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Jewish Report

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Generation Sinai has taken the Jewish world by storm. This initiative, started by Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein in South Africa in 2011, to get parents and children studying a portion of Torah together at Jewish day schools, has escalated spectacularly. At present tens of thousands of parents - and grandparents too - and children at more than 100 Jewish day schools in 38 cities across six continents, united in a joint initiative of global Jewish unity last Friday. As Rabbi Goldstein has put it: “Sharing Torah together - that’s what Generation Sinai is about.” Generation Sinai takes place just before Shavuot, the holiday which marks the actual giving of the Torah to Moses. “The Torah is the unifying factor of the Jewish people,” the Chief Rabbi has said. In South Africa it has been embraced with passion, with up to four generations studying Torah together. Pictured are four generations of one family studying together - at King David Victory Park Primary. They are Joe Sack (great-grandfather) right; Justine Cohen (mother at the back); grandfather Maurice Sack (left), with grandchildren Demi and Ruby Cohen. See page 6.



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Bitachon - trust in G-d



Parshat Bamidbar
Rabbi Danny
Sackstein
Sunny Road Shul

A young man returned from visiting his father in hospital. His father was tragically losing his long battle with cancer. The renowned Rabbi Shimon Schwab asked the man about the condition of his father. He answered: “I have trust in G-d that he will recover.”

Rabbi Schwab told him that trust in G-d does not mean all will turn out the way we wish; it means whatever happens is part of G-d’s masterplan. This is a mistake we often make.

Faith and trust (emunah and bitachon) in G-d are the foundation of the Torah. On Shavuot we relive the earth-shattering event that changed the world: the giving of the Torah.

Our sages teach (Makkos 23b-24a): Six hundred and thirteen mitzvot were given to

Moses at Mount Sinai. Habakuk said they rest on one principle, as it says (Habakuk 2:4): “The righteous shall live by their faith.”

Faith (emunah) is loyalty to the knowledge that there is a Creator of the universe. An obvious fact when we look at the intricate world around us. Trust (bitachon) is living with that faith. Faith is the dress rehearsal, trust is opening night knowing G-d is behind the curtain whispering our lines.

The Talmud (Bava Matzia 15a) relates a conversation with G-d and Joab (Iyov). Joab had a very difficult life losing his money, his family and his health. Joab turns to G-d saying: “Maybe you have mixed up my name, I am Iyov - Joab not Oyav - your enemy.” G-d answers: “Where were you when the world was created?”

We are here in this world for a very short time. There is no way we can understand the true reasons why things happen. Imagine arriving an hour late to a movie and leaving after just 10 minutes. The plot and the characters are a mystery because we have missed most of the story.

Our lives in this world are the same. Our

brief appearance of 70 or 80 years is less than 10 minutes in the journey of our souls. Our previous incarnations and the tikkun, rectification needed for our souls are not apparent to us. Much of what happens and why it happens remains a mystery. Only Hashem sees the full picture and the entire timeline of our souls.

G-d wants us to be cognisant of this process. Sometimes the events of our lives are

painful, very often they are perplexing. We are sent to this world to develop spiritually through the Torah and mitzvot and our trust in G-d.

This entails living with the deep knowledge that nothing is random and everything makes perfect sense in G-d’s masterplan. This will only be revealed to us when we leave this finite world and enter the eternal world of souls.

Shabbat Times and Yomtov Times				
June 10 / 4 Sivan June 11 / 5 Sivan				
Shavuot June 12 / June 13 Parshat Bamidbar				
June 10 Start	June 11 Candle-lighting	June 12 Candle-lighting	June 13 Yomtov ends	
17:05	17:57	17:57	17:57	Johannesburg
17:26	18:20	18:20	18:20	Cape Town
16:45	17:38	17:38	17:38	Durban
17:06	17:59	17:59	17:59	Bloemfontein
16:57	17:51	17:52	17:52	Port Elizabeth
16:50	17:44	17:44	17:44	East London
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Shavuot - a festival with many names

SUZANNE BELLING

Shavuot has several names, each highlighting a different aspect of a festival that marks a key occasion in Jewish existence. Strangely, it has been relegated for many to a lower status than Pesach and Rosh Hashanah.

Part of the reason might be that Shavuot lacks a central unifying activity which is present in every other festival. Pesach has the seder, Rosh Hashanah marks the beginning of the 10 days of repentance, culminating in the fast of Yom Kippur, and Succot is marked by the requirement to live in rickety booths for eight days.

By contrast, Shavuot has no prescribed mitzvot, other than refraining from manual labour - a mitzvah that applies equally to Pesach, Succot and Rosh Hashanah.

Many customs have developed over the years, such as eating dairy foods. Food, of course, plays a major role in most Jewish holidays and, on Shavuot, the eating of dairy products is part of the tradition. Dishes include cheesecake, cheese blintzes and cheese kreplach.

Other traditions include the reading of the Book of Ruth and studying the entire first night of Shavuot, known in Hebrew as Tikkun Leil Shavuot.

A feature of Shavuot and the other two pilgrimage festivals in later years has been the recital of the memorial Yizkor prayer.

Yet the variety of names of the festival testifies to its centrality in Judaism.

Its significance is also rooted in the



ancient tradition of it being one of the three pilgrimage festivals, when masses of Jews went up to Jerusalem for the occasion - the other two being Pesach and Succot.

Shavuot is primarily zman matan Torateinu, the time of the giving of the Torah at Mount Sinai, the foundational event of the Jewish religion. The Torah makes Judaism what it is and the commemoration of this event makes Shavuot a uniquely significant festival.

Shavuot literally mean “weeks” - the festival of weeks, marking the end of seven weeks from Pesach, during which the Omer is counted to mark the passing of every day of that period.

Chag Habikkurim, the third name, means the festival of the first fruits. It was an

important time in an agricultural society, when the first fruits of the harvest came in and when all seven species mentioned in the Bible - wheat, barley, grapes, figs, pomegranates, olives, and dates - were brought to the Temple.

The next name follows from this, Chag Hakatzir, the harvest festival, showing once again that Shavuot was originally an agricultural festival. A sample of the first wheat crop was baked into two loaves of bread and waved before the Temple altar as the concluding rite of the season.

It is also sometimes referred to in English as Pentecost, a term derived from the Greek, meaning 50th day, the day after the end of the 49-day counting of the Omer.

UOS arranges comprehensive mashgiach course

The Union of Orthodox Synagogues says in a media release it is running its “most engaging and insightful mashgiach training course to date,” and will consist of the following:

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The course will be held at the offices of the UOS on July 3, from 08:00 - 18:00 and the cost is R650.

• RSVP to kashrut@uos.co.za by June 15 for catering purposes and to allow the UOS time to arrange an interview.

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Keynote speaker
BGU Prof Eilon Aida
addressing 500 delegates
from six countries (see flags).

No potable water? Then you create some, conferences told

ANT KATZ

Over 500 delegates from five Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries and a host of South African government departments that either use water technology from Israel, are considering it, lauded the initiatives of the Holy Land this week at conferences on water technology arranged by the Israeli embassy.

Arid little Israel is a world leader in water technology and has for many years worked with both the private and public sectors in the SADC region – albeit often under the radar.

Speaking at the Johannesburg leg of the Israel-South Africa Water Week conference on Monday (the other legs were Cape Town and Durban), Swaziland’s Minister for Natural Resources and Energy Jabulile Mashwama, ended a talk on the huge assistance Israel has been giving, with these words: “Swaziland congratulates Israel on this initiative and it must be applauded.”

She paused for effect before ending with two simple and emotive words: “Shalom, shalom.”

Power FM CEO, Andile Khumalo, hosted the morning session and emphasising the growing need for water solutions, told delegates that South Africa in 2015 had experienced its lowest rainfall figures ever. National record-keeping started after the

Anglo-Boer War in 1904.

Keynote speaker Prof Eilon Aida, a professor from Ben-Gurion University of the Negev, a world authority on water conservation, told the conference: “If we could solve our water issues in our harsh desert (of Israel), it can be done anywhere!”

Israel has long been co-operating, transferring technology, manufacturing and training private and public sector enterprises in South African and its SADC neighbours. And, given that the region is experiencing its worst water shortage ever, nobody was hiding their faces either.

There is no shortage of water, not even in the Sahara Desert, contended Prof Aida, “only of potable water”. He went on to tell the delegates about Israel’s initiatives to “make” sufficient potable water for themselves, for the Palestinians and even for Jordan.

Israel has managed to do this through conservation, recycling, desalination and even hybrid crop development (they grow olives in brackish, salty water and export olive oil to Italy and Spain.)

Despite having natural water to support 500 000 people at most, and a small amount of agriculture, Israel today supplies sufficient potable water for over 10 million people and all the farming they want to do. In fact, 68 per cent of all potable water in Israel goes to the agricultural sector today,

he said.

