



Beautiful
photographs
on show at
In Toto
(page 12)

South african Jewish Report

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Photo by Ilan Ossendryver

Isla Feldman, SAZF director, and organiser of the Yom Ha'atzmaut concert at Gold Reef City to celebrate Israel's 65th, is helped up by theatre guests after being pushed to the floor by BDS protesters who had infiltrated the concert on Monday night. See pages 3 & 6.

Down but not out – in defence of Israel

WENDY KAHN: Tasneem Essop fabricates a revised version of Reshef concert

"Ms Essop and her fellow SRC members would seem to have realised that their thuggish behaviour has been exposed and that neither the university administration nor the staff, students and Wits community as a whole will tolerate it".

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Anger is mounting over UAE's shoddy treatment of Prof Karabus



Says Health Professionals Council of SA's acting registrar, Adv Tshepo Boikanyo: "...the HPCSA is appalled at how the UAE has handled the Karabus case... we will not be associated with the travesty of justice in this case."

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Pretoria's compromise on labelling doesn't cut any ice in Israel

According to the Foreign Ministry in Jerusalem: "Labelling as such is discriminatory, no matter in which way it is done, and there is no cause for rejoicing in the face of clear discrimination."

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Jewish groups support Obama's caution about who bombed Boston

The low-tech nature of the device used in Boston - a "pressure cooker" that relays shrapnel upon explosion - suggests that the attacker was not part of a sophisticated network.

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ChaiFM's radiothon wins the station an MTN award

After just four years of broadcasting, Jewish community radio station, 101.9 ChaiFM, last Saturday night at the Sandton Convention Centre, walked away with an MTN Radio Award - going up against other long-established stations.

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April 20 / 10 Iyar

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17:15	18:04	Durban
17:35	18:24	Bloemfontein
17:32	18:23	Port Elizabeth
17:24	18:14	East London

KASHRUT ALERT

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Love – to receive that Torah

“The truth hurts,” so the saying goes.

It’s human nature, I may know my own faults yet I’m not bothered by them until someone else points them out.

There is something inherent in our psyche that compels us to force these shortcomings below the surface. We’re comfortable to continue our lives in this blissful state of denial - that is, until someone else drags them right back to the surface - then it hurts!

The famous Talmudic sage Hillel, expresses the fundamental Torah precept “to love your fellow as yourself” in the following way: “That which is hateful to you do not do to your fellow.”

The obvious question is: What is wrong with the original version? Why is he presenting the mitzvah in this negative format? Is there perhaps some insight being suggested?

One idea taught in chassidic writings is that Hillel is not just talking about an individual’s pet peeves but of a more universal “hateful” that is common to all people. What really bothers me? What gets an individual’s back up? What really gets under my skin more than any petty annoyance?

It’s when my own weaknesses or negative traits are brought under the spotlight by someone else pointing them out!

So, this is what Hillel was teach-

ing: We have to learn how to embrace our fellow in the same way that we embrace ourselves. Just as I’m quick to “bury” my own negative side and overlook my own failings, in that same way I should overlook the failings of my fellow.

We have to learn to see the inherent worth of each individual just as we are convinced of our own self worth. This then allows us to look beyond the less significant aspect of our fellow - their failings and weaknesses; after all, no one is perfect.

We read this mitzvah: “Love your fellow as yourself,” in our parsha during the weeks when we are counting up to Shavuot



PARSHAT ACHAREI MOT KEDOSHIM
Rabbi Pini Hecht
Assistant Rabbi,
Marais Road Shul,
Cape Town

preparing ourselves to once again receive the Torah.

The timing should serve as reminder of the incredible importance of this mitzvah, as Hillel continues his statement: “This is the entire Torah, the rest is commentary” and to encourage the imperative that we live this ideal so that we can once again receive the Torah “k’ish echad b’leiv echad” - “as one man with one heart”.

Anger mounts over Karabus treatment

ROBYN SASSEN

Online and international communities are being stirred into action and outrage by the shoddy treatment meted out to 78-year-old Professor Cyril Karabus in Abu Dhabi.

The retired paediatric oncologist from Cape Town, tried and found guilty 10 years ago of manslaughter and fraud without his knowledge, after the death of a three-year-old patient suffering from terminal leukaemia, whom he had treated while on a locum in Abu Dhabi, has been under arrest and then house arrest since August last year.

After a myriad postponements, which seems to have very little to do with justice, the latest scheduled hearing of his case’s prosecution is now set for April 23.

The medical fraternity in SA, former patients, colleagues and doctors further afield, are agitating for a boycott of the United Arab Emirates and especially of a medical congress called Africa Health Week scheduled in South Africa next month. This major three-day healthcare professionals congress and exhibition is sponsored by a Dubai-based commercial company called Informa Life Sciences.

Earlier this week, Times Live quoted the Health Professionals Council of SA’s acting registrar Advocate Tshepo Boikanyo, on the forthcoming medical conference: “As the custodian of healthcare ethics and standards of professional conduct of registered healthcare practitioners in the country, the HPCSA is appalled at the manner in which the United Arab Emirates has handled the Karabus case. We have decided to boycott the conference and exhibition as we will not be associated with the travesty of justice as in this case.”

In addition, SA born Israeli citizen Laurence Seeff, and Mike Fisher, a former

Israeli resident now based in South Africa decided last October to create a Facebook page and Twitter account to raise awareness for Prof Karabus’ ordeal. Says Seeff: “We started it in our private capacities, but found it necessary to confer with Sarah, Karabus’ daughter, and Michael Bagraim, Karabus’ lawyer.

“Sensitive information and information deemed problematic to the case, was always first sent for endorsement to Sarah and Michael. To date, this relationship ensues and is proving to be very effective,” they add, saying there are over 1 500 supporters on Facebook and over 300 on Twitter.

“Given that we are dealing with a human rights case and with an impeccable man of sterling reputation, there are many ups and downs. Keeping the page alive is not easy when there is no news. We are awed at the support and love sent to the Prof on the page.”

One supportive source is Prof Eugen Adelsmayr, from Austria, who set up an Intensive Care Unit in Dubai before finding himself in similar onerous circumstances to Karabus, which manifested in a life sentence in 2012.

Adelsmayr has written a book “Dubai Low-Down” published on Kindle. He has made it available through the Free Prof Karabus Facebook page. The book exposes the underbelly of a culture that markets itself as the world’s shopping mecca, revealing one of incompetence, malice and corruption.

Adelsmayr has pledged to donate all income generated from current sales of this book to Karabus’ trust fund. The case has put tremendous financial strain on the Karabus family.

Will sufficient public awareness cause the UAE to take notice? “We hope so,” say Fisher and Seeff. “From the UAE, we see



An image from the Free Prof Karabus facebook page.

increased activity. We cannot attribute results to changes; we are witness to changes in awareness.”

Since the Jewish Report’s story last week in which leading Johannesburg gynaecologist Dr Theo Kopenhagen publicly rejected his invitation to Africa Health Week because of this saga, the HPCSA has withdrawn from the conference.

Dr Trudy Smith, another prominent Johannesburg gynaecologist also invited to present at this conference, also rejected the opportunity for the same reason. “In addition, I was also invited to a meeting about the Human Papillomavirus, on May 6 and have declined because of the Karabus affair.

“The meeting is an important regional event, focused on the cervical cancer vaccination in the Middle East and Africa. It’s a pity I won’t be there.”

Kopenhagen has written to Dr Mzukisi Grootboom, chairman of the SA Medical Association, encouraging him to “rapidly set up an e-mail petition” for South African doctors. Kopenhagen added that another

prominent gynaecologist, Prof Franco Guidozzi was attempting to get a ruling from the Wits Health Sciences Faculty Ethics Committee on the conduct required of an ethical doctor in response to the present situation.

“There is a possibility of it doing sufficient harm for the Dubai-based organisers to press for a change of attitude at home. Prof Guidozzi will also try and get the WHSF to request all their alumni to boycott the Africa Health Week Conference.”

Publisher of MyShtetl Ant Katz, has established that “Grootboom is determined to get his board to ratify the executive’s decision... and formally withdraw from the event.”

The Free Prof Karabus Facebook page, MyShtetl.co.za and <http://briancramer63.wix.com/cyril-karabus>, set up by Israel resident Brian Cramer, are just some of the platforms stirring awareness of Karabus’ plight.

Initiatives, from city-led fundraisers to impromptu protests, sales of banners and multiple petitions are mushrooming. The campaign is taking on a life of its own.

Jewish Report

PUBLISHER Bryan Silke - bryan@sajewishreport.co.za • EDITOR Geoff Sifrin - geoff@sajewishreport.co.za • Sub-editor Paul Maree • Ed Co-ordinator Sharon Akum - sharon@sajewishreport.co.za • Sports editor Jack Milner • Books editor Gwen Podbrey • Arts editor Robyn Sassen • Cape Town correspondent Moira Schneider: 021-794-4206 • Pretoria correspondent Diane Wolfson: 082-707-9471 • ADVERTISING MANAGER Karen Knowles - karen@sajewishreport.co.za Advertising: Adi Lew: 083-407-8034 - lews@tiscali.co.za, Britt Landsman: 082-292-9520 - britt@sajewishreport.co.za, Marlene Bilewitz: 083-475-0288 - marlene@sajewishreport.co.za • Classified sales: Susan Walunda - jrclassified@global.co.za • Distribution manager Britt Landsman • Design and layout: Bryan Maron/Design Bandits – bryan@designbandits.co.za • Website: Ilan Ossendryver • Subscription enquiries: Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860-13-2652. Board of Directors: Howard Feldman (Chairman), Issie Kirsh (Deputy Chair), Marlene Bethlehem, Bertie Lubner, Benji Porter, Herby Rosenberg, Howard Sackstein, Jason Valkin, Elton Bondi, Michael Sieff, Steven Krawitz, Denese Bloch.

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They died so that Israel may be free

SHIRA DRUION

In sombre mood at the Yom Hazikaron remembrance in Johannesburg, as was the case around the world, this week homage was paid to the thousands of Israeli soldiers who have lost their lives in defence of the State of Israel. But the mood was tinged with gratefulness that those lives had not been lost in vain.

There were stories of loss and heart ache, but also of hope and pride. Every Jew could look with pride at that tiny sliver of land called Israel, a beacon of democracy where Jews can be free.

This year in Johannesburg, the SA Zionist Federation hosted a packed audience who had come to pay tribute to the brave Israel Defence Forces soldiers. The evening's proceedings were chaired by Bnei Akiva Chairman Neal Daskal.

"Tonight, I think it is most befitting to share this very moving story," said Rabbi Laurence Perez, CEO of Yeshiva College Schools and rabbi at Mizrahi Shul, who encapsulated the tragedies that have befallen the Jewish people over many generations.

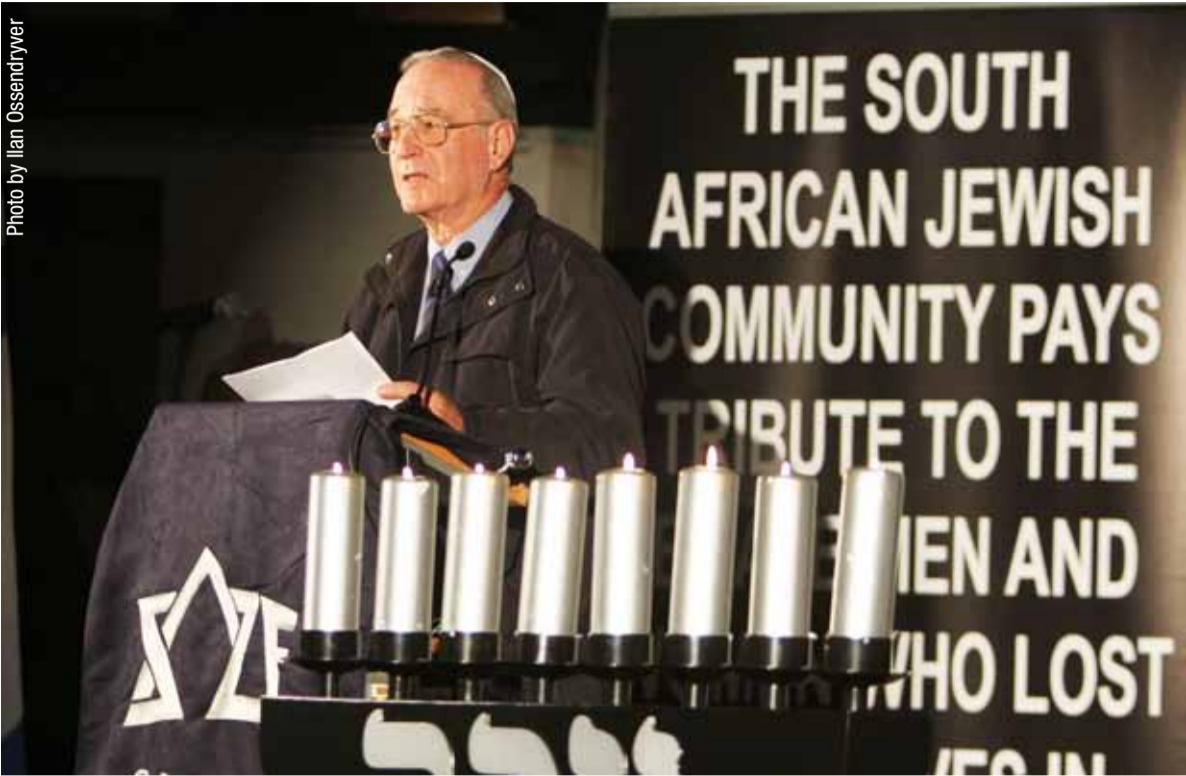
"A story is told about Rav Yisrael Gustman, a Holocaust survivor and a world-renowned rabbi, Professor Robert Auman, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, who

attended a weekly shiur given by Rav Gustman.

