



Edinburgh
Fest's best,
'Rosa' speaks
to us (page
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South african Jewish Report

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Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Three Voices rocked Montecasino

“The whole place was rocking,” said an ecstatic Rabbi Yossy Goldman of The Voices, a concert organised earlier this week at Teatro, Montecasino, by the Sydenham Highlands North Shul, featuring Israel’s first “haredi heartthrob” Gad Elbaz in collaboration with Minnesota-born Benny Friedman. “Johannesburg has never seen anything like it before.” Clearly Elbaz’s promise on the eve of the concert that it would be electric, was not an idle one. Pictured are Elbaz, Sydenham Shul’s chazzan Yudi Cohen and Friedman.

Chief Rabbi’s Shabbos Project put a spring in community’s step

“When people are invited to an event, they go as passive passengers,” he says. “This event created active partners - even leaders - and led to spontaneous positive energy.”

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Fransman feels the heat of his anti-Semitic rants

Last week Marius Fransman’s latest statements hit a nerve in fellow-ANC MP Ben Turok. “Primarily it was because I detest anti-Semitism,” Turok said of why he had faced off with Fransman.

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Stay healthy, be beautiful: see our Health and Beauty supplement



9-11

SAKS: SA Jewry bucking the worldwide trend

It has not been a case of the older generations... but of the younger generations forging ahead while also raising the levels of their parents’ and grandparents’ involvement.

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To attend Limmud or not; that’s the UK question

One of the Rabonim urged “any Jew whose heart has been touched by the fear of G-d”, to stay clear of December’s Limmud.

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Who is a hero?



Parshat Chayei Sarah

Rabbi Shmuel Kagan
Or Zarua,
Mizrachi Young Adults

Someone who is brave, committed, makes a tremendous contribution to the community? These are characteristics of a hero and this is what we have read about in the last two sedras when we encounter Avraham our forefather.

The tumultuous journey towards the Land of Israel we heard about in Lech Lecha, the existential struggle to bear children with his wife Sarah, Avraham’s attempted salvation of the cities of Sdom and Gemorah, and the climax of the saga taking place in Parshat Vayera has the flames consuming the ram on top of Mount Moriah, while Yitzchak stands with his father thinking “this could have been me”

The Akeidat Yitzchak where Avraham showed his courageous and trusting nature by binding his son to an alter at G-d’s request, would have been a fitting final scene in the life of our hero, Avraham!

Nevertheless, the story does not end there. Our last portrait of Avraham is of a man eulogising his beloved wife while burying her on a plot of negotiated land in the country he would bequeath to his children.

Avraham then sets to the “mundane” task of finding a wife for his son and then is occupied with marrying again and starting a new family. In this week’s sedra of Chayei Sarah, we see Avraham as the family man. He retires from his life as a warrior, a prince and a revolutionary. He ends his eventful tenure tending to his home, rather than tending to his “flock”.

The community is in great need of heroes - those who are willing to swim against the current and stand up for and contribute to something bigger than themselves and

further reaching than their families. People often argue that they don’t have time, but we need to share our time between ourselves and others.

Nonetheless, our families need heroes as well - parents who will make time for their children and children who will honour and serve their parents. This form of mundane heroism is often more difficult than the first, as our names are not etched into brass plaques or honoured at banquets.

Dads don’t make much profit from educating their kids and moms don’t get much fame from cleaning up after their toddlers.

Avraham is both the father of many nations and the aba of a family. It is interesting that the Torah ends off its description of the founder of the Jewish people and the propagator of monotheism and morality, the quintessential iconoclast, as a man involved in the mundane business of allotting inheritance.

The Torah is teaching us we need to have balance. We must always extend our circle of

influence while not forgetting about the core. We must find meaning in the ordinary and envision great things behind the small.

How can we do so much for others, and treat them with generosity and charm, while we are inpatient and cruel in the privacy of our home?

Pirkei Avot (Chapter 1:14) summarised it as such: “If I won’t be there for me (and my family) who will be? And if I am only for myself what am I?” That is a true hero and that was Avraham our forefather!

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Chayei Sarah		
October 25/ 21 Cheshvan		
October 26 / 22 Cheshvan		
18:02	18:52	Johannesburg
18:15	19:44	Cape Town
17:54	18:46	Durban
18:13	19:04	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:15	Port Elizabeth
18:11	19:04	East London

Yom Rabin memorial: Unity doesn’t mean uniformity

DAVID SAKS

If there was an overriding message that came through at this year’s Yom Rabin memorial at Beyachad last week, to pay homage to slain Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, it was that unity does not have to mean uniformity.

Whereas previous such events have tended to emphasise Rabin’s role as a peacemaker, this time speakers focused more on confronting the legacy of hatred and division that had directly led to his assassination 18 years ago.

No matter how convinced one might be about the correctness of one’s beliefs, this never justified hating others for thinking otherwise, let alone killing them.

For Neil Daskal, chairman of the Zionist Youth Council and Bnei Akiva, true achdut (unity) was only achievable when everyone was involved in the debate and when people could agree to disagree.

Extremism of any kind could not be tolerated; ultimately, Jews had to focus on what united rather than on what divided them.

Violence was a red line, and Rabin’s assassination demonstrated what happened when that line was crossed, said Habonim-Dror Chair-

man Roxeanne Joseph. Prior to his death, inflammatory terms like “traitor” and “Nazi” had been hurled at him; Yigal Amir, his assassin, simply took things one step further.

The keynote speaker was Michael Freeman, newly-arrived Deputy Head of Mission, Embassy of Israel. He had been in Dublin at the time of the assassination, he recalled, and his first reaction on hearing the news was that an Arab had finally been able to get close enough to murder an Israeli prime minister. That the killer turned out to be a Jew and an Israeli citizen was especially difficult to come to terms with.

Democracy, he stressed, was more than about the right to vote. If one found oneself in the minority, it was about accepting the legitimacy of decisions made by the majority.

For those in the majority, it meant not just allowing other views to be aired, but listening to those views as well. It was always difficult to get the balance right, particularly in Israel.

Freeman observed how those present that evening were drawn from across the religious and political spectrum, yet were united in a common desire to work for what was best for Israel.

Regenesys celebrates Lubner

ROBYN SASSEN

The air was thick with excited expectation as the jam-packed auditorium at Sandton-based graduate business school Regenesys readied itself for the start of the first of its three annual graduations, last week Friday.

The ceremony celebrated the institution and lauded one of its trustees, Bertie Lubner, for the business successes he has achieved, his leadership qualities and the contribution he has made to socio-economic development.

CEO of Regenesys, Siege Brownlee, in opening the proceedings, said: “Regenesys started from an idea; 15 years and 95 000 graduates later, we are in 125 countries globally, including Mumbai in India and Lagos in Nigeria, our newest campuses.



Bertie Lubner, one of the trustees of Regenesys, receiving a special lifetime award from the institution’s founding director, Dr Marko Saravanja. Another of Regenesys’ founding directors, Penny Law, looks on.

She saluted the project’s founding directors, Penny Law, William Vivian and Dr Marko Saravanja.

Student upon student - 194 in all - came forward to be capped. With a shouted out “Go, Ma!” some praise songs and much ululating emanating from the audience, the environment, electric with joy, gave an understanding of the challenges these men and women have faced in reaching this point. Few are school leavers. Many are professionals returning for a second or third degree. All of them balance work with studying.

Morathoa Thoke, head of the SRC, who received her post-graduate diploma in public management, said: “Potential is within us. We’ve talked the talk and walked the walk and now we must be agents of change. Wisdom is the right application of knowledge.”

Dr Saravanja then made a special presentation to veteran businessman and philanthropist, Bertie Lubner. The audi-

ence stood in unison, as a deeply moved Lubner gathered his thoughts.

“When I look at all these beautiful faces... each of you has chosen to make a life of your own. What greater joy can one have.

“One thing I have learned is that it is empty and dangerous to try and have education without challenge, science without humanity, and commerce without morality.

“There is a world of difference between interest and commitment,” he spoke of how Regenesys posits change in the lives of so many young people, as he paid tribute to Dr Saravanja.

“Interest is something one does only when it is convenient. But commitment can change your life.

“May you be empowered for the rest of your days and may you also realise that it’s not only about what you have done for yourself, but what you can give back to society.”

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Fransman feels the heat of his anti-Semitic rants

ANT KATZ

The DA Western Cape MEC of Transport and Public Works, Robin Carlisle, has accused Marius Fransman, deputy minister of International Relations and Co-operation and Western Cape ANC leader, of lying about property ownership in the city. And the story continues to make headlines in the Cape.

The furore erupted last week after Fransman had told the Cape Town Press Club that 98 per cent of the properties the province and the City of Cape Town were renting in Cape Town, were owned by "the white community and, in particular, also people in the Jewish community".

This statement led to veteran ANC MP Ben Turok, who is co-chairman of the Parliamentary ethics committee, calling on ANC Secretary-General Gwede Mantashe, to take disciplinary steps against Fransman. “Today you talk about Jewish ownership, tomorrow it can be Greek ownership - or any other ethnic group for that matter,” Turok told Jewish Report.

