



The Miser is the best play of the year. (page 8)

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Barack Obama, Mitt Romney spar on Iran, Israel, healthcare and more

JTA STAFF
NEW YORK

JTA reviews the positions of presidential candidates Barack Obama, the Democratic incumbent, and Republican challenger Mitt Romney, on some issues of importance to the Jewish community.

IRANIAN NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

Obama:
The president has said that it is “unacceptable” for Iran to have a nuclear weapon and the US is “going to take all options necessary to make sure they don’t have a nuclear weapon.” He has ruled out the possibility of simply containing a nuclear-armed Iran.

Obama says his administration has “organised the strongest coalition and the strongest sanctions against Iran in history”, noting the damage that has been done to the Iranian economy.

He said that in any negotiated deal, the Iranians would have to “convince the international community they are not pursuing a nuclear programme”, and that there should be “very intrusive inspections”. Obama said Iran would not

be allowed to “perpetually engage in negotiations that lead nowhere”.

He accuses Romney of having “often talked as if we should take premature military action.

Romney:

The Republican nominee calls a nuclear Iran “the greatest threat the world faces, the greatest national security threat”. He says that Iran must be prevented from getting “a nuclear weapons capability”.

Romney says he supports the further tightening of sanctions against Iran and accuses the Obama administration of not moving aggressively enough on this front.

Romney’s running mate, Wisconsin Representative Paul Ryan, says the Obama administration has failed to convey to the Iranians that there is a credible threat of US military action. Romney later said “military action is the last resort. It is something one would only, only consider if all of the other avenues had been - had been tried to their full extent”.

Romney said that Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad should be indicted for incitement to genocide over his verbal attacks on Israel’s existence.

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Waiting for Sandy to arrive

A haredi couple waiting for Hurricane Sandy in Brooklyn on Monday. By Wednesday it had lost most of its fury but the devastation stunned America. Cities in the Northeast must now clean up waterlogged buildings, buried homes and crippled infrastructure. Never-say-die America is buckling-down to remedy Sandy’s legacy in New York and other cities. And then the snow started falling...

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More Polish gentiles see Jewish culture as part of own heritage

Many Poles have begun to look at Polish Jewish history as part of their own cultural heritage - something to be appreciated and remembered, not cast aside.

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GAVIN LEWIS: ‘Africa’s not for sissies’: Marikana and its aftermath

The social consequences are dire. It is not just fulltime mineworkers affected - almost equal numbers of contractor and service provider jobs are in jeopardy.

7



Michael Sieff quietly, confidently at the Chev helm, aims at sustainability

The Chev’s policies are well devised. They are for the benefit of the community. It is about sustainability.

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GOLDSTUCK: The Week the World Changed

Before he died, former Apple CEO Steve Jobs insisted Apple would never make a device in that format. But, just sometimes, market forces speak louder than single-minded vision.

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18:19	19:12	Bloemfontein
18:05	19:24	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:11	East London

KASHRUT ALERT

CHALAV YISRAEL PRODUCTS:
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Dairy World is no longer producing supervised Chalav Yisrael products, but, the kashrut department of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues advises, Montic Dairy has begun production of supervised Chalav Yisrael products, which can be identified by a Beth Din Chalav Yisrael sticker on the packaging.

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Stretching beyond ourselves

Religiosity and goodness are neither quite the same, nor opposed. We all know people who are absolute disbelievers and whom we would nevertheless define as being “good” by virtue of their high moral standards.

Conversely, we also unfortunately know others whom we would regard as observant - they keep Shabbat and are scrupulous in their kashrut - but who are nevertheless ruthless or dishonest in personal and commercial relations.

The pathway to spiritual greatness, as prescribed by G-d in the Torah, incorporates both of these areas. G-d wants us to develop both aspects of our personalities simultaneously. Our relationship with G-d and our dealings with our fellow human beings are the two legs that carry us forward on our spiritual journey. Each one is emphasised in the Ten Commandments.

The first five commandments deal with our obligations to G-d, the last five focus on our obligations to our fellow human beings.

The model of this holy individual walking steadily forward on two stable legs, is the founder of Judaism, Avraham Avinu. This week’s Torah reading opens with the description of Avraham as the quintessential Baal Chesed - master of kindness.

His tent is open on all four sides to welcome everyone. The Torah describes how the physical pain he experiences after his circumcision is pale in comparison to his emotional anguish as a result of not being able to welcome guests into his home.

On the other hand the Midrash and the Rambam describe how Avraham came to the understanding that there must be a creator through his own intellect. By means of his logical thought process, Avra-

ham reached the conclusion that there must be a designer who created the world for a purpose.

After searching for this source of existence, G-d revealed himself to Avraham.

Avraham stands firm in his belief in One G-d in the face of the popular culture. He is ostracised and persecuted as a result.

These two aspects of his personality are hinted to when the voice from heaven calls out to him at the binding of Isaac at the end of this week’s reading, “Abraham, Abraham...”

What is the connection between the two Avrahams? Why do we need to master both of these areas to truly develop our spirit?

Perhaps the reason is our behaviour in both of these areas grows from the same root - the ability to stretch beyond ourselves. The



PARSHAT VAYEIRA
Rabbi Danny Sackstein
Sunny Road Shul

default state of human beings is to be preoccupied with our own lives.

When we live in cognisance of the needs of others, we begin to recognise how our needs are taken care of by the Creator.

Our positive actions in these two areas indicate our progression from a state of self-absorption to awareness beyond ourselves.

This is not an easy goal to achieve. It is a career of hard work and discipline.

We all nonetheless have the ability to follow the example of our patriarch Abraham stretching beyond ourselves to become spiritual giants.

Rosenberg to stay on at Afrika Tikkun for three more years



Herby Rosenberg (77), outreach organisation Afrika Tikkun’s first CEO in 1995, has renewed his contract with the organisation as executive deputy chairman for a further three years, Afrika Tikkun said in a statement.

While most people count themselves fortunate to have had one successful career, Rosenberg has had at least three: as a successful lawyer and businessman; as executive director and director-general of the South African Zionist Federation; and with Afrika Tikkun.

Rosenberg says the chance to make a difference in the lives of those less fortunate is a mitzvah for him. He doesn’t see himself as being in the business of fundraising, but of “friend-raising”.

US Jewish community bears impact of Hurricane Sandy

ADAM SOCLOF
NEW YORK

Less than a year into her job at North Shore Synagogue in Syosset, New York, Rabbi Debbie Bravo sounded remarkably poised as she and her community face one of their most powerful challenges together: Hurricane Sandy.

According to figures released by The Long Island Power Authority on Tuesday, over 930 000 families - 90 per cent of all island residents - are without power after Hurricane Sandy wrought havoc on Monday night across the northeastern United States. Among those 930 000 are an estimated 139 000 Jewish households.

Hurricane Sandy, which washed ashore Monday evening just south of Atlantic City, New Jersey, took dead aim at the most populous region of the country, home as well to the majority of the country’s Jews. In its wake, it left a trail of devastation that may take weeks to restore.

“I went over to the synagogue a few hours ago, which is right next to a woody area,” Bravo said. “Ten plus trees are down, including a huge one down on the front lawn. Everyone’s saying this is a hundred times worse” than previous natural disasters that

hit the island.

The greater New York area, home to the largest population of Jews in North America, took a harsh hit as severe winds and flooding toppled trees, triggered electrical fires and flooded public transportation systems. The result: mass evacuations of apartments and dormitories, widespread school closings and damaged homes and community institutions.

Early Tuesday afternoon, David Weissberg, executive director of the 120-year-old Isabella Freedman Retreat Centre in Falls Village, Connecticut, posted a photo of a tree that literally sliced through the roof over the centre’s main building.

“We’re looking in the short term how to work around that space and need to assess how long it will take to get that space repaired,” Weissberg said.

“It’s an amazingly precise cut. It fell at an angle perfectly perpendicular to the building, which will hopefully make the repair an easier one.”

Jewish communal organisations, whose offices, landlines and in some cases e-mail servers were down on Tuesday, largely set up shop remotely to formulate a response.

“The concerns of the Jewish Federations movement is focused on both those in the Jewish community



Photo: Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Centre Facebook

The main building at the Isabella Freedman Jewish Retreat Centre in Falls Village, Connecticut, sustained damage on Monday, when Hurricane Sandy sent a 100-year-old tree slicing through the roof.

and non-Jewish community, as we work with local Jewish federations as well as local, state and federal emergency management personnel to assess the damage and look forward to recovery,” said William Daroff, vice president of public policy and director of the Washington office of The Jewish Federations of North America.

Daroff noted that while watching the devastation unfold, social media was a source of comfort. “Compared to visuals from New York and the Long Island coast, having a support structure and literally thousands of friends acquired through Facebook and Twitter helped me feel less alone as my family sat shuttering with gusts of wind at 50 mph (80 kph).”

The Jewish United Fund/Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago set up a relief fund on Monday night,

with The Jewish Federations of North America and Union for Reform Judaism following suit the next afternoon.

For those without power on Long Island, finding alternative to landlines was critical.

“A lot of people are not getting cellphone service at home,” Bravo said. “For one congregant, the only time I could talk to her was when she left her house.”

As Bravo attempts to establish and maintain contact with the elderly and other congregants - including two with recent births - she also pondered the next moves for her synagogue’s two b’nai mitzvah this weekend, which in all likelihood will be conducted without power.

“Truthfully in my mind, our options are try to use daylight,” she said. (JTA)

jewish report

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Obama and Romney spar...

From page 1



**JTA STAFF
NEW YORK**

**ISRAEL
Obama:**

The president points to what he calls his administration’s “unprecedented” commitment to Israel’s security, citing the growth in US security assistance and funding for the Iron Dome system to intercept rockets from Gaza. He has promised to do “what it takes to preserve Israel’s qualitative military edge - because Israel must always have the ability to defend itself, by itself, against any threat”.

He has pledged to pursue a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, saying that “a lasting peace will involve two states for two peoples: Israel as a Jewish state and the homeland for the Jewish people, and the state of Palestine as the homeland for the Palestinian people”. He has called for using the 1967 lines with mutually agreed land swaps as the basis for negotiating the borders between Israel and a Palestinian state.

Obama opposed Palestinian efforts to gain statehood recognition at the UN and said the path to a Palestinian state was “negotiations between the parties”. He has demanded that Hamas recognise Israel’s right to exist, renounce violence and abide by past agreements between Israel and the Palestinians.

While the Obama administration has criticised Israeli building in eastern Jerusalem and the West Bank, it also vetoed a UN Security Council resolution condemning Israeli settlement activities.

Romney:

The Republican nominee says Obama “has thrown Israel under the bus” and has tried to create “daylight” between the US and Israel. He says the “world must never see any daylight between our two nations.” He vows to “never unilaterally create preconditions for peace talks, as President Obama has done”.

At a meeting with donors that was secretly recorded, Romney expressed pessimism about current possibilities for Israeli-Palestinian peace, explaining that the Palestinians don’t want peace. But in a later speech he promised to “recommit America to the goal

of a democratic, prosperous Palestinian state living side by side in peace and security with the Jewish state of Israel”. He says he “will reject any measure that would frustrate direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians”. He has promised to increase military assistance to Israel.

**HEALTHCARE
Obama:**

The president says that the 2010 Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act - often referred to as “Obamacare” - is a historic advance. The law aims to make coverage universal by offering federal subsidies for many insurance buyers, expanding Medicaid eligibility for low-income families, setting up health insurance exchanges to offer choices and mandating that everyone has insurance or be subject to a penalty. It bans discrimination on the basis of pre-existing conditions and prohibits lifetime caps on coverage.

On Medicare, the president touts the health reform law’s provisions that he says help close the “doughnut hole” in the programme’s prescription drug benefit and achieve an estimated \$716 billion in future Medicare cost savings.

