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DAYS

TO
JEWISH
ACHIEVER
AWARDS!
(page 5)

South African
Jewish Report

www.sajewishreport.co.za



Photo: Estelle Cline

UJW pays tangible tribute to domestic workers

There was excitement on Tuesday, July 30, when the Union of Jewish Women Johannesburg hosted 80 domestic workers to a fun-filled morning which included a CPR demonstration by Hatzolah, a talk by Bidvest Bank on “How to save your salary effectively”, a baking demonstration and tips by the CSO and GAP on security. Two musicians entertained the audience with traditional “township numbers”, and a rendition of “Pata Pata” had the guests singing and dancing in the aisles. The excitement was palpable when “Lucky Ticket” numbers were drawn and winners went home with prizes ranging from electrical appliances to cellphones. Each guest received a goody bag with gifts. As a result of the enthusiastic response by employers and their employees, this “thank you” function will become an annual Union of Jewish Women event. In the photo, Thandi Mndebele, who works for Edna Freinkel, tucks into the cake.

New ambassador shows how not to make friends...

Jerusalem Post Magazine's Michael Freund interviewed the new SA Ambassador to Israel, Sisa Ngombane, under the headline, “For us, Hamas is a national liberation movement.”

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Israel not immune to events in Egypt, warns Paula Slier

Slier said she was afraid going into Egypt. Reporters Without Borders had warned that female journalists should not be sent into Egypt as it was too dangerous.

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Peace talks: Right-wing intensifies efforts to influence outcome

“There will never be clear sailing as long as there are people who do not recognise Israel as a Jewish nation.”

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CityKidz: an ‘old-new’ school for inner city kids

“You have humbled us’, the Department of Education officials said, when they left, giving the school their blessing.”

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Wholly holy

Forbes Magazine reported recently that fulltime jobs may be a thing of the past. In the future, companies will only want contract part-time workers - cheaper, greater flexibility and less commitment.

For some people that kind of work is liberating, for others terrifying. Whichever it is for you, this week’s Torah portion says that is no way to approach your relationship with G-d.

Without mincing any words, our parsha tells us: “You must be tamim (wholehearted) with the Eternal your G-d (Deuteronomy 18:13).”

In an ADHD world where we are never wholly anywhere, as we juggle the ever-demanding calls of Facebook and Twitter, Skyping with the niece in London and the DSTv remote control, how do we have a wholehearted relationship with The One? What might that mean?

To begin with, how do we understand tamim - wholeheartedness, in the first

place? It’s a word used earlier in Torah to describe both Noah and Abraham, meaning “complete” or “blameless”. But we know that Noah was not blameless - he is the Torah’s first drunkard. Neither was Abraham - take his treatment of his wife Sarah with Pharaoh and Avimelech for example.

So, we move to a different understanding of tamim - of being spiritually focused on connecting with G-d. That Noah and Abraham did have in bucket loads, but we have great trouble with in the world today. And not just today. Back in 11th century Spain, the philosopher Bachya Ibn Pakuda wrestled with how we often say one thing and think another, even when we speak to G-d:

“For you must know that words are a matter of the tongue, but meaning is a matter of the heart... When someone prays only with their tongue, the heart is preoccupied with something other than



Parshat Shoftim

Rabbi Greg Alexander
Cape Town Progressive
Jewish Congregation

the meaning of the prayer...The prayer becomes like a body without a soul, a shell without contents... Only the body is present; the heart is absent.” (Chovot Halevavot - Duties of the Heart)

Sometimes our tongues go onto autopilot, especially when they are trotting off the (many) words of the siddur or machzor. Our hearts are not really in it and our prayer becomes “like a body without a soul”.

At no time is this more challenging than the High Holy Days. We sit in shul for longer, reading unfamiliar words that we only meet once a year and shul is brimming with people we haven’t seen for ages.

Is it surprising then that we might experience a little disconnect between “the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts?” What might it feel like to be more tamim, more wholehearted in our prayers over Yomtov?

As we make our way through this month of Elul, preparing ourselves for the spiritual crescendo of the New Year, may we take a little more time to check in with our hearts and our tongues and see if they are singing from the same siddur.

Shabbat Times		
August 9/ 3 Elul		
August 10 / 4 Elul		
Parshat Shoftim		
17:27	18:17	Johannesburg
17:54	18:47	Cape Town
17:10	18:02	Durban
17:30	18:22	Bloemfontein
17:25	18:19	Port Elizabeth
17:18	18:10	East London

Building South Africa

CityKidz - An ‘old-new’ school for inner city kids

ROBYN SASSEN

Tucked away in Mooi Street in central Johannesburg is a primary school with a corrugated iron roof, built in 1947, under apartheid rule, for Indians. Today, it’s a heritage site, brim-full of enthusiastic children.

This is CityKidz, created by brothers Renney and Wayne Plit and led by Principal Pierre de Lange, formerly of Bramley Primary School. “We started Afhco 18 years ago,” said Renney of their company Affordable Housing Company, which has boomed all over the city, regenerating derelict buildings into affordable apartments. “We founded the school in 2007. My background triggered me to not make it into apartments.

“For 15 years, I ran Advtech Group, an education resourcing company. Most CBD schools are fly-by-nights, focused on money-making, not education. We’ve created 40 000 rental apartments in the city, which must mean that there are at least 40 000 kids in the area.

“The school had nine classrooms,” he said, opening door upon door of new prefab classrooms. “It’s now got 13. The bicycle shed has been glassed in to form a science laboratory; we’re planning a second storey.

“It caters to 300 children from

grade R to grade 7. We opened in January 2008. The Department of Education sent us from pillar to post with requirements to fulfil to open with their sanction. Four months after we opened without their official sanction, a deputation from the DoE arrived, ready to shut us down.

“We took them around the school and explained everything to them. ‘You have humbled us’, the officials said, when they left, giving the school their blessing.

“The fees are low. There’s a bursary facility. We don’t believe in seeing children turned away because their families are in economic or emotional distress.”

And the facilities? “CityKidz use a swimming clinic at Ellis Park; there’s a chess team and traffic training for the little ones, on BP scooters,” he indicates a playground painted with road signs, endorsed by the Traffic Department. “Netball and soccer fields are interchangeable with moveable goalposts.”

“We don’t take ‘second-hand teachers,’” says De Lange. He beams as he opens the door to another classroom: Wits education students are currently doing teaching practicals at CityKidz. “I have been in education for 46 years,” he adds. “There’s still petrol left in this tank. It is a blessing to be in a situation where you are needed.”

A woman cleans the corridors.



Enthusiastic Grade 1B learners at CityKidz, with their teacher Cindy Moyo.

“She’s deaf. But she’s doing a sterling job. Part and parcel of our company policy is to address all disadvantages.”

“Afhco put some R5 million into CityKidz, before the government agreed to subsidise it. Seven years later, we are beginning to break even,” adds Plit. “A great irony is that some of our kids are bussed from Soweto, which doesn’t say much for the quality of primary school education there. CityKidz was created for inner city children.

“Our biggest problem is we do not know where our CityKidz go after grade 7,” he adds. “There are no decent high schools in the area.”



Getting down to tachlis: Afhco CEO Renney Plit and school principal Pierre de Lange with Grade 1B learners: Moon Keisha, Simelane Manelo, Chitsvatsva Travis, Gerald Mthethwa and Rapetsoa Karabo.

Jewish Report

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New ambassador shows how not to make friends...

STAFF REPORTER

Last Thursday the Jerusalem Post Magazine’s Michael Freund interviewed the new South African Ambassador to Israel, Sisa Ngombane, under the headline, “For us, Hamas is a national liberation movement”. The interview has caused a considerable brouhaha in Israeli circles.

Barry Shaw, a special consultant on delegitimation issues to The Strategic Dialogue Centre at Netanya Academic College and the author of “Israel Reclaiming the Narrative”

exploded: “The new SA Ambassador needs to get himself an education very quickly,” he wrote.