Today, Israel is famous as a hi-tech capital but, over 70 years ago, they were first having to cut their technological teeth by tackling their water issues. Not yet a state, and still without a name, the pre-independence Jews knew that their biggest vulnerability against the enemies was the lack of potable water.

Israel’s trade consul in South Africa, Itai Melchior, told the delegates that he was proud that the attendees had come from South Africa, Mozambique, Namibia, Botswana, Swaziland and other neighbouring states.

Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk said that Israel was prepared to share all of its water technology with SADC countries in their time of need.

They have done it before, but only this time, by the look of who was attending the conferences and whom they were holding one-on-one discussions with, it seems that Israel’s partners are now prepared to engage freely – out of the closet, so to speak.

• *Follow our website, www.sajr.co.za for much more on the week of conferences. Also see the bios of the speakers, links to exhibitors and much more about this whole new world in SA-Israel relations. Next week, we ask the Israeli ambassador and trade consul what has really been achieved.*

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Zuma and Abbas call their Tuynhuys talks ‘fruitful’

ANT KATZ

Ties between the South African government and the Palestinian territories have been strengthened following a meeting by President Jacob Zuma and his counterpart, Mahmoud Abbas the week before last.

The meetings received very little publicity and media coverage, but this was contained in a statement issued by the Presidency after Zuma hosted Abbas at his official Cape Town residence, Tuynhuys.

The memo says that Zuma and Abbas’ meeting led to the strengthening of socio-political ties as well as trade and economic relations between South Africa and the Palestinians.

The visit took place at a time of heightened tension between the Palestinians and Israel. Israel “is increasingly frustrated” at the PA’s refusal to control rampant violence against Israelis and their refusal to sit down at the negotiating table.

The Palestinians, for their part, bemoan increased construction of settlements. This was Abbas’ third visit to South Africa in two years. He undertook a state visit to this country in November 2014 and also attended the African Union Summit in June 2015 in Sandton.

Welcoming Abbas to South Africa, Zuma said: “It is my great pleasure to welcome you again to our shores and South Africa will continue to be a liberated zone and a friend of the Palestinian people. We also send our country’s good wishes ahead of the crucial meeting initially scheduled for May 30, now re-scheduled.”

South Africa and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), now consumed in the Palestinian Authority (PA), have enjoyed cordial relations dating back to the days of the anti-apartheid struggle.

Determined to improve relations and trade and to try and share some

of South Africa’s experiences at negotiated peace, Zuma appointed an experienced diplomat to head up the country’s embassy in Israel in December 2012, namely Ambassador Sisa Ngombane.

This coincided with Israel upping its game in South Africa and the results have been considerable growth in trade between the two countries.

Diplomatically, at the height of the last Gaza War in 2014, Zuma appointed former Minister Zola Skweyiya and former Deputy Minister Aziz Pahad as special envoys on the Middle East peace process. The two have travelled widely in the Middle East seeking to establish common ground for a peace process.

The current, but stalled initiative aimed at resolving the Israel-Palestinian standoff, the Paris Middle East Conference (also known as the French Initiative) was discussed at length by the two men.

Zuma has also taken an interest in “intra-Palestine reconciliation” and progress towards elections and the formation of a government of national unity. The ANC recently hosted Hamas.

Abbas also briefed Zuma on efforts in this regard, the two leaders said in a joint statement after the meeting.

Zuma said afterwards that he had gained “a better understanding of the Israel-Palestinian situation and also to probe (and) get more details of the French initiative (which took place last Friday) as a mechanism to resolve the Middle East impasse”.

Zuma also wanted to clarify “whether there was any role that South Africa could play”, in the process “as proposed today by President Abbas”, they said at the conclusion of the visit.

Abbas said that there was “some progress” towards Palestinian elections and a national unity government.

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Yifat brings Six Day War alive

the guests, among them Christian supporters of Israel and representatives of the Israeli Embassy. “Today is a day of song,” said Rabbi Widmonte, “they marched to the drum of Providence and we humbly acknowledge their Herculean sacrifice.”

A photograph by the world-renowned David Rubinger of three paratroopers staring emotionally up at the Western Wall as they arrived there has become the iconic image of the Six Day War. It was shown on a screen alongside a recent picture of the same men.

In the centre of both pictures stood Dr Yitzchak Yifat, who was brought to South Africa as guest of honour at the event.

“I was so emotional, so excited,” he recalled. “The whole of Jewish history passed before my

eyes.

“I looked up at those huge stones, so special, so mighty, so impressive. We had managed to reverse 2 000 years of submission and disgrace of the Jewish people. It was unbelievable.”

Yifat described the tension leading up to the war as “very difficult days for the State of Israel”.

Concern that he had not been drafted early in the crisis, evoked “a storm of emotions”.

However, on May 23, “my heart beat through my chest”, when two young Gadna members - the organisation that prepares Israelis for military service - knocked on his door and served him with his call-up papers.

“In a matter of moments” he felt no more shame at remaining out of the army and donned his uniform and boots, filling his backpack, before departing for duty.

After the closure of the Straits of Tiran late in May 1967, he said Israel faced a choice: “Jump into the sea or fight for your rights, for freedom.”

At that stage, Israelis abroad were clamouring for seats on planes to return to fight for their country.

His unit was initially ordered to prepare for a drop on to El Arish in the Sinai. “It would have been my first operational parachute jump into enemy lines. It was a moment of truth.”

He added: “Paratroopers are not war lovers, but we were jumping into reality.”

But the orders were changed. Jordan had entered the war and his unit was heading for Jerusalem.

“We heard artillery on the outskirts of Jerusalem. There was no time for instructions or practice.”

He and his comrades got off the buses in a Jerusalem suburb. He suddenly developed bad toothache. “I felt uncomfortable speaking to



Rev Dr Kenneth Meshoe with Dr Yitzchak Yifat.

anyone about it. But then a woman came out of her apartment bringing us hot coffee and cookies.

“She said her husband was a dentist. I jumped as if a snake bit me. He gave me local sedation and told me if we regained Jerusalem I could come back for free treatment all my life.”

Their first major battle was on Ammunition Hill, strongly defended by the Jordanians, including artillery fire. “The enemy fire was like hail.” Many of his friends fell around him.

“As I stopped to reload, a Jordanian attacked me with a bayonet. I pushed him aside with my gun, disabling him.”

After taking Ammunition Hill, his unit erected a monument to his fallen comrades and also built a smaller one in memory of the Jordanian soldiers whom he declared had fought bravely.

As the Israelis were entering the Old City, paramedics were called to find that the problem was an Arab woman giving birth in an alleyway. They assisted successfully.

Yifat said he later came full circle when he qualified as a gynaecologist.

Mizrachi SA chairman Avrom Krengel thanked Yifat, saying his story was one of a true hero.

Musical entertainment throughout the evening was provided by prominent Jerusalem Cantor Netanel Hershtik and the Jonathan Birin band.

Mall threats: ‘Be alert’ – CSO

SUZANNE BELLING

The Community Security Organisation (CSO) is raising the threat level from three to four, following the US, British and Australian alerts of possible terror attacks targeting South African shopping malls. Levels are between one and five, with the standard level in South Africa usually at 2.

According to Jevon Greenblatt, operations director of the CSO in Gauteng, the organisation views the threats as “specific and credible” but does not see it as aimed at the South African Jewish community.

“However you look at it across the world, the Jewish community is usually a secondary target - in Paris, Charlie Hebdo was followed by the attack on a kosher supermarket and in Copenhagen, the initial attack was in a free speech coffee shop, followed by an attack on a synagogue in that city.”

Greenblatt said precautionary measures were being put in place. “It is our duty to protect Jewish institutions and Jewish communal life. But people must be vigilant, take care and report anything suspicious to the authorities or, in a mall, to security.”

The CSO Gauteng issued an update on the terrorism threat and increase of CSO threat level to the community on Tuesday, referring to the numerous media reports which stated that upscale malls, particularly those frequented by US citizens, were a response to a travel advisory issued by the US State Department.

This information follows a call by Islamic State to carry out attacks during the month of Ramadan, which began on June 7.

“The South African authorities have issued a statement indicating that there is no immediate danger, nor reason for panic,” the CSO stated. “There is no specific information to suggest that our community is a direct target for this attack, but the possibility must be considered.”

Immediate actions suggested in the communication include the following:

- Ensure that gates to all communal installations are kept locked at all times;
- Ensure that only trusted people are allowed access to any communal installation;
- Be aware of your surroundings at all times. Report anything suspicious to the CSO immediately on 086 18 000 18
- Ensure that your physical security and security procedures are up to date and well-practised;
- Ensure that you have a security team that has the necessary training and equipment to deal with any eventuality;
- Your security and the security of your family and your community is your responsibility – act on anything that is suspicious.

The CSO stressed that “numerous false and sensationalised” messages related to this information have been widely disseminated. “Any official CSO message will only be sent on a CSO letterhead. All other messages should be disregarded and reported to the CSO.”