He opposes what he characterises as Romney’s plan to turn Medicare into a “voucher” programme, arguing that it would be costly for seniors. The Obama campaign says that the Republican nominee’s proposed cap on federal Medicaid spending growth amounts to a dramatic cutting of the budget for the federal-state programme that provides health coverage to the needy. Obama touts the healthcare reform law’s requirement that insurers cover contraception.

Romney:

The Republican nominee promises to work immediately to repeal the healthcare reform law. He says that individual states should have the ability to craft their own approaches to healthcare. He says he wants to promote greater competition in the healthcare system and give consumers more choices.

Romney proposes transforming Medicare into what he calls a “premium support system”. Under the system, seniors would receive a defined contribution from the govern-

ment that could be applied toward an array of private insurance options he says would have to be comparable to what Medicare offers, as well as a traditional government-provided Medicare option that would compete with the private plans. If a plan’s premium exceeds the government’s contribution, seniors who choose such a plan would pay the difference. He promises Medicare remain unchanged for current beneficiaries and those nearing retirement age.

He accuses the president of cutting \$716 billion from Medicare in order to pay for the other provisions of the health reform law.

Romney has called for transforming Medicaid into a programme in which the federal government gives block grants to the states and allows them greater flexibility to define eligibility. He would place a cap on the annual rate of increase in the federal government’s contribution to Medicaid, limiting it to 1 per cent above inflation.

**RELIGION AND STATE
Obama:**

The president said the “constitutional principle of a separation between church and state has served our nation well since our founding - embraced by people of faith and those of no faith at all throughout our history - and it has been paramount in our work”.

Obama says he “expanded the federal government’s faith-based initiative because it is important for government to partner with faith-based organisations”, citing the role they play in delivering social services.

He says he does not support school vouchers, including to religious schools, and that his administration found a way to respect religious freedom while also ensuring that employees of many religious-affiliated institutions have contraception covered by their health insurance. The administration requires a religious-affiliated institution’s insurance provider to directly provide such coverage to employees free of charge when the religious institution objects to providing or paying for such coverage itself.

Romney:

The Republican nominee said “the notion of the separation of church and state has been taken by some well beyond its original meaning. They seek to remove from the public domain any acknowledgment of G-d”. He said that America’s founders “did not countenance the elimination of religion from the public square”.

He says he would allow low-income and special needs students to use federal funds designated for them to enrol in private schools, including in religious schools.

He criticises the administration’s application of the healthcare law’s contraception coverage clause to employees of many religious-affiliated institutions, saying that it infringes on religious liberty. He endorsed legislation that would exempt employers from having to cover contraception in their employees’ insurances policies if doing so would contradict an employer’s religious beliefs or moral convictions.

World News in Brief

CONFERENCE SESSIONS SUGGEST NEW FUNDRAISING MODEL, PRAISE ISRAEL-DIASPORA CO-OPERATION

JERUSALEM - Delegates to the Jewish People Policy Institute conference have proposed a new model for Jewish communal fundraising and stressed the importance of co-operation between Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities.

At a conference session on how the global Jewish community spends its funds, former CBS executive and Fox News founder Mark Pearlman suggested that the community shift in part from focusing on umbrella Federation funding, and instead emphasise funding based on causes - though he noted the importance of Federations to American Jewish communal life.

He also said that Jewish communities should develop better online fundraising, and set up an organisation that can monitor fundraising groups and direct donors to specific causes.

“It’s not about auditing,” he said. “We need to continue to support the federated system but we need to promote a marketplace like this to get funding to solve causes.”

The conference which took place on Tuesday and Wednesday in Jerusalem, was called “The Conference on the Future of the Jewish People” and brought together more than 120 Jewish leaders and experts from around the world. The Institute is a think tank focused on developing policy for the Jewish world.

Israeli President Shimon Peres also addressed the delegates on Tuesday.

Aside from the Jewish communal budget, the conference’s sessions dealt with Israeli and Jewish identity and geopolitics.

Tuesday’s keynote speaker, French Jewish public intellectual Bernard-Henri Levy, praised increased unity between Israel and Diaspora Jewish communities, as compared to Israel’s early days as a state.

In earlier years, “there was the feeling in French Jewry that Israel was a reality that had to be accepted but that it would probably create more problems than it would solve”, he said.

“This whole debate seems over. Today it seems the Diaspora and Israel are like the two pillars of the Jewish world and one cannot work without the other.”

Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat and Natan Sharan-sky, chairman of the Jewish Agency for Israel, JPPI’s parent organisation, also appeared at the conference on Tuesday. (JTA)

EUROPEAN JEWISH ASSOCIATION CALLS FOR PROTECTION OF UKRAINIAN JEWS

BRUSSELS - The head of the European Jewish Association has called on the Ukrainian government to ensure the safety of the country’s Jews in the wake of the election to parliament of an anti-Semitic party.

“We are not presuming of course, to interfere in internal Ukraine affairs and its voters’ decisions, however we are very concerned about the safety of Ukrainian Jews and are seeking to prevent expansion of anti-Semitism in Europe,” Rabbi Menachem Margolin said in a statement.

Last Sunday, ultranationalist Svoboda Party, or Freedom Party, making unprecedented gains in Ukraine’s parliamentary elections, garnered 12 per cent of the vote, after winning less than one per cent in the last election, in 2007. The percentage means that the party can control a parliament faction for the first time.

Party leader Oleg Tyagnibok has called in the past for purges of the approximately 400 000 Jews living in Ukraine, as well as other minorities. The party has held several protest rallies against the presence of Jews in Uman, in the centre of the country. (JTA)

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Sieff, quietly, confidently at the Chev helm aims at sustainability



DR IVOR BLUMENTHAL

I sat down with Michael Sieff (pictured) to discover the truth behind the rumours and perceptions about the direction the Chevrah Kadisha is taking, which abound in the Johannesburg community.

Sieff is a product of Yeshiva College, King David Linksfeld and Wits University. He graduated with a BA in law and psychology, honours in industrial psychology and an MBA from Herriot Watt in the UK.

His career has been in human resources and training, through a number of positions, including a seven-year stint at Discovery and eventually as CEO of ORT South Africa, for seven years as well. He was appointed CEO of the Chev in February 2010.

The Chev is an organisation which has 1 000 residents among its facilities, and additionally looks after 1 000 dependent families

within the community, but outside of its facilities supporting on average four people per family.

Through West Park Cemetery, which is a critical component of the Chev, it conducts more than 500 funerals a year, of which 25 per cent are either partially or fully subsidised.

“We assist the most vulnerable and needy,” he says. Among its fulltime staff members, 25 per cent are Jewish. He firmly believes the Chev takes care of 80 per cent of the needs of the Jewish community and that while it should therefore qualify for 80 per cent of tzedakah given by the community, that is not what it receives.

Urban legends abound about his predecessor, Denis Levy. Sieff’s first task on becoming CEO, was to call for a forensic audit, facilitated by accounting firm Grant Thornton, into the financial affairs of this R200 million a year, 1 000 staff member

organisation, which he was stepping into.

To his relief, Sieff says that no wrongdoings were discovered as, although “as with any firm doing an annual turnover of R200 million, there were system weaknesses identified by the auditors with recommendations for improvements which were immediately implemented”.

He is pleased that the audit exonerated his predecessor. He maintains that Levy was responsible for many of the good things which happened at the Chev, in particular the integration of the growing number of organisations which had approached the Chev to be rescued, into a group structure.

“No funds were found to be missing and no impropriety had occurred, contrary to what many people had chosen to believe,” Sieff says.

In this regard he immediately counters the belief that the Chev has been on an acquisition trail of Jewish organisations.

“We have not gone after any of these organisations and tried to take them over. In every case they had approached the Chev and had asked to be taken over and integrated into our structure, which we have always agreed to do for the sake of the community.”

It is apparent that none of them were profitable organisations, and there was a large overlap with many of those independent organisations and existing Chev activities. Ultimately this type of integration in a non-profit environment has made sense.

When pressed for what he wants his legacy to be when he leaves the Chev, he says the “sustainability of the Jewish community, which equals the sustainability of the Chev”. For him the equation is simple.

The Chev needs to ensure that as far as vulnerable people in our community are concerned, they are well taken care of. “They cannot do it for themselves and it is

incumbent on us to try and do it for them.”

Perhaps the most damaging public perception currently regarding the Chev is that to be admitted into an institution at the Chev, such as Our Parents Home or Sandringham Gardens, you have to sell your soul. You have to hand over all possessions, not retain assets and not have anything to pass down to your children.

I for one was taken aback by Sieff’s answer. “Over the lifetime of a typical resident, our organisation, the Chev will budget and spend in excess of R2 million for each person we admit on a residential basis. R2 million!

“This is money from our community, for our community, which we are entrusted with and which we need to ensure is spent as properly as possible.”

If a person has R800 000 in unit trusts as an example, Sieff maintains that the person should have to pay full fees until their resources are exhausted - and the Chev will thereafter step in and subsidise the balance.

Alternatively, the applicant may agree to pay a lump sum, which is affordable and agreed upon, and the Chev will bear and cover the balance of the risk. “We try and do it in the most respectful manner but it is ultimately invasive. Many people say they are saving what they have for a ‘rainy day’. We try to bring to bear the understanding that ‘it is raining!’”

It is obvious that the Chev has become much firmer than it has previously been; it has to be run as a business. Where money is owing to the Chev and the person does have resources, that money should be repaid.

As an aside Sieff comments that prior to joining the Chev he had never been to the Beth Din. In the last three years he had been summoned five times by people with grievances about the way the Chev has treated them and what he generally puts down to as a sense of “disproportionate entitlement”.

In a very genuine aside he says: “We upset people, but are trying to do things in the best manner pos-

sible protecting the community and the community’s welfare.

“On every occasion, on a case-by-case basis, we work out a financial plan with every applicant. The purpose is not to strip them of every and all assets. We understand what dignity is and pride and we look for that middle road.

“There are unfortunately instances where applicants do refuse to give up their assets or pay their way and insist on the Chev sponsoring and subsidising them completely. In that instance we refuse where we know they have the means. If someone is sitting on R1 million and they want the Chev to pay R13 000 a month as charity, we say sorry, we cannot.”

He adds that the Chev’s policies are well devised and thought out. They are realistic and for the benefit of the community. Again it is about sustainability. “We are never able to please everyone all of the time.”

A persistent, pressing, current misperception is that the Chev is retrenching its Jewish staff and replacing them with non-Jewish people. Sieff objects strongly to this notion.

“We have a very firm pro-Jewish employment policy at the Chev. Of those directly employed by the Chev, 76 per cent of the top 50 staff members (in terms of seniority and earning) are Jewish. We actively seek and prefer Jewish candidates to non-Jewish ones.”

He adds that the Chev has a policy whereby the employment of non-Jewish staff members on a fulltime basis requires exco approval and is done by exception. “I have to show that we have searched and cannot find a suitable Jewish applicant for that position before my exco will give permission.”

Sieff has taken on an enormous task and is quickly becoming the master of his own fate in the process. This married, devoutly Jewish father of six, could easily find a more sedentary working life in the commercial sector. However, in his own words: “In taking the position as CEO, I wanted to do something for my community. I wanted to give back.”



The Jewish World

in seven seconds

The London Jewish Chronicle, London, UK:

www.thejc.com

“Call to label medicines made in Israel rejected”

The Department of Health has rebuffed calls by Liberal Democrat MP Sir Bob Russell for medicines produced in Israel and sold in the UK to be labelled as such. His request was denied by Norman Lamb, the Liberal Democrat MP who is Minister of State at the Department of Health.

Canadian Jewish News, Toronto, Canada:

www.cjnews.com

“Wanted philanthropist arrested in Toronto”

Nathan Jacobson, 58, a Winnipeg-born Jewish Canadian businessman, known for his philanthropy and commitment to Jewish and Israeli causes, was arrested last week at his home in Toronto. Jacobson was originally charged with fraud, money laundering and the distribution of controlled substances, to the tune of \$46 million.