"When Professor Auman's son was killed while serving in the army, Rav Gustman visited the professor to comfort him. As he entered the room, he said: 'My dear Professor, I'm sure you don't know this, but my son Meir was shot and killed during the Holocaust, so I will tell you what I believe is transpiring in heaven right now. My son is welcoming your son with open arms and he is saying to him: Shlomo, I died because I am a Jew but I didn't have the opportunity to protect others while doing so, but you Shlomo, you died protecting your people; what a holy way to die!'

"Then Rav Gustman turned to the professor and said: 'When my Meir died, I didn't have the opportunity to sit shiva for him, so now I will sit together with you.' The professor turned to Rav Gustman and said: 'I did not think that I could be comforted by anything, but your words have comforted me.'"

Dov Segev-Steinberg, Israel's ambassador to South Africa, told the audience: "Since the founding of the State of Israel, 25 000 soldiers are dead, 75 000 wounded and over 100 000 disabled in military combat as well as thousands more killed and wounded



Glen Eilon, at the Yom Hazikaron podium.

in terror attacks. The world has unfortunately inverted good and evil to create a complete travesty of justice."

SAZF Chairman Avrom Krengel recounted that "when Rav Meir Lau's brother Naphtali had stood at the Kotel at his inauguration, his eyes had welled up with tears as he recalled how during the Holocaust, he had turned to his eight-year-old brother, Israel and had told him that there was a

place in the world known as Eretz Yisrael.

"He had made him repeat the words over and over again, so that if he didn't survive, those words would be etched in his brother's memory. Forty eight years later, after first arriving at the Kotel as young orphans, little "Lulek" - as Israel was known - was elected Chief Rabbi of the State of Israel."

Glen Eilon, an expat who now

lives on a moshav on the border with Gaza, shared the harrowing story of how he lost his son Mark in the US, while he was in service of the IDF at a military base in Arizona.

"November 7, 1989, will forever be burned in our memories as the day when we lost our first born son and beloved brother from this world forever. We buried him on our moshav in the land he had worked and loved so dearly."



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Jewish Report

The hate
in their eyes

It is not clear whether the BDS demonstrators who are very publicly disrupting Israel-related events in Johannesburg, are indicative of a growing anti-Israel movement, or just a small group of noisy agitators. They claim endorsement from a list of eminent South Africans and organisations, ranging from the ANC to Cosatu, government officials, NGOs and others.

What does the “average” South African think - if he ever does think about Israel, or even knows where to find it on a map? To the vast majority, the issue means little - they want to get on with their lives, feed their families, pursue their careers, etc.

Clearly, though, BDS and its cohorts aren’t going away. So, for the foreseeable future, celebrations of Israel, Israeli artists, etc, will have to be protected by strong security, as was the case at the Yom Ha’atzmaut concert at the Lyric Theatre in Johannesburg on Monday, regardless of the participants’ politics.

BDS is so devoured by hatred for Israel that there’s little room for debate or hearing different views. In the pictures we’ve published about the protests, the venom in demonstrators’ eyes as they shout anti-Israel slogans, is obvious. The truth is, Israel as the “evil empire” is an easy target for students seeking a cause to believe in and that will give meaning to their lives. What’s more, it requires little sacrifice on their part or intellectual discourse.

Many Jews - probably most - who attended Israel Independence Day celebrations at the Lyric believe in Israel living side by side in peace with a thriving Palestine, as do those who went to Yossi Reshef’s concert on March 12 to enjoy a piano recital by an eminent artist.

But in today’s world, safety doesn’t necessarily depend on one’s personal views. Boston knows this. The runners from many countries participating this week in the Boston Marathon - one of the world’s great sporting events - held diverse political views. They came to Boston to enjoy the run, celebrate being alive, in a spirit of camaraderie with other people. Yet they were bombed together, regardless. This hatred doesn’t discriminate.

It’s scant consolation that Israelis aren’t alone in facing this irrational loathing. The terrorist bombs which exploded in buses, restaurants and hotels in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, were about the victims’ very existence, not their opinions.

There’s a dilemma for Israelis and their supporters: how to take the fight to the enemy, rather than just responding. Once one reacts, one is already on the defensive. However, by continually complaining or retaliating, one may also seem to be crying wolf.

At 65, Israel is roughly the retirement age when many people look back on what they have and haven’t done, their achievements and regrets; an age when they hope their children and grandchildren will live good lives.

Israel has much to celebrate. A recent survey showed three-quarters of its approximately 6 million Jews are “very proud” to be Israeli, a 5 per cent increase from last year. More than 74 per cent think it is a good place to live in. Its population is 8 million, 75,3 per cent Jewish, 20,7 per cent Arab. Its Arab population enjoy more rights and a higher standard of living than their brethren in most Arab countries.

Yet all is not well. The demonisation of Israel by the BDS and its ilk is growing and has become endemic. This cannot be explained by what Israel does today or has done in the past.

Some of its actions have been misguided - there’s no country in the world that hasn’t made mistakes or won’t make some in future - but its overwhelmingly positive development shows how on track it really is. The obsessive hatred for it must derive from some other source. After all, the “idealistic” demonstrators of the BDS for human rights seem remarkably apathetic in condemning Sudan, Syria, North Korea, the CAR, etc.

Reshef concert: Tasneem Essop
fabricates a revised version

WENDY KAHN
NATIONAL DIRECTOR, SAJBD

Anyone who was present on the night of the abortive Yossi Reshef concert at Wits on March 12, will have been astounded by the shameless manner in which Tasneem Essop (Wits SRC secretary-general) has gone about fabricating a revised version of what took place.

Indeed, it has become standard practice over the years for anti-Israel radicals to provoke ugly confrontations and then position themselves as the victims afterwards, usually by cynically playing the racism card.

This time, however, Ms Essop and her fellow SRC members would seem to have realised that their thuggish behaviour has been exposed and that neither the university administration nor the staff, students and Wits community as a whole will tolerate it.

She and her ilk have since realised that the University is intent on taking action against those responsible for the outrageous manner in which protesters disrupted the concert and intimidated and threatened those in attendance, thereby running roughshod over their individual rights and the fundamental right to academic freedom that is itself one of the pillars of a democratic society.

Their actions are indefensible and she and her cohorts, being well aware of this, have resorted to concocting a bizarre account of the proceedings that bear not even a passing resemblance to what actually occurred.

Having been at the venue on that sad night, I witnessed students proudly showing off their SRC blazers threatening, verbally abusing and harassing concertgoers arriving for the recital.

Blocking the entrance and trying to prevent entry into the hall, they shoved and screamed angry slogans at arriving guests, including elderly people and a disabled woman. Their political agenda superseded the rights of these people to attend an event they wished to; academic freedom is not a value for these students.

When Ms Essop continually bleats that this was merely a peaceful protest, I see only a rampaging mob storming a concert venue, causing people to flee in fear. It is not possible to convince me that overpowering Wits security, barging into the venue, slamming down the piano cover and traumatising concertgoers is in any way peaceful.

We have never condemned protest; we believe that it is the right of people in a democratic society; however aggressive hostility that denies fellow South Africans their freedom of speech is unacceptable.

Ms Essop asserts that she was denied entry to the concert due to “racial profiling”. Maybe she should consider that she was denied entry as she had made it clear in letters and press statements prior to the event that they would disrupt the proceedings.

The vice-chancellor of Wits has promised “appropriate action against those responsible” and that “those responsible for perpetrating this act will be subject to its disciplinary procedures”.

The university has also announced that “11 members of the Wits community have been charged for a possible contravention of the university’s code of conduct”.

Realising they will face consequences for their actions, these students have now resorted to their usual modus operandi; concocting a story to make them the victim, contrary to all the witness accounts, the video and photographic footage and the fact that it was them who stormed the venue.

Then, Ms Essop armed with her newly-devised fictional account of the night, began her media road show, peddling her



revised version to every media house.

Tales of physical abuse of the protesters are news to anybody who was there on the night. This construct is nothing short of a way to divert attention from the mayhem the SRC leadership caused that night.

Ms Essop and her cohorts are deeply indignant that their boycott against Israel is not shared by Wits University and that the university has distanced itself from the SRC resolution frequently and has resorted now to bullying and intimidating academics and students into pursuing their agenda.

I applaud Wits University, its Vice Chancellor Loyiso Nongxa, its incoming Vice Chancellor Adam Habib and its administration, for the decisive and firm manner in which they have responded to this issue.

As awful as it was witnessing the events of the night in question, it is reassuring that Wits is holding fast to its values and principles of academic freedom, “providing a platform for different constituencies to express their views and opinions through considered debate and intellectual engagement in the spirit of tolerance, respect and openness”.

Israeli performers dazzle Yom Ha’atzmaut
audience amidst BDS protests



Soloists Yaniv D’Or (left) and Ofer Callaf enthrall celebrants at Gold Reef City on Monday. See story on page 3.

Israel strongly steams ahead, despite efforts to destroy it



BARBARIC YAWP
David Saks

Golda Meir once quipped that the only real beef that the Jewish people had with Moses was that he led them to the only country in the Middle East that had no oil. Extraordinary as it would seem, it now looks very much like she was dead wrong.

Last year, it was revealed that Israel was home to massive shale oil reserves, not merely large proportionate to its small size, but in global terms. Almost unbelievably, current estimates suggest that they should yield some 250 billion barrels, equivalent to Saudi Arabia’s reserves.

Had the discoveries been enough to cover only Israel’s energy requirements, then day-enu. Instead, all indications are that Israel will in the not too distant future become a major global energy supplier in its own right, to go along with its rising status as a hi-tech frontrunner.

Even this is not the main energy-related story of the day concerning the Jewish State. In 2009, huge reserves of natural gas were discovered in Israeli territorial waters.

Shortly after Pesach, pumping commenced in the first of these fields, named “Tamar”. This field by itself is large enough to meet Israel’s natural gas needs and in addition to make it an important exporter for many years to come, yet in size it is dwarfed by a second field, aptly named “Leviathan”, which once developed, is set to yield considerably more.

The gas discoveries took place shortly before the fall of the Mubarak regime in Egypt and its replacement by an Islamist government. One of the results of the regime change and ensuing disorder has been the discontinuation of gas exports from Egypt to Israel.

This would under normal circumstances have been a serious setback for the latter, but now it hardly matters.

We are seeing Hashem pour His blessings over the Holy Land and its people, time and again thwarting the malevolent aims of those seeking its destruction, yet even now Israel’s leaders don’t seem to get it.

There is nothing remotely “normal” about Israel’s position, either in terms of the deadly, irrational enmity it is attracting, or in the phenomenal success it is achieving despite this.

Israel’s enemies have become obsessed with the notion that white South Africa was driven from power through being progressively isolated by a multifaceted international boycott campaign.