Photos: Suzanne and Michael Belling

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SUZANNE BELLING

Over 500 guests were transported back 49 years at Vodaworld in Midrand on Sunday night to the liberation and reunification of Jerusalem that returned the Old City, the Temple Mount and the Kotel to Israel after 19 years of separation from the Jewish people - and 2 000 years in foreign hands.

“They were soldiers of G-d, standing for the Jewish people,” Rabbi Ramon Widmonte, executive director of Mizrahi South Africa, told



Avrom Krengel with Rabbi Ramon Widmonte.



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Raymond Ackerman receives an honorary doctorate from Rutgers

SUZANNE BELLING

Iconic life president and founder of Pick n Pay 49 years ago, Raymond Ackerman, was awarded an honorary doctorate from Rutgers University in the United States - his seventh honour of this kind and the first from the US - before 2 000 people in a stadium.

His daughter Suzanne Ackerman Berman, transformation director and chairman of the Ackerman/Pick n Pay Foundation, accompanied her father on his 10-day trip to the US.

Raymond Ackerman believes that business is not only about the maximisation of profits, but about investing in and contributing to the communities one serves.

The link between the Pick n Pay and Rutgers MBA programme was forged eight years ago when Suzanne began an annual course of lectures to the Rutgers MBA students who came out to Pick n Pay to study the company's philosophy on the environment and social economy.

In his acceptance speech, Ackerman said: "My philosophy is simple. I describe my business as a table. Customers are the top of our table.



Iconic businessman and philanthropist Raymond Ackerman with his daughter Suzanne Ackerman Berman at the Rutgers University graduation ceremony in New Jersey where Ackerman received an honorary doctorate of letters.

Without them we have no business. We strive to win their loyalty every day. We try to make their lives easier in tough times. We celebrate with them in good times.

"To stand and be firm, a table must have four legs. The administration of the business forms one leg. The products we sell and our relationship with our suppliers form a second leg. Our people make up a crucial third leg of the table. They carry the soul and values of the organisation, so we must nurture and invest in them.

"The fourth leg, which makes the table strong and secure, is social responsibility. I have always believed that no organisation can ever stand alone. We only succeed if the society in which we operate succeeds. We must always strive to make our contribution to that society."

His belief is that the customer sits on the top of the table and remains king.

Referring to Nelson Mandela, he said the former president had told him that South Africa needed more entrepreneurs to create and spread wealth to build a stronger nation.

South Africa is facing challenges and needs to grow the economy effectively and transform the lives of its people more definitively. This progress needs to be swift.

"But I am an optimist. I remain as excited as I have ever been about

the future of our country. Our potential is boundless. We will, in the end, succeed.

"The key is leadership. We do not lack hope in South Africa, but we need leaders who can take that hope and transform it into a vision and programme for all, in which we can all share," Ackerman said.

In her address Suzanne Ackerman Berman referred to globalisation and, in that context, suggested there were two types of leaders, those who build walls and those leaders who build bridges.

"I am passionate about searching for a new wave of leaders, taking the enormous step into the wide village we call the world."

She decried the building of walls and division of society as "sadly common themes that we cannot escape.

"While the physical apartheid walls dividing [South African] society on racial grounds may have fallen, the psychological walls and remaining damage will take many more generations to repair; the emotional scars run very deep."

The building of bridges is based on positives - trying to develop connections and links among people

of different backgrounds to create bonds that look past those surface differences of colour, language, ethnicity or religion.

"We can all probably think of unsung bridge builders who have influenced our lives. It is in this sphere, rather than in the political arena, that Africa - like everywhere else in the world - has some wonderful examples...

"We need to, as humanity, find our voices to speak out against inequality and discrimination in any shape or form, to forbid the builders of walls to dominate."

The builders of walls play on fears, which is a classic old recipe for clinging to power. They need to stand up and become builders of bridges and remove the invisible walls based on prejudice of race, tribe, gender, sexual preference or religion.

"These invisible fences are destructive - they are built on stereotypes, xenophobia and prejudice.

"Business has an obligation to address the inequalities of the past by learning to combine cultural differences, racial inequalities and societal indiscretions, with successful commercial application," she said.

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חג שמח

Generation Sinai ‘happens’ at King David Schools



GABY COHEN

Last week Friday, Generation Sinai took place at all the King David Schools in Johannesburg. King David children across all campuses loved having their parents, grandparents, siblings and special people in their lives with them at school, learning together

about Shabbat, Shavuot and the Birkhat Hamazon. The theme of this year’s Generation Sinai was “Gratitude”. When learning together, the participants spoke about Torah, brought spiritual ideas into reality and brought Sinai down to earth. A conversation was started which the children will not forget.

Hirsch Lyons girls love their learning programme

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The learners of Hirsch Lyons Girls’ High School in Johannesburg attend a weekly on-campus learning and breakfast programme. This term, Raella Carr of the Hirsch Lyons Informal Department launched the Sinai X Pirkei Avot as the learning material for the programme, allowing girls the opportunity to learn it every Tuesday morning in chavrutot (study pairs), followed by a summing-up.

Pictured are Leah Teeger; Daniella Slasky; Ayala Sackstein; Rivka Berelowitz; and Elisheva Bome.



Sydenham Pre-Primary celebrates Generation Sinai 6



JENNY MILLER

Generation Sinai 6 was celebrated at Sydenham Pre-Primary School with interest, involvement and enthusiasm. Parents and children alike listened attentively as Rabbi Yossy Goldman of Sydenham Highlands North Shul introduced the learning session with some insight on bensching and the fact that everything comes from Hashem. Together the two and in some instances three generations spent an invaluable 30 minutes both teaching and learning from each other. The stimulus provided by the Chief Rabbi’s Office was thoroughly enjoyed by all and in honour of this special day, the children baked chocolate chip challahs to take home. Pictured enjoying the morning are Marc Pozniak (left), Robert Pozniak (right) and Shaun Pozniak (front).

‘Importance of bread, gratitude and Birkat Hamazon’



OWN CORRESPONDENT

The children of Herzlia Weizmann Primary School greatly enjoyed the half hour spent learning with their parents as part of the Chief Rabbi’s Generation Sinai event last week Friday. Parents were first invited to attend the primary school’s daily prayers which gave them a glimpse into their children’s morning ritual. This was followed by breaking up into families to learn about the importance of bread, gratitude and Birkat Hamazon. Both parents and children loved the novelty of sharing the learning process in the classroom setting.

Bellavista embraces Generation Sinai with fervour



Nava and Tziphora Pogrud.

ROMY ANGER

Last week Friday Bellavista School in Johannesburg, together with children throughout the world, learnt about bensching and gratitude for Generation Sinai. Generation Sinai is a real treat as children get to learn with their parents, siblings and grandparents. The school hall was abuzz with discussion as the Jewish children came together and shared in this meaningful experience.

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Browde’s funeral offsets the cynics ruling today’s SA



In South Africa’s political environment dominated by politicians’ blusters and corruption and student mobs and trade unions burning schools and artworks, spots of gentleness are precious to show that behind the public din, there are people doing the humbler tasks of building society.

Last Sunday’s funeral of advocate, activist and Jewish leader Jules Browde who died at age 98, radiated this ethos. It was infused with both idealism and his characteristic sense of humour. The feeling was of a life well lived.

Johannesburg Mayor Parks Tau attended with an honour guard of men and women in city uniforms to accompany the coffin to the grave. He spoke about the importance of uprightness among city officials and Browde’s

role in its integrity committee, helping over 200 councillors ensure their financial affairs complied with regulations.

Browde did not believe in retirement and still had several months to complete his contract. The city offered him the first five-year contract when he was in his late 80s despite him saying he might not complete it; he saw it through and was offered new contracts.

In a moving scene after the Jewish ceremony at the graveside, city workers and dignitaries filled the grave. Mourners included Constitutional Court judges, legal figures, artists, activists, Habonim youth movement leaders - he was its national president for 25 years - and ordinary folk.

The serenity of a worthy life completed. There were no political speeches, cries of “amandla!” or political party representatives with thuggish red overalls, intense T-shirts in blue, red, green or black. No point-scoring or jostling for power.

Browde’s friendship in apartheid’s early years with liberation icons and lawyers Oliver Tambo and Nelson Mandela was mentioned by the

rabbi: “Today everyone likes to say they knew Mandela; but at that time, to be a friend of Mandela was not popular in white society.”

He was a founding member of Lawyers for Human Rights in 1980, then its chairman during the State of Emergency. After democracy, Mandela appointed him to investigate irregularities in appointment of certain public officials. His other honours are too many to list here. True to his ethos, several women participated in the act of shovelling earth onto the coffin which, although contrary to this Jewish community’s custom, was entirely natural - the rabbis did not stir.

When it came to the family saying Kaddish, his wife of 68 years, Selma, participated with her sons. Again, entirely natural, though not the usual custom. No-one would be excluded.

