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(page 20)

• south african • jewish report

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The disruption at the piano recital, as two security guards (centre) confront a demonstrator approaching pianist Yossi Reshef (right back in suit and tie). Prof Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph to the left of the demonstrator is photographing the pandemonium. A frightened couple (bottom left) hold each other as the tension rises.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Israeli pianist: victim of thuggery

ROBYN SASSEN

Pandemonium broke out on Tuesday evening at the Atrium in the South West Engineering Building on Wits' West Campus, when Wits University Palestinian Solidarity Committee members disrupted a recital by Berlin-based Israeli-born, internationally celebrated pianist, Yossi Reshef.

The concert was attended by dignitaries of the Jewish community, diplomatic corps and the art world. As befits an audience of this status, private security personnel were present.

Victor Gordon, director of Tararam, the cultural fund promoting Israeli culture in South Africa, which was responsible for paying Reshef's flights for his national tour, commented: "Immediately I heard this was

happening, I attempted to contact Wits' two vice-chancellors. Both Professors Adam Habib and Loyiso Nongxa, who is also Wits' principal, are currently in New York, attempting to raise funds for the university from Jewish benefactors and alumni.

"About 60 protesters came in through the door of the Atrium, which had been locked, and which they had broken; they blew vuvuze-

las; some sat on the piano. It shows how many more notches the BDS's antagonism towards us has been ratcheted."

Professor Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, a music lecturer at Wits, deemed the disruption "out of hand. The protesters made the situation very tense from before the recital; some audience members did in fact turn away before the concert.

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Chavez and the Jews: A sorry tale

In attacking Israel, the late Hugo Chavez inadvertently undermined the arguments of those who say anti-Zionism is one thing, anti-Semitism something else.



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Rabbi Manis Friedman regrets YouTube fallout on abuse statement

Rabbi Yossy Goldman: "... knowing the man and his reputation, I knew there had to be more to the story than face value."

8, 21

Cape Board launches innovative Black and Jewish entrepreneurs forum

Sandile Sibeko, a developer of corporate wellness programmes said starting a business was challenging; he hoped to interact with like-minded people to share ideas and learn from them.

4



SUPPLEMENT: Golden Years

"And now the end is near//And so I face the final curtain//I'll state my case of which I'm certain.//I've lived a life that's full, I travelled each and ev'ry highway //And more, much more than this. I did it my way." Frank Sinatra (lyrics by Paul Anka)

11-14

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The Jewish Report will be running a brides' competition, soon!

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18:09	18:58	East London

KASHRUT ALERT

MATZAH NOT CERTIFIED FOR PESACH

The kashrut department of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues says it has been found that there are a number of products that are being sold as “matzah” which are not suitable for Pesach.

It urges members of the community to check that the matzah they buy has a reliable hechsher and is kosher for Pesach.

The Beth Din certifies both Mozmark’s and Rakusen’s matzah as kosher for Pesach.

The kashrut department explains that chametz is only created by the fermentation of flour from one of the five major grains in the presence of water.

Fermentation in the presence of all other liquids - such as fruit juices, wine or eggs - cannot become chametz.

The mixture commonly known as “egg matzah” (although it is usually made today with apple or grape juice) may therefore be eaten during Pesach without any concerns of chametz, as long as no water is added.

If even a drop of water is added to the mixture or to any of its ingredients, the mixture becomes chametz almost immediately.

“It is for this reason that the custom among Ashkenazim is to refrain from using egg matzah during Pesach, unless it is absolutely necessary for children or the elderly who would have difficulty eating regular matzah; and even then they may not fulfil the mitzvah of eating matzah at the seder with egg matzah,” the Beth Din says in a statement.

Once again, Israel Apartheid Week hits our shores...

STEVEN GRUZD

South African Jewry braced itself for the ninth Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), which started on March 11 and runs until the 17th. This annual event - which includes speakers, films, rallies and performances all claiming that Israel is an apartheid state - plays out mainly on university campuses in over 250 cities around the world every February and March.

IAW claims that it seeks to highlight the plight of the Palestinians and thereby gain support for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. In reality, claim its critics, it is used as an opportunity to demonise and delegitimise Israel at every turn, as well as stifle pro-Israel views about the Middle East conflict.

This year’s IAW in South Africa was launched on March 10 at a rather poorly-attended press conference at the Apartheid Museum. Messages of support were delivered by the Congress of South African Trade Unions (Cosatu), the SA Communist Party (SACP), the SA Municipal Workers’ Union (SAMWU), the National Education Health and Allied Workers’ Union (NEHAWU), the ANC Youth League, Christian group Kairos Southern Africa and the mostly Jewish-led StopTheJNF.

There were almost more people on the panel than in the audience, suggesting that many in the mainstream media dismiss IAW for the propaganda circus that it is. It is often the Jewish media that gives IAW undue attention.

At the launch, Mbuyiseni Ndlozi of BDS SA, called on Jewish communal organisations to “renounce their



Israeli Apartheid Week graffiti outside the Apartheid Museum, Ormonde.

Photograph by Ilan Ossendryver

racist and colonial Zionist projects tied to the criminal state of Israel, in the interests of freedom, justice and equality”.

The SACP called for the “complete ‘de-Zionisation’ of our economy”, and SAMWU has impressed on its shop stewards in every municipality to question the use of Israeli goods and services.

Its representative said: “In just about every corner you can look in, you’ll find that there’s Israeli business, Israeli advisers, Israeli consultants, Israel products for sale... we have pledged ourselves to make every municipality in this country an apartheid Israel-free zone.” Nehawu mentioned that it planned monthly protests outside the US and Israeli embassies.

IAW is widespread in South Africa, with events this year scheduled in Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg, Lenasia, Manzini (in Swaziland), Orange Farm, Pietermaritzburg, Pretoria, Port Elizabeth, Stellenbosch and

Vanderbijlpark.

Several senior ruling alliance figures feature in IAW events.

For example, ANC National Chairman Baleka Mbete, spoke at an event at the University of Johannesburg on “The bond between Palestine and South Africa” on March 13, and on the same day ANC Deputy Secretary General Jessie Duarte spoke at the University of Pretoria on “South African and ANC support for Palestine”.

Dr Blade Nzimande, Secretary General of the SACP and Minister for Higher Education and Training, is set to speak at a rally in Orange Farm on March 17. Struggle veterans Denis Goldberg and Ahmed Kathrada spoke in Cape Town and Port Elizabeth respectively. Several events featured Palestinian Susan Abulhawa, who wrote the novel “Mornings in Jenin”.

IAW is also receiving increased numbers of endorsements and support from civil society structures

(including unions) in South Africa, with over 50 groups having their emblem appearing on this year’s official IAW poster.

Apart from the organisations mentioned at the press conference, supporters include the Centre for Civil Society, the Muslim Judicial Council, National Union of Metalworkers SA, Open Shuhada Street, SA Artists Against Apartheid, the SA Council of Churches, SA Democratic Teachers Union, the Student Representative Councils of the University of Pretoria and the Witwatersrand, and the Young Communists League.

Jewish communal organisations are closely monitoring and documenting IAW events. On March 12, a performance at Wits University by Israeli concert pianist Yossi Reshef was disrupted by IAW protesters. Complaints have been laid with the university administration, which has assured the SAJBD that it will deal seriously with the incident.

SAJBD reports Deputy Minister Fransman to SAHRC

The SA Jewish Board of Deputies has requested the SA Human Rights Commission to intervene in a matter concerning inflammatory remarks made by Deputy Minister Marius Fransman, (pictured) which the Board in a media release calls “divisive rhetoric”.

“The SAJBD decided to approach the SAHRC after several requests to Mr Fransman’s offices for a meeting to discuss and clarify his statements, received no response.

“In a radio interview broadcast by Voice of the Cape on February 27, Mr Fransman, speaking in his other capacity as ANC leader in the Western Cape, condemned the Democratic Alliance for allegedly giving building contracts previously been held by Muslims, to Jewish businessmen.

“The substance and context of these remarks clearly intimated that in the view of Mr Fransman and his party, the Jewish community in Cape Town was unfairly benefiting economically at the expense of the Muslim community.

“Specifically, Mr Fransman stated the following: ‘We saw that the DA had given over building contracts... as well as lots of contracts in Woodstock and Observatory that historically were in the hands of Muslim participants and now they have given it to people from the Jewish community; so that we’ve picked up and so that is not right. We must not divide our people.’

“The religious affiliations of the individuals allegedly concerned should have been regarded as entirely irrelevant. Instead, Mr Fransman

made a point of drawing attention to them, and did so, moreover, in terms suggesting that Muslims were being unfairly disadvantaged in order to benefit the Jewish community.”

Mary Kluk, National Chairman of the SAJBD, said that pitting one religious community against another for vote-catching purposes, was deplorable under any circumstances, particularly coming from a high-ranking member of government.

“The SAJBD unequivocally condemns attempts to pursue political goals through resorting to such inflammatory practices. Doing so diametrically contradict the ethos of tolerance and inter-group harmony on which our society is proud to base itself,” she said.



jewish report

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Israeli pianist: victim of thuggery...

Continued from page 1

“Then about 30 minutes into the Beethoven Sonata, the first work in the programme, the protesters burst into the auditorium, having broken the locked doors. Everyone was very traumatised. My colleague, Jonathan Crossley, was chased by the protesters.

“I had played a role in organising Reshef’s debut tour of South Africa, on his initiative; it was a dreadful coincidence that it happened to be at the same time as Israel Apartheid Week.”

On Monday, Reshef performed at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, and, Gordon explained, people were concerned, given Rhodes’ status as a “hotbed of anti-Israel activity” that there would be trouble, but “it was benign. The auditorium was half full, but there was a standing ovation and an encore.”

David Macgregor in The Port Elizabeth Herald, wrote that at Rhodes, audience members were “forced to walk through a tunnel of peace activists handing out pamphlets for a nearby Israel Apartheid Week exhibition.”

Dr Jeff Brukman, head of Rhodes’ music department, was unsuccessfully pressurised by 45 Rhodes academics “to pull the plug on the event. Attempts by one academic to get concert opponents to vocally express their dissatisfaction, fell on deaf ears when the protesters agreed to stick to a pre-arranged agreement not to harass patrons.”

Macgregor cited Rhodes media liaison officer Zamuxolo Matiwana, who confirmed that “the Israel Embassy and state organs played no direct part in any of the tour arrangements.”

In Stellenbosch on Wednesday evening, for a further concert in his tour, shortly before performing, Reshef commented on how appalled he was at the Wits protest, but added: “Despite all these attempts to stop the performance, I have loved performing here and I definitely want to come back.

“I appreciate all the hard work that everyone has done to make my stay here more comfortable. I got so many letters apologising on behalf of the university for what happened.”

Zaidel-Rudolph continued: “When I realised there was to be a protest that coincided with the concert, I was initially not nervous. I’ve been associated with Wits for 36 years and I know how the students can behave. But this was unprecedented. The police were called, but shortly after they came onto campus, they were instructed to leave.”

Shirona Patel of the Registrar’s office confirmed that this was indeed the case; in terms of university protocol, police may only be called on campus to intervene in a situation if they are instructed to do so by the head of the university’s security.

“I believe that there are only a handful of real Muslim agitators on campus,” Zaidel-Rudolph added, “but that they are lobbying



Demonstrators chanting and toyi-toying while disrupting the pianist Yossi Reshef’s concert at WITS. Mbuyiseni Ndlozi, National Spokesman for the Israeli Apartheid Week SA Team, is on the left foreground, with a bandana around his head.

many people to take part in these protests.”

In a statement, issued on Wednesday, Prof Nongxa, in his capacity as vice-chancellor and principal of Wits, apologised for the incident with deep regret. “The disruption of this event points to intolerance of members of the university community and goes against core values espoused by the university.

“The university is investigating this matter and will take the necessary action based on its policies, processes and procedures,” he added, confirming that views and opinions that might be expressed by the university’s Students’ Representative Council or any other student groups on campus, do not represent the official views of the university, “nor are they necessarily an accurate reflection of the views of the majority of students, staff and alumni.”

A victorious statement issued by Tasneen Essop of the Wits University Palestinian Solidarity Committee, relayed the event, adding: “The cancellation (of Reshef’s concert) was celebrated by the protesting students as a ‘cultural boycott of Israel success’.”

The statement quotes politics student Kenneth Mgaga, present at the protest, who states that the concert was funded by the Israeli Embassy, “...a clear violation of the cultural boycott of Israel... The hosting of Reshef in South Africa is a direct attempt to undermine the Israel Apartheid Week campaign... We stand firm in our solidarity with the Palestinians against Israel and its apartheid

policies.”

This is in fact, not the case. The tour was actually Reshef’s own initiative, and as Gordon explained, only the flights were supported by Tararam. “It has nothing to do with the embassy.”

Said SA Jewish Board of Deputies National Director Wendy Kahn, in the audience on Tuesday: “Despite assurances from the

university that they would uphold Reshef’s right to perform... the recital was disrupted by Wits students headed by their SRC, several of whom were wearing SRC blazers. Campus security was thoroughly inadequate.”

The SAJBD is currently collating video and photographic footage of the protest to send to the Dean of Students who requested their assistance.

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Pianist Yossi Reshef being escorted from the concert venue by a security guard.

She knows to lead from the front in this microcosm of South Africa

SUZANNE BELLING

Brilliance in its diversity from grassroots upward, was commissioner Marlene Bethlehem’s summation of the third national consultative conference of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities (CRL), held in Centurion, from March 7 to 10.

Bethlehem, the only Jewish member serving on the CRL, was appointed deputy chairman by former President Thabo Mbeki when the body was founded in 2004 - “a fulfilment of one of late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris’ greatest wishes”.

“Rabbi Harris was on the committee which wrote the Act leading to the formation of the CRL,” said Bethlehem who was encouraged by him to take up the position.

She has another 10 months left before her tenure expires, as commissioners are permitted to serve only two five-year terms. She is currently chairman of the public education and advocacy committee.

For the Centurion conference, with 350 delegates from all over South Africa, Bethlehem was programme director for the opening session which featured Minister of Co-operative Governance and Traditional Affairs Richard Balozi as keynote speaker.