Since the beginning of the century, they have expended enormous resources worldwide in pursuing this goal - Israel Apartheid Week on university campuses, “Lawfare” campaigns aimed at criminalising the Israeli Defence Forces, kangaroo courts like the 2001 UN World Conference on Racism and the Russell Tribunal on Palestine, trade union boycott campaigns and innumerable other initiatives now take place more or less continuously.

All this notwithstanding, during the same period, the Israeli economy has powered ahead as never before, establishing the country as one of the hi-tech capitals of the world and largely shrugging off the economic turmoil that has gripped most of the Western world over the past five years.

In the foreign relations sphere, Israel has also never been in a more favourable position. Before the collapse of the Soviet empire and the Oslo peace process, it had diplomatic relations with only a bare handful of African states and none in eastern and central Europe and the various now-independent states that made up the Soviet Union.

It now has ties with some 40 African countries as well as all the former Iron Curtain nations, not to mention increasingly warm relations with emerging superpower India and even China.

Against all this, our own local chapter of boycotters can only strut and brag over having done a little war dance outside a Jewish-owned toyshop or forcibly prevented people from listening to an Israeli-born pianist and then cry racism when faced with the consequences of their behaviour.

Thus far, then, the campaign to isolate Israel has made minimal headway. However, beneath the surface malign forces are at work that could cause the situation to rapidly change.

Academic boycotts are surfacing in practice on a regular basis, including in South Africa; the stream of biased and damning media coverage continues apace, NGOs are largely dominated by crusading anti-Israel elements and trade unions the world over have seemingly been poisoned to the core by radical antipathy to the Jewish State.

We know only too well how frighteningly quickly the situation could change for the Jewish people, and hence should be using the current position of strength we enjoy to redouble our efforts on Israel’s behalf.

World News in Brief

Jewish community ‘vigilant’ in the wake of Boston Marathon bombings

NEW YORK - The head of the security network for US Jewish organisations said on Monday the community was “standing vigilant” following bombings at the Boston Marathon.

Three people were killed, including an eight-year-old girl and more than 80 injured in two blasts at the marathon on Monday, according to reports. One of the bombs exploded at the finish line.

“We know that unfortunately 30 per cent of terrorist attacks had Jewish institutions as secondary targets,” said Paul Goldenberg, director of the Secure Community Network.

“However, I must stress that there is absolutely nothing here that indicates any connection to an attack on the Jewish community. But based on history, we are standing vigilant for at least the next 48 hours.”

Police exploded at least one device in Boston that did not go off. (JTA)



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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*

WHAT ON EARTH - OR HEAVEN - WILL ISRAEL BE BLAMED FOR NEXT?

I wish more people would have heard Israeli journalist Ben Dror Yemini this week. He is against the “occupation”. He accepts Israel is not perfect and should be open to criticism, a standard any country should be held to.

What he is intensely against, as all moral beings with integrity should be, are the absolute, outright lies that anti-Zionists (Jewish and not) spew out against Israel, such as the former Tony Blair government minister Clare Short’s recent claim that no progress was possible on climate change because Israel “undermines the international community’s reaction to global warming”.

So, Israel, a speck on this earth, is now blamed for global warming! All the way to the ruthlessly ambitious Goldstone who blamed Israel for disproportionate war crimes against Palestinians, (of course not breathing a word about the real disproportionate civilian casualties other nations have committed in Kosovo, Darfur, Afghanistan, Syria, etc.); also, ignoring Colonel Richard Kemp who testified that “the IDF did more to safeguard the rights of civilians in a combat zone than any other army in the history of warfare”.

They claim Israel is committing genocide against Palestinians, when in fact their infant mortality rate is now the lowest it’s ever been (about half that of South Africa) and Palestinian life expectancy is longer than in some European countries (20 years more than the average South African).

Before 1967 there were no universities in the West Bank. Now there are over 20 advanced educational institutions in the West Bank and Gaza.

Palestinians have the opportunity to be the most educated Arabs in the Middle East. Occupation is not ideal, but Palestinians seem to be doing better overall than they ever have before.

Michele Engelberg
Johannesburg

A KOSHER RESTAURANT EXPERIENCE WHICH IS BETTER TO BE FORGOTTEN QUICKLY

Why is eating in one of Johannesburg’s kosher restaurants always a bad experience?

My daughter, who lives overseas, came to South Africa for a visit. We decided, before she leaves to have a relaxed family evening and eat out.

I am a vegetarian and was pleasantly surprised to find that the menu offered a good and balanced variety of vegetarian meals. My first choice was unavailable; my second choice was also unavailable. The waiter suggested I try the stir fry, I conceded defeat and agreed.

My daughter ordered the lamb curry and my sons the ribs. While we waited the waiter placed a bowl of cold soggy potato skins in front of my daughter. Is this part of her meal we wondered? It was a snack for the table!

When the meal arrived, the ribs looked appetising but were cold, the curry, my daughter says was average. The stir fry was a disaster. Stir fry conjures up images of fresh, brightly coloured vegetables cut into strips lightly fried and served on a bed of freshly boiled rice noodles. Before me lay a greenish coloured mixture of congealed unidentifiable vegetables and gravy inelegantly plopped on a massive bed of bright yellow rice. I did not eat and as a result my family ate in great discomfort.

The bill was the equivalent of my budget for one week’s groceries.

This is not an unusual story. Why are Johannesburg’s kosher restaurants so awful? We are entitled (because we pay for it), to good, tasty, freshly cooked food, not pre-cooked reheated food to an inadequate temperature.

Are we not entitled to decent décor, some table decorations and adequate room at the table for comfort?

Eating out is a treat, why not make it good? Or don’t kosher restaurateurs really care? We are a captive market anyway.

THIS SPOON HAS TO BE AN EXTREMELY LONG ONE!	HOLOCAUST PROVES THAT THERE IS NO G-D
In his letter of April 5, (“Reshef protest reminiscent of actions in Nazi Germany”), Norman A Blumberg bewails the fact that “for 50 years or more, Jewish students and staff members were always at the forefront in opposing government and race policies”.	In response to your editorial in the Jewish Report of April 12 on Yom HaShoah: I was the “audience member” who shouted “there was no G-d at Auschwitz” at the remembrance at West Park Cemetery last Sunday.
I can only refer him to an old Afrikaans proverb that states: “Meng jou met semels dan vreet die varke jou”. The closest English equivalent I could think of is: “He needs a long spoon who would sup with the Devil”.	I did it because none of the speakers ever says it. The fact there was no G-d at Auschwitz, means that there is no G-d at all.
	In other words, the Holocaust is the ultimate proof that there is no G-d.
Jonathan Ossher Uitenhage	Yossi Bogacz Highlands North, Johannesburg

LOT MORE TO SHOAH EXPERIENCE THAN WHAT SCHOOLS SEEM TO PROVIDE

Moira Schneider’s article from Cape Town on Herzlia’s Shoah commemoration in last week’s SAJR, refers.

I quote: “When it comes to Holocaust education, many learners feel they have heard this so many times, there is nothing new they can learn - there is a large disconnect.”

That is becoming a common phenomenon. I don’t blame the youth, but rather what they have NOT been taught about the Shoah.

It is to their credit that they have a surfeit of horror and atrocities; they are not perverts. Even Shoah survivors can reach saturation point.

My contention is that there is a lot more to the Shoah experience than what the schools seem to provide.

There was much of which to be proud, that was to the credit of our people and ought to make our youth want to remember and hear more. Most of our Jews in the camps deserve admiration for their fortitude under the circumstances. The very act of maintaining one’s humanity, compassion and faith, was resistance against descent into the prevailing demoralisation and inhumanity.

Consider the following few examples:

- Older children would take charge of and protect the young.
- Men on a death march would risk their lives by breaking rank in order to support a comrade who could not proceed unaided.
- Religious Jews would observe the fasts despite their daily rations consisting mainly of a slice of bread weighing 180 gm in the morning, no lunch, and a litre of boiled water with no fat, meat, potato or much other substance in the evening. These religious commandments were recalled from memory.
- In the Ravensbruck concentration camp a Czech woman learned that her daughter had been selected for a fatal transport. She begged a female SS guard to save her daughter and when this was accomplished, she fell on her knees before this guard and kissed that woman’s feet. That evening the head of the Czech contingent called a meeting of all her countrywomen. She upbraided the mother for her action, reminded all who the perpetrators and who the victims were and that they owed no gratitude to the monsters responsible for their suffering. Had one of the women present denounced their leader to the SS, that courageous woman would have been hanged in front of the whole camp.

Resistance is not confined to firing guns. Far more difficult and admirable is moral resistance. Can we and our youth ever become tired of hearing about that?

Don Krausz
Chairman, Association of Holocaust Survivors in Johannesburg

ChaiFM’s radiothon wins it an MTN award

After just four years of broadcasting, Jewish community radio station, 101.9 ChaiFM, last Saturday night at the Sandton Convention Centre, walked away with an MTN Radio Award - going up against four other radio stations. It won for their Selwyn Segal Radiothon.

The station said in a media release it had been nominated for four MTN Radio Awards in total. Through the radiothon, the station managed to raise R2 million for the Selwyn Segal centre for the mentally impaired.

Commenting on the station’s success, Station Manager Kathryn Kaler (pictured) said: “I am so incredibly proud and humbled by my fellow ChaiFM team members and our wonderful listening community.

“It is always nice to be acknowledged by the broadcasting industry.”



World News in Brief

Israel population tops 8 million on its 65th anniversary

JERUSALEM - Israel’s population has topped the 8 million mark on the eve of its 65th anniversary, according to data released by Israel’s Central Bureau of Statistics, the Jerusalem Post reported.

According to the data, 6 million or 75,3 percent are Jewish residents, while Arab residents comprise around 1,6 million or 20,7 per cent of the population. The total population increase in Israel was 137 000, or 1,8 per cent from last year.

The remaining 4 per cent or roughly 318 000 include non-Arab Christians, members of other religious sects or unaffiliated.

Over the past year, 163 000 babies were born and 41 000 people passed away. There were also 19 500 immigrants to Israel. (JNS.org)

French national railway banned black workers during Peres visit

PARIS - France’s national railway banned black workers from the station where Israeli President Shimon Peres arrived to ensure that no Arab workers were present.

British media reported late Sunday that SNCF, France’s national railway, excluded black and North African railway workers from the Gare du Nord station when Peres came for a visit on Friday, March 8 on a high-speed train from Belgium.

The SUD-Rail transport union filed an official complaint with the railroad, the Daily Telegraph reported, saying everything was done to ensure there were “no Muslim employees to welcome the Head of the State of Israel”.

In its complaint, the union said that management assumed anyone from a “black or Arab” background might be Muslim - an assumption “based on the appearance of the workers”. The union called on SNCF to publicly condemn the incident as “unacceptable”, according to the newspaper.

A spokesman from the railway company said it would launch a full investigation.

In the last two years, SNCF admitted that the company participated in transferring Jews to Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War and apologised. (JTA)

Read the South African Jewish Report online

www.sajewishreport.co.za

WE KNOW WHO WE ARE

HERZLIA REMEMBERS



The Jewish Life and Learning (JLL) Department at HERZLIA embarked on an extraordinary programme for their 365 High School pupils. This learning project involved over 40 sessions, each 45 minutes in length that were either multimedia presentations, interactive workshops, live music or a combination of the three.

Presenters ranged from Holocaust survivors, HERZLIA students, children of survivors, musicians, historians, film makers to community activists and they covered an extraordinary range of topics.

"The Holocaust in the single greatest tragedy in the modern history of the Jewish people", said Saul Kaplan, head of JLL. "It is our job as educators to ensure that the significance of this catastrophe is neither minimized nor trivialized. To this end we selected a wide variety of speakers with a huge range of topics. This programme was conceptualized seven months ago when, together with Vivienne Anstey, we wanted to assemble an appropriate, informative and meaningful experience to commemorate *Yom Hashoah*. This wonderful programme was put together by the organizing committee of Richard Freedman, Yaniv Nachmias, Devis Losifzon, Mark Helfrich and Goldie Norris.