But it was Carlisle who hit out most savagely at Fransman. "Not only are these statements 100 per cent wrong, but Mr Fransman knows they are wrong, as he either signed and/or dealt

with most of the leases himself.”

He disclosed there were eight buildings in central Cape Town that met Fransman's description. One was owned by a black Sharia compliant entity; two belonged to Cameroonian Moosa Baba; one to the Government Employees Pension Fund; one to JSE-listed Growthpoint Properties; two more to Ascension Properties, a black-managed and substantially black-owned JSE-listed company; and the final one belongs to the Benjamin Family Trust.

Carlisle challenged Fransman to a public debate, but as yet to no avail. A request by the Cape Times for Fransman to supply documents to support his argument, drew a blank. Fransman told the media he stood by his claim about white ownership regarding the province's leasing of land which, he said, "is based on facts".

Carlisle referred back to a February radio statement in which Fransman made another anti-Semitic statement which is presently before the SAHRC: “He knew what he was saying was untrue, just as he knew that his (February) accusations that the DA had taken building contracts... from Muslim businessmen and awarded them to Jewish businessmen, were also untrue.”

Fransman tried to quell the outrage about

his anti-Semitic comments last week by saying that he “unreservedly apologise for the perception created that I was singling out the Jewish community”.

After the February statement, which the SAJBD took to the SAHRC, Board President Zev Krengel, accused Fransman's of a disingenuous, half-hearted apology.

Fransman reneged on attending an HRC-arranged mediation meeting in June, saying that South African Jews were “nose picking”.

Last week Fransman's statements hit a nerve in fellow ANC-MP Turok, who has long since given up religion and makes clear that he is not a Zionist. "I detest anti-Semitism," Turok said of why he had faced off with Fransman.

Turok told Jewish Report that what Fransman said had motivated him to react, due in part to his own personal experience of anti-Semitism and his general distaste for any form of ethnic discrimination and labelling of people.

“My position is that I certainly have sensibilities to my anti-Semitic past,” Turok said that his parents had fled anti-Semitic pogroms in Ukraine only to find themselves in Latvia (where he and his two older brothers were born)



when it became the first fascist country in Europe and they were again targeted.

Even when the family emigrated to South Africa in the thirties, they faced anti-Semitism from Afrikaner nationalists, Turok, a former Treason Trialist, told Jewish Report.

Political analyst Daniel Silke said Fransman's comments might be his personal view and not that of the ANC, but it was "foolish for the ANC to play on existing religious tensions in the hope that it will improve its vote tally".

Carlisle said he wondered “whom Fransman most insults: the Muslim community, the Jewish community or the long-suffering ANC whom he purports to lead”.

To attend, or not attend Limmud, that's the UK question

ANT KATZ

Senior Jewish leaders in the UK have accused seven strictly Orthodox rabbis, led by the former head of the London Beth Din, of a “shocking failure of leadership” and “tactical power play” after they opposed new Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis’ stand on Limmud and urged a continued boycott and a stay-away from the organisation’s December conference.

Two weeks ago, South African-born Rabbi Mirvis did an about-turn on the views of his predecessor, Lord Jonathan Sacks, and announced he would be attending the upcoming Limmud conference.

Dayan Chanoch Ehrentreu, past head (and still a member) of the London Beth Din, and Rosh European Beth Din, was among seven signatories of the letter urging “any Jew whose heart has been touched by the fear of G-d”, to stay clear of December’s annual cross-communal educational event.

Just as in South Africa, thousands of participants of all ages and religious backgrounds attend the annual five-day Limmud conference, which boasts everything from Talmud study to art classes and jamming sessions to social opportunities.

The rabbis' letter came just weeks after Rabbi Mirvis announced his plans to present at the December event, breaking with the decision of his predecessor. No specific mention was, however, made of Rabbi Mirvis in the letter.

The UK Jewish Online News last weekend published a story on the issue, which they said “the entire community is talking about”, which included what they called a “stunning rebuke” by nearly 30 community leaders, politicians and philanthropists who said the Chief Rabbi’s presence “should be welcomed and not be the subject of misplaced and disrespectful criticism”.

The open letter - backed by Board of Deputies President Vivian Wineman, Jewish Leadership Council Chairman (formerly from Johannesburg) Mick Davis and several senior US figures - said their declaration that participants would not be viewed favourably by G-d, had the power to “cause great harm to our community”.

Since its inception as an inclusive, open space for Jewish learning for all South African Jews, Limmud SA has, “enjoyed the input and participation of many world-class international Orthodox rabbis”, national co-chairman, Brett Wilks told Jewish Report this week. Limmud SA has seen consistent growth in participation of Orthodox presenters, delegates and volunteers at their conferences, says Wilks.

The 30 UK community leaders said Rabbi Mirvis' presence at Limmud in December "should be welcomed and not be the subject of misplaced and disrespectful criticism", adding that the seven rabbis had "misrepresented" Limmud in suggesting it "espouses the ethos of pluralism... the upshot of this is no one is deemed to be wrong".

Limmud, said the 30 to the seven, “is a marketplace that attracts massive levels of participation from across our community”.

Seeking to dissuade Orthodox rabbis and others from participating, they said, was a “failure of leadership” and would leave many Orthodox participants “bereft of rabbinic input”. Wilks says Limmud SA “welcomes this

Limmud's key principle, says Wilks, is "one of choice within our diverse community. We implore members of the wider community and the Chief Rabbi's Office to welcome and not discourage this freedom of choice"

SA Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein was asked for comment, but we had not received his comment by the time of going to print.



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Dread disease cover

The longer lives many of us will lead and our modern lifestyles, are exposing us to increasing risks of contracting a dread disease.

Ryan Switala, the head of risk product development at Liberty, says the chances of suffering a dread disease such as cancer or a heart attack before retirement, can be as high as one in five, but the risks you face depend a lot on your age and other factors such as your smoker status.

With the risks of contracting a dread disease as high as one in five, you need to make sure that you have dread disease cover.

"Despite this, critical illness cover is unfortunately sometimes relegated to a status of 'nice to have' when the reality is that it should be stressed as an essential component of any insurance portfolio," Switala says.

Dread disease cover, also known by its other names, severe illness or critical illness cover, is a life assurance policy that provides you with a benefit aimed at meeting the cost of surviving a dread disease.

Dr Marius Barnard, brother of the doctor who performed the first heart transplant, Dr Christiaan Barnard, is regarded as the founder of dread disease cover.

Barnard has said that you are more likely to survive a major health crisis than to die from it, but having survived the crisis, your cost of living will be greater than the cost of dying.

Ideally, for the best protection of your financial position, you should have an income replacement policy and belong to a good medical scheme.

If you contract a dread disease, your income replacement policy will pay out while you are too ill to work and your medical scheme should cover the bulk of your medical costs.

However, as a severe illness can put enormous pressure on your finances, you should also have dread disease cover.

Some of the additional costs you may incur as you make temporary or permanent lifestyle adjustments to your illness, can include:

The cost of getting the best medical treatment: Your medical scheme should cover the costs of treating your dread disease, but your doctor may consider specific treatments that your scheme is not funding to be most suitable for you.

A lump sum payout from a dread disease policy could give you the freedom to choose the treatment you want to follow, rather than being confined to that for which your scheme provides.

Adapting your lifestyle after your illness: A dread disease such as a stroke, may

leave you impaired for the rest of your life. To live with this impairment you may need to adapt your home or your vehicle.

You may also need to purchase equipment, such as wheelchairs or walking aids that give you some independence. All of these can be very expensive. You may also need to employ a private nurse to assist you with your daily routine at home.

Non-medical costs of treatment: The appropriate specialist doctor you need to consult might live some distance away and you may need to pay high transport and accommodation costs every time you have an appointment.

Help at home: If you are diagnosed with cancer and need to undergo chemotherapy, there may be periods when you are unable to carry out your family responsibilities, such as helping your children with their homework or preparing meals, and you may need to hire somebody to help with such tasks.

Dread disease cover can help overcome the problem that occurs when a stay-at-home parent becomes ill and unable to look after children. This parent has no income to insure, but should illness leave them unable to do the job of looking after children, the family may face an additional expense of paying for care for the children.

Rehabilitation: In some cases, you may need rehabilitation after your illness or an event, such as a stroke.

Reconstructive surgery: As a woman, you may wish to undergo reconstructive surgery after a mastectomy and/or may wish to purchase wigs after suffering the hair loss associated with chemotherapy.

Your income replacement policy will pay out if you are found to be unable to continue to work. However, a dread disease may leave you able to work, but no longer able to pursue your career, because you have lost the drive to continue your career path or to work the same hours as you did before. This may curtail your future earnings. If you are close to retirement age, you may even consider early retirement.

"Before you take out dread disease cover make sure you understand the level at which the benefits on your policy will be paid out. Some policies pay out the full assured amount on diagnosis of a dread disease, while other policies pay out a percentage of your assured amount that depends on the severity of your illness.

"This is why it is important to have a relationship with a financial adviser to guide you through your financial journey," concludes Switala.