Arutz Sheva, West Bank, Israel:

www.israelnationalnews.com

“Democratic Internet campaign: Romney has ties to Iran”

The US presidential race may have slowed for Hurricane Sandy; both sides frantically worked the Internet to make up for lost time. The National Jewish Democratic Council released a link this week to a micro site claiming presidential contender Mitt Romney has economic ties to Iran.

Baltimore Jewish Times, Maryland, US:

www.jewishtimes.com

“Jewish community weathering storm”

Hurricane Sandy is inching closer to the greater Baltimore area, at our going to press. According to Mark Smolarz, Chief Financial Officer for The Associated: Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, Comprehensive Housing Assistance earlier this week called a meeting of Jewish leaders to co-ordinate a plan to serve the areas most vulnerable during the hurricane.

Alliance, le Premier Magazine Juif sur le net, France:

www1.alliancefr.com

“The mayor of Toulouse will visit the graves of the victims of Merah in Israel”

Toulouse Mayor Pierre Cohen visited Israel last week, where he paid his respects to the memories of the Jewish victims of Mohamed Merah buried in the cemetery Har Hamenuchot. Cohen's trip also commemorates the 50th anniversary of the twinning between the cities of Toulouse and Tel Aviv.

The Algemeiner, Brooklyn, US:

www.algemeiner.com

“Taking advantage of storm, thugs beat, rob Jewish man in Brooklyn”

A video has surfaced, on www.Crownheights.info, showing a Jewish man being ambushed, robbed and beaten by African-American thugs during the storm this week in Brooklyn. The incident took place on the corner of Albany Avenue and President Street in Crown Heights, Brooklyn.

Haaretz, Tel Aviv, Israel:

www.haaretz.com

“Jewish Agency calls for rethink on ban on women praying at the Western Wall”

The Jewish Agency passed a resolution this week after a closed meeting with Chairman Natan Sharansky, calling on Israel to revisit its position on women praying at the Western Wall but stopped short of demanding it wrest control of the issue from the Orthodox establishment. Sharansky was angry at Anat Hoffman's treatment by the police.

World News in Brief

DANISH JEWS ANGERED BY REQUEST NOT TO DISPLAY ISRAELI FLAG

COPENHAGEN - The organisers of a Copenhagen-event celebrating diversity, asked Danish Jews to refrain from displaying the Israeli flag “for security reasons.”

The request came during preparations for the city-sponsored Mangfoldigheds festival held early last month, according to the Copenhagen-born Jonas Herzberg Karpantschof, former chairman of the European Union of Jewish Students.

The Danish Zionist Federation displayed the Israeli flags despite the requests. Several verbal confrontations occurred in front of the federation's stand, but they did not escalate into physical violence, Karpantschof wrote in a report for the website of CRIF, the umbrella organisation of French Jews.

Karpantschof said that “in reality, it [the request] was an attempt to block the group's participation”.

Other groups also displayed country flags at the event, the Copenhagen Post reported, and had not

been asked to refrain from displaying them.

One of the event organisers, Pernille Kjeldgaard, told the Post: “It is not that there is a flag policy. Specific associations were asked not to display their flags as a safety precaution.”

His group, TaskForce Inklusion, had been tasked by the municipality to organise parts of the event.

Max Meyer, head of the Danish Zionist Federation, was quoted as saying: “It is a shame that one group is discriminated against, especially at a diversity celebration.”

In the festival, participants were supposed to offer visitors food and culture connected with their ethnicity.

The festival featured a Kurdish stall and three Palestinian organisations, Meyer wrote. Jews, Muslims and Christians shared one stall at the event.

It was the first time that the Danish Zionist Federation participated in the festival. (JTA)

JEWISH AGENCY COMMITTEE WANTS NEW APPROACH TO WESTERN WALL PRAYER

TEL AVIV - A Jewish Agency committee has adopted a resolution calling for a “satisfactory approach” to prayer at the Western Wall.

The resolution passed on Tuesday during the Jewish Agency for Israel's Board of Governors meeting in Tel Aviv, reads in part: “Whereas Jewish women and men, of all streams of Judaism, desire the opportunity to pray at the Western Wall of Har Habayit (the Temple Mount) in a manner that fulfils their religious expression, and in an atmosphere of mutual respect and Ahavat Yisrael” and calls for “the Chairman of the Executive of The Jewish Agency for Israel, consulting with the Committee for the Unity of the Jewish People, and working with Jewish Agency-Israel Government Co-ordinating Committee and other appropriate bodies, including the Western Wall Heritage Foundation, to

arrive at a satisfactory approach to the issue of prayer at the Western Wall of Har Habayit.”

The resolution comes in the wake of the arrest and alleged roughing-up by police earlier this month at the Western Wall of Anat Hoffman, leader of Women of the Wall and the Reform movement's Israel Religious Action Centre. Hoffman was wearing a tallit and leading the Shema prayer at a Rosh Chodesh service for about 200 women.

The Reform movement has called for an Israeli police investigation into the incident in which Hoffman said she was put in shackles, dragged across a jail floor and put into a cell overnight without a blanket, being forced to use her tallit to cover herself. In 2003, Israel's Supreme Court ruled that women cannot wear a tallit or tefillin or chant from a Torah at the Western Wall. (JTA)



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south african
jewish report

Is government
changing Israel
policy by stealth?

South Africa is a democracy, therefore NGOs like BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) may engage freely in lobbying against Israel. BDS is very active, among other things sending text messages and e-mails to all and sundry, including numerous Jews who don't support its stance.

In another of its recent efforts, it organised on Monday a gigantic billboard on the highway near Wits University to be plastered with an edge-to-edge anti-Israel poster – which was immediately removed when the CEO of the company owning the billboard learnt of it.

Despite growing anti-Israel activities, the Jewish community has taken comfort in the fact that formally, the ANC government's Israel policy apparently has not changed: South Africa has full diplomatic relations (even if lacking warmth) with it and supports a two-state solution to the conflict with the Palestinians. This was reaffirmed in a letter from President Jacob Zuma to the SAJBD several years ago, which leaders of the board refer to as the "Balfour declaration" of the SA government.

What should we do, however, when the line between government and BDS blurs? A few days ago the latter sent out a triumphal press release saying that during an international conference in Johannesburg, the ANC had endorsed BDS South Africa's boycott call against Israel. There was "widespread support from international delegates for the adoption and support of the Palestinian BDS call", and former SA Deputy President Baleka Mbete said Israel was "far worse than apartheid South Africa".

This flies in the face of official ANC policy on Israel. The Times of Israel's front-page story on Monday quoted Israeli Foreign Ministry spokesman Yigal Palmor: "The government of South Africa has stated time and again that it is against boycotts... This release being a hodge-podge of half-truths and entire lies serving as arguments to recommend a policy rejected by the South African government; we're waiting for South African officials to respond and clarify the official position."

Therein lies the nagging question: If ANC policy remains the same, why is there deafening silence from the SA government? Add recent incidents where in August Deputy Minister of International Relations and Co-operation Ebrahim Ebrahim called on South Africans not to visit Israel, and Minister of Trade and Industry Rob Davies initiated in May the controversial "relabelling" requirement for Israeli goods made in the West Bank, fingering Israel while staying mute on blatant examples elsewhere in the world.

It is beginning to look as if the government is changing its policy by stealth and slowly downgrading the relationship with Israel, with the result that after a while, no-one queries the "new" policy.

From the official Jewish community standpoint, there is a need for the ANC to reaffirm its Israel policy. SAJBD President Zev Krengel says: "The most troubling thing is that no-one in government is stopping this downgrading."

Everyone knows that until the ANC elective conference at Mangaung in December is over, Zuma will not say anything that might harm his chances of re-election. And the Israel relationship is contentious.

We are 18 years into our democracy. One can understand ANC sympathies towards the Palestinians who supported them as a liberation movement during the Struggle era. But the ANC must now act like a government, rather than a factional movement.

A mature government conducts relationships on a much higher, sober level. For how long must the ANC pay its dues to the Palestinians - or, for that matter, to other Struggle allies which have now become infamous, such as Zimbabwe?

If the government is changing its Israel policy, it should do so openly so it can be confronted and debated directly; and if the policy has not changed, government must have the courage to implement it in both letter and spirit. BDS should not appear as the "unofficial" exemplar of government attitude.

More Polish gentiles see Jewish culture as part of own heritage

KATARZYNA MARKUSZ
WARSAW

Marek Tuszewicki is doing doctoral work at the Institute of Jewish Studies at Jagiellonian University in Krakow, teaches Yiddish at the Krakow JCC, and leads a club that brings together those who like to sing Chassidic songs and read Yiddish literature.

He also co-founded a Jewish literature and art quarterly called Cwiszn and publishes articles and poems in Yiddish.

There's just one thing: Tuszewicki is not himself Jewish.

"There is the whole Polish background with the ruins of cemeteries and synagogues from which there is no escape," Tuszewicki told JTA.

"There are more and more people interested in Yiddish and opportunities to learn," he said. "What are the proportions of Jews and non-Jews I cannot say exactly, but I'm sure at the university there are more students from non-Jewish backgrounds."

Tuszewicki is among the growing number of non-Jewish Poles who are immersing themselves in Jewish culture. They organise Jewish events or ceremonies commemorating the Jews who lived in their cities. They are building monuments and teaching others about the history of their Jewish neighbours. They write in Yiddish.

Many Poles have begun to look at Polish Jewish history as part of their own cultural heritage - something to be appreciated and remembered, not cast aside.

"I know that many Poles are interested in Yiddish because it is the heritage of Poland," Tuszewicki said. "Yiddish developed here and great Yiddish literature has been written here. Besides, it not only coexisted with Polish, but it also entered with it into intensive contact. Forgetting Yiddish we would forget an important part of our culture." Martyna Majewska is another of the many Polish gentiles to have charted a Jewish path. She was granted a scholarship from the Jewish Foundation for the Right-

eous to teach about the Holocaust and Jewish history. She took part in education courses organised by Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial and museum.

Majewska also co-authored a book called "Warsaw: City of many cultures" that helps educators teach about Poland's minority communities.

Now Majewska, along with Marcin Kozlinski, a fellow Polish gentile, is preparing the first postwar Polish animated fairytale in Yiddish. It's part of the Multicultural Mosaic of Tales and Legends project funded by the US Embassy in Warsaw. The Jewish story is titled "Happy Man" and will be a short animated film in three languages: Polish, English and Yiddish.

"We decided to create a series of stories so children could learn more about the fairytales in different cultures and see that they have universal appeal," Majewska said. "And another advantage of every fairytale is that it can be seen in its original language, giving the opportunity to familiarise children with an unknown language."

Bogdan Bialek does not speak Yiddish. He grew up in a Jewish neighbourhood in Bialystok, where he had Jewish friends. One was a neighbour who was a survivor of Auschwitz from whom he learned about the Holocaust. Poland's anti-Zionist campaign of 1968 decimated what Jewish life remained in Bialystok, and Bialek eventually moved away, marrying a girl from Kielce, the site of a 1946 pogrom resulting from a blood libel.

In Kielce, Bialek wanted to learn more about the massacre, in which 37 Jews and three non-Jewish Poles were killed. The locals, however, were reluctant to talk about it.

"In 1982, one of the priests warned me not to talk about this because Jews kidnapped children and made them into matzah," he said. "I met with a Poland which I did not know before. Thus began my stubbornness confronting the city with the pogrom."

Even in the 1990s, with Poland emerg-

ing from its communist shell, it wasn't easy to talk openly about Jewish history. Bialek endured several attacks for delving into Jewish history. Perpetrators threw grenades into the newspaper office where he worked.