"We were so delighted with the level of co-operation from our speakers who willingly gave of their time to speak about so many sensitive topics. We understand that personal experiences can be very emotional and their willingness to share their trauma with our students is greatly appreciated. The goal was to bring lecturers

from a variety of backgrounds – rabbi's, professors, business, performing artists, musicians and ex-students who made use of multimedia, discussion sessions, movies, music and debates to broaden our pupils understanding of this great tragedy. Students were given a menu of sessions and topics and told to choose three. This generated extensive debate and discussions around topics to choose and the resulting hype created huge interest prior to the event itself. As a result of making their own choices, the pupils took ownership of the morning and engaged to a far greater extent than they would just sitting in a prescribed lecture"

Sessions and topics included:

- Questions from Hell. Rabbi Jonny Ross
- Who 'owns' the message of the Holocaust? Dalit Anstey
- The Holocaust and Social Media. Cara Saven
- The Aftermath of the Shoah – a filmmakers' perspective. Heather Blumenthal
- Kovno to Cape Town - Characters of Heroism "The Japanese Tzaddik - My (double) Hero" and "Heroic Halacha - Rabbi Oshry". Rabbi Asher Deren
- Voices Unstilled: Musicians & Singers of the Holocaust. Ivor Joffe and Zola Shuman
- A Rabbi who Rescued 4000 during the Holocaust
- The Auschwitz Album [Lili Jacob Album]. Mark Helfrich
- Holocaust historian or forensic detective? Michal Singer
- I left my soul in Poland and my heart in Israel - Reliving the Holocaust. Jonni Glick
- Why my parents didn't want me to know I was Jewish. Andrea Kuti
- Songs in the darkness. Rus Nerwich
- Mapping Genocide. Romi Kaplan

- Remember not to forget. What is my role as a young person in remembering the Holocaust? Richard Freedman
- Dealing with the Holocaust through positive psychology Mor Arbel
- Finding G-d in the Holocaust. Rabbi Kalman Green
- Moral Dilemmas in the Holocaust. Rabbi Sam Thurgood
- G-d on Trial. Lance Katz
- Survivors. A movie created by Steven Spielberg
- Through the eyes of a 9 year old refugee. Sonja Keschner and Rolene Miller
- Sephardic Holocaust survivors' narrative. Carole Levin
- 'Number A26188' Henia Bryer the story of a survivor. Richard Freedman
- Hitler Youth. Sarah Moross and Shaun Katz
- Theresenstadt -The Great Bluff where my family perished. Rabbi Richard Newman
- Forgive but never Forget? Natalie Barnett
- The Lion of Judah – Movie

HERZLIA Jewish Life and Learning has introduced a number of innovative educational concepts into our curriculum. This year alone we produced a CD "*Techeilet – A thread of Blue*", prayers for Grades 1 – 3 performed by Cantor Ivor Joffe and the Highlands Primary singers. On 5 February 2013 we held the JLL Summit for parents where we discussed the way forward and asked for suggestions as to improve the level of Judaica at the school. HERZLIA has a new Campus Rabbi, R' Jonathan Ross and we are currently designing new and appropriate learning materials for the JLL curriculum. The Yom Hashoah programme is not an isolated event but part of the investment in JLL at HERZLIA.



Jewish groups support Obama’s caution about who bombed Boston

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

The day after the Boston Marathon bombing, President Barack Obama called it an “act of terrorism”. What kind of terrorism, no one was ready to say - a caution that derives from years of wrongful speculation that on occasion has ruined innocent lives.

Hours after the attack on Monday that killed three and injured scores, Obama in a television address refrained from using the word “terrorism”. He did use it on Tuesday, but wrapped it deep in caveats.

“Given what we now know about what took place, the FBI is investigating it as an act of terrorism,” Obama said in a White House briefing. “Any time bombs are used to target innocent civilians it is an act of terror.

“What we don’t yet know, however, is who carried out this attack or why; whether it was planned and executed by a terrorist organisation, foreign or domestic; or was it the act of a malevolent individual. That’s what we don’t yet know.”

Jewish groups and officials who track such incidents took the same

tack, declining to engage in conjecture given the limited information about the attack.

“We know that unfortunately 30 per cent of terrorist attacks had Jewish institutions as secondary targets,” said Paul Goldenberg, director of the Secure Community Network, the security arm of the national Jewish community, on Monday.

The low-tech nature of the device used in Boston - a ‘pressure cooker’ that relays shrapnel upon explosion - suggests that the attacker was not part of a sophisticated network.

“However, I must stress that there is absolutely nothing here that indicates any connection to an attack on the Jewish community. But based on history, we are standing vigilant for at least the next 48 hours.”

Over the last year, evidence has emerged that Hezbollah and others acting on behalf of Iran have stepped up plans to attack Jewish and Israeli targets, partially in response to increased pressure on Iran over its suspected nuclear weapons programme.

There has also been evidence since Obama’s 2008 election of intensified domestic violence by anti-government and white supremacist groups.

The Anti-Defamation League in an April 8 security bulletin noted that the week of April 20 - Hitler’s birthday - is a period of heightened alert due to the history of right-wing violence that coincides with it. The violence includes the 1993

storming of the Branch Davidian complex in Waco, Texas, and the Oklahoma City bombing, both on April 19.

“As a consequence of these anni-

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President Barack Obama in the Oval Office receiving an update from FBI Director Robert Mueller on the explosions at the Boston Marathon on Monday. With the President are Lisa Monaco, assistant to the president for homeland security and counterterrorism, and Chief of Staff Denis McDonough.

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From page 10

versaries and the symbolism and significance of these dates, anti-government extremist groups, such as militia groups, may target April 19,” the ADL said. “Neo-Nazi and white supremacist groups have a history of staging events on or close to April 20.”

The low-tech nature of the device used in Boston -- a “pressure cooker” that relays shrapnel upon explosion - suggests that the attacker was not part of a sophisticated network, said David Schanzer, a terrorism expert at Duke University.

“The only thing we do know is the amount of damage and destruction and power these bombs have,” Schanzer said.

“It was a successful bomb but it didn’t bring the buildings down. That tells you something about the bomber and the types of materials used. If a group was determined and capable of planting a bomb in this particular spot, it would want to use the most sophisticated bomb they were capable of creating.”

Schanzer was careful to qualify even that insight, saying there were some scenarios in which a sophisticated group might consider using a crude device. Such caution derives from multiple speculations over the years that ultimately have embarrassed their purveyors and in some cases had dire consequences.

Some experts at first blamed the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building on Muslim extremists, but anti-government extremists were found to be the culprits.

Law enforcement authorities leaked the name of Richard Jewell, a private security guard, as a person of interest following the 1996 bombing attack at the Atlanta Olympics. Though Jewell ultimately was vindicated, he spent the rest of his life trying to regain a semblance of normalcy. Jewell died in 2007 at 44.

Over the last year, evidence has emerged that Hezbollah and others acting on behalf of Iran have stepped up plans to attack Jewish and Israeli targets.

Matthew Levitt, a former FBI analyst who now directs the Washington Institute for Near East Policy’s counterterrorism project, said that he expected more information would soon become available. Agents were scouring the bombing area for DNA and were reviewing the wealth of video likely collected by hundreds of marathon watchers on the day of the race.

“When something does go boom, there’s no one better than the FBI at this,” Levitt said. “There’s a tremendous number of people working on this all over the world.” (JTA)

Nearly two thirds of Palestinians oppose armed conflict with Israel

RAMALLAH - Nearly two-thirds of Palestinians oppose armed resistance against Israel, according to a recent Jerusalem Media and Communication Centre poll.

Some 1 200 Palestinians from the West Bank and Gaza Strip were polled, and only 31 per cent supported armed conflict, a 20 per cent drop since the last poll was taken four months ago, shortly after Operation Pillar of Defence ended in November.

While the popularity of a violent resistance has dropped, there was a notable rise in support for nonviolent resistance. About 84 per cent of respondents said they supported non-violent resistance and about 79 per cent said such efforts should be intensified.

About 30 per cent supported a “peaceful popular intifada” as the primary means for achieving a Palestinian state - up from 22 per cent in December 2012 - as opposed to peace negotiations with Israel.

The poll also shows that nearly two-thirds of Palestinians oppose renewing negotiations with Israel until it freezes construction of Jewish communities beyond the

1967 armistice line, also known as the Green Line.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, on the other hand, has repeatedly expressed the desire to return to the negotiating table with the Palestinians if there are no preconditions for such talks. (Israel Hayom/Exclusive to JNS.org)

Kotel egalitarian prayer section proposed as female worshippers arrested

JERUSALEM - At the Western Wall, a new plan has emerged for the creation of an egalitarian prayer section in a bid to end a longtime dispute over prayer access among Jewish sects.

The Western Wall, Judaism’s holiest site, has been the centre of a decades-old dispute between the Orthodox, who control the site, and Jews seeking egalitarian practices there, mainly Conservative and Reform Jews from the United States.

In recent months, the dispute reached new heights when members of a Jewish group, “Women of the Wall” were arrested for praying with religious garments only traditionally worn by men under Orthodox practices.

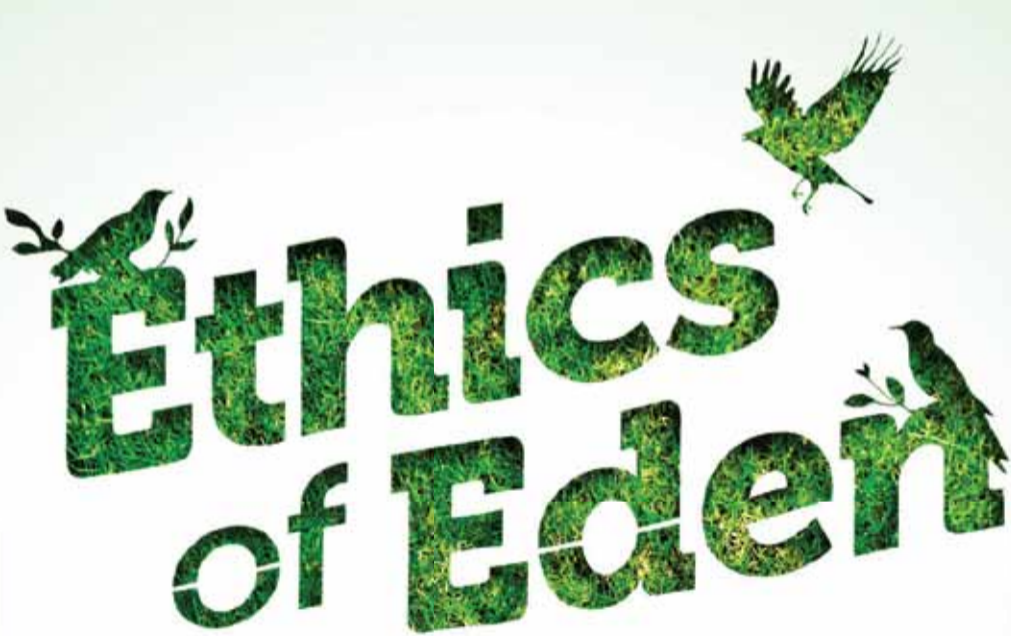
More arrests came last week Thursday during Women of the Wall’s monthly Rosh Chodesh service marking the start of the Jewish month. Five women were detained for defying the Western Wall’s ban on women wearing prayer shawls and reading from the Torah, and several ultra-Orthodox worshippers insulted the women, Israel Hayom reported.

Natan Sharansky, chairman of the executive for the Jewish Agency for Israel, was tasked by Israeli PM Benjamin Netanyahu to find a solution to the issue.

Under Sharansky’s proposal, a new area will be created at Robinson’s Arch, which is currently an archeological site south of the Western Wall Plaza. This new area would allow egalitarian prayer as well as be expanded and connected to the existing Orthodox-supervised men and women’s prayer sites. The new site would be open 24 hours a day for prayers, events and mass ceremonies.

“I presented it to the government ministers, to the leaders of the Jewish movements in the US, to the Western Wall rabbi, and each of them have their own reservations but they all understand that the situation in which the Western Wall is a place of conflict and dispute must end and that it must be rebuilt as a uniting place,” Sharansky told Yedioth Ahronoth.

The proposal will be submitted to Netanyahu for his consideration. (JNS.org)



Ethics of Eden

A STUDY IN JUDAISM’S ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE

“The L-rd G-d, took the man and placed him in the Garden of Eden, to work it and protect it.”
– Genesis 2:15

G-d entrusted the earth to humankind. But every gift carries with it a responsibility of care. Nature has served the pursuits of man,

recording his greatest ideas and fueling his most ambitious dreams. But is this exploitation sustainable or ideal?

