellectually docile, unadventurous and tamely conformist learners, would instead undermine bold, critical thinking in the very institutions that were supposed to nurture it.

The reality is that universities function best as elite institutions for serious and more academically gifted students. Today there are too many passengers simply going through the motions and wasting not only the taxpayer’s money, but their own time.

Angry, frustrated youth with too much time on their hands and no real intellectual curiosity, are easily manipulated by agenda-driven academics who themselves are usually nursing large chips on their shoulders.

In the apartheid era, there were at least pressing issues to take up. Today, what causes are there around which bored, purposeless youths can rally around and vent all their pent-up anger?

Actually, there are many. The corruption, wastage and incompetence on the part of the ruling regime is one. Another, is the racial divisiveness that has placed blacks in one camp and minorities - no longer just whites, but mixed-race and Asian South Africans - in another.

Then there is the question of African immigrants, legal and illegal, and the discrimination, intimidation and occasional deadly violence to which they are routinely subjected. Surely these are the kinds of thing the nation’s intellectuals-in-training should be grappling with? Certainly, their tenured professors should be

doing so.

None of this is happening. The mass rallies against apartheid injustice are a thing of the past, and most students seemed mired in apathy and cynicism. It is within this ideological vacuum that the international campaign against Israel - not just against certain of its policies, but against the very existence of a sovereign Jewish State - is everywhere taking root.

South Africa has seen an alarming escalation in on-campus anti-Israel activities over the past year or so. This is no longer merely manifesting as radical anti-Israel propaganda stunts, often

endorsed by the teaching body, but is moving on to banishing dissenting voices from campus altogether.

Certainly, this was the most disquieting feature of the Wits SRC’s deplorable pro-boycott resolution last week, with the future banning of Zionist activity being explicitly made part of the package. Fortunately, the university responded at the official level by strenuously distancing itself from the resolution.

The Universities of Johannesburg, KwaZulu-Natal and lately Unisa, on the other hand, have gone a long way to endorse the

boycott principle, at least where Israel is concerned.

Taken as a whole, in fact, academia has been disgracefully acquiescent, when not downright complicit, in the bullying, manipulative and intellectually dishonest machinations of the anti-Israel lobby. This has become a world-wide phenomenon, with US, Canadian and British college campuses having long descended to the kind of levels that are only now manifesting at our own institutions.

Jewish parents have traditionally placed great emphasis in providing their children with

a university education. Perhaps the time has come for them to consider alternative programmes for them once they leave the co-cooned environment provided by the Jewish day schools.

Focused, practical courses in business management, computer skills and the like, might nowadays be a better alternative to wasting crucial formative years in pursuit of degrees that not only fail to provide one with marketable skills, but which can no longer even be relied upon to develop objective, critical thinking and that indeed in many cases serve to stifle it.

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Myth that Jews are unemployable in SA because of BBBEE

DR IVOR BLUMENTHAL

There’s no law preventing companies from employing white Jewish people.

This falsehood emanates from human resource practitioners who are consciously deceiving their seniors in creating the myths around affirmative action and BBBEE (Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment), because HR practitioners generally do not understand typical business processes.

Seven categories of measures determine how adequately a company fulfils its BBBEE requirements, employment being two.

The intention of this legislation has always been noble. Nowhere are business owners asked to hand their companies over to black people and simply walk away. Nowhere are they asked to replace all non-black employees with blacks.

The question posed is: “In the sector of this country which is the economy and in the realm of seven areas which apply to that economy, what can you in your company do to create parity between the races, without sacrificing your self-interest, namely ownership and equity?”

The most significant capacity to legitimately employ Jewish people, vests in those companies considered by legislation to be “Generic Enterprises” (turnover in excess of R35 million per annum).

These are the companies gunshy of employing whites and actively retrenching anyone who has been out of nappies for a year, who happens to be white.

CEOs of these companies are so busy kowtowing to politicians and brown-nosing in the interests of their own personal credibility, that as the Jewish community we must recognise that there is no chance of having them act in their own communities’ best interest. Their focus is in keeping their own jobs.

To achieve our objective as a community, we have to focus on the other two types of businesses.

The first is “Exempt SMEs” doing an annual turnover less than R5 million. There is no focus on the colour of employees and hence a great opportunity to bleed Jewish staff into these SMEs legitimately.

They automatically qualify for BBBEE recognition. Unless they as owners are themselves black, there’s little to distinguish between these SMEs in terms of their practices.

The second, larger opportunity, vests with “Qualifying Small Businesses” (turnover between R5 million and R35 million). By applying the law of BBBEE to this kind of company we can best understand the seven categories of measure.

Qualifying small businesses only have to choose the four areas of the seven that they most excel in.

First focus, in measuring how



Dr Blumenthal is a former CEO of the Services SETA and a previous member of the National Skills Authority.

genuine a company is about doing its share for BBBEE, is “Ownership”; 25 per cent will earn the owner of that “Qualifying Small Business”, maximum BBBEE here.

That’s not giving the farm away. To work effectively, 26 per cent should be transacted as a sale.

The second measure, the most contentious and very seldom complied with, is of “Management”, and control where to earn maximum points, 50,1 per cent of directors and executives should be black.

Control will never be sacrificed for BBBEE, hence there’s a massive focus to ensure that there is over-achievement in the other more palatable areas of measure.

Over-achievement earns bonus points and compensates for shortcomings in the measure of control.

The third and most publicised

focus of BBBEE is “Employment Equity” where a company would need to show that 40 per cent of first-line, supervisors and middle managers are black, and 60 per cent of general employees are also black.

What is obvious here is the opportunity to have 60 per cent of management white, and 40 per cent of general staff. Unfortunately, owners, directors and executives wanting to protect their own turf and not relinquish control, are willing to sacrifice whites unnecessarily at management and general employee levels.

The fourth measure is spending two per cent of payroll on “Skills Development”. All companies have to pay one per cent of payroll to SETAs (Sector Education and Training Authorities) and most invest in additional training.

Fifth measure: 0 “Preferential Procurement”. Business people often say their clients ask for BBBEE certificates and, because of the chain of dependency from company to company, earning these certificates comes at the expense of employing whites.

This is rubbish and a sign of the lazy application of all seven measures creatively and strategically.

Preferential Procurement means buying product and services from companies, which have acceptable BBBEE ratings. They can earn “acceptable” BBBEE certificates

without sacrificing productivity or whites.

“Enterprise Development” is the sixth measure. It’s about teaching a man to fish.

It’s the measure most often overlooked, because white business owners generally don’t want to do business with previous employees or “New-Age” beneficiaries as suppliers.

If there was an area for residual racism and preventing the employment of whites in the process, this is it. This is also the area which can become the saviour of this country and account for more job creation than any other.

By empowering previously disadvantaged people to become operators and business owners, the flickering embers of revolution are dampened immediately.

The final area, possibly the most under-valued, is “Socio-Economic Development”. Companies choose to over-achieve on this measure because it’s politically correct, often to the detriment of their own community.

Jewish companies ploughing massive funding into non-Jewish beneficiaries, while Jewish NGOs and needy organisations struggle, is a case in point.

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The day the music arrived

A decade after iTunes demolished the traditional music industry, the arrival of Simfy Africa finally gives South Africans a legal equivalent. And it offers a wealth of Jewish-related music.



**GOLDSTUCK
ON GADGETS**
Arthur Goldstuck

The music industry, for all its culture of revolution, has always resisted change, almost always to its enormous cost. When a programme called Napster arrived at the end of the 1990s to allow online sharing of digital music files between individuals, the industry took to the courts to shut it down. The music industry succeeded, giving it the confidence to resist any attempt to embrace the concept of digital, or find new ways to add value to a disenchanted public.

It insisted on sticking to a business model that was decades old: selling an album of about 10 songs to give fans access to the one song they wanted to hear.

Then came iTunes, an online music service integrated with Apple's iPod, a digital alternative to the Sony Walkman. Apple's charismatic CEO Steve Jobs, was able to convince most major American music labels to allow digital tracks to be sold on iTunes, and also played on computers.

Overnight, the album died.

Individual tracks at a dollar a time made so much more sense to consumers. But it also meant that the music industry imploded - from a \$33 billion business in the 1990s to \$16,2bn in 2011.

In the US in 2011, digital sales overtook physical sales, taking 50,3 per cent of the market. Ironically, along with that landmark, album sales grew for the first time since 2004, as new artists like Adele gave the mass market a more compelling reason to buy a full set of songs.

In all this time, the South African music industry tried to fend off the digital revolution, or at least hide from it. They were helped along by iTunes, which paid little attention to this market. As part of its deal with the music industry devil, Apple still maintained the entertainment industry's fiction of geographically-defined rights to music. So, despite how illogical it is in the boundary-free era of the Internet, a South African may not - officially - buy music from an American or European online store.

But on August 27, SA's digital isolation ended. A German alternative to iTunes called Simfy struck a deal with eXactmobile in SA, to bring its service to this country. It is branded Simfy Africa.

Simfy was originally modelled on the online radio station Spotify, which offers unlimited access to a vast catalogue of songs at no cost. It's all paid for by advertising, which may work in markets with deep Internet penetration, but is a non-starter in South Africa.

The South African adaptation is an all-you-can-eat model, for R60 a month. That, coincidentally, comes in at the same level as the BlackBerry Internet Service's unlimited access option (excluding streaming media like video and music. It is also, according to eXactmobile founder and Simfy Africa CEO Davin Mole, a price point that gave the major music labels in South Africa a sense of comfort.

It's not the first unlimited music offering on South Africa. Nokia pioneered the concept, but only for purchasers

of specific phone models bundled with Nokia Music Unlimited, like the hugely popular Nokia 5310 XpressMusic.

That service turned the Nokia Music Store into the biggest digital music outlet in South Africa, but made little dent in the overall music industry.

Both services offer millions of songs, but Simfy Africa takes the concept a few steps further, opening it to all computer and most smartphone users. Indeed, as Mole puts it, "This is a smartphone play".

Through an app on BlackBerry, iPhone and Android phones, the music can be downloaded or played directly off the data stream. Ironically, Nokia is not part of this mix, as its Symbian operating system is not supported by Simfy. For the rest, as long as the monthly subscription is active, customers can build up unlimited music libraries on their own phones or computers, within the Simfy app.

The music can't be played on other devices without using the app - another element that persuaded major labels to tolerate the service.

The four major music labels represented in South Africa, EMI, Sony, Universal and Warner Music, are all represented. The independent music aggregator The Orchard, which was started 15 years ago to give independent music producers access to mainstream outlets and pioneered legal digital downloads, is part of the line-up.

Two other aggregators, finetunes and Merlin, are also in there; more are expected to join, giving unsigned artists a variety of options to access Simfy Africa customers.

The service boasts 18 million songs. It should come as no surprise that it includes a wealth of Hebrew and Jewish-themed music. For example, it offers dozens of versions of Yerushalayim Shel Zahav, including the original by Naomi Shemer. The classic rendition by Ofra Haza, the late Yemenite Jewish world music star, is absent, although several hundred songs from her catalogue are included. This highlights puzzling gaps, but as more independent labels come on board, such holes should be filled.

Looking for Connie Francis singing My Yiddishe Momme? Eddie Calvert's instrumental version? A klezmer treatment of a Charleston tune? Or, if that's your taste, something by the Meshugge Klezmer Maniacs? Perhaps a Psalm performed by ex-South African chazzan and baritone Colin Shachat?


Then there's the entire catalogue of the Chassidic reggae star from Brooklyn, Matisyahu, Israeli rock from the likes of Beit HaBubot and Knesiyat Hasekhel, and any amount of Israeli folk music and traditional Jewish music. A search on Rosh Hashanah produces material by rabbis, cantors, quartets, choirs and orchestras. The experience becomes entirely a matter of taste, rather than of what is made available. Users can build playlists, make them public, and share their music tastes with other users.

The beauty of the unlimited option is that it opens music fans to the concept of discovering new music. When you don't have to pay \$1 or R10 a time just to find out if you like a track, the exploration of music - rather than listening to what you know - truly arrives in your life.

• Arthur Goldstuck is MD of World Wide Worx and editor-in-chief of Gadget.co.za. Follow him on Twitter on @art2gee

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A CODE OF MODESTY IN DRESS IS NEEDED FOR JEWISH WOMEN

Well done to Limmud for hosting another stimulating weekend for the second year running. “Women singing” was one of the topics that was spoken about, as it was in this paper recently. The discussion extended to include other aspects of “restrictive laws” regarding women’s modesty, most notably, women’s clothing.

I agree that what a woman wears is not an invitation to be raped (G-d forbid). However, I don’t believe that that is the end of the discussion.

When observing the state of Western societies, I find that there is an enormous amount of freedom, to the point that it is taken advantage of without thought to the outcomes of the superficial trends that plague our young people.

Yes, we are a free society and don’t demand that women wear burkas here. But must women go to the other extreme and be scantily clad in the school parking lot or at a supermarket? What message does this send out about who this woman is and who she aspires to be?

Is her message that she is excessively revealing her physical entity because there isn’t much else that she can get attention for, or is confident about?

My heart is saddened for the younger people, who do not have their identities yet formulated with conviction, all the while being subjected to images, in all types of media, of women in provocative dress.

Is it any wonder that teenage pregnancy and Aids are rife? Are we really doing women (especially the younger ones) justice by not teaching them to respect their bodies and to not flaunt them like chocolates at the cashier’s counter?

To neglect to teach young girls and teenagers that their bodies are sacred and should be considered private, not only from those who would want to touch them in an inappropriate way, but also from others being able to see their bodies in a highly revealed way, is negligent and unwise. I do think that a certain code of modesty in dressing, for all women, would uplift the general quality of the atmosphere in our society.

I would like to suggest that each woman design her own dress code for modesty, not necessarily coinciding with halachah, but also to realise that wearing low-cut tops or tight spandex pants is not considered modest by most reasonable people.

Michele Engelberg
Johannesburg

HISTORY HAS TAUGHT US YOU CAN NEVER ESCAPE BEING JEWISH

Heidi-Jane Esakov, in her open letter in the general press to Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, spoke of the SA Jewish community as not being homogeneous and proudly added that he does not speak in her name, nor in the name of thousands of other SA Jews.

While she has chosen not to align herself to mainstream South African Jewry, she is obviously correct that he does not speak in her name. However, in his official capacity, he does speak in the name of the vast majority of SA Jews, albeit that no single community can ever be totally homogeneous.

In a survey conducted in 2005 (the most recent one) by the Kaplan Institute, 66 per cent of the Jewish adults questioned, classified themselves as traditional, while 14 per cent described themselves as strictly orthodox.

It would seem from these figures then that 80 per cent of South African Jewry sees itself as affiliated in some way to the Union of Orthodox Synagogues.

But religious affiliations aside, the Chief Rabbi’s stance on Israel and Zionism is representative of the overwhelming majority of SA Jews.

A Google search will demonstrate that in 2002 a “Not in my Name” petition managed to acquire 287 signatures. A further search for anti-Israel signatories gives the odd name, perhaps 50 or so more.

A very recent Open Shuhada Street petition managed 6 459 signatures from the entire SA population. As I could not see the list of signatures, I do not know how many were Jewish – I would assume, though, that the vast majority of signatories were not.

But let’s be generous and say that the number of “Not in my Name” Jews has quadrupled or even increased fivefold in the last 10 years, that would bring us to the enormous figure of 1 200 – 1 500 souls.

The abovementioned Kaplan Institute survey found in 2005 that 53 per cent of the respondents felt strongly about Israel, 33 per cent moderately, 13 per cent had no special feelings and one per cent felt negatively. So Ms Esakov, you must see that you belong to that huge group of one per cent.

Ms Esakov, the SA Jewish community is as proudly Jewish and Zionist as it ever was. I would go so far as to say that our love for Israel is probably the glue that holds most of us together.

You, together with your cohorts, belong to the few, who unfortunately rear their ugly heads in each generation - the few who are both unhappy and uncomfortable in their Jewishness.

A pity, because the one thing history has taught us is that, try as you might, you can never escape “being Jewish”.

Monessa Shapiro
Glenhazel, Johannesburg

RETRENCHMENT OF THE ELDERLY LEAVES A BITTER TASTE

I want to thank Dr Ivor Blumenthal for his courageous stand in last week’s Jewish Report (on the employment of over-55s).

I am an elderly lady, and many of my life-long friends and other contemporaries have had their lives destroyed by being retrenched by the Jewish Helping Hand.

My disgust at the way the forced retrenchments were carried out, cannot be stressed enough. Certain of my friends have either turned ill or have become depressed after this abomination carried out by the so-called “new management”.

There can be no justification for this process, as certain people were exempt from the retrenchments (even though they were themselves over 65) and the people who were retrenched were replaced by younger people and even non-Jews.

Dr Blumenthal articulated the plethora of reasons to keep on elderly people.

Surely there was a more humane and halachically correct way of handling this situation?

There should be an independent investigation into the reason and the whole process. Donors deserve to know the truth. And those charged with governance must answer some tough questions.

It’s important to stress that this company is a NGO, funded by the community for the community. Surely the elderly deserve better than this?

Suzanne Pleskin
Killarney, Johannesburg

BEWARE OF THE CURSE OF ISAIAH ON THE JEWISH COMMUNITY

Dr Ivor Blumenthal should be commended and applauded for his brave article “Strong message of support for over-55s in the workplace”.

Unfortunately, championing the cause of the elderly of our community has either not happened or been muted by certain powerful members of our community. Everyone knows of someone or heard of a person being jettisoned from Johannesburg’s largest NGO/welfare organisation.

Kudos to Dr Blumenthal for broaching the subject which unfortunately has become taboo. The simple truth is that elderly Jewish people had dedicated their lives to jobs that were not always financially rewarding. Yet, they at least afforded these people a semblance of dignity and self worth.

And regretfully, certain forced retrenchments were carried out under the guise of them “resigning of their own free will”.

The “young” leadership and management will justify the job cuts as necessary, due to financial considerations. However, the vacant positions are almost always advertised and then filled by younger persons (at similar if not higher salary levels).