According to Bethlehem, speakers were of the highest level and even included Carel Boshoff IV, of the all-white Afrikaner town of Orania in the Northern Cape. “Can you imagine the kind of clout the CRL has to have a group of this nature? There was input from the Khoisan, who



Marlene Bethlehem with Mathole Motshekga, ANC chief whip; Deputy Chairman Julia Mabale; and Marlene le Roux, the NCC Conference Organiser.

appealed for a place for their culture and speech

During the panel discussion on religion on the Friday (March 8), Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, of the Great Park Synagogue and dean of Torah Academy, explained the Noahide laws, religious values and responsibility. “Religion can give us a common voice before G-d. It can muster the strength of individual communities and the community of humankind,” he said.

The finale of the singing of the national anthem “with everyone holding hands and joining in”, Bethlehem describes as “a microcosm of what we could achieve in South Africa”.

Having started in communal service a year after her marriage, Bethlehem has notched up 49

years both in the Jewish and general spheres.

Currently president of the Jewish Women’s Benevolent Society, she started her voluntary work with the society, working her way up to chairman. It was through this office that her climb up the leadership ladder began - first as chairman of the then Transvaal Council of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, later as the first woman to become national chairman of the Board, followed by the national presidency.

With her history in supporting human rights and equality, Bethlehem’s term at the Board fortuitously coincided with Nelson Mandela’s tenure as president of the country.

“I was privileged beyond belief to have had an

association with him.” She also forged a strong bond with Mbeki.

She is a trustee of the Christa Maria Will Trust, which fights anti-Semitism and promotes relationships between Jews and other denominations. She chaired the committee for the disbursement of the Swiss Banks’ Humanitarian Fund for Needy Holocaust Survivors in 1998 and in 2006 was the first and only South African elected vice-president of the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture in New York.

Bethlehem has very definite views regarding leadership. “A good leader must have a moral and ethical approach and be passionate about the cause,” she says.

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Cape Board’s Black-Jewish entrepreneurs forum

TALI FEINBERG
CAPE TOWN

“This is the face of the future,” said Matsi Modise, national director of the SA Black Entrepreneurs Forum (SABEF), addressing a gathering of black and Jewish entrepreneurs on March 7.

Modise was speaking at the launch of the new Black-Jewish Entrepreneurs Network, an initiative created in partnership between the Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies and SABEF.

“There is so much we can learn from each other,” said Modise, with Cape Board Chairman Li Boiskin concurring. Boiskin said that her organisation aimed to facilitate collaborations with other communities.

She explained that this event was very much in response to a challenge given by Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe in 2011, when he asked the Jewish community to help the country reduce the high unemployment rate through the incubating of entrepreneurship.

Entrepreneurs at the event ranged from Sascha Berolsky, who has developed famed Cape Town institutions like Royale Eatery, Neighbourhood, El Burro and The Assembly who creates craft beer; to Naushad Khan, who publishes the entertainment newspaper “The Next 48 Hours”. Sandile Sibeko develops corporate wellness programmes; and David Chait began Mr Delivery, Vida e Caffe and Rikki’s Taxis.

While the areas of expertise ranged between the entrepreneurs, it was clear that all aimed for excellence.

Discussing why he had chosen to attend the gathering, Sibeko said that starting a business was challenging and that he hoped to interact with like-minded people to share ideas

and learn from them.

Eric Marx, who is part of the Cape Board committee that organised the event, explained that the Board hoped to “bring together communities. The more we talk to each other, the more preconceived stereotypes disperse.”

Keynote speakers at the event were Jodi Aufrichtig and Khaya Gobodo. Aufrichtig is an entrepreneur and property developer, who founded the Grand Daddy Hotel, the Old Biscuit Mill, the Old Mac Daddy Trailer Park and the group “Daddy’s Deals” – among others. Gobodo is an entrepreneur and founding partner of Afena Capital.

Aufrichtig presented his “world of businesses” to the audience and explained some of his ethos, which includes being environmentally aware, creating spaces for creativity, and his opposition to “greediness”.

“There is enough for everyone. Let someone else do well too,” he said. “South Africa is in an amazing position as the ‘gateway to Africa’,” and advised that entrepreneurs “get out there, have fun and take a chance - if you don’t, you’ll never know!”

Gobodo was equally inspiring, telling the group about his business journey and how he overcame enormous challenges, especially during the credit crisis. He feels that “race still matters in business in South Africa today, but not always in the ways we might think”.

“People relish investing in great ideas,” he said. “This country needs more of that, and true entrepreneurs offer something extraordinary.”

• For more information on the Black-Jewish Entrepreneurs Network, contact Cape Board Executive Director David Jacobson at DavidJ@ctjc.co.za or Media & Diplomatic Liaison Dan Brotman at DanB@ctjc.co.za.



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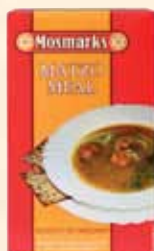
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Does Israeli Apartheid Week matter?

Israeli Apartheid Week (IAW), which kicked off on Sunday at the Apartheid Museum in Johannesburg as part of the annual programme held in cities around the world, riles a lot of people. Particularly in this country where, having lived through the apartheid reality, we think we know what it is and isn't.

Do Israel supporters - Jewish or otherwise - have to worry about IAW? Or can its rallies and workshops be dismissed as a transitory hate-fest against Israel, lacking practical substance, which will pass and be forgotten in a week or two?

Studies show that IAW held on American university campuses generally achieve little traction. Most students are not interested; nor are the mainstream media. Ironically, most publicity comes from the Jewish press.

What about the Israelis? Given the violent eruptions in an increasingly unstable Middle East, should Israel worry about the IAW in other countries? With its neighbour Syria disintegrating amid wholesale killing, Jordan groaning under the influx of a multitude of Syrian refugees, Egypt shaking on its political and religious foundations, Iran's nuclear ambitions, US President Barack Obama's upcoming visit and a new Israeli government kicking off, other things occupy Israeli minds. The Israeli press carries almost nothing about IAW.

The option of ignoring IAW is not so simple for Diaspora Jewish communities, however. In South Africa, the BDS movement is very active; the political climate is growing more hostile towards Israel and political heavyweights are being drawn into its fold.

The participants in IAW events include bodies such as Cosatu and individuals such as Dr Blade Nzimande (Secretary-General of the SA Communist Party), Baleka Mbete (National Chairman of the ANC), Ronald Lamola (President of the ANC Youth League) and Ahmed Kathrada (former Rivonia Trialist). SA Jewry is feeling the heat.

BDS claims of support are often exaggerated, but it is succeeding in creating the perception among a wide swath of society of a solid anti-Israel wave growing by leaps and bounds. This is self-reinforcing - the greater the perception of widespread condemnation of Israel, the more such sentiments grow.

A major IAW focus is university campuses. Jewish students face pervasive anti-Israel feeling and enormous pressure to condemn Israel. Many feel intimidated and scared to express views supporting Israel - or even be neutral.

There is a difference between students and faculty. Whereas students spend a limited time at university, then go off into the world, the faculty remains. And among much of the faculty on campuses such as UJ and Wits, the Apartheid Israel label has become virtually unchallenged.

Professors display anti-Israel posters on their office walls. These views influence successive waves of students - even in our cynical age, students still take the views of faculty members with some seriousness.

Does Israel contain elements of apartheid? Detractors cite the "occupation", checkpoints, separate roads and buses for settlers, etc, and say this is apartheid. Defenders say these are necessitated by security concerns, not racism and that Israel is fighting an existential battle. There is no simple "yes" or "no" - it depends on the prism through which one is looking.

University of Toronto President David Naylor said of the week featuring the IAW events in his city: "We do, in fact, recognise that the term 'Israeli Apartheid' is upsetting to many people, [but] we also recognise that, in every society, universities have a unique role to provide a safe venue for highly charged discourse."

So too, South African universities should be places where highly charged discourse about the issue should occur. A necessary corollary is that Jewish students must be factually equipped and emboldened to engage in this, to hold their own often against seasoned opponents.

Jewish schools and institutions must increasingly educate young people with accurate ammunition to think honestly and critically about the topic and express their views in a reasoned manner.

Too frequently they simply react emotionally to attacks on Israel, try to bluster their way through or silence their opponents. This, alas, does more harm than good.

There are, of course times when reasoned argument is impossible, such as the events on Tuesday night when a performance by Berlin-based Israeli pianist Yossi Reshef was stormed by anti-Israel protestors and he had to be hustled out of the hall by security personnel.

Even in such situations, however, one must not respond by stooping to those levels.

Chavez and the Jews: A sorry tale



Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez in Guatemala, in 2008.

**BEN COHEN/JNS.ORG
NEW YORK**

Like one of those "telenovelas" that are so popular on Latin American television, the slow yet inexorable deterioration of Venezuela's President, Hugo Chavez, was soaked in drama and cloying sentimentality.

Chavez died on March 5 following a two-year fight with cancer. And for most of that time, he claimed – falsely – to have been cured. But less than two months after winning a fourth term in last October's election, Chavez was spirited back to Cuba, where Fidel Castro's doctors treated him.

Now, Chavez's death affords the opportunity for a critical reassessment of his tenure. In his 14 years in power, Chavez turned Venezuela into the Latin American hub of a global network of anti-American, authoritarian rogue states.

There is scarcely a fellow dictator he didn't befriend. Some, like the Iraqi tyrant Saddam Hussein, are no longer with us. Others - among them Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, Belarussian President Alexander Lukashenko, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, and Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe - remain, sadly, alive and in power.

The closest relationship of all is that forged with the Castro brothers in Cuba, Fidel and Raul, whose ailing economy is kept afloat by heavily subsidised oil from Venezuela, which is Latin America's biggest producer.

With allies like these, it should come as no surprise that Chavez became an arch-foe of the State of Israel. In one of the last foreign policy statements he made before returning to hospital in Cuba in December, Chavez denounced what he called the "sav- age" Israeli attack on Gaza.

In 2009, on the previous occasion that Israel responded militarily to Hamas rocket attacks from Gaza, Chavez told the French newspaper Le Figaro that Israel had launched a "geno- cide" against the Palestinians. "The question is not whether the Israelis want to exterminate the Palestinians. They're doing it openly," he said.

Such incendiary statements won Chavez the admiration of the Arab street. In 2006, during the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Arab satellite network Al Jazeera praised Chavez for beating Arab leaders to the punch when he became the first head of state to condemn Israel's actions. Similar gasps of admiration greeted his decision to expel the Israeli ambassador to Caracas in 2009.

In attacking Israel, though, Chavez inadvertently undermined the arguments of those who say that anti-Zionism is one thing, anti-Semitism something else entirely.

In many ways, Chavez's attitude to Israel mirrored that of the Soviet Union. Just as the USSR marked its own Jews out as a fifth column during its decades-long propaganda campaign against Zionism, so did Chavez.

Before Chavez came to power in 1999, there were 30 000 Jews in Venezuela. Now, the community has dwindled to just less than 9 000. Having experienced virtually no anti-Semitism in their history, the Chavez years ushered in a set of new and frightening experiences for Venezuela's Jews, from cartoons in the press that could have been lifted from the notorious Nazi newspaper, Der Sturmer, to the vandalism of the main syna- gogue in Caracas in 2009.

A depressing summary by Tel Aviv University's Kantor Cen- tre for the Study of Anti-Semitism noted last September: "Re- cent years have witnessed a rise in anti-Semitic manifestations, including vandalism, media attacks, caricatures, and physical attacks on Venezuelan Jewish institutions."

In 2012, Israel was temporarily displaced by the emergence of a domestic Jewish target, in the form of the rival presiden- tial candidate to Chavez, the youthful and energetic Henrique Capriles. While Capriles is a practising Catholic, his mother's family, the Radonskis, arrived in Venezuela after surviving the Holocaust in Poland. Other members of the family perished in the Nazi concentration camps.

In their attacks on Capriles, Chavez and his press lackeys referred to him with an array of derogatory terms - "gringo", "bourgeois", "imperialist", and, above all, "Zionist". Moreover, there was no doubt that by using the word "Zionist", the regime meant "Jew".

Perhaps the ugliest headline during the election campaign appeared in a muckraking magazine, Kikiriki, which read: "We are f-ked if the Jews Come to Power".

Why, then, did anti-Semitism become such a potent force in a country that eschewed it for so long? Some analysts, like Dan- iel Duquenal, the author of a vibrant dissident blog, regard it as the inevitable outcome of Chavez's alliance with Iran, Hamas and Hezbollah.

Yet there is another factor. The main ideological influence on Chavez was a relatively obscure Argentinian sociologist, Norberto Ceresole. An ardent admirer of Peronism in Argentina, Ceresole was liv- ing proof of what happens when the ob- sessions of the far left overlap with those of the far right.

A Holocaust denier and all-round conspiracy theorist, Ceresole's theories became the basis for what Venezuelans know as Chavismo, the matrix of social in- stitutions and values created by the Chavez regime. The first chapter of a book in which Ceresole extolled the virtues of such a system, in which the relationship between the "leader" and the "people" is privileged, was entitled "The Jewish Prob- lem".

There are few reasons to believe that antagonism towards Jews will disappear in Venezuela post-Chavez. Nicolas Ma- duro is an orthodox Chavista who, as foreign minister, has enthusiastically pushed for even closer relations with Israel's enemies.

Chavez's figure will loom large in the political life of Ven- ezuela. Should Henrique Capriles challenge Chavez's succes- sor, it is probable, according to Sammy Eppel, director of the Human Rights Commission of B'nai B'rith Venezuela, that the "shocking anti-Semitic" caricatures used against him last year will emerge again.

As for Chavez himself, Eppel does not hold back. "Chavez will probably be remembered as the one who made Venezue- lan Jews feel that for the first time they were not welcome in their own country, a chilling reminder of past tragedies," he told me in an e-mail. (JNS. org)

• Ben Cohen is the Shillman Analyst for JNS.org. His writ- ings on Jewish affairs and Middle Eastern politics have been published in Commentary, the New York Post, Ha'aretz, Jewish Ideas Daily and many other publications.

“Chavez will probably be remembered as the one who made Venezuelan Jews feel that for the first time they were not welcome in their own country, a chilling reminder of past tragedies”

Promoting dialogue as opposed to demonisation

ARIELA CARNO
PRESIDENT, SAUJS

For the past nine years, South African campuses have witnessed the phenomenon of “Israel Apartheid Week”. This event focuses exclusively on demonising the State of Israel, which its sponsors portray as being exclusively to blame for the plight of the Palestinian people.