But in 1996, on the 50th anniversary of the pogrom, Bialek organised a ceremony commemorating the murdered Jews. Then he began to organise annual memorial marches, the first of which drew just three people. At this year's there were 300.

He built a monument of a menorah in town as well as a statue of Jan Karski, a hero of the Polish resistance who delivered news of the extermination of Polish Jewry to the outside world. Today, Bialek says, Kielce is a different city than it was a generation ago.

"For many years in Kielce there have been no anti-Semitic slogans on the walls," Bialek said. "Yes, there are anti-Semites, but they understand that divulging this is indecent."

A few weeks ago, thanks to Bialek, a succah was erected in the mall in the centre of Kielce. Locals came to listen to stories and watch films about Kielce's Jewish past.

In the central Polish town of Grodzisk Mazowiecki, a group of locals convened in 2009 to try to figure out how to commemorate their town's local Jewish heritage. They started their project, called Jewish Street, by lighting up the walls of the old Jewish cemetery one night.

"I wanted to let people know that the current area of the cemetery is only one-tenth of its original area," said Robert Augustyniak, one of the project's initiators. "Since 1953 on the rest of the area of the cemetery there is a junkyard. Most people today do not know that there was also a cemetery." In 2010, Augustyniak managed to excavate Jewish gravestones that had been used to build a sidewalk in one of the backyards in town and return them to the cemetery. It was an eerie undertaking, he recalls.

"It was raining that day. From the mud began to appear some symbols: hands, candles, ornaments, plants and finally the Hebrew inscriptions," Augustyniak said.

"Jan Jagielski of the Jewish Historical Institute was with us then. He read inscriptions from the gravestones and we felt that behind these strange-sounding names there are people who ask to be remembered."

That same year the group organised Grodzisk's first Jewish cultural festival with workshops, a book fair, meetings, and theatre and concert performances. The town's mayor was an enthusiastic supporter, according to Augustyniak. In 2011, the Israeli Embassy in Warsaw gave Jewish Street an award.

"The memory of the Jews is now fashionable in the city," Augustyniak said.

A hundred kilometres away, in Minsk Mazowiecki, Justyna Jekalska decided recently to restore the old Jewish cemetery in her city. Thanks to her efforts, it was cleaned up and soon will have a new fence.

Jekalska says she was motivated by simple human decency. "I was ashamed that the cemetery in my city looks like that," she told JTA. "I'm not associated with Judaism in any way. I phoned a rabbi's office. It turned out that they liked the idea that I wanted to do that. It is, after all, not only to clean but also to preserve human knowledge about this place and change the way it is seen." (JTA)



Robert Augustyniak, right, guiding a tour in Grodzisk with Zofia Szulman, a native of the Polish town now living in the United States.

‘Africa’s not for sissies’: Marikana and its aftermath

DR GAVIN LEWIS, DA MPL

The shooting by police of 34 people, many of them in the back, at the Lonmin Marikana mine in the North West province, reverberated around the world. It marked South Africa’s first post-apartheid massacre and came as a great shock to South Africans.

Now an official investigation is under way to determine the facts of the matter, but no heads have yet rolled as a result. No one has been held accountable. But that does not mean there have been no consequences.

After Marikana, with Lonmin apparently having caved in to the strikers’ demands, illegal strikes outside the formal bargaining structure have spread like wildfire. Goldfields, Angloplats, AngloGold Ashanti, Kumba Iron Ore, and even some coal mines, have been affected.

Gold Fields is ready to start dismissing illegally striking workers who fail to report for work - fully 15 000 of them. Anglo Plats has fired 12 000 workers. Lonmin workers are back on strike after arrests of ringleaders. Lonmin has closed one shaft with a loss of 2 500 jobs. And Kumba Iron Ore has fired 180 strikers.

With each mineworker supporting an array of dependents, the social consequences are dire, especially in the poorest rural areas of southern Africa, where most migrant workers are recruited.

It is not just fulltime mineworkers who are affected - almost equal numbers of contractor and service provider jobs are placed in jeopardy as well. The strikes have come at a high price to the mines themselves. Amplats says the strike has cost it R1,1 billion in revenue. Lonmin’s share price fell from 13 500 cents in May to 6 000 cents in October. Gold Fields has lost R1,2 billion in revenue due to strikes.

Strikes threaten to relegate AngloGold Ashanti and Gold Fields debt ratings to junk status according to Standard & Poor, making it difficult to fund expansion or new mines.

The impact on “official” trade unions has also been severe, with Cosatu affiliate, the National Union of Mineworkers, finding it too dangerous to go near the strikers. They have been replaced by the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (Amcu) but many mine strikers are more anarchic.

Adcorp predicts that strikes will cost jobs long term: up to 200 000 jobs.

For government, initially silent on Marikana, the effects of the mushrooming strikes have been just as bad, with the national fiscus taking heavy losses in billions of rand in income, as the mainstay of South Africa’s exports, the mines shut down.

The event also directly led to the S&P downgrading, which costs South Africa more to repay its rising debt burden. Strikes have lower South Africa’s growth rates from 2,8 per cent in 2012 to 2,4 per cent.

Mining disruptions threaten South Africa’s image as an investment destination. Mining investment is going to Australia instead.

The rand is at R8,50 –

The system of migrant labour means that mineworkers sustain two families and two households - aggravating the rise in their indebtedness to unscrupulous moneylenders

9,00 against the US dollar, but is likely to weaken further. The medium term budget statement may allay fears about populism within the ANC as Mangaung ap-



proaches, but will it prove sustainable?

What of the road ahead? The fact is that there are no winners. The mines will have to look long and hard at their labour system, where reform is long overdue.

The system of migrant labour means that mineworkers sustain two families and two households - aggravating the rise in their indebtedness to unscrupulous moneylenders. Yet migrant worker remittances sustain the poorest areas of southern Africa.

The solution might be a three-month on, one month off week shift which will allow them to attend to their rural families and relieve the stress of harsh mining conditions.

For organised labour, it is clear that they have lost touch with their membership. Num and Cosatu leaders are spending too much time on national politics and not enough time with their workforce.

And for government, things will be aggravated by populist politicians such as Julius Malema. This is entirely an own goal. It will increase the urgent need for strong leadership post Mangaung.

World News in Brief

LIKUD PARTY APPROVES ELECTION LIST MERGER WITH YISRAEL BEITEINU

JERUSALEM - The Likud Party reportedly voted overwhelmingly to approve merging its candidates list with the nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party.

Likud members gathered on Monday at a party convention in Tel Aviv to vote on the proposal floated last week by the Likud chairman, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and Yisrael Beiteinu head Avigdor Lieberman, the foreign minister.

A move to put the vote on the proposal to a secret ballot was denied at the convention.

The proposal included stipulations that the Likud head will choose the position of the party’s candidates on the list, as determined by a party primary, and that the two parties will be

represented on the list with the balance in the current government - 27 seats for Likud and 15 for Yisrael Beiteinu.

Before the vote, Netanyahu reassured his party members that Lieberman is not next in line for the prime minister’s position.

“I’ve heard all kinds of things in recent days about successors,” Netanyahu said. “I have news for you: I plan to lead the State of Israel for many more years. The Likud will continue to lead the State of Israel for many more years.”

He reportedly also stressed that the Likud would remain an independent party despite the merged lists.

Israeli general elections are set for January 22. (JTA)



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Beit Emanuel Progressive Synagogue Community Rabbi

Beit Emanuel, a Progressive Synagogue in the historic suburb of Parktown, Johannesburg (South Africa) is seeking a full-time rabbi with effect from December 2012.

Beit Emanuel has historically been the largest or “flagship” Progressive congregation in Johannesburg and South Africa, and the successful applicant will work with lay leadership to reinvigorate congregational life and grow membership.

Beit Emanuel has just under 400 member family units, with varying ages, income and levels of observance. Services are offered for Shabbat and all festivals, and the community is attempting to grow its Religion School, youth and young adult demographic and activities.

The ideal candidate will combine warmth and learning, and will have a demonstrated ability to build and grow a community, as well as the skills and abilities usually expected of a solo or senior rabbi for a Progressive community.

Due to the imminent deadline, interim appointments will be welcomed, and in this regard, applications are invited from senior students, rabbis on sabbatical or those recently retired.

The remuneration package will be market-related and negotiable to the right candidate.

For more information or to submit your CV in strict confidence, please e-mail chairman@beitmanuel.co.za.

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ROBYN SASSEN

“Our original concept for the space housing the valuable Wits university art collection was gold,” says Nina Cohen of Cohen&Judin, one of the two architects who designed Wits Art Museum which opened in May.

Fronting Jorissen and Bertha Streets in Braamfontein, their design won the national competition for the new museum, hosted and adjudicated by Wits in 2004. “It was an exercise of breaking down classical space in many ways, but the cladding on the outside and inside of this frontage is distinctive for the university and the city.”

“We were sold on gold,” concurs architect Fiona Garson, Cohen’s creative partner for the past five years. “But in developing the design, we realised it was more difficult than we’d thought. Our cladding needed to block UV light, be relatively light-weight and provide climactic insulation.”

Adds Cohen: “It took us months to think of the humble brick as the solution.”

SA cast brilliant in Molière’s timeless masterpiece, The Miser

Show: The Miser
Where: Barney Simon Theatre, Market, Newtown (011) 832-1641
When: until December 9

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

Arguably the best play so far in director Sylvaine Strike’s brilliant career, this play is easily also her riskiest. The odds of a French comedy of manners first performed in 1668 drawing full houses in 2012 in Johannesburg, seems completely outrageous but outrageous is as outrageous does; every bit of this flawless production proves that.

This Molière tale tells of Harpagon, a man so attached to his money that he loses sight of everything else; while his adult children find partners in secret, his horses have become so neglected, they have turned into ideas.

The play skitters lightly between humour to make you roar with laughter and pathos. Scribed in a world where usury was synonymous with Jews, it would have taken tiny nuances in accent to cause this play to slip into racial typecasting; with Strike at the helm, you are in safe hands: this play is about good theatre and it’s as good as it gets.

With a cast cherry picked from all over the industry, headlined with the magnificent Lionel Newton as central protagonist, making a hugely welcome return to our stages, and featuring pre-eminently talented William Harding who debuted professionally in Strike’s “The Table” last year, this play is handled with a joyous respect for

Garson. “I was playing with my kids and watching how toy bricks make patterns. Then the penny dropped! The interwoven bricks lend the wall two skins, allowing air in; keeping light out. We used a double cant brick, the kind generally used for the top of a wall, and created a staggered effect.”

In 2002, the Gertrude Posel Gallery, where Wits’ 9 000-strong collection of objects from Africa - arguably the biggest and most important in the southern hemisphere - and its fine art collection had been housed since 1972, was closed to facilitate the centralisation of Wits’ student enrolment centre.

“We were ‘shoe-horned,’” senior curator of WAM, Julia Charlton describes it. GPG was on two floors; its entrance and gallery were above storerooms and offices. In 2002, the upstairs space was bricked in; the downstairs space became inaccessible to anyone other than the staff.

The budget for the new design of WAM initially was some R70 million. “Wits could not raise this; we had to distill our ideas to

Providing the golden ‘wow’ factor to WAM

She explains the creative give-and-take she enjoys with

fit a much smaller budget,” Garson explains. “We had to think of ‘wowing’ everyone in less obvious ways.

“People kind of lose sight of the humble nature of a thing like architecture,” she continues. “It’s about ‘wowing’ people: but it’s also about understanding how people experience a space.”

The mandated task was not only to create a museum, it was also to knit together disparate spaces - the garage under University Corner, the basement of the old Dental School and Old Lawson’s tower, built in 1964: a five-storey 5 000m² space, for storage, exhibiting, research and offices.

Adds Cohen: “This calibre museum between Braamfontein and the inner city emphasises the university’s status as a gateway to the city. Credit goes to Wits for choosing this site. It is so the right place. And it conveys exactly the sense of gravitas.”