The further heartbreak is that this forced removal of skilled, dedicated and valuable people who, because of their age, have made massive contributions to the organisation, and who would no doubt have continued to do so in the future, will now be lost tragically.

There is an often repeated perception that the Johannesburg Jewish community is one of the most caring and benevolent in the world. I have no doubt that the broader South African Jewish community will be outraged at the retrenchments, dismissals, retirements - call it whatever the expensive consultants hired by the NGO euphemistically suggested this process be called.

The rest of the world can exist without their elders. But the Jewish people are not a Jewish people without their elders. Therefore the curse of curses that Isaiah gave to the Jewish people before the destruction of the Temple was that they will reach the stage that the young people will be disrespectful to their elders.

The management must be held accountable for its callous behaviour towards fellow-Jews. Or lest we see the curse of Isaiah visited upon us.

David Cohen
Sydenham, Johannesburg

JEWISH NESHAMA PREVENTED ISRAEL TURNING COMMUNIST

Gary Selikow writes in the Jewish Report of August 10, about the Soviet Union voting at the UN for the establishment of Israel, in 1948.

Most Israelis in 1948 voted Labour/Socialist (Mapai and Mapan) but there was a Communist presence in the Knesset. Although the Communist Russians expected Israel to follow the Communist creed they did not. Was this due to the fact that they could visualise that Marxism was an inoperable utopian dream, or was it due to the fact that to be a good Communist one needed to be anti-religious?

Although the Israelis of 1948 were a-religious, they had in the majority a Jewish neshama (soul) and therefore the neshama prevented them becoming Communists. So, we can thank G-d (literally) that Israel did not go the Communist route and waste 70 years and cause much pain to its citizens.

Communism skewed the little wealth it did create in favour of card carrying members. However, capitalism is going the full circle with near monopolistic company directors (such as bankers) awarding themselves obscene salaries and installing bonus structures which lead to them gambling with the companies’ assets/equity.

Footnote: Examples of anti religious Communists are Karl Marx and Ronnie Kasrils. Some people claim that religion is responsible for strife, but Hitler’s main gripe was biological, in other words racial, not religious, when people are inclined to hate others, they will find a reason, whether religious, racial, colour, financial success, shape or size of the nose.

John Brenner
Cyrildene, Johannesburg

IS CRAVEN TO BE TAKEN TO HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION?

Are the combined South African Jewish organisations going to take (Cosatu spokesman) Patrick Craven to the Human Rights Commission for the anti-Semitic remarks he made recently that were reported in a previous edition of the SA Jewish Report? If not, why not?

Cosatu has stated publicly that it stands by the statement Craven put out which was done in his capacity as spokesman of Cosatu.

Sylvia Gon
Victory Park, Johannesburg

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If you did something wrong, can it be deleted?

YOCHAVED GOYKADOSH

It was a regular Friday afternoon. You know, all the busy preparations, running around, getting ready to greet the Shabbat Queen. Busy, busy, busy. I don't know what possessed me. I knew I shouldn't have done it.

Since when is a busy Friday afternoon the time to upload new music to your iPod? I figured I'd do it quickly so I wouldn't have to deal with it later and then I'd have a ready well-equipped iPod. So I attached my little blue 4 GB iPod nano to my laptop. What could go wrong? Nothing, right? Wrong.

My entire song list, lectures, pictures and everything else that had accumulated over the past two years on my iPod was gone - disappeared into cyberspace.

For those of us less tech-savvy, let me mention a cute little fact. If an iPod is not attached to its "mother computer" which contains the iPod's entire song list, it does not automatically upload songs. The computer prompts you to transfer it all manually.

Here's a life lesson: It's always a good idea to read the directions. I apparently had missed something in the prompt, so it automatically erased everything on the iPod, replacing it with the new stuff I was trying to add.

Mother Computer had crashed and was suffering from a severe case of information amnesia. So with one push of a button, it changed everything. My iPod was now dead. I was not feeling very optimistic.

It took me a while to get over this. My dear sister sent me a condolence card gently reminding me that everything is ultimately "meant to be". She encouraged me to enjoy the present moment because "that too will not come back". I realised that she was right. Years ago, they didn't even imagine an mp3. Got to count my blessings and move on.

Since I didn't have any music to listen to, I had a lot of time to reflect in my iPod catastrophe. And I arrived at such an inspiring insight that I can honestly say the whole episode was 100 per cent worth it. I wouldn't mind losing

hundreds of iPods if it meant truly internalising this clear and meaningful insight of what it means to start anew, to have a clean slate.

First, the background: Judaism has a concept called Teshuva. When we make a mistake, we have two choices: We can either justify it – "I was tired", "He had it coming to him", "It's my parents' fault", etc. Or we can regret it - truly regret it, to the point where I genuinely wish I had never done it.

Even more, to transform my thinking to the point where if I'm ever in such a situation again, I will make the right choice. That is Teshuva - a "return" to what our soul really wants to do.

Now here's the amazing thing: If I achieve this turnaround, the historical record - the video of my life - gets re-edited, totally deleting the mistake. It's as if it never happened.

So, I as sat there staring at my blank iPod, I wondered: How does Teshuva really work? If you did something wrong, how can it be truly deleted?

And then I realised: When we push the button of sincere Teshuva, when we transfer our true feelings of regret, it

changes everything. It utterly deletes the old files.

Teshuva not only erases the mistakes, it actually turns them into something positive.

Everything in the physical realm is a reflection of the spiritual realm. If history can be permanently, irretrievably deleted forevermore from an mp3, then through the power of Teshuva, the A-mighty can surely delete our misdeeds from the spiritual software to the point where scrolling through the playlist entitled "Mistakes" is totally blank.

But it goes beyond this. Teshuva not only erases the mistakes, it actually turns them into positive acts (mitzvot). When our mistake becomes the inspiration - the catalyst - for self-reflection and positive growth, that original mistake now occupies a positive place in our life. In that way, the "mistake" becomes a "mitzvah".

Imagine your iPod going from 30 songs to 400 or more. Imagine all the songs, audio books and awesome photos you ever dreamed of, all arranged in amazing playlists. Teshuva really works. It can delete, replace and cleanse all our mistakes, sending them into the dust bin of Spiritual Cyberspace.

• *Published with kind permission of Aish Hatorah*

LOOKING FOR

WHAT'S HAPPENED TO ROBERT HORWITZ AND MICHAEL COHEN?

Michael Cohen and Robert Horwitz/ Horowitz went to Gesher Haziv in Israel as volunteers in 1967 and became friendly with Sonny Merovitz from Montreal.

Sonny is having major problems with his eyes, and for his 70th birthday, his brother Larry is trying to reconnect him with these two friends.

Michael was a park ranger at the Kruger National Park and Robert an attorney.

Can anyone please help Larry locate the men or supply information on them? Larry may be contacted at mavens@eol.ca

CAN ANYONE HELP LOCATE BERGHAUS/BERGAUS SONS?

In the Berghaus/Bergaus family, the father, Hillel, mother, Eudice/ Eugene, and baby sister were killed in Leckava or Latskeva Lithuania during the Holocaust. Two young sons, however, escaped by being sent to their mother's relatives in South Africa prior to the war.

Their first cousin, Marcia (their uncle Aaron (Aura's daughter) is trying to find them. If anyone can help, please contact Larry Merowitz at mavens@eol.ca



We wish you mazel, good health and happiness for the year ahead.

L'Shana Tova.

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moving your way

US-based Schusterman Foundation makes micro grants available in SA

DAN BROTMAN
CAPE TOWN

The Cape Board has partnered with one of the world’s largest Jewish philanthropic networks, the US-based Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, to launch the “Make It Happen Initiative”.

On August 10, 25 of Cape Town’s top young Jewish change-makers and entrepreneurs, met

in Stellenbosch to discuss how to innovate the Cape Town Jewish community. While all of the participants are very successful in their respective fields, many are disconnected from the “official” Jewish community, as they feel that it does not meet their needs.

Philanthropist Lynn Schusterman believes in the power of young adults to create change, and through her generosity, enables them to create the type of

Jewish experiences they would like to see in their community. Whenever Lynn meets with young adults, she reminds them: “You make it happen and I make it possible.”

Already on his third visit to South Africa in the past year, Director of Network Initiatives Seth Cohen, introduced the concept of “micro grants for macro change”, which makes every Schusterman community member in South



Former Cape Town Tourism MD Sheryl Ozinsky, IT entrepreneur Eran Eyal and business consultant Daniela Peiser engaged in text study on one’s commitment to Jewish peoplehood.

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Africa eligible for a “Make It Happen” micro grant of up to \$US500 (R4 000).

This funding enables each individual to create exciting Jewish experiences and/or develop his/her skillset. The only conditions attached to the grant are that the experience must be inclusive, cannot charge an entrance fee nor fundraise, and must be used by March 2013. Participants also have the option of pooling their money together with other Schusterman community members towards a single project.

Jonathan Marks, former director of the Raymond Ackerman Foundation Academy for Entrepreneurial Development at the University of Cape Town, facilitated a master class for the group entitled Entrepreneurial Thinking: Ways of Seeing and Ways of Being.

Sheryl Ozinsky, former MD of Cape Town Tourism, facilitated the second master class called Putting the ‘J’ back in the OY of being Jewish. This was followed by a text study and lively discussion facilitated by Cape Board Executive Director David Jacobson on “What is our commitment to Jewish community and Jewish peoplehood?”

A similar event was held a few days later for young Jewish Johannesburg innovators at the Maboneng Precinct. Maboneng is a ground-breaking urban mixed-use community, and is the brainchild of 29-year-old entrepreneur Jonathan Liebmann.

In 2008, Liebmann purchased the old DF Corlett construction offices and warehouses, transforming them into Arts on Main – the cultural hub known for its mix of galleries, artist studios, creative venues, offices and retail spaces.

After a tour of Maboneng, the Johannesburg group had an opportunity to interact with Liebmann, as well as hear social entrepreneur Ronen Aires speak about the importance of using one’s talents, networks and platforms to maximise one’s impact on the world and to create a career significance. The evening concluded with Cohen’s launch of “Make It Happen”.

South Africa is the first Jewish community outside of the United States to benefit from the “Make It Happen” micro grants. Should the model work here, it will be rolled out to other Jewish communities throughout the Diaspora.

The Cape Board will be featuring the various local Make It Happen initiatives on its website which is www.capebod.org.za/events/make-it-happen. To learn more about the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation, visit www.schusterman.org.

• For more questions on Make It Happen South Africa, contact Dan Brotman at DanB@ctjc.co.za

‘Luck Jew’ caricatures hark back to dark days in Poland

DOMINIC MAHLANGU was sent on the March of the Living programme by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies and the Christa Maria Will Trust. He is deputy editor of the Times. He writes in his personal capacity. TRACEY FARBER was sent to Poland by the March of the Living to run debriefing groups for participants. She is a psychologist that specialises in trauma.



Tracey Farber, Tali Nates, Dominic Mahlangu and Rebbetzen Ann Harris, during a March of the Living tour of Poland

Just an hour after landing at Krakow Airport in Poland, I pounded the streets of the town in the company of my friend Tracey Farber. We were to participate in the March of The Living Tour in Poland.

As we moved from one block to the other to the direction of the central square, one could not stop and wonder at the magnificent architecture and the busy streets full of life.

My excitement at being at the centre of history, brought back memories of my history teacher at a Christian boarding school in KwaZulu-Natal.

It was at this school that my German nun teacher whose love for life and truth formed the basis of her teachings, I became aware of the killing of Jews in their millions. It was at this school that Poland became a symbol of what this world should avoid at all costs.

I recorded each step I made and took time to look and ponder what it must have been like for Jews to be forced to move to the special ghettos meant for their kind.

The Poland that I experienced that Monday afternoon (in April) was of course far different from the 1939 to 1945 chaos. “This town is so beautiful,” I remember telling Tracey, but not knowing that in the next kiosk we were about to entre, my spirits would be dashed.

As we entered the kiosk we saw a display of “Jewish” caricatures. They were small unattractive ornaments of Chassidic Jews; each character was holding a gold coin.

In Poland, I still can’t believe that everywhere we went there were a number of kiosks displaying and selling the caricatures of a Hassidic Jew holding a coin. As I saw this I looked at Tracy and wondered silently: Are Jews who visit this town and those who are resident here, okay with this?

I believe that a symbol that represents prejudice can never be explained to suit our comforts. The “Luck Jew” caricatures displayed across Krakow, to me was a sign of a country not willing to adopt symbols that unite and heal the wounds of the past. Rather, these symbols keep the wounds of the past alive.

I believe that all forms of hatred, prejudice, anti-Semitism and downright racism should be fought at all costs. The world that we live in today and the past we have inherited from our grandparents who experienced the horrors of the Second World War and the injustice of apartheid in South Africa and other man-made tragedies across the world, are a reminder of what could happened if we lower our guard.

From what I have read and what my history teachers both at high school and at university always emphasized, was that symbols in all forms play a critical role in shaping perspectives. In the context of Poland, the Jew

caricatures represented the beliefs endorsed by many in Europe during the hardships after the First World War that their economic woes were as a result of the capitalist Jew, a Jew whose intention was to make more money at the expense of ordinary folks.

The symbol that I saw at the market made me feel uncomfortable. To me it was a continuation of the prejudice against Jews. While in South Africa we still have a long way to go to eradicate all forms of racism, we continue to raise our voices every time symbols of hate and racism emerge.

The recent art work by Brett Murray (The Spear) which depicted President Jacob Zuma in an unflattering manner, is a case in point. Many South Africans, both black and white, disapproved of the art work and said it was inappropriate, especially in a country coming from the dark days of segregation. South Africans remain vigilant also in protecting Murray’s right to freedom of expression.

While in Poland the Hassidic caricatures might be a symbol of good luck, I am afraid that it might be a symbol that continues to reinforce the hard attitudes that still exist in some parts of that country.

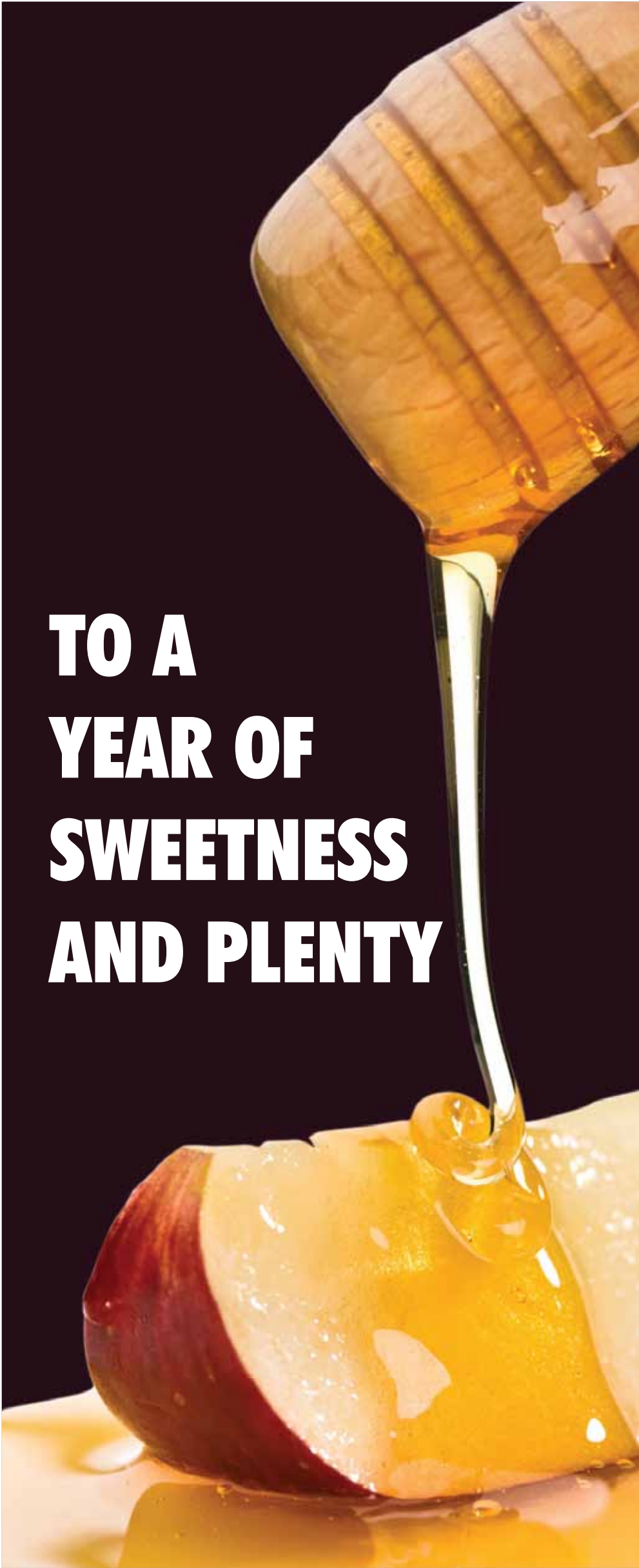
Poland was the centre of an “extermination plan” by the Nazi regime against Jews and other nations they regarded inferior. It was in Poland that thousands of young and old people were marched to their harrowing deaths in the factory-like camps in Auschwitz, Treblinka and Majdanek.

The Poland that I saw has made giant leaps and has found its feet again. It can’t afford to drop its guard in fighting prejudice, hatred and racism, especially when it knows what it led to in the past.

As we moved out of the kiosk, I shared my thoughts with Tracey and told her that while I might not claim to be a Jew or a fundi of what it’s like to be a Jew, I, however, find it difficult to keep quiet when I see a symbol that represents the opposite to what my parents and teachers taught me.

The manufacturing of these “Luck Jews” clutching gold-painted coins, can’t be dismissed as just another caricature. Today’s Europe is again boiling with incidents of hate crimes directed at outsiders (foreigners).