What the BDS campaign is doing, is taking what is in reality a complex and multifaceted situation and reducing it to a simple “right side - wrong side”, “good people - bad people” equation that grossly misrepresents the reality of the situation.

As a propaganda ploy, its proponents engage in the kind of emotive rhetoric and sloganising that that they feel South Africans can identify with. In my personal capacity as a South African, I feel insulted when I hear the term “Israel Apartheid”; this not only misrepresents the reality of what Israel is, but undermines the very real and legitimate struggle that we went through in this country.

If the aim of “Israel Apartheid Week” was indeed to promote peace, then the primary component of it would be to support honest, constructive dialogue. However, such dialogue, and indeed any notion of featuring alternative viewpoints,

is explicitly shunned, with students instead being provided with just one face of a very multifaceted conflict.

What SAUJS aims to do is to provide dialogue on campus - but we often find our efforts stringently opposed and I will provide the following example:

Prior to “Israel Apartheid Week”, SAUJS ran an “Israel Awareness Week” at Wits University. It was a week of proactive, non-derogatory educational activities. As part of the display, we painted a map of the Middle East on a wall at Wits (that is designated for murals) and within a few days Israel had been blacked off the map.

Now, the target audience for such a display is not the demographic who would black Israel off the map. The target audience are the “pareve” masses who have no opinion either way - but the fundamental question really is: “Does this target audience really care?”

In the current South African reality the majority of university students don’t know - and in fact don’t want to know - about the “situation in the Middle East”. They are worried about the constant increase in university fees and whether or not a



particular department is going to apply negative marking to an exam.

One could argue that perhaps it would be better not to engage at all and just to “let the storm pass”, which is a legitimate argument to an extent... However, one has to acknowledge that at this current point we are not the ones winning the media war and we don’t want to get to the point where “Israel’s crimes” are no longer a matter of debate between two opposing sides but a generally accepted fact by the mark-obsessed university student.

In my personal capacity I would love to subject a member of the Palestinian Solidarity Committee to a polygraph test and see whether or not they actually believe all the factual inaccuracies that they are spouting.

But then I take a step back and remember that I don’t only represent myself; I represent SAUJS and the interests of all Jewish students on campus. It is not our role to fight all of Israel’s battles - nor to create a battleground.

It is our role as SAUJS to provide the forgotten voice and promote dialogue as opposed to demonisation.

Israel condemns Dutch labelling of products from Jewish communities beyond Green Line

JERUSALEM - Israel last week Thursday sharply condemned a new initiative in the Netherlands directing businesses to label products originating in Judea and Samaria, eastern Jerusalem and the Golan Heights, separating them from those which are produced within Israel itself.

Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor, said that according to Israel Hayom: “If the Europeans claim that labelling products made in the settlements is intended only to inform the consumer that the product comes from a disputed area, they should also be consistent and they should mark any product from disputed territories in Europe and around the world.

“But if the move denigrates Israel, and only Israel, it is clearly a manifestation of blatant discrimination and thus inherently wrong.”

Interior Minister Eli Yishai also responded to the Dutch government initiative, saying: “Products from the settlements beyond the Green Line, just like those made within the Green Line, are proud blue and white products. The State of Israel will stand as one entity against any attempt to boycott its products.”

The Israel response was to the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs’ directive to all retail chains in the country to assist consumers in making fully knowledgeable decisions in stores by labelling products from Jewish communities beyond the 1967 Green Line differently than products from the rest of Israel.

The directive calls for the labelling of fresh produce not as made in Israel, but as made in “Israeli settlements in the Golan Heights, east Jerusalem, the West Bank or in Palestinian territories.” Though retailers rather than importers are responsible for the labelling, they will not be punished for not complying, nor is it illegal to import products from the Jewish communities in question.

The move follows a February 27 report written by European Union mission heads in Jerusalem and Ramallah recommending that EU countries “prevent” all financial transactions that support Israel’s activities in those communities.

Holland joins other EU countries, such as Britain and Denmark, as well as South Africa, which has also recommended that such labelling be implemented for retailers. (JNS.org)

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Rabbi YOSSY GOLDMAN of Sydenham Highlands North Shul, responds to critics of Rabbi Manis Friedman. From his Friday night sermon last week (See background story on page 21).

There is an old story of a man who came to his rabbi seeking atonement for speaking badly about his neighbour. The rabbi advised him to go into the town square with a feather pillow and slash it, allowing the wind to blow the feathers throughout the town. If he could then find all the scattered feathers, he would be atoned.

The message was clear. It is difficult, if not impossible, to undo the damage of words that leave our mouths and are spread

far and wide through communal grapevines.

Sydenham Shul recently hosted a lecture tour by American author and teacher, Rabbi Manis Friedman. It was very successful with hundreds of people of all ages coming to be intellectually and spiritually stimulated.

An original thinker, he challenged convention, compelling us to rethink our preconceived notions of life, love, marriage, parenting and suffering through a perspective of what Torah teaches.

Yet, this wise teacher, who has been counselling and guiding thousands of students over 40 years, was suddenly made out by many to be a villain! Why? Because of a YouTube clip where he was seen to be allegedly trivialising the plight of victims of sexual abuse. This was e-mailed and distributed widely via social media and my shul and I were criticised for bringing him to South Africa.

I believe when someone has a solid reputation acquired over many years and you hear something awful about him or her, the reaction should be that this is so out of character that there must be more to the story than meets the eye. And there was.

Indeed, after his first weeknight talk, Rabbi Friedman shared his views on the molestation issue and took questions, including some direct challenges to his remarks.

He explained the background and the context of that discussion which was with other counsellors in Israel.

In fact, he answered all the questions so satisfactorily that at the end of the meeting he was asked why, then, did he apologise?

With characteristic humility he explained that he apologised because of the hurt some unfortunate victims may have experienced because of him.

The sages in Pirkei Avot teach rabbis to choose their words carefully lest they lead to dangerous misimpressions. For that he apologised. He also went further than most rabbis in calling for perpetrators to be prosecuted.

In fact, Rabbi Friedman has helped thousands of people in his counselling career, among them hundreds of abuse victims, including while he was here now. Unlike many psychologists, he believes passionately that they can be healed. He insists they can move forward in life and build healthy families and they must not perceive themselves as “damaged goods”.

But, sadly, many saw fit to judge the man without giving him a hearing, pronouncing him guilty and sharing it with their Facebook friends, too. And although many of those same people were invited to hear Rabbi Friedman in person on the subject, they elected not to come.

Some 50 people did stay until midnight for questions and answers with the rabbi, but not one of his vocal critics showed up. One of them even told my colleague, Rabbi Yehuda Stern, that she wasn’t coming “because she didn’t want to be convinced!”

Yes, it would have been easier for us to cancel the tour and not have to face any criticism at all. But knowing the man and his reputation, I knew there had to be more

to the story than the face value. And I felt it would have been immoral and against my conscience to be part of what has, tragically, become something of an international “lynch mob”.

It pained me that rabbis in Melbourne, where the Jewish community is going through a difficult time with this issue rushed to condemn our guest without calling him first. It pains me that young people in our own community rushed to condemn him and criticise us. But such is the sad reality of loshon hora. It is, all too often, simply accepted as truth without any proper research.

Thank G-d, our community has come a long way and we have learned much about Judaism in the last decades. We know so much about the evils of loshon hora that we even almost affectionately refer to it as “losh”. But, I am afraid that this time we really blew it, badly.

So, I learned some very important lessons these past two weeks, namely that before we judge anyone, we should give them the benefit of the doubt.

And that before we condemn people, we should give them the opportunity to explain themselves. And, finally, that “losh” by mouth is nothing compared to “losh” by e-mail, Facebook or YouTube.

So, please go out and try to gather up the feathers. I’m not sure how you can do it, but I hope that in the interests of honesty, morality, truth and justice you will do your best.

What you should know about BDS and IAW

MAURICE OSTROFF

If you support Boycotts, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) and Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) because of a genuine interest in relieving the plight of fellow human beings you will surely be interested to know more about the organisation you support and the cause you are promoting.

BDS leaders do not support a two-state solution of the Arab-Israel conflict. They oppose it

Omar Barghouti, one of the founders of the BDS movement declared in an article in the Electronic Intifada: “The two-state solution for the Palestinian-Israeli conflict is really dead. Good riddance.”

Many mistakenly believe BDS is intended as a means of achieving Israel and Palestine side by side within agreed borders. They will be surprised and even shocked to learn that BDS organisers oppose the two state solution to which the US, the EU and Russia as well as Israel subscribe. Barghouti openly proposes “euthanasia” for Israel. He declares that BDS advocates one state to which all the Palestinian refugees as well as their generations of descendants will return. He is not referring to the original approximately 700 000. He refers to the 4.7 million, including descendants.

As NY Times columnist Roger Cohen put it in a February 28 article entitled ‘Zero dark zero’, “... Palestinians will seek their rights — including that of return — within one state, rather than pursuing the establishment of their own national state. The only trouble is that, as the Israeli novelist Amos Oz told me recently, “The right of return is a euphemism for the liquidation of Israel. Even for a dove like myself this is out of the question.”

While the quartet and other interlocutors call for an adjustment of the 1967 lines in terms of Resolution 242, Barghouti totally rejects a separate Israeli state and is derisive of what he calls committed leftists “who grieve over the loss of Israel’s moral superiority after occupying the West Bank and Gaza in 1967, as if prior to that Israel was as civil, legitimate and law-abiding as Finland.”



In an interview with Electronic Intifada on May 31, 2009, during which he used the now widespread apartheid allegation to justify BDS, Barghouti admitted that he is unconcerned that the apartheid description of Israel is inaccurate. He said: “We don’t have to prove that Israel is identical to apartheid South Africa in order to justify the label apartheid.”

Many BDS supporters will also be shocked to learn the attitude of BDS organisers to the Palestinian Authority. Barghouti stated in the aforementioned interview: “In the West Bank you have a largely quisling [traitor] government that is completely supporting Israel in anything it wants to do. They get immediate support from the Palestinian Authority in Ramallah, which is an unelected authority imposed by an American general.”

He added that the return of the refugees would mean an end to Israel’s existence as a Jewish state.

If we are to be consistent in our compassion we would boycott any country that legislates apartheid and more specifically against Palestinians. I refer to Lebanon for example. In an article in the Guardian of June 24, 2010, one of the most vocal advocates of BDS against Israel, the American Palestinian writer Ahmed Moor wrote that Arab leaders pay lip service to Palestinian rights except when it comes to the rights of domiciled refugees in their countries. As an American in Beirut he said he was privileged but “...Today, Lebanon is the most hostile country to Palestinian refugees after Israel. They are second-class citizens here. Racism is so widespread that African and Asian guest workers are openly barred from attending the beaches where Lebanese people frolic. And that’s saying nothing of the often inhumane working conditions they are subjected to on a daily basis.”

A little introspection reveals that the professionally organised, well planned and widely publicised calls for BDS action focused only on Israel leads to criminal neglect of much more extreme cases of need that cry out desperately for a small share of the attention given to the Palestinians.

World News in Brief

NY Jewish attorney seeks to ban Jews from jury

NEW YORK - A New York Jewish attorney has asked a federal judge to exclude all Jews from a jury involving a client facing charges for lying about joining the Taliban.

Frederick Cohn is representing Abdel Hameed Shehadeh, who is facing charges in US District Court in Brooklyn for lying to the FBI about his involvement with the Taliban. Shehadeh was indicted in 2010

Cohn believes Jews on the jury would be biased automatically against his client, according to the New York Post.

“Given that there’s going to be inflammatory testimony about Jews and Zionism, I think it would be hard for Jews to cast aside any innate antipathy,” said Cohn, who himself is Jewish. “The American Jewish community is heavily aligned with Israel and Zionism. Here is a guy who is a Muslim, who is opposed to those things.”

The subject of Jews on Shehadeh trial’s jury first arose in February, when Cohn told Judge Eric Vitaliano that he wasn’t “wild about having Jews on the jury in this case” while acknowledging his request was a “long shot.” (JTA)

Suspect arrested in death of Brooklyn Hassidic couple and baby

NEW YORK - The suspect in the hit-and-run killing of Nachman and Raizy Glauber, both 21, has surrendered to police. Julio Acevedo was arrested on charges of leaving the scene of an accident and is being held without bail.

Acevedo is accused of driving in Brooklyn last Sunday at 100 km per hour and hitting a taxi in which the Hassidic couple was on its way to the hospital because the pregnant Raizy was feeling ill.

Both Nachman and Raizy were killed. The baby was delivered via c-section in the hospital, but died hours later. Acevedo said he was speeding because he was running away from gunshots.

A friend of Acevedo arranged his surrender by meeting police at New York’s Grand Central Terminal and taking them to Acevedo who was located about 120 km away. Authorities discovered that Acevedo already has a record.

He was previously arrested on a charge of driving while under the influence, and was imprisoned for 10 years in the 1990s for manslaughter. He had been convicted of shooting a Brooklyn criminal who called himself 50 Cent. That name inspired rapper Curtis Jackson’s stage name.

“We in the community hope that today is Acevedo’s last day that he sees daylight for the rest of his life,” said Isaac Abraham, a spokesman for the Satmar Hassidic community, according to Haaretz. (JNS.org)



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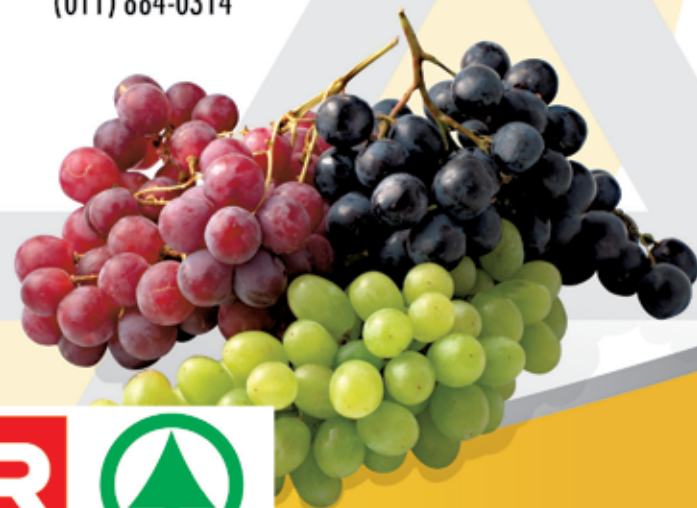
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Honour your father and mother: challenges and rewards of elderly care

DR ROBERT ODES MB CHB MBA
CEO, ODYSSEY ASSIST

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There are ethical challenges to elderly care. The most important relate to parents’ autonomy to make decisions regarding end of life issues such as resuscitation or do not resuscitate, ventilate or do not ventilate.