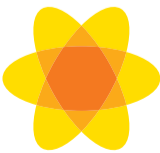
Join The Academy as we seek to understand humankind’s relationship to nature, the Earth and G-d. Ilana Stein, environmental conservationist and biblical teacher, will explore the Jewish attitude to our natural environment.

Using the guidance of Rabbi Soloveitchik, Rabbi Samson Raphael Hirsch, Maimonides and modern scholars the six-part series will explore how we are to relate to nature’s incomprehensible beauty, animal welfare, nature conservation and our metaphysical roots as beings who emerged from the earth.

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The Academy
of Jewish Thought and Learning



*In association with Mizrahi South Africa and the London School of Jewish Studies;
President: Chief Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks, Dean: Dr. Raphael Zarum*

Provocative, yes, but also artistically forgettable

Show: “(Co)Production” by Myer Taub (Room, 70 Juta Street, Braamfontein) room@urbanartprojects.org Until: May 4

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

When formal art’s veneer chips away, what remains? Should it raise your hackles and frighten your world view to evolve? Contemporary performance artist Myer Taub believes this, but his current work is too mired in subtlety and hidden from the public eye to set the art world afire.

Yes, the queer Jew in art is potent; can this identity still be valuably exploited in a world where anti-Semitism and homophobia are on the rise? Can the phrase “work will set you free” mouthed by a fictional Jewish character be meaningfully isolated from Holocaust references?

Some 24 years ago, local performance artist Steven Cohen angered his audiences by confronting the horror of being hunted as a homosexual Jew. His work put him into unwalkably high shoes. It aimed to shame him. In succeeding, it affected how art gets read. In those days, religious

Jews were not shot in France.

Lesbians weren’t being correctively raped in Soweto. This context makes Taub’s work politically even hotter than Cohen’s groundbreaking stance, but he weaves an oblique academic veil around it.

The exhibition, in a broken-plate strewn room (you are invited to smash plates when you visit the show), comprises several components. Each Wednesday Taub stages a “happening” in the space.

His last week’s happening was stopped by police because of its inflammatory nature. After each happening, Taub eats beetroots, urinates into a vessel and drinks his waste. Dressed as “JewJew” in a pig mask, he then attempts to walk to the station to catch the Rosebank-bound train.

If you miss the happenings, videos of work are on show featuring Taub’s collaboration with director John Trengrove and photographer Nadine Hutton among others. One presents a spoof on Lady Florence Phillips, a founding dame of the Johannesburg Art Gallery. It’s called Florence Changes and presents Taub and actress Patricia Boyer swapping clothes.

Another sees Muscle Jew, a superhero/anti-hero in shorts, climbing Pretoria’s Voortrekker Monument and the monument to miners in Braamfontein. Afrikaans songs play backward in the background. While the work promises to be about questioning South Africa’s heritage sites, the loadedness of the term “Jew” suffocates it with a political red herring.

In another piece entitled Death in Varanasi, we see Taub having his body hair shaved by an Asian boy, on a boat, while the same extracts from Wagner’s 1850s opera Tristan und Isolde that Salvador Dali and Luis Buñuel used in their 1929 surrealist film, “Un Chien Andalou”, play.

The work celebrates Thomas Mann’s short story “Death in Venice”. Looking aside from the literary references it spawns, the awkward fumbling of this work gives it a sense of original raw moral fire and hilarity absent elsewhere in this show.

In the 1990s, Cohen took his self-devised character Ugly Girl going to Loftus Versfeld to buy a rugby ticket; in Taste, he appears to ingest his own waste. Taub’s work emulates these challenges yet his gestures feel tamer, more self-consciously polished.



JewJew, a character invented and performed by Myer Taub.

Photo by Nadine Hutton

Artistic awareness and techno achievement

Show: “Exposure”, In Toto Gallery, Birdhaven (011) 447-6543 Until: May 20

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

She sits and looks at the world and you through time and space, with a delicacy and a depth of glance that belies her identity as a bovine creature. This, photo-based artwork entitled Venda Cow, a Van Dyke Antique process print by veteran photographer Bob Cnoops, is arguably the pivotal work in this photographic exhibition that brings together a diversity of prominent South African photographers, at play and in earnest.

It’s a beautiful exhibition, co-curated by photographer Michael Meyersfeld and the gallery owners, Jacques Michau and Jessica Slack.

It reflects a range of perspectives and glimpses at this country from the inside and the outside, which will cause you to remember how photography-dedicated galleries used to proliferate in Johannesburg maybe less than a decade ago.

More than beautiful images, however, the exhibition is about mastery of sheer skill which opens the photographic technique up and shifts it away from the strictures of framed documentary or amateur sensibility.

These ten men and women, from Michael Meyersfeld to Sally Gaule, Marcus Neustetter to Lien Botha, bring to the gallery their individual unapologetic perspectives, their wry sense of humour and their sense of wonder and wisdom in the act of making the work, which extends into the darkroom as a creative forum as much as the field.

Linked by this wisdom and curiosity, the works are very different, which is part of the show’s strength. From Neustetter’s simple triptych of drawings in light, featuring a man and a flame, against a black background, called “Shooting Star”, to Stephen Hobbs’ sardonic documentation of graffiti in the city reflecting a myriad socio-political values under its skin, to images almost holy in their commentary on “the dignity of gradual decay” as Gaule describes her photographs of the Old Boiler House, each image grabs you and holds you.

But a photographer whose work has not been exhibited in Johannesburg for some time - or as frequently as it should be - is Cnoops. Working with time-hewn and alternative photographic techniques which do not always involve a camera, but

Photos courtesy IN TOTO Gallery



Venda Cow, a Van Dyke Antique process print by Bob Cnoops.

concern making a print-sized negative by applying emulsion to the paper on which the image is printed, rendering it light receptive, he challenges the distinction between photograph and drawing.

Three of his works are on show here; two are cameraless, reflecting the artist’s hands and body against the light sensitive support.

A couple of images from Meyersfeld’s new “White on Black” series lend a glorious gravitas to

landscapes which might otherwise be considered humdrum. In “Guard House” he exposes the cleavage between tree foliage and sky leaving poetic calligraphic signatures on both.

This is show is a gem of aesthetic awareness and technological achievement. If you visit it only for that beautiful portrait of the Venda cow, you will be seduced and nourished by the other hand-picked works on show there too.



Joburg skyline, Vrededorp, a digital print by Stephen Hobbs.

Arts Briefs

‘Bitches’ is Freedom Day fare at Lyric Theatre

Freedom Day weekend is celebrated girl-power style with “Bitches” an all-girl comedy show at the Lyric Theatre, Gold Reef City on April 26 and 27 directed by John Vlismas. Mooted “fifty shades of funny” in a media statement, the show features some of SA’s best female comics who will present a slick, tight line-up of stand up comedy, song, dance and sketch, including Tracy Klass sharing her observations of life and love from the unique “vintage” point as a post-marriage Jewish woman.

Controversial issue of censorship in art

An exhibition by Yull Mabaso, Lekau Motsena and Max the Gorilla movement under the leadership of Anthony Posner, entitled “The Goodman Gallery Respects Your Right to Protest”, at 56 Buckingham Avenue, corner Rothesay, next to Corner Cafe in Craighall, engages with the controversial issue of censorship in art, dealing with the issues opened up with the display of Brett Murray’s “The Spear”, a painting which was exhibited at the Goodman Gallery last May. The exhibition, which is not suitable for young children, closes on April 19.

Out of the box zany art will make you laugh out loud

The Jittery Citizens long improv group are at it again. Comprising theatre performers of the ilk of James Cairns, Toni Morkel and Claudine Ullman, they perform April 18 - 20 at POP Art, in central Johannesburg. The work must be seen to be believed in its zany yet supremely skilled ability to collaborate, think out of the box and make you laugh like never before. Visit www.popartcentre.co.za for bookings.

You can’t bank on it

Absa and Investec both finally launched banking apps in the last two weeks - and both have taken a narrow view of the market.

Two major banks have finally come out of labour and given birth to mobile apps to complete the South African family of financial apps. Both Absa and Investec showed off their long-awaited apps to the world in the last two weeks, joining FNB, Standard Bank and Nedbank in the nursery of 21st century banking technology.

The proudest parents this week were the members of the Absa team who had climbed into bed with their, err, parent company, Barclays, to produce an app with clear African credentials.

Adrian Vermooten, head of digital channels at Absa, says it will be rolled out across Africa, customied for the needs of local banks. More important, though, is the ability it gives users to send money or airtime, from their bank accounts, to other users.

To facilitate this function, which will no doubt have great appeal on a mobile money-oriented continent, the app is integrated with the phone book on the device, so that recipients can easily be identified and selected.

It also supports both consumer and business customers, meaning a company can give numerous people access to the app while controlling what each user can access in the app. It also supports both English and Afrikaans, and can be adapted to other languages.

All functions, says Vermooten, are designed in such a way that they can be activated in two clicks.

So far, so apt. But just when you think this baby is running before it walks, it turns out that it is still in the incubator: it only runs on Android and Apple devices.

Consider this: the smartphone market is currently dominated by Blackberry, with around 45 per cent market share. Nokia’s Symbian, though fading fast, still holds about 30 per cent. Android has quadrupled in the past two years, from 5 per cent to 20 per cent, but is still trailing in third place. The iPhone is at the bottom of the South African pile, with a mere 5 per cent share of the smartphone market.

The mantra for developers of apps aimed at a broad smartphone user base should be: “BlackBerry first”. However, developers enjoy developing for iPhone first, because it is both easier and sexier. It is therefore quicker to persuade developers to produce the app, and quicker to have it produced. You can have a near-instant pregnancy, with little labour pains.

The old BlackBerry 7 operating system, which powers most of the devices in South Africa, is regarded as ugly and ungainly by developers, and not the kind you want to show off in public.



GOLDSTUCK ON GADGETS

Of course, they would look silly avoiding it altogether. So, like nervous teenagers, they make all kinds of excuses before they finally hold hands in public. Eventually, they get within kissing distance. And, like the courtship, the resultant pregnancy tends to be longer than typical for other operating systems.

Bear in mind, however, that Absa launched their app no less than 21 months after the first South African banking app was born to FNB. And these 21 months witnessed the biggest boom in BlackBerry take-up in Africa yet. Vermooten has given an assurance that the BlackBerry version will be out in the next eight weeks, which provides a useful guide to how much longer one remains in labour with a BlackBerry app than with iOS or Android.

Over at Investec, the developer daddies and mommies are so proud of the head of their new baby - an app made only for iPads - that they cannot yet give a clear picture of when the rest will be delivered.

With its private client base of wealthier customers, it is the one bank that can probably get away with claiming that its typical customer does own a 10” iPad. However, tablets have always allowed users to conduct online banking on the device - particularly on the bigger iPads.

The irony is that the banking app is far more user-friendly and slick than the bank’s web-based option. The website is a real old-timer, in desperate need of a visit to the rejuvenation fountain.

Says Lyndon Subroyen, Chief Information Officer of Investec Wealth and Investment, who is also driving the digital programme for Investec: “We already have a roadmap of further developments, including an app for Android tablets, smartphones, as well as innovation in traditional online banking.”

BlackBerry is missing entirely from the picture. The further irony is that older users in South Africa’s upper-income segments tend to be as loyal to BlackBerry as are the youth who still underpin its presence here.

Which only goes to prove, not all the money in the world can produce a baby that everyone will find beautiful.

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

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
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Yom Hazikaron and Yom Ha’atzmaut marked in Pretoria

DIANE WOLFSON
PRETORIA

The courtyard at Jaffa home for the aged in Pretoria, was packed. A moving ceremony was held there to remember those who died fighting in Israel’s defence, as well as those killed in terror attacks.

A strong message was brought by Advocate Lawrence Nowosenetz, chairman of the Pretoria Council of the SAJBD, as well as from Deputy Israeli Ambassador, Ya’akov Finkelstein.

Walter Davidoff, a resident at Jaffa and a member of Nahal, in a story replete with anecdotes, told how in

1956, at the age of 18, he volunteered to serve in Israel. He felt so proud to take the oath of allegiance to the State of Israel and serve in Tzahal.