So, too, did Times of Israel blogger Zev Shandalov who wrote that while Ngombane’s “thoughts and ideas are nothing new”, he felt incensed by “the mere fact that an ambassador to Israel working on our land, made such comments”.

Shandalov quotes the ambassador as stating: “To drop a few rockets that fall in the field and then bring a reaction from Israel, for which they feel they must have reprisals, is just

counterproductive.”

“A ‘few rockets’?” wrote an incensed Shandalov. “Is he aware that thousands of rockets have been launched... causing untold human damage... how would South Africa reply to thousands of rockets launched at them from Botswana, Namibia or Zimbabwe? Would they overlook them or would they ‘feel they must have reprisals’?”

J-Post wrote that when Ngombane took up his post, “he could not have come at a more difficult time in the bilateral relationship” between

Israel and South Africa. A “froitness descended on ties between Pretoria and Jerusalem,” wrote J-Post, as South Africa “has been a vocal supporter of the Palestinians and a frequent critic of the Jewish State and its policies.”

Ngombane is a former ambassador to the Ivory Coast and the Congo.

Barry Shaw also lambasted ambassador Ngombane, suggesting the diplomat should first look and learn before speaking and laying out “ten important lessons for the SA ambassador”.



South African Ambassador to Israel, Sisa Ngombane.

Photo courtesy DIRCO

Levitas tackles Kairos’ negative stance on ME peace

STAFF REPORTER

A war of words has erupted between the anti-Israel Kairos Church group and the SA Zionist Federation’s Cape Council chairman, Ben Levitas (pictured).

Rev Edwin Arrison posted a blog on the Kairos-SA website last week titled: “Update to South Africans on the Current Palestine-Israel-USA Negotiations: Continue to Support BDS!”

“Is Reverend Arrison more interested in boycotts than peace?” asked Levitas in a blog-post of his own. “One would assume that all people of good intent should be pleased that peace talks between Palestinians and Israelis have commenced.”

Arrison asks rhetorically: “Is there something different this time?” and then answers: “The ‘something different’ this time might be the chaos in the neighbouring countries (particularly Egypt and Syria) and the subsequent loss of support to Hamas.”

Arrison, a supporter of the Boycott, Divest and Sanction (BDS) movement, suggests that the peace negotiators “are probably saying to each other: ‘This is the best time to negotiate: the key supporters of Hamas... are at their weakest at the moment’.”

Arrison is not supportive of the peace talks. This, he says, is in part because of “the exclusion of Hamas”.

Levitas says in response: “By insisting on the participation of a self-destructive, hate-infused party as a precursor to talks, (Arrison) reveals his true intent, to undermine these attempts at achieving peace, so that he can continue with his self-proclaimed righteous crusade aimed at punishing only Israel.”

Says Levitas on his blog on the MyShtetl website: “With peace Rev Arrison would be a rebel without a cause.”

Arrison, however, is unrepentant and insists that “those involved in the current round of talks should... see to what extent Hamas can become involved in the talks (if they want to be). They could of course be invited and refuse to participate, but this will then be their choice,” says Arrison.

Levitas says Arrison “fails to acknowledge that Hamas is not recognised by any Western state, or even by the United Nations, as being representative of the Palestinian people”.

Arrison insists that “we at Kairos-SA believe it is correct” to continue to pressurise Israel. “There is no question that the US is ‘Israel’s lawyer’,” he writes, adding “and therefore we, the rest of the human community, should be ‘Palestine’s lawyer’.

“The Palestinians have been correct to refuse to negotiate with Israel since the power balance is hugely in favour of the Israelis,” contended Arrison.

Levitas is scathing. In response he wrote: “Should the South African Council of Churches not rise above cheap political point-scoring of Reverend Arrison and those religious leaders associated with Kairos Palestine and issue a statement of unequivocal support for the peace process, it will forever have missed an opportunity to fulfil its role of being a leading moral voice about the conflict.”

When men of the cloth, “who purport to espouse love and peace of all humanity and particularly of the ‘weak’ speak out against giving peace a chance, and question the ‘credibility’ of the current peace process,” wrote Levitas, “then their motives need to be probed.”





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Slier: Israel not immune to events in Egypt

MICHAEL BELLING

Did the Arab Spring improve the lot of the average Arab in the street? She felt it was not an Arab Spring, but an Arab winter.

“It is very big question whether the average Arab in the street is better off after the Arab Spring. I don’t think so,” journalist and Russian TV correspondent in the Middle East Paula Slier (pictured) told the United Zionist Luncheon Club at Our Parents Home last week.

Having left Tahrir Square in Cairo a few days earlier, she said the Arab Spring in Egypt was not only about political change and the overthrow of President Hosni Mubarak; it was also about economic change.

The millions who were in Tahrir Square in 2011 felt their revolution had been hijacked.

She said she was afraid going into Egypt. Reporters Without Borders had warned that female journalists should not be sent into Egypt as it was too dangerous.

It was also too dangerous, not only for women, but for any journalists to stand inside the square. The media stood on balconies of homes around the square to report.

Egypt today was completely divided. Earlier this year demonstrators were shouting for elected President Mohammed Morsi to be removed. After his removal (by the military), there were still hundreds of thousands of demonstrators there, but Morsi supporters were now demonstrating elsewhere in Cairo. “Being a Friday,” she said at the UZLC’s lunch on the Friday, “there will be violence there today.”

The Morsi supporters argued that he was



Journalist and TV presenter Paula Slier.

elected democratically - “and they do have a point”.

But the world had been silent since his removal from office by the army (on July 2). The United States had not called Morsi’s removal a coup as, under American law, aid would have to be stopped in that case and with it, American influence.

Morsi was very anti-Israel. Before his election he had been the spokesman for the Muslim Brotherhood and in 2010 had said that Zionist were bloodsuckers, warmongers and the sons of apes and pigs.

There was chaos in Egypt and the country was full of conspiracies and conspiracy theories.

The effect of events in Egypt would be felt in Israel, although there was a peace treaty on paper - which Slier thought would not be broken - although on the streets it was said Israel was racist and a cancer and that the peace treaty should be destroyed.

The real problem now for Israel was the impact on the Sinai Peninsula, where weapons and people, refugees from countries like Ethiopia and Sudan, were being smuggled.

Slier had managed to visit one of the few remaining members of the Jewish community in Egypt, an 83-year-old woman who suffered from Parkinson’s disease. The woman refused to be interviewed in her apartment, as her neighbours were Muslim Brotherhood members and they all knew she was Jewish.

For her own safety, Slier could not tell her she was also Jewish. When she asked the woman why she had not gone to Israel, she replied she was too scared to go to “that little country” and had heard it was only for Ashkenazi Jews and not Sephardim.

On another front she pointed out that the war in Syria was getting closer and closer to Israel. More than 100 000 people had been killed and there were millions of refugees, mainly to Turkey and Jordan. Many of the women were being raped.

“It is incredibly sad what’s happening to the Syrian refugees.”

If Bashar al-Assad was removed, the whole country was likely to collapse. Assad’s enemies included Al-Qaida and the Muslim Brotherhood, who were very hostile to Israel. They could also get their hands on chemical weapons.

Aliyah Expo on in Jozi and CT this month

STAFF REPORTER

The 2013 Aliyah Expo will be on in Johannesburg and Cape Town for four days each this month and, as usual, Israeli and South African experts will be on hand to advise potential olim on anything they may require.

This year The Israel Centre South Africa, aptly dubbed their annual expo “AliyahNOW”! It will run in Johannesburg from August 19 to 22 and in Cape Town from August 22 to 25.

“Throughout the week we will be hosting representatives from various Israeli institutions (and some South African ones) who help and enable olim in their aliyah process,” explains the Israel Centre’s marketing co-ordinator Simone Penn.