For more information on Liberty policies contact the Liberty contact centre on 086 032 7327

What made the news

South african • Jewish Report
October 25, 2003

HU professor tackles Jews and apartheid

This week, Professor Gideon Shimoni's new history "Community and Conscience: The Jews in Apartheid South Africa", was launched in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

Shimoni is professor emeritus and a former head of the Hebrew University's Institute of Contemporary Jewry. His other publications include The Zionist Ideology (1995).

In the 2003 launch of his book, in Johannesburg, covered by David Saks, Shimoni asked whether Jewish leadership during the apartheid years "actually failed the community, given that their mandate had not been to be an advocacy body whose purpose was to lobby for change in society as a whole, but to protect the interests and wellbeing of South African Jewry. In this respect, it had generally acted sagaciously, although unquestionably at the cost of moral rectitude.

"It was impossible to say what the results would have been had the leadership taken an unequivocal stand against apartheid, particularly as it had not been possible to determine

whether the governments of the day ever discussed what it would have done had this transpired.

"Gone are the days when Jews have to write about 'the Jewish contribution to...' he said. "Now Jews can feel free to write about their own history."

In Cape Town, in an article by Moira Schneider, Mr Justice Dennis Davis said he had been "ashamed", on reading the book, of the "disgraceful legacy which haunts us. We need to think very carefully how we participate as citizens and Jews in a democratic country instead of moving in the direction of a culture of authority."

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Top international recognition for Rosebank's Grillhouse



Saul Mervis with chef Paulos Ntini at the grill.

ROBYN SASSEN

Restaurateur and co-owner of The Grillhouse, Saul Mervis, was delighted to hear this month that his Rosebank branch was considered among the top restaurants in the world.

"We knew nothing about it," he told the Jewish Report. "One of our regular international customers sent me the article which appeared in the Condé Nast Traveller.


"We were named among the 15 best in the world," he added that he was not aware when Condé Nast critic, Jeremy Wayne had eaten in

his establishment.

Referring to the bouquet of steak restaurants selected, from Spain to Sydney, Tuscany to Tokyo, Wayne described The Grillhouse as "a slick operation with a soul".

"This acknowledgement is good for our restaurant, which, 19 years old, in November remains one of the few white-tablecloth steak restaurants in Johannesburg; it also puts South Africa on the map," Mervis said.

"The biggest challenge for anyone in this industry is consistency. You are only ever as good as your last meal served."




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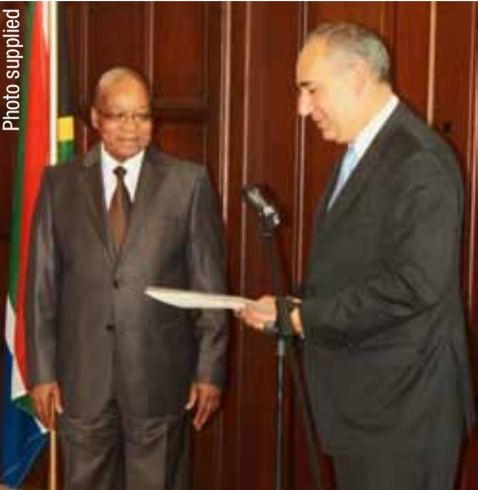
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A Chasseneh
A chossn iz geshtanen mit der kale unter der chupe. In shul zanen geven a sach mentshn. Es iz geven grod noch shavues, vos iz dem yor gefaln af donershtig un fraytig. Iz der chossn tsutuml gevorn fun aza gröyssen öylom, un b'shas er hot gedarft zogn dem harey-at, hot er es tsumisht mit'n eyrev-tavshilin un hot gezogt: "Harey at m'kudeshes li ul'chol adad Yissroel hagorim boir hazöys."

A wedding
A groom once stood with his bride under the bridal canopy. In the synagogue many people were present. It was soon after Shavuot, which, that year, had fallen on a Thursday or a Friday. The groom had become confused by the large crowd, and at the point at which he was to say the "harey-at", he mixed it u with the "eruv tavshilin" and said as follows: "Thou art consecrated to me and to all the congregation of Israel, in this town."

Lenk presents credentials - and vegetables - to Zuma



Last week, Israeli Ambassador to SA Arthur Lenk presented his credentials to President Jacob Zuma, with a basket of vegetables.

“It is a small but symbolic gift,” he said in his introductory letter. “(The vegetables) were grown on small farms in South Africa, using Israeli know-how.” He cited Umbumbulu, Kwa-Zulu-Natal; Bethanie, Northwest; and Hazyview, Mpumalanga, as the source of the vegetables.

“I believe such projects provide wonderful opportunities for small famers in South Africa to increase employment, promote food security concerns and save precious water resources. They are a small example of the wonderful things that Israel and South Africa can do together.”

New Israeli ambassador pays visit to Durban

ALANA BARANOV

Earlier this month the new Israeli Ambassador to SA Arthur Lenk, made his first visit to Durban. He was joined by Itai Melchior, head of Trade and Economic Affairs at the Israeli Embassy, who was also visiting Durban for the first time.

The underlying message in Durban was both South Africa and Israel would also share similar dilemmas in the future and that together such dilemmas could be transformed into opportunities.

After meeting with eThekwin water and sanitation officials, and extending an invitation to attend the global Water Technology and Environmental Control Exhibition Conference (Watec) in Tel Aviv later this month, Lenk said: “Some of the experiences that we have with our own water issues could be relevant and useful... and we want to share our success with our friends.”

Lenk had a meeting with eThekwin Mayor James Nxumalo and the vice chancellor of the Durban University of Technology, Professor Ahmed C Bawa. The vice chancellor invited Lenk to address his students, the majority of whom are studying for careers in areas of Israeli expertise.

Lenk also interacted with Trade and Investment KwaZulu-Natal, which was established to promote KwaZulu-Natal as an investment destination and to facilitate trade by assisting local companies to access international markets.

Before leaving KZN, Lenk and Melchior paid a site visit to Umbumbulo near Amanzimtoti, to inspect a greenhouse project with Israeli links.

A highlight of the trip was a meeting between the ambassador and Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who warmly welcomed Lenk to KwaZulu-Natal.

New consulate in Jo’burg

DIANE WOLFSON
PRETORIA

As part of their efforts to accommodate and be more accessible to the general public, and in order to expand consular services, the Embassy of Israel in Pretoria has now opened a regular consulate office in Johannesburg.

This office will operate from Beyachad in Raedene one day a month; the public will be able to make appointments by e-mail.

The first date for such services to be provided to the public in Johannesburg, will be November 12. The office will be open between 09:00 and 12:00.

To make an appointment, e-mail the Consul Aviad Hefetz, on consular@pretoria.mfa.gov.il. No telephonic appointments will be made. The e-mail should provide the following: Full names, passport number, date of birth and the reason for the appointment.

- For urgent matters, the Consulate office in Pretoria remains open Monday to Thursday 09:00 - 13:00; Fridays 09:00 - 12:00.

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Jewish Report
**Orthodoxy and
Limmud - an
unhealthy stand-off**

A storm among UK Jewry involving secular and religious leaders, about the relationship between Orthodox Jewry and Limmud, has echoes in Jewish communities worldwide, including South Africa’s.

Limmud started in England in 1978. After 35 years, the annual conferences have proliferated to 60 countries, become an educational platform in numerous languages, and include everything from Talmud study, technology, Jewish history, art, music, mysticism and other topics.

It is an excellent opportunity for diverse Jews to mingle and get to know each other. Thousands of participants of various ages and religious backgrounds attend.

The Orthodox establishment has generally refrained from formally accepting Limmud’s “legitimacy” as a platform for Jewish teaching. The first Limmud in South Africa was in 2007.

In 2008, the Southern African Rabbinical Association discouraged members from participating, referring in a resolution to its “existing policy toward the upcoming Limmud learning programme, which is that no (Orthodox) rabbi will accept an invitation to participate” and stating that rabbis in a position to dissuade people from attending, would do so.

Since then an uneasy truce has operated, without public denunciations. Initially, Orthodox Jews were not evident at Limmud, but an increasing number of kippa-wearing Orthodox Jews now attend.

International Orthodox rabbis like Nathan Lopes Cardozo and Shmuley Boteach have participated. South African Orthodox rabbis, however, have held back.

The international scenario changed dramatically a few weeks ago when the UK’s new chief rabbi, South African-born Ephraim Mirvis, announced he would attend the next UK Limmud, scheduled for December.

He told the London Jewish Chronicle: “One of my primary functions is as teacher of the community. I see Limmud as an opportunity to teach Torah to large numbers of people who want to learn.”

Then last week seven strictly Orthodox rabbis, among them former head of the London Beth Din, Dayan Chanoch Ehrentreu, published a letter in a haredi newspaper, saying “any Jew whose heart has been touched by the fear of G-d and who wishes to walk upon paths which will be viewed favourably” must not attend Limmud.

The gathering has non-Orthodox rabbis teaching Torah, leading them to say: “Participating in their conferences, events and educational endeavours, blurs the distinction between authentic Judaism and pseudo-Judaism and would bring about tragic consequences for Anglo-Jewry.”