There was a special quality to Browde’s generation, moulded by the Second World War struggle against Hitler in which he fought for five and a half years, South African Jewry’s flourishing, anti-apartheid activism, and idealism for a new, humane state of Israel. They

were natural partners to the likes of giants like Mandela and Tambo.

This year marks the 20th anniversary of the beginning of the SA Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which was intended to heal many wounds of apartheid. But the country stands at a dangerous crossroad: Will it continue its descent onto chaos and cynicism, or regain the idealism of Mandela’s rainbow nation vision?

It also marks 49 years since Israel’s Six Day War, in which a still idealistic Israel defended itself against invading Arab armies - but which also resulted in Israel becoming an occupier of another people, which today is tearing at the society’s moral fabric.

South Africa desperately needs the integrity of people like Browde to counteract the vitriol as this confused country tries to find its way. Will the wave of corruption, patronage and power-mongering lead downwards to what is beginning to feel like a fascist state?

Hopefully, the pendulum will swing back.

Read Geoff Sifrin’s regular columns on his blog sifrintakingissue.wordpress.com





This Shavuot
Chag Sameach





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Does Israeli-Palestinian peace pass through Paris?

STEVEN GRUZD

Last week Friday the French government hosted a three-hour meeting of senior representatives for almost 30 countries and organisations in Paris to try to kick-start peace negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians, stalled since April 2014.

The protagonists, however, were not invited to parley in Paris. In a Middle East wracked by turmoil since the “Arab Spring” of 2011, is this a likely pathway to peace, or was it just amassing air miles for ministers?

French President Francois Hollande said in his opening statement: “Violence is growing and hope is fading - that’s why we want to try and revive the peace process.”

“Only the sides can make peace, but we have to help them,” French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault said. “It is important to create conditions to bolster trust and renew negotiations.”

Attendees included UN Secretary-General Ban ki Moon, US Secretary of State John Kerry, EU Foreign Policy chief Federica Mogherini, South African Minister of International Relations and Co-operation Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and representatives from Egypt, Jordan and Saudi Arabia.

Britain, Germany, Japan and Russia did not send their foreign ministers though, perhaps suggesting scepticism about any breakthroughs.

The terse joint communiqué issued is fairly paeve. It reaffirms support for “a just, lasting and comprehensive resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict” based on “a negotiated two-state solution”, which it says is “dangerously imperil[led]” by “continued acts of violence and ongoing settlement activity”.

It reiterates the UN resolutions that map out a peace path as well as support for the 2002 Arab Peace Initiative (where Arab states offered recognition of Israel if a Palestinian state was created in the West Bank and Gaza).

It mentions the prospect of a high-level summit, including the Israelis and Palestinians, later in the year, but the communiqué falls short of Paris’ hopes that it would mention a firm timetable or working groups to resolve tough issues like settlements, Jerusalem and refugees.

According to Israeli English news sites, it was considerably watered down by the Americans, and months of Israeli lobbying.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu firmly rejected the initiative. In the run-up he said: “The way to peace does not go through international conferences that seek to impose agreements, make the Palestinians’ demands more

extreme and thereby make peace more remote.”

He sees no alternative to direct talks without preconditions, which brought peace with Egypt and Jordan.

Director-General of the Israeli Foreign Ministry Dore Gold likened the Paris meeting to the secret 1916 Sykes-Picot agreement in which Britain and France carved up the Middle East that would emerge from the Ottoman Empire’s collapse after the First World War and said any imposed solution would fail.

Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk said: “We wonder if Paris wasn’t just a waste of everyone’s time... The statement that came out - that everyone flew to Paris for three hours for - did not move anything forward... we got what we already had - calls for a two-state solution, ending violence and restarting negotiations.”

“We know the solution from South Africa: let neighbours talk to neighbours. But the Palestinians are avoiding direct talks.”

Lenk says he has encouraged Pretoria to urge their Palestinian contacts to make hard concessions for peace. “It’s not meetings in Paris or the UN - it’s through a Codesa that we make peace,” he said, referring to the multi-party negotiations in the early 1990s by South Africans themselves that led to a political settlement.

The PLO welcomed the meeting, and would love France to usurp the US as Middle East mediator, seeing the latter as too pro-Israel. Predictably, Hamas and other extremist Palestinian groups strongly rejected any attempts at reviving what they called “futile negotiations”.

Professor of Political Studies and Governance at the University of the Free State, Hussein Solomon, does not believe this conflict is ripe for resolution.

“The Palestinians are too divided to have a common position vis-à-vis Israel, and with the inclusion of some far-right parties in Netanyahu’s Cabinet, meaningful concessions are not likely.”

He adds that the Palestinian position is further weakened by “the Sunni-Shia tensions and the Saudi-Iranian support the different factions have”, as well as by the focus in the region on the Islamic State.

While mustering international and regional support for peace is critical, it will remain elusive until the key players are prepared to sit down for earnest and sincere negotiations.

• Steven Gruzd is a political analyst at the South African Institute of International Affairs in Johannesburg. He has an MSc in International Relations from the London School of Economics.

Community

Mothers gloriously celebrate life at King David Schools

ROBYN SMOOKLER

This week marked the launch of a brand new concept in the King David Schools - that of KD Soul Sunrise. It was initiated by the SA Board of Jewish Education’s newest division - KD Soul.

This event saw King David mothers arriving en masse to celebrate life and the new Jewish month of Sivan.

All too often these days the community comes together in times of challenges and tragedies. “We decided: Why not create a space to come together in gratitude and joy? The morning began with inspiring words about the power of Jewish women and Rosh Chodesh and then went into a musical Hallel, accompanied by guitars, bongo drums and tambourines.

“The energy in the room was palpable with everyone on their feet dancing and singing, together, as if at a rock concert. It brought to life the old adage of ‘One Nation With One Heart’.”



Ronli Dorfman; Lyndsey Kartun; Rebbetzin Gina Goldstein and Talia Zulberg.



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Community Voices

Kol isha: Colloquium and then the courts

Kol isha - interpreted as the voice of a woman singing solo in public - has become a divisive issue within the Jewish community, culminating in two Cape Town Orthodox Jews and SACRED (the SA Centre for Religious Diversity and Equality) taking court action on constitutional grounds against the Cape Council of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies for unfair discrimination against women.

SUZANNE BELLING

The case is to be heard in the Equality Court, unless the two sides can reach agreement to settle the dispute internally. The Board, according to Orthodox halachic interpretation in this country, did not permit a woman to sing solo at the Yom Hashoah ceremony last month.

The Board has arranged a colloquium in Cape Town for June 20 to try to find a unified voice about the issue among its own affiliate organisations

The SA Jewish Report approached members of the public for their views on the matter.



Pam Blumenthal, a Progressive rebbetzen, does not believe in “Jews washing their dirty linen in public - I genuinely believe this is a matter for the Beth Din.

“There should have been a compromise in order to prevent a divide in the Jewish community.”

Given these views, Blumenthal used to sing in the Temple choir and this controversy did not happen within the confines of the Progressive congregation. “I don’t believe any man found my voice provocative...”

“I believe people put their own interpretations on halacha to suit their own book.”

Totally against any court action, she feels that controversy within the Jewish community should be over important basic principles and “not over trivia”.



Elan Lieb says the entire issue “angered me. The whole thing is pathetic.

“People cannot separate the constitutional rights of citizens of this country from an age-old law that came into existence long before the Constitution.”

He says he cannot understand Orthodox Jews being reduced to this type of shallowness and pettiness.

“If you are Reform you are entitled to your own opinion, because there everything is negotiable.”

He believes the matter does not concern human rights at all.

“It is sad that we live in a world where anything goes, as opposed to the tried and tested.”

Women are honoured in Orthodoxy, he says.



Adrienne Kay said that out of “absolute respect you shouldn’t have a woman singing in public”.

Going to a function where the people present observed halacha should be acceptable to their views as well.

“Halacha prohibits women singing solo at events.” This observance had to be respected.

“You wouldn’t have a woman singing at a funeral,” she said.

Yom Hashoah was commemorated in a holy place and

because of that, “I don’t think it’s right for a woman to be singing in a cemetery”.

The same applied to other events, such as the function held on Yom Yerushalayim.

She did not feel it was right to institute legal action. It was saying Jews did not respect other Jews.

“I think it’s a chilul Hashem [desecration of G-d’s name] that one Jew can take another to court over something like that, something unimportant.”



David Carless regards the kol isha issue as unnecessary, saying it does not affect him.

He said the ruling on the matter was made many years ago by the Chief Rabbi and that ruling still stood.

“It depends on the function,” he said. If the event involved a cross-section of the community and a woman singing was going to be the reason for some not to attend, the ruling should stand.

The Holocaust memorial event was one such function.

“I think it’s very sad that we should be taken to court and create disunity in a relatively small Jewish population and publicise something like this. It is almost a chilul Hashem.

“I don’t think it is something worth going to court about. It’s a pity it can’t be resolved outside court.”