To page 12

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I travelled with a metal chair via an airport; the security insisted I would be hauled out of my chair and searched most intimately, because they saw my jeans were padded.

I wear a pad as they soon discovered, total degradation, but the real blame was the metal chair, as the security staff were too nervous about it - something to do with the long lasting aftermath of 9/11.

But it must be said that the EasyRoller changed all that completely; no more hassle, no more alarm sounding, no more embarrassment, now I turn heads because the chair I am in is remarkable, not because the metal detectors blasts out an affirmation to everyone that a wheelchair user is in the way.

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Honour your father and your mother

From page 11



It all relates to perceptions of maintaining quality of life while preserving dignity and privacy. These are vexing issues, about which many have written. Specific questions should be dealt with by a competent rabbinic authority.

The overriding fact is that life is created by G-d and has infinite value, and cannot be subjected to the opinions of moralistic reasoning precipitated by fluctuating societal norms.

Healthcare challenges: The goal is to provide best, patient-centred, individualised care, starting with proper multidisciplinary assessments. The elderly often have multiple medical problems and disabilities, including reduced mental functioning, affecting many activities of daily living.

Therefore, they require comprehensive medical, nursing, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and speech therapy assessments.

The elderly further have many psycho-social issues, relating to the many losses they endure, from dwindling finances to inability to cope with activities of daily living, to the loneliness resulting from families relocating overseas.

Therefore, a psycho-social assessment by a social worker is at least as important as the other assessments mentioned.

Once these assessments are completed, a patient-centred “Care Plan” is developed to the older person’s specific needs.

The biggest healthcare challenge that most children face at some point relates to where best to care for parents. It’s the famous “home care” versus “care home” decision. There are advantages and disadvantages to both options. Parents should be involved in the decision-making process.

Remaining at home, the advantages include: a warm, caring environment, surrounded by children and grandchildren; the family is very involved in care, choose the carers, and do not have guilt for abandoning the parent; financially there are cost savings.

Disadvantages are that the family may be overseas or, if living locally, may develop “carer burnout”. Furthermore, the parent may feel isolated away from peers, and there is no easily available advanced care. Multi-disciplinary patient-centred home-based care organisations, such as Odyssey Assist, provide home-based healthcare services, including 24-hour nursing services, medical and therapy services, plus food deliveries and socialisation and lifestyle programmes.

These organisations remove the burden of responsibility from the children, while retaining the advantages and minimising the disadvantages of home-based care.

Statistically, multi-disciplinary home-based care organisations reduce hospital readmissions by a third over a five year period, further reducing costs and increasing longevity and life quality.

Living in a care home has advantages: the management is professional, the care is multi-disciplinary, frail-care services in addition to standard hotel services are often available, and socialisation and lifestyle programmes are critical success factors.

Disadvantages are that of living in a costly institution. Rules and regulations within the institution may make the parent feel limited. Furthermore, being out of one’s familiar home sometimes leads to depression. The children should investigate several homes, and obtain professional advice, before deciding on the best home for their parents. The emotional challenges in caring for elderly parents cannot be underestimated. Chief among these is “role reversal”. Children who were cared for by parents now find themselves caring for their own parents. This presents greater difficulties where parents are uncooperative and, especially in dementia, abusive and aggressive.

Ways of dealing with unacceptable behaviour are available from many dementia books and websites, including the information section of the Odyssey Assist website, etc.

The legal challenges involved in elderly care include assessing testament capacity: whether the parent has reasonable understanding of his (or her) assets, relationship to beneficiaries, and ability to communicate these.

Protection of vulnerable adults is essential. These legal challenges are best met by competent attorneys and advocates, in liaison with doctors who have special interest in geriatrics and psycho-geriatrics.

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Boost your retirement savings

Sanlam Employee Benefits have some practical suggestions for supplementing retirement savings.

People are living longer and longer. On average, men who retire at 60, live for another 18 years. The average life expectancy of women aged 60 is another 21 years.

While it's wonderful that it could mean your children will be able to spend many more years with their grandparents and great-grandparents, how do you think your parents and grandparents are going to fund these additional years? Will their pensions be enough?

Sadly, many people have not saved enough to see them through their extended retirement period and often have to go back to work to survive.

No-one likes the idea of putting money away for a rainy day sometime in the future, but when it comes to retirement planning that's exactly what you have to do. If you don't start saving for retirement while you are still young, working and earning a salary, a financially secure retirement may be out of reach for you and your family.

Here are some ideas of how you can boost your retirement savings to ensure that you are on the road to financial freedom for your retirement.

Retirement savings boosters

One way of boosting your retirement savings is to make additional voluntary contributions (AVCs) to your retirement fund. AVCs are fixed contributions that you make every month over and above your normal contribution. You don't have to make a long-term decision regarding making AVCs to the fund, nor will you be locked in for a period of more than one year.

Most other forms of savings lock you in and have punitive termination clauses.

The contributions you make to your retirement fund cannot be withdrawn by you or anyone else until you withdraw from the fund. In this way, any temptation to spend the money other than at retirement, is largely counteracted.

You can also speak to your financial adviser about other savings vehicles that would be the most appropriate for your circumstances, including retirement annuities (RAs), endowment policies or unit trusts.

Make sure that you preserve your benefits when you change jobs by transferring your benefits to your new employer's retirement fund or transferring them to a preservation vehicle.

Not preserving retirement fund benefits is one of the biggest reasons for inadequate retirement provision. Think twice before retiring early. Early retirement not only reduces the amount you will have contributed to your retirement fund but increases the time you spend in retirement.

Consider the following if you retire early:

- Loss of future income.
- Loss of fringe benefits.
- Your last 10 years before you retire is usually a time when you have no dependant, so you can make more savings.
- You stand to receive a reduced spouse's pension.
- Your retirement gap is likely to be bigger the earlier you retire.
- Loss of group life and disability benefits.
- Medical inflation is high and will have a larger and larger impact on your budget.
- Getting rid of debt.

Ideally, by the time you retire you should have paid off your debt. Don't start making additional savings too late.

The sooner you start making provision for your retirement, the better.

Obtain professional financial advice. Many members make poor investment decisions or get poor advice from unqualified financial advisers and can "waste" precious savings by being incorrectly invested.

Steps to action

Refer to your Annual Member Benefit statement or discuss it with your financial adviser to establish how big your retirement gap is. Your retirement gap is the shortfall between what you need at retirement and what you currently stand to receive when you retire based on your current savings.

Identify practical ways of reducing your debt so you'll have some disposable (available) money to allocate to savings at some point. Reassess your retirement goals. You may need to adjust your retirement goals or adjust your spending habits now to realise your dreams.

Always obtain good financial advice to ensure that your hard-earned money is correctly invested, in line with your retirement goals.

Personalised care at Ron Smith Care Centre in Lyndhurst

Rand Aid Association recently opened a specialised dementia unit at its Ron Smith Care Centre in Lyndhurst, Johannesburg, with the emphasis on creating a homely, happy atmosphere for the patients.

The well-appointed centre, situated in the grounds of Elphin Lodge retirement village, offers comfortable accommodation, with the option of private bathrooms.

The dementia unit boasts 32 single rooms, most of which lead onto a covered veranda. The lounge and inter-leading dining room are pleasantly decorated and provide a social space as well as room for activities.

Stimulating activities, according to residents' abilities, are provided daily under the guidance of a fulltime occupational therapist. Activities include arts and crafts, sensory stimulation and music therapy.

Nursing staff participate in training courses presented by Alzheimer's SA (the Gauteng office is on the premises) and are well qualified to take care of this vulnerable group of residents.

Residents who do not need the degree of specialised care offered in the dementia unit, might prefer one of Ron Smith's other accommodation choices. Apart from dementia-specific care, mid care, assisted living, full frail care, respite care when the regular carer needs a break and recuperative care after hospitalisation or illness, are offered.

Newly opened is Elphino's, a coffee shop with outdoor and indoor seating that offers a relaxed environment for people with dementia and their carers. Elphino's and its adjacent tuckshop are open from Tuesdays to Sundays.

Care centre rates include full board and lodging, laundry, OT services, 24-hour nursing care and a doctor on call. There is a physiotherapist on site and a podiatrist visits on a regular basis. A hairdresser and a beautician provide valuable personal care on site.

Accommodation is offered on a long- or short-term/temporary basis.

For more information, contact Helen at (011) 882-6296 or e-mail hpetrie@randaid.co.za.



Disclaimer
The letters page is intended to provide opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report.

Guidelines for letters
Letters up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime contact phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened. *The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za*

CUT OUT LUXURIES, BUT PESACH SEDERS STILL COST AN ARM AND A LEG

I notice with great interest, the eternal Pesach gripe about the prices of kosher food, published under “Community Voices” in Jewish Report of March 15.

I love cooking, am a very traditional Orthodox Jew and am keenly aware of the prices of kosher food and products, particularly over the Jewish festivals.

The three ladies very enthusiastically gave their views on the spiritual “cost” of not keeping kosher over Pesach, versus the actual cost of kosher food and came to the conclusion that doing without or with less, is best.

This is laudable and I agree with them.

However here in the rub: even the downscaling of the Pesach feasts, not keeping up with the Cohens and correctly putting one’s mind over one’s stomach regarding the meaning of the chag, will still cost a fortune.

I don’t know where these ladies shop and like all good Jewish mamas I’m sure they shop with enthusiasm for Pesach; one has still got to virtually take out a second bond on one’s house to pay for the seders.

One only has to buy some kosher meat for a few people - “kein ain hara” us Jews know how to eat - and one is already out of pocket to the

tune of a few thousand rand. There are, after all, two seders, four yontaivim and a Shabbat in between the yontaivim. That’s a load of entertaining to do.

Remember the Union of Orthodox Synagogues’ commission into the price of kosher chickens, never mind red meat, which they never got to?

What exacerbates the issue is the enticing array of “kosher for Pesach” products available in a modern city like Johannesburg. When I was growing up in Aliwal North, there were no choccies, sweets, cold drinks, biscuits, chips, fried veggies and cakes to be had on Pesach.

My late bobba made mead to drink (disgusting stuff) and cried over the horse radish that she made from scratch.

Besides the normal traditional Pesach dishes, that was the only extra “luxury” one had for the chag.

I do not expect the UOS to set up a commission into the price of “kosher for Pesach” foods, but this really breaks the piggy (oops) bank.

Stanley Klompas
Sandringham, Johannesburg

MIZRACHI’S ACTIONS OF LATE ARE CONFUSING IN THE EXTREME

For many years, I have had an association with Bnei Akiva and the Mizrachi organisation. They represent the religious-Zionist camp.

I understood that the learning of Torah was an important element of their ideology. But in recent months, I have become confused about this. A few months ago, they brought out a rabbi from Israel who spoke to the community, emphasising that the modern Israel needed to decrease the number of yeshiva students. He was extremely vocal in his disparagement of other religious sects.

Then, recently, the Bayit Yehudi electoral can

didate Naftali Bennett, who was endorsed by both the rabbinic and lay leadership of Mizrachi in Israel, joined up with Yair Lapid immediately after the elections. It is astonishing that the Mizrachi movement which is right-wing, would join up with a far-leftwing party just in order to ensure that religious Jews stop learning Torah. The two of them seemingly only have one common goal: to eliminate Torah learning in Israel, with the exception of 400 elite students.

Jack Shapiro
Glenhazel, Johannesburg

WHAT ‘EXTRAS’ CAN WE LEAVE OUT FROM PESACH SHOPPING?

I have to take issue with your three ladies in “Community Voices” in last week’s paper, on the cost of Pesach. Their advice is: Go without certain items.

I fully agree. However, a box of machine made mass produced Shmura Matzah costs R50. (I hate to think what hand-made matzah costs!) Ordinary matzah is between R26 and R28 - can I do without matzah? A small bottle of jam is over R30 (a luxury?) Matzah meal: R35 - can

Pesach be Pesach without kneidlach? That is without meat, chicken (the cost of which makes me want to have a nervous breakdown) and fish. We won’t even think about dairy products.

Tell me how I do without the above? Pesach, without any “extras” will cost the average family over R5 000 for eight days. Can we justify this?

Sandy Resnick
Highlands North, Johannesburg

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Barry Bateman is the Pretoria Correspondent at Eyewitness News having joined them in 2010. In 2011 he was awarded National Press Club Journalist of the Year. Barry recently made South African twitter and media history by gaining about 130-thousand new followers in the wake of the Oscar Pistorius shooting.

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Holocaust-Era Assets in Former East Germany

The Claims Conference has established a Late Applicants Fund (“LAF”) of €50 million in order to accept applications from the following heirs of a former Jewish owner (“persecutee”) of property/assets in the former East Germany for which the Claims Conference received proceeds as Successor Organization under the German Property Law of 1990:

(a) The immediate testamentary heir of the persecutee; (b) Children, grandchildren, or great grandchildren of the persecutee; (c) Siblings of the persecutee; (d) Children of siblings listed under (c); (e) Spouses of persons listed under (b), (c) and (d).

Applications can be filed directly with the Claims Conference for no fee. There is no need for applicants to pay a fee to any party. The LAF will accept applications through December 31, 2014.

After the application deadline, the Claims Conference shall determine the payment that each eligible heir will receive. This determination will be based on a number of factors detailed on the Claims Conference website.

The Claims Conference has published on its website, www.claimscon.org, a list of the properties/assets received by the Claims Conference as of the date of publication, and such assets for which claims by the Claims Conference are still pending under the German Property Restitution Law, including the name of the former owners and/or businesses, as well as the addresses of the properties/assets.

The detailed rules of the LAF, applications, and other information are also on the Claims Conference website, www.claimscon.org.