As we continued with our journey across Poland, I could not but help but marvel at the attitude the nation has. The streets are alive with a positive attitude, especially among the young. I, as a black person from SA, felt at ease walking the streets, negotiating for a better deal at the local market. If only the negative symbols could be done away with and the new Poland displayed in all corners of this country that once endured the hatred of a madman...



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Easy to see why ‘Mies Julie’ took Edinburgh by storm

Show: Mies Julie; Arena, State Theatre, (012) 329-4000
Until: October 7

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

Local audiences should be clamouring to see the play, celebrated as the pick of 2012’s Edinburgh Festival. Yael Farber’s “Mies Julie” keeps you on the edge of your seat, tying political horror, betrayal, love and hate in a bloody knot.

Based on August Strindberg’s almost eponymous “Miss Julie” (1888), a shocker in its day extrapolating on between-classes love, “Mies Julie”, a product of its time, is intensely explicit in representing sex, violence and racial prejudice. It has an age restriction of 18 and true to Farber’s reputation, doesn’t pull punches.

It tells of Julie (Hilda Cronjé) the only child of a farmer. Brought up by the maid, Christine (Thoko Ntshinga) in the wake of her mother’s suicide, Julie’s sense of self is complicated by her inability to know if she loves or hates those who have raised her.

One of these people is John (Bongile Mantsai), Christine’s

son, a little older than Julie. The bond between them is fraught in a gelatinous mess of love, hate, guilt and desire.

The plot is thickened by the fact that the kitchen is built on the burial site of John’s forebears. A tree stump protrudes from the red-polished floor, crumpling the tiles around it. As a device on which Christine’s ghostly Gogo (Tandiwe Nofirst Lungisa) sits, the stump is ambiguously spectral.

The story’s catalyst is Christine, a woman susceptible to ancestral intervention, she has for generations, wiped up white man’s mess; observed indiscretions silently; taken charge of situations with the same pragmatic hand that stirs pap for her son.

While trajectories run deep and sodden backwards and forwards, pointing like fingers through ugly histories, the main narrative is between John and Julie; it’s a sticky, dirty situation about bravado and cruelty as much as it is about lust.

It’s about dreams smashed into stains and a kitchen full of blood. It’s about forcing a bitch to abort as it is about destroying a caged bird. Allegories abound with

abandon.

You weep when confronted with the humiliating dead-ends that are John’s lot, but your sympathy is at arm’s length with Julie’s character. Cronjé is so vulnerably young, she’s difficult to look at; the invective of agony she is scripted to vent at her servants feels so blunt and inborn that she becomes terrifying as a will-less victim.

Canada-based, Wits-trained Farber, poses hard questions with her words, impeccable direction and ancestral music by Lungisa.

Matthew Pencer’s soundtrack lends the work the exact tone of impending thunder necessary: never obvious, but present enough to energise your pulse. Mies Julie is an important indictment of our domestic and land-based politics.

• Readers are advised: the Market Theatre production of “Miss Julie” from October 22, is a one-hander performed by Sweden’s Anna Petersson; it is Strindberg’s original script and not Farber’s. The Market Theatre anticipates hosting Farber’s Mies Julie in January, 2013.



Julie (Hilda Cronjé) seeks comfort from her maid Christine (Thoko Ntshinga); John (Bongile Mantsai) polishes Julie’s father’s boots.

Pretoria State Theatre: a most user-unfriendly venue

ROBYN SASSEN

The State Theatre in Pretoria is an immensely challenging venue to visit; readers need to be aware of management’s tendency to lock lifts before a production is over, forcing patrons to find staircases to get to the parking in order to leave the building.

One is obliged to pay for the parking before entering the theatre, and yet, there are no facilities close to the machine where one can obtain change: the going rate for theatre parking is R13. Two days after the opening of internationally acclaimed production, Mies Julie, the venue’s foyer, marketed as being able to supply light meals and refreshments, was unable to offer a cup of tea to would-be patrons, their stock was limited to a couple of bars of chocolate, and the toilet facilities

were largely not functional.

The venue in which the production was performed, the Arena, necessitates walking the full length of the theatre, and then up a narrow, poorly lit flight of stairs to reach the box office where one accesses one’s tickets.

The theatre itself is four flights above the box office, with just one lift feeding it. There are no facilities to assist patrons who might have walking difficulties. And for patrons driving from Johannesburg, the street names of several main streets feeding the city are in the process of being changed. This is not made clear on the theatre’s website.

Please be aware that Potgieter Street is now Kgosi Mampuru Street; and Schoeman Street is Frances Baard Street.

Arts in Brief

ROGER BALLEEN IN ERDMANN CONTEMPORARY
From September 18, Erdmann Contemporary and the Photographers Gallery.za in Cape Town present by acclaimed photographer Roger Ballen: “Roger Ballen/Die Antwoord”, featuring photographs from Die Antwoord’s “I fink u freeky” music video directed by Ballen and Ninja. Also included are photographs from Ballen’s Shadow Chamber and his Outland series which inspired the band’s evolution. In an email to Ballen, Die Antwoord’s Yo-landi Vi\$Ser writes: “When we first discovered your work our minds got totally blown and we have never been the same since. Immediately we began working on a new project: Die Antwoord.” The exhibition closes on October 27, (021)422-2762.

JERSEY BOYS PREMIERS IN SA AT MONTECASINO IN APRIL 2013
The smash hit international musical Jersey Boys, recipient of 54 major awards, premiers locally next year. It tells the true story of how four poverty-line kids became one of pop music’s greatest successes, The Four Seasons. Produced by Hazel Feldman, with musical direction by Bryan Schimmel, it features a 19-strong cast, with Grant Almirall, Daniel Buys, Kenneth Meyer, Emanuel Castis, Jaco van Rensburg, Carmen Pretorius, Taryn-Lee Hudson and Kirsten Murphy in the leads, with Bjorn Blignault, Matt Counihan, Ryan Flynn and Lara Adine Lipschitz, amongst others. Visit www.jerseyboyssa.co.za

DANIEL FRIEDMAN PRESENTS WHITE WHINE
Later this month, in a follow-up to his debut one man show, Deeply Fried, Deep Fried Man (aka Daniel Friedman) presents White Whine, a satirical take on what it is like to be a white person in South Africa. It’s a show that has earned him applause, accolades and even BCCSA complaints. This is apt, because complaining is one thing that white South Africans excel at. White Whine, debuting at the Old Mutual Theatre on the Square in Sandton, between September 19-29, blends music, satire and complaining. Bookings can be made through the theatre: (011)883-8606 or Strictly tickets: 082 553 5903/1 or www.strictlytickets.com

MASHATILE GUEST OF HONOUR IN EDINBURGH
The Minister of Arts and Culture, Paul Mashatile, was the guest of honour at a function at the Assembly George Square in Edinburgh during the month of August, organised by the Assembly Theatre, British Council, Brand South and Festivals Edinburgh to celebrate the Edinburgh Festival’s 2012 SA Season. Among the eight productions in the SA Season Mies Julie (reviewing on these pages) directed by Yael Farber, won a coveted Bank of Scotland Herald Angel fringe award. Malcolm Purkey (Market Theatre), Aubrey Sekhabi (The State Theatre) and Lara Foot (Baxter Theatre) were among the theatre luminaries present.



Norman Goodfellows

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Arts in Brief

SHAKENOVSKY HOSTS HER FIRST SOLO EXHIBITION AT VELO

Twenty-five-year old Leanne Shakenovsky is a painting specialist working at Strauss and Co fine art auctioneers and consultants. Also a fine arts graduate from Wits, she is currently hosting her first solo exhibition, entitled “Unification and Rebellion” at Velo in Braamfontein until the end of September.

“My work includes many mediums: painting, sculpture and ink drawing and incorporates local commodities such as the Oros man. Tiger Brands has now come on board and is assisting with funding of sculptures and other integral parts of the show,” she says. E-mail Leanne on leeshaka@hotmail.com for further details.

TRADITIONAL AND MODERN ART IN AFRICA CELEBRATED AT WITS

On Heritage Day, September 24, Wits University celebrates traditional and modern art in Africa. All museums on both east and west campuses will be open all day. Events include a walkabout with curator Natalie Knight of “A Just Society”, hosted by the Origins Centre, featuring the work of Madeleine Georgette, at lunchtime; and an unveiling of the new Herman Wald sculpture, installed on campus, in the afternoon. A high tea will be catered by Jenny Diner. Call Natalie for further details on 082-926-0009.

FRIEDMAN ANNOUNCES ‘POST-APARTHEID DANCE PUBLICATION’

Cape Town-based dance scholar Sharon Friedman announces the publication of Post-Apartheid Dance: Many Bodies, Many Voices, Many Stories. Published by Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK, it is the first of its kind in SA; as yet, she says in a media statement, there has been no collection of writings in book form that attempts to provide a scholarly, cohesive account of the range of voices in dance in post-apartheid SA. Featuring eight local writers, the book begins with an historical context for theatre dance in SA. Contentious issues are juxtaposed in examining the complexity of dancing on the ashes of apartheid.

NEW OPPORTUNITY FOR YOUNG LENS MEN

The Market Photo Workshop announces a new opportunity for young photographers: the Gisèle Wulfsohn Mentorship in Photography. The mentorship, initiated by family and friends of the late Gisèle Wulfsohn, and Friends of the Market Photo Workshop to honour Wulfsohn’s memory and her work, will run over a year. It is supported by the Centre for the Study of AIDS at Pretoria University. Wulfsohn dedicated her life’s work to awareness, openness and respect; she worked on issues of democracy, HIV/AIDS education and positive identities, gender issues and women’s rights, and was committed to education and change. Contact Bekie: (011) 834-1444 or bekien@marketphotoworkshop.co.za

JEMMA KAHN, TRULY A WOMAN FOR ALL SEASONS

Theatre practitioner and artist Jemma Kahn (pictured), who was the costume designer for the production of Ariel Dorfman’s Delirium, on at the Market Theatre, is a woman of many skills. She is currently on her way home from Amsterdam, where her fantastic little work, the Epicene Butcher and Other Stories for Consenting Adults, premised on the Japanese medium of Kamishibai, was selected from the Grahamstown National Festival’s pickings to travel to the Amsterdam Fringe festival, one of just three South Africans. Armed with a best of the Fringe award, she returns, possibly for a Cape Town season of the Epicene Butcher.



DAN PATLANSKY HAS A HEAVY PERFORMING SCHEDULE

Blues master, Dan Patlansky concludes his national tour, mooted “Stripped”. He will perform at the following venues for the week ahead: On September 20, at Potter’s Place, Jeffrey’s Bay, call (042) 293-2500; September 22, at the Music Kitchen, Port Elizabeth, call 082-567-7404; on September 23, at the Jam Shack Theatre, East London, call (043)740-2179; on September 24, at the Barnyard Theatre at Gateway, Umhlanga Ridge, call (031) 566-3045 and on September 29, at the Pumpkin Theatre, Ballito, call 082-652-9508.

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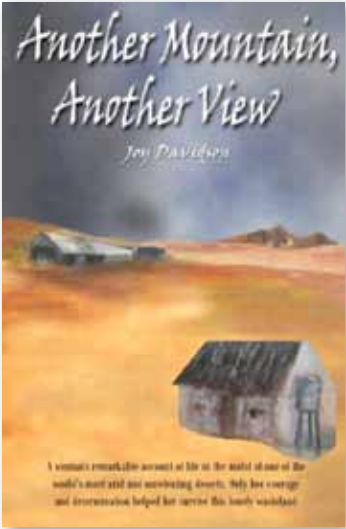
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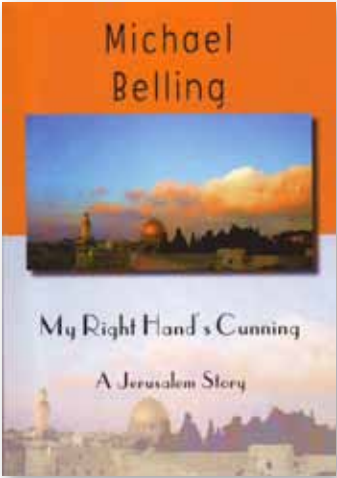
Discovering and defying geographical, human boundaries

REVIEWED BY GWEN PODBREY



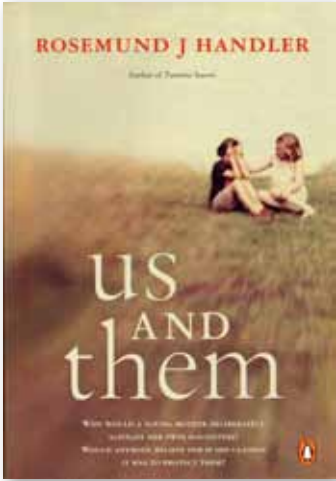
Another Mountain, Another View by Joy Davidson (Reach Publishers, R185)

When Jenna joins her mining engineer husband in Namibia, where he is opening a tin mine, she is unprepared for the intense physical and psychological hardships of life in one of the most arid regions in Africa. While trying to care for her nine-month-old baby, she must cope with searing loneliness, silence and extremely limited water. Yet, slowly, she discovers inner resilience which, in turn, unlocks imaginative reservoirs she never realised were available to her. When the family eventually relocate to the (then) Eastern Transvaal, the geographical changes may be enormous - but Jenna continues to evolve into a strong, self-assured and remarkable woman. A poignant and powerful work.



My Right Hand's Cunning: A Jerusalem Story by Michael Belling (Tange, R175)

A skilfully crafted novel combining the parallel stories of Holocaust survivor Meir Rosen and the city in which he seeks to reclaim his life during the early years of Israel's statehood. As the reclusive, emotionally damaged Rosen falls in love with a woman and is slowly drawn out of his shell, Jerusalem, too, must adapt to incursions which include hordes of refugees from Arab countries, hostile neighbours and other upheavals. A wonderfully realised, perceptive and highly erudite study of a man and a city struggling to redefine their identities, come to terms with a traumatic past and venture into an uncertain future. Very highly recommended.



Us and Them by Rosemund J Handler (Penguin, R175)

Dealing with her own adolescent turbulence, the loaded expectations and insecurities of Holocaust survivor parents and the rigours of an intensely Orthodox lifestyle, Jen's teenage years in Cape Town are anything but easy - and eventually lead her to rebel. However, breaking away is never truly possible: the fears and frailties among which she was raised (which manifest in the form of a dybbuk, the demonic creature in Judaic folklore which seeks to possess human beings and divert them into evil) cannot be exorcised. Indeed, they not only remain inside her, but re-manifest in her own daughters. A disturbing, but beautiful exploration of generational ties and the darker things which form part of their inheritance.



Tigers in Red Weather by Lisa Klaussmann (Picador, R200)

At the end of the Second World War, marine Hughes Derringer comes home to his beautiful young wife Nick. The couple move to Martha's Vineyard, where Nick expects a life of glamour, excitement and all the blithe non-conformity she and Hughes once promised each other they would have. The reality, however, is starkly different: slowly, but inexorably, the Derringers watch themselves (and their children) turning into middle-class, frightened, conservative New England suburban citizens - and when they become involved in a murder investigation, their few remaining ideals are finally shattered. A piercing exposé of the American Dream at both its headiest and most hollow, and the terrible price of awakening from it.



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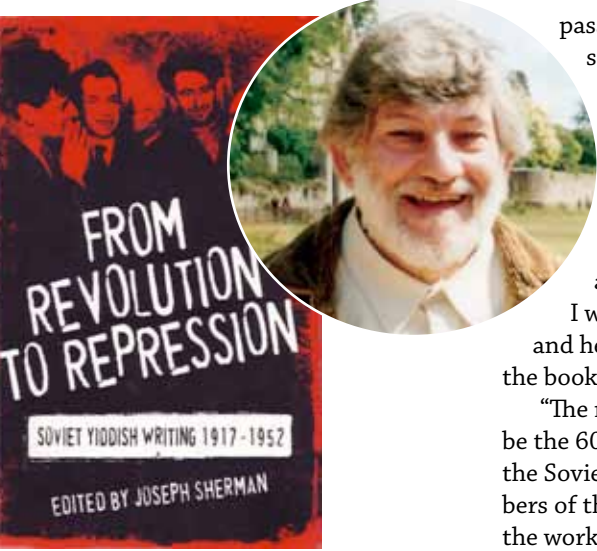


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Size of this book belies its gigantic ambit and depth



ROBYN SASSEN

On August 12, 1952, arguably the most blatant act of betrayal in modern Jewish post-Holocaust history took place: Joseph Stalin’s wholesale cold-blooded murder of Russia’s Jewish intelligentsia.

These men and women - numbering close to 70 - poets, writers and translators; scientists and researchers, the cream of their fields who had vowed support for the Soviet ideology, mooting themselves the Jewish Anti-Fascist Committee with Stalin’s official support - were all shot dead in a basement after a mock trial, based on trumped-up spying charges.

This year, on August 12, an event in London commemorated the 60th yartzeit of this murder. It featured a talk by Gennady Estraiikh, internationally well-respected Yiddishist and professor at New York University; and the launch of “From Revolution to Repression: Soviet Yiddish Writing 1917 – 1952”, edited by the late Joseph Sherman (pictured, inset). This book is of particular interest to South Africans.

Sherman, a Yiddishist of prominence, was born in SA in 1944. He enjoyed an immensely rich life as an English school teacher, and then as a university professor.

He had a deep passion for Yiddish literature and historiography and gave back to his students, infusing them with the love he had for his field, and the levity and wisdom with which he considered the world.

In 2001, Sherman was invited to be the Woolf Carob Fellow in Yiddish Studies at Oxford University. This “heavenly job” - in his own words - enabled him to flourish more; he translated and published important literary works forever “enriching the corpus of high-quality English translation” in Yiddish, according to Estraiikh.

Publisher of Five Leaves, Ross Bradshaw, begins the publication movingly accounting its trajectory. Sherman very suddenly

passed away in early 2009. This manuscript had been submitted. “It was my intention to continue with [this] publication [after Joseph’s death], but I rather lost heart to do so without him.