Davidoff was called to serve in the war against Lebanon in 1982 but was too old and only performed guard duty, whereafter he was honourably discharged and awarded the OT Sinai and OT Shalom Hagalil awards.

After davening Mincha and Maariv, the community adjourned to the Jaffa hall to celebrate Israel’s 65th birthday. Thanks to the many sponsors of the day, more than 70 prizes were given out to the excited audience and an enormous birthday cake from Mooz was enjoyed by all after a delicious Israeli supper.

ORT team complete Paris Marathon



ORT SA’s Paris Marathon team all completed the marathon on Sunday April 7.

The ORT SA Paris Marathon team successfully crossed the finish line at the Arc de Triomphe on April 7. Twenty-six runners from Johannesburg and Cape Town, 16 of whom were first-time marathoners, made up the team.

Some had to battle injuries and run at their own pace, but all finished successfully. Although the weather at the start of the race was freezing cold, the skies were blue and the scenery magnificent

as the runners passed all the major Paris landmarks, ORT SA said in a media release.

The Paris Marathon is a huge attraction for athletes around the world as well as being a prestigious platform for raising money for charity.

Nicci Raz, organiser, runner and ORT SA fundraising manager, said: “I am very grateful to everyone who participated. Each runner not only paid for his or her own

trip to Paris, but made the effort to raise money for our NGO.

“The eight-month journey from training runs to the completion of the final race in Paris, was fun and memorable. I am so proud of everyone who successfully completed the challenge of running 42,2km.

The campaign was a successful fundraiser for ORT SA with the Herzlia Foundation benefiting from the efforts of the Cape Town runners.



Irene Klaus a Holocaust survivor, lights a candle.

WIZO’s Shoah memorial commemorates victims

WIZO Johannesburg commemorated Yom Hashoah with the traditional lighting of the candles by six survivors - Irene Fainman; Roger Jankelson; Irene Klaus; Helene Sieff; Maurits Polak; and Florie Mencer - and the intoning of the Haskarah by Chazan Chilly Chrysler, WIZO says in a media release.

A story titled “The Wedding Gown” was read by Yvonne Jawitz followed by the well-known film about Felix Zandman, a Polish Jew, who escaped and hid from the Nazis under the floorboards of the house of a Polish family.

There was not a dry eye in the room by the end of the film although it finished on a redemptive note.

JNF launches ‘Green Shul Campaign’

Besides planting trees - it has so far planted 260 million - the Jewish National Fund’s environmental work extends into areas such as agricultural research, water purification and renewable energy.

In a media release the JNF said with this knowledge in mind, it had launched its new “Green Shul Campaign” to help synagogues around South Africa become spaces of sustainability and of worship.

“The multi-pronged initiative will as-

sist shuls who join the programme with environmental action in categories such as recycling, water wastage, Torah approaches to the environment and green activism,” the release states.

“They will also receive a certificate of participation and a ‘green flash drive’ full of Jewish of environmental resources.

“There has been an interest in the campaign from a number of synagogue communities with several having their

launch events in the near future, such as Chabad of Strathavon who will be having a talk on reducing energy consumption in the home on April 23 and Northfield Shul who will be having an event on saving money by being environmentally conscious on April 28.”

As part of their programme, the Lions Shul in Doornfontein recently conducted an environmental audit which will be shown on SABC 1 in a few weeks’ time.

Magnificent coffee table book recounts Great Park’s history



SUZANNE BELLING

A limited edition of a magnificently produced coffee table book “Great Park Synagogue 1887 - 2013: A History”, written by David Saks and published and convened by Geoff Wald, will mark the centenary in June this year of the shul since its inception as the Great - or Park - Synagogue in Wolmarans Street in Joubert Park in 1913.

The book, which goes back further in time to incorporate the history of Johannesburg, synonymous with the growth and development of the city’s Jews, was launched to the media last week Thursday.

It traces the movements of the Jewish pioneers of early Johannesburg, then split into two congregations and the eventual amalgamation under the name of the United Hebrew Congregation of Johannesburg in 1915, to the closing of Wolmarans Street Shul because of changed Jewish demographics and inner city decay.

The congregation was temporarily housed in Rabbi Hazdan’s home in Currie Street, Oaklands, for several years until, in 2000, the renamed Great Park Synagogue opened its doors in Glenhove Road on the first day of Rosh Hashanah that year.

The book elaborates on the religious leaders of the congregation since its beginning and highlights many of the illustrious congregants and lay leaders, giving insight into the challenges they presented and faced.

Wald explained that only 1 000 copies of the book, at R1 500 per volume, had been produced to ensure its status as a collector’s item, with all proceeds going to tzedakah.

The information and photographs will be retained in the archives of the synagogue, but the printing plates will be destroyed to mark the publication as a rare volume.

“The book will not be on sale through any outlets and individuals who apply will not be permitted more than three copies.”

Saks, who waited for two years since the project was mooted, completed the writing within six weeks after the go-ahead was finally given. He paid tribute to Rose Norwich, whose dissertation provided the basis for the historical facts and who contributed to the editorial content.

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, spiritual leader of the congregation, said the book reflected “times of exuberance and times of great tragedy... We are not only at the end of 100 years, but on the threshold of the next 100.”

In his message in the book, Rabbi Hazdan writes: “The celebration of a historical milestone is a time to reflect and to remember, as much as it is a time to plan and plant.”



Rabbi Dovid Hazdan; David Saks (author); and Geoff Wald (publisher).

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Remembrance and rejoicing



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

This week, our community observed two very different yet fundamentally related anniversaries, Yom Hazikaron followed by Yom Ha’atzmaut.

The second expresses our joy, pride and gratitude over the establishment of the State of Israel; the first reminds us of the high price that has been paid, and is still being paid to achieve this.

That price has not only been paid by the soldiers who lost their lives in Israel’s defence, but by the many more who suffered lasting physical or psychological harm and the countless family members and loved ones who suffered such painful bereavement.

Remembering and honouring the dead is a necessary prologue to celebrating what they were fighting to preserve, yet even the very act of celebration serves to give meaning to their sacrifice.

There were large and enthusiastic turnouts for Yom Ha’atzmaut in Johannesburg and Durban. The Durban event went off without incident while in Johannesburg, attempts by protesters to disrupt the proceedings made minimal impact and were efficiently dealt with.

The SAJBD stands fully behind its sister organisation, the SA Zionist Federation, in recognising the deep emotional bonds between our Jewish community and the State of Israel and in its commitment to upholding its right to express this attachment under all circumstances.

There will always be those seeking to undermine

our support, but neither their noisy protests nor any other disruptive tactics they might engage in, will stop us from demonstrating our full-blooded support for Israel, the great miracle of national Jewish rebirth that we are privileged to witness in our time.

Wits University and the Yossi Reshef incident

Two weeks ago, this paper carried a statement by Wits Vice-Chancellor Loyiso Nongxa in response to its reports on the disruption of the Yossi Reshef concert by anti-Israel activists on March 12.

This week, the university confirmed that it had charged 11 members of the Wits community for a possible contravention of the university’s codes of conduct. In making this announcement, it stated that it did not wish to pre-judge the outcome of the independent hearing and appealed to all parties to allow the legal process to take its course.

We were encouraged to see further confirmation that the Wits leadership regards the incident in the most serious light and is committed to following it through in line with its own disciplinary procedures.

That such a thing should have happened, is deeply unfortunate, but the real issue now is what is being done to deal with those responsible and hopefully prevent a recurrence of such behaviour.

Our National Director Wendy Kahn, was present at the occasion, and since then has been kept abreast regarding developments on almost a daily basis by the university. At this stage, we can feel satisfied that Wits is taking appropriate steps to address this gross breach of its own rules and fundamental principles.

We fully endorse the Vice-Chancellor’s appeal to all parties to allow the process to take its course and are hopeful that this will in due course lead to a satisfactory outcome.

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

Canadian university student union strips anti-Israel group of official status

MANITOBA - The University of Manitoba Student Union (UMSU) in Canada has become the first student group in North America to ban the anti-Israel “Israel Apartheid Week” and strip the anti-Israel “Students Against Israel Apartheid (SAIA)” group of official status.

The motion, which passed 19 - 15, bars SAIA from receiving student funding or using student activity space on campus, the Winnipeg Jewish Review reported.

Pro-Israel students argued that the anti-Israel student efforts violate university policy which protects the “dignity and self-esteem” of its students and prevents them from “discrimination or harassment”.

“According to the UMSU policy, I didn’t have to prove that IAW has actually incited hatred, but that it is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of students on campus who are Zionists,” pro-Israel UM student activist Josh Morry told the Winnipeg Jewish Review.

The move at the University of Manitoba comes amid recent battles on North American college campuses between pro-Israel and anti-Israel students.

Last week, the student government at the University of California (UC), Santa Barbara rejected a resolution to divest from Israel, joining several other California schools who have rejected Israel divestment resolutions. But the student union at Toronto’s York University, Canada’s largest, recently endorsed an Israel divestment resolution.(JNS.org)

ADVERTORIAL

First Chagall to be auctioned In SA, live and online

This month, Stefan Welz & Co will be the first in South Africa to auction an original Chagall, as well as the first in Johannesburg to hold an online decorative and fine arts auction.

Valued at between R2,2 to R2,5 million, the signed and dated Joie de Vivre Paysage de Vence Avec Des Fleurs, will be for sale on April 23.


This Chagall painting has never been on the market; it was sold by Chagall directly to a gallery in Paris, from which it was purchased by a private collector, who passed it on to his son.

Chagall was born in Russia and raised in a devout Jewish home; his religious back-ground inspired his art. The work, painted in gouache on paper, was painted in 1958 in Vence.

The live online bidding, managed by ATG Media South Africa through www.the-sale-room.com give users the facility to search catalogues and place bids over the Internet in real-time, with live audio and video feeds recreating the auction room atmosphere.

Pre-auction viewing is open to the public at no charge, between April 17 to 21. For more information, contact (011)-880-3125. The auction catalogue can be viewed at www.stephanwelzandco.co.za

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GERIEP JR

Gandhi and Kallenbach - kindred spirits in a great struggle for equality

DAVID SAKS

In the pantheon of heroes of the anti-apartheid struggle, the names of many Jewish South Africans loom large, from Helen Suzman, through to Lionel Bernstein, Arthur Chaskalson and Joe Slovo, among many others.

Far less well known are those Jews who participated in an earlier campaign against institutionalised racial injustice in the country, the Indian Passive Resistance movement that took place in the years roughly spanning 1907 - 1914.

Alongside the legendary M K Gandhi and other Indian stalwarts of this struggle, were such figures as Herman Kallenbach, Henry Polak, Sonja Schlesin, Lewis Rich, William Vogel and Gabriel Isaac, several of whom were imprisoned for their activities.

On April 4, over 100 members of the Jewish and Hindu communities of Johannesburg came together at the historic Satyagraha House to remember the extraordinary friendship and political partnership between Gandhi and perhaps the most significant of these little-known Jewish activists, the architect Herman Kallenbach.

The event was organised by the Gauteng Council of the SAJBD, in partnership with the Hindu Co-ordinating Council and the Mahatma Gandhi Remembrance Organisation.

After meeting at Satyagraha House, the original premises where Gandhi and Kallenbach lived in 1907 – '8 and today a guest

house-cum heritage site, the audience moved next door to the Pine Street Shul hall to hear visiting Israeli writer and researcher Shimon Lev speak on his newly published book “Soulmates: The Story of Mahatma Gandhi and Herman Kallenbach”.

Lev, who is completing his PhD in Indian Studies at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, inter alia consulted the Gandhi-Kallenbach archive in the then possession of Kallenbach’s grand-niece, Isa Sarid in Haifa. He was in South Africa to participate in a symposium held by the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research in Cape Town and to speak at Taste of Limmud in Durban.

After a Hindu and a Jewish prayer, the latter given by Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, Hindu Co-ordinating Council Chairman Kokiebhay Singh, delivered a message of welcome after which Eric Itzkin, acting director Arts, Culture and Heritage, Johannesburg City Council, spoke on the history of Satyagraha House. SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn gave the opening and closing remarks.

Lev gave a thorough overview of the friendship between Gandhi and Kallenbach, which commenced in the early part of the century and continued until the latter’s death in 1945.