All communications regarding the Late Applicants Fund should be submitted to:
Claims Conference Successor Organization,
Sophienstrasse 26, D-60487 Frankfurt am Main, Germany.
Fax: ++49-69-97-07-08-11. Email: claims-conference-laf@claimscon.org

To aid applicants who do not have complete information, the Claims Conference has a Department for Property Identification. If you believe that you or your relatives may have owned Jewish property in the former East Germany, please include as much information as possible in your application and the Department will endeavor to identify such property. Please write to the above address. There is no charge for this service as well.

The Claims Conference has appointed an Ombudsman. To contact the Office of the Ombudsman, please email Ombudsman@claimscon.org or write to The Ombudsman, PO Box 585, Old Chelsea Station, New York, NY 10113, USA

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Curl Up and Dye - 25 years on, it’s weightier

ROBYN SASSEN

In 1989 it rocked Orange Grove’s Black Sun Theatre, emblazoned itself on audience hearts and became a standard of South African drama, thus exceeding all expectations.

It was published in an anthology with plays which were thermometers in the hotbed of South African currents, like Anthony Akerman’s “Somewhere on the Border”. Now, “Curl Up and Dye” is back. Its writer, director and designer Sue Pam-Grant (pictured), spoke to Jewish Report.

Using the bravely still-standing frontage of Lorna Court, a Joubert Park block of flats as its poster image, the production, Pam-Grant explains “reflects a new vision. Since the play debuted, the world’s a different place. I’m a different person.”

Breast cancer in 2003 caused this UCT-trained actress to rethink her energies; she’s been making visual art since. At her Melville studio, it’s clear many passions ignite her. “I love cups and chairs,” she says, indicating

an array of teacups. “What you choose to use speaks about who you are.

“When are you bringing it back?” has been a constant nag from various people.” She refers to the play’s status in school and university curricula. “In the last two years I started thinking about staging it again.

“As I finished writing the play, 25 years ago, the season opened. It was harrowing; there was no time for failure. So, how do you revisit an old work? Only if you move on, if you look at it with a completely dissociated gaze and really question it,” she remarked.

“I was 27 and exploding with energy and age-appropriate utter lack of hindsight or insight,” she comments on how the work launched her career. “It was terrifying to come back to the work and stick my hand in with creative and intellectual tools 25 years older than the piece.

“I have dug into the script. It has been vigorous and rigorous; it’s been about the luxury of asking myself scary questions.

“I wanted to hone in on the



The ladies of Curl Up and Dye: Robert Coleman; Hlengiwe Lushaba-Madlala; Cindy Swanepoel; Quanita Adams; and Lesedi Job-Smith.

choral quality of the piece, in how performers ‘sing’ together,” she adds. “It’s not a musical piece, but it’s an ensemble.”

Staged in a down-at-heel women’s hairdressing salon and drawing on how women unburden themselves while their hair is being done, the play features a hairdresser, Roelene (initially played by Pam-Grant herself) and four clients, played originally by Val Donald-Bell, Nandi Nyembe, Lillian Dube and Debra Watson.

Her cast, echoing the cream of talent it assembled in the 1980s, is Robert Colman, Quanita Adams, Hlengiwe Lushaba-Madlala, Lesedi Job-Smith and Cindy Swanepoel.

“The play is about greyness,” she says, deliciously using hair images that pun focus on society, “But it’s also about archetypes. This is no sitcom. But it’s also no kitchen sink drama any more.

“It now has a darker palette and is weightier,” Pam-Grant waltzes between “fragility and resilience”. Holding local foibles up to salon mirrors, she’ll make you laugh and cry, with greater abandon and more insight, this time around.

• *Curl Up and Dye is at Old Mutual Theatre on the Square, Sandton, March 20 - April 20, (011) 883-8606.*



Give-and-take between visual tradition and contemporary wit ever-present

Exhibition: Drawings by Mark Nathan
Where: Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre, Oaklands (011) 728-8088
Until: March 24

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

There’s a curiously prosaic tone to the body of drawings in pen and ink on paper by Mark Nathan on show. Blending religious images relating to exegesis and tradition, from the hourglass to the hamsa, and peppered with ketubah references, the exhibition, when first you look, might seem a basic but competent engagement with tradition.

The more you look, however, the more you realise the depth and reach of these mostly elegant drawings. Divided cleanly into pieces speaking of religious tradition and others based in more abstract paradigms, the exhibition on the whole is one of serenity, but again, this is at a glance from a relative distance.

Nathan courts cliché in some works, like ancient illuminators who brought life to manuscripts reaching back into the annals of literary history, he offers subtexts.

In the 1990s art historian Michael Camille wrote of the intricate subtexts subtly present in mediaeval illumination, pointing at how the earnestness of traditions can be gazed at with a curious and sometimes skew eye.

Leaping centuries forward in time, think of the Pesach haggadah illustrations of American Mark Podwal, in which contemporary art, ancient tradition and everyday politics is niftily and wittily shuttled into

drawings.

Nathan is not quite in the same confrontational league as Podwal, and his work remains within a framework of “pretty” and “demure”, but the give-and-take between visual tradition and contemporary wit, is very present in these drawings.

Here we see a butterfly smashing through an hourglass, there a spiderweb embalming musty references. Dreamcatchers hang from the fingers of hamsas in an engaging dance with tradition.

Prosaic objects waltz with ones that have religious value: Nathan’s line work is accurate and the objects he renders quickly legible.

The secular, abstract works in the first section of the gallery space play elegantly with the notion of a scribble pattern.

Like the later work of Spanish surrealist Joan Miró, Nathan’s line work is given full calligraphic reign in these pieces which here seem to describe a dancer spinning, her skirt twisting and flaring with the movement of her body, and there, they turn into eddies of water or the delicate gymnopedies that happen when a confident line of ink meets a sheet of paper.

The more successful of Nathan’s drawings rely on his linear talents: some of the works which use colour are overworked and easy to pass over.

Nathan’s real skill lies with his use of line, which point to a flaw in the exhibition.

Close to 50 works are exhibited here: had the show been more ruthlessly curated, showcasing only gems by this artist, it would have been more convincing, albeit smaller.

Arts Briefs

Nhlengethwa’s ‘Of Jazz Interiors, Tributes and Townships’, in CT

Through March, veteran Cape Town gallerist Rose Korber, shows work by Sam Nhlengethwa. Entitled, “Of Jazz Interiors, Tributes and Townships,” the exhibition is a compilation of recurring themes in the work of this well-known artist, who veers between lithography, etching, drawing and collage to make work quintessentially South African.

Born into a family of jazz lovers, Nhlengethwa acknowledges: “I am at heart, a non-practising jazz musician.” It’s a passion which reverberates through his art.

The work will be shown until March 31, in Camps Bay. Call (021) 438-9152 or visit www.rosekorberart.com, where you can see photographs of works on show.

Nineteen SA writers feature at Writers Festival in Durban

The 16th Time of the Writer International Writers Festival in Durban, is between March 18 and 23. It features 19 writers from South Africa, Africa and beyond.

Hosted by the Centre for Creative Arts at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, the programme includes contributions by Damon Galgut, whose novel In A Strange Room, following the journey of an isolated South African traveller, was shortlisted for several awards, including the 2010 Man Booker Prize.

Galgut is a co-panellist with Elana Bregin, well known for her award-winning young adult titles.

The festival’s programme and the full biographies of the participants can be accessed on www.cca.ukzn.ac.za or call (031) 260-2506.



Streisand to perform at Peres’ birthday bash

JERUSALEM - Barbra Streisand will make her official performing debut in Israel at the 90th birthday celebration for President Shimon Peres.

Streisand is slated to perform at the opening ceremony of the Israeli Presidential Conference on June 18.

According to the Times of Israel, it would be the iconic Jewish entertainer’s first official performance in Israel, although she had been to Israel on several occasions for personal visits.

Streisand is being brought to Israel through the music company Live Nation, which is organising a rare European tour. Several Israeli promoters have attempted to bring her to Israel to perform.

One of the best-selling musicians of all time, Streisand claims 140 million in record sales. She performed at last month’s Oscars for the first time in 26 years.

Some 4 500 people are expected to attend the Israeli Presidential Conference. (JTA)

Israel releases Obama travel schedule

WASHINGTON - Israel has released a tentative itinerary for President Barack Obama’s visit to Israel and the West Bank.

The March 20 - 22 visit, according to the schedule released on Monday by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s office, will include visits to Yad Vashem, Israel’s Holocaust memorial, as well as visits to the graves in Jerusalem of Theodor Herzl, founder of modern Zionism, and Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister assassinated in 1995 by a Jewish extremist.

Also on the itinerary are a review of Israeli innovations in technology as well as a tour of the Dead Sea Scrolls, both at the Israel Museum; meetings with Israeli leaders, including a state dinner at the residence of Israeli President Shimon Peres; and a review of a battery of the Iron Dome anti-missile system funded by the United States that Israel said repelled most of the rockets launched from the Gaza Strip during last November’s war with Hamas.

Obama also will spend time in Ramallah with the Palestinian Authority leadership.

Not listed but reported in the Israeli media are a speech that Obama plans to deliver to students at Israeli universities and a visit to the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem. (JTA)

US defense official calls for Pollard’s release

WASHINGTON - Former US Assistant Secretary of Defence Lawrence Korb, said on Tuesday that the US should release convicted Israeli spy Jonathan Pollard from prison, saying Pollard’s punishment was “disproportionate”.

“As an American, I can’t accept the injustice of it,” Korb said, according to Israel Hayom.

Korb was assistant secretary of defence when Pollard was arrested by US authorities in 1985. Pollard was later convicted of spying for Israel and sentenced to life in prison.

Now a senior fellow at the Centre for American Progress think tank in Washington, Korb made his comment while visiting Israel, where he met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and President Shimon Peres.

“Pollard is the only person in US history to be served a life sentence for spying for a friendly country,” Korb said. “Israel is undoubtedly a friend, not an enemy. The average sentence for spying for a friendly country is only a few years. He needs to be released not because of interests, but because it is the right thing to do.

“It is time for the Israeli public to make its voice heard,” he said. “Precisely because we are such close friends, it is important that President [Barack] Obama hears your voice.”

More than 100 000 Israelis have signed a petition calling for Pollard’s release. The petition will be presented to Obama during his visit to Israel later this month. Prominent signers of the petition include former President Yitzhak Navon, writers AB Yehoshua and David Grossman and Nobel Prize-winners Dan Shechtman, Aaron Ciechanover and Robert Aumann. (JNS.org)

Libyan Islamists torture 48 Christians

BENGHAZI - Libyan Islamists affiliated with the fundamentalist Salafi groups, last week arrested and reportedly tortured 48 Egyptian Coptic Christians in Benghazi.

According to AFP, the Coptic Christians were arrested and detained by armed Salafists on charges of proselytising. A video later released by the Salafists showed dozens of men with shaved heads squatted on the floor in a tiny room with a bearded Libyan recounting their charges.

According to Fox News, the Christians were later released by the Salafists and are awaiting deportation back to Egypt. But during their detainment, family members back in Egypt claimed that the Coptic Christians were tortured by their captors, including having their heads shaved and having acid used to burn off crosses that were tattooed on their wrists, Ahram Online reported.

“When the residents of the village told me that he was imprisoned, I embraced his sons and told them they would not see their father again,” Fardoos Salib, the mother of Coptic farmer Atif Kamel, told Egyptian newspaper al-Watan. “I prayed in the church, until G-d responded and he was released, as G-d knows our conditions.”

This is the latest incident in an increasing number of attacks on Christians in post-Ghaddafi Libya. In late December, two Egyptians died in a blast at a Coptic Church in the town of Dafniya. In February, four foreign missionaries were arrested on charges of proselytising. Last week, a Catholic priest was attacked by armed militiamen in Tripoli, according to Independent Catholic News. (JNS.org)

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From Sudanese slave to ambassador for Israel’s cause

SHIRA DRUION

Former Sudanese slave Simon Deng, (pictured) this week visited South Africa under the auspices of the SAZE, spearheaded by Chairman Avrom Krengel and Executive Director Isla Feldman. He is a passionate defender of Israel.

Deng shared his story and message with a diversity of audiences which included students from UJ and Wits, in the lead-up to Human Rights Day. He also attended private meetings with community members, gave several media interviews and addressed a large crowd at an HOD dinner.

Deng shared his story of how his village was pillaged by Muslim Northern Sudanese Arabs.

“When I was eight, the Sudanese army swept through my village. The invasion displaced my family and the members of my village by perpetrating horrific war crimes against them. I offered to help an Arab man carry his belongings to a ship on the Nile River nearby and was then

abducted and given to a relative of the kidnapper to be their slave in Northern Sudan.”

Deng’s master, Mahmed Ahmed, and his wife Amna, refused to let him return home and subjected him to physical torture, deprivation and constant threats. They showed him a picture of a man with his feet and hands cut off, and warned him: “If you complain, this is what will happen to you.”

Like the majority of families in Northern Sudan, Deng’s “owners” were Muslim and they urged him to convert to Islam and become accepted as their own son. But Deng refused and managed to escape after three years.

Deng, who is a devout Christian, has associated himself with defending Israel against the Islamic claims that it should be under Palestinian rule. He told his audience that “the anti-Israel propaganda that flashes ‘the apartheid card’ as a means to galvanise support, is not only creating untrue accusa-

tions against Israel, but is also insulting the real victims who suffered the severe atrocities of life under the apartheid regime.

“When anti-Israel politicians get up and equate Israel to apartheid, it undermines the severity of the experiences of the real victims, creating nothing short of a travesty.”

He pointed out that Israel had not committed genocide, neither had it displaced millions of people, nor had it enslaved hundreds of people, all of which were crimes that had been perpetrated by the Northern Sudanese, making them perpetrators of apartheid-like crimes.

He said the UN, which he called the “United Do Nothing Nations”, had barely intervened in the Sudanese genocide and instead, had watched idly as millions had been plundered, raped and displaced.

He compared the difference between Israelis and the Northern Sudanese: “The Israelis have made sincere efforts to make peace, compared to the fruitless

efforts of the UN to try and negotiate peace with the Sudanese.” Israel had attempted over 20 peace resolutions while Sudan had none.

Deng recalled that “at a recent meeting of the Arab League in Morocco, it was discussed that two nations needed to be eradicated from the world: the Jews and the Southern Sudanese”.

He said the Jewish community would always have the support of the Southern Sudanese who will always be loyal to Israel. “My mother has a Star of David in her hut; our loyalties lie with you and your people.”