• At WAM until January 2013 is “The Art of Life and Death (and everything in-between)”, an exhibition of life-cycle-related objects from Wits’ collection. Tel (011) 717-1365.

Photos by Brett Rubin



Nina Cohen in front of a Kente cloth from Nigeria.



Fiona Garson in front of a work by Willem Boshoff, in Wits Art Museum’s inaugural show .

Arts in Brief

RESIDENT ARTISTS SHOWCASE WORK AT SPAZA ART GALLERY

This weekend, November 3 and 4, at Spaza Art Gallery in Troyeville, there will be a showcasing of work made by resident artists associated with the gallery, including furniture designer, Alan Epstein; ceramicist Peter Ntombeni; metal works specialist Justin Wells; and painter, Rosemary Joynt. The gallery, uniquely situated in one of the older inner-city neighbourhoods, promises guided tours from 09:30 and lunch by its resident chef, Sanza. Established in early 2001 by Andrew Lindsay, who boasts strong credentials as public art guru, the gallery is located at 19 Wilhelmina Street, Troyeville, Johannesburg, and may be contacted on 082-494-3275 or emp@intekom.co.za

RICHARD SMITH EXHIBITS AT IRMA STERN MUSEUM

The Irma Stern Museum under the auspices of the University of Cape Town is currently hosting an exhibition of work by former political cartoonist, Richard Smith, who has credentials reaching back to the 1960s and who was associated for many years with the Everard Read Gallery. Entitled “Head and Shoulders”, this exhibition of large portraits and other works, is something of a retrospective; it also draws from a new aesthetic Smith began developing in 2005. The exhibition is curated by Rose Korber and closes on November 24; featuring walkabouts by the artist on November 3 and November 17. Call (021) 685-5686.

‘SOUND US OUT’ AT WITS

Wits University’s School of Arts, Wits Music and Wits Theatre present “Sound Us Out”, an end-of-year celebration of the work of music composition students, of which there was an unprecedented large number, this year. Under the guidance of Jeanne Zaidel-Rudolph, Jonathan Crossley, Cameron Harris and Chris Letcher, the students perform on November 11, 12 and 14, featuring collaborative ideas from students studying engineering, digital arts and music. The concerts will take place in the Wits Great Hall and the Music Room, University Corner. Contact Cathy: (011) 717-1376.

Photos by Ruphin Coudyzer



Showing him how it is done, Frosine the matchmaker (Patricia Boyer) explains her trade to a bemused Master Simon (Mpho Osei-Tutu).



Harpagon, the miser, in full stride (Lionel Newton).



Sister and brother, Élise and Cléante (Kate Liquorish and William Harding) conspire.

Project Natan aims to empower people to earn their own living

ROBYN SASSEN

“Sometimes in the worst of disasters, there is a blessing,” says Rabbi David Masinter of Chabad, one of the key drivers of Project Natan, a business plan competition initiated by ORT JET and Chabad three years ago.

“I have seen too much despair,” he refers to the current scourge of unemployment. “You need to go out and fight for it and make it happen.”

“Don’t be scared to commit your business idea to paper,” advises Daniel Roy, CEO of Trillian Asset Management, appointed by Rabbi Masinter to head Project Natan.

“The project is funded by people who want to help aspirant entrepreneurs. An interest- and surety-free loan of R100 000 and another of R50 000 are the top prizes. To date, we have funded 23 businesses.

“Business plans are controversial,” he acknowledges. “My advice is don’t be afraid: The process gives you a lot more clarity than an idea in your head.”

“ORT JET does the initial analysis of candidates for this competition. There are many prizes besides the loan. Project Natan’s aim is to become self-funding. The loan is interest- and surety-free, but it is a loan. As entrepreneurs pay it back, so they contribute to others getting their businesses started.

ORT JET has been running business plan workshops since mid-October, ORT JET’s Cindy Silberg, Manager: Business Mentor-



Paul Bacher, ORT JET’s CEO; and Daniel Roy, the manager of the project and CEO of Trillian Asset Management (fifth from left); with last year’s Project Natan winners, Errol Freeman; Jarrod Myers; Jake Willis; Ryan Hollander; Anita Kramer; Amanda Rabinowitz; Michael Wingrin; and Donald Nghonyama.

ing, explains. “Most of our applicants, our finalists, our winners, have been sitting on a business idea for years, but have never developed it. A business can be a lifeline,” she adds. “At ORT JET we try to empower people to do things for themselves.”

Paul Bacher, ORT JET’s CEO said: “We aim to make business plans come to life.” This year, Project Natan is open to Capetonians; and it offers a category for start-ups and another for seedlings or infant businesses (under 18 months).

It’s not only about entrepreneurship. Rabbi Yossy Goldman, of Sydenham Shul, is developing a section in his newslet-

ter “What’s Nu”. Called “Jobs for Jews”, it aims to match job seekers with jobs. MyShtetl.co.za also has a “Jewish Jobs Junction”.

Says Tzivvia Grauman, head of communications at the Chevrah Kadisha: “In 1993, the Chev launched StaffWise, an initiative with a mandate to employ Jewish people and tap into Jewish business networks.”

It also focused on assisting sheltered employment candidates. “It seemed a good model; for several years it worked. Many competent applicants were placed; employers were very satisfied.”

Over the years, StaffWise’s reputation

waned; unsuitable candidates dominated its books. “The model had to be re-examined, resulting in the Chev redirecting its efforts towards expanding its Protected Employment Services, with Kadimah Occupational services since 2008, for those unable to be part of the conventional job market.”

StaffWise Cape Town was established in 1999. According to Linda Kawalsky, who runs it “it was originally set up to

assist welfare candidates, but now it assists generalist job applicants also. Particularly in the last two years, its popularity has grown; we handle everything from au pairs to

financial managers.”

ORT JET also has a division called Jet Jobs, but rather than an employment agency as such, it “facilitates workshops in skills like interviewing”, explains Silberg. “It’s focused on how to search for your ideal job.”

“The purpose of the Project Natan initiative,” concludes Rabbi Masinter, is “to empower people, but also, enabling someone to earn their own living is the highest form of tzedakah,”

• Project Natan’s closing date is November 26; visit www.ortjet.org.za



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DISCRIMINATION IN ISRAEL AGAINST NON-ORTHODOX JEWS AN ABERRATION

I refer to the article, “Hoffman’s arrest galvanises liberal groups”, in Jewish Report of October 26.

Bar Kochba was correct when he said to one of the Roman generals: “Why are you trying to kill us Jews? If you leave us alone we will kill ourselves.”

The fact that Israeli law discriminates against non-Orthodox Jews is in itself an aberration.

My personal view is that all Jews who wish to pray at the Kotel should be able to do so in any manner or form they choose, be they Orthodox, Conservative, Reform or secular.

I am an Orthodox Jew but I cringe with embarrassment that the Kotel has become predominantly the preserve of the Orthodox.

We are quick to criticise Jews who do not support Israel (as I also criticise such Jews) but then we do not allow those Jews (who are predominantly non-Orthodox) to pray at the Kotel in the manner they choose.

While Israelis may view the Wall as something as not relevant today it is a pity that the Orthodox Right in Israel who have the swing vote deem it fit that what could have been a national symbol to connect Jews from all over the world, is now only the preserve of the Orthodox.

Israel and Jews need all the support we can get.

The religious arrangement at the Kotel does nothing to encourage those Jews from non-Orthodox congregations, who do not support Israel, from doing so.

The Israeli Supreme Court needs to take cognisance of this diabolical situation unless it too wants to be associated with an “unfair selection process”.

Myron Robinson
East London

A REAL MITZVAH DONE BY A FINE YOUNG MAN

In 2009, my husband, Ronnie Friedman, had a knee replacement operation and was house-bound for many weeks.

Rabbi Azriel Uzvolk’s son, Yisroel, grandson of Rabbi Norman Bernard, made an effort at the age of 11 to sit with my husband watching cricket.

They became true friends - the young and the old - and whenever they saw each other, the discussion always revolved around cricket.

This young man who is now 14, took the trouble to visit Ronnie who was in hospital for four months.

Recently, young Yisroel walked all the way from Victory Park to Milpark Hospital to enable Ronnie to do the mitzvah of shaking the lulav and etrog on Succot.

The walk took 90 minutes there and back.

How absolutely admirable to do such a mitzvah for an old sick friend. We thank you. Yashar Koach.

Rona Friedman
Johannesburg

BEWARE THAT ‘CONNECTING’ WITH G-D ISN’T IN FACT SERVING ONESELF

Anat Hoffman was arrested for donning a tallit and leading a group of women in loud prayer at the Kotel recently.

A presenter on our Jewish radio station criticised the arrest. A caller also expressed disdain and said this “put her off”. I wasn’t sure if it put her off Judaism or specifically Orthodox Judaism, etc.

The radio presenter continued to express outrage about the arrest and maltreatment of Hoffman and then she caught herself. Being a radio presenter maybe she thought she had to at least open it to both sides of opinion.

So she began: “But maybe you don’t think it was wrong to arrest Anat Hoffman. Maybe you were brought up with certain beliefs and if they are challenged then...” And I thought:”Is this how Orthodox people are being presented? Painted with one broad brushstroke? That we all agree?”

As an Orthodox Jewish woman I had to respond. So I called in and stated that I disagreed with the arrest. I believe it was a mistake.

But I do have a gripe. The Torah has commandments for men and commandments for women. There are women who disregard the commandments for women and say: “I want one that the men have.”

A classic example of the “grass is greener on the other side”. They are not satisfied with their lot. So they don a tallit over a tank top.

It’s not as if they have done all the commandments for women and then conclude: “My soul is not fulfilled. I want more!”

Instead, they disregard the commandments for women and decide what they’d like to do instead.

So the presenter asked me: “But don’t you think people should worship in their own way?”

Now this can be a loaded question. Contemporary thinking might say: “Yes, of course we should all do what we want (in various arenas) and worship in our own way.”

So I took the focus away from a discussion about worshiping G-d. Let’s talk about our spouses. Let’s say we want to “connect” with our spouse and impress them with dinner.

So we set a nice tablecloth and light candles. And we really want a juicy hamburger. So that’s what we make. But our spouse is vegetarian. So at dinner, we are very excited to eat the hamburger by candle-light with our spouse. And our spouse, the “other”, who is vegetarian, looks at us like we’ve lost the plot.

They cannot partake. In fact, our efforts have probably insulted them because you should know your spouse is vegetarian. We have not accomplished the goal of the dinner, which was to “connect” with our spouse. There is a saying: Do unto others as you would have done to you. There is another saying: Do unto others as THEY would have done unto them.

Which is the higher goal? I believe the latter. And this applies to G-d also. He has given us a list of things that He’s asked us to do. These are ways to serve and connect to Him. To disregard them and to invent something on your own, is not an effort to “serve” or to “connect” with G-d. It’s an effort to serve oneself. And that is ego.

Michelle Engelberg
Johannesburg

NOT ALL OF RHODES JEWISH POPULATION DIED IN HOLOCAUST

I read with interest your article, “Jewish and Greek South Africans celebrate a shared past”, published in your October 19 edition.

I wish to point out that not the entire Jewish community of the island of Rhodes perished in the Holocaust as stated by historian Issac Habib. Some 54 members were saved by the Turkish consul of the island, Mehmet Ulkumen.

This included my granny Rachel Amato, my parents, Albert and Renata Amato and me. Also, there are still two direct descendants of that community that I can recall living in Rhodes, namely Elio and Rita Soriano.

I was unable to attend the meeting but would like to set the record straight.

Lina Kantor Amato
Cape Town

A HUGE BOUQUET FOR MONTESSORI AT THE GREAT PARK SHUL

My family and I spent 11 years in Boston, Massachusetts. For family reasons we decided to spend more time in South Africa this year. While in the country, I wanted to find a preschool for my child. I visited Montessori at the Great Park Shul and quickly had my heart set on the cute little school.