The next salvo came quickly, when 30 senior community leaders, politicians and philanthropists, in an open letter, reproached the seven rabbis for a “shocking failure of leadership”. It was backed by Board of Deputies President Vivian Wineman, Jewish Leadership Council Chairman Mick Davis (a former South African) and senior US figures.

The Chief Rabbi’s presence at Limmud, they said, “should be welcomed and not be the subject of misplaced and disrespectful criticism”, and the seven rabbis’ declaration that participants will not be viewed favourably by G-d, has the power to “cause great harm to our community and appears to be rooted in tactical power play, as opposed to religious principle”.

Among South African Jewry, the issue sits like the proverbial “elephant in the room”. Limmud SA consolidates itself year by year, with participants including a wide variety of Jews. It is unhealthy for this community that the matter remains in a stand-off, causing unhappiness among significant sectors.

The community’s lay leadership is generally enthusiastic about Limmud and have expressed this publicly, including the SAJBD and other organisations. Many senior leaders have attended Limmud.

South African Jewry has a history of tolerance and accommodation between its various sectors going back many years. The stunning success of recent projects emanating from the Orthodox establishment, such as Sinai Indaba and The Shabbos Project, open more opportunities to follow this line.

The community needs to find a solution which will allow anyone to attend Limmud if they wish, without pressure or risk to their positions, and that will not push anyone to go to Limmud if they do not want to.

Chief Rabbi’s Shabbos Project put a spring in community’s step

ANT KATZ

The almost unbelievable success of The Shabbos Project is no secret; it has become an urban legend among South African Jewry.

Architect of the acclaimed initiative, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, said: “I am by nature an optimist, but the breadth and depth of the support and participation caught me off guard. The response has been overwhelming!”

One of the things he liked most, said Rabbi Goldstein, was the way South Africa’s Jewry “proudly celebrated who we are”. That’s the South African culture, he says: Unity in diversity.

The measures of success and involvement, he says, is based on anecdotal evidence - of which there is much to find. He believes that “the majority of the community” participated in some way or another.

It is reported that at least 20 000 new people kept this one Shabbos in its entirety. To put this in perspective, Rabbi Goldstein says 10 000 South African Jews normally observe Shabbat fully.

Another aspect that amazed Rabbi Goldstein, “was that there was a true sense of joy and celebration - like the thousands who joined the challah bake and the 600 who turned out for the street dinner in Oaklands. There was a tremendous atmosphere of taking to the streets.”

What sparked the idea?

A secular Israeli, Prof Dan Ariely, was in South Africa last year on a consulting project. Rabbi Goldstein says Prof Ariely is one of the most respected behavioural scientists in the world.

While in South Africa he made contact with Rabbi Goldstein, as he was looking to find answers about Judaism. “We spoke about Shabbat and that was where the germ of the idea came from. I stayed in contact with him.”

Ariely ended up keeping Shabbat last weekend for the first time. He also drafted a survey and has been researching what he considers to be the amazing social phenomenon that was The Shabbos Project.

What does Rabbi Goldstein attribute the overwhelming success of this project to? “It hit the sweet spot,” he says. “Both the breadth and the depth of the support was unbelievable.”

Two weeks prior to the event, Rabbi Goldstein says, “it passed the tipping point”. From then on, it was the talk of the community; momentum started to mount and the excitement became palpable.

The team that had been so successful on the Sinai Indaba and Generation Sinai projects, was roped into service. In fact, the team has been kept on for an extra month “to deal with the unanticipated mass of data from a quantitative and qualitative point of view,” says Rabbi Goldstein.

The invitation to participate went to all of South Africa’s Jewry, including Progressive and unaffiliated Jews - who, by all accounts, also embraced the event.

Rabbi Goldstein started formulating a plan with Laurence Horwitz. “I unveiled it at the closing session of the Sinai Indaba,” he says, “and then we started fleshing it out.” He wrote an eight-point manifesto, met with rabbis and briefed them at the Rabbinical Conference, brainstormed with the rabbis, met with the schools, primarily KDS and Herzlia and later met with shul lay-leadership at the UOS Conference.

“We brainstormed how to involve the schools so they all owned it,” he explains. Prefects of some schools became project ambassadors; shuls and schools were partners. “Our shuls



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

were the most amazing partners and really made The Shabbos Project come alive for people. That was crucial in attaining the tipping point and moving into high gear,” he says.

He then transferred ownership to Jewish institutions and individuals. “When people are invited to an event, they go as passive passengers,” he says. “This event created active partners - even leaders - and led to spontaneous positive energy.

“I have heard stories of people who went knocking on doors and inviting strangers to Shabbos, taking it from awareness to participation.” It had achieved that spontaneous energy.

By the time The Shabbos Project became a reality, says Rabbi Goldstein, “the community had a spring in its step!”

The anecdotal evidence of the success of The Shabbos Project is overwhelming. It’s become a social movement.

Rabbi Goldstein points to the fact that shuls were packed as if it was Rosh Hashanah, and at some shuls, not a car in sight. At Houghton Golf Course caddies went home. The non-Jewish Bridge Association posted under half of their normal scores. A non-Jewish-owned hairdresser closed on Saturday. A soccer coach cancelled training...

The stories keep pouring in of people who kept their first Shabbos - and it has morphed into “This is My Story” which can be seen (or added to) on the project’s Facebook page and YouTube channel. Testimonials can be sent to office@chiefrabbi.co.za or posted to <https://www.facebook.com/theshabbosproject>

In Venice, Italy there was a challah bake in solidarity with The Shabbos Project. “We are inundated with formal expressions of interest,” says Rabbi Goldstein. The US, Canada, Israel and Australia are considering using the South African experience.

He foresees this as a “great South African export”.

He adds: “People are asking me: ‘Now what?’ The place for this to be taken further is in our shuls and homes.

“Individuals, families and communities are working out their way forward”, he says.

Clearly pleased with the results - and so he should be - Rabbi Goldstein says humbly: “We worked on this together, as a community; people rose to the occasion.” That may well be true, but it took an inspirational leader and a masterful executive to make it happen.



Readying the street for a dinner to be remembered: Six hundred turned out for the street dinner in Oaklands over the Shabbos Project.

SA Jewry bucking the worldwide trend



BARBARIC YAWP
David Saks

The extraordinary success of The Shabbos Project again showed how much South African Jewry is bucking international trends when it comes to levels of religious observance and Jewish identity in general.

Whereas most Diaspora communities, outside of their strictly Orthodox enclaves, are experiencing a relentless downward trajectory, South Africa’s is just as consistently moving in the opposite direction. Religiosity here is growing and intensifying, particularly in Johannesburg but in the other centres as well.

By contrast, secularism is rampant in the Western world. For some time now, the countries that constitute it, have not maintained even a pretence of being Christian societies. The bulk of Jews outside of Israel now live in such countries, while of the remainder, nearly all are found in countries that once made up the Eastern Bloc and which have never recovered from the enforced secularism of the Soviet era.

Inevitably, the majority have been greatly affected by their environment, and accordingly have become secular too. In practical terms, this means that neither they nor their non-Jewish neighbours have any compelling reason not to marry one another, and indeed this is no longer the exception, but increasingly the norm.

The recently released Pew Survey on Ameri-

can Jewry found that well over 80 per cent of US Jews who profess no religion, “marry out”. (The rate in many European countries is over 90 per cent).

Moreover, even among those who identify as “Reform Jews” - by far, the largest group within the Jewish population - nearly six in 10 marry non-Jews without the latter undergoing any form of conversion to Judaism.

In 1983, the American Reform movement determined that henceforth, having one Jewish parent would suffice in order for the children to be recognised as Jews, thereby doing away with the matrilineal descent principle. As a result hundreds of thousands of American Jews today are considered Jewish by the Reform but not by the Orthodox nor, to my knowledge, Conservative movements.

This would particularly present problems when such individuals wished to marry within the Orthodox Jewish fold, but in practice the great majority of patrilineal Jews - not unpredictably - go on in their turn to marry non-Jews, so the question has arisen less often than had been feared.

Taking the Orthodox out of the equation - according to the Pew finding, intermarriage in this sector is only two per cent - one finds that more than seven American Jews out of 10 are marrying out of the faith.

This is despite the enormous sums that have been invested in “Jewish continuity” programmes following the results of the 1990 US National Population Survey, revealing that US intermarriage rates by then exceeded 50 per cent.

In South Africa, according to surveys conducted in 1998 and 2005, intermarriage remains well below 10 per cent. More than

four out of five Jewish children attend a Jewish day school, strikingly high proportions compared with other Diaspora communities observe such basic practices as keeping Shabbat and kashrut and nearly all of the remainder are sufficiently connected to at least attend a seder and fast on Yom Kippur.

South African Jewry is, in fact, much more religious now than its pioneering ancestors were. What is more, the turnaround is largely youth-driven.

South African Jewry is, in fact, much more religious now than its pioneering ancestors were. What is more, the turnaround is largely youth-driven.

In what goes against all expectations and past experience, it has not been a case of the older generations striving (and usually failing) to keep the youth in the fold, but of the younger generations forging ahead while also raising the levels of their parents’ and grandparents’ involvement.