The type of institutional expertise available includes representatives from Israeli municipalities, property firms, financial institutions and tax-law experts.

The purpose of the week is to ensure that every possible query and question about making aliyah is answered for every possible oleh - from someone who has never even considered aliyah before, right through to those whose tickets are already booked. Telfed will be on hand to assist prospective olim in any way they can.

There is no charge to attend. One-on-one appointments are arranged with delegates they would like to meet. Some delegates always get fully booked early - so anyone interested in making appointments, should call Debbie on (011) 645-2560.

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Many faces of depression



MICHAEL BELLING

There was no doubt that depression was a medical illness, clinical psychologist and psychiatrist Dr Frans Korb told over 250 people at an event arranged by the Chevrah Kadisha Social Services and the Johannesburg College of Adult Jewish Education (CAJE) at the Sydenham Shul hall recently.

Depression was one of the most common psychiatric disorders. A 2004 study found depression to be the third most common cause of disability and it was probably even higher now.

“Depression is often difficult to diagnose. It is a heterogeneous illness with many faces,” Korb said.

Depression and anxiety often went together. Doctors often treated the anxiety, which was easier to spot. This was also a problem when patients with physical illnesses that accompanied depression went to doctors - the depression was often missed.

Depression could lead to health problems, such as heart problems, hypertension, stress and diabetes. It also affected the size of the hippocampus in the brain; scans have shown that it shrunk in the brains of people who suffered from depression

Depression made brain cells die. Antidepressants stimulated the brain so that those brain cells could grow again and assisted the electronic impulses that made brain cells work and the chemicals between the cells that helped them communicate.

“There are no physical tests for depression or bipolar disorder, no blood tests or scans to measure it,” Korb said. It was assessed through clinical interviewing.

Common symptoms of clinical depression included feeling blue, loss of feelings, loss of libido, loss of interest in work and the inability to experience pleasure. These were all psychological symptoms.

Depression could be illustrated as a triad, with depressed mood, slowed thinking and slowed moving - a triad published as far back as 1899.

Depression was potentially a lethal disorder - depressed people sometimes committed suicide. Suicide was the second most common cause of death in teenagers and was also relatively frequent among people over the age of 65

Korb suggested that doctors should place a simple diagnostic questionnaire in their waiting rooms for patients to complete, as many doctors were too busy to do so when seeing the patient.

Treatment required not only medication, but also spiritual and psychological aspects as well.

Treatment usually involved a many faceted approach: pharmacotherapy (medication), only a small part of managing a psychiatric illness; psychotherapy; family participation; psycho-social intervention, such as admission to rehabilitation programme; and general medical care - depressed people often did not eat properly and lost their immunity.

It was important to find an antidepressant that worked for the patient and for the patient to persevere with the medication, as depression often recurred if the treatment was not followed.

“Patients need to work at it. Depression will never really get better if people do nothing,” Korb said.

Lifestyle was important. Patients had to care for themselves by staying active, relaxing and setting goals.

Depression might be more common today because the demands of life had become so extreme, he said. Many people were unable to cope.

“Society’s fabric has changed so much, with the societal stresses and demands life is putting on us.”

Betar - story of the “Come-back Kid”



Photo supplied

Former SA Betar leaders living in Israel, meet for a quarterly breakfast. By chance, Leon Reich was in Israel last year and Hertzell Katz was invited to join them. Pictured, standing are Roi Most (currently CEO of World Betar); Lennie Kohli; Hertzell Katz; Leon Reich; Mathew Karp; Bennie Penzik; Harry Brand; Yossie Gaitelband; Dr Eric Lebbanon; and Ivor Woolf. Seated: Dr Hymie Josman; Dr Hymie Green; Monty Kramer; and Barney Wainer.

STAFF REPORTER

“It was our success that lead to our decline,” is the way National Chairman David Isakow describes the falling fortunes of Betar-SA over the past decade. “The highest objective in Betar is to encourage aliyah,” he explains - and the youth movement’s top leadership all made aliyah.

That, together with losing their Shaliach in 2005 and the loss of funding for World Betar by the Sochnut after 2008, resulted in the once popular organisation all shutting down in South Africa after their 2009 year-end camp, which was attended by about 50 channichim.

In 2012 Betar-SA was revived, largely due to the efforts of Likud-SA Chairman Leon Reich, with the support of the Israel Centre and the Zionist Federation.

World Betar is celebrating its 90th anniversary this year. The movement has just held an exhibition in Jerusalem which will be starting its world-wide tour in Johannesburg next week. The exhibition will be officially opened by Professor Moshe Arens.

Exactly what caused World Betar’s funding hiatus for four to five years, is something Betarim are not comfortable talking about on the record. What is clear, however, is that the Sochnut, the Jewish Agency for Israel NGO, withheld funding to Betar for several years.

The Sochnut allocates funds to the various youth movements annually (including Israeli Arab youth movements). These funds are then distributed from Israel to their various Diaspora branches.

In the case of Betar, however, there was a concern that the funding allocation in around 2008 was “misdirected” and that “no more funds would be allocated until the money was repaid and/or heads rolled”, one Betar leader who asked that his name not be published, told the Jewish Report.

“This led to the collapse of World Betar,” said the source, including in Israel. For several years Betar was only active in the US, Canada

and Australia where it was able to continue on its own funding.

In 2011 Sochnut funding to World Betar resumed. There is an ideological (and formal) relationship between Israel’s ruling Likud party and Betar - both of which follow the right-wing Zionist policies first espoused by Ze’ev Jabotinsky. As chairman of Likud-SA, Reich stepped into the breach.

“I found that David Isakow had been on a Betar leadership training course for a year in Israel,” explains Reich, “and the minute I spoke to him, I realised we have a leader here.” And so Isakow was appointed national chairman of Betar-SA.

Reich and Isakow’s first order of business was to identify and appoint a shaliach, to identify and train madrichim and only then to recruit channichim. “We worked with Israel Centre on many of their projects and they allocated some funding when we needed it,” says Isakow.

In 2012 Betar found just the right shaliach - Ori Leizer - an Israeli who had been working on logistics at camps in the US for a very large youth movement.

“Now that we have a shaliach and trained madrichim, the backing of World Betar, the SAZF and Likud-SA,” says Isakow, “the community have trust in us.”

Betar is a Zionist political right-wing youth movement that subscribes to a traditional Orthodox view. Its appeal is to secular Jews who still want religiosity, says Isakow. At their gatherings they always have a rabbi on hand, only provide kosher catering and observe Shabbos.

They now have a well-trained leadership committee of 20 madrichim from matric upwards and are planning a rollout event to attract channichim in September. They are planning to be in a position to hold mini machanot over the next two years and a full camp at the end of 2014.

Betar’s Margate campsite was sold off five years ago and the money held in abeyance to buy a new one when required.

All systems go for a humdinger Absa Jewish Achievers banquet

It’s all systems go for this year’s Absa Jewish Achievers banquet, which takes place on Thursday August 15 at the Maroela Room, Sandton Sun Hotel.

It promises to be - again - a remarkable function: our prize winners are of the highest possible profiles in the broader South African community, all the tables are fully booked for this glitz and glamour affair, the entertainment is lined up and all the other elements to make this an extraordinary event are ready to roll.

The winners of the Cell C competition for tickets to the Achievers, who will be attending with a partner, are (in alphabetical order) Jose Bogacz, Melvyn Bookatz, Roni Lea, Mohammed Sayanvala, Adrienne Schiff, Bernard Seeff, Witness Sibanda, Eddy Steiner, Roni Zidel and a recipient who wishes to remain anonymous. Congratulations!



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Wathint’Abafazi Wathint’imbokodo!

Women’s Day is an ode to women, a celebration of womanhood. There are many outstanding women making huge contributions to the country and society.

Unfortunately, though, it is not only about celebration. The problems specific to women have not been resolved in our “enlightened” era. Is this because it is still a “man’s world” where women are viewed as objects, rather than people?