There are roughly 35 preschools in the Massachusetts town where we live. I did my research and visited many of the preschools in the US, but very few even came close to the Montessori preschool at Great Park.

I realised there was genuine love and kindness shown towards all the little ones, that far exceeded any reasonable expectations that parents may have of care given by a school. Michelle Gronemann allowed me to stay until my daughter settled.

During that time, I appreciated the high standard of general education, including learning letters at a play school level. I was amazed by the variety in knowledge across different subjects shared with the little ones.

As an industrial psychologist, I was impressed by the educational toys, IQ building games and the individual attention given to each learner, tailored to his or her unique set of interests and abilities. I enjoyed the happy introduction to a Jewish education which is provided with appropriate creative activities.

I liked the good pricing and that maximising profit was not a priority. Each day I loved being surprised by the new ideas reflected in the creative artwork my daughter brought home.

We needed to return to the US and could not find the level of love, warmth, individual attention and flexibility in academic standards and activities, designed around my daughter’s level of intellectual development at any pre-school or nursery school.

I would like to take this opportunity to give Michelle and Mary a big thank you for bringing a totally happy and worthwhile school experience to our lives.

Fayona Meyerovitz
Boston, USA

LITHUANIAN CITIZENSHIP NOW ALSO AVAILABLE VIA CONSULAR MISSION IN JOHANNESBURG

I am forwarding correspondence from the Lithuanian Embassy in Israel; I am currently in the process of applying for citizenship.

At the moment citizenship applications can only be made where there is an embassy - the best options are Israel, Lithuania or London

As per the letter, for the first time this service will be offered in Johannesburg, from November 26 -30.

Since the principal requirement to apply, is proof of Lithuanian citizenship of a parent or grandparent, I am sure many people in our community qualify and would like to take advantage of this opportunity to get Lithuanian passports.

I think your readers would be interested in this information

The announcement regarding the arrival of the Consular Mission to South Africa says: “In order to schedule an appointment, please contact the Lithuanian Embassy in Israel at +972 3 6958 685 before November 5, 2012.”

It is signed by Evelina Slavinskaitė, LR ambasada Izraelio Valstybėje / Embassy of Lithuania to the State of Israel, Shaul Hamelech 8, Tel Aviv 64733 Israel, tel. +972 3 6958685, fax +972 3 6958691.

Mike Esra
Johannesburg

MAYBE IT IS DION FRANSMAN WHO HAS MISSED THE MARK...

I refer to the letter by Dion Fransman (Jewish Report October 26) about the play, “From the Mouths of Babes”, on at the Market Theatre in Johannesburg. Fransman contends that the play “totally misses the mark’.

I think Dion has “missed the mark”, not “totally”, but he has not given credit where credit is due. Having read his unfair criticism of the play, my husband and I were particularly aware of the possibility of any “distasteful and unnecessary” aspects to this well-rehearsed rendition of “story-telling with pure a cappella singing by three very talented young Jewish artists with no embellishments”.

Perhaps Dion was oversensitive to the use of “crude and vulgar” language. It was more a comment on pronunciation of language. As fairly observant Jews, we enjoyed the clarity of the girls’ voices of the Jewish songs and in no way were we embarrassed by the non-Jewish references. Yes, our audience was also very mixed and we felt from the applause, most people enjoyed the show and took it in the spirit of the intention of the director, Malcom Purkey. In his words: “The play is about Jewish identity in South Africa, in particular the girls’ identity.”

The arts need support. Anybody reviewing a show like this needs to see it in a more mature light.

Carol Schwab
Johannesburg

IT IS A JEWISH TENET TO FEED AND CARE FOR STRANGERS IN OUR MIDST

I have mulled over Dr Ivor Blumenthal’s article in the Jewish Report of October 12 (on dispensing of Jewish Charity contributions) and the first thing that comes to mind is what was his motivation in writing this article?

Was it to stir up some debate? Was it well thought through or did he write it on the spur of the moment? Then I thought perhaps Ivor has been sitting in his SETA tower for too long and is not up to scratch with what is happening on the ground in the Jewish NGO communities.

I would like to take Ivor on a tour of Alexandra township and show him some of the services and skills training programmes that the UJW are and have been doing for many years together with the huge Lutheran congregation community there.

These people don’t just like my fellow hard working women colleagues, they absolutely love us! If what these women do in Alex is called “reparations”, then, so be it!

I would not shie away from that word because we do need to repair our relationships with our black South African population and those of us who lived through those ghastly 48 years of Nationalist rule do need to show some remorse. How many gave a hoot as to how and where people lived and worked in those awful days?

The above is just one of the many services that the UJW supervises and administers and then there are those other worthy activities that they support in the Jewish community. We do understand that we need to look after our own, but at the same time not to forget that there are hundreds - no, thousands of others - who are also in need.

Is it not a well-known Jewish tenet that we must feed and take care of the stranger in our midst and who knocks at our door?

I refuse to believe that Jews are not liked and are actually hated by the general population. If there are exceptions among us who have not acted in a decent or ethical manner and have incurred this hatred through their actions, then of course there would be animosity and it would be deserved.

This letter is an open invitation to Blumenthal and any other interested person or anyone who believes Ivor, that there is this hatred in the black population towards us Jews, to call me or anyone of my UJW colleagues. We’ll take him on a tour of our activities and then ask him to make up his mind as to whether we are busy with “reparations” or whether we are doing upliftment (work) and empowering those who are more disadvantaged than ourselves.

Ray Wolder
Corlett Gardens
Johannesburg

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

United Jewish face presented against universal challenges

Members of the community were understandably outraged to see a large anti-Israel propaganda billboard placed in a “can’t-miss” position on the Empire Road off-ramp near Wits University and the Board was soon inundated with complaints about it.

This particular poster, which is being rolled out around the country by local anti-Israel activists, has already appeared in various localities in Pretoria and Johannesburg. Fortunately, it transpired that the senior management of the relevant PR company concerned, had not been aware beforehand of the nature of this “advertisement”.

On being approached by Fairplay SA, the CEO expressed his most “serious and sincere apologies” to the Jewish community and ensured that immediate steps were taken to remove it. As he told Fairplay SA Chairman Ben Swartz, his company would never, in the normal course of company practice, have placed a billboard that carried so offensive a message. As discussed in previous columns, Fairplay SA is a co-ordinating body that harnesses available resources within the Jewish community to oppose anti-Israel boycott action. The SAZF and Board took the lead in setting up the body, and are among its most important constituent organisations.

Kol Hakavod to Ben Swartz and Shira Goldblum for their excellent work in dealing with this matter. It may prove to be only a temporary reprieve, but we can take heart from this small victory in our ongoing fight against the delegitimisation of Israel. There will be many further such issues to deal with, but at least we have seen that through constant vigilance and persistence, we can make a difference.

SA Jewry is not alone in having to operate within an increasingly hostile environment. Our UK counterparts, particularly in academia, have been engaged in



Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

an extended battle against radical anti-Israel prejudice that in turn has inevitably created a hostile environment against Jews in general. Last week, our National Director Wendy Kahn was in London to participate in what could prove to be a landmark court case on this issue. The case revolves around a suit brought by Ronnie Fraser, a Jewish academic, against the University and College Union on the grounds that the latter’s obsessive and negative focus on Israel had resulted in creating an “intimidating, hostile, degrading humiliating” environment for Jewish members.

Part of the evidence for this is that in 2009 the UCU invited Cosatu spokesman Bongani Masuku to participate in an event calling for a boycott of Israeli academics, despite knowing

that a complaint of anti-Jewish hate speech lodged by the SAJBD was pending with the SA Human Rights Commission. Even when the SAHRC upheld our complaint, the UCU went ahead with the invitation, and subsequently declined to condemn Masuku’s anti-Semitic and threatening statements.

On Monday, Wendy presented her “Witness Statement” to the court, presenting in detail how the Masuku affair unfolded. Afterwards, she successfully withstood some sharp challenges from UCU’s defence counsel, inter alia reiterating that it was unacceptable to use the Israeli situation as an excuse for hate speech and threats against fellow South Africans.

The whole process of finalising our document and preparing to give evidence, working closely throughout with Fraser’s legal team, was a useful learning experience. It was also another encouraging example of how Jewish organisations across the world can pool their respective experiences and skills and work harmoniously together in confronting the challenges facing the Jewish people today.

World News in Brief

US, ISRAELI OFFICIALS TALK CYBER-PROTECTION OF MARKETS

WASHINGTON – Top Israeli and US government officials last week Wednesday discussed protecting financial markets from cyber threats. The officials, convening at the US State Department for the US-Israel Joint Economic Development Group meeting, discussed “macroeconomic trends and policy challenges”, a State Department statement said.

“The two sides exchanged views on global, US, and Israeli economic policies and performance, agreed to expand co-operation on addressing cyber threats to economic and financial infrastructure, and discussed the economic challenges and

opportunities posed by Israel’s recent discoveries of significant off-shore gas reserves,” according to the State Department.

Leading the Israeli delegation was Doron Cohen, who directs the Finance Ministry. The American side was co-chaired by Daniel Hormats, the undersecretary of state for economic growth, and Charles Collins, the assistant Treasury secretary for international finance.

The meeting coincided with a signing ceremony in which the United States extended nearly \$4 billion in loan guarantees to Israel through 2016. (JTA)

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KDS art exhibition draws in the crowds

VIVIENNE WEINER
PHOTOGRAPHS: ARNALDO MANDEL

King David Sandton Primary School showcased its annual art exhibition at the Morningside Shopping Centre, last week Wednesday.

The opening was a cultural experience in itself – visual art, music and social interaction.

This extravaganza included a variety of media, both 2D and 3D, from bold talented learners, ranging from grade R to grade 7. The art making process was energised and inspired by the principles in Stephen R Covey’s “The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People”.

The children’s work was on public display and they lived the life of a professional artist for a week. They felt acknowledged, recognised and validated.



Zak and Jayden Levy; Daniel Rakusin; and Eli Worms.



Zachary Lipworth; Leo Mayers; Zak Rachelson; Levi Nathan; Ben Cohen; and Tallin Kaplan.



Shayna Goss and Dani Ogus.

TA Primary sports meet had them jumping and shouting

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH
BY CHANI ZWICK

Torah Academy Primary School held its ever-popular annual sports day last week Thursday. Torah House (vs Mitzvah) was the overall winner of the events.

Junior victrix ludorum Shayna Smith; Tanya Jayes (sports administrator); and senior victrix ludorum Liron Cohen.



Torah pasuk personifies TA matric girls’ farewell

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Torah Academy Girls’ High matrics held their farewell last week Thursday at the Simon Kuper Hall, attended by parents and teachers.

The theme was based on a Torah pasuk “A drop from a well-spring purifies”.

Pictured are, back: Sara Tauby; Tali Levy; Devorah Friedman; Liora Glassman; and Elisheva Masinter. Front: Shifra Bacher; Golda Segal; Yael Krinkin; and Soshe Lewin.

Photo: Joffie Berkowitz



It was truly ‘for young and old’

STACY FLEISHMAN

King David Primary School last week held its annual stage production, aptly named “For Young and Old”.



Photos: Carla Lipschitz



It was a delightful sing-along, sung by each class with a song of their choice. Congratulations to Mr CJ Lottering, teachers and children in producing a wonderful concert in a very short time.

Left: Joshua Rosenthal. Far left: Daniella Steiner and Dean Promnick.

Treats and tips for domestic helpers

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The PTA of the Yeshiva Pre-Primary School last week held its annual “Maids’ Afternoon”. Eighty women attended and were treated to a chocolate cake demonstration, a talk on finance as well as information on drawing up a will.

Tea was enjoyed by all and after an afternoon specially designed for these women, they went home with a goodie bag and recipe - and many smiles on happy faces.

Photo supplied.