“Although we had talked through the structure at length, and agreed on much of the content, I was conscious this was his project, and he was no longer there to shepherd the book to publication.

“The realisation that August 2012 would be the 60th anniversary of the executions of the Soviet Yiddish writers and other members of the JAFK, prompted me to return to the work.”

And what a fine work it is! A book relatively ordinary in size, it feels gigantic in ambit and depth. It contains a detailed account by Sherman of the history of the JAFK, as well as such splendidly translated poetry and prose by some of these men; you must read it slowly to savour it.

This treasure of utterly beautiful gritty writing, makes one realise the enormity of their loss to world literature.

The words of Izi Kharik, Peretz Markish, Der Nister, Leyb Kvitko and David Bergelson, shimmer with resemblance to the writing of more acknowledged literary giants like Franz Kafka, Charles Dickens, certainly

Mark Twain, in their delicious viciousness, and open criticism of the community of which they were a part and loved so deeply.

The pieces vie between poetic and allegorical, almost apocalyptic representations of the world, to harsh, coarse yet immensely funny accounts of the horror of

conflation of post-Holocaust Russian and Jewish values.

“From Revolution to Repression” is a deeply important and immensely readable addition to the litany of English translated Yiddish. It is available in South Africa through www.loot.co.za.




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Rosh Hashanah

The Speaker and Members of the Western Cape Provincial Parliament wish the Jewish community of the Western Cape a blessed Rosh Hashanah. K’tiva chatima tovah.

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Howard and Heidi Feldman and family wish the Jewish Report and all its readers a

גמל תתימה טזבה

May we all be blessed with a healthy, happy, peaceful and successful year



17 October 2011



Gilad Shalit was taken captive at age 19 on June 25, 2006, and almost immediately his family launched an incessant public campaign to free him. The crusade included vigils, marches, meetings, statements by world leaders, celebrity endorsements, bumper stickers, congressional resolutions, songs and a protest encampment opposite the prime minister's official residence in Jerusalem.

2 March 2012



The 23rd Miracle Drive, hosted at the Sandton Convention Centre, was a bid to support not only Jewry, but the broader community too, made possible in part by prominent property tycoon Natie Kirsh. Emceed by comedian Nik Rabinowitz and featuring acclaimed Chabad tenor Dudu Fisher, accompanied by Shai Bachar on piano, the event, masterminded by director of Chabad, Rabbi David Masinter, hosted 1 950 guests; it's arguably South Africa's biggest fundraiser.

6 April 2012



Jonathan Klein, CEO and founder of Getty Images, and former Davidian who matriculated in 1977, spoke to a capacity audience at King David Linksfield, about photographs that changed the world. Klein, who currently lives in New York, founded Getty Images in 1995 in partnership with Mark Getty. Today it yields some \$2,8 billion annually, and employs over 140 000 photographers on a freelance basis internationally. It was the first company in the world to licence images on-line.

A glimpse at the

15 June 2012



Internationally, Philip Tobias is best known for his work on human evolution, and key role in establishing the Cradle of Humankind as a world heritage site. In 1966, he began the excavation at Sterkfontein, the world's longest continuously active palaeoanthropological dig, which has yielded over 1 000 hominid fossils, one third of all hominid fossils found. His crowning palaeoanthropological find was "Little Foot", a 4,17 million-year-old hominid skeleton, at Sterkfontein.

22 June 2012



In its second year of existence, Sinai Indaba, the brainchild of Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, has established itself as a force in the Jewish community. In Johannesburg a packed-out audience of 3 000 and in Cape Town 1 100, listened to a top-range of Jewish speakers on subjects Jewish or of Jewish interest.

6 July 2012



Former Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, left, shown with former Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, gestures during a Likud party conference in 1987. Shamir died on June 30, 2012. (Moshe Shai/FLASH90)

20 April 2012



As an antithesis to the “Death March” between Auschwitz and Birkenau in Poland by Jews in the Second World War, in 1988 the annual “March of the Living” was established, bringing students to explore Holocaust history. On Yom Hashoah, thousands march from Auschwitz to Birkenau, the largest Nazi concentration camp. This file photo shows young Jews entering the gates of Auschwitz-Birkenau.

18 May 2012



DA's Gauteng caucus leader Jack Bloom, one of the last active Jewish politicians in Johannesburg, joins ranks with his DA comrades in a march, which was halted by hostile members of the Congress of SA Trade Unions. The DA wanted Cosatu to stop stonewalling a government youth wage subsidy which it believes will create thousands of new jobs for young people. The police later used teargas and water cannons to disperse Cosatu members.

11 May 2012



In a surprise move, Likud and Kadima agreed to form Israel's broadest government coalition government ever. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, left, and Kadima Party Chairman Shaul Mofaz, are pictured at a joint news conference in the Knesset on Tuesday morning, announcing that Kadima had joined the coalition government.

year that's passed...

3 August 2012



With a smile of defiant jubilation, Leslie Lyndon (68) former cantor of the Masorti North London Synagogue who was diagnosed with dementia five years ago, was one of the 8 000 selected Olympic torchbearers who carried the lit torch through North London suburbs last week. He was chosen for this particular honour because of the good work he has accomplished during his career.

24 August 2012



A delegation from the National Inter-faith Council of SA visited Marikana in North West Province, where 34 miners were killed in a police confrontation. The delegation had as its purpose, in his words, “to see what we, as religious leaders, could do to bring comfort to the victims...” Pictured are boxing legend Baby Jake Matlala; Catholic Archbishop of Johannesburg Buti Tihagale; Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein; and Pastor Ray McCauley of the Rhema Church.

7 September 2012



Wits University's SRC issued a statement that it had unanimously adopted a full academic and cultural boycott of Israel, in solidarity with the Palestinian people. Wits Convocation condemned the statement in a release of its own, supported by the SAJBD and SA Union of Jewish Students, one of the SRC's constituents. The SRC's resolution also called for immediate investigation into any relationships Wits may have with Israeli institutions.

Community Briefs



Irv Lissoos’ shofar-making legacy lives on

One of many hobbies of the late Dr Irving Lissoos, was shofar-making. Over the years, he amassed a fine collection of shofars from the horns of animals, other than the traditional ram. Every shofar shown here is functional and made by Lissoos. Anecdotally, he was almost ousted from his home each year when he indulged in this hobby, because of the smell of the process. Lissoos could demonstrate the three sounds of the shofar on the horn of kudu, goat, ram and eland. After blowing a springbok shofar, Lissoos would quip that his audience had heard a “Springbok shofar player”. MICHELLE LISSOOS.

Incredible response to Yad Aharon fundraiser

On August 31 the Flair Salon in Norwood had their official launch, in the spirit of tzedakah. The whole day was dedicated to collecting dry goods and money for Yad Aharon & Michael Tzedakah Food Fund and the response was incredible. People showed their true generosity and ensured the day was a resounding success. Half the proceeds from all blow dries and nails went to Yad Aharon & Michael and two Can Can bins were filled with an array of kosher non-perishable items which will make a huge difference as Yad Aharon & Michael heads into their Rosh Hashanah distribution.

Annual Chazzonus Club concert hosted At Victory Theatre

On August 29, the fourth annual concert of the Chazzonus Club was hosted at the Victory Theatre in Orange Grove. The seven piece ensemble under the baton of Jonathan Birin, harmonised with Barry Braun, (Cape Town), Chilly Chrysler, Ari Kievman and Ezra Sher, and guest artist Chazzan Yudi Cohen. The concert was held in aid of SA Friends of Beit Halochem, Zahal Disabled Veterans’ Organisation, Israel. The organisation presently has four centres, each of which “gives disabled veterans and civilian victims of terror attacks ongoing rehabilitation”. SA Friends of Beit Halochem may be contacted on (011) 645-2553, beithalochem@beyachad.co.za or www.zdvo.org.

Teams of volunteers pack Yad Aharon Rosh Hashanah hampers

September 2 saw teams of volunteers make their way to the Yad Aharon & Michael bayit in Sydenham, to assist with the packing of dry goods hampers for Rosh Hashanah. The hampers are distributed to some 550 families in Gauteng and include items such as milk, cooking oil, tuna, tinned fruit, tomato sauce and more. The packing was arranged and organised by Eric Cotton who made sure that everything ran smoothly and efficiently throughout the morning. The volunteers ranged in age from three to 63; everyone arrived with one thing in mind: the true spirit of giving.

Stalwart Cyrildene Shul turns 75 this year

Cyrildene Shul, east of Johannesburg, one of the bastions of the older generation of Johannesburg Jewry, which this year celebrates its 75th birthday, is conducting a membership drive with the offer of a combined High Holiday seat and membership: R2 160 per person, offering an “early bird” rate of R1 800 if membership/seating is taken out before September 17. Call Rhona at the office: (011) 616-3312 or cyrildeneskul@telkomsa.net

UJW’s annual Rosh Hashanah lunch again a highlight

The UJW Johannesburg celebrates each Yomtov with the guests at its Friendship Club lunches. Last week, at the lunch preceding Rosh Hashanah, David Woolf explained the origin of the shofar and then sounded the shofar, enabling the guests to perform the mitzvah of hearing the shofar during the month of Elul. As a special surprise, Woolf brought along his four-year-old son, Joshua who treated everyone there to his own sounding of the shofar! This was an amazing feat for one so young. Father and son then blew in unison - a very moving moment indeed. Guests were served with apples and honey and lunch. Entertaining them afterwards with popular songs were Tony Bentel and Stella Beder. ESTELLE CLINE



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A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

About being accountable

As we approach Rosh Hashanah and look back on the past year, we are encouraged to take an inventory of what we have accomplished and to gauge if, in fact, we have made positive progress. That done, we must resolve to do even better in the year ahead.

For an individual, this is not a simple exercise and a lot of soul searching is necessary if we are to do it right.

But for an organisation, like the Chevrah Kadisha, taking stock in that manner is much more complicated.

How do we measure the Chev's accomplishments over the past year?

- by the figures on the balance sheet?
- by how many people received financial help?
- by the number of people who have been housed, healed and counselled?
- by the number of residents in our aged homes, mental health facilities, at Arcadia and Selwyn Segal?
- by how many funerals and unveilings have taken place?

The world, our Sages tell us, is built upon kindness. So, how do we measure the value of feelings of



Partners in Chesed
Michael Sieff
Group CEO

relief and gratitude so often expressed by those the Chev is able to help? How does one calculate the worth of happiness and peace?

What grades are awarded the Chev merit for making people feel safe, so they know there is somewhere to turn to when all other doors seem closed?

It's a given that we cannot meet every request or expectation. There will always be financial and practical limitations, and, as human beings, there is so much we cannot control.

All things considered, if I was to ascribe measurement for the success of this remarkable Organisation, I believe they would be kindness, effort and sincerity.

There is, of course, always room for improvement and so, on behalf of the Chev, I would sincerely resolve, with your help, to spare no effort to do even better in the year ahead.

Wishing you all shana tova u'metukah.

May our partnership continue to thrive!

• Please feel free to communicate with me on feedback@thechev.org.za

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

An appropriate time for reflection

The approach of the Yamim Noraim - High Holidays - provides us with an opportunity of looking both forward and back. Just over a year has passed since my election as national chairman of the SAJBD.

It has been in many ways a difficult period for our community, particularly during the last six months, but there was also much to feel positive about.

I have been much heartened by the way in which our community has been able to work together in confronting the challenges that have confronted us, particularly in the area of South Africa-Israel relations and in responding effectively to the increasingly sophisticated, well-funded propaganda efforts of the anti-Israel lobby.

The Jewish community is served by a range of different organisations, each focusing on a particular area of Jewish communal concern. However, in the face of a common threat, these organisations have been able to transcend any turf or personality issues that so often undermine collaborative efforts and join forces in working for the best possible outcome for the community as a whole.

The SAJBD has worked especially closely with the SA Zionist Federation, Fairplay SA and the SA Union of Jewish Students, and of late this inter-organisational co-operation has very much included the Office of the Chief Rabbi as well.

Among the most noteworthy collaborative projects, have been responding to last November's Russell Tribunal on Palestine and conducting a sustained challenge (whether in the legal, diplomatic, media or other fields) against the proposed re-labelling of Israeli products from the West Bank.

On a continual basis, unfortunately, we are being faced with individual cases of anti-Israel boycott initiatives, mainly in the political arena and on certain university campuses. Despite the



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

increasingly difficult environment in which we are working, we are, however, not backing down, but rather continue to seek new and effective ways of responding.

In some cases we have had encouraging success, while in others, little headway is made, at least ostensibly. Regardless of the outcome, however, we are doing all that we can to challenge whatever we consider to be unfair, discriminatory and hostile to our interests.

What has also been very heartening for us during these trying times, has been the more outspoken and meaningful support we have been receiving from outside the confines of the Jewish community.

Many Christians share our love and concern for Israel, and are becoming much more active in standing up against hardline anti-Israel activists.

Most memorable was the march in Pretoria earlier this year by some 2 000 mainly black and Christian South Africans, to protest against the anti-Israel policies of the current government.

Throughout all of this, South African Jews have continued to strengthen their connection to their Jewish heritage. Never before in our community's history have we seen so great an involvement in Jewish learning, with the Sinai Indaba and Limud being just two of the more recent initiatives that have helped to bring its members on board.

From my own perspective in Durban, I have seen the establishment of a vibrant, active Jewish centre in Umhlanga that now provides a hub of Jewish education and observance.

All this points to the essential resilience of South African Jewry which, combined with its strong sense of unity and commitment to the greater good, will undoubtedly see us successfully meet any challenges the forthcoming New Year will pose. I wish everyone a Shana Tova u'Metukah.

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Replacing Red 40 with Israeli tomato dye

KARIN KLOOSTERMAN
BEERSHEVA

Israel's LycoRed plant-derived food colouring is the only one of its kind to win the FDA's green light.

Look at any Israeli dining table and the humble tomato is usually there, front and centre, diced into a cucumber salad or sliced in big wedges drizzled with lemon juice and olive oil.



No one knows fresh tomatoes like the Israelis. It makes sense, then, that the Israeli company LycoRed should corner the market for lycopene, a new super-food

and natural dye extracted from the tomato.

Lycopene is quickly replacing artificial and animal-based red dyes across America. Health-conscious, vegan, kosher and halaal consumers are paying particular attention to this new “green” red dye. Red food colouring is an attractive way to add a natural tint to milkshakes, red velvet cupcakes, candies and yoghurts, but recent evidence on six synthetic dyes, including Red 40, links them to behavioural problems in children.

As savvy parents demand better solutions for candies and snack foods, and big retailers such as Starbucks are searching for natural alternatives for their fruit shakes, all eyes are on Israel.

LycoRed has been making natural dyes - from orange to red to red with bluish notes - for about 15 years using carrots or tomatoes. The company recently doubled production of Tomat-O-Red, its antioxidant-rich lycopene compound from non-genetically modified tomatoes grown in California and Israel. Kosher- and halaal-certified, it is recognised as safe for consumption by the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Roei Nir, the company's colour and flavour global commercial manager, tells Israel21c that the “Southampton Six” - Red 40 and five other petroleum-based synthetic food



dyes - were found by Southampton University researchers to be linked with childhood reactions including temper tantrums, aggressiveness, screaming and a lack of self-control.

Children are particularly susceptible to the effects of Red 40, while in adults it might cause nervousness, migraines or an upset stomach. LycoRed's colourings offer fresh hope for the food industry. The company's lycopene is now widely used in products including surimi, an artificial crab meat; smoothies and yoghurts; beverages and juices; and confectionary like gummy bears and hard-boiled candies, says Nir. And now Starbucks? A recent controversy was stirred when Starbucks declared it would no longer use a petroleum-based dye in its Strawberries & Crème Frappuccino.

Initially the company announced it would switch to carmine, a dye produced from a beetle, but vegetarians objected and so did kosher consumers, who are not permitted to eat insects. Starbucks quickly replaced its “bug juice” with lycopene.

LycoRed is the only lycopene producer with FDA approval, so it's a good bet that Starbucks uses the Israeli product, though Nir can't name names due to non-disclosure agreements.

LycoRed has had to double its production to meet increasing demands, and Tomat-O-Red is expected to transition from the basic foods industry to cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

LycoRed estimates show that the worldwide market for lycopene could reach \$84 million by 2018, up

from \$66 million in 2010. The main markets are currently in North America, Europe and Japan.

Though other Red 40 replacements from the natural world include a dye from beetroot, Nir says these other solutions are not as chemically stable as lycopene and tend to degrade at high temperatures or over time. They are also more susceptible to damage from UV light. That puts LycoRed in an enviable position, particularly as public awareness of lycopene's health benefits for the skin and heart has really started taking off in America, Nir adds.

Based in Beersheva, Israel, LycoRed employs 250 people and has factories in Israel, the United States and, most recently, China. (Israel21c)

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China remains an intriguing country to visit



Sunset over the Forbidden City in Beijing

MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN

Fulfilling a lifelong dream, former social worker and teacher Erica Cohen travelled to China last year. Though a direct flight from Johannesburg to Beijing of 14½ hours has now been introduced, Cohen flew Qatar Airlines via Doha, part of an 11-strong group. Addressing the Union of Jewish Women recently, she said she saw very few Western tourists, though they number around two million a year. There are, however, 200 million Chinese tourists, who only now have enough money to travel around and see their own country. While visiting China did not necessitate being super fit, one needed to be a walker and to be able to manage steps without railings, she advised. While one was free to go anywhere, it would be “very hard” to find one’s own way around because of the language difficulty - 99 per cent of the population do not speak English.