Krengel said “Deng’s visit was very successful because his agenda is completely in line with that of the SAZE.

“Simon works tirelessly to dispel claims which accuse Israel of being an apartheid state.

He echoes the very message we are trying to disseminate and he does so with a noble passion and conviction, making him a true ambassador for the cause.”



Thoroughly enjoyable art tour of Wits’ West Campus

WIZO’s Fortnightly Forum provided a wonderful morning for a large group of women when they participated in an art tour on the West Campus of Wits.

WIZO said in a media release, well-known art personality and curator, Natalie Knight, led the group on a walkabout at Wits.

She spoke to them about art and the reason for the selection of works displayed. Afterwards they enjoyed tea and refreshments.

Many of the women on the tour, who had not been to Wits for years, were amazed at the calibre of art, the buildings and the great vibe on campus.

In the picture below, Joyce Kruger (WIZO Forum); Lorna Sonnenberg (WIZO Forum); Natalie Knight (Wits art curator); Prof Kathy Munro (Wits University); and Barbara Isserow enjoy tea in the gardens of the Wits West Campus.



World News in Brief

Israel escapes the locust plague in advance of the Passover holiday

JERUSALEM - In advance of Passover, Israel has successfully escaped the plague of locusts that threatened to damage the country’s agricultural industry - for now.

“Officials sprayed the flying insects with pesticide early this morning (March 6), greatly reducing the number of living, flying insects,” according to a statement from Israel’s Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development.

One of the few ways to deal with swarms of locust is to spray them with pesticides, according to experts.

“The FAO [UN Food and Agriculture Organisation] warned Israel a couple days ahead of time that swarms were likely, and the country immediately mobilised teams [and] resources, and informed farmers and other parties so they were prepared for the locusts,” Keith Cressman, a senior locust-forecasting officer in Rome for the FAO, told Live Science.

The desert locusts, which originated in Egypt and Sudan, thrive in warm and wet environments. They arrived in Israel just weeks before Passover, which recounts the Jewish exodus from Egypt. According to story in the Bible, one of the 10 plagues that G-d used in order to torment the Egyptians over their enslavement of the Jewish people was a plague of locusts. (JNS.org)

Marais Road Shul choir CD takes airwaves by storm

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

From the jaunty Ein Kelokeynu to the haunting Mikolot Mayim, the Marais Road Synagogue Choir CD has been making waves since its release here four weeks ago. It has topped the South African “Reverbnation” (most listened to) Internet charts and sales have followed suit.

Financed by Londoner Michael Cohen, the CD’s musical arrangement is by Matthew Reid and features Cantor Ivor Joffe, the shul’s chazzan and choirmaster David Gordon, along with the choir. It has been produced by world-class music producer Murray Anderson.

Cohen, who spends three months a year in Cape Town over the summer, recalls being “mesmerised” when he first heard Joffe’s rendition of the traditional tunes in “a very modern, innovative, upbeat way.

“I’ve listened to choirs all over the world and I haven’t heard one anywhere like it,” he says. “I think that the traditional liturgical music doesn’t work for young people today and I feel that this music could very well bring them back into the synagogue.

“It’s not gospel music, but it’s similar in that it is very, very uplifting. I’m not that religious, but I would go religiously to Marais Road (Green and Sea Point Hebrew Congregation) to listen to the choir because it was like watching a theatre show - it was tremendously entertaining and that’s what I hoped to capture on the CD,” he says.

Cohen adds that the reaction from Londoners has been “extraordinary - they’ve never heard anything like it!” He plans separate launches in Johannesburg, Durban and then London (June), New York (August) and Sydney (October), to which he hopes to attract the huge South African expatriate communities.

“There’s a huge revival in Jewish music in England,” he adds, referring to the Cantors’ Convention scheduled to take place there in June. “To my knowledge, it’s the largest in the world.”

A year in the making, the CD incorporates two English songs - “You Raise Me Up”



The cover of the Marais Road Synagogue Choir CD.

and “Those Were the Days” - with its predominantly synagogue music.

Profits will be shared between the shul and Jewish charities in England and Israel, including Zaka, an organisation best known for collecting mortal remains following terror attacks, or natural disasters, to ensure a proper Jewish burial.

As chief executive of MPC Entertainment, Cohen manages entertainment and sports stars worldwide, including Shane Warne and Jonah Lomu and locally he co-represents Dale Steyn, Jacques Kallis and Shaun Pollock.

While this latest venture would seem to be “completely different” from his current work, he has actually come full circle.

“I started off in the music business and used to handle some of the biggest musical stars in the world,” he remarks.

“I really wanted to make a difference,” he says of his motivation. “I think the South African community needs to realise that although I made it for them, I also made it for the rest of the world, because a lot of the tunes are in South African synagogues, but they are not heard outside (the country) and that’s what particularly fascinated me.

“What I hope will happen is that the tunes will be adopted by synagogues all over the world. Even if they copy them, I think that that would be very exciting because they are enthralling to listen to.”

‘New anti-Semitism’ - the old merely clothed in more sophisticated guise



WIZO Johannesburg Chairman Nava Gonen and speaker Bev Goldman.

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY MICHAEL BELLING

Much of the world hates and loves to hate Israel, Bev Goldman told the general meeting of WIZO Johannesburg, now celebrating its centenary.

“What is it about Israel that inflames the passions of millions across the world?” she asked. They make a point, push forward an idea, orate passionately with truth or lies, defend or attack vociferously or venomously.”

Israel’s detractors ignored the realities of the past in favour of the fallacies of the present, ignored the Bible and centuries of history and incontrovertible facts in favour of enemy propaganda, distorted agendas and often irrational antagonism, visceral hatred, blatant malevolence, spewing words such as genocide, ethnic cleansing, apartheid and Nazism.

It was possibly anti-Semitism, with Israel being singled out and ignoring many countries with their own human rights abuses.

Israelis in general hated the idea of public relations, she said. They lived in a country that had been under effective world quarantine for almost all its history, in a society of “unbridled openness”.

She added: “They are bathed in a culture which insulates itself and armours itself and has little reason to believe the world will give it a fair shake.”

Whatever they did, the world was likely to condemn them and

they had seldom been proved wrong in this.

The Israel army was the fourth largest in the world, ensuring the country’s continued existence.

But its enemies said it had a huge army, therefore they hated it - merely for being Israel; Israel was a tiny country.

“Yet if we read the world press accounts or daily condemnations from the United Nations, we might conclude that Israel is a world power intent on destabilising Middle East affairs.”

The world focused disproportionately on Israel with regard to the major issues of contention - occupied land and settlements, refugees, a divided Jerusalem, cross-border incursions and the security fence, while similar disputes were commonplace across the globe.

“The world community singles out Israel for its supposed transgressions in a fashion that it does not do for nearly identical disagreements elsewhere.

“I think this points to a new sort of fashionable and socially acceptable anti-Semitism which is rearing its ugly head. The new anti-Semites were polished and sophisticated intellectuals who took on and endorsed much of the anti-Israel sentiment, including Hamas cartoons of Jews as apes and pigs.

“There was a second facet of the new anti-Semitism. The establishment of the State of Israel also served as a respectable cloak for anti-Semitism. One now spoke not of disliking Jews, but only of despising the Jewish state. “

There was also resentment against Israeli successes, while other countries in the region failed. In addition, the Palestinians positioned themselves as underdogs against a mighty Israel.

“Despite all that, Israel stands proud and steadfast today, sharing with this same world its groundbreaking achievements in technology, medicine, agriculture, eco-environmental policies and education.”

Israel was there when there were natural disasters around the world, as the bastion of free speech, free religion, the protector of women and children, as home and sanctuary not only for Jews, but in many cases for oppressed and abused Christians from neighbouring countries.

“Israel is vibrant and exciting. Israel is there for us all,” she said.

Chev’s Helping Hands hand Kia Rio to Darren Gorelick



Photo: Celeste Everitt

CELESTE EVERITT

Darren Gorelick was the winner of a brand new Kia Rio at the Chevrah Kadisha’s annual Helping Hands Charity Poker Tournament late last year.

Gorelick received the handover of his car last week at the Chev’s revenue offices. The magnificent Kia Rio was sponsored by Ray Levin, CEO of Kia and Clive Blechman, CEO of Eastvaal Auto.

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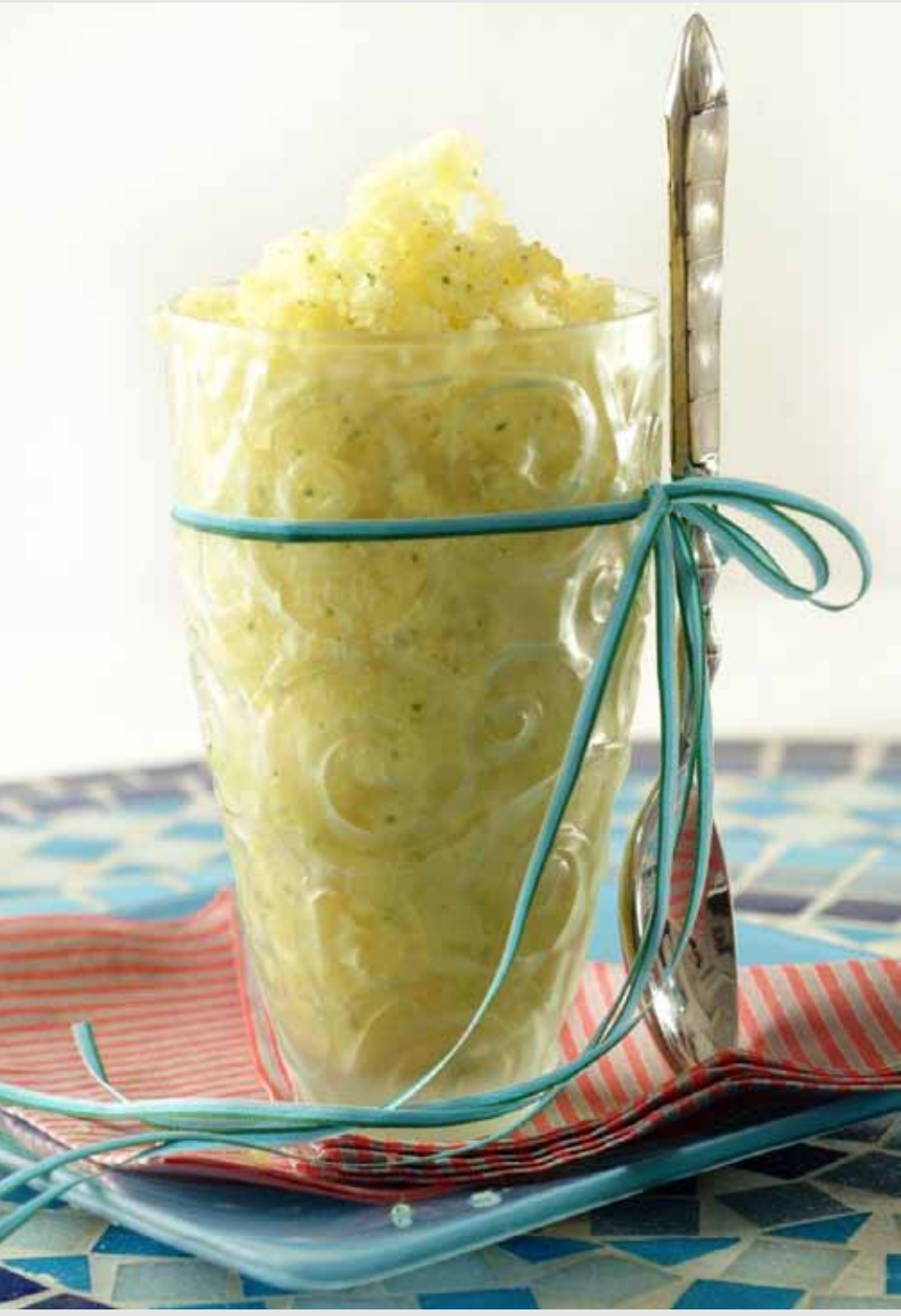
Something sweet for Pesach

SHARON LURIE, known in cookery circles as “The Butcher’s Wife”, has come up with a stunning mouth-watering kosher “sweetener” to enhance your Pesach seder.

- PEAR, LIME AND GINGER SORBET**
- 6 pears (peeled, pips removed and diced) or two cans (KFP) pears with juice
 - 3 - 4 cups water
 - 1/2 cup sugar
 - 1 cup water
 - 3 cm piece of ginger, peeled and sliced
 - 1 tbls lime juice
 - 1 tsp finely grated rind of lime
 - 2 egg whites

- Method:**
- 1 Boil pears in 2 - 3 cups water in a deep saucepan until soft.
 - 2 While pears are boiling, dissolve sugar in water in a medium sized saucepan. Once dissolved, add ginger.
 - 3 Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low and allow to slow boil for about 10 minutes.
 - 4 Add lime juice, rind and boiled pears (with water) or tinned pears with juice and bring to the boil again.
 - 5 Remove from heat and either blend with a hand blender or food processor until silky, smooth.
 - 6 Place mixture into plastic bowl or container the shape and size of a 2 litre square ice cream container.
 - 7 Freeze for 3 hours so that it’s not completely frozen but has started freezing around the edges.
 - 8 Just before removing sorbet from freezer, whisk egg whites until firm.
 - 9 Remove sorbet from freezer and add whisked eggs. Mix well with electric beater or hand blender and refreeze immediately.

- Canned pears option**
- If you are using canned pears, remove the juice from the cans and add enough water to make 3 cups of liquid. Add ginger, juice of lime, rind and only 1/3 cup of sugar (as the syrup in the pears has enough sugar).
 - Bring to the boil, then reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Add pears to liquid, bring to the boil, remove from heat and blend until smooth.
 - Continue with step 4 above.



KDHSVP wins plenty national theatre awards

GAVIN BUDD, HEADMASTER, KDHSVP

The cast of last year’s acclaimed school musical production “A night at the Theatre”, was honoured by the South African National Community Theatre Association when they were nominated as one of the six finalists in the country, to receive awards in the 8th SANCTA Full-Length Play Festival.

The other finalists were: Biloxi Blues (Bishops College, Cape Town); Hairspray (De la Salle College); Maybe This Time & Dance Spectrum (National School of the Arts); Robin Hood (Protea Stage Productions).