Lisa Zimmerman the convener of the function, welcoming a few of the domestic guests.

Practical approach to Parshat Noach

RACHEL PELS



Torah Academy Nursery School children Dovid Medalie; Menni Schochet; Gedalia Kievman; and Yossi Klass, feeding a goat. To bring the story of Parshat Noach to life, they were treated to a mini-farmyard and all enjoyed touching and feeding the animals.

The week the world changed

Last Thursday, the world changed - once again.

Microsoft’s launch of Windows 8 was the obvious, expected and long-planned main event. Not quite as expected or planned, Microsoft’s nemesis, Apple, announced its first disappointing financial results in many years.

The irony of this turning of the tables was that, just two days earlier, Apple had made its own biggest product announcement in its history. It had launched the new iPad mini 7.9” tablet, along with a fourth generation iPad, and new versions of its iconic iMac computer, MacBook Pro laptop and Mac mini computer.

Such an extensive upgrade of its range, the launch of a new format and arrival of the iPad 4 barely six months after the previous version, represented a show of force by Apple. Coming - not coincidentally - two days before the launch of Windows 8, it sent a message that Apple was able to go large any time it wanted, and that it had not lost its touch for producing deeply desirable products.

At the same time, however, it revealed chinks in its armour. Crucially, the new 7.9” iPad mini represented the first major new product from Apple in more than a decade that did not lead the market. It was a response to the massive inroads made into its tablet market share by 7” tablets, in particular Amazon’s Kindle Fire.

Before he passed away, former Apple CEO Steve Jobs had insisted Apple would never make a device in that format. But, just sometimes, market forces speak louder

than single-minded vision.

The bigger surprise, however, was the pricing of the iPad mini. Given the \$249 tag on the Kindle Fire and other competitors, it was assumed the mini would cost the same - and clean up the market. Instead, it was launched at \$330 - prompting an instant decline in the Apple share price. Then, on Thursday night, Apple announced quarterly financial results that disappointed the market - a rare occurrence.

Coming as it did even as Microsoft was unveiling a vast range of machines running Windows 8, it marked the beginning of a new era in computing.

At the South African launch in Johannesburg, one large wall was lined with device after device running Windows 8 in different formats: large and small computers, large and small laptops, tablets, and hybrid devices that can double as a laptop and a tablet.

One device in particular attracted special attention: the Samsung Windows Ativ 10.1” tablet. Aside from being the first Windows tablet from the brand that had presented Apple with its only serious competition in the 10” tablet format, Samsung had previously been the main producer of tablets running Google’s Android operating system.

The device itself was only half the story. It came with a startling announcement: In South Africa, it would initially only be sold by Standard Bank to its customers, at a 16 per cent discount to its R8 000 price tag.

Microsoft also announced that Standard’s banking app - which had appeared on

smartphones and tablets a full year after FNB’s entry into the apps space - would be the first South African banking app on Windows 8.

If the app was the first step in catching up, the Samsung Ativ represents the second phase in Standard Bank’s efforts. FNB has sold more than 100 000 devices - tablets and smartphones - through offering attractive discounts only to customers. As a customer acquisition exercise among up-and-coming wage earners, it was groundbreaking.

The exclusive deal with Samsung, for the first time, gives Standard Bank a small edge in what will initially be a small niche of the market. It is believed to have pre-ordered 5 000 of the devices.

The further significance of the device is that it is in effect a stand-in for the Surface, Microsoft’s own tablet that represents its first direct entry into the computer hardware market. The Surface is only sold through Microsoft branded stores, of which close to 50 have been rolled out in North America. Neither the stores nor the devices are expected in South Africa within in the next year.

While the Surface was conspicuous by its absence at the launch, close to 45 other devices were on display

“That is the kind of choice we are giving,” said Mteto Nyati, country head of Micosoft South Africa in an interview. “You will have the same operating system but, if you want something completely different from a hardware perspective, you



GOLDSTUCK ON GADGETS
Arthur Goldstuck

will have something completely different.”

In a rare comment on the competition, Nyati acknowledged that the timing and nature of the Apple event was significant.

“In the past they would never have considered a Microsoft launch and then make a decision around that on timing their own event. What we are beginning to see is that Microsoft is becoming more relevant in the consumer space, our products are now much more competitive, and we have carved a new space.”

Of course, Apple is not going away. Its devices remain iconic and market leaders. The Core Group in South Africa has negotiated pricing that allows it to sell the devices at near-equivalent US prices. That tends to leave the rival products overpriced.

Clearly, Microsoft and its partners will need to pay careful attention to pricing. Meanwhile, they are meeting users’ need for products that can be used for both work and play, in the office and on the road.

Windows 8 is Microsoft’s comeback, and its timing could not have been better.

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

Community Briefs



SUCCOT AT SANDRINGHAM GARDENS

Sandringham Gardens loves Succot: it’s a chance for the residents to show off their succah, famous for being one of Johannesburg’s most beautiful; and the winner of many competitions. This year, on October 5, during Chol Hamoed, Sandringham Gardens held a lunch and hosted Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein who addressed the residents. He emphasised that their seniority and wisdom were “characteristics that we all value”. Succot, he said, was a time of reflection and life must be viewed similarly. Both of Rabbi Goldstein’s bobbas, Razelle Goldstein and Rochie Weitzman, reside at Golden Acres and attended this event. – CELESTE EVERITT

DAILY ENGLISH DAF YOMI PROGRAMME A WORLD FIRST

Chai FM presents a world first: A daily English Daf Yomi programme. The “Daily Daf” is presented by Ohr Somayach’s Rabbi Ari Taback, Mondays to Thursdays at 20:00. The concept of the Daf Yomi, first introduced by Rabbi Meyer Shapiro in 1923, at the First World Congress of Agudat Israel, involves the learning of a page of the Gemara per day so that the entire Talmud is completed in a cycle of seven and a half years. This learning has unified Jews all over the world, because it makes Torah learning accessible to those who are not Torah scholars.

JWBS BARNYARD FUNDRAISER HELPS COMMUNITY’S NEEDY

The Jewish Women’s Benevolent Society held a fundraiser at the Barnyard Theatre, Rivonia last week, which featured a show called Big Top Rock, as well as moving speech by guest speaker, Dr Richard Friedland, who explained how he had been assisted by the JWBS’s education fund to graduate as a veterinary surgeon. He later switched to medicine. The funds raised on the evening will help the JWBS reach its goals of helping the community’s needy. The fundraiser was convened by young members of the JWBS. If you would like to become a member of the JWBS, call (011) 485-5232 or jwbs@icon.co.za. – GLORIA PRICE.

DL LINK SPINATHON A HUGE FUNDRAISING SUCCESS

The DL Link is an organisation seeking to assist victims of cancer and their families as they battle through the harrowing process of the illness and its related treatments. Funding is a vital component to the successful running of any organisation and this past Sunday saw the first DL Link spinathon come to fruition at Old Edwardians in Houghton; hundreds of participants galvanised together to show their solidarity. Event coordinators Tamsyn Gordon and Tammy Goodman were delighted at the very positive turnout and were filled with praise for the participants who came out in droves to support the good cause. – SHIRA DRUION

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Community Briefs

WUJP CONDEMNS ARREST OF ANAT HOFFMAN FOR PRAYING AT WESTERN WALL

SA's Union of Progressive Jewry has added its voice to the World Union for Progressive Judaism against the treatment by the Jerusalem police of Anat Hoffman, director of Women of the Wall and executive director of the Israel Religious Action Centre, arrested last week while praying at the Western Wall. Steve Lurie, SAUPJ chairman, signed the statement on behalf of SA Progressive Jewry. The WUPJ said "It is anathema to everything the Jews hold sacred that prayers of any Jew should be silenced. The ultra-Orthodox hegemony overseeing holy sites must be overturned; the sites are sacred to all Jews.

Jews Congratulate Lutheran Church in Hillbrow's 100 Years

Recently, the German Lutheran Church in Hillbrow celebrated its centenary. Reeve Forman brought a celebratory message on behalf of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies. Built in 1912, the church was made possible, not only by its local congregants but by German Jewish immigrants who helped their German brethren with financial support and helped to establish a trust that financed the church. Key members of the Union of Jewish Women attended the event with their chairman, Lynne Raphaely; part of the UJW's current initiatives include a joint project with the Lutheran Church in Alexandra to uplift those in need.



Eric Itskin, Deputy Director Arts, Culture & Heritage, City of Johannesburg; Reeve Forman SAJBD; Lynne Raphaely; Lilian Isaacs; and Lucelle Salomon UJW; Martine Wurm-Dittkrist (German Embassy); Pastor Gertrude Tonsig Lutheran Church; and Arleen Samuels UJW.

BRAD TYACK TO DRIVE CHAI FM'S SUNDAY SHUFFLE



Recently, 101.9 Chai FM appointed a new host for their Sunday Shuffle music show, which plays music from the '60s to the "noughties", on Sunday afternoons between mid-day and 15:00. Brad Tyack (pictured), according to a media statement, "intends to make sure the Sunday Shuffle appeals to everyone, which means that no music request is out of bounds." An avid seeker of adventure and extreme sports in his free time, Tyack can be SMSed with song requests (SMSes charged at R1,50) on 34519. Chai FM, which celebrates its fourth birthday this month, may also be accessed via live audiostreaming: www.chaifm.com. - RONEL ZEFF

WIZO TZABAR TURNS 10 IN STYLE

WIZO Tzabar, falling under the umbrella of the worldwide fundraising NGO WIZO, is a Hebrew speaking group which recently celebrated its first decade of existence. The event was MCed by Harry Sideropoulos and featured performances by "Music Affair", a quartet of women singers. The event also featured the screening of a short film, which recounted all WIZO-Tzabar's Purim parties, Yom Ha'atzmaut parties, Hebrew sing-a-longs, trips, talks and other activities over the years. A kind of prickly pear, the Tzabar is also the name of the organisation, a colloquial derivation of the term "Sabra", which means a person born in Israel. - NAOMI DINUR



Graciela Skudicky (Tzabar leader); Elizcia Bezuidenhout and Lizelle de Klerk (Music Affair members); Naomi Dinur (WIZO executive); Sima Zadok (Tzabar); and Richelle Grant and Aliza Knafo (Music Affair members).

Controversial 'right-winger' Frank Startz, a gentle, tolerant man

DAVID SAKS

The late Frank Startz's reputation as a stormy petrel of South African Jewry, was belied by his gentle and essentially tolerant and empathetic nature. While regarded at one time as a rightwing Jewish extremist because of his championing of the controversial Rabbi Meyer Kahane and his involvement in a local chapter of the Jewish Defence League (known as Kach South Africa), he was in reality broadminded and fully committed to dialogue with those with whom he disagreed. Indeed, he devoted much time to opposing what he saw as a lack of democracy and consultation within the established Jewish communal structures, including that of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies and SA Zionist Federation. Startz, who passed away in Johannesburg last week at the age of 76, was a lifelong campaigner against anti-Semitism, both in a private capacity and as "senior spokesman" of Kach SA.