August 9 recalls the determined 20 000 women who marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria in 1956 to protest against legislation requiring black South Africans to carry the infamous “dompas”, the document which curtailed their freedom of movement during apartheid.

They sang a protest song composed for the occasion: Wathint’Abafazi Wathint’imbokodo! The phrase from the song You Strike the Woman, You Strike the Rock has come to represent women’s courage and strength.

Given that admirable history, how is it that South Africa has become known as the rape capital of the world in human rights circles? The appalling reality today is that women and child abuse ranks among the foremost scourges of the country. We should be ashamed as South Africans.

The statistics make chilling reading. The Department of Justice estimates that one out of every four South African women is a survivor of domestic violence. According to People Opposing Women Abuse, one in every six women who die in Gauteng is killed by an intimate partner.

In a research project, the Institute of Security Studies found that 90 per cent of the women interviewed had experienced emotional abuse; 90 per cent had experienced physical abuse; 71 per cent had experienced sexual abuse; and 60 per cent of all abuse cases were committed by partners, lovers or spouses.

In the Jewish community, the figures would seem on the surface to be less severe than in the general population. But let us not fool ourselves that women abuse does not also occur among us.

In the Jewish world at large, the syndrome of keeping such things hushed up and pushed out of sight is prevalent. Perpetrators are often not named and victims made to feel that exposing them would be undesirable or disloyal to their community. So the victim is left to deal with the issue herself, and the perpetrator’s personality disorders left untreated.

We tried to put ourselves in the shoes of a woman who is being abused, when she needs help urgently, during the day or even late at night. Or in the shoes of a neighbour who is aware that someone in the house next door is being abused. Do they turn to Jewish organisations? The police? Organisations in broader society?

There is also the question of who a woman can turn to for help on a longer-term basis, to resolve the deeper issues, or get back on her feet after leaving an abusive situation.

The Jewish Report contacted numerous Jewish welfare organisations to ask if they had in place a procedure to take that sort of call. Many said - regretfully - that they really should have something more organised in place, but hadn’t got around to doing it properly.

A few, however, do have the proper systems and gave us phone numbers and the services they offer. We have put together a directory of what we found on page 9.

On a positive note, we also asked several women in key positions in various organisations, whether it is indeed still a man’s world. Some of their responses are published on the facing page.

It is incumbent upon men to educate other men about this. As a poster for women’s rights put it: “Real men don’t rape.” And emotional abuse of women - humiliation, belittling, etc - must never be dismissed as “not really serious”. It can destroy a woman, her children and her entire family.

To acknowledge these issues on one day of the year is all very well. But without continuous attention to them, little is achieved in reality.

Peace talks: Right-wing intensifies efforts to influence outcome

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

Israeli settler leader Dani Dayan has made it his mission over the years to warn members of Congress, particularly Republicans, of the perils of Israeli-Palestinian peace talks.

Dayan has been a regular visitor to Washington, his trips often coinciding with developments in the peace process. During the Annapolis talks in 2007 – ‘08, Dayan would watch Israeli officials as they met with the media in the lobby of the venerable Mayflower Hotel, just blocks from the White House, and then move in to offer his own spin.

In June, Dayan met with GOP House leaders in a meeting organised with help from the Zionist Organisation of America. The meeting was followed by a Washington Jewish Week report that another settler leader, Gershon Mesika, met with 20 Congress members just days before the relaunch of peace talks between Israelis and Palestinians.

The intensive cultivation of relationships on Capitol Hill appears to be bearing fruit.

Within days of talks kicking off in Washington last week, Representative Matt Salmon (Republican Arizona), a freshman who attended the June meeting with Dayan, drafted a letter asking the US attorney general to hinder the release of Palestinian prisoners - a move approved by Israel to help kick-start negotiations.

Dayan didn’t ask Salmon to write the letter; that request was made by the Endowment for Middle East Truth, a conservative lobby funded in part by gaming billionaire Sheldon Adelson.

But the congressional measures now being undertaken to impact the trajectory of peace talks have their roots in the warm relations that settlers and their American friends have forged in Congress over the past two decades.

“It was important to meet with the Yesha people,” a GOP official said of the June meeting, using the Hebrew acronym for the settlers’ council, “to find out who the settlers are, what they feel obstacles to peace are, what Judea and Samaria means from a historical perspective.”

In addition to Salmon’s letter, a perennial effort to tighten a 1995 law requiring the United States to move its embassy to Jerusalem reappeared just as talks resumed. The strengthened law would remove a presidential waiver that has enabled successive presidents to delay the move on the grounds of national security.

Members of Congress behind both ini-



Dani Dayan, a leader of Israel’s Yesha settlers council, makes a point at a meeting with Republican congressional leaders in Washington, on June 27.

tiatives deny that the measures - neither in timing nor in substance - are intended to scuttle the peace talks. On the contrary, the lawmakers say they are intended to improve the chances of success for the talks by strengthening Israel’s bargaining position and making American parameters clear to the Palestinians.

“There will never be clear sailing as long as there are people who do not recognise Israel as a Jewish nation,” said Representative Doug Lamborn (Republican Colorado), one of the sponsors of the new Jerusalem bill.

But the settler leaders and the right-wing pro-Israel groups that support them are more blunt about their objectives.

“I told the congresspersons that the strategic choice that John Kerry made to go on with the conventional peace process to try to renew negotiations... will have catastrophic consequences for the American national interests,” Dayan said.

“Because when he fails - and he will fail - the fact that the secretary of state of the United States failed will be noticed very clearly in Tehran and in Damascus and in Moscow and in Pyongyang.”

Daniel Mandel, director of ZOA’s Centre for Middle East Policy, said his group was gearing up to push back against talks it believed were doomed because the Palestinians remained unwilling to accept Israel’s existence as a Jewish state.

“Our strategy now that negotiations have resumed is to unblinkingly focus on the unregenerative nature of Abbas’ Palestinian Authority,” Mandel said, referring to Mahmoud Abbas, the P.A. president.

Efforts to exert congressional pressure to affect the outcome of peace talks are not new.

Following the launch of the Oslo peace process in the early 1990s, right-wing Israelis and their allies helped pass a con-

gressional bill that would move the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem - a move that would buttress Israeli claims to the city whose ultimate fate was to be determined by Israelis and Palestinians.

A separate bill sought to prevent US troops from patrolling the Golan Heights to help cement a peace deal with Syria. Yitzhak Rabin, then the Israeli prime minister, expressed his frustration at both moves.

Back then, the right-wingers had mainstream allies; the American Israel Public Affairs Committee lobbied for the Jerusalem law. AIPAC did not respond to requests for comment on the new Jerusalem bill, which is backed by the ZOA.

Republican House officials say their members are deeply sceptical about the renewed talks, which were launched after an intensive round of shuttle diplomacy by Kerry. Sensitive to Republican mistrust of President Barack Obama’s foreign policy agenda, Dayan said he attempted to persuade House leaders that the peace process would harm US interests.

“I would like Congress to explain to the State Department that this is a morally improper way to conduct diplomacy,” Dayan in an interview this week.

Sarah Stern, the director of the Endowment for Middle East Truth, said her primary concern was for the families of those killed by the released prisoners, but she acknowledged there was a dividend in alerting Americans to the dangers of the peace process.

“I can’t petition the Israeli government as an American citizen, I can only petition our officials,” Stern said. “But as a sidebar, it’s painful to see Israel has to go through so much just to get the Palestinians to sit down, and it’s a very sad thing that Israel has been subject to so much pressure by Kerry.” (JTA)

SAY YES TO A BETTER YEAR

It’s time for all of us to say ‘yes’!

Rosh Hashanah is a poignant time of year for every Jewish person. It’s a time of retrospection, introspection and most of all, a time we should look to the next year with joyful optimism and inspiration.