Against such formidable competition, King David Victory Park’s production received the most nominations in the Festival for: Best Production, Best Director, Best

Choreography, Best Ensemble, Best Technical, Best Costumes, Best Actor (Dean Salant), Best Actress (Kerri-Lee Gluck), Runner-up to Best Actor (Marc Goldblatt), Best Supporting Actor (Renos Spanoudes), Runner-up to Best Actress (Julia Chaskalson and Atira Pollack), Best Supporting Actress(Bianca Sevel), poster and programme.

Congratulations to KDVP High for winning the following awards at the SANCTA Awards Ceremony last Sunday:

- Best Ensemble: Les Miserables
- Best Actor: Dean Salant as Danny Zuko in Grease
- Best Supporting Actor: Renos Spanoudes as Thenardier in Les Miserables
- Best Director: Gavin Budd



Julia Chaskalson, on stage

Getting rid of chometz for a good cause

LIOR FEIGIN

Linksfield Shul’s new “Links-Youth” team - “a dedicated bunch” - has put together some unbelievable programmes, with one of their initiatives leading up to Pesach is a “Chometz Drive”.

The drive will be happening from this Sunday (March 17) until next Sunday morning (March 24).

The purpose is “for you to get rid of your chometz in an easy, stress-free way, and to

help the broader community at the same time. Links-Youth will be donating the chometz to Our Childrens’ Home, who will benefit greatly from this mitzvah.”

There will be designated bins at the Linksfield Shul office where any chometz can be donated. It’s an amazing opportunity to not only clean for Pesach, but to assist those in need at the same time.

- For more details, contact Sean Korb, 076-889-7847.



Deena Kabatznik; Josh Sewitz; Sean Korb; Asher Marcus; Daniel Frichol; Lior Feigin; Craig Frichol; and Tali Bloom.

Rabbi Friedman regrets YouTube fallout on abuse statement

SHIRA DRUION

For the last four decades, Rabbi Manis Friedman (pictured) has been a maven worldwide in his quest to help victims of molestation and sexual abuse, with his own individual style of therapy, which aims to help victims make sense of their traumatic experiences.

But comments made by him in a private discussion and aired on YouTube, has caused a worldwide storm in Jewish circles. He was met with a barrage of criticism for the “totally inappropriate” manner in which he had addressed the group of religious therapists about abuse.

In the clip he said, inter alia: “It can be very helpful to explain to victims that they are not that damaged and that it is something that is possible to move beyond.”

He was severely criticised for being “insensitive, callous, and undermining of the severity of the issues involved with abuse” and was also criticised for saying that “victims are not that damaged”.

In the clip he was asked questions such as: “Do you think it is advisable to inform a potential spouse that you had been abused?” He answered: “if you have just been physically ill with diarrhoea, do you have to tell the person?”

Which is an analogy that he admits was totally insensitive and out of line, but was used to drive the point home.

In an interview with the Jewish Report, Rabbi Friedman explained that he helped victims of abuse after they had been through the necessary psychotherapy and certainly did not assume the role of psychologist.

“People come to me when they are at the end of their healing process and want to make sense of what they have been through from a religious point of view. They often still feel contaminated and ashamed and want to know how they are viewed from a Torah perspective, to which I immediately reassure them, that the Torah does not view them as ‘dirty or contaminated’ and that they should not feel guilty for crimes they did not commit.

“When you tell people that they will never get over this and that they are damaged goods, they feel totally overpowered by their experience and it prevents them from being able to get well, because they feel that it is incumbent on them to be damaged for the rest of their lives.

“However when you minimise their own perception of how



damaged they are, you empower them to feel like they can move forward, In my experience, I have seen that it has in fact been very comforting for victims of abuse to hear this, because it helps to alleviate their feelings of intense shame and embarrassment.

“In my mind, if somebody has worked through the abuse, then it is just as much in the past as when one has just been physically ill. One doesn’t need to carry it around and feel unnecessarily burdened by baggage which has been resolved, and more than that, why should one feel like that all the painful childhood wounds should be exposed, when a person moved beyond them?”

If one has been through the therapy and the healing, and has moved forward, one should feel like he/she is doing something wrong when they don’t “disclose” the information about their history of abuse.

He is filled with contrition for his lack of sensitivity, but is emphatic that it is no reflection of his true feelings on the subject.

Rabbi Friedman admits that he was devastated by the damage he caused with his candid approach to the subject. He has issued an official apology and sincerely hopes people will be able to forgive his actions: “I want to apologise for my completely inappropriate use of language when discussing sexual abuse.”

See story on page 8

ORT SA with Bidvest, gives laptops to Alex teachers



MARCELLE BLOOM-RAVID

The ORT SA/Bidvest ICT, Maths and Science Laptop Project, was launched last week to great fanfare at ORT House in Houghton, Johannesburg, as Alexandra teachers signed for their laptops.

They were welcomed by Gauteng Department of Education District Director of Johannesburg East, Raymond Martins.

The idea behind the project is to supply teachers with laptops and training in order to help close the digital

divide that exists between schools in South Africa. This project will be extended to all the schools where ORT SA runs programmes.

In the picture, teachers from Alexandra township northeast of Johannesburg, gather together with Raymond Martins, district director, Gauteng East, Gauteng Department of Education, (second left); Ariellah Rosenberg, head of Department, Educator Empowerment, ORT SA (centre); and Jane Horner, Educator Empowerment Co-ordinator, ORT SA (last right).

American nous for our young entrepreneurs

SHIRA DRUION

Tuesday night saw well over 500 young Jews gather to show their support for the Chevrah Kadisha’s Helping Hands, which is specifically focused on bringing the organisation to the younger community.

It is geared for the 18 - 35 year olds , hoping that they will become Chev donors and help alleviate the massive financial burden of having to raise the hundreds of millions required to keep up with the growing communal demands placed on the Chev each year.

The evening was held at Investec and guests were treated to supper and an outstanding presentation and question/answer session by the two “inventors” who had come from the US as guests of honour.

As Global entrepreneurs Jason Lucash and Mike Szymczak who have been on Times’ list of the 50 greatest inventions of the year entertained the audience with humour and sharp wit, they shared their story of how they started their OrigAudio business with the creation of foldable speakers that they invented when experimenting with a Chinese take-out box and how they have grown a tiny business into a global brand.

Helping Hands Chairman Hugh Bauer, said: “It is a night that shows the real power that the young people in our community have to really make things happen, both entrepreneurially in business, and also in terms of our community.

“I thought Mike and Jason were some of the most engaging, down-to-earth speakers we’ve had, and particularly inspiring for our audience, because they are of a similar age. A lot of the people in the audience are looking for practical guidance and inspiration in their entrepreneurial careers and they have much to share with people (like these), based on their experiences of building their own business.”

Torah Academy’s Pesach market gets more popular every year

SUZANNE BELLING

For over 20 years now, Torah Academy has held an annual Pesach market and wine sale before the festival, with Adam’s International wines at bargain prices.

This year (March 10) there was an added dimension: a wine tasting with cheeses (chalav Yisrael and kosher for Passover) never before available in this country for Pesach - among them gouda, mozzarella and cheddar.

On sale was a variety of paper goods, disposable products and other goods to facilitate easy kashering of homes for Pesach.

The market and wine tasting at KosherWorld in Glenhazel, was preceded by a special breakfast.

Some 1 200 members of the community flocked to Glenhazel for this pre-Passover experience with a difference. The event was co-ordinated by Rabbi Shabsy Chaiton, administrator of Torah Academy, who says the fundraising from the market is ongoing and the total of funds raised is not available at this stage.



Ivana Goldfein, who manned a wine stall, drinking a toast with Alex Fine, Sam Michel.

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Marlene Bethlehem and the CRL Commission

Commencing last Friday, the Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Commission held its three-day national consultative conference in Pretoria. Board members attended on the first day and, with our National Director Wendy Kahn, I attended the gala banquet on Saturday night.

It was most inspiring to be part of so diverse a gathering, one representing the full spectrum of cultural, religious, ethnic and linguistic groups that make up the rich tapestry of the population.

Our community has from the outset had a special link with the CRL Commission, mainly due to the pivotal role played on it by one of its most distinguished communal leaders, Marlene Bethlehem.

Marlene’s extraordinary record of communal service stretches back more than five decades, during which time she



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

has served, among various other important positions held, as chairman and president of the SAJBD.

When the Commission was constituted in 2003, she was one of the original 17 candidates selected out of several hundred names put forward to sit on it. She was subsequently chosen by then President Thabo Mbeki to be the CRL’s first deputy chairman, and continued to serve as a commissioner after completing her term.

In addition to representing our Jewish community on the CRL, Marlene has been intricately involved in many other aspects of its activities. It was gratifying to witness at first hand the enormous respect and affection with which “Commissioner Mama Bethlehem” is regarded by all who have worked with her. I can only commend

Marlene on having discharged so successfully her challenging, sensitive duties, and warmly thank her for her selfless efforts, not just on behalf of South African Jewry, but for our country as a whole.

Truly, she has epitomised the ideal of Jewish leadership, one that combines a passionate concern for the well-being of one’s own community with a commitment to leading that community in contributing to the wider society.

A tribute to SAUJS

At the time of writing, the annual anti-Israel jamboree known as “Israel Apartheid Week” (IAW) is in full swing and as in previous years is concentrated mainly on the university campuses.

Once again, we can be proud of our Jewish students for the way they have responded. Confronted with an extremely well-resourced campaign whose distinguishing feature is to engage in scurrilous, accusatory rhetoric rather than in promoting honest, constructive

debate, they have stood up for their beliefs with courage and dignity.

The previous week, it ran an Israel Awareness Week, providing a positive, proactive depiction of the realities of modern-day Israel as opposed to the distorted caricature that would inevitably follow it.

As the Jewish community’s representatives on campus, SAUJS is at the coalface when it comes to defending Israel. However, this is just one aspect of its activities, and it is to the leadership’s credit that it has not allowed IAW-type provocations to divert them from its many other activities.

As in the case of Marlene Bethlehem noted above, this includes both working to foster a vibrant Jewish culture on campus while engaging in partnership with other sectors of society in outreach and upliftment initiatives, including a current project aimed at establishing a new library in Alexandria.

• Listen to Steven Gruzd on Jewish Board Talk on 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00.

This column is paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

It’s our duty to pursue justice

Opening the third of the Five Books of Moses, the weekly portion Vayikra (Leviticus 1:1 - 5:26) describes an array of sacrifices to be prepared by individuals who violate any of the commandments.

The prepared sacrifice would then be handed to the consecrated Kohen and offered as a sacrifice, relieving the burden of sin. Those sacrifices were the essence of Jewish worship in the wilderness, in the Tabernacle and, later, in the Temple in Jerusalem.

The text repeatedly refers to “sin” - chet - although it is but one of the varieties of violations which the Torah presents as challenges in Jewish living. The nature of the sin is left general, the violation of any of the mitzvoth, which were only later defined at 613 in number. What is

more clearly established in the text, however, is the result of sin - that is our personal responsibility.

This becomes particularly clear at the start of chapter 5: “If a person incurs guilt - when he has heard a public imprecation and - although able to testify as one who has either seen or learned of the matter - he does not give information, so that he is subject to punishment...” silence in the face of deed or falsehood becomes our own sin.

Torah teaches here that such silence is not only to accept the wrongdoing, but even more, to be an active part of it.

Contemporary legal systems generally have made this part of statute, calling accomplices to crimes to account, punishing accessories and marking collaborators, as guilty of

criminal offence.

Nevertheless, social mores and legal codes are often not perfectly aligned, so personal values might be at odds with the law. Modern democracies, including South Africa, incorporate rights and responsibilities into law; among the responsibilities placed upon each adult is moral decision.

We are expected to choose “right” even should it conflict with self-interest or the perceived interests of our community.

The sacrifices outlined in this sedra, refined in Sefer Vayikra (Leviticus) remain impossible to carry out since the destruction of the Temple.

Prayer and study of sacred texts allows us to verbalise and consider the effects of our actions on the world that we know. The transition from sacrifice to prayer started during the Babylonian Exile; the words incorporated in our siddurim continue to be elaborated upon in each generation. With them,

each of us has to reflect upon our own deeds and to seek our own forgiveness.

A consistent thread in Jewish life remains responsibility for sin, even as misdeeds are the result of life decisions we are called upon to make.

At any instant, no matter how devoted and focused we might be, no matter how skilled in living inside the boundaries of halachah, any (and in fact, all) humans are likely to act in ways that transgress.

While Torah is loath to establish a hierarchy of the seriousness of such actions, even as it calls mitzvoth kallot as important as mitzvoth chamurot, the verses attributing responsibility to the passive, silent participant in Leviticus 5:1 point to the grave importance that defence of the rights of others holds.

Parashat Shofetim discusses justice: Tsedek, tsedek tirdof - Justice, justice shall you pursue; and continues its instruction with the words:



PARSHAT VAYIKRA
Rabbi Robert A Jacobs
Bet David, Sandton

ki hashochad iver chachamim - bribery blinds the wise.

Failure to reveal misdeeds, concealing evidence, turning a blind eye and a deaf ear to wrongs in society, are links between Leviticus and Deuteronomy, between personal responsibility and required responses in our society.

Such honesty, however, does not come without sacrifices of a modern sort: Seeing the needs of strangers, responding to the suffering of the powerless or rising in defence of the innocent disturbs our safe spaces, complacent lives and comfortable naiveté.

Like the prophets of old who never hesitated to speak to truth to power, our duty as a nation of priests and a holy people remains to seek the sacred, to offer the world our strength and above all, to pursue justice.



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World News in Brief

Jewish Harvard students receive mock eviction notices in anti-Israel campaign

NEW YORK - Jewish students at Harvard University, as part of “Israel Apartheid Week”, last week received mock eviction notices on their dormitory doors as part of the anti-Israel campaign organised by the Harvard College Palestine Solidarity Committee.

The flyers, which informed the students that their rooms “were scheduled for demolition in the next three days”, were meant to invoke the “unlawful displacement of Palestinians from their homeland at the hands of the Israeli government”, the Harvard Crimson reported.

“Israeli Apartheid Week” is an annual series of anti-Israel lectures, events and protests that is aligned with the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign.