Writer **Alexandra Levin**, a member of the Beit Emanuel Progressive Congregation, said she thought the exclusion of women singing at communal events was “appalling”.

“G-d gave women a voice and the voice was meant to be heard. I am for women being heard and seen.”

She felt the court case instituted by two Cape Town Orthodox Jews, subsequently joined by the SA Centre for Religious Equality and Diversity (SACRED), was “absolutely a good idea.

“I think that if there was a better way of dealing with it, it would have been done.”

She said the spiritual leader of her congregation, Rabbi Sa’ar Shaked, had discussed it and he was in favour of women singing at communal events.



Barbara Rigden feels the issue disrupts communal unity, “which is our strength”, and it divides the Jewish community.

“Such disputes should be resolved by the rabbinate and the Jewish community itself - not by outside secular courts.”

She thinks that women singing for the purpose of expressing what is in their hearts “has nothing to do with stirring feelings in men, but relays one’s own emotions and feeling.

“I think it has nothing to do with halachic rulings,” she said. “The court action is making a laughing stock of the Jewish people. It is really very wrong.”

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Kaleb Eli takes pride of place in Jonathan’s life

VANESSA VALKIN

Jonathan Kaplan, the renowned former rugby referee, who just became a father last week using a surrogate egg and a surrogate mother, held a bris for his new son Kaleb Eli in his home in Cape Town, last Wednesday morning. Rabbi Greg Alexander oversaw the ceremony. Speaking at the bris, Jonathan who was both calm and very excited, told the large gathering of friends

and family that he chose the name because he loved the ring of Kaleb Kaplan. But he also hoped that his Kaleb would have some of the bravery that the biblical Kaleb had when he together with the other 11 spies went out to scout the land of Israel for Moses while the Jewish people remained waiting in the desert. Kaleb and Joshua were the only two spies to come back with positive reports. Like Kaleb, said Jonathan, “we are braving new territory”.



Around the Jewish World

First Israeli gig for SA rave band Die Antwoord

RISHON LEZION - South African rave band Die Antwoord is the latest to join the roster of summer performers, with a concert this week Wednesday in the Rishon Lezion amphitheatre. The offbeat, alternative group, which includes singers Ninja, Yolanda Vi\$\$er and DJ Hi-Tek is based on the South African “zef” countercultural movement, and was founded in 2008 in Cape Town. The band has a cult following, first developed on social media platforms with the release of its earliest songs. This is Die Antwoord’s first appearance in Israel. - Times of Israel

Erin Schrode - pro-Israel and possibly youngest Congress member

SAN FRANCISCO - Erin Schrode is a 25-year-old candidate for California’s Second Congressional District from Marin County. If elected she will be the youngest member of Congress. “I’m an activist, an educator, a social entrepreneur,” she said. “Public service has been my life for over a decade, but never did I think that I’d be a politician. “I gave a speech two plus months ago - the through-line of which was: ‘If not here, where?’ about the impact of this place, of Northern California, of our CD-2 on my life, my values, my career. I walked off stage and people said: ‘How do we get you to run for office?!’ “I called up my mentors, those I respect most, dear friends, and expected them to smack me down to size, but they all said: ‘Run! We need that voice in government today’. “I never had any connection to the State of Israel,” she said. “A friend convinced me to go on Birthright. I landed at Ben-Gurion and had the most profound sense of homecoming, of belonging.” - Los Angeles Jewish Journal

Revolutionary Israeli technology turns off the pain of periods

TEL AVIV - When female reporters from publications including Cosmopolitan, Seventeen and HuffPost opened packages containing a wearable device to relieve menstrual pain, they

probably didn’t realise it was invented by an Israeli father and son. iPulse Medical, the company behind Livia, was founded in April 2015 and is headed by Chen Nachum, a 36-year-old bachelor, using technology developed by his father. Zvi Nachum, a medical patents developer, was experimenting with pain solutions for a different project and discovered how to fine-tune the frequency and wave shape of an existing technology called TENS (transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation) to block specific types of pain. Nachum gathered a mostly female group of Israeli experts to birth Livia: industrial designers from Tenenbaum Hazan Design Studio in Herzliya; marketing and branding gurus from Tross Creative in Tel Aviv; and publicists from Blonde 2.0 in Tel Aviv. It was the publicists who had the idea of 3D-printing 20 prototypes to send to influential women journalists. The result is a small patent-pending wearable (available in a variety of fun colours) that claims to provide nearly instant relief from cramps in three easy steps: attach the electrodes via gel pads to the spot where pain is worst, clip the device onto a waistband or pocket and switch it on. - Israel 21c

Australia’s three richest are all Jewish

MELBOURNE - The three richest people in Australia have a combined wealth of more than A\$29 billion... and they’re all Jewish. Property developer and Meriton owner Harry Triguboff topped the list with an estimated worth of \$10,62 billion according to the Australian Financial Review. Triguboff said that when he built his first apartment building in 1963 he never imagined he would one day be the richest person in Australia. “I’m excited because it took a long time to get to the top, so it’s a big thing,” Triguboff said. Despite his rise to the top of the list, Triguboff said that as he slowly approaches retirement he has realised some of the mistakes that he made along the way. “I recently nominated some people as directors who had worked for me for a long time, and now they look upon the business as if they are the boss and it made a really big difference. “I’m getting more people around me, which I probably should have done early because I did too much myself.” Following Triguboff on the rich list is packaging, paper and recycling group, Visy, executive chairman Anthony Pratt with \$10,35 billion and Westfield shopping centres’ founder Frank Lowy in third place with \$8,26 billion. - Australian Jewish News

Judo is Israel’s most successful Olympic sport

TEL AVIV - Judo is arguably Israel’s most successful Olympic sport. Three of Israel’s seven Olympic medals have come in judo (just like windsurfing), with the likes of Yael Arad, Oren Smadja and Arik Ze’evi regarded as some of the country’s all-time greatest athletes. In recent years, it has been Yarden Gerbi who has taken over the mantle, becoming the first Israeli to be crowned judo world champion in 2013 and winning a silver medal in the competition a year later. Seven Israeli judokas – three men and four women - officially secured their places in Rio when the new world rankings were released. Israel has never sent more than five total representatives to the judo events at any Olympics, and no more than a single woman. After a disappointing 2012 Olympics, the IJA decided to overhaul the way its athletes train. Rather than each judoka practising mainly with his personal coach, the IJA adopted a team-orientated format in which the athletes spend far more time training together under a joint head coach and his staff. There were many doubters, but it is hard to argue with the results. - Jerusalem Post

Chassidim object to ‘overkill’ in school raid

MONTREAL - Spokesmen for the Chassidic community say a June 1 intervention by the Youth Protection Department (YPD), accompanied by police, at a school suspected of operating without a government permit, was unnecessary and excessive. During the school day, about a dozen social workers from Batshaw Youth and Family Centres - apparently unannounced - came to the boys’ school, located in a commercial building at 6355 Park Ave. When they were refused entry, the police were called, according to reports. The YPD has not made public why it took the action, citing confidentiality, but the education ministry confirmed that it has issued no permit for a school at that address. “This was really overkill,” said Alex Werzberger, head of the Coalition of Outremont Chassidic Organisation. “If you want to use a stronger word: terrorism.” He said there were maybe 30 police on the scene, and the approximately 60 elementary age learners were in “lockdown” for hours, “traumatising” them. “It looked like a drug raid,” he said. Werzberger said the school is affiliated with

the Vishnitzer community and was established last year. Although the YPD was involved, there are no allegations of abuse. It is the role of the YPD to make inquiries on behalf of the education department when learners are to be interviewed. Other Chassidic and Charedi schools are also under the scrutiny of the education department for not complying with the law, notably for failing to teach the mandatory curriculum and having unqualified teachers, but Werzberger said this is the first time an operation like this has occurred. - Canadian Jewish News

Suspended Leftist Labourite claims a conspiracy

BRIGHTON - Jacqueline Walker, the vice-chairman of the hard-left Momentum group loyal to British Labour leader Jeremy Corbyn, has claimed she has been the victim of a conspiracy. Walker, who was readmitted to the party after being suspended over allegations of making anti-Semitic comments, said: “There is a little bit of a conspiracy going on.” Speaking at a meeting in Brighton, she told a 50-strong audience that she had been abroad when she was informed of her suspension last month. She said: “Look at the date of the Jewish Chronicle when that came out. I was actually in Turkey. “My letter suspending me was actually dated May 4. The Jewish Chronicle published the story about me on May 4. “Now, you have to put two and two together. What you will know is that somebody in the [Labour] compliance unit, or around there, is leaking information out to the media. “I want to ask who that is, why they are doing it, and what the political purpose of that is.” She defended her Facebook post, in which she claimed that Jews were the “chief financiers of the sugar and slave trade”. She attacked the Israel Advocacy Movement for exposing her comments, but added: “I don’t want to spend too long talking about it because what I am not going to do is be trapped. This was a private Facebook discussion, this was a discussion between me and two friends. One was an Israeli Jew, a Zionist, and we have been friends for a long time, ever since we studied the African Holocaust and the Jewish Holocaust together some years ago.” - Jewish Chronicle, London

World authority shares his brit milah expertise in South Africa

ANT KATZ

The Regulatory Board of Brit Milah in South Africa, which was inaugurated in March this year, has made huge strides in creating a governance structure.