With this sentiment at its core, Chabad House hosts the annual “Say Yes To a Better Year” event just before Rosh Hashanah, on August 20 at 20:00 in the Maroela Room of the Sandton Sun Hotel. There will be a donation of R50 required.

This year Chabad House is hosting Adrian Gore, CEO of Discovery; Shimona Tzukernik, International Kabbalah coach; Rabbi Ari Shishler; and Rabbi Michael Katz.

In the build-up to the event and in the spirit of “Say Yes To a Better Year” the “Say Yes” street team has been saying “yes” to the fabulous things making Jewish Johannesburg what it is!

So far they have said “yes” to Mooz Brothers, KosherWorld, Simba Salt and Vinegar Chips, Norwood Mall and of course the Jewish Report, to name but a few. With just under two weeks to go, we have yet to see what else they say “yes” to. Apparently we still have Moishe’s biltong and Nando’s to look forward to.

Samples of the product or services selected, are handed out at various locations around Johannesburg.

The “Say Yes” street team has also been selling tickets and giving out badges asking what you say “yes” to. By writing this on your badge and logging your sentiment with them, you gain entry into a draw, whereby in true Miracle Drive style, a prize will be awarded at the event. Online ticket purchases will also be entered into the draw by answering the same question.

If you see the street team, or the “Say Yes” truck, take a photo with them, post it to Facebook, like and tag the Miracle Drive page - prizes will be awarded for this.

• For more information, call (011) 440-6600.

Community Voices

Are women finally accepted as equals on all levels?

On August 9, 1956, 20 000 South African women, led by Lilian Ngoyi, Helen Joseph, Rahima Moosa and Sophie Williams, marched in their masses to the Union Buildings in Pretoria, to protest against the proposed amendments to the pass laws. Apartheid was rife, the world was in a state of madness: this week, the SA Jewish Report approached several women employed in high ranking professional or vocational positions, the kind of jobs that in a previous era would generally have been occupied by men. And we asked them if things had changed.



Sara Gon, former Justice of the Labour Courts of South Africa and co-founder of the Johannesburg Philharmonic Orchestra: “It depends. In SA it is, if you are uneducated. You are more likely to be poor and subject to the power of headmen and husbands or boyfriends. “For educated women life is more

equitable if not completely equal. Most companies treat women equally and respectfully. The unfair labour practice jurisdiction sorts out many anomalies. “There’s much hand wringing and breast-beating about women occupying so few positions of power in corporates. Sometimes it is about the glass ceiling and chauvinism. But there is an issue never discussed: by the time women reach the point where they can become company directors, they don’t want to. “They learn that corporate life is not the be-all and end-all. They want to strike out in different, more creative, directions after years of climbing the ladder. They want a greater quality of home life. Working 18 hours a day, seven days a week, at the beck and call of a corporate is not terribly attractive.”



Lisa Chait, co producer SABC3 Series I Am Woman Leap of Faith: “Of course it is, but us gals are definitely bringing up the rear. Remarkable strides have been made on many fronts and the number of women in key positions is still on the increase. “Point is, we shouldn’t have had to be on the back foot to start with! So I say: ‘Viva jobs-based-on-pure-merit-across-the-board, Viva!’ Here’s another thing: Women need to step up and join conversations. Shabbos table conversations around politics, for example, still sees women sitting quietly while the men hold the fort. “I know that women these days are perfectly up to speed with what’s going on, certainly enough to venture an opinion! But old habits die hard. Don’t hold back girls, the old times are past.”



Marcelle Ravid, Johannesburg City Councillor for Ward 73: “Yes, it is certainly still a man’s world - but with a difference. The old chauvinistic self-righteousness still exists among the old school who can behave badly towards women who threaten them, but the boys’ club is not woman-proof anymore. “Statistics in the work place show that women are becoming more successful, but still remain a minority in power positions. It always perturbs me, though, that positions safeguarded for women, means that not all women are appointed on the basis of their competence and this makes the rules of the game different. “This clouds the call for equality. I wait for the day that everyone is appointed for their ability to do the job and not because of their gender.”

Bonita Meyersfeld, Associate Professor of Law at Wits University and Head of Gender at the Centre of Applied Legal Studies: “Yes, it is still a man’s world; the difference is that now we have a pretense of equality that is yet to be implemented in practice. Individuals are still judged by their sex and not by their individual capacities.”



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8. ADRIENNE SCHIFF
9. JOSE BOGACZ
10. MELVYN BOOKATZ

OFFICIAL PARTNER OF THE ABSA JEWISH ACHIEVERS AWARDS



Women in crisis: where to turn to

Women’s Day is an appropriate time to look at women abuse in all its ugly facets. There are so many faces to this scourge: physical, mental... And if a woman needs help, usually urgently and often in the dead of night, who can she turn to? Are there appropriate structures in the community to deal with it and ease the trauma - which often also involves children? The Jewish Report has compiled an easy to follow directory of services available. It is by no means complete, but we are sure anyone in need of help will find at least one number to dial for help.

JOHANNESBURG

The Chevrah Kadisha is the one community organisation most Jewish people in need will turn to. Here are appropriate telephone numbers on a 24-hour basis.

The Chev offers comprehensive assistance to Jewish women facing hardships. Challenges can arise as a result of domestic violence, abuse, divorce, abandonment or for a multitude of other reasons. Help is provided in the form of crisis intervention, safe shelter, financial support or counselling. In many cases a combination of these services is required.

Those who attend the Chev’s Divorce Support Group receive structured, practical and emotional guidance on a variety of topics.

Women in need of counselling can contact a professional therapist during office hours on (011) 532-9616; on the after-hours hotline on 082-499-1010 or by e-mail on jjhbchev.co.za. Financial Assistance Services can be reached on (011) 532-9710.

Other appropriate numbers in Johannesburg

LifeLine: (011)-728-1347
POWA 24 hr no: 0800 150 150
CSO Emergency: 086 18000 18
Hatzolah 24 hour line: 083-222-1818

The Union of Jewish Women has been providing “Comfort Packs” to rape survivors for over 18 years. These packs contain clean clothing, new underwear and toiletries such as soap, a toothbrush and toothpaste, sanitary towels and a face cloth. Where possible, “luxury items” such as deodorant and body

lotions are included. In addition, a soft cuddly toy is provided for the raped and abused children - girls as well as boys.

The UJW’s aim is to help to restore dignity to women and children who have fallen prey to the horrific scourge of rape and abuse, and to help soften the trauma as much as possible.

Contact: Tel JHB UJW OFFICE (011) 648-1053

CAPE TOWN

The UJW in Cape Town has refurbished a Comfort Room at the Milnerton Police Station and also supports one in Stellenbosch. The UJW collects items and pack rape kits which are distributed to Rape Crisis Clinics and other appropriate organisations.

CAPE TOWN UJW OFFICE (021) 434-9555;

Jewish Community Services in Cape Town is an organisation which is part of a Cape Town Jewish community-wide education and awareness campaign to combat domestic and gender violence and abuse (GBV&A), both within the Jewish community and broader South African society.

Organisations that are taking part in the campaign, include the Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies, Bnoth Zion WIZO, the Union of Jewish Women, United Herzlia Schools, the United Orthodox Synagogues, Temple Israel, Jewish Care Cape, SAUJS and Jewish Community Services.

Professionals from all of these organisations, including rabbis, teachers, social workers and community leaders can be contacted by anyone who is a victim of abuse, or to be alerted of such issues by a concerned family member or friend.

If you are a survivor or victim of gender violence or abuse or concerned about a family member or friend, then call the

gender-based violence and abuse line on 072-538-6871. Your confidentiality is assured.

Other organisations to contact are Jewish Community Services, which is available for the entire Western Cape region (021) 462-5520 and the Women’s Legal Centre (021) 424-5660 for lists of counsellors and professionals in your area.