As a result of all of this, South African Jewry has exercised a disproportionate influence on the international Jewish stage, particularly through those of its members who have emigrated.

Among the many former South Africans who have risen to prominence is the new UK

Chief Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis, a former Capetonian. It is hard to imagine that for most of its history, this community had to “import” its spiritual leaders.

Only from the late 1950s did local institutions begin turning out a “made in South Africa” product, commencing with the Minister’s Training College operating under the auspices of the old Federation of Synagogues and based at the Great Synagogue in Wolmarans Street Synagogue.

Since then, scores of young rabbonim have emerged from the multiple yeshivot and kollelim around the country, with a high proportion of these making a significant impact overseas.

As for the rank and file, one only has to witness the streets of the Greater Glenhazel area on any given Shabbos to see how remarkably the scrupulous piety of our Lithuanian (and other) ancestors has taken root, completely confounding the gloomy prediction of previous generations who believed such a thing to be impossible.

On a sobering note, while South African Jewry seems to be enjoying a genuine golden age, the reality is that it numbers little more than 75 000 souls and perhaps even less than that. Put another way, this community would have to grow eight-fold just to be as large as that of Miami and 50-fold if it is to match that of New York.

At the end of the day, we are only a little corner of the Diaspora, albeit a relatively healthy one, but elsewhere a vast proportion of the Jewish world is in the process of disappearing altogether. This alone should make one very hesitant to immigrate to anywhere other than Israel.

An appeal to the community

Rabbi Moshe Schnerb, well known to the community, has a serious health condition. Both **kidneys** are **not functioning** and he is on dialysis a couple of times a day. He needs a **kidney transplant** from a live donor to save his life. There are **no family members** with a **suitable** blood type which is type O. On the national donor list the Rabbi is sitting at **No.250** which means **he could wait five to ten years**

Rabbi M A Kurtstag,
Rosh Beth Din

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which will be a mitzvah, please contact Dr. Odes on 082 391 5062



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

WHY DOES JEWISH REPORT IGNORE ‘THE ELEPHANT IN THE ROOM’?

It is amazing how Jewish Report publishes letter after letter that seek to refute the notion that Israel is an apartheid state, while continuing to ignore the proverbial “elephant in the room”: hundreds of thousands of Jewish settlers residing in the Palestinian Occupied Territories.

They were settled there by Israel in violation of international law and they enjoy access to Israeli citizenship as well as full political, civil and social rights. Alongside them, millions of local Palestinians are subject to military rule and have no access to political, legal and civil rights or social services in Israel, the

state that governs their lives and imposes its domination on them.

In addition, the state plays an active role in dispossessing Palestinians of land and water resources, and transferring them to Jewish citizens and Israeli companies.

It is the coexistence of two populations that are subject to radically different legal regimes and sets of rights, which constitutes a form of apartheid rule in international law.

Ran Greenstein
Sociology Department, Wits

It is with the utmost sadness and anger that I note that the turnout by the Johannesburg Jewish community to pay respect to the memory of Yitzhak Rabin, has fallen on deaf ears. Maybe 50 people turned up, with most of King David School learners and a few members of the community.

None of the other schools such as Yeshiva College and Torah Academy, were present. Where was most of our South African Jewish leadership: Avrom Krengel? The Chief Rabbi that is supposed to represent South African Jewry? Why was he not there? Probably counting the number of challot made and the number of Jews that will now keep Shabbat after his Shabbos Project.

I call on the Jewish community to remember the consequences of Rabin's murder. That is to remember tolerance of one another, something that is missing in the South African Jewish community.

David Kruger, Johannesburg

YOU MUST REGISTER TO VOTE

I, together with my fellow South Africans, Jews and non-Jews alike, note with concern the signing of the controversial and maligned e-toll system into law by our ANC-run government.

Notwithstanding the procedural and substantive irregularities surrounding the implementation of e-tolls, the implementation of the e-toll system by Sanral, will impose a further increase on the ever-spiralling cost of living.

It is time that we, as South African Jews, who have a history of being responsible citizens, fighting to uphold democracy and against society's ills, make our voice heard.

I am not advocating that Johannesburg Jewry participate in the next Cosatu march, or that we withhold payment of taxes; what I do suggest, is Johannesburg Jewry protest the ANC-driven e-tolls by registering to vote on November 10 and 11 and by voting at the upcoming elections in 2014. This is even more imperative, given the recent loss of the Opposition Against Urban Tolling Alliance's case in the Appeal Court which, barring an appeal to the Constitutional Court, paves the way for the implementation of the e-toll system.

Whichever political party one votes for, participation in democracy through voting, is the strongest tool in the hands of the ordinary citizen. It is also vitally important that we educate the youth regarding the importance of the vote and encourage them to register to vote. The time is now to save our democracy from the ANC, which believes that it can enact policies such as e-toll without heeding the voice of the public.

Joshua Apfel, Sydenham

AD FOR CAPE CONFERENCE, MISLEADING

I am shocked at David Jacobson's letter (JR, October 18) on charging a fee to attend the Cape Board's conference, because in the advertisement in the Jewish Chronicle of September, it stated that "most importantly, the community is invited" to "share their views" at the conference.

Nowhere did it say in the ad that only organisations, delegates and observers can attend.

Jacobson states in his letter that in the conference "we host an important communal conversation". Do I not exist? Am I not part of the Cape Town Jewish community, because I can't pay the R200 entrance fee? The venue seats at least 400 people; only 250 attended. I thank the promoters of the Sinai Indaba for having made available free tickets for the Sinai Indaba for those who could not afford to pay, of which I was one.

Ellen Lan, Cape Town

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Rabbi David Masinter
Director
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Health & Beauty

Breast cancer is a multi-faceted scourge

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Breast cancer is any woman's worst nightmare. This is as much about the horror of getting cancer as knowing that your body will look different for the rest of your life, which will affect who you are, and how you see yourself, as a woman.

US actor Angelina Jolie made the issue skyrocket in general awareness in May, when she announced that she was having a "prophylactic mastectomy", because her mother had died of breast cancer and she too had the BRCA1 mutational gene.

Jewish women of Ashkenazi descent are genetically more commonly prone to the illness, but scarily, statistics reveal a significant increase in breast cancer diagnoses; while your genes might protect you or push you towards the firing line, more than 70 per cent of current diagnoses are in women with no genetic or lifestyle indications.

Specialist breast surgeon Carol Benn (pictured), who runs South Africa's most proactive breast cancer awareness clinics, in the Helen Joseph and Milpark hospitals, doesn't like the term "prophylactic mastectomy" as she feels it is not accurate.

"It's not based on any one decision. The procedure is usually accomplished today with an associated immediate reconstruction. Removal of so-called healthy breast tissue creates an intensive debate, among both clinicians and women themselves.

"With recommendations that conservation and radiation be standard for treating stage 1 and 2 breast cancers, and awareness that most women will be alive and well five and 10 years post breast cancer treatment, the idea of removing non-cancerous breast tissue must be studied with clear understanding of risks and benefits.

"The term prophylactic mastectomy is not accurate. Prophylaxis means to prevent; although with the techniques used for mastectomies today, over 98 per cent of breast tissue can be removed, this is still never 100 per cent.

"There are two types of risk-reducing surgery: Women who wish to undergo bilateral skin sparing mastectomy, with immediate reconstruction; and

women diagnosed with breast carcinoma in one breast who wish to undergo an opposite side mastectomy. The latter is for women who wish to have perfect symmetry.



"The models for predicting high-risk patients are many. About five to 10 per cent of breast cancers are thought to be hereditary, from either the mother's or father's side of the family. Some 20 to 30 per cent of women with breast cancer have a family member with the disease, but some 70 to 80 per cent do not.

"Inherited breast cancer mutations are most commonly found in Jewish women of Ashkenazi descent; they're also found in African American women, Afrikaner women of Dutch descent, and women who have Scottish or Hispanic origins.

It's a tough decision to choose risk-reducing breast surgery because it can't be undone. Benn is adamant that "a patient should attend medical appointments with her partner to determine which decision is correct for her", but, she adds ultimately it must always be the patient's decision and not that of the treating physician. "The decision is difficult, particularly when a woman is at her most vulnerable (post diagnosis). Should the woman not be sure of this decision, it is always advisable to delay it. There is no such thing as an emergency risk-reducing mastectomy."

She explains the signs of breast cancer, adding that the trick is to catch it in its earliest manifestation. "Know the look, size, shape and feel of your breasts. They aren't identical.

Know the extent of your risk, in terms of hereditary cancers."

Scarily, "70 per cent of all women diagnosed with breast cancer have no identifiable risk factors; don't be complacent. If you are a woman over 40, go for an annual mammogram and ultrasound; women of all ages should do breast self-examinations once a month. Breast cancer is not an old ladies' disease; youngsters are at risk

too.

"The good news is nine out of ten women treated for breast cancer are alive ten years down the line. A large percentage of breast cancer patients receive immediate breast reconstruction. It is usually a prescribed minimum benefit on medical schemes. Onco-reconstructive surgery has been performed in Europe for the last 30 years; we know it is safe and beneficial."