Though China’s one child policy had been relaxed, it had left problems in its wake. “In some villages, there is a shortage of wives, which has given rise to trafficking in women. As recently as 1992, if you had more than one child, you lost your job, medical benefits, your house and were ostracised,” Cohen noted. The only cars on the road in the 1970s were Russian-built saloons for government officials. Though there were more now, there were millions of bicycles, with the e-bike, an electric scooter, most popular. Chinese diet caters for vegans; Cohen commented she never saw bread or milk except in Western hotels. “These days it’s becoming unlawful to eat dog, but they’ve been eating it for 500 years,” she said, relating that sheep penis, deep-fried silkworms in cocoons, scorpions and crickets had featured on the menu at the Beijing night market. The Forbidden City in central Beijing and home to 24 Chinese emperors from the Ming to the Qing dynasties, had taken a million workers 25 years to build. The Great Wall of China, two hours from Beijing, is accessible by cable-car. It is said that there had been one

body for every metre built. The Terracotta Army Museum in the Xi’an district, south-west of Beijing, is more popular than the Great Wall as a tourist attraction. A collection of sculptures buried with the first emperor of China, it was discovered in 1974. Three days on the Yangtze River revealed hiking paths, holiday resorts and “hanging coffins”: thousands of years ago, prominent individuals were buried high up on the precipices. In the 1840s, three groups of Jews arrived in China from Baghdad. It was a haven to Russian refugees in the 1900s, and European Jews fleeing the Holocaust by mid-century. The Mir Yeshiva, including rabbis, students and their families numbering some 400, relocated to Shanghai in 1941; entry was allowed without papers. In 1943, the Japanese occupiers ordered the Jewish refugees to be confined to the Shanghai Ghetto. Mezuzahs remain on its walls as evidence of their presence. Most left for the US and Palestine after the war.

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The Great Wall of China



A bronze horse-drawn chariot in the Terracotta Army Museum, south west of Beijing.

- If you travel to China on an SA passport, you need a visa, accessible either through the Chinese Embassy, in Pretoria (012) 431-6537; the Chinese Consulate, in Sandton, (011) 685-7540 or via a commercial company called SATravelbug: www.satravelbug.co.za. A Chinese tourist visa will cost about R500.
- Four to six weeks before visiting China, depending on which areas you will be visiting, it may be necessary for you to be immunised against typhoid or malaria.
- Autumn in China – between September and early October – is considered the most comfortable time of the year to visit.
- There are close to 300 languages spoken in mainland China; English is taught from early primary school in the country; you should have no difficulty communicating in English.
- China’s monetary unit is the Renminbi Yuan. At the time of going to press, 1CNY will cost you R1,29.
- Traffic in China is on the right.
- Electricity in China is 220 volts alternating at 50 cycles per second. Three different plug types are used in China: one with two parallel prongs, another with two parallel circular pins and a third with a grounding pin and two flat prongs, positioned in an upside-down “v” shape.
- It is not safe to drink tap water in China. All hotels provide free bottled water and it is easily accessible at convenience stores and kiosks in the street.
- Beijing, the capital of China, is six hours ahead of South Africa.

Jewish education – the lifeblood of Jewish survival

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Education continues to be the elixir that will guarantee that the next generation will be equipped with the necessary tools to enrich our community and society as a whole.

Golda Meir, when she was prime minister, said: “Jewish education is the lifeblood of Jewish survival.”

Jewish education excels in the actualisation of this task, with banners flying high as the King David and Herzlia Foundations ensure that hundreds of learners across the country experience what 21st century education has to offer.

Vanessa Valkin, director of the Herzlia Foundation, tells of the many goals that the Foundation has. “We have wonderful new projects on the go and in the pipeline; however it is clear, that for the Foundation to provide a sustainable income for those projects, we need to increase its capital assets.

“Through the Foundation and the generosity of Cape Town’s United Jewish Campaign, we also help 272 pupils a year who are on subsidies. This, however, is an awesome task that requires great efforts and the generosity of our community and alumni that are scattered all over the world.”

Co-director of the King David Schools’ Foundation, Raelene Tradonsky, is passionate as she speaks of the huge task that both she and

Elliot Wolf undertake daily in their desire to provide funding for education to over 500 learners annually.

“Approximately 15 per cent of our student body of over 3 000, is on subsidies and the money that is necessary to provide for this, is very significant. We have recently launched our ‘Dor le Dor’ campaign with a goal of accumulating R100 million for the Foundation to sustain King David Schools and ensure they remain institutions of excellence, given the indispensable role they play in the Jewish community of Johannesburg.”

The monies are administered by seven top businessmen, with Discovery’s Adrian Gore at the helm. The combination of their business acumen and knowledge of the markets, promises to be a winning recipe.



Havdallah at Constantia Primary, the Herzlia Foundation fundraises for Jewish Life.



King David Linksfield learners.

‘Our King David alumni have certainly continued to make me proud’

Valkin, who worked as a journalist in the US, speaks of the many projects that she and her team are focusing on. “We have just raised funds to greatly enhance our Hebrew department and make Hebrew and Israel studies as fun and exciting as possible for our learners.

“We are also raising funds in the arenas of sport, Jewish studies, music, for our programmes that provide facilitators for learners with special needs and for the refurbishing of

several Herzlia buildings across our 10 campuses.”

At the core of the King David Foundation is the soul of Elliot Wolf, co-director of the KDSF. On raising funds for the schools, he says: “Our mandate is manifold, with goals to continue to the subsidy programme, to develop and enhance teaching skills, to upgrade infrastructure, and to develop and improve academic facilities and programmes.

“Our King David alumni have certainly continued to make me proud, not only from the standpoint of witnessing how so many have excelled beyond expectations

in a diversity of fields, but being witness to the nostalgia shown towards their King David experiences has been very moving.

“During my years as principal, I was never aware of the true impact that an educator can make, but the Foundation has afforded me the privilege to meet with so many faces that I had buried deep into my subconscious.

“These alumni have not only shared their journeys with me, but have shared generous words of affirmation that have proved to me how very vital a positive Jewish education is in the developmental process of any young Jew.”



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Haredi soldiers take their spirit into the field

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Like any of the Israeli army’s combat battalions, the soldiers of Netzach Yehuda faced a 96-kilometre hike during basic training meant to simulate battle conditions.

They hiked with their gear at night and during the day, up and down hills and through rough terrain. One night, their commanders told them that their supply trucks had been bombed and they needed to ration whatever food and water they had left.

Finishing the hike, they put down their gear and caught their breath. As a band played traditional Jewish wedding tunes, they began to dance as if one of the soldiers had just been married.

Popularly known as the Nahal Haredi, Netzach Yehuda is the haredi Orthodox division of the Israeli army, and its combat and reserve forces number several thousands of men.

For decades, haredi men in Israel have received exemptions from otherwise mandatory service in the Israel Defence Forces, so that they could study in yeshivas. Many are non-Zionist or anti-Zionist, and mass protests erupted in haredi neighbourhoods this summer when the government came close to passing a law requiring haredi men to serve.

Even if a law were to be passed, some supporters of mandatory haredi service question the army’s ability to accommodate thousands of new draftees who require stringent kosher certification and eschew any contact, especially physical, with women.

Netzach Yehuda has attempted to address those issues on a smaller scale. And though they say that the IDF sometimes falls short in its efforts to accommodate the battalion, its soldiers and administrators feel that since its founding in 1999, the programme has worked.

“It’s a little more of a Torah atmosphere,” said Yehuda, 20, who is serving now in Netzach Yehuda. “There are fewer problems with prayer and army regulations.”

After they finish training, Netzach Yehuda soldiers serve in and around the West Bank Palestinian city of Jenin, fulfilling the same duties as other combat units. But

when they’re not on combat missions, the soldiers’ schedule includes time for three daily minyans, including at least 45 minutes for the morning service. A synagogue always stands close to their barracks, giving the soldiers space to pray or learn a page of Talmud during breaks. Rabbis occasionally come to their bases to teach Torah.

In addition, the battalion’s food is mehadrin kosher, an especially stringent certification. And the soldiers receive ritual fringes on a green rather than white undergarment, so that it will match their combat uniforms.

Netzach Yehuda’s soldiers also have little if any direct contact with women, which accords with the strict gender separation in haredi communities. While women often teach fitness classes in the IDF, men run those classes for the haredi soldiers.

“They come back and they’re even stronger from a religious viewpoint than when they came in,” said Rabbi Tzvi Kledanow, head of the Netzach Yehuda nonprofit, which runs the battalion jointly with the army and Defence Ministry. “The environment is a very positive environment. It has everything it requires to avail itself to a haredi young man.”

But Kledanow was quick to note that although the army accommodates the haredi soldiers, the soldiers don’t necessarily enter Netzach Yehuda supporting the army.

“They’re not Zionist at all,” Kledanow said. “Not only are they not Zionist, but their education is anti-Zionist.”

He says the soldiers enlist because “not every haredi boy is cut out to sit and learn 12 to 14 hours in yeshiva every day. They feel they need a different life, and in order to work you have to do the army.”

That pragmatic line of thinking stands in contrast to the official position of Israel’s haredi leaders and much of their rank and file, which remains opposed to the idea of haredi army service even as the govern-



Young haredi Orthodox soldiers pictured at the swearing-in ceremony for the Israeli army’s special unit for them, on May 31 this year.

Photograph: Noam Moskowitzz/Flash90

ment tries to mandate it. A large portion of haredim are opposed to or agnostic toward Zionism.

“Everyone out there is a sinner,” said Yehuda Cohen, 20, a haredi student at Yeshivat Porat Yosef in Jerusalem’s Old City. “The Land of Israel belongs to Jews if they keep the Torah. If there’s no Torah we don’t deserve the land.”

Such communal attitudes make returning to haredi life difficult for Netzach Yehuda soldiers. Because “to marry a boy that was in the army is a no-no”, Kledanow says. Netzach Yehuda helps the battalion’s veterans to find matches for marriage and then helps them fund their weddings, if necessary.

Serving in a combat unit also poses challenges to men raised in strictly observant communities, as they must perform missions and guard duty on Shabbat and Jewish holidays. But the battalion consults a rabbi who tries to minimise those occurrences, while Netzach Yehuda soldiers do what they can to perform rituals regardless of where they are.

“On seder night there will be 100 soldiers, so 30 soldiers will be on guard duty,” said Eli Lax, who runs the nonprofit Coalition for the Torah-Observant Soldier. “But if they finish guarding at 10 or 11, they’ll

start praying at 10 or 11 and have the seder at 12.”

Moshe Lifshits, a veteran of the battalion, who now works with Pledanow, and who participated in the 96-kilometre hike and subsequent dance, loved Netzach Yehuda’s Jewish atmosphere.

“The spirit of the guys is very strong,” he said. “Shabbat there, you feel like a yeshiva.” He said that even as 20 or 30 per cent of the battalion is Modern Orthodox rather than haredi, “You see everyone together.”

While most men are required to serve in the IDF for three years, after two years of service in Netzach Yehuda, its soldiers have the option of taking a year of classes, either to prepare them for university or to teach them a profession.

“A boy coming into the army from the haredi community has a sixth-grade skill level,” Kledanow said. “It’s not enough to do army service. They want to enter into the workforce, so they need some educational skills.”

According to the IDF, more than 85 per cent of Netzach Yehuda veterans find jobs after their service.

The past draft cycle, according to Kledanow, was Netzach Yehuda’s most successful in history, with 200 recruits. As the debate over haredi army service continues, Yehuda, current Netzach Yehuda soldier, says more haredim should join the IDF.

“Everyone needs to give,” said Yehuda, who said he was raised with a positive view toward army service. “We’re one nation in one place and everyone should contribute.” (JTA)



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Mouth-watering recipes for Rosh Hashanah

Food for Rosh Hashanah and the High Holy Days, might be sweet and delicious and a treat for the palate; the objective, however, is not only to enjoy these culinary delights, but to appreciate their religious significance. For they are rich in symbolism and mitzvoth, which four rebbetzens, who supplied their tried and tested recipes, explain.

COMPILED BY SUZANNE BELLING



Rebbetzen Mashi Lipskar
Counsellor, teacher and lecturer par excellence, Rebbetzen Mashi Lipskar, wife of Rabbi Mendel Lipskar, founder and head of the Lubavitch Foundation of Southern Africa, is the essence of spirituality - so much so that this quality extends to the meals she prepares, especially in baking challah, which is ac-

companied by blessing and prayer as it is the fulfilment of a mitzvah.
“In Yiddishkeit, our customary foods not only carry a theme but evoke a blessing,” she says.
Mashi is an expert on the various shapes of challahs, portraying the symbolism of the festivals.
“For Rosh Hashanah, tradition dictates that our food should be round, sweet and rich, as that is the kind of year we want.
“Rosh Hashanah means head of the year and not the beginning of the year and, as the name indicates, we hope and pray that we should be as heads not as tails - for what is a head, but the entire

body in miniature, with everything dependent on it?
“When the head functions correctly, it reflects a healthy body.
“So, too, on Rosh Hashanah, the day we call the head of the year, we give attention to the detail of how we spend the 48 hours of the Yomtov, including the foods we prepare and eat, so that we make appropriate vessels to contain the many blessings that Hashem wants to give us in the coming year.”
Thus, varying shapes of challahs are baked for the High Festivals - round for Rosh Hashanah by rolling a single or doubled thick sausage, pressing raisins into it

and twirling the dough into a spiral or in the shape of a crown, denoting Hashem as King.
By placing rolls close together in a chif-fon tin, a crown is created.
Mashi emphasises the meals on erev Yom Kippur, as the day is honoured by eating special foods. The challah eaten before the Fast forms the shape of a ladder “that our prayers may ascend”.
This is achieved by rolling dough into sausages and shaping a ladder on a flat baking sheet.
For Hoshana Rabba, the seventh day of Succoth - the day marking our final judgement - the challah is baked to resemble the Hand of Hashem, with two slits to form three fingers, distinguishing it from the human hand.
Round challahs are traditionally shaped, baked and enjoyed until after Simchat Torah.

- CHALLAH**
Ingredients
2-3 pkts dried yeast
5 cups lukewarm water - from the kettle and allowed to cool
1 cup oil
4 eggs
1 cup sugar
4 tsps salt
Approximately 14 cups cake flour

Method
Place the water in a large bowl. Begin by adding 6 cups of flour. Mix with wooden spoon and gradually add flour until dough is soft, but not sticky. Cover with dish towel and two handtowels, tuck in ends and place in a warm spot until dough doubles in bulk - about 1½ hours.
Punch down and cover. Reach under towel and make the bracha:”Baruch Ata Ado-shem Elo-kainu Melech Ha’olam asher kid-shanu b’mitzvotav vi-tzivanu l’hafrish challah”.
Separate a piece of dough called “challah” - approximately 30 grams - as you say the words: “Harei zeh challah”.
The separated piece of challah is then burned.
Shape dough as desired. Place on oiled baking pan/sheet. Cover and allow to rise again for 30 to 45 minutes.
Brush with beaten egg and sprinkle with poppy or sesame seeds, or crumbed flour mixture*.
Bake at 180 degrees for 30 to 40 minutes or until nicely browned.
*Crumbed topping: 4 tbs each of flour, sugar, oil. Mix until crumbs form.

The different shapes of challah for the High Festivals, baked especially for the Jewish Report Rosh Hashanah issue by Rebbetzen Mashi Lipskar.



Photograph By Suzanne Belling



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Rebbetzen Sara Bayla Wineberg
Having moved to Cape Town two years ago, Rebbetzen Wineberg is the wife of Rabbi Dovid Wineberg, who headed the mesivta programme at Torah Academy and was the associate rabbi and head of the adult education division at Sand-ton Shul, before being appointed as spiritual leader of the Green and Sea Point Hebrew Congregation.
Sara Bayla, an 11th generation Jerusa-lemite, who was brought up in England, is a



woman of many talents - a qualified seamstress, graduate of a soft furnishings course and a teacher.

She loves “the fairest Cape” and views their move as a challenge. She has instituted a new-look batmitzvah programme, which also involves mothers in Sea Point.

She chose the recipe for salmon kebabs as a starter for the Rosh Hashanah meal, especially as the fish in Cape Town is “incredibly fresh”. She earlier purchased a whole salmon and froze the head of this fish to represent the head of the year - to be placed on the dinner table.

“I love the creative side of cooking and think the food should both taste good and be appealing to the eye.”

SALMON KEBABS

Ingredients

- 1 salmon side filleted, cut into squares with chicken scissors
- ½ cup soya sauce, preferably a thick one
- ½ cup honey
- 2 large cloves garlic, crushed
- Sesame seeds for sprinkling on top
- Pack of skewers
- Chunks of pineapple, onion, and green pepper,

Method

Arrange the salmon squares on the skewer with the vegetables and fruit in between, following the same sequence for all. (Great for the kids to do.)
Mix the soya, honey and garlic and pour over the skewers in a deep dish. Allow to marinate for a few hours.
Spread out the skewers on a tray and sprinkle with sesame seeds.
Grill at 180 degrees for 15 - 20 min
Serve straight from the oven. Enjoy!



Rebbetzen Rochel Goldman
Rochel Goldman is a well-known community leader, having lived in this country since 1976. She is rebbetzen of the Sydenham Highlands North Hebrew Congregation which she describes as being “in the forefront

of Jewish life in South Africa”.

She has many years’ experience as an accomplished educator, teacher and relationship counsellor.

For the past 13 years she has directed and funded Women of the World (WoW), the objectives of which are funding education, promoting a positive South Africa, and “nurturing the nurturers”.

She has given talks on parenting, Madonna and Kabbalah and, more recently, in Stressa, Italy, on mysticism. She has organised many diverse programmes for women’s groups, including the Rosh Chodesh Women’s Forum and Stretch your Mind, Body and Soul.

Rochel says Rosh Hashanah has many

symbolic foods, which reflect our wishes for the coming year.

“Tzimmes or carrots are traditional to have on Rosh Hashanah. In Yiddish this is ‘me-ren’, which means to increase. We ask Hashem that our good deeds should multiply and all good things for the coming year should multiply and be blessed.

“Pomegranates are also eaten on the first night after the apple is dipped in honey, symbolising the wish that our merits be increased like the seeds of a pomegranate.

“All sweet foods, like honey cake, honey biscuits and sweet kugels, are included in the wish for a sweet new year.”