For more information of the Cape Town GBV&A campaign, visit www.capebod.org.za/gbva

DURBAN

Durban Jewish Social Services (DJSS) has been looking after the needs of the community since its establishment in 1898. Ongoing projects include kosher mobile meals, financial relief and rehabilitation, crisis and statutory intervention.

In particular, the DJSS and its social worker, are there to assist any women in the community experiencing financial or emotional problems.

Tel: (031) 202-6409 or e-mail djss@idialup.co.za

The various shuls in Durban can also be reached out to a time of crisis at the following numbers:

- Temple David: (031) 208-6105
- Durban United Hebrew Congregation: (031) 201-5177 or e-mail duhc@iafrica.com
- Chabad of the North Coast: (031) 561-2487 or e-mail chabadnc@global.com

Durban UJW is involved with packing and supplying care bags to the Umbilo Police Station and have also given these bags to the Bobbi Bear Foundation for abused children.

Contact: Tel DURBAN UJW OFFICE (031) 335 4457

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Tzvi Karp fashion designer’s style is “sikh punk”

ROBYN SASSEN

Wearing a miscellany of accessories, drawing from all over the cultural radius, fashion designer Tzvi Karp, 26, is the kind of person you might want to photograph if you see him in the street, simply because he looks so outrageously beautiful.

“I call my own style sikh-punk,” he grins through his long beard, white turban, pierced septum connected to his ear with a spiked chain, not to mention a safety pin-adorned T-shirt under a leather jacket. The ensemble comes together with Doc Martens boots. “I don’t do yoga. My fashion decisions are purely aesthetic,” he says.

“I always wanted to do something creative in my life,” he explains how he wowed both the SA Fashion Week and the Mercedes Benz Fashion Week with his graduating collection of designs from the London International School of Fashion (LISOF) in 2011. “Fine art seems to have lost its direction. Design is limited to rules, which you get to break.

“I was thrown in the deep end: directly after my graduation; SA Fashion Week’s Lucille Booyens commissioned me to showcase a



Fashion designer Tzvi Karp and runway shots from his recent collection.

Photo of Tzvi by Gavin Goodman

new collection for the next season. And Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, under Dr Precious Moloi-Motsepe asked to show my graduating collection, which was themed around human trafficking. It comprised things like a dress three models wore simultaneously, examining how body space can be linked.

“My design aesthetic is experimental and conceptual. Commercialism doesn’t interest me. Not now. It’s one of the advantages on this level. You do not have to focus on a target market; instead you get to explore architectural possibilities of what you are making.

“My design ideas might mu-

tate within a commercial sphere to be more practical. And other designers might work with them, altering hemlines and necklines. Changes are corruptions but they do not hurt the designer; they’re about the business of fashion.

“I’m inspired by the body itself: designing fashion is about telling

a story; I’m also governed in the work I do by my process and what I can afford.

“The broader fashion design industry is a multi-billion dollar one, catering to a specific market. A designer is assumed to have premonitions, but I choose to distance myself from that.

“I’m influenced by many things, from inner city kids to religious Jews.” His studio is in the city centre. “I love being in the heart of Johannesburg with all its craziness.

In clothing himself, he enjoys eclecticism: “I purchase wherever possible in vintage or second hand shops. In calling my personal style ‘sikh-punk’, I juxtapose the tranquility of the East with the hostility of punk culture. People stare at me all the time! I love ‘making you look’.

“I identify very strongly with being Jewish. I love how religious Jews are so distinctive and separate from a general aesthetic. They have their own, immensely proud and dignified context.”

Karp showed new designs with Mercedes Benz Fashion Week, earlier this year. He’s currently on deadline with a new collection for them, which launches in October, with 18 new looks

Meyersfeld’s gutsy show resonates with his German history

ROBYN SASSEN

His photos hit you in the solar plexus: they’re shocking yet superficially sedate like the work of 20th century Belgian surrealist painter Rene Magritte. Inimitably staged, but sliding around direct interpretation, flirting with a sense of artifice and a concomitant sense of violence, the images tell stories, but they’re not his: photographer, Michael Meyersfeld, who’s been exhibiting since 1975, is impatient with giving explanations.

Having hosted a retrospective at Absa Gallery last year, Meyersfeld, who is notorious for controversy and published “Gaze”, a visual essay on homosexuals in society recently, is embarking on a curious project which intertwines his Jewish heritage with the forces that have bruised it and embraced it, historically.

The story reaches across three generations and two continents: “My grandfather, Berthold was a banker in Braunschweig, Germany. His son, Herbert, my father, grew up with a non-Jewish boy: Richard Borek; their fathers went to school together.

“The D Meyersfeld Bank was founded in 1838 by my great grandfather, Bernhard. It was housed in a well-respected landmark. It was a well-respected



Untitled, by Michael Meyersfeld, one of the works which will be shown in Braunschweig next month.

institution. Until the global depression of 1929. Like countless other institutions and individuals, the Meyersfeld Bank was a casualty. From one day to the next, the family lost everything.

“There was one exception: they were able to retain the building that had housed the bank. Meyersfeld’s

grandmother turned the building into the Meyersfeld Café, forbidding the swastika to be raised on her building in 1933, when the Nazis came into power.

“My father left Germany and eventually arrived in South Africa in 1936; he married my mother in 1939 in Johannesburg.” And life carried on.

“I became a great friend of Richard junior (my contemporary); his son Richard celebrated his 21st birthday in our home in Johannesburg.”

The Borek family made their fortune in stamps and coins and later, property. Speaking of how Jewish and German identity were connected and how he had to weather having had a generations-long family tie disparaged as “that Nazi”, Meyersfeld acknowledges an intellectual process he went through in understanding that not every German was a Nazi.

Meyersfeld’s contemporary, Richard Borek has invited him to host a four-month-long retrospective of his work in Braunschweig. It’s a very art-savvy city, with one of the most important international art universities in its midst. But this isn’t any ordinary prestigious exhibition: it will be housed in the building which was Meyersfeld’s family’s bank.

“It is empty but immaculate,” Meyersfeld, who leaves South Africa to install his show, early in September, recalls the 10-roomed house, which he first visited as a 19 year old. “In many ways, it is like this Meyersfeld is coming home. The exhibition will be held in the home my father was born in on September 11, nearly a hundred years after his birth.”

Hodes and Ossendryver explore the Tree of Life

Exhibition: “Tree of Life”, an exhibition by Loren Hodes and Ilan Ossendryver, Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre, Oaklands (011) 728-8088), until September 1

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

Contemporary local artist Loren Hodes and photographer Ilan Ossendryver have collaborated to produce an exhibition which explores trees in their physical, spiritual and metaphorical aspects. It’s generally a strong show, thwarted a little by inconsistencies and twee-ness.

While Ossendryver shows a body of eight pieces, some of which contemplate light and the fractious surrounds of trees, Hodes’ work enfolds

it with some 30 paintings and drawings.

In one of Ossendryver’s pieces, a grand baobab explodes within the format of the composition. It’s a hugely celebratory work that grabs you by the heart and makes your emotions soar.

The show stumbles a little with literalness, in the case of Hodes’ paintings that engage kabbalistic interpretations of the idea of the Tree of Life, where we see a Torah scroll floating within the branches of a tree, or elements of the Temple, for instance, but it drifts melliflously from this when thematically the work is allowed to reach beyond literal interpretations of what the Tree of Life can mean.

In Tree of Fire, for instance, we see Hodes creating a complex tree, overwhelmingly red, impec-

cably strong in its sense of life. It’s a small work in mixed media, but it holds you like few others.

While there’s a great spirit of experimentation in this considerably sized show, many works skirt on whimsical lines and such clear homage is paid to Vincent van Gogh in one of the pieces, it seems uncomfortable. Also, Hodes tends to sign her work in a manner so bold and so legible that it affects your eye’s ability to sally untrammelled through her work.