“I feel like [Israeli Apartheid Week] goes against what Harvard stands for as a place for open academic dialogue, open thoughts, and open intellectual activity,” Harvard senior Steven J Tricanowicz, who was one of the students effected by the notices, told the Harvard Crimson.

Many of the ‘eviction notices’ which had been placed on the doors, were later found to be ripped up and thrown on the ground.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) expressed outrage over the incident.

“This tactic is designed to silence and intimidate pro-Israel advocates at Harvard and campuses around the country,” said Robert Trestan, ADL acting New England regional director.

“Free expression has a place on campus; however targeting the dorms of Harvard students lends itself to creating tension, isolating students and fomenting hostility,” he said. (JNS.org)

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What's On

Today, Friday (March 15)

• UZLC hosts Nicholas Wolpe, CEO of Liliesleaf Trust, who will talk on “Liliesleaf - Past, Current and Future”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Contact: Gloria, 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (March 17)

- The Chevrah Kadisha will be packing food boxes for Pesach today, at the Chev’s premises, Long Avenue entrance, from 09:00 - 12:00. Everyone - all ages - welcome. Information: Tanya (011) 532-9628.
- RCHCC shows a documentary, “The Klezmatics: On Holy Ground” Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, e-mail: rhcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za
- WIZO Etgar celebrates WIZO Johannesburg’s 100 year birthday bash. Children’s fashion show (6-16 years). Two shows only: 10:30 and 15:00. Garments will be on sale. Venue: World of Yamaha, 19 Eastern Service Road, Eastgate, Ext 6. Cost: R180 (incl refreshments). Contact: Lee 082-441-2953 or Zee 083-377-5644.
- Second Innings hosts Arlene Bernstein who will talk on “Managing Stress - Making Everyday Life Meaningful”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz

Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact: Grecia, (011) 532-9718. All talks are R20 entrance for Second Innings members and R40 for non-members.

Monday (March 18)

- UJW hosts the screening of “Constantine’s Sword”, a film dealing with the sign of the cross and its significance to Christians and Jews. The film will be preceded by a short introduction by Ronnie Mink, head of Jewish Studies at King David Linksfield. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (March 19)

- UJW hosts Arlene Bernstein, former head of LifeLine, who will head a group discussion. Come along and bring a friend. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Wednesday (March 20)

- Second Innings is hosting an “Outing to Satya Graha House - The Museum and Home of Gandhi”. Self-drive to 15 Pine Street Orchards; meet promptly at 10:30. Entrance fee R40. Contact: Grecia, (011) 532-9718.
- UJW CT’s adult education division hosts Miri Eisen who will talk on “The Israeli Intelligence Community”. Venue: Stonehaven. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Entrance: R20 (inc refreshments). Enquiries: (021) 434-9555 (mornings only).

Sunday (March 24)

- Second Innings is hosting Hilary Semple who will talk on “Shakespeare’s Fathers and Daughters”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact: Grecia, (011) 532-9718. All talks are R20 entrance for Second Innings members and R40 for non-members.

Monday (March 25)

- Greenside Shul hosts its Pesach seder on 1st night Pesach. All welcome. Please call the office soonest on (011) 788-5036, if you want to join the seder, Adults R250, children 13 years and younger, R125.

Tuesday (March 26)

- UJW hosts Estelle Sher who will present the second of two sessions on “Debussy - His Life and Works”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

- WIZO hosts a “Lunch & Learn” shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz, every Thursday at Beyachad. Time: 13:00. Contact: Joyce 082-446-0480.

Wednesday (April 3)

- UJW CT’s adult education division hosts Petra Muller who talk on her poetry. Venue: Stonehaven. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Entrance: R20 (inc refreshments). Enquiries: (021) 434-9555 (mornings only).

- Chabad Chai Seniors Club meets Monday to Friday every week, 09:00 to 13:00. Venue: Chabad House. Refreshments as well as lunch are provided. Mondays: Brain exercises with occupational therapist and computers and Internet (16:15). Tuesdays: Exploring the myths and mysteries of Judaism. Ladies learning with Aviva Goldman. Wednesdays: Torah studies and computer and Internet training (16:30). Thursdays: Living with the times with Rabbi Shlomo Raitport and ladies shiur with Rebbetzen Chaya Haller. Fridays: Living Torah with Rabbi Shlomo Raitport. Distribution of take-home food. Info: Chabad House (011) 440-6600, e-mail rak@chabad.org.za www.ChabadJoburg.org/seniors.

- WIZO Gift Shop: Order now for all your Pesach gifts. Situated at the bottom level of the Genesis Shopping Centre, Sandler Road, Fairmount (entrance from Bradfield Drive opposite Shula's Bakery). Hours: Mon - Thurs 09:00 - 17:00, Friday 09:00 - 13:30. Open on Sundays February 17, March 17 and 24. Contact (011) 640-2760.

- Orchid WIZO Florist, for chuppahs in shuls or gardens; canopy, drapes and floral arrangements our specialty. Daily deliveries of floral and fruit arrangements as well. Contact: (011) 728-4513, after hours: (011) 728-2769.

- Bnoth Zion Association WIZO is collecting anything of value for its store. Contact (021) 464-6729 or Linda Saban 072-245-3225 or Cherna Kredo 084-589-8588.

- Johannesburg Children’s Home is appealing for shoes and takkies for children and teenagers. Contact Edna or Hylton Segal (011) 970-4266.

- Intimate Antiques Fair held on last Sunday of every month at Cedar Square corner Witkoppen/ Cedar Avenue in Fourways, from 09:00 - 16:00. Contact Robyn 083-311-4768.

- The Selwyn Segal Shop has a huge selection of gifts ranging in price from R30 upwards. Visit them from Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 14:00. Phone (011) 640-6413 or (011) 640-5171. All proceeds to The Selwyn Segal Foundation for the Mentally Handicapped.

- 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 (Monday - Friday) at 21:00, cnr Elray and Michel Streets, Raedene. Open to broader community. Don't fret if you need a later minyan. Secure parking provided.

- 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.

- JWBS Johannesburg, urgently requires secondhand clothing, kitchenware, household goods, books and bric-a-brac for its second-hand shop. Contact (011) 485-5232.

- Celebrating a bar-/batmitzvah? Why not give a donation to WIZO's bar-/batmitzvah project in Israel? You get a beautiful certificate to give to the bar-/batmitzvah child here. Certificates are available from WIZO tel (011) 645-2548.

- Second Innings runs a series of courses and activities including scrabble, bridge, discussion groups, play reading groups, women's and men's reading groups, symphony concert rehearsals, bowls, pilates, Yogic Pranayama, walking and aerobics, Golden Oldies Cine Club, weekly workshops (by arrangement) on “falls education for the elder adult”, and organises regular activities. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

There is no feeling like owning a winner



ROCKING THE BOAT
Jack Milner

For most people not involved in horseracing, the sport is all about bookies, betting and duplicity. Of course that does play a part, but there’s a lot more to it than that; it’s about the beauty and grace of one of the noblest creatures on Earth and there is hardly more emotional activity around.

For the punter, the thrill of backing a winner is countered by the annoyance and disappointment of defeat. Punters theorise why they back a horse and when it loses they theorise why they should not have backed the one they did, and should, in fact, have backed the winner!

For owners watching their horse win, it is exhilarating and has very little to do with the prize money. I remember as a youngster working for the late Mick Maris, a highly prolific bookmaker, who told the story a horse called North Road, owned by Harry Oppenheimer in the 1970s. The horse was running at the now defunct Germiston Racecourse and was the even-money favourite. According to Maris, Oppenheimer pulled R10 out of his pocket and asked for a bet of an even R10.

“Your horse is going to win,” Maris told Oppenheimer. “You really can have a bigger bet than that!” Oppenheimer said he would think about it, took his ticket and walked away. North Road shortened in to 7 - 10 and just before the start Oppenheimer again approached Maris, took another R10 out of his pocket, and asked for a bet of R7 to R10.

“No problem,” retorted Maris, “but I’ll tell you what Mr Oppenheimer, I will give you another even R10.”

The horse duly won and Oppenheimer was paid out his R20 profit, less a little tax of course.

Maris was bemused by the small bet. The truth is that the money was irrelevant. After all, what was another R1 000, R10 000, or even R1 million to Harry Oppenheimer? What actually gave him the biggest thrill was watching his horse win and leading him into the No 1 box. It’s about that picture on your wall, not the money.

It was an experience encountered by Bidvest chief executive, Brian Joffe in Dubai last weekend.

Joffe owns a wonderful sprinter named Shea Shea in partnership with Myron Berzack. The five-year-old son of National Emblem had stamped his authority on local racing by winning two Grade 1 races, the Golden Horse Casino Sprint over 1200m at Scottsville in Piet-



Bidvest's Brian Joffe (centre), trainer Mike de Kock (right) and jockey Christophe Soumillon, receive their trophies after Shea Shea's record-breaking victory in the Meydan Sprint in Dubai last Saturday night.

ermaritzburg and the Computaform Sprint over 1000m at Turffontein.

The connections then decided to try their luck overseas and Shea Shea, who was trained by Geoff Woodruff in South Africa, was sent to Mike de Kock’s yard in Dubai. His first race at Meydan Racecourse was disappointing but he was then entered in the Listed Meydan Sprint over 1000m last Saturday.

Shea Shea not only won, but set a track record in the process. Despite all the winners he has trained, De Kock still thrives on the thrill of another victory. But, he admitted, his best moment last Saturday was watching the reaction of Joffe, who had flown over to watch the race.

“To witness Brian’s pure joy was heart-warming. To see a man who conducts billion dollar deals almost every day of the week overcome with emotion and pride, was hugely gratifying,” said De Kock.

It is also worth mentioning the part Shea Shea played in bringing two rivals together. It is well known in racing circles that there has been no love lost between De Kock and Woodruff. They have fought out many Trainers’ Championships and the competition has occasionally gone over the top. However, the relocation of Shea Shea has done what humans could not do and brought them together.

“Geoff, too, was as proud as punch. He came along to support what was formerly his yard’s best horse and while it couldn’t have been easy, he participated with a touching enthusiasm.

My sincere thanks go to Geoff and his team for teaching Shea Shea the ropes as a young horse, bringing him through the ranks so successfully and passing him on to us for his international exploits,” said De Kock

Shea Shea will now be aimed at the Grade 1 Al Quoz Sprint, which carries prize money of \$1 million, and will be run over the same course and distance on Dubai World Cup night, on Saturday March 30. This race was won by South

African-bred JJ The Jet Plane in 2011.

There is no doubt that Joffe will be back at Meydan on World Cup night and I will be shocked if Berzack is not alongside him, to watch what could be Shea Shea’s finest hour.

Hopefully many South Africans - and not only racing enthusiasts - will tune in to channel 239 on DStv to share the thrill which will last a lot longer than the around 57 seconds of the race.

Hospice Raceday: all the prize-winners

JACK MILNER

The Hospice Raceday did not take place last year for logistical reasons, but the draw for the 15 prizes was made last week and the winners have been announced.

There were some super prizes to be won, with the top four being a trip to Wimbledon, a visit to the US Open in New York, a trip to the Atlantis Hotel in Dubai which, if you want, will coincide with Dubai World Cup night, and the option to attend any Arsenal home match in London.

“I would like to commend the local Jewish community for all their support of this event,” said organiser Ivan Zartz. “Their contribution, both in supplying prizes and

buying the tickets, was outstanding.”

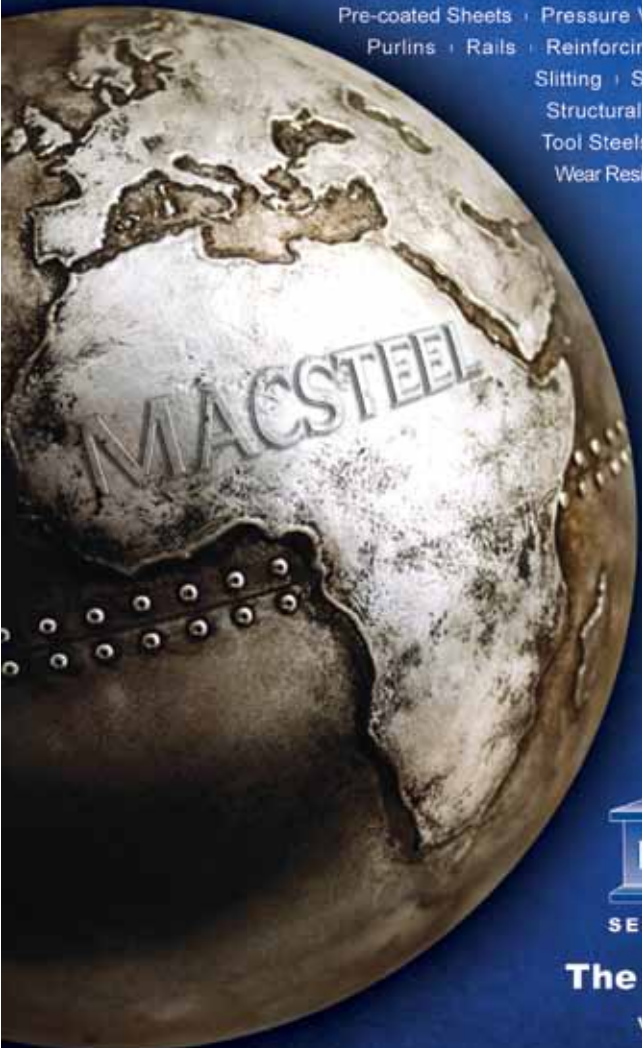
The full list of prize-winners are:


Main prize 1 - Linda Nathan; Main prize 2 - Brenderly Hyman; Main prize 3 - Bev Bouwer; Main prize 4 - Peter White Mining (Pty) Ltd; Bon Ami gift voucher - Nigel Unwin; Jeppe Tyre Prize hamper - Ellerine Bros (Pty) Ltd; Leeways Garden Centre gift voucher - Ashley Farber; Randburg Race gift vouchers - D Yutar; Protea Hotel - Stephen Anderson; Sabi Sabi Lodge - Team Leigh Care; Cascades Hotel - Diesel Electric; Euphoria Hotel - Peter White Mining (Pty) Ltd; De Hoek Country Club - Diesel Electric; Comair tickets - Abraham Machele; Desch voucher - Diesel Electric.

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