SWEET LAMB Ingredients
Lamb chops (quantity depends on number of guests)
Sweet chilli sauce
2 tsps teriyaki sauce
Dried rosemary
Paprika
Oreganum
Olive oil

Method
Marinate chops in sweet chilli sauce, teriyaki sauce and dried rosemary.



דב



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Sprinkle paprika, oreganum on chops. Grill or bake in oven with olive oil. If you bake, add sweet potatoes, butternut chunks, with drizzled olive oil over them.

- CARROT PIE**
Ingredients
15 large carrots (2 - 3 packs)
¼ cup of syrup
1 cup of brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
1 tsp salt
¼ cup hot oil
1 cup of flour
¼ tsp nutmeg
¼ tsp cinnamon

Method
Grate carrots and cook for 1 hour or until soft. Drain water.
Add syrup, sugars, salt, flour and mix.
Add hot oil, mix.
Can sprinkle some cinnamon and sugar on top.
(Cinnamon and/or nutmeg - optional)

Bake at 180 degrees until crispy for approximately 1 hour.



Rebbetzen Gina Goldstein
“In our home, preparing food for Yomtov is part of the celebration, excitement and holiness of Rosh Hashanah. It is unlike preparing food during the week, because Yomtov meals are a part of the spirituality and sanctity of Rosh Hashanah,” says Rebbetzen Gina Goldstein, wife of Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein.
To be Jewish is to serve G-d spiritually and physically, she says. “The food we eat is part of this service and mealtimes are elevated family experiences with an opportunity with connect to G-d and each other in love and closeness.
“The Mishna tells us that our table is

like a mizbayach - an altar in the Temple - where we can bring Torah ideas to uplift and inspire each other.”
On Rosh Hashanah night, the meal is filled with prayers for a good and a sweet new year. “There are a number of symbolic foods we eat on Rosh Hashanah which symbolise our prayers and hopes for the new year ahead. This is a special opportunity to pray with our families and friends at the meal, while we enjoy the physical experience of eating.
“The most famous of these symbolic foods is the apple and honey. We pause at the start of the meal to pray to Hashem for a good and sweet new year.
“I have chosen the recipe to share with you because you can include a number of the symbolic foods like pomegranates, dates, apples and honeycomb. In the Artscroll siddur, pg 769, you can find the associated one-line prayers set out for you to say together.
“In our home we say them aloud with our children and friends. This has been a fun and energetic way to do it! May it be Your will, Hashem our G-d and G-d of our forefathers, that You renew for us a good and sweet year!”
Gina added: “We know that experiences, both good and bad, are put in our life journey by Hashem for our ultimate benefit. On Rosh Hashanah we pray that all our experiences will be sweet and ‘taste delicious’ and that nothing bitter or sour will be served to us this year.
“Wishing you all a ketiva vechatima tova. May our entire community be in-

scribed in the book of life and blessing. And may we all have a good and sweet new year.”
HONEYCOMB, MARSHMALLOW AND PRETZEL CHOCOLATE BARK
450g bittersweet parev chocolate
½ cup broken pretzel pieces
½ cup dried apple
½ cup mini marshmallows
½ cup chopped honeycomb pieces
Optional variations to use: Dried apricots, pomegranate seeds, raisins, dried cranberries, cornflakes, popcorn, chopped dates, salted almonds or pistachio nuts (although traditionally nuts may not be eaten on Rosh Hashanah).
Please use the best quality eating chocolate you can find, like Rosemarie, Lindt or Elite bittersweet bars (I don’t recommend baking chocolate).
Melt the chocolate slowly and evenly over gentle low heat in a double boiler.
Pour the melted chocolate onto a tray lined with baking paper.
Immediately sprinkle the honeycomb, marshmallow, apples and pretzels on the chocolate and gently press into the chocolate.
The chocolate layer should be deep enough for the pieces to sink into.
Let this chocolate bark cool to room temperature before placing it in the fridge.
When ready to serve, break into shards or alternatively serve on a board and your guests will break off shards for themselves.
Makes about 20 pieces.

Mitzvah of blowing the shofar during the month of Elul

STACY FLEISHMAN

The shofar, (or ram’s horn) is blown during the month of Elul. At King David Victory Park Primary, Rabbi Mendel Rabinowitz and brothers Evan and Carl Koton, do this wonderful mitzvah every morning before prayers.



Pictured are Carl and Evan Koton.

World News in Brief

MAARIV SOLD TO RIGHT-WING NATIONALIST PUBLISHER

JERUSALEM - The Israeli daily newspaper Maariv reportedly was sold to the publisher of the right wing nationalist newspaper Makor Rishon.
The \$21 million sale, which does not include Maariv’s debts or publishing house, will be completed by October, the Israeli business daily Globes reported last Sunday. Israeli businessman Nochi Danker owns Maariv.
Makor Rishon publisher Shlomo Ben-Tzvi plans to continue operating Maariv as a newspaper, according to a notice from Maariv Holdings Ltd to the Tel Aviv Stock Exchange, Globes reported. Ben-Tzvi also will offer to hire as many as 400 Maariv employees, the notice said; Maariv has about 2 000 employees.
As part of the sale, Ben-Zvi also is acquiring the NRG website, a chain of local newspapers, magazines, intellectual property rights, and the newspaper’s clients and subscribers, according to the Calcalist business news service.
Earlier this month, the board of Discount Investment Corp, which is owned by Danker, agreed to put more than \$3 million into Maariv and sell its printing house. Maariv reportedly was going to cease publishing on a daily basis, only producing a weekend edition while providing updated daily Internet news. (JTA)



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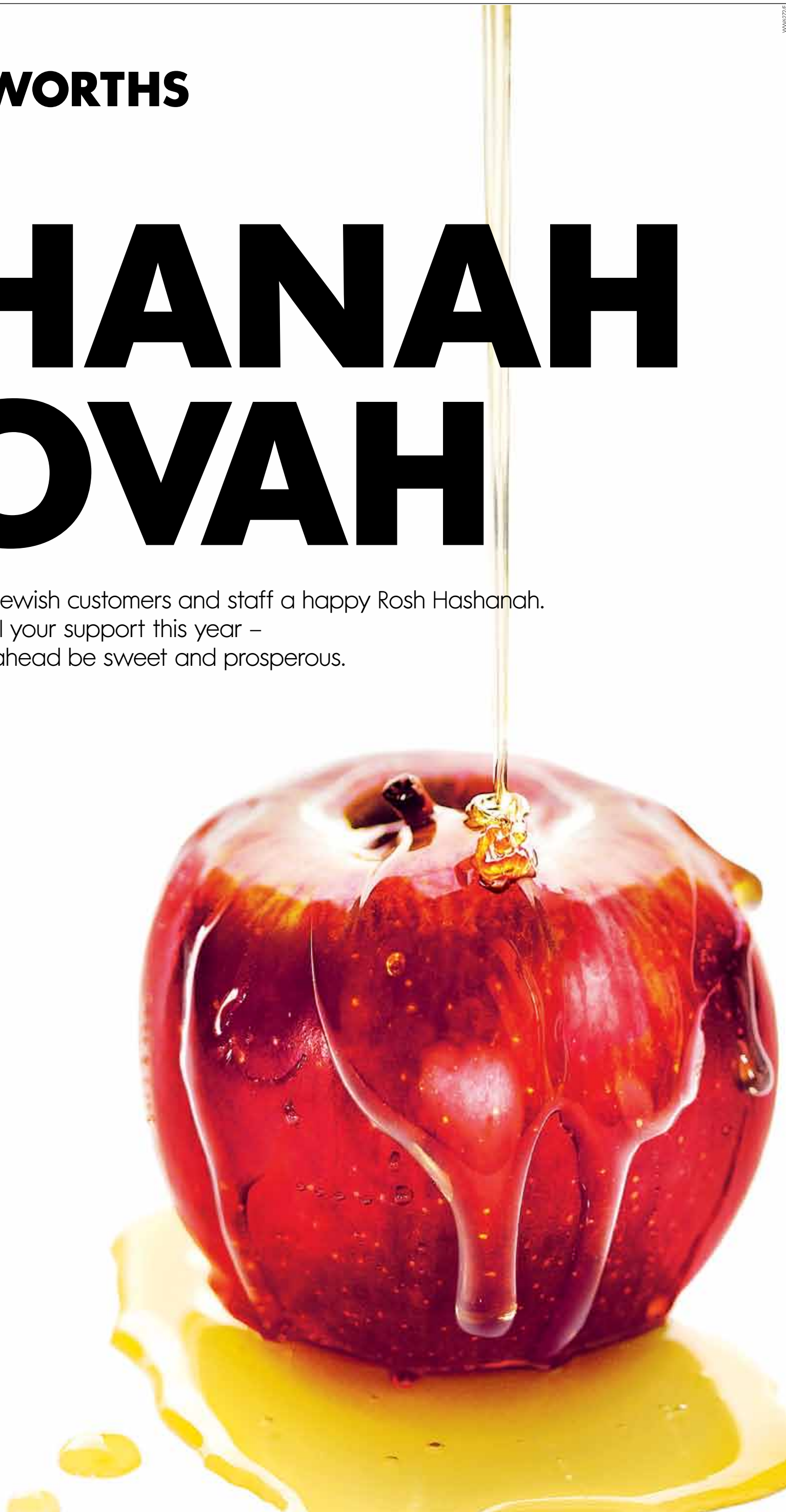
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may your year ahead be sweet and prosperous.



Encounter 2012, a highlight on Herzlia’s calendar

SARAH MORRIS AND GREG GELB

Encounter is the highlight of Herzlia’s grade 11 year. It is a five day experience where the pupils have the opportunity to express and question their Judaism and more importantly... themselves.

The JIPSY team consisting of Josh Gavronsky; Samantha Benatar; Greg Gelb; and 14 madrichim, devised a programme under the theme, “Express Yourself”.

In addition to education-

al, professional, and thought-provoking tochniot, there were four guest speakers, namely Shani Krebs, who was jailed in Thailand 18 years ago for drug smuggling and released only four months ago; Rabbi Jonathan Ross; Rabbi Menachem Sosnovik, from Johannesburg; and Rabbi Dani Brett.

They delivered dynamic discussions on a wide range of topics. One of the highlights of Encounter is Shabbat, and the pupils enjoyed a truly joyous and observant experience.



YouthHerzliaEncounter: Madrich Rafi Ress; Aidyn Breiter; Chanan Suiza; guest speaker Shani Krebs; Liora Freeman; Ben Rubin; and Tao Klitzner.

Two little girls sweet as honey

RACHEL PELS

Zahara and Layla Lurie enjoying dipping their apple into honey, an interactive Rosh Hashanah learning experience in Chana Rivka Lewin’s class at Torah Academy Nursery School.



KDHSL chooses its student leadership for 2012/2013

JODI STARKOWITZ

King David High School Linksfield recently chose their head and deputy head student leaders for 2012/2013.

They are: Yakira Amoils (deputy); Talya Carno (head); Lynton Kadish (head); and Andrew Bernstein (deputy).



Photo: Jodi Starkowitz

KDVP grade 7s show off their T-shirts



Photo: Stacy Fleishman

STACY FLEISHMAN

As its tradition and their last year at primary school, the King David Victory Park Primary School grade 7 learners, may design their own T-shirts. Proudly displaying this year’s T-shirts are Rachel Asoulin; Joshua Molin; and Kayla Gosher.

Spring has sprung at KDVP

STACY FLEISHMAN

Spring has sprung and fun was had by all at King David Victory Park Primary School. This happened on Friday August 31. The theme was “Flower Power” and the children had fun dressing up and enjoying their flower suckers and popcorn, bought especially for this fun day.



Pictured are Gabriella Bogolubov, behind left; Michael Rubin; Joshua Cohen; and in front Rabi Master.

Photo: Shira Tollman

Traditional



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Encounter 2012 - allowing us to grow spiritually

**TALYA CARNO AND LYNTON KADISH
GRADE 11 ENCOUNTER 2012.**

On Monday August 13, we along with the rest of the grade 11s at King David Linksfeld, were off to Meulstroom Lodge for our Encounter programme with the Department of Informal Jewish Education (Dije). Our day-to-day activities included having Tefillah workshops on the beautiful river, daily chugim where we made kippot, flat caps, key rings and many more creations. We had daily discussions about Jewish values, family relationships, intermarriage, aveilut - the laws of mourning, and many more relevant topics, which we all gained insight from. One of the highlights of Encounter was Israel Day. This included a mini shuk, quad biking, visit to the “Bedouin tents” and of course, traditional Israeli food. After almost every meal we had an awesome “jam” at the vibey ruach sessions. During free time you could find Encounter-goers engaging with various rabbonim, playing volleyball, soccer or swing ball, or just taking in the breathtak-

ing scenery of the river. On Encounter we were privileged to speak to and hear from many well-respected rabbonim and others. We realised how lucky we are in our lives and to make the most of every day, after hearing about the life-threatening accident one brave person fought through. The atmosphere on Shabbat was one not to be forgotten. We had special Shabbat in our uniquely “decorated” rooms with our friends and advisers who had become our family over the past week. After Shabbat dinner we kicked back and relaxed, while we enjoyed the hilarious hypnotist show. After a spiritual and enriching experience of Shabbat, we had a very meaningful Havdalah, and then ended off our Encounter programme with a celebratory banquet. Our grade came together as one as we shared an unforgettable and life-changing experience. Thank you to the Dije and everyone who helped create this atmosphere which allowed us to grow and get in touch with our spirituality in the most enjoyable way.



TA Primary boys get to grips with practical science

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY CHANI ZWICK

Torah Academy Primary School boys from grades one to four, visited the Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown in downtown Johannesburg recently and were given time to experiment hands-on with various scientific equipment. The boys are pictured experiencing what it is like to be on a construction site, with a mock crane, wheelbarrow, bricks and other construction equipment. They are Levi Abrahamson; Mendy Zwick; Moshe Bacher; Levi Chaiton; and Benjy Joselsohn (back).



KD Sandton proud of its revamped campus

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ILAN OSSENDRYVER

The King David Schools’ Foundation together with SA Board of Jewish Education, have embarked on a number of special projects to ensure that the facilities at our schools are updated and kept in line with international trends in education and technology and maintaining our desire to keep our schools excellent. In a media release the School’s Foundation says that for many years there has been a need to bring the antiquated prefab classrooms used in the foundation-phase facility of the King David Sandton campus, into line with the rest of the school’s excellent classrooms, halls and sports facilities. “After securing funding from a number of very generous donors, we were able to embark on this project to upgrade the Sandton campus. The first phase was a rebuild of 11 state-of-the-art classrooms that will house the junior primary. “The next phase of the project will include a modern library with a state-of-the-art computer centre and multi-media auditorium. The envisioned building will provide teachers and students with a space for reading and research as well as modern amenities to access and present educational materials.” On Wednesday August 29, King David Sandton hosted a tea to celebrate the opening of the newly-refurbished and upgraded King David Sandton campus and to honour and thank the generous donors, particularly Eric and Sheila Samson and the family of the late Mendel Kaplan.



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, Eric Samson and Rabbi Craig Kacev, proudly unveil a plaque at the opening of the newly-renovated King David Sandton campus.



King David Sandton’s new classrooms.

KDL tots show off Rosh Hashanah artwork

VAL ARONSON

Gabrielle Becker; Galya Woolf; Shira Magid; and Jaimie Price, all in the playschool of King David Linksfeld, pose in front of the pretty artwork done last week in preparation for spring and the upcoming festival of Rosh Hashanah.



Photo: Lara Riback

Applications are invited for bursaries for 2013

Bursaries from various trusts administered by the Council of KwaZulu-Natal Jewry are available to Jewish students for tertiary education.

Student loans from the **Lionel Goldblatt Will Trust:-** A limited annual sum is also available for the provision of interest-free loans for tertiary education.

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*Applications must be made in writing on the prescribed form which may be obtained from
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Farmer and Mrs MacGregor (Sean McGrath and Sanelisiwe Jobodwana) take out the rotten veggies while Peter Rabbit (Karabo Oberem) looks on.

Delightful bit of frippery to start off the new term

Show: Peter Rabbit and Other Tales, People's Theatre, Braamfontein (011) 403-1563
Until: October 7

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

The delicious thrill of witnessing a play with a fresh new bunch of children in the audience, many of whom might not yet have experienced the inside of a theatre, is

always endearing. Peter Rabbit is a well-heeled favourite, having been seen by many a generation of tot in this theatre; the six lovely Beatrix Potter classics do override their Victorian context. With musical direction by Clifford Cooper, this version of Peter Rabbit is sprinkled with a magic not previously seen at this theatre, but it's a delicate magic that can sometimes go amiss or get broken. In addition to the adult cast, there are three children in this production – and three casts of kids, but I got to see seven-year-old Mikah Solomon, 10-year-old Ziya Devar and Samuel Hertz, who is also seven, in collaboration with the grown-up performers. They sing, they dance, they interact with the young audiences, almost on the brink of professionals, but when they feel they are good or funny, it shows, and they teeter on the edge of self-consciousness and showing off. Also, a casualty in most child performers is their lack of disciplinary context; breathing, singing and talking too quickly can turn into a big jumble in which words and clarity get lost in the cuteness stakes. But the two youngest cast members deserve a little more focus. Crammed with confidence, little Samuel Hertz makes for a delightful Benjamin Bunny. He's cute as a button and allows his face to do the talking. His counterpart, Mikah, is the narrator for several of the stories, and while there are moments of sheer surreal quandary as this young contemporary child in a Victorian frock prattles on about her "pini" of which I have no doubt that not one of the children in the audience had the foggiest notion what she meant, they respectfully looked on. As is Potter's wont, the stories are about little forest animals in clothes, that have mannerisms of British folk. It is, however, the manic performance of Trix Vivier as Jemima Puddleduck (who children's theatre aficionados will remember as Pippi Longstocking a few seasons ago), opposite the suave fox played by Sean McGrath, who debuted professionally last season, that will get even the adults engaged. A light bit of frippery to start off the new term, this production of Peter Rabbit froths up audience adrenalin with chases and hassles, with bunnies and puppies and with child-sized hard cover books to read.