The exhibition concludes with another Ossendryver work, entitled “The Last Remaining Jews of Ethiopia”, which draws from the photographer’s work in the region, but gives fulsomeness to an understanding of the idea of Tree of Life. Here we see many Ethiopian men, ensconced in talleisim;

the values of growth and fruition flow from its compositional width and depth.



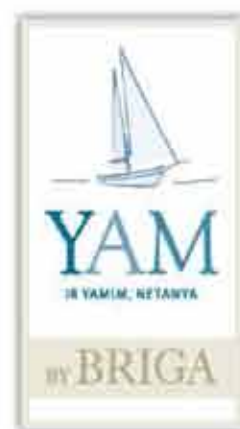
Tree of Fire by Loren Hodes, in mixed media.



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Our Jewish brides in a class of their own

Photographs come in steadily for the Jewish Report’s exciting and prestigious Bride of the Year 2013 competition. Enticing prizes - with details to be announced at a later date - await the winning bridal couple. Come on brides, share your glorious moment with our readers and also stand a chance to win some of our mouth-watering prizes! The rules of the competition explain the simple procedure to be followed. At the bottom is a printed entry form to accompany your entry.

- Rules:**
1. Entries close at the end of November 2013. (The exact date will be announced later.) All brides married between January 2013 and November 2013, are eligible for entry.
2. Brides must be present in South Africa at the time of judging.
3. The only photographs permitted for entry, are those submitted by the bride herself, or by her photographer with her explicit permission. All entries MUST be signed by the bride herself.
4. Photographs will be printed within the time frame and discretion of the Jewish Report.
5. Photographs for submission, must be in high resolution PDF and JPEG.
6. The judges’ decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.
7. Members of Jewish Report and competition sponsors, will not be allowed to vote on family member entries.
8. Very important: Please note that all photographs MUST be submitted to brides@sajewishreport.co.za - a form is available on www.sajewishreport.co.za
Send the photos to: Attention: Susan at brides@sajewishreport.co.za

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TAMSYN BERNATH
Groom’s name: Jonathan Sweidan
Place of chuppah: Killarney Country Club
Date of wedding: March 7, 2013
Photographer: Mandelle Bernstein



ASHLEIGH (ARIELLA) GAWRONSKY
Groom’s name: Rabbi Nissen Goldman
Place of chuppah: Great Synagogue, Gardens, Cape Town
Date of wedding: July 21, 2013
Photographer: Guy Lerner



TALIA SINGER
Groom’s name: Ashley Gritzman
Place of chuppah: Mizrachi Shul
Date of wedding: January 24, 2013
Photographer: Mario Sales



AMANDA BLANKFIELD
Groom’s name: Justin Adam Koseff
Place of chuppah: Urban Tree, Kramerville
Date of wedding: May 26, 2013
Photographer: Lisa Skinner



JHANA SEARLL
Groom’s name: Jonathan Weltman
Place of chuppah: The Grand Cafe and Beach, Granger Bay, Cape Town
Date of wedding: April 28, 2013
Photographer: Jean Pierre Uys

Please send in your photograph with:

Bride's first and maiden names

Groom's name

Place of chuppah

Date of wedding

Name of photographer

Contact telephone number (bride)

Contact telephone number (groom)

E-mail address

Postal address postcode

Cell number

Email consent given for the printing of this photograph

Would you like to get your photographs back? YES / NO

Note: No entries will be accepted unless all the fields (name, telephone number, e-mail address etc) are filled in correctly.

Camp Gan Yisrael pays warm tribute to Nelson Mandela

LEIBEL BAUMGARTEN

Camp Gan Yisrael, run under the auspices of Chabad House, continued its growth with more than 450 children enjoying two weeks of fun, trips and Jewish education during the holidays.

As part of the programme, children spent 67 minutes on Nelson Mandela’s birthday (on July 18) making sand-wiches for distribution to impoverished children in the Malatjlie township near Lanseria Airport.

Camp Gan Yisrael is “driven” in part by Chabad House’s Miracle Drive, directed by Rabbis David Masinter and Michael Katz. The programme has already sponsored numerous efforts on behalf of the residents of Malatjlie.

“Madiba spent his life working to better the lives of others,” explained camp directors Rabbi Pini and Rochie Pink to the children at the time. “We are going to spend a few minutes following in those footsteps and do something great for needy children in his honour.”

Camp Gan Yisrael has become a household name throughout the Johannesburg Jewish community and each year it is growing steadily.

The programme includes trips to the Aquadome and ice skating, along with Jewish pride-themed activities and games.

Head staff hailing from as far away as California, led a team of devoted and energetic staff in giving the kids a most memorable experience. Abba Raichik and Yossi Richler headed the boys’ division; Esty Wineberg and Chomi Lisbon the girls’ and Chanie Spielman and Mushky Grossman, the kiddie camp.



Photo: Mendi Katz

Having fun on the rock-climbing wall at Gan Yisrael.

Sandton Sinai Nursery kids had a ball!

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Sandton Sinai Nursery School annual winter holiday camp was packed with a variety of fantastic activities and delicious snacks. The children enjoyed our pizza-making day among other exciting activities that took place. Sandton

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- For more details contact (011) 802-1210, office@sandtonsinai.co.za and visit our website www.sandtonsinai.co.za



Azriel Shevel; Naomi Winer; Kim Kassel; Ariella Hurvitz; Eli Sacks; and Raphael Finkel.

Minnie Bersohn tots all fired up by a red monster

MICHELLE VINOKUR

The children at Minnie Bersohn Pre-Primary School in Johannesburg, are learning about various occupations. A variety of visitors came to speak to them about their jobs.

On Wednesday, July 31, the children were treated to a visit from the Sandton Fire Station. They got to see a real fire engine and a demonstration of how the fire fighters do their job. Lots of fun was had by all and the grade Rs even got to ride in the fire engine!



Photo: Michelle Vinokur

Pictured are Jaco Kotze (fireman); Pamela Silverman (teacher); Rhulani Ramaloko (community educator). Kneeling: Michelle Vinokur (teacher); and the grade R children of Minnie Bersohn.

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Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

This year's Limmud festival has just concluded in Cape Town and is now underway in Durban. Over the long weekend, it will take place in Gauteng. Limmud, with its top notch speakers and multiple opportunities for multifaceted Jewish learning and cultural enrichment, has been an outstanding success in South Africa. In all three centres, it regularly attracts high attendances representing a broad spectrum of political and religious views and is now among the most eagerly anticipated events on our communal calendar. As in the past, many Board members will be attending and in some cases taking part as speakers. Once again, I commend the organisers for all their hard work in bringing this event to our shores.

Durban happenings

Durban Jewry is currently abuzz with the many diverse activities that have been taking place in the city over the past couple of weeks. This commenced with the AGM of the Council for KwaZulu-Natal Jewry, at which former Durbanite Tony Leon was guest speaker. Since then, the South African Rabbinical Association has held its annual conference at the new Jewish campus at Izinga, in Umhlanga. I had the opportunity of meeting with some of the delegates and addressing the event on the work of the Board.

What's On

Saturday evening (August 10)

WIZO Tzabar hosts an "Edith Piaf Cabaret Evening" at the EOH Auditorium, Block D. 1 Osborne Bedfordview. Cost: R150 (incl finger food, wine, tea, coffee and cakes). Contact: Ayala (011) 882-9875 or 082-412-2269 or Graciela (011) 882-6060 or 082-925-0924.

Monday (August 12)

NW Shuls (Blairgowrie, Emmarentia, Greenside, Northcliff and Victory Park), hosts Prof Cyril Karabus who was detained in the United Arab Emirates for some nine months before found not guilty of manslaughter and fraud charges. Venue: Greenside Shul. Time: 18:45 for 19:00. Cost: R30 (incl refreshments). Bookings: Nadine (011) 788-5036.

UJW hosts Digby Ricci, head of English, Roedean School, on "The Great Gatsby on Paper and on Screen". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

SAZF hosts Kasim Hafeez in Cape Town, talking on "The Day I Stopped Hating Israel", his transition from radical Muslim to proud Zionist. Contact: Yvette, (021) 464-6714.