As part of the process, the new regulatory body last week brought out one of the world’s foremost authorities on circumcision and the management and registration of mohelim, Dr Joseph Spitzer, from London. All the mohelim from around South Africa came together for an extensive all-day workshop.

The board will shortly begin registration of all the Orthodox mohelim in the country.

Dr Spitzer is a GP in private practice and medical officer of The Initiation Society (a society of mohelim in the UK that was set up in 1745 for the furtherance of the practice of brit milah). It is the oldest Jewish organisation in the UK and – until Princes William and Harry – had circumcised every Royal male from the time of their inception.

Dr Spitzer has been a mohel for over 35 years and is also the honorary senior clinical lecturer at Barts and the London School of Medicine and Dentistry, Queen Mary College, University of London.

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein told Jewish Report that the Brit Milah Regulatory Board is in the process of “creating a governance framework for the practice of brit milah” and that Dr Spitzer was brought out to assist. “His visit to South Africa was very successful and the way forward in this ongoing process is well set out,” said Rabbi Goldstein.

“We are determined to implement a new governance structure with speed, excellence, accountability and transparency,” said Rabbi Goldstein. “This new structure will greatly strengthen and enhance the practice of brit milah in our community.”

Dr Spitzer’s presence at the meeting certainly added to the gravitas of the occasion. “I was able to share my experi-



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Dr Joseph Spitzer.

ence and expertise,” said Spitzer. “As the officer in charge of training, supervision, ongoing education and arranging of meetings for the Initiation Society,” he says, his purpose is also to “regulate the practice of brit milah, maintain a register of mohelim, provide ongoing education and ensure the public that registered members will provide them with the highest of religious and medial standards”.

Spitzer felt it was “an extremely useful session” and that the mohelim had enjoyed the opportunity to discuss issues that they have in common, in a “constructive and positive manner”.

The discussions that were led by him, he says, “were often lively and heated - but of a constructive and valuable nature”.

He says that “besides the obvious surgical skills required and the halachic knowledge demanded, the aspect of social communication skills was just as important.” He believes these “bedside manner” skills are vital for all mohelim whether medical or rabbinic.

Dr Spitzer is the author of a host of medical papers and three books: Caring for Jewish Patients; Handbook for Mohelim; and A guide to the Orthodox Jewish Way of Life for Health Care Professionals (written specifically as an insight to non-Jewish doctors).

This was Dr Spitzer’s second visit to South Africa.

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KDL Pre-Primary kids have their Kotel cake - and eat it

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY ROMY ADLER

King David Pre-Primary Linksfield grade R learners commemorated Yom Yerushalayim by discussing the history and significance of Jerusalem Day and how important and special it was for the Jews to win back the Old City in 1967.

After all the learning and discussion, the children enjoyed a cake, decorated by the grade R learners in the shape of the Kotel in Jerusalem.



TA boys and girls learn about Yom Yerushalayim

RABBI MOTTI HADAR
PRINCIPAL, TORAH ACADEMY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Throughout the week Torah Academy Primary School concentrated on various aspects of the Holy City of Jerusalem to mark Yom Yerushalayim. Featured were the Kotel, the Temple Mount and more, from a historical, a geographical, and a modern perspective, as well as the messages and lessons which can apply to our lives today.

Each class had a “round robin” of short lessons where teachers used props, videos, pictures and other tools to educate them on an array of topics including the City of David, the Gates of the Old City, the Jewish Quarter, the Six Day War and the ancient history of Jerusalem.

Rabbi Avraham Vigler, an eighth generation Yerushalmi, who lived in Jerusalem during the Six Day War and the liberation of the Kotel in 1967, related his personal experiences to the school, with messages of inspiration and hope for the third Beit Hamikdash.

Student representatives from grade 4 and grade 6 boys spoke to the entire school at the morning assemblies, reflecting on their experiences and feelings of Yerushalayim.

The senior girls’ classes joined forces to create a magnificent bulletin board depicting Yerushalayim, while the grade 2 boys undertook projects.



Some of the grade 4, 5 and 6 girls from Torah Academy Primary School in front of the bulletin board depicting Yom Yerushalayim. Back: Batsheva Ash and Keren Lurie; middle: Jordan de Villiers; Elisheva Ainsworth; Kayla Kay; and front: Ella Levin; Batsheva Lurie; Rivka Youngworth; and Shayna Unterslak.



Grade 12 life sciences and geography classes listen to Ashley Kruger.

Ashley Kruger shares his insights at King David Victory Park

DANIE BOTES

King David Victory Park was honoured to have Ashley Kruger a past alumnus of the school, who matriculated in 2005, to come and speak to the grade 12 life sciences and geography learners.

Ashley is currently busy with his PhD in palaeontology at Wits and is part of the team working on homo Naledi.

The learners, and Mairi Pringle, geography and history teacher, found his lecture fascinating, and it was a privilege to have Ashley back at his old school.

KDL’s cross country team awarded for their hard work



OWN CORRESPONDENT

Intensive training and self-discipline reaped rewards for five King David Linksfield cross country athletes when they were selected for the Inter-District competition which took place in Pretoria at the end of last month.

The five athletes were Mila Davidovitz (grade 8); Shane Silverman (grade 8); Levi Marx (grade 9); Jessa Marx (head girl, grade 12); and Dalya Abadi (grade 12). Shane Silverman and Levi Marx both finished in a time of 15:32 for 4 kms.

A jubilant Dean Passmore, head coach of cross country at King David Linksfield High, said: “I am honoured to have been the coach of such wonderful, caring and talented athletes. We started pre-season training on March 7 and none of the athletes expected that by the end of the season on May 23, all of them would have

challenged themselves to be the best version of themselves.

“As the season progressed, with an average of 30 athletes competing at the respective cross country meets, it was evident to me that the athletes were focused, excited and willing to push through boundaries they never thought before were possible.”

He says he never puts pressure on his charges. “You come to training, we train... we go to meets together... we race and we have fun in doing so.

“KDL Cross Country 2016 is a family and a team I will treasure for many years to come.”

Passmore says cross country no doubt is tough, “but only as tough as you make it. The team trained hard and consistently. They ran the Linksfield Ridge every week - sometimes twice a week - and this probably was their best of all sessions.”

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The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za

Guidelines for letters
Letters of up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.

IN MEMORY OF HER BELOVED BROTHER STANLEY WHOM SHE LOST RECENTLY

On May 7, I lost my brother Stanley, who after the death of our parents, became my mentor, praising me in achievement, encouraging me in adversity.

On May 11 at the Israel Embassy in Pretoria, I attended the Yom Hazikaron ceremony for South Africans who fell defending the State of Israel.

During the ceremony, the following was recited:

It is not true that life continues
By Yair Lapid, chairman of the Yesh Atid Party
It is not true that life continues, they always say that but it is never true.

When you lose someone, your life, the way you know it, will never be the same. Your family is still yours but it is different now. Your parents are different. The way you sit around the table, the way you remember the trip to Greece, with the photo album of all the hilarious pictures you took, which now changed into a memorial document.

I really don't think that life continues. People keep asking you the same simple questions such as "how are you"? And you know they actually mean either "we know" or "we're here for you". Every time you're sad, they all stop by to cheer you up and you don't know how to tell them you definitely don't need a support group but you just want to hide under your blanket for an hour.

Who can possibly think that life continues? Even you can never be the same. You are the one who lost a relative. You are the one who watches alone the old TV show which you always used to watch together.

You're the one that when you laugh, they say you managed to get over it. When you're busy, they say you are really okay and if you leave home for more than two weeks, they say you probably ran away.

It's not true that life continues; even your past is being edited. Every time you tell them how you took the bus together on some trip, you find yourself debating whether to mention him as "my brother" or, "my late brother". Sometimes you just leave him out of the story because you don't want any embarrassing moments.

Sometimes, when you meet someone who was out of the country for a long time and he asks you how your brother is feeling and you just answer "he's not feeling anymore", it's you who need to comfort the shocked guy and say that "life continues". But it doesn't.

It is not true that life continues, it stops and then restarts, differently.

I trust these words bring the same reality, yet with comfort, to a reader who has lost a loved one.

Thank you, Embassy of Israel.

Reeva Forman
Johannesburg

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LET'S START NOW GETTING RID OF THE BURDEN OF BITTERNESS

The Temple Mount in Jerusalem is a focus of conflict between Jews and Muslims. Yet in a perfect world, a place as holy as this would be the centre of peace and unity between all people, especially between fellow monotheists such as Jews, Christians and Muslims.

When the great Temple still stood on this Mount, sacrifices were even accepted from idol worshippers.