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Silly Jemima Puddleduck (Trix Vivier), given context and life by the Collie dog (JT Medupe).

Shana Tova



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Property market: Is the glass half full or half empty?

ALISON GOLDBERG

An estimated 10 per cent of the white population in SA today earns less than R3 000 per month. Between 1998 and 2002 unemployment among whites increased by 74 per cent, even though it was still much lower than among blacks.

This increasing white unemployed “underclass” around the country has been negatively affected by affirmative action and is, therefore, not bondable, says property economist Erwin Rode, commenting on second quarter house prices, quoting from Helpende Hand, a welfare division of Solidarity.

Rode noted that the affordable segment of the housing market, that is occupying homes below 80 square metres, is “probably” the most indebted. He attributes the indebtedness in the market to the fact that South Africans have become reckless consumers like their counterparts in the US and UK, failing to save or invest.

Among second quarter housing reviews, it was in the lowest segment of the market, at the R250 000 and below level, that the most growth was recorded. This by Lightstone, which tracks deeds office activity, reporting nominal growth of 9,9 per cent, owing to demand outstripping supply.

According to the Rode Report on



Knysna: good value for money right now, if you can afford it

the State of the Property Market in the second quarter, nationally rentals in the R750 000 to R1,5 million range of flats and houses grew by five per cent and four per cent respectively, while townhouses lagged behind at one per cent.

Absa’s finding was that middle-segment (80m² - 400m² and priced up to R3,6m) house price deflation continued in both nominal and real terms in the second quarter of this year. In the affordable (40 - 79 sq m - R500 000 - and luxury - R3,6m to R13,4m) categories, nominal house price growth remained in positive territory to the middle of the year.

However, after inflation of 5,5 per cent, house prices in real terms grew fractionally in Absa’s affor-

able market (Lightstone’s takes in the 40 sq m and below market as well, which accounts for the difference), and were down about 2,6 per cent year-on-year in the luxury market.

The statistics on the housing market highlight basic problems in the economy, some of which could be addressed. Strike action and work stoppages in the mining industry in the first quarter – carrying on in the second quarter – caused a major contraction in mining production, resulting in a downward revision of GDP for the year to 2,7 per cent.

Impaired credit recordings in the first quarter amounted to 46,4 per cent or 9,05 million credit-active consumers of a total 19,49 million.

Absa property analyst Jacques

du Toit reported unsecured lending by households continued to grow at a relatively fast pace in the first half of the year and was a situation that needed constant close monitoring in order to determine if and when it might reach bubble proportions.

Early indications are that unemployment rose further in the second quarter, from 25.2 per cent in the first quarter.

For those who can afford to buy, the timing could not be better. It is for this reason that Lew Geffen, chairman of Sotheby’s International Lew Geffen, reported “the strongest quarter we’ve had in years, in terms of both turnover and prices.

“In my market, where prices average R2,5m and where there is

not much stress, people are generally getting on with their lives, moving from cheaper to more expensive homes.

“Buyers realise that the market cannot get any lower. If they need an extra bedroom or entertainment room, this is the time to buy. When the market is in full tilt, returns on the more expensive houses will be greater.

“Low coastal property prices was one of the salient features of Absa’s second quarter review. FNB came out with a survey showing that prices 40 per cent lower from their peak four to five years ago, have recovered by 10 per cent.

“Add inflation over that period, one looks at prices 30 per cent plus 15 per cent lower, that is 45 per cent down. So basically one can’t get cheaper or better deals. There’s more stress in coastal provinces than metropolitan areas.

“That includes CT properties which are moving rapidly because they are so low. What cost you R30 million four to five years ago now sells for R18 million.”

Herschel Jawitz, CEO of Jawitz Properties, added: “For anyone who can afford a holiday home, now is the time to buy. Ar-eas like Plettenberg Bay, Knysna and Ballito, are offering really good value for holiday homes and apartments.”

World News in Brief

Six Jewish teens arrested in attack on Jerusalem Arab

JERUSALEM - Six Jewish teens have been arrested in connection with an attack on an Arab resident of eastern Jerusalem that left the victim with a broken leg.

Jerusalem police arrested five of the teens last Saturday night, two days after Ibrahim Abu Taha, 28, was attacked in downtown Jerusalem. A sixth teen was arrested on Sunday.

Taha allegedly was attacked outside the apartment of a Jewish female co-worker from a Jerusalem hotel. He and a Jewish male co-worker had walked the female home after work.

The arrested teens, three of whom are 16 years old, said they attacked Taha because they thought he was “taking advantage” of a Jewish woman, Ynet reported. The Jewish co-worker was not attacked.

The incident comes less than a month after a group of Jewish teens allegedly beat a 17-year-old Israeli Arab in Jerusalem and left him in critical condition. Israeli police described

the assault as a lynching. Police arrested five in the attack, including a 13-year-old.

Earlier in August, Jewish teens were indicted for allegedly firebombing a Palestinian taxi near Gush Etzion, injuring six people, including two children.

Meanwhile, an Arab petrol station attendant from eastern Jerusalem said he was the victim of an anti-Arab attack at work early on Friday morning. (JTA)



Chag Sameach

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‘Face the fear and do it anyway’, got Simone to top of Kilimanjaro

Daniela Peiser, programme co-ordinator
Professional’s Beit Midrash for Women; Rebbetzen
Nechama Brett, director; and Simone Hope, who
spoke about her Mount Kilimanjaro climb at a
Women’s Day breakfast hosted by the group.

Photo: Moira Schneider

MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN

What’s a nice Jewish grandmother doing climbing Mount Kilimanjaro? Simone Hope, who did “the unthinkable” in February last year, shared her story and the lessons she has learned at a Women’s Day breakfast hosted by the Professional’s Beit Midrash for Women, a learning programme now in its second year.

Hope, an observant Jew, was part of a group consisting of 16 men, including her husband, to undertake the expedition. As she says: “If you’d asked me a couple of years ago if I’d climb a mountain, I would have laughed.”

She was, in her own words, “seriously overweight, a real couch potato”, but “really took to heart” Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein’s words: “There is no status quo.”

“I started to redefine myself. I started reading and despite the fact that I was hideously overweight and very, very self-conscious, I joined a gym. After ‘davening’ one day, I started to have bigger dreams,” she recalls.

She started collecting her kit, found a personal trainer and persevered with her preparations, despite threatening to quit three times. She now describes the climb as “the most beautiful gift I’ve ever been given in my entire life”.

On the climb, everything was done in accordance with halacha, including putting up an “eruv” and other Shabbos preparations. She describes the surroundings as “an absolute wonderland” as one ascends further, which included at one point walking above the clouds.

Challenges included the extremely low temperatures which saw her “freezing with all my gear on”, as well as her “terrible fear of heights”. Climbing the Baranka wall was, she says, “the worst day of my life. You don’t look up or down, but just keep climbing and scrambling.”

And then there was altitude sickness and incredibly slippery snow, which at times reached hip level. “If you slide into a crater, they can’t get you out.”

On the lessons she learned, she says: “Everyone is waiting for somebody else to save them from themselves. No-one can make your dreams come true except you.

“You don’t have all the time in the world. I learned the ability to hold on and just keep going, long after I decided to quit. There is no status quo - the only way to go up is with persistent strength and effort.

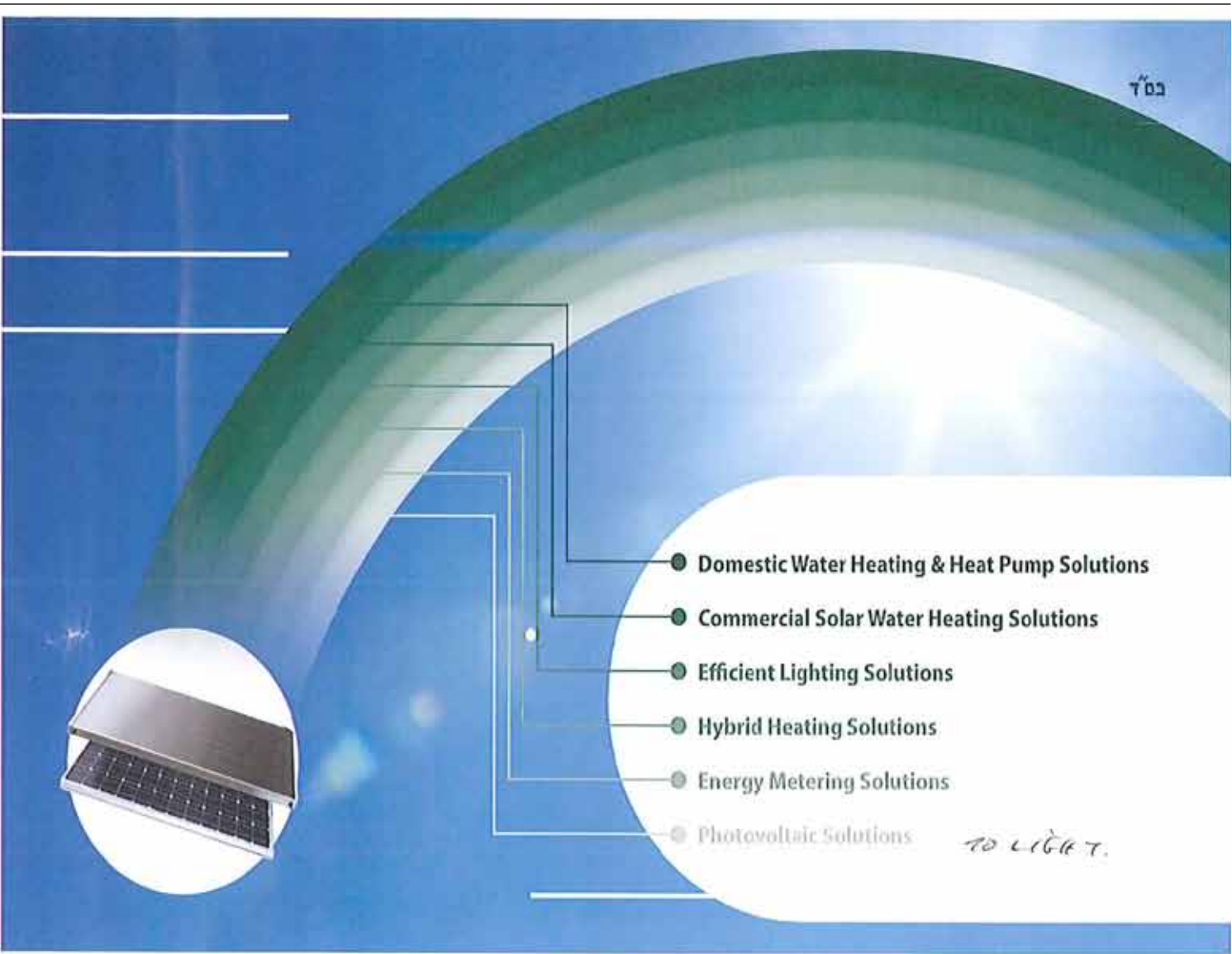
“I chose to take the mountain one step at a time and follow the sherpas. This was the best lesson on life - we should follow our rabbis and ‘gedolim’.

“I learned the power of gratitude and kept saying: ‘Thank you, Abba.’ Religion is no straitjacket - you can be true to your dreams without compromising halacha.” (Throughout the climb, Hope wore a skirt and several head-coverings).

“I learned that you can choose to behave properly and that there is no shame in getting help. Obstacles are inevitable and necessary - I believe they are simply there to test our resolve.

“Na-aseh V’nishmah. Face the fear and do it anyway.

“Climbing Kilimanjaro changed me forever.”



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Scandinavian Jews brace for fresh attempts to ban circumcision

**CANAAN LIPSHITZ
COPENHAGEN**

Untrained rabbis mutilating hysterical babies while black-clad men stand around praying: The description of a Jewish circumcision in the mainstream Danish media indicates the xenophobia creeping through Scandinavia, some Jewish leaders fear.

“Around the baby stand ten black-clad men - a must in every Jewish circumcision,” the text declares. “As usual in Judaism, women aren’t allowed to be present. An untrained rabbi mutilates the baby, who cries and bleeds profusely as the men pray.”

The words typify “the level of the current debate on circumcision in Denmark,” said Finn Schwarz, president of the Jewish Congregation of Copenhagen.

Schwarz says the false account of a Jewish circumcision indicates the increasing intolerance toward the ritual, couched in xenophobia. Buttressed in recent bans elsewhere in Europe, Schwarz worries that a Danish push could turn into parliamentary action on circumcision in Denmark as early as this year.

The false description belongs to Kjeld Koplev, a well-known Danish journalist who converted from Judaism to Christianity. He began telling the story to the media after a court in Cologne, Germany, ruled in June that the non-medical circumcision of a minor amounted to a criminal act. Koplev’s account of how ritual circumcision is child torture and abuse, appeared on television and in an op-ed in the newspaper Politiken.

“When a former Jew says this, people listen,” a frustrated Schwarz told JTA.



Although Scandinavian societies and governments have led opposition to circumcision long before June’s ruling in Cologne, the debate has taken “a nasty turn” since the German court’s ruling, Schwarz says.

Several politicians in Denmark, Norway and Finland said that they were in favour of banning circumcision. Yet no party has submitted a bill to restrict the ritual.

Hostile media are the least of the con-

cerns of Scandinavian circumcision advocates. In 2003, Denmark’s Children’s Ombudsman, a government body, classified circumcision as a children’s rights violation. Its Norwegian counterpart concurs. And Finland’s Child Welfare Union lists circumcision as “violence”.

Schwarz worries that Copenhagen may set a precedent.

Sophie Lohde, speaker of Venstre, Denmark’s largest party, supports a ban, as do speakers of other parties, according to the newspaper Kristeligt Dagbold.

Laura Glavind, a spokesman for the liberal party Venstre, told JTA that the party did “not have enough knowledge” and would take a stand after consulting the Health Ministry.

Detractors of circumcision rely on a survey published in 2008 by the Danish Health Ministry’s research institute, SSI, conducted by Dr Morten Frisch; it indicated that circumcisions caused sexual performance problems.

If a ban does come to pass, Danish Jews would “pack up [their] suitcases and end 400 years of Jewish life in Denmark,” Bent Lexner, Denmark’s chief rabbi, said.

“It deeply saddens me,” Schwarz said. “For centuries we’ve been very important for this society. Yet now we hear our customs are barbaric and we need to evolve.”

Some anti-immigration campaigners are using the circumcision issue to prevent what they call Denmark’s “Islamisation”. A nation of 5,5 million, Denmark has approximately 210 000 Muslims.

He believes that some right-wing Danish politicians do not raise the subject to avoid being seen as targeting Jews. “If not for the Jewish community, circumcision would’ve

already been banned here.”

Danish Muslims, Schwarz says, are happy to let Jews lead the defence. Whereas Jews circumcise boys when they are eight days old, many Muslims are circumcised much older in childhood.

“The Jewish circumcision looks much more peaceful,” Schwarz said. “The Muslims have a bigger problem in the debate.”

The debate, however, is of little concern to Sweden’s Jews. In 2001, the community lobbied successfully for special legislation on circumcision of male babies younger than two months.

The law says that circumcision of newborns may be performed by a “licenced professional”. The country’s Jewish ritual circumcisers, or mohelim, receive their licence from the country’s health board, but a nurse or doctor must still be present when they perform the procedure.

Children older than two months must be circumcised in a hospital by a doctor.

Norwegian Jews, who number around 700, last year formulated a similar compromise with their government, but it has not yet been enacted.

Finland’s Jewish community of approximately 1 400 has little to fear either, according to Gideon Bolotowsky, president of the country’s Central Council of Jewish Communities.

Backpedalling can be observed elsewhere in Europe. A Swiss hospital that had imposed a moratorium on circumcisions ended it this month. Last month, an Austrian court ruled in favour of allowing circumcisions, ending a brief ban in some state-run hospitals. (JTA)

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A NEW TIME HAS COME

World News in Brief

The pond is now located in Carleton Park on land donated by George Carleton. (JTA)

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Jewish filmmaker puts lens on Jewish African tribes

**RINA BASSIST
PRETORIA**

Filmmaker Laurence Gavron is on a journey to document lost Jewish tribes in Africa. The French-born Gavron, who has made Senegal her home since 1989, says she was immediately taken by the project, which she says combines her passion for Africa with the mystery of rediscovering Judaism.

The film, titled “Black Jews, Juifs noir en Afrique”, focuses on a dozen African tribes - in Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon and other countries - each with a Jewish story. Some claim to be descendants of the Bible’s 10 Lost Tribes; others believe their ancestors were Jews who emigrated from Judea to Yemen.

Rabbinical authorities have not accepted any of the groups as Jewish under halachah, although all the tribes strive to be recognised as such at some level or another.

Edith Bruder, who has been studying these Jewish groups for more than a decade and wrote “The black Jews of Africa, history, identity, religion”, turned to Gavron for the film, which is expected to be released in the coming months.

“In sub-Saharan Africa, you can find ‘Judaic’ tribes in Ghana, Nigeria, Mali, Uganda, Cameroon, South Africa, Zimbabwe and even in Sao Tome and other countries. There are

many of them,” Bruder said.

The two women are documenting Sabbath celebrations in remote African villages, Ghanaian Jews practising circumcision and Jewish-African traditional marriage ceremonies. They have even been deep into the forests filming black Jews preparing their “kosher” meals - in their own tradition, the way the Torah explains it simply - not mixing the meat of the veal with its mother’s cow milk.

Filming a Shabbat service in Ghana was a moving experience, Gavron says. The French connection between Bruder and Gavron seems predestined: Gavron with her fascination for Africa and Jewish roots, and Bruder’s researching of “Jewish-related subjects” for most of her career. Their producer, too, is French: Anne Schushman of Scuch Productions.

“I am very interested in Jewish people, being one, and in blacks, living in Africa and having become Senegalese,” Gavron said. “So black Jews is something that was more than perfect for me.”