Despite its sinister reputation, Kach SA operated essentially as a lobby group and unlike its overseas counterparts, was never associated with any act of vigilante violence. It was primarily active during the 1990s and Startz conducted a voluminous correspondence on its behalf with a range of politicians, media figures and Jewish communal leaders. The organisation was reconstituted in 1991 for what it perceived as a failure by the SAZF and SAJBD to oppose the forthcoming visit of Yasser Arafat. The organisation's most ill-considered act was probably to complain to Crawford College about an anti-Israel essay posted on a notice board by one of its Muslim pupils. The school responded by suspending the learner, thereby engendering a major controversy that eventually reached the SA Human Rights Commission. The learner was reinstated after the SAJBD met with the school. Startz was also much involved in opposing, unsuccessfully, the proposed compilation of a database for the Gauteng Jewish com-



munity on the grounds that the information might be used against the community if it fell into the wrong hands. On a number of occasions, he lodged formal complaints with the Broadcasting Complaints Commission (BCC) in response to offensive statements on radio talk shows. Several of these were upheld by the BCC, including a complaint against Radio 702's John Qwelane for referring to Kach SA a terrorist organisation. He also was a frequent contributor to the letters pages of the Jewish and general media. An accomplished abstract artist, Startz studied during the 1960s at the Johannesburg College of Art (now part of the University of Johannesburg) under George Boys, Sidney Goldblatt and Giuseppe Cattaneo. He exhibited professionally with a number of local and international art galleries and in 1978 was commissioned by the Israeli foreign ministry to create a body of work relating to the Holocaust. During the 1970s, he was also involved with such artists as Paul Stopforth in anti-apartheid art activism. In the last year of his life, Startz contributed articles on his friend and mentor, the artist Sidney Goldblatt, and on the photographer David Goldblatt, to the SAJBD's journal Jewish Affairs. At the time of his death, he was planning to write a history of Kach SA for the journal. He had previously donated all of the now defunct organisation's correspondence and other relevant documentation to the SAJBD archives. Startz is survived by his wife, Jackie, and two sisters.

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Today, Friday, (November 2)

- UZLC hosts Don Krausz, who will speak on “My Holocaust Experiences”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (November 4)

- RCHCC is screening a film version of The Royal Ballet’s “Romeo & Juliet”, with Carlos Acosta and Tamara Rojo. Introduction by Gail Dendy, dancer and author. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R60 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, e-mail, rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

- Sha’arei Torah presents the musical, “A Gift of Music”, adapted from the Sound of Music. Produced and directed by Helen Heldenmuth with musical direction by Jeanette Kuper. Women and girls only. Venue: King David Primary School Hall Bedford Street. Time: 14:30 and 19:00. Booking: (011) 887-0744.

- Second Innings hosts radio personality John Berks on “John Berks Remembers”. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Venue: Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact: Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

- Jaffa Old Aged Home in Pretoria’s “Morning Market”. Arts and crafts, books, jewellery, raffle bric-a-brac mini tombola, 2nd hand clothing, tea room. Time 09:00 - 12:00.

- Great Park Shul invites the community to the Show Day of the new Great Park Mikvah - Mikvah Ma’ayan Ganim - in memory of Gavriel and Rivka Holtzberg z”l. Time: 10:00 - 14:00. Official presentations: 10:15 - 10:30, followed by tours of the mikvah.

- WIZO SA invites you to its 34th Triennial Conference, “Facing the Future”. Tea and registration at 09:00. Guest of honour: World WIZO President Tova Ben Dov. Panel discussion with key participants on “Faces of Israel in the Media”, will be held at 11:30, followed by lunch and open sessions for the afternoon. Official opening at 18:30 by guest speaker Tony Leon on: “Jewish Gauchos and Nazi Hunters in Argentina”. Cost R125. Contact: Sandy: (011) 645-2548.

Monday (November 5)

- Sha’arei Torah presents the musical, “A

Gift of Music”, adapted from the Sound of Music. Produced and directed by Helen Heldenmuth with musical direction by Jeanette Kuper. Women and girls only. Venue: King David Primary School Hall Bedford Street. Time: 19:00. Booking: (011) 887-0744.

- UJW is hosting Prof Kevin Behrens, head: PhD Programme in Bioethics & Health Law, Wits, on “Ethics of Organ Transplants”. Time: 09:30. Contact: (011) 648-1053, fax 086 273-3044. Donation: R20.

Tuesday (November 6)

- UJW is hosting Arlene Bernstein, former head of LifeLine, who will lead a “Group Discussion”. Come along and bring a friend. Time: 09:30. Contact: (011) 648-1053, fax 086 273-3044. Donation: R20.

Wednesday (November 7)

- RCHCC screens the Academy Award nominee “In Darkness”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R60 (incl refreshments). Bookings: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378. E-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, or www.greatpark.co.za

- UJW CT’s Constantia Group is hosting a talk on drug awareness. Tickets: R80. Enquiries: J Poswell 083-446-2535.

- WIZO Cyrildene invites you to their “Card Day” at Beyachad, featuring bridge, kaluki, rummy and Scrabble. There will be morning and afternoon sessions from 09:00 - 12:30 and 13:45 - 17:00. Cost R80 and optional raffle tickets R10. Tea will be served. Contact: Crystal, 083-376-5999.

Thursday (November 8)

- RCHCC is hosting the third in the series on memory, a presentation by MemoryMakers Adrienne Scott and Dee Pinto, on “Developing Reserve Brain Capacity at Any Age Helps to Prevent Memory Loss in Later Years”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R60 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378, or e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net, or www.greatpark.co.za

Friday (November 9)

- UZLC hosts Amanda Porter as its guest speaker. Her topic is: “9 Lessons I learnt Climbing Kili”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Contact: Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127- 9421.

Community Briefs

CYRILDENE WINS SHUL SUCCAHS COMPETITION

Last Wednesday, the Federation of Synagogues Women’s Guilds under its president Devorah Nates, hosted its annual prize-giving for Johannesburg’s succahs and kosher posters, a competition for grade 6 learners. Featuring ORT SA’s Robyn Smookler as guest speaker, the event celebrated Cyrildene in first place for shul succahs; Oxford and Sandton tied second and Greenside came third. For institutional succahs, Our Parents Home came first; Arcadia, second; and Selwyn Segal and Sandringham Gardens tied third. Kosher poster winners were Gina Izerel (King David Sandton) and Jonty Segal (KDVP) for 2-D posters, and Rachel Edelstein and Ryan Van Eeghem (KDVP) for 3-D posters.

ANTI-ISRAEL BILLBOARD REMOVED

Last Friday, a billboard was erected on the Empire Road off-ramp from the M1 North, with a message condemning Israel as an illegal occupier of Palestine. Ben Swartz of Fairplay SA, a Jewish communal collaboration between the SAZF and the SAJBD, with a mandate to protect Israel against efforts to delegitimise the country in SA, contacted the owners of the billboard site; their error was immediately acknowledged. Within six working hours, the billboard was removed. Said Swartz: “Although this type of occurrence will not be the last such issue we have to deal with, all similar issues are being closely monitored.”



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Abuse facilitators are as bad as perpetrators



ROCKING THE BOAT
Jack Milner

For most of us, sport is a wonderful experience. Whether you participate at any level or whether you are just an enthusiastic armchair viewer – and critic – for many of us there is nothing better than an evenly matched contest in which both protagonists, whether it is two teams or two individuals, produce a high level of skill matched with an equal portion of integrity.

Last Saturday’s Currie Cup final fell into that category. Only the most hardened of Sharks supporters would not have enjoyed the rivalry. The match was alive and in the balance right until the final whistle, and the players from both teams put their bodies on the line in an attempt to attain the coveted Cup.

As a Lions supporter I was not particularly concerned who actually won the match, although, because I was sitting in a room full of Sharks fanatics, I did have a slight bias towards the boys in blue. Okay, so I did it just to be davkah.

But as we have seen with the recent doping saga, sport, alas, has its dark side. Sadly, it gets even murkier when sexual abuse is involved.

There have been a number of cases where coaches have crossed that line and got involved with the youngsters they are training. Tennis has had its share in recent years

with Australian Gavin Hopper, a coach to the likes of Aaron Krickstein, Monica Seles and Amanda Coetzer, spending 27 months in jail for sex offences committed while he was a sports teacher at Wesley College in 1985.

Recently there has been a move to have former South African tennis great Bob Hewitt indicted over sex abuse allegations. This has turned into an international story with some of the greats in the game attempting to at least have Hewitt’s name expunged from the Tennis Hall of Fame.

There are cases where others get tainted over abuse and there is just a grey area of responsibility.

The American college fraternity was hit with a massive sex abuse case involving former Penn State football co-ordinator, Jerry Sandusky. Sandusky was charged in November 2011 with 40 counts of alleged sexual abuse of minors.

Penn State athletic director Timothy Curley and university Senior Vice President Gary Schultz, were also indicted for perjuring themselves and not reporting a 2001 incident in which a then graduate assistant and later assistant coach, Mike McQueary, said he witnessed Sandusky abusing a child on Penn State property.

For the record, Sandusky is not Jewish. However, also tainted in the affair was Graham Spanier (pictured) who served as president of the Pennsylvania State University from September 1995 to November 2011. It all came to an end just four days after Sandusky was indicted.

Spanier is an interesting figure. He is not only Jewish, but was born in Cape Town in



Photo supplied

1948 before his family emigrated to Chicago.

He was forced to resign from his position at Penn State following criticism of his reaction to the sex abuse scandal. An investigation later determined that Spanier, along with football coach Joe Paterno, Curley and Schultz had enabled sex abuse by former coach Sandusky, by not reporting the abuse to the relevant authorities.

Spanier issued a statement the day the charges came to light in which he said Curley and Schultz had his “complete confidence” and that they “operate at the highest levels of honesty”. Spanier was criticised for expressing support for the two and failing to express any concern for Sandusky’s alleged victims.

A group of Penn State students created the Facebook page “Fire Graham Spanier”. An online petition at www.change.org calling for Spanier to be given the boot, garnered over 1 700 signatures in just four days.

Spanier “resigned” with immediate effect and although he has been tainted by the affair, he was perhaps fortunate not to end up behind bars.

Looking at some of the other facts, it is clear that Spanier was involved in a cover-up. A Phoenix private investigator, Paul McLaughlin, came forward in the wake of the Sandusky revelations. He charged that in the early 2000s Spanier and others at Penn State had rebuffed his efforts to report his own sexual abuse.

McLaughlin contended he was sexually abused as an 11-year-old in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He named, among others, PSU education professor John Neisworth.

McLaughlin secretly taped a telephone conversation with Neisworth which contains a purported confession. He said Spanier responded :”Don’t bother”, when McLaughlin offered to send him the tape.

It is quite clear that Spanier turned a blind eye to the whole affair. He may have believed in his staff members, but he also had a responsibility to investigate. It is sad how many institutions would rather turn a blind eye and allow abuse to go on, rather than deal with the scandal an institution would face.

Incidents like these are totally unacceptable and badly damage the image of sport. Those who allow abuse to take place, are just as guilty as the perpetrator and should not be allowed to walk free.



Ajax Amsterdam’s Niklas Moisander (L) fights for the ball with Real Madrid’s Kaka during their Champions League Group D soccer match at the Amsterdam Arena stadium October 3.

Dutch soccer director vows to punish anti-Jewish chanters

THE HAGUE - The director of a soccer team from the Dutch city of Utrecht has vowed to punish fans who sang anti-Semitic chants during a recent match between FC Utrecht and FC Groningen.

“Racism will not be tolerated in the stadium,” Wilco van Schaik, general director of FC Utrecht, told the Dutch news agency ANP. The report did not specify what steps would be taken against the fans.

The chants were made during in a sing-along led by Danny Temming, a Dutch folk singer, who has distanced himself from the anti-Jewish slogans during the match in Utrecht last week Friday. Temming told the daily AD that he “only began to sing the first lines” during the match, “and then the fans [of Utrecht’s soccer team] started to sing their own texts”.


Teun den Hartog, chairman of FC Utrecht’s fan club, said a flyer instructing fans how to behave, was passed out before the match, in an effort to educate fans on refraining from “racist slogans”. The leading soccer club ADO Den Haag, banned eight fans in April from entering the city’s soccer stadium for five to 10 years, following protests by the Hague-based watchdog group CIDI and court instructions. The fans were filmed shouting “Hamas, Jews to the gas” during a match with the Amsterdam soccer club Ajax.


Dutch soccer fans often refer to players and supporters of Ajax as “Jews” at matches. Ajax supporters often wave Israeli flags, symbolism that has become associated with the soccer club. (JTA)

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