It would also serve as a place of peace within the different monotheistic religions themselves - Shia and Sunnis, Catholics and Protestants, secular and Charedi would all enjoy harmony.

Conflict embitters us, making us miserable and is not a burden worth carrying. It is much easier being at peace with the world and not having to watch our backs for real or

imagined enemies.

The Rambam (Maimonides) wrote that Islam is a kosher religion for gentiles, since it follows the seven Noahide principles. The Rambam also indicated that we are thus allowed to pray in a mosque. (This obviously does not apply to the militants who break the principle not to murder).

John Lennon sang: "You may say that I am a dreamer, but I'm not the only one." This peaceful sentiment is in accordance with our religion's messianic expectations. But why wait for a future utopia? Why not begin now by letting go of the burdens of bitterness which do not serve us or the world.

Martin Zagnoev
Sunningdale Ridge, Johannesburg

DON'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE LITHUANIAN GOVERNMENT

Some time ago a letter of mine was published in Jewish Report critical of Lithuanian passports and citizenship obtained by Jews, whatever the benefits.

I did this on behalf of my late stepfather. His family, which he had left behind in Lithuania, were murdered by their neighbours.

He mourned them every day for the 20 years I was in his home and spoke of Lithuania as a Jewish graveyard. He was adamant about having nothing to do with them.

I am now amazed to read the article by Daniel Lutrin in last week's Jewish Report, lamenting the refusal of his own Lithuanian citizenship and passport application.

He has nicely set out the wrongs done and still being done to the Jews - all the reasons why one should have nothing to do with them. Yet he still persists with his wants. I don't understand him.

Cyril Wides
Johannesburg

HOW DOES ONE DEFINE WHETHER RAMALLAH IS A CITY?

I refer to Ant Katz's article in last week's Jewish Report, titled "Mandela Ramallah statue's costs leaves many unanswered questions". The article refers to the fact that Ramallah [and Johannesburg] are twin cities.

Is Ramallah a city? And by what definition?

When I was at school in the '50s and '60s, we were taught that in order to be classed as a city - an upgrade from a town - there had to be a cathedral.

Our English teacher had an Oxford English Dictionary on her desk that was about 8 inches (203 mm) thick and she encouraged us to use it to check the spelling and meanings of words

Maybe I am showing my age, and today some words do not have the same meanings as in the past [or as defined in older tomes].

Colin G Zaiden
Johannesburg

QUESTION MARK BEHIND STATEMENT THAT 'HUMANITY IS RESPECTED' IN SA

Last week Friday, I read on a website an article about the Shabbos Project of Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

This in itself is a very much blessed project. However, what I would like to comment on is his quoted response to the question about the difference between Europe and South Africa regarding anti-Semitism, which was that in South Africa "humanity is respected".

As far as I understand, Rabbi Goldstein tries to claim that "humanity is respected" in South Africa "more than it is in Europe".

My question therefore is:

How is that so? Has Rabbi Goldstein never heard about farm murders in South Africa? About other acts of black-on-white racism? About Julius Malema and his openly genocidal EFF? About President Jacob Zuma singing "Kill the Boer"?

How is that supposed to be "respect for humanity", and where can such things be found in Europe?

Silence and denial of farm murders and things like that is appalling; it is time to wake up.

Avner Eliyahu Romm
Jerusalem

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za

What's happened to Herman Anthony Bernard Eckstein?

Veronica White of 18 Honeysuckle Close, Berg en Dal in Hout Bay, [mailto:danwhite@mweb.co.za] writes that she has been asked by a friend in Cambridge, UK, Fabian Clancy, to try to track down a South African Jew, Herman Anthony Bernard Eckstein.

The reason for the contact is in order to organise a get-together with fellow students of his year at Cambridge.

"I think he would have been there late '50s or early '60s."

south african

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Benny Friedman back in Johannesburg



The American singing star, Benny Friedman, was in South Africa in 2013 and captivated the crowds at Montecasino. Now he's returning.

Sydenham Highlands North Shul said in a media release that Friedman will be performing with Bryan Schimmel & Orchestra at Emperors Palace on Sunday and Monday, June 19 and 20.

The supporting act is The Gat Brothers from Israel, famously known as the "Holy Rollers". Young, local singing sensation Shmuly Brill, is also on the bill.

The 40th anniversary of the amazing Rescue at Entebbe will be commemorated at the shows as well.

Tickets are available from www.TicketPro.co.za or at selected outlets like PostNet Glenhazel and CNA Norwood Mall. More information may be obtained from Sydenham Shul on (011) 640-5021.

14

SA JEWISH REPORT

Community

10 – 17 June 2016

Ambassadors talk about Israel and Germany – the past and the future

RABBI JULIA MARGOLIS
CHAIRMAN OF SACRED

On Sunday May 29, SACRED (South African Centre for Religious Equality and Diversity) in collaboration with the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, Bet David Progressive Synagogue and the Konrad Adenauer Stiftung, was an organiser of "Ambassadors in Conversation: Dealing With a Complicated Past, Creating a Common Future".

The ambassadors in question were Israel's Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk and German Ambassador Walter Linder.

"Today relations between the two peoples are astonishing given the recent past: the German government's position is one of 'unconditional support' of Israel.

"Indeed, German Chancellor Angela Merkel has said that 'Germany's support for Israel's security is part of our national ethos, our raison d'être'. These words have been backed up by action internationally.

"She has also been on an official tour of Israel and has addressed the Knesset. Jewish life in Germany is active and supported by the government. Israelis now flock to Berlin and Merkel enjoys high popularity in the Jewish state.

"With the Holocaust still within living memory, we were honoured to host survivors in the audience who could not possibly have imagined this state of affairs 70 years ago, at the end of the Second World War.

"This is attributable to determined efforts by both countries to keep the doors of communication open without ignoring the terrible events of the Holocaust. Both ambassadors agreed that although relations between the two states will never be 'normal', they had been able to make significant progress in the last 70 years and that this should serve as an example to other countries and peoples dealing with painful pasts."

The setting for the discussion was the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre, whose director, Tali Nates, herself the daughter of a Holocaust survivor, was the moderator.

Pine Street pulls them in for Yom Yerushalayim

ASHLEY LAZARUS

Last Saturday night a capacity crowd at the Pine Street Shul Hall in Johannesburg celebrated Yom Yerushalayim in style.

The function started with a dvar Torah about Jerusalem by Rabbi Anthony Gerson, the rabbi of Pine Street Shul.

This was followed by a selection of songs with Jerusalem as theme by Chazzan Ezra Sher, who was joined in his last song by Rabbi Ilan Herrmann of the Lions Shul. The audience thoroughly enjoyed this and joined in on the last song with dancing and singing.

Wayne Kopping, the producer of the film Under the Helmet and co-producer of the soon-to-be screened film, Mekonen, addressed the audience, giving the historical background to this new film

Kopping spoke of the great moment in Jewish history when Jerusalem was recaptured and the people of Israel could at last see and daven at this most holy site, the Kotel.

He explained that it was the Tzanchanim, the Parachute Division of the Israeli Army that recaptured Jerusalem and the Kotel in the Six Day War and that his latest documentary was about

an Ethiopian Jew who became an officer in the prestigious Tzanchanim.

Chazzan Sher rounded off the evening's entertainment with "Time to Say Goodbye" and the singing of Hatikvah.



Film producer Wayne Kopping receiving a watch from Ashley Lazarus.

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UJW's Mandela Day 'Catch the Cavity' project helps ensure healthy teeth

This year, to commemorate Mandela Day, the Union of Jewish Women's branches across the country - in Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth, East London and Pretoria - will, together with the manufacturer of a best-selling toothpaste, be presenting toothbrushes and toothpaste to thousands of young children at disadvantaged nursery and primary schools.

The UJW says in a media release that the company is donating some 5 000 packs containing toothpaste, toothbrushes and educational material on dental health and is sending four oral hygienists to four of the UJW branches to accompany them to the schools.

"This is a wonderful gesture for the little ones, many of whom may never had had their own toothbrushes, or been able to brush their teeth with anything other than salt, in their short lives."

The UJW says "children's excitement at receiving such gifts knows no bounds" and the organisation is appealing for more packs from the community to enable even more children to benefit.

"The UJW has been participating in Mandela Day since its inception and once again there is enormous excitement around this year's project. The community's response to previous appeals has always been generous and heartening and we know that this year's will be no different."

• Those interested in participating in the "Catch the Cavity" project and wanting more information, may call the UJW's head office in Johannesburg at (011) 648-1053.

Have you sent in your nominations?

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A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Oscar-winning performances

Everyone who runs a business or organisation knows that nothing much can get done without motivated and loyal staff. My background in industrial psychology and a large part of my corporate experience has been in this field - how to build, train and motivate staff to get the best they have to offer.

That’s why, together with our emerging and innovative HR department, we instituted a staff “Culture Campaign” not long after I joined the Chev in 2010.