The two men, he said, were indeed soul mates, driven as much by their common commitment to attaining a spiritually more elevated lifestyle as they were by their commitment to fighting injustice.

Through Gandhi, Kallenbach eschewed his previous life of ostentatious luxury for one



Shimon Lev with SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn in Satyagraha House.

of the utmost simplicity, something that ultimately culminated in the famous Tolstoy Farm commune on the outskirts of Johannesburg that they established for themselves and various Indian passive resisters.

Kallenbach not only supported the Satyagraha (“Passive Resistance”) movement financially, but was intricately involved in planning and participating in its campaigns. He was especially active in the “Great March” of some 6 000 Indian workers from Natal into the Transvaal in October 1913, and along with Gandhi was sentenced to three months’ imprisonment for his part in the demonstration.

Lev also discussed the subsequent history of Gandhi and Kallenbach, who were reunited on two occasions during the late 1930s when the latter visited to India. Kallenbach was then active in the Keren Hayesod, and had been asked by future Israeli Prime Minister Moshe Sharit to elicit Gandhi’s support for the Zionist movement.

Lev also touched on a controversial suggestion made in a recent biography of Gandhi that he and Kallenbach might have had a homosexual relationship. He believed this was highly unlikely, not least because both men had adopted lives of the strictest celibacy.

Jews must also take ownership of the Afrikaans language

LIONEL SLIER

Platteland (country) Jews, because they spoke Afrikaans, were part of the shared ownership of Afrikaans... Most of them had since left the Platteland but the language was in them!

This was the message Johannesburg-born Cyril Wides brought to last week’s United Zionist Club meeting in Johannesburg. During his talk he emphasized: “The Afrikaans language also belongs to Platteland Jews.”

He added: “But it does not stop there. What about the other Jews in South Africa? We have a connection with Afrikaans. With few exceptions we all learnt Afrikaans at school. Many still speak to each other in Afrikaans when out of the country and they do not want strangers to hear what they are saying...”

He told about how he worked in the Netherlands where he learned “Nederlands” and where he realised that Afrikaans was not a watered down version of the Dutch language.

“To assume, as I did, that Afrikaans is Dutch with German added and some French as well - a European language; but the truth is that it is not as simple as all that.”

Wides told how the Nat government’s forcing black learners to be instructed in Afrikaans, in 1976 caused the watershed Soweto riots when young blacks vehemently protested the measure.

“That was a real low point for the Afrikaans language. However, a lot of good has happened since the new dispensation in 1994. In 2012 a book sponsored by the Afrikaanse Taalraad, ‘So Kry Ons Afrikaans’, reflects a new positioning.

“In the foreword it states that ‘Afrikaans is owned by everyone who speaks it’. It is now seen as inclusive, embracing all who speak the language.

“Accordingly, Platteland Jews, because they speak Afrikaans, are part of the shared ownership of Afrikaans.”

Stressing the “shared ownership” Platteland Jews have of Afrikaans, he says that although many have left the Platteland, “the language is in them”!

Wides spoke about other peoples whose languages had contributed to Afrikaans - the Khoi-Khoi for instance, the original indigenous people of the country, whom the Dutch seafarers met in the 1600s. Jan van Riebeeck established a halfway station at the Cape for the Dutch East Indian Company in 1652.

The move away from the original Dutch language started with the Khoi-Khoi.

Some Khoi-Khoi words which were now standard Afrikaans, were among others, biltong, boegoe, dagga, kiere, karos, gogga, eina... Also some town names like Prieska, Keimoes and Kakamas.

“Another major influence on Afrikaans had been the Cape Malays and in the 1800s Afrikaans became the language of the Islamic religion at the Cape. Their written Arabic texts were Afrikaans, but in Arabic script.

Some Afrikaans words from Malay were katel (bed), baklei, piesang, baie, kombers, kombuis, baadjie (jacket), etc.

When the Rapport Sunday newspaper reviewed the book, “So Kry Ons Afrikaans”, the title of its article was: “Van Die Khoi Tot Die Taal Van Ons Tegnologiese Era”.

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Theodor Herzl pupils shine a light for tolerance

Confusion and chaos reigned for a few minutes at Theodor Herzl High in Port Ekizabeth last week Tuesday morning, when pupils were divided groups according to their hair colour and gender.

The exercise offered the 21st century teenagers a small window into how Jews and other victimised groups might have felt in Europe during the Second World War and helped to prepare them for the stirring annual Holocaust Remembrance ceremony held at the school.

Pupils of all cultures and faiths lit six large candles and dozens of tealights in tribute to the six million Jewish men, women and children who died during the Holocaust.

Guest speaker Peter de Decker recounted the realities of the war years from the perspective of his childhood in The Hague, Netherlands.

He recalled the sirens, bombs and hunger, as well as people having to wear yellow stars on their clothing to identify them as Jewish.

De Decker has lived in Port Elizabeth since 1959 and his granddaughter is a pupil at Theodor Herzl.

“There were more than 140 000 Dutch Jews living in the Netherlands in 1939, but by 1945 only about 35 000 of them were still alive. Anne Frank... who was hiding in Amsterdam with her family, was about your age - just 15 - when she died of typhus in a concentration camp,” he told the pupils.

Theodor Herzl’s head of Judaica and Hebrew teacher Esther Levitan, urged pupils to be mindful of their attitudes in society.

“Remember, you are the future. You can make the world tolerant or racist, by your actions or lack of them. It is your choice - your right and your responsibility,” she said.

Campus Head Stephen Fay, said the ceremony was also an opportunity to reinforce the importance of the values espoused by the school which contribute to the pupils’ development as responsible, caring citizens.

• *“‘Holocaust’ is a word of Greek origin meaning ‘sacrifice by fire’. More than 1,5 million Jewish children and tens of thousands of other youths, died under Nazi tyranny.”*

King David Schools get together to celebrate Yom Ha’atzmaut



KELLY ODES AND JAYDE MOSS, GRADE 10

On Tuesday at King David Linksfield, we began our morning with a Remembrance ceremony, recalling the fallen soldiers who perished while fighting for our beloved homeland, Israel.

There were speakers, singers and dancers, all expressing their heartache while the Israeli flag was lowered and then later lifted again.

The warmth and pride we felt was indescribable. As the assembly drew to an end, we all felt eager to celebrate the 65th birthday of the homeland that is our very own.

We were joined by our Linksfield Primary School as well as King David Victory Park on our rugby field, where a vibey and funky atmosphere prevailed, with balloons and flags flying, dancing and happy faces all round.

The entertainment included the Krinsky brothers who were finalists in “South Africa’s Got Talent”, for their incredible acrobatic skills. Student bands and dancers from both schools performed and anthems were sung.

It was truly an inspiring event which bonded our Jewish community. Together we stand - no matter what. Am Yisrael Chai.

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Penina’s arduous journey back to her Jewish roots

SHIRA DRUION

Penina Taylor (pictured) is the rare combination of a Jewish girl who converted and became a Christian missionary, before returning to her Jewish fold.

After 17 years as a practising Christian, she now works tirelessly to bring Jews back to their roots.

This week, the UOS ensured that Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban were on Penina’s map as she addressed packed audiences.

Penina grew up in the US in a single parent home where her Jewish mother struggled to make ends meet. Being left on her own much of the day, Penina became the object of abuse, which made for a traumatic childhood. It wasn’t long before she was smoking, drinking, and failing school. “I had lots of existential questions, but absolutely no answers,” she recalls.

When she was 15, a school friend took her under her wing and recommended that she put her trust in G-d and develop a relationship with Jesus.

“The strength of my friend’s belief resonated with me. I was searching for something deeper than myself, and this was the answer. I began attending church and soon became a born again Christian.

“Now that I was living for something higher than myself, I stopped smoking and drinking and began to do well in school. I was empowered with a sense of purpose, and that, in itself, is life-altering.”

Penina’s mother watched helplessly as her daughter slipped away from her Jewish roots, but believed that something that could motivate her daughter to make such dramatic changes in her life must be true, so both she and Penina’s younger sister converted to Christianity.

After high school Penina attended Bible College where she was trained as an evangelist, and married Paul, her best friend’s brother, who also was a pastor. Together they devoted themselves to converting thousands of people to Christianity.

Today, Penina and her family are Torah observant Jews, thanks to a

patient group of rabbis who are devoted to returning Jews to their authentic faith.

“The most important words I heard along my journey were spoken to me by the rabbi who brought me back to Judaism. He said: ‘Penina, you are a Jew no matter what you believe.’”

Four years after becoming observant, her husband converted to Orthodox Judaism. “Initially some people thought I should ask for a divorce. But my husband is one of the most sincere and honest people I’ve ever met, and I loved him, so I knew that eventually he’d come around.”

Today, Penina lives in Israel and all her children are observant Jews. “My biggest regret is that I facilitated a few close family members becoming Christians, and they have not yet returned to Judaism as the rest of my family have.

“In trying to turn people around, I don’t argue; I just try to educate and let them come to their own conclusions. If they’re sincerely honest, the truth will prevail.”



Circles of generosity in a Forest of Giving

GUY LIEBERMAN

Last year the South African branch of the Jewish National Fund put out a call for fresh ideas on a new campaign to help draw some focus to its activities.

According to their brief, they wanted something that had never been done before under their banner. Being the oldest environmental organisation in the world - at over 100 years - and having been engaged in the development of the modern State of Israel since its inception, this was going to take some creative, out-of-the-blue-box thinking.

I was fortunate to be part of the team they took on to generate the Forest of Giving campaign (www.forestofgiving.com).

For the purpose of the campaign, and to have a little fun, we called ourselves the Blue Team. It included formidable ad man Brett Morris, as well as the super creative Laurence Horwitz and his design production house, Mama. Mama basically led the charge on the concept and the principles behind the campaign - which is a totally unique model in the Jewish South African nonprofit world. My role was to be the on board Greenpeace-nik. I had to use words like “carbon neutrality” and “nutrient cycle” and “topsoil regeneration” and “selling thousands of trees”.

The premise of the campaign is simple: provide people with an opportunity to give a gift to someone else, in order to support a good cause. The gift? A tree - or many trees. The cause? Pushing back desertification through the plantation of a new, 65 000 strong SA forest in the Ne-

gev (since the current South African forest is, amazingly, full), while celebrating Israel’s 65 years as a nation state.

By layering several elements into one seamless online action, one gets to be generous by planting trees in the name of someone else; reduce desertification in Israel; ensure carbon capture, soil enrichment and air quality; honour the Land of Israel; and initiate a chain of giving in the community. The idea is that those you plant a tree for will naturally elect to plant one or more trees for others. And so spirals out an orchestrated pay-it-forward initiative.

The idea for the forest to commemorate Israel’s 65th year was the brainchild of former JNF Chairman Chaim Cohen. We needed to tell the story in a compelling enough way that young people who might be allied to a variety of cool and media savvy Jewish groups, could also connect with the gravitas and historically relevant JNF.

But its not only history that needs to be noted; the fact is that the JNF has been “on” the environmental issue decades before it came in to vogue. So there is an inherent appeal that many among the youth don’t know about. What has the JNF actually done? And how do we share this in a way that all ages will resonate?

We needed something hip and effective that would simultaneously inspire the imagination while sharing information. So, through hours of consultation with Amber Cummins, our navigator on the JNF side, we conceptualised and produced a two-minute animation that sums up the narrative journey of the Jewish people over the last century, the State of Israel, the JNF and, of course, why trees are important.

The campaign has just launched, and so far it’s looking good - people are taking up the call.

In one way, you could see this as one tree in the new forest per Jew in South Africa. But even in the early chains as seen on the website, there are non-Jews committed to Israel’s success up there, having trees being bought for them and buying for others.

The beauty of this campaign is that this is something that anyone can support. The JNF has one foundation that literally underpins all others, and that, simply, is the Earth. Go to www.forestofgiving.com to participate in the circle of giving.

• Guy Lieberman is a social entrepreneur and green consultant in the marketing and clean technology industries and is director of Second Nature Sustainable Solutions.



Elena Thomas – her passing is reminiscent of Goodbye Mr Chips

DAVID MEDALIE

Dr Elena Thomas (pictured), who died on April 11 at the age of 88, was a legendary Latin teacher, who taught at King David High School, Linksfield, for 33 years.

Generations of learners passed through the hands of “Doc”, as they affectionately called her. They were captivated by her charisma, her exuberant sense of humour and her candour (she was sometimes astonishingly blunt, but never malicious).