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Isisa Healthcare provides a service to the Gauteng area. Its services include that their staff are available to work day duty, night duty and "live in" if the patient should need a 24 hour care service.

The company is owned and managed by Anthea Cowan and Elizabeth (Liz) Fairall. Anthea Cowan (R.N), has worked in the

corporate environment for many years and was a director of Steiner Hygiene, a division of Bidvest, until she left to start Isisa.

Elizabeth Fairall (RN RM diploma Clinical Care Administration and Instruction), was the managing director of Charisma Healthcare Solutions, a division of Adcorp Holdings, from 1997 - 2008. She was Senior Nursing Service Manager at Sandton Medi Clinic from 1992 – 1997.

Isisa Healthcare has made application to the major South African medical insurance groups to be registered with them as a preferred supplier for home care services.

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Pouyoukas cooks up storm at Look & Feel Good Expo

The Pouyoukas kitchen at the Look & Feel Good Expo was a huge drawcard for visitors who flocked to the first-ever show in Durban. The stand was a constant hub of activity with celebrity chefs demonstrating mouthwatering dishes and interacting with visitors.

Lisa Raleigh, a wellness expert and local celebrity, shared her knowledge of healthy eating habits and made easy-to-prepare tasty dishes such as home-made granola, low fat muffins, gluten-free apple crumble and a delicious and healthy roast vegetable and couscous salad.

Masterchef finalist, Joani, cooked up a storm with her seed loaf, cooked Pouyoukas whole-rolled oats, smoothies, black-eyed bean and tuna salad, falafel balls and cranberry oat squares.

The audience and passers-by were treated to samplings of all the dishes, as well as receiving hundreds of complimentary Pouyoukas products.

The Look & Feel Good Expo goes to Sandringham Farm in Cape Town, today, Friday October 25, followed by the Northgate Dome in Johannesburg on November 8.

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For further information please contact: Dean Miller, Group Marketing, tel (011) 762-5261 or cell 083-297-6210, or contact Hazel Jacobson at Caro Communications, cell 082-829-6165.

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RAIN Urban Boutique Spa is a women's-only beauty and wellness spa. Adopting a holistic approach, RAIN treats the spa experience not as a luxury, but as part of the modern woman's wellness routine with proven emotional, physical and psychological benefits.

Speaking to guests, co-founder and creator of RAIN, Amanda Johnson said: "Our focus is on meeting and surpassing the expectations of the woman who takes an interest in her own wellness and recognises the need to take care of herself. We want to make sure that every woman who walks through the door, feels absolutely special, taken care of and part of the RAIN family."

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uncluttered and affirming environment for its women-only clientele.

Nicola Hopwood, co-founder of the spa comments: "It's time women had a space of our own, and what better place than the spa! We want women to be able to have a safe and comfortable place where they can simply be themselves."

"It's what makes RAIN the perfect place to come to by yourself or with a group of your friends, for a bridal shower or other special event, knowing you can just be one of the girls."

The spa membership includes an affordable R350 monthly premium, with all-inclusive benefits including a customised monthly massage, discounts on a wide range of treatments, guest passes, and opportunities for upgrades and special gifting to friends and family. RAIN is soon to be a member's only spa, so be sure to get in quickly before member spaces run out.



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Robyn Scott steals Edinburgh’s Fringe accolade

ROBYN SASSEN

“Edinburgh was the hardest thing I’ve done,” Capetonian actress Robyn Scott told the Jewish Report, of winning best actress at this year’s Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

She earned the accolade for “Rosa” an elderly Jewish woman, in “London Road”, a play by Nicholas Spagnoletti, which debuted four years ago.

Rosa is a Sea Point resident; she’s all alone. Her children have emigrated. She befriends Stella, a young Nigerian woman, with dodgy drugs-laced secrets, but real heart.

“Nicky wrote the play as ‘Stella’,” Scott remembers. “I met him at a party; he said: ‘It needs another

character.’ That was Rosa.

“Three readings later, the play was longer, Lara Bye was director, an older actress was cast. But Lara struggled to get the older actress to play ‘old’. She invited me to audition. Rosa is 84. I was 36.”

Bizarre it may seem; the fit was sound: Scott first earned critical kudos as a 21-year-old, when she played Queen Elizabeth, aged 60.

“I have a weakness for the elderly. We have so much to learn from them; so often, society abandons them. In finding Rosa, I looked within. I grew up in Sea Point. I’m half Jewish - my father, born in Frankfurt, was rescued by the Kindertransport.

“In researching this role, I ac-

costed little old Sea Point Jewish ladies, armed with a voice recorder. The show’s designer, Craig Leo and I decided what shoes Rosa wears, what cardigan; bit by bit we pieced her together. It’s an honour to perform her. A privilege. She deserves 110 per cent of my attention every time.

“I’d never been to Edinburgh before. It’s really daunting. The festival, established in 1947, lasts a month; this year there were 2 896 shows. We were invited by the Assembly Festival under William Burdett-Coutts.

“London Road’s been to three consecutive National Arts Festivals in Grahamstown, but in Edinburgh we suspected it wouldn’t be the rock concert success it was in South Africa. Edinburgh audiences don’t know Sea Point nostalgia or accents.

“Also South African audiences laugh and roar and clap and scream and hoot. They don’t, in Edinburgh.

“I’m a better actor because of Rosa,” she adds. It takes her two hours to transform into the old lady. “And that’s just the make up.” The emotional shifts are huge, too.

“But, being singled out with Dame Janet Suzman and then winning the award, one of the top at Edinburgh, called the Stage Awards: Oh! It was such an honour! When they called my name I was in shock. Just being nominated, was like I’d won. When I did actually win, I was speechless.”

The Stage Awards, among 29 that assess Edinburgh Festival, is judged by the festival review team from The Stage newspaper.

Other South Africans acknowledged this year in Edinburgh include the cast of Lara Foot’s “Marion and Solomon”, Janet Suzman and Khayaletu Anthony; and Canada-based



Robyn Scott as she is (inset) and Robyn Scott as Rosa in London Road.

Yael Farber, whose play Nirbhaya, about rape in India, won the Amnesty International Award.

“This win is opening doors for me. Just you watch this space.”

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Arts News in Brief

Art exhibition raising money for ‘the fun stuff’

Janet Pollack Art Studio, 12 Otto Street, Illovo, hosts its annual art exhibition on Sunday November 3, 11:00 - 13:00. Ten per cent of the proceeds of the exhibition go to the Children’s Haematology and Oncology Centre, a project which Janet Pollack has been running for about 18 years. “It is a showcase of my students’ work,” says Pollack. “People come, they open their hearts and their pockets to this cause, acknowledging that every cent counts.” The money she makes is very specifically allocated and is focused on buying “the fun stuff” that goes toward bringing smiles to the young patients. (011) 268-1024.

Lewandowski Chorale on at Theatre on the Square

Following the runaway success of the Lewandowski Chorale and the Imilonji KaNtu Choral Society at the Soweto Theatre earlier this month, the Lewandowski Chorale, under choirmaster Adam Golding, performs a lunch-hour concert at the Auto and General Theatre on the Square in Sandton on November 1. The chorale, barely 20 months old, is still a toddler as far as choirs go. Initially conceived to perform the works of the famous 19th century Jewish liturgical composer in the original form, the choristers - many of whom have never been exposed to this music - have risen to the challenge with aplomb. Call (011) 883-8606.

Cat Simoni for ‘West End to Broadway’ revue

Bet David in Sandton presents Cat Simoni, aka the girl with the golden voice in a revue called From West End to Broadway and Beyond, a fundraising show which will feature showstoppers from

some of the biggest musicals to grace Broadway and the West End. The show will also present highlights of Simoni’s “showbiz rollercoaster ride and bizarre encounters with high society’s rich and famous at London’s five-star venues: The Ritz, Dorchester and Mayfair.” The revue takes place in Middleton Hall, 3 Middle Road, Morningside on Sunday November 3 at 16:00. Tickets: R150. Phone (011) 783-7117 or e-mail admin2@betdavid.org.za for bookings.

Variety of work to go on display at Johannesburg Library



Since April 2013, a group of Johannesburg-based artists, including Talya Lubinsky (pictured), Jonah Sack, Bettina Malcomess and Ruth Sack, have been working in the Johannesburg City Library. They have been investigating its resources, which include a newspaper archive, as well as reference collections of Africana, musical scores and theatrical scripts. The library’s singular location and labyrinthine architecture will be made use of, opening up previously unused, hidden areas. On November 9 they introduce an ongoing endeavour that will continue in 2014. A variety of work will be on display, including sculptural and performative interventions, collaborative work and artists books.

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Apt analogy of a caterpillar morphing into a butterfly



Photo Joffie Berkowitz

Pictured are the girls before the ceremony: Sarit Shull; Tzipporah Berman; Lisa Bloch; Chani Glassman; Chani Yachad; Devorah Finger; Jordan Lorge; Kiki Farber; Tali Drutman; and Sasha Berkowitz.

OWN CORRESPONDENT

“Transformation and Change” was the theme of the Torah Academy Girls’ High School’s matric farewell attended by 200 people at the Sydenham-Highlands North Synagogue Hall.