Tuesday (August 13)

UJW hosts Pilyppa Meyer who will conduct a tour of "Brenthurst Library", Federation Road, Parktown, Johannesburg. Time:10:00. Bookings: (011) 648-1053. Donation: R30. Numbers are limited. Meet at Brenthurst Library at 09:45.

SAZF hosts Kasim Hafeez, "From Radical Muslim to Proud Zionist", the young British Muslim of Pakistani origin who becamea proud Zionist after reading "The Case for Israel" by Professor Alan Dershowitz. Venue: Abe Abrahamson Auditorium, Beyachad. Time: 19:30 for 20:00. Cost: R100 (incl coffee and

dessert). Bookings: Miriam (011) 645-2531 or miriam@beyachad.co.za

Wednesday (August 14)

UJW CT adult education programme hosts Tony Weaver will talk on "Exploring Barotseland and the Busanga Plains – Zambia". Venue: Stonehaven, Sea Point. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20. Enquires: (021) 434-9555 (until 14:00).

UJW screens Series 3 (last episodes) of "Downtown Abbey". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time 09:30. Donation: R30. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

SAZF again hosts Kasim Hafeez, talking on "The Day I Stopped Hating Israel", his transition from radical Muslim to proud Zionist. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 19:30 for 20:00. Cost: R100 (incl coffee and dessert). Contact: (011) 645-2531 after 10:00.

Thursday (August 15)

UJW Lena Segal/Linksfield branch hosts a "Tea and Talk" in support of DL Link, a support group for Jewish cancer patients and their families. Guest speakers will give insight into the organisation: Shirley Ancer, cancer survivor; and Ruth Ancer, psychologist. Time: 10:00 – 11:30. Donations will be appreciated. RSVP: Phillipa Levitan 073-158-1988 or e-mail: phil@traininginteractive.co.za

SAZF hosts Kasim Hafeez, talking in Durban on "The Day I Stopped Hating Israel", his transition from radical Muslim to proud Zionist. Contact: Grant, (031) 337-1507.

Friday (August 16)

UZLC hosts Mannie Zar on "Some Humour in the Law". Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria, 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Social worker

The Selwyn Segal Centre for Intellectually Disabled People, situated in Sandringham, has a vacancy for a social worker.

The position requires skills in working with individuals, families and groups and offers the opportunity to work within a very committed and supportive multi-disciplinary team. Registration SACSSP is essential. Computer literacy, a valid driver's licence and own transport are required. Knowledge of Jewish culture, practice and religion, would be an advantage.

Only short-listed applicants will be responded to.

Interested candidates please forward a current CV to hr@jhbchev.co.za or Attention HR Dept, Private Bag X1, Sandringham, 2131, or fax 0866327774

Rugby definitely not a game for the fainthearted



ROCKING THE BOAT
Jack Milner

According to an old joke, the definition of an accountant is a Jewish boy who can't stand the sight of blood. Perhaps we have it wrong. It could be the parents who can't stand the sight of blood!

That was highlighted at the recent Maccabiah when the under-18 South African rugby team played England in their opening match. South African lock Michael Levenstein ended up with a cut above the eye and anybody who has experienced that sort of injury knows it can bleed profusely.

He left the field so the team doctors could stitch up the cut and his mother, Mireille, obviously concerned about her son, went along to see how he was.

He was fine but she had one look at all the blood on his face and passed out.

Michael, accountancy awaits you...

On the subject of the junior teams who

have just returned from the Maccabiah, South Africa scooped the pool in both rugby and cricket. The rugby sevens and XV's both won gold medals, as did the cricket team.

The exploits of the sevens team were discussed two weeks back. The SA under-18 XV's won all their games, beating England 26 - 3 in the first round and then defeating Israel 15 - 5 in a tough second encounter. England scored a win over Israel and met South Africa in the final, which was won emphatically by the "Jewish mini-Boks" 40 - 0.

Junior rugby was only just introduced into the Maccabi Games, but the South African junior cricket team has a proud tradition at the event.

The country has produced a number of top performers at the event and I know Adam Bacher was very keen to try and keep "player-of-the-tournament" Daniel Harrisberg involved in the sport following the 2005 Games.

This year was no exception and the team, managed by Myron Michel and coached by Jono Leaf-Wright, were also unbeaten throughout the tournament.

As was the case with the rugby tournament, only three countries competed in

cricket - South Africa, Great Britain and Israel. The South Africans won all their round robin matches and squared up against Great Britain in the final. The Brits batted first and were all out for 145 and South Africa reached the winning total of 146 for the loss of just three wickets and with 20 overs to spare, to win the final by seven wickets.

Man of the Match went to Joshua Gordon for scoring 63 not out, but he also went on to claim the Player of the Tournament award as well.

All Man of the Match awards were decided by Israeli and international umpires and the Player of the Tournament was decided by the Israel Cricket Association.

The results and medal winners are just starting to creep in but King David High Linksfield was delighted with the performances of its learners who participated in the Maccabiah. The 45 athletes who travelled to Israel included cricketers Joshua Gordon and bowler Riley Freeman, who had overall figures 12/42 in 18,4 overs in just four games. He took six wickets against Israel and four in the final.



Joshua Gordon receives his Player of the Tournament award from ICA chairman Stanley Perlman.

Aston Silver achieved Most Valuable Player of the Tournament for the under-18 sevens team, while Danica Schlome and Chava Barit brought home bronze medals in two events.

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Ochberg Orphan Solly Jossel: A life well lived

SHIRA DRUION

Solly Jossel, the last remaining male "Ochberg Orphan", recently celebrated his 99th birthday. Jossel was one of 200 Polish children allowed to come to South Africa with the permission of General Jannie Smuts to escape the atrocities of the pogroms instigated by the Cossacks in the 1920s.

Jossel's wife Sylvia (88), says: "We think he was born under a lucky star. Ochberg chose him alongside only seven others from 400 other children in his orphanage. Ochberg was mandated to select eight orphans from several orphanages across Poland."

His mother brought him to the orphanage at the age of two in the hope that he would be offered a chance at a better life. Jossel says: "My father was killed one night when he went outside to help a young woman being beaten by the Cossacks. My mother was left a widow with three children, pregnant with me."

"My mother visited me at the orphanage. When I was selected, she came to say goodbye, knowing she would most likely never see me again. She handed me a picture of herself with her name and address.

"Later, when my adopted parents took me home from the orphanage in Doornfontein, I handed my mother the picture and she wrote to my birth mother to tell her that she has her son and will look after him for her.

"My mother in Poland had a neighbour who translated the letters for her into Polish and that is how they stayed in touch."

Erna hits 103 with lots of style

ROBYN SASSEN

"It's a good secret," 103-year-old resident of Our Parents Home, Erna Cramer, who celebrated her birthday on August 6, laughed with glee in response to my question about the secret of her longevity. "And I'm not going to tell you!"

Born in Cape Town in 1910, she moved with her family to Wolmaransstad in what's now Northwest Province. "It was a godforsaken place. I came to Johannesburg to work," she remembers.

The third of four children, Erna née Bach, married Hans Cramer in 1941. They had one daughter, Melanie. "She was very active in fundraising," says Melanie. "She was always

doing volunteer work for St John Ambulance, the MOTHs and Bikkur Cholim, and she also liked helping 'the old people' in the home, making herself a stalwart in OPH fundraising activities, from doll-selling stalls to book sales."

An assiduous knitter - until arthritis halted her fingers - and a passionate reader - there's a copy of a W Somerset Maugham novel on her bedside table - Erna has lived in Our Parents Home for 16 years.

With a beautiful manicure and light pink nail varnish, her hair and make-up freshly done, Erna looked every bit the elegant great-granny, awaiting the arrival of great-grandchildren from Australia in December.

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