In this tiny woman they found a gargantuan appetite for life, which she saw as an adventure, to be embarked upon with forthrightness and passion, but without sentimentality or a sense of entitlement.

“Don’t ask what life can give you,” she would say, misquoting John F Kennedy; “ask what you can give life.”

Long after they had forgotten every word of Latin, her learners would cherish their memories of how she denounced them as “bloody little blobs”, urged soft-spoken children to “stop mumbling - you’re not in shul now”, and gave them names such as “Pulcher” (beautiful) or “Matzo Ball”. In turn they made fun of her accent, which always remained as strong as if she had just left Italy.

When she called out “Story Time”, everyone listened with rapt attention to her accounts of the myths and legends of ancient Rome; or to events from her own life, including her childhood, life under the Fascists, the deprivations of the war years, or how she met Jimmy Thomas, then fighting with the Allies, and whom, after the war, she married by proxy and followed to South Africa, a land she had never seen.

Elena (who had a doctorate in English literature) did not regard culture and the life of the mind as separate categories of experience, but as intrinsic to a life well lived. Her conversation could move effortlessly from rugby (which she watched avidly) to Tennessee Williams (she loved theatre and often directed plays at school), to Fellini or Dante.

She had no time for poseurs, though, or people who were intellectually or emotionally dishonest; and she sniffed them out unerringly.

All those whose lives she touched, were enriched by her rare, intensely loyal and magnanimous spirit. The word “unique” traditionally has no superlatives; nevertheless, she was the most unique person I ever met.

Jimmy, to whom Elena was married for 60 years, died in 2006. She is survived by two daughters, Dylan (in Sacramento, California), Seren (in Johannesburg), a son-in-law and two granddaughters.



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Today, Friday (April 19)

• UZLC hosts Helen Heldenmuth who will speak on “Here, There and Everywhere”. Venue: Our Parents Home Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

• RCHCC hosts an exhibition of works by Sandra Gordon, titled “Pro Décor” and Estelle Jane Litvin, “Impressions of Arcadia”, where she grew up. The exhibition closes on Sunday, June 2. Hours: Mon - Thurs 09:00 - 16:00; Fri 09:00 - 12:00; Sun 18:30 - 21:30. Information: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rhcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net

Sunday (April 21)

• Ohr Somayach Savoy have just completed Shas Mishnayos and will be restarting it today. You are invited to work your way through Shas Mishnayos. Study covering two or three mishnayos. Send an e-mail with your name and shul to mishnaportal@gmail.com to subscribe to the free programme and to receive a daily e-mail with audio files attached for the day’s learning, to http://www.mishnaportal.co.za.

• RCHCC screens the acclaimed documentary “Ai Weiwei: Never Sorry”, directed by Alison Klayman. 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, or e-mail: rhcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, or www.greatpark.co.za

• Second Innings hosts Dr Gavin Lewis, DA MPL Gauteng Legislature, who will speak on “The Mining and Labour Crisis in South Africa”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R40 non-members. Contact: Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Monday (April 22)

• UJW House & Garden Circle Meeting takes place at 25 Christopherson Road, Hyde Park. Time: 09:30 for 09:55 sharp, when entrance

• JWBS Johannesburg, urgently requires secondhand clothing, kitchenware, household goods, books and bric-a-brac for its secondhand 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.

• Benarc Gift Shop has gift presentations for all occasions, made to order. Call (011) 485-5232, JWBS. All kosher under the Beth Din. Proceeds to support the less fortunate in our community.

• Elise WIZO Gift Shop has an exciting range of gifts available. Contact (011) 640-2760 or call in at Genesis, bottom level of the Genesis Shopping Centre, 3 Bradfield Drive, Fairmount.

• Chabad Chai Seniors Club meets Monday to Friday every week, 09:00 to 13:00. Venue: Chabad House. Refreshments and lunch provided. Mondays: Brain exercises with occupational therapist and

closes. Donation: Members R40, visitors R50. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

• UJW adult education division hosts Prof Steven Friedman of UJ who will talk on “The Tyranny of the Minority – Why Much of What we are Told About our Country is not Really True”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (April 23)

• RCHCC hosts a talk by Redi Tlhabi on her tale of love and healing, “Endings and Beginnings” Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. donation: R80 (incl refreshments) Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378 or e-mail: rhccc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

• WIZO Forum presents “Strike a Woman, Strike a Rock”, honouring the power of women - paying tribute to contemporary women making a contribution to the SA and Jewish community. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 09:30. Cost: R40. Contact: Sandy, (011) 645-2515.

Wednesday (April 24)

• Women of the World and KosherWorld present “Soul Search” with Rochel Goldman. Learn new things about nutrition with Mary-Anne Lindenberg. Venue: Mi Vami. Time: 09:30 - 11:30. Cost: R60 pp. Contact: Mandy, 083-380-5268.

Thursday (April 25)

• Join WIZO every Thursday for a “Lunch & Learn” shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 13:00. Information: contact: Joyce 082-446-0480.

• RCHCC screens the documentary “People v The State of Illusion” written and produced by Austin Vickers. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R80 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rhccc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net orwww.greatpark.co.za

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• 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.

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The Masters brings out the best in golf



ROCKING THE BOAT *Jack Milner*

In 2004 I covered the Nedbank Golf Challenge at Sun City and one person, knowing I also wrote for the Jewish Report, came up to me and said that he had heard American golfer Jay Haas was Jewish.

Every fibre of my being told me this information was incorrect, but I thought it would be worth investigating.

When I asked how they knew he was Jewish the response was that he had played in the Maccabi Games. I mentioned that I knew Corey Pavin had played at the Maccabiah before marrying out of the faith and converting to Christianity, but this person was adamant he was right about Haas.

The next night at one of the functions, I found myself at the same table as Jay and with some other members of the press around I could not find the right moment to ask him what could be perceived as an antagonistic question: "Excuse me, are you by any chance Jewish?"

My chance came from a different viewpoint. He was discussing some unusual places he had played in and so I suddenly piped up: "Have you ever played at the Maccabi Games in Israel?" Haas looked at me in a rather curious manner and replied, most politely. "I would be very happy to play in Israel if I was invited but I can't see any reason why those people would have invited me."

I had my answer, and in the most courteous manner imaginable, I had been rebuffed.

The story came to me again during The Masters in Augusta last weekend. Australian golfer Marc Leishman led the tournament for quite a while and I had a number of calls asking if I knew whether he was Jewish.

I don't know, but I don't think so. I am not in receipt of any evidence to prove that he is, but unlike the case with Jay Haas, I don't have any denials either.

But on the subject of The Masters, for those who enjoy golf, the last three holes that decided this year's event, were probably the greatest I have ever watched.



Australian Adam Scott (left) is congratulated by Angel Cabrera after the Australian's win in the 2013 Masters at Augusta last Sunday.

When it comes to the major sporting events, everybody wants to see somebody win it, rather than see somebody toss it away, and that is exactly what they witnessed. Briefly, Australian Adam Scott, whose putting had been suspect the entire afternoon, sunk a 20 footer on 18 to birdie the hole and go nine-under par, one shot ahead of Argentinian Angel Cabrera.

Cabrera responded with a brilliant second shot that landed four feet from the hole. He birdied to force a playoff. They went back to the 18th and both managed a par four. That saw them move to the 10th hole and once again they went eyeball to eyeball, both putting their second shots reasonably close to the pin.

Cabrera's third shot got to the edge of the cup, but just refused to role in and that left Scott with a 15 footer to win the famous "Green Jacket". He struck the ball perfectly and it rolled straight into the hole. The 32-year-old Scott became the first Australian to win a Masters, ending the so-called Aussie curse.

Much of the good golf was overshadowed by the "Tiger Woods Affair". Woods was penalised two shots after revealing in his post-round news conference that

he had dropped the ball away from its original position. That resulted in officials revisiting the issue. Under normal circumstances he would have been disqualified but a recent change in the

regulations saved him.

Fred Ridley, chairman of the competition committee, said: "The penalty of disqualification was waived by the Committee under Rule 33 as the Committee had previously reviewed the information and made its initial determination prior to the finish of the player's round."

Many top golfers, including Ernie Els, Nick Faldo and David Duval, were quite outspoken with their view that Woods should have disqualified himself.

There is little doubt that Woods broke the rule, signed the wrong score on his card and for that he should have been disqualified.

The BBC's golf correspondent Iain Carter, summed it up best of all. "This is using a rule that has been brought in to try to alleviate the situation where players are disqualified for signing for the wrong scorecard as a result of HD television evidence coming into play.

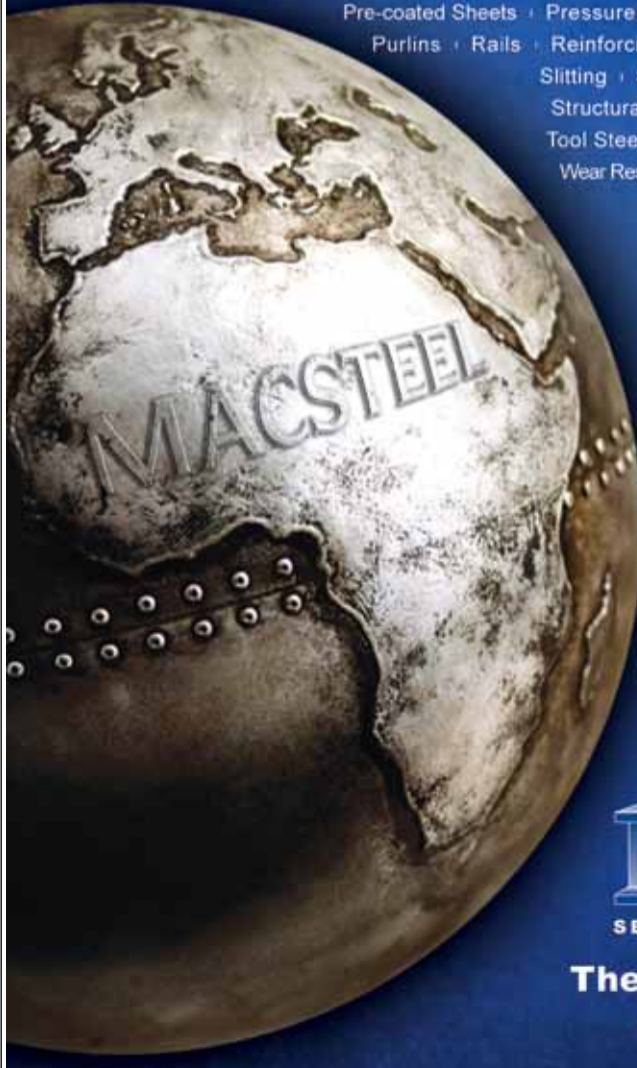
"This seems to me a very tenuous way to keep Tiger Woods in the tournament. There is an awful lot of feeling within golf that Woods broke a rule - inadvertently, but he did break a rule in regard to how he dropped a ball at the 15th. They have used a technicality here, I feel, to keep Woods in the tournament.

"This is a huge controversy that will not go away."

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Maccabi junior cricket tournament a great success

Prior to the departure of the 70 Maccabi Gauteng Cricket touring party to Cape Town recently, former Protea Adam Bacher and current Protea and IPL Sunrisers Hyderabad star Quinton de Kock, presented the players with their official playing caps at the capping function at King David High Linksfield.

Over 100 cricketers born between 1999 and 2003, participated in the inaugural Maccabi SA Junior Cricket Festival at the Green Point Cricket Club in Cape Town.

This first Interprovincial cricket tournament for boys aged 10 and 13 years, was a milestone for Maccabi cricket. There were eight teams overall. The four teams in the

11-and-under category, comprised two teams from Maccabi Western Province and two from Maccabi Gauteng. In the 13-and-under section, there were three teams from Gauteng and one from WP.

Former Maccabi World Union President Jean Futeran, presented the gold medals and trophy to the 11-and-under winners, Maccabi WP Haifa, and the silver medals to the runners-up, Maccabi WP Netanya.

The Abe Levenstein Memorial Trophy and the gold medals for the 13-and-under category were handed over by Sandra Lurie, his daughter, to the winning Maccabi Gauteng Negev team, with Maccabi Gauteng Ra'anana claiming the silver medals.