The invitations drew an analogy between the metamorphosis of a caterpillar into a butterfly, stating: “Just when the caterpillar thought the world was over, it became a butterfly.”

Dressed in their finery, the girls wore graduation caps and gowns when they entered the hall.

Chanale Chaikin was MC for the evening, while Chani Glassman delivered a Dvar Torah. A DVD of last year’s TA “Israel Encounter” was also screened.

Rebecca Sarchi, principal of TAGHS, addressing the girls, spoke about each individual matriculant.

She encouraged them to believe in themselves and to be positive about life. “If you change the way you look at things, you will change the things you see,” she said.

The matrices paid tribute to all their teachers and thanked them for providing their six years of high school education.

A “surprise” was the screening of another DVD, featuring the siblings of the matrices when they explained, in a humorous way, the transformation they had witnessed in their sisters throughout their high school years. The evening was organised by Devorah Kay and the grade 11 class.

Wearing bandanas for a worthy cause

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY HAILEY FOX

Bandana Day raises awareness and money for those fighting leukaemia. Pine Street Playschool learners Sara Kress; Mopeli Koloti; Nathan Sim; Tyler Gilchrist; Erin Katzman; Chase Goodman; and David Sim, proudly wear their bandanas in support of the Sunflower Fun.



Shaven or coloured heads for a good cause

JAYDE MOSS, GRADE 10

Cancer Awareness Week was held at King David Linksfield from Monday October 7 to Friday October 11.

The school’s Outreach and Awareness Committees teamed up in an effort to raise cancer awareness. There were three different ways in which our fellow pupils, teachers, as well as parents could be involved:

1. Pink hair extensions.
2. Spray painting of the hair with different colours that each symbolised a different form of cancer.
3. For those who were brave enough - most of the boys - a #2 shave.

Gold beaded cancer awareness badges were sold during the breaks and in the mornings before the start

of school, to raise the awareness of cancer and support several cancer associations with the funds that we raised.

Teddy bears were also collected throughout the week and taken to hospitals for children who were suffering from cancer. On Wednesday October 9, break was extended by an hour, just to raise the extra awareness throughout our school, and by this day, the gold badges were already sold out! It was an unbelievably generous turnout from our school and everyone came together to support one cause and raise awareness throughout society.

Well done to everyone for their overwhelming support – the school raised R20,000.



Photo Jodi Starkowitz

Headmaster Marc Falconer has his head shaved by past pupil Eitan Egdes.

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Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

I congratulate the newly-elected executive of the SAJBD Cape Council, whose members were elected shortly after the SAJBD Cape Conference held earlier this month. It comprises Gary Eisenberg (chairman); Stanley Donen and Eric Marx (vice-chairmen); Vivienne Anstey and Lester Hoffman (treasurer); I look forward to working with them.

As previously reported, the theme of the Cape Conference was “Safe Spaces”, which stressed the importance of fostering an environment in our community where diverse viewpoints can be aired and discussed in a respectful, constructive manner. It is fine to disagree with someone, but unacceptable when this takes the form of personal insults or intimidation.

What makes it more vital than ever that we achieve this goal, are the multiple ways in which people in our community now communicate with one another on a continual basis.

Through the electronic media, we today have at our disposal a range of vehicles through which dialogue and discussion can take place. It is a wonderful tool, but like anything else, it can be, and unfortunately often is, abused.

Cyber bullying in general has emerged as a serious problem and it is made all the more difficult to deal with by the fact that cyberspace is simply too vast to be effectively policed. Ultimately, it is up to each and every individual to

act responsibly when exercising his or her right to freedom of expression.

It is fine to disagree with someone, and to do so robustly if necessary, but vilifying them for their opinions is unacceptable. It is also counterproductive, since such discourse all too often deteriorates into unseemly tit-for-tat invective in which the actual issues at hand are increasingly pushed to the margins.

As a community, we should be able to debate issues among ourselves in a cogent, respectful manner. Whether in the social media, the blogosphere or indeed at traditional face-to-face community gatherings such as conferences, each of us needs to be cognisant that just because someone holds a different opinion to you does not make him or her “the enemy”.

An inspiring Mitzvah School prize-giving

One of the longest-running community outreach projects is the Mitzvah School, on the premises of the Bet David congregation.

Since 1987, this has assisted disadvantaged learners from Alexandra and elsewhere in preparing for and writing matric and has notched up an outstanding success rate in this regard. Our national director, Wendy Kahn, attended the school’s prize-giving ceremony on Sunday and was both inspired and deeply moved by the stories the individuals concerned had to tell.

Again, it demonstrated how many people in our community, almost always quietly and out of the public eye, are helping in so many ways to alleviate the many socio-economic challenges facing our society.


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

The merger of complements

As a firm that continues to expand, we at Grant Thornton South Africa are proud to announce that PKF offices in Johannesburg and George have merged with us. This strengthens our national footprint, enhances our client services throughout South Africa and provides significant opportunities for our people to grow.

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Over 75 per cent of our R200 million annual budget has to be collected through donations. That’s a huge amount of money and it takes a special kind of community to rise to the challenge.

Thank G-d, that’s what you are - a very special, generous community who feels a responsibility to share the burden. There is, after all, no family that has not been touched, in some way or at some time, by the Chev’s scope of services.

We have always been grateful to those who, in addition to their financial support, also donate goods. But now that we have perfected and streamlined our procedures to efficiently process these donations, we are more grateful than ever.

Our Donations Store arranges a minimum of 12 collections each week - sometimes to pick up the contents of an entire home when a person has moved away, or passed on, and other times for an old dining-room or lounge suite when new ones have been purchased.

We have a responsibility not to waste money on purchasing new goods, unless we have no alternative, and are consequently very creative about the way we recycle.

Our first priority is to review requests from our financial assistance workers to ascertain which of the 2 000 welfare clients we support is in need of an appliance, a bed, even a desk or lamp.

Second on our list are requests from the GMs of our residential facilities where furniture, linen and other items are often required. And finally, the Chev has developed a wonderful partnership with Hospice. Through their network of retail stores they collect and sell goods for us, turning donations into money that we use to support our welfare clients.

In the final analysis, nothing gets wasted and everything you donate is either used by people in need, or sold to provide for them.

May our partnership continue to thrive.

Feedback@thechev.org.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrach Kadisha

Community

Building genealogical bridges

ROBYN SASSEN

In European pockets, interest is growing in researching family trees of Holocaust victims. “Bridges are being built,” said Claus-Dieter Richter-Kraneis through a translator at the Johannesburg Genealogical Society.

Richter-Kraneis lives in Wesel, a city in North Rhine-Westphalia, Germany. He worked for a chemical company until his retirement. He’s also been instrumental in bridging gaps in the family history of three Johannesburg residents, Sonya Abelson (born Gunther), whose family he started researching in 2006 and her cousin Frank Haymann and his wife Carol (née Rapoport) whose families he started researching in 2010, and who he has managed to track all the way back to 1750.

Giving an account of family members whose birth and death records he found, Richter-Kraneis opened up an area of previously hidden secrets. “I’m interested in the fight to outlaw racism, anti-Semitism and Holocaust denialism,” he wrote. He came upon the family in question “by fluke” according to Abelson.

“The size of the Holocaust - six million Jewish victims - is so big, it is incomprehensible. I wanted to individualise it by understanding how the atrocity touched particular families.”

Each year, since 1999, he has been visiting

sites of Nazi atrocities during the Holocaust, as an advocate for Holocaust history and to research. The artist Gunter Demnig has, since 1996, been involved in installing 10x10x10cm cast concrete stones, with inset brass plaques in several European cities, called stolpesteine (“stumbling blocks”) to commemorate the former homes of Jews who became victims of the Nazi era. To date, some 27 000 stolpesteine have been installed all over Europe.

Wesel’s senior high school learners under the guidance of Richter-Kraneis, are assigned to research the records of the people whose names are on the “stolpesteine”.

The stones, paid for by civilians, are embedded in the sidewalks in front of the former residences; each stone’s inscription begins with the words “lived here”, followed by the name, date of birth, possibly the date of escape from Europe or the date and place of death.

“It is a patchwork of research,” added Tali Nates, director of the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, “but interest in it is picking up all over Europe.”

• *The Jewish Registry Index for Poland is: www.jewishgen.org/jri-poland or www.jri-poland.org. Other websites for different European countries may be accessed through Thuli at the JH&GC: thuli@jhbholocaust.co.za*



Gunter Demnig installs stolpesteine in Wesel, in December 2009.

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Today, Friday (October 25)

• UZLC hosts journalist Lionel Slier on “I heard a call - the Story on Hannah Senesh”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

Saturday evening (October 26)

• WIZO Tzabar hosts an “Evening of Opera with Gala Matushek” with music and discussions on classical opera and modern mu-
sicals. Venue: EOH Auditorium, 1 Osborne Lane, Bedfordview. Time: 20:00. Cost: R80 (incl finger food and refreshements). Con-
tact: Ayala 082-412-2269 or Graciela 082-925-0924.