In the introduction to her documentary project, Gavron writes: “Who has the right to proclaim himself a Jew? Who can assert his connection to Judaism? Are these black Jews really a part of the Jewish people? And if not, why do they wish to be included?”

Her own connection to Judaism - a sense of peoplehood and culture - has mostly been background music, she says, and making the film has “rekindled” those feelings.

Gavron, who keeps busy making films, writing detective stories, making video clips and curating photo expositions, among other pursuits, recently made history in her adopted homeland. In July, she became the first woman toubab - Senegalese naturalised white person - to be on an electoral list for parliament. With a victory, she would have become the first Jewish member of Senegal’s parliament.

Gavron, 57, hadn’t given much thought to political involvement in the Muslim-dominated country until just a few months ago. At a cocktail party in Dakar, the Senegalese capital, she began speaking to Mamadou Lamine Diallo, who heads Tekki, a left-wing party.

“I told him how much I share with him the values defended by his party: transparency, citizenship activism and ethics. He immediately asked me if I cared to join as a candidate for the upcoming elections.”

The offer “enchanted me,” Gavron said. “I felt it was a wonderful way to repay this country, which has embraced me without hesitation. It is my way to pay my gratitude back to the Senegalese people.”

Gavron was able to run only



Photograph: Courtesy Laurence Gavron

Laurence Gavron, a French-born filmmaker whose film “Black Jews, Juifs noir en Afrique” tells the story of African tribes that claim to have Jewish ancestry.

because the Senegalese parliament adopting an equal gender representation act two years ago, obliging political parties to present an equal number of male and female candidates. And although she did not win the election, the experience convinced her to remain politically active.

Senegal has undergone significant changes in the past three years, most recently choosing Macky Sall as president over incumbent Abdoulaye Wade, who was criticised for his grandiose living style. That, along with the new laws designed to promote gender equality, may well play

in Gavron’s favour.

As to her “home party”, Gavron is the perfect match for what Tekki is striving to achieve, says El Hadrji Sarr, a Tekki leader who supported Gavron’s candidacy.

“Laurence is a Senegalese in every means and ways, even though she is white,” he said. “She has a natural place within our electoral list.”

Gavron has long split her time among France, Africa and Israel. Although a Senegal citizen who makes her permanent home in Dakar, she says that when she visits Paris, she suddenly feels that is home again, as if she never left the place. Israel, meanwhile, remains her spiritual homeland, she says.

Her first visit to Senegal, a former French colony in western Africa, came in 1987. She made it her permanent home in 2000. She became a Senegalese citizen in 2007.

The night before she left Paris for the permanent move to Dakar, Gavron says she was inexplicably drawn to visit the Jewish quarter of Paris.

“I curiously found myself walking towards the Marais,” she recalls, where she bought a mezuzah.

“Being Jewish is important for me, even though I do not practise Judaism every day,” she said. “I am attached to my Jewish identity and to the cultural elements which differentiate me from others.” (JTA)

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A Ramallah-born terrorist turned Shin Bet informant



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

ALISON GOLDBERG

Mosab Hassan Yousef (pictured), son of a Hamas founder, Sheikh Hassan Yousef, was brought out by the SAZF and the Israel Centre from California, where he lives, to Johannesburg last Wednesday night under heavy security. Eschewing any discussion about politics, he told the audience at the HOD that what he knew might have expired by now.

The 34-year-old, Ramallah-born terrorist turned Shin Bet informant, said he preferred to talk about his personal journey and the human drama of his life. Arrested at the age of 17 by the Shin Bet, two weeks after he had acquired some guns - which didn't work - and he had decided to become a terrorist, Yousef described his life in prison where, because of his witnessing the brutality of Hamas prisoners towards their own, he turned into a Shin Bet informant (1997 - 2007) and convert to Christianity (1999).

About his conversion to Christianity he said he had been particularly moved by Jesus's Sermon on the Mount and his instruction "to love thy enemy".

In his long account, given to a packed audience which included Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Israel's deputy chief

of mission Ya'acov Finkelstein, Yousef mentioned his escape from the West Bank and his life as undercover agent, which, he said, was accomplished under the guise of his being arrested by Israeli intelligence and which involved throwing a curfew over the whole area. This he passed off as "sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do".

Shimon Shimalia of the Israel Centre, commended him afterwards on his courage to speak the truth and gave him a copy of Nelson Mandela's Long Walk to Freedom. Yousef thanked SAZF Chairman Avrom Krengel who had expressed his gratitude for the Israeli lives Yousef had saved and hoped that Yousef's life would serve as a beacon to Arabs and Israelis.

Yousef's life is the subject of his autobiography, Son of Hamas: A Gripping Account of Terror, Betrayal, Political Intrigue, and Unthinkable Choices, (2010) which he co-authored.

It was on sale at the event and many were queuing up afterwards to have him sign copies. He plans to make this into a film with Israeli producer Sam Feuer; along with another on the Prophet Muhammad, based on accounts of 8th century historian Ibn Ishaq. He attributes the conflict in the Middle East to the ideological dimension and Muhammad's warmongering, which he wants to expose.

Yousef is credited with preventing dozens of suicide attacks and assassinations of Israelis, exposing Hamas cells and hunting down many militants, including his own father. To pass himself off as the genuine thing, he himself had to spend 26 months in Israeli prisons.

Notable were the dissonances he has to cope with: his hatred for Israel from birth; his respect for Israeli intelligence; and his desire to show Hamas how they were their own worst enemies.

Saving lives was his justification for being an informant: "It was the right thing to do". But his caveat for this work he told his handlers, was that no-one be killed on account of him.

He added that he was proud to be invited by Zionist organisations and also, that if he had to do it all over again, he would.

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Today, Friday (September 14)

• UZLC has as its guest speaker, David Batzofin, who will talk on “Changing Horses in Midstream”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria at 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (September 16)

• Roni Lea singing/playing keyboards, presents a “Rosh Hashanah Special Brunch/Lunch” of Jewish and Israeli live music. Songs from the Six Day War, Kasablan, army bands, Arik Einstein, Shlomo Artzi and many more. Venue: Kosher Mi Vami, 1 Long Ave, Glenhazel, Time: From 11:30 till 14:30. Entrance free. Information: Tel (011) 440-4933.

Wednesday (September 19)

• RCHCC screens a suspenseful documentary, “Wordplay”, directed by Patrick Creadon. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R60 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378), e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, www.greatpark.co.za

• UJW CT adult education division hosts Paul Hoffman, advocate and director of Constitutional Rights, who will once again ask: “Will the Hawks Fly or Should the Eagles...” Venue:

Stonehaven. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Entrance: R20 (incl refreshments). Enquiries: (021) 434-9555 (mornings only).

Sunday (September 23)

• RCHCC presents “Woody Allen”, a documentary directed by Robert Weide. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 18:30. Donation: R60 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, www.greatpark.co.za

Sunday (September 30)

• Second Innings hosts Hedy Davis, historian, researcher and editor of the Muizenberg Exhibition, on “Muizenberg - the Early Hotels and the Balabostes who Made the Village Strong”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Information: Grecia (011) 532-9718.

• Hospice Flea Boot Market at the Checkers Car Park on Barry Hertzog Avenue in Emmarentia. Every first, and last, Sunday of each month from 08:00 until 13:00. An assortment of goods, new and second hand. Bric-a-brac, honey, plants, hardware, furniture, antiques and special presents. Information: Madeline (011) 794-5464 or Amanda at Hospice (011) 728-1052.

Wednesday (October 3)

UJW CT adult education division hosts Sedick Isaacs who will talk on “Education in a Seriously Hostile Environment”. Venue: Stonehaven. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Entrance: R20 (incl refreshments). Enquiries: (021) 434-9555 (mornings only).

• WIZO Forum hosts its “World WIZO Bible Day” with Nicole Landau, inspirational speaker, on “Making Meaningful Changes in Your Life”, as well as presentation of Rebecca Sieff Awards. Venue: Oxford Shul Succah. Cost R40. Contact: Sandy: (011) 645-2515.

Sunday (October 7)

• Hospice Flea Boot Market at the Checkers Car Park on Barry Hertzog Avenue in Emmarentia. Every first, and last, Sunday of each month from 08:00 until 13:00. An assortment of goods, new and second hand. Bric-a-brac, honey, plants, hardware, furniture, antiques and special presents. Information: Madeline (011) 794-5464 or Amanda at Hospice (011) 728-1052.

Sunday (October 14)

• WIZO Etgar Invites you to visit three of Johannesburg’s prettiest gardens. There will be a guest speaker and tea. Cost: R190 per person. Booking: Helen Maisels Trisk, 083-267-2607. Credit card Bookings can be made through Sandy on (011) 645-2515.

• Israeli folkdance - health and fun, every Wednesday at 20:00 at King David Sandton. Beginners at 18:30. Contact Anat 083-326-7095, Miri 082-773-8248 or Ora 083-288-7202.

• Join WIZO every Thursday for a “Lunch & Learn” shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz, 13:00 - 14:00 at Beyachad. Information: Joyce, (011) 640-2416.

• Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation has a Friday evening service every week in shul, starting at 18:45. Contact (021) 886-5257.

• The Yiddish Academy offers weekly basic, intermediate and advanced classes on Monday evenings at 19:30, Tuesday mornings at 10:30 and Thursday evenings at 19:30 at the RCHCC, Glenhove Road, Houghton. Conversational groups. Details: e-mail yiddishacademy@gmail.com or call Hazel Cohen on (011) 728-8088.

• Supervised bridge with Jeff Sapire Tuesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (intermediary) and Wednesday morning 10:00 - 12:00 (advanced), at the Clive M Beck Auditorium. Booking: Hazel or René, (011) 728-8088/8378. E-mail: hazelc@greatpark.co.za or renes@greatpark.co.za


• Beis Midrash Chofetz Chaim is offering a second ma’ariv minyan every weekday evening from Monday to Friday at 21:00, cnr Elray and Michel Streets, Raedene. Open to the broader community. Don’t fret if you need a later minyan. Secure parking space is provided on-site.

• Sunday Scrabble Club meets every Sunday at 10:00 at Zahava’s, Grant Avenue, Norwood, off 9th Street. Cost R5. Players of all strengths welcome. Larry 082-888-5355.

• Orchid Florist, a project of WIZO Johannesburg, offers beautiful arrangements of flowers and fruit for every occasion. No occasion too large or too small. Contact Annette (011) 728-4513.

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Safe, multi-functional anti-inflammatory/anti-allergic drugs developed at Hebrew University

JERUSALEM - A synthetic, anti-inflammatory and anti-allergic family of drugs to combat a variety of illnesses, while avoiding detrimental side effects, has been developed by a Hebrew University of Jerusalem researcher.

The researcher is Saul Yedgar, the Walter and Greta Stiel Professor of Heart Studies at the Institute for Medical Research Israel-Canada at the Hebrew University Faculty of Medicine.

Inflammatory/allergic diseases affect billions of people worldwide, and treatments for these conditions are a major focus of the pharmaceutical industry. The most common drugs currently

used to treat these numerous diseases are steroids, which are potent but are associated with severe side effects.

These include metabolic changes, organ-specific effects and even psychotropic side effects.

For decades, alternatives, such as biological NSAIDs (non-steroidal alternative anti-inflammatory drugs) have been the focus of the pharmaceutical industry. The resulting drugs have been commercially successful, but have not produced genuine alternatives to steroids, due to their limitations.

Synthetic NSAIDs are less

potent and have their own side effects, including cardiovascular disorders, stomach bleeding and respiratory disorders. The biological drugs are costly and, must be injected and have rare but severe side effects.

Inflammatory/allergic diseases present different symptoms affecting different organs, such as skin inflammations; airway injury and allergy; osteoarthritis and rheumatoid arthritis; intestinal inflammation; central nervous system inflammation, as well as atherosclerosis and cancer metastasis.

All of them share biochemical mechanisms.

In Prof Yedgar's lab at the Hebrew University, he and his associates have designed and constructed an entirely novel synthetic generation of drugs that control these biochemical mechanisms thereby providing multi-functional, anti-inflammatory drugs (MFAIDs).

MFAIDs have shown excellent safety and were found efficient in treating diverse inflammatory/allergic conditions in animal models, using different ways of administration.

This platform technology has been exclusively licenced from the Hebrew University through the university's Yissum Tech-

nology Transfer Company to Morria Biopharmaceuticals PLC (a British company), which is currently developing these drugs to treat inflammatory diseases of the airways (hay-fever, cystic fibrosis), the skin (eczema), the eye (conjunctivitis) and the gut (colitis, Crohn's disease).

For his groundbreaking work, Prof. Yedgar was one of the winners of this year's Kaye Innovation Awards at the Hebrew University. The Kaye Awards have been given annually since 1994 to develop innovative methods and inventions with good commercial potential which will benefit the university and society.

Noam Gershony hands Israel its first Paralympic gold medal



JACK MILNER

Whatever any top sportsman has accomplished is a magnificent achievement. Whatever any Paralympian has attained is even more remarkable as it has taken far more than just

Israel’s Noam Gershony with his gold medal after winning the men’s wheelchair tennis singles event at the 2012 Paralympics in London.

hours in a gym and practice – it has taken the strain of first having to triumph over adversity.

Every Paralympian has his or her own story. Some people were born with their disability while for others it came about through some form of tragedy. Natalie du Toit lost her leg in a motorbike accident while Shireen Sapiro was injured while water-skiing.

Each person first had to come to terms with his or her new circumstances, and then commit to a new life.

Israel won their first gold medal at the Paralympics last week when Noam Gershony won the wheelchair tennis singles title in London.

Gershony’s journey began in the aftermath of the devastating helicopter crash that killed his co-pilot. Gershony spent the time recovering from the life-threatening injuries, wondering whether he would ever play sport again.

Five years later, the shy 29-year-old is at the centre of Israel’s wheelchair tennis revolution - and returns home with two Paralympic medals - gold in singles and bronze in the doubles with teammate Shruga Weinberg.

Gershony, an Apache helicopter pilot, was injured and his co-pilot killed when their craft collided with another helicopter during Israel’s 2006 war with Lebanon. After extensive rehabilitation, he took up surfing and wheelchair tennis.

The persistence he displayed in overcoming that ordeal, no doubt came in handy during the Paralympic semifinals when he found himself down to local favourite Jamie Burdekin of Great Britain.

As in life, he rallied back after the first set to defeat Burdekin, advancing to the finals, where he beat the top-ranked

player in the world, David Wagner of the US.

Gershony says he never expected to win gold at the London Paralympics and his modest, almost bashful smile upon wheeling up to the top of the podium said as much.

Only one Israeli has ever won gold at the Olympic Games, windsurfer Gal Fridman in 2004. Gershony’s gold, though, captured on the less-heralded stage of the Paralympics, was much celebrated in the Israeli media last weekend.

Last week Wednesday, Gershony and Weinberg combined to win bronze in the doubles. They collected their medals wearing black armbands to mark the 40th anniversary of the Munich massacre.

The men’s success means Israel’s tennis squad will return home with a medal haul far exceeding expectations.

According to the London-based Jewish Chronicle, Noam’s parents and sister travelled to London to watch him compete.

After last week Tuesday’s 6-1 6-1 victory over American Bryan Barten, Noam’s father, Moshe, recalled the moment an IDF officer arrived at the family’s home near Tel Aviv to break the news of the crash.

“When you hear that knock on the door at 03:00, you know that something very bad has happened. They took us to the hospital and said the situation with Noam was critical.

“We had to wait about a week before they told us he was almost out of danger.”

In Moshe Gershony’s eyes, his son was already a champion: “For us the main thing is that he is healthy, he can do almost everything he did before the accident, he even does water-skiing.

“Noam has come back to life.”

Furman realises two dreams - Bafana Bafana and Brazil



JACK MILNER

England-based soccer player Dean Furman, finally got his call-up for Bafana Bafana. The 25-year-old Oldham Athletic captain was in the starting line-up that faced Brazil in Sao Paulo last week Friday.

The midfielder, who was born in Cape Town but moved to the UK with his parents when he was five, had impressed coach Gordon Igesund in practice and the coach decided to include him in the starting XI.

He was substituted in the 60th minute, but according to some experts, Furman exhibited loads of talent. “I thought he was

one of the better players on the field,” said veteran football journalist Sy Lerman.

Jonty Mark, journalist for The Star, was also impressed by Furman as he watched the youngster train with the squad at the Palmeiras training camp in Sao Paulo. “One player is a particular bundle of energy, with his voice as well as his feet.

“Charging around in the midfield, and yelling out instructions at his teammates, is midfielder Dean Furman, who seems remarkably adapted to his surroundings for a man who is only in a Bafana camp for the second time in his career.”

“That’s just my character,” says Dean Furman. “Being vocal, helping others, and always trying to improve - that’s just how I am and there is no point being any different here.”

He was excited at the prospect of getting his national call-up. “It would be incredible,” said Furman of the opportunity to face Brazil on their own turf.

“To be with the national squad is something I have always dreamt of, regardless of who it is against. But to play against Brazil, one of the best teams in the world, would be a bonus.”

It was a bonus that he received.



L'Shanah Tovah

Wishing you health, happiness and success in the New Year!

World News in Brief

ISRAEL WILL NOT RECEIVE LULAVS FROM SINAI

JERUSALEM - Israel likely will not have palm fronds from the Sinai for this year's Succot lulavs.

Terror in the Sinai and a lack of communication between Israeli and Egyptian agricultural agencies, are the reasons that the palm fronds will not be imported, Israel National News reported on Monday.

Last year, Egypt banned the export of the palm fronds to Israel, leading to fears of a lulav shortage. Israel's Agricultural Ministry then encouraged local palm

farmers to increase production.

Avner Rotem, manager of date palms on Kibbutz Tirat Tzvi in the Beit Shean Valley, told INN there should be enough lulavs grown in Israel to meet domestic needs and for export. Israel previously had imported 700 000 palm fronds a year in the run-up to Succot, about 40 per cent of annual demand. Another 700 000 of the two million lulavs used in Diaspora Jewish communities, also came from Egypt.



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