Sunday (October 27)

• JH&GC, Liliesleaf and the French Institute, host a talk by French
historian Tal Bruttman on “How a Country Remembers its Past:
The Holocaust in France”. Venue: Liliesleaf, Rivonia.Time: 14:30.
Contact: thuli@jhbholocaust.co.za or (011) 640-3100.

• Second Innings hosts Rabbi Jonathan Fox, rabbi at the Chevrah
Kadisha, “Transcendence of the Soul - Making Sense of the Grief-
ing Process According to Jewish Law”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz
Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members,
R40 visitors. Contact: Grecia (011) 532-9718.

• The Majestic Film society, in the Ditsong Museum of Military
History, Saxonwold, hosts a screening of ‘Miracle at Midnight’, a
film based on the spontaneous rescue of some 7 500 Jews from
Nazi persecution by Denmark’s citizens. Call (011)486-3648 or
email majestic@telkomsa.net

Monday (October 28)

• UJW hosts travel writer Kate Turkington on “Magical Journeys”.
Venue: 1 Oak Street Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30.

• The Decorative Arts Society, hosts Radio Today broadcaster Sel-
wyn Klass accompanied on piano by Tony Bentel, talking on the
Danish rescue of its Jews. The talk takes places, in the Ditsong
Museum of Military History, Saxonwold.

Tuesday (October 29)

• WIZO Forum presents “Reaching New Heights - A Celebration of
Overcoming Obstacles”, with Amanda Porter who recently sum-
mitted Kilimanjaro. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 09:30. Cost: R40. In-
formation: Sandy, (011) 645-2515.

• UJW hosts Arlene Bernstein, former head of LifeLine, on “Issues
of Concern”, a group discussion. Venue: 1 Oak Street Houghton.
Time: 09:30. Donation: R30.

Wednesday (October 30)

• RCHCC hosts Naomi Dinur who will give an audiovisual presenta-
tion on “Yiddishe Piraten - Ahoy-Vey”, a voyage in the footsteps
of Jewish pirates. Venue: RCHCC. Time: 19:30. Cost: R70. Book-
ing: (011) 728-8088/8378, after hours (011) 728-8378.

• UJW hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the Dept
of English at Wits “Contemporary Poetry”. Venue: 1 Oak Street
Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30.

Thursday (October 31)

• UJW CT’s Constantia Group hosts Pamella Shippel for a “Din-
ner Demo”. Venue: Kirstenbosh Tea Garden. Time: 18:30 - 19:00.
Cost: R150 per ticket. Enquiries: (021) 434-9555 (until 14:00).

Friday (November 1)

• UZLC hosts The Star’s Metro Watch reporter Anna Cox, on “The
Hijacking of Buildings in Johannesburg and Any Queries on Met-
ro Watch”. Venue: Our Parents Home, Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Con-
tact: Gloria, 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

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ADL urges ‘hurtful’ Redskins name change



I was interested to read that the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) in the US has called on professional sports teams to seriously consider moving away from “the use of hurtful and offensive names, mascots and logos”.

In a statement the ADL wrote that in the early 20th century, when many great American sports franchises were first named, offensive caricatures and stereotypes of Jews and other minorities were widespread in the mainstream media and popular culture.

“Today, offensive caricatures are no longer prevalent, public figures cannot utter ethnic slurs without repercussions, and we have come a long way in fighting discrimination and educating about the impact of prejudice and the fact that words and stereotypes can hurt.”

They added that while the intention was not to offend, some offensive caricatures persist. The two teams they singled out specifically,

are the Washington Redskins and the Cleveland Indians.

I was quite impressed by their decision to publically voice their view, because one can hardly cry foul against anti-Semitic issues but stay silent on those concerning other minorities.

Interestingly a poll commissioned by the Oneida Indian Nation shows 59 per cent of adults in the Washington region say that American Indians would have a right to feel offended if called “Redskin”.

The poll also showed that if the Washington pro-football club changed its name, 55 per cent said it would not affect their support for the team. Some 25 per cent said it would lessen their support and 18 per cent said it would increase it.

Perhaps the ADL were speaking directly to Redskin owner Daniel Snyder, who is Jewish. The debate has been raging for quite a while and Snyder’s early response had been: “We’ll never change the name. It’s that simple. NEVER - you can use caps.”

However, following President Barack Obama’s decision to join the debate, suggesting that Washington’s owner should at least



Daniel Snyder, owner of the Washington Redskins, is not keen to change the name of his team.

contemplate changing the team’s name from one which is considered offensive by many Native Americans, Snyder has toned down his defence.

“I respect the opinions of those who disagree. I want them to know that I do hear them, and I will continue to listen and learn. But we cannot ignore our 81-year history, or the strong feelings most of our fans as well as Native Americans throughout the country have.”

However, The Onion, a satirical newspaper based in Washington, has printed a response which is causing shockwaves on the Internet.

“Denying widespread claims that the franchise is being offensive or disrespectful, the Washington Redskins’ kike owner announced that he remains steadfast in his refusal to change the team’s derogatory name. The shift-eyed hebe went on to assure fans that he will do ‘everything in his power’ to preserve the team’s proud heritage.”

These words may have been written in satire, but still, they appear pretty shocking. Which is, of course, the point. Nevertheless, The Onion has even been condemned by the likes of Al Jazeera. They seem to have overplayed their hand and it will be interesting to see how the ADL responds to this slur.

On the subject of names, I remember a while back that some people were claiming that Lionel Messi was Jewish. That turned out to be a load of rubbish but if the pundits are accurate “the next Lionel Messi” could well be.

The Barcelona Academy has a 17-year-old Venezuelan in their camp who is being hailed as the new Messi. His name is David Zalzman. Now anybody who has been watching the under-17 soccer World Cup on SuperSport, may well have seen this youngster in action.

He is pretty talented but only time will tell if he does turn out to be anywhere as good as Messi. And is he Jewish? Well, at this stage I have not been able to establish anything but I will keep digging and hopefully will have an answer soon.

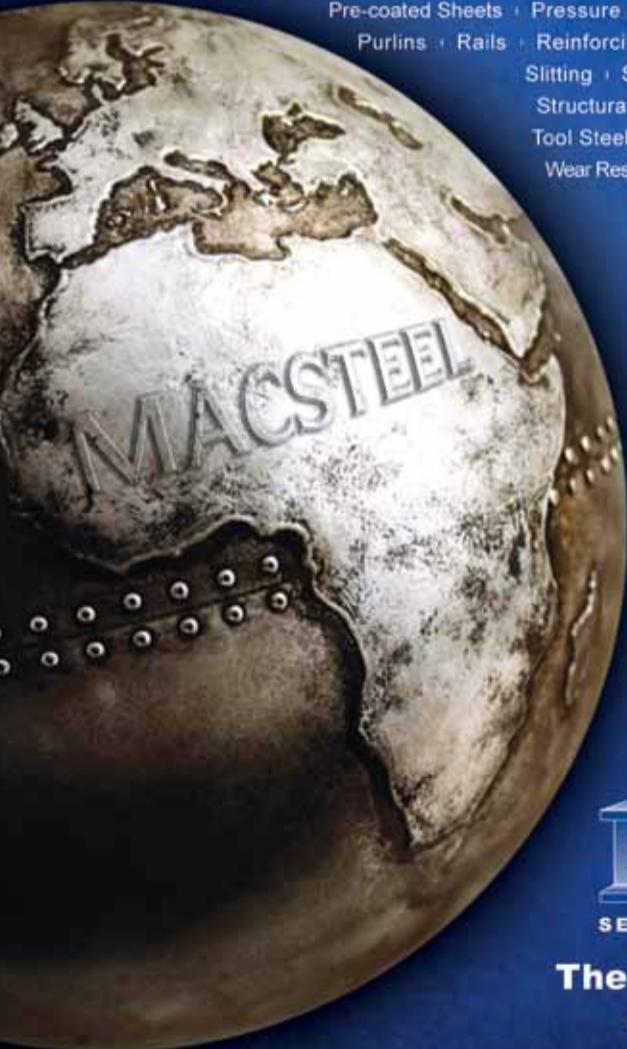
Finally, another name to keep an eye on this weekend is that of Jonathan Kaplan. The 46-year-old will bring down his illustrious career as a rugby referee on Saturday in the Currie Cup final between Western Province and the Sharks at Newlands.


At times he has been at the centre of controversy but he has done South Africa and the Jewish community proud. Once the dust has settled I will chat to him about life after rugby refereeing.

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Olivia earns chess WCM status

JACK MILNER

Olivia Bernstein (pictured) was recently chosen for the girls under-16 team to represent South Africa at the All Africa Youth Chess Championships in Port Elizabeth.


The tournament was originally due to take place in Cairo but because of the political unrest in Egypt, it was moved to Port Elizabeth. The top two players from 41 African countries played against one another and Olivia had the misfortune of opening her competition against Egyptian Woman Grand Master Wafa Shrook.

The South African battled for over three hours before managing to beat the Egyptian.


In her last game, Olivia put pressure on Algeria’s Woman International Master, Dina Abdi Zineb, with rating 1913, to draw the game.

Olivia took third place in the girls under-16 section which means she is now rated No 3 in Africa. She was also awarded the title of “Woman Candidate Master” (WCM).






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