While attitudes and mind-sets change slowly, the campaign, now in its fourth year, is proving to be a worthwhile investment and we are seeing improvements in team relations; lower staff turnover; greater dedication; and improved service.

Each year has been differently themed. In 2016 the theme is WE ARE ONE. Every division showcases their work to visiting colleagues from other departments. The tour around the kitchens arranged by the Catering team was fascinating and informative; Selwyn Segal and the mental health facilities demonstrated their daily timetable as we explored the different areas, and the Rehabilitation department provided wheelchairs, walking sticks and tied one hand behind guests’ backs to help them experience life with a disability. When it came to Social Services,

we all wondered how on earth they would showcase counselling. And that’s where the Oscar awards come in.

At the outset the large group of visiting staff was introduced to a fictitious family in trouble - mom, dad, two children and grandparents. We were ushered from room to room to watch different types of counselling being enacted.

The role-playing was clearly well-rehearsed and very convincing. First up was the Intake social worker who positioned the family’s needs and the multiple issues they were facing - laying out a game plan that would ensure the way in which each challenge would be addressed.

Then the out-of-work husband and his wife, who was burned out and suffering stress-induced abuse from her husband, were counselled with empathy and practical advice.

A third social worker consulted with the parents about the children and the school’s reports that they were unsettled and acting out.

In yet another room the grandparents were counselled. They were not in good health and beginning to suffer the effects of dementia, adding tension and financial strain into an already troubled household.

Other counsellors presented preventative programmes and before we knew it everyone had experienced a real day in the life of our extraordinary Chev social workers.

What made it so impressive? The acting, of course. Only the acting.

May our partnership continue to thrive
feedback@jhbchev.co.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Constitutional Review 2016

The law-making process in South Africa allows for civil society to comment and give input into proposed new legislation, including an annual review of the Constitution. The Board has a long history in contributing to the development of the Constitution, starting with our involvement in its original drafting.

Last week, the Board made a submission for this year’s Constitutional Review, focusing on “hate speech” issues and how the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) could be made more effective in addressing them.

In terms of defining prohibited hate speech, we suggested that the current definition takes an overly-narrow approach since it proscribes “advocacy of hatred” only when coupled with “incitement to cause harm”.

This, we argued, did not take into account the realities of how damaging racist hate speech was in and of itself. In practice, the mere airing of unacceptable views results in “harm”, even when harm is not explicitly advocated.

While the SAHRC plays a critical role in enabling members of the public to seek redress when they feel that their right to dignity has been infringed, the section dealing with its powers and functions makes no reference to the right to dignity, and we suggested that this be remedied.

We further stressed that for the SAHRC to operate effectively, all parties involved must abide by the rules and procedures it has laid down in

terms of investigating complaints. It was therefore recommended that provision be made for the institution to “impose appropriate penalties” for failures to comply with its rules, unless there are legitimate reasons for not having done so.

We unfortunately cannot rely solely on legislation to protect the basic rights and security of South African Jews. The reality is that we have to be vigilant against attacks from those for whom the law of our country is irrelevant.

Over the past week, a number of high-level warnings have been received from around the world of possible terrorist attacks in South Africa. I urge people to be especially vigilant at this time, and in the event of becoming aware of anything suspicious or unusual taking place in their environment, to immediately inform the CSO.

Jewish learning continues to thrive in SA

After Shabbat, thousands of community members will come together throughout the country for “Tikkun Leil” - the traditional erev Shavuot learning session. For the first time, Limmud SA will be holding its own Tikkun Leil programme.

This follows on last Friday’s Generation Sinai event involving day school learners and their parents to strengthen the bond that our Jewish heritage plays in connecting the generations.

Levels of knowledge and observance differ across the community, but across the board, we are seeing a growing involvement in the culture of learning. In wishing everyone a chag Shavuot sameach, I encourage as many people as possible to make themselves a part of this.

• Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaiFM every Friday 12:00 - 13:00

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

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Two stunning Shavuot recipes

The Torah was given by G-d to the Jewish people on Mount Sinai more than 3 300 years ago. Every year on the holiday of Shavuot Jews renew their acceptance of G-d’s gift, and G-d “re-gives” the Torah.

The word Shavuot means “weeks”. It marks the completion of the seven-week counting period between Passover and Shavuot.

The giving of the Torah was a far-reaching spiritual event - one that touched the essence of the Jewish soul for all times. Shavuot also means “oaths”, for on this day G-d swore eternal devotion to the Jewish people and they in turn pledged everlasting loyalty to Him.

The holiday of Shavuot, or “The Feast of Weeks” stretches over two days, beginning at sundown of the 5th of Sivan and lasting until nightfall of the 7th of Sivan. (In Israel it is a one-day holiday, ending at nightfall of the 6th of Sivan.)

Women and girls light candles to usher in the holiday on both the first and second evenings.

It is customary to stay up all night learning Torah on the first night of Shavuot.

All men, women and children should go to the synagogue on the first day of Shavuot to hear the reading of the Ten

Commandments. As on other holidays, special meals are eaten, and no “work” may be performed. It is customary to eat dairy foods on Shavuot.

On the second day of Shavuot, the Yizkor memorial service is recited.

The word “Pentecost” derives from a Greek word which means “fiftieth”. It comes from the command to count 50 days from the day after the Sabbath during Passover week.

Jews were to count seven weeks and the Hebrew word for weeks is “Shavuot” therefore it was known as the Feast of Shavuot or Feast of Weeks.

The first Pentecost was when Moses received the 10 Commandments. So every year during this holiday the story of Moses ascending the Mount is read along with the Book of Ruth, about a gentile being grafted into Israel.

KosherWorld has provided two stunning recipes for this festive period: one for cheese cake and the other for asparagus quiche.

LOW-FAT CHEESE CAKE

Ingredients

Crust

- 1 packet Tennis Biscuits
- 100g melted butter
- ½ cup sugar



Filling

- 3 x 250g tubs of fat-free smooth cream cheese
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup flour
- Pinch salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla essence
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 250ml plain yoghurt

Method

- Put oven at 180 degrees Celsius
- Mix crushed biscuits, butter and sugar
- Press into bottom of spring form tin
- Bake until brown
- Mix fat-free cheese and flour
- Beat eggs and sugar until creamy
- Add to cheese mixture
- Add vanilla, lemon juice, salt and yoghurt
- Lower oven temperature to 150 degrees
- Pour cheese mixture into tin
- Bake for one hour
- Turn oven off and leave the cake in oven overnight

ASPARAGUS QUICHE

Ingredients

Pastry

- 3 cups flour
- 175g butter
- 25ml water

Filling

- 1 cup grated cheddar
- 1 tin asparagus salad cuts

- 3 eggs
- 225ml fresh cream
- Pinch of salt

Note: ¼ cup of cheddar can be substituted with ¼ cup parmesan

Method

Short pastry

- Use your food processor with a plastic blade
- Blend 3 cups flour with 175g butter and 25ml iced water
- Roll out the dough
- Grease an oven-proof dish and line it with the pastry
- The pastry must be pre-baked before adding filling. Prick pastry and place a piece of foil on top
- Bake at 200 degrees Celsius for about 10 minutes
- Remove foil and bake for a further 5 minutes.

(Note: 1 roll readymade puff pastry also works for a quick base; grease and line an oven-proof dish with pastry)

Filling

- Put ½ cup grated cheddar on base of pastry
- Add one tin rinsed and drained asparagus salad cuts
- Add another ½ cup grated cheddar
- Beat 3 eggs, 225ml fresh cream, pinch of salt
- Pour over filling
- Bake at 200 degrees for approximately 35 to 40 minutes



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Muhammed Ali had a close relationship with Jewry

ANT KATZ

Muhammad Ali started off as a boxer. But, by the time he died on June 3 at the age of 74, he had become so much more to Americans and to the world. He enjoyed close relationships with various Jewish figures, including his trainer and promoter, sports-casters and other celebs. He pre-choreographed his own funeral and will be eulogised by close friend, Jewish comedian Billy Crystal. Writing in the Forward, Benjamin Ivry says Ali had been accused of having “frequently clashed with the Jewish people”. The truth, however, is far more complex.

Ali was raised as a Baptist, joined the Nation of Islam in 1964 and later converted to Sunni Islam and ultimately to Sufism. However, he always saw his religion as just that, and not politics.

In 2013, Ali’s boxing promoter Bob Arum told The Jewish Telegraph that he had to confer with Elijah Muhammad, leader of the Nation of Islam, before signing the boxer. Arum said Ali was never anti-Semitic towards him. “He was anti-white for sure, but never anti-Semitic.”

Ali’s devoted assistant trainer and corner-man, Drew Bundini Brown, was already converted to Judaism when he and Ali met. The two were inseparable friends and he even wrote some of Ali’s famous poems that he spouted to intimidate opponents. Says Ivry: “Some Yiddishkeit might even be discerned in Ali’s interactions with the poet Marianne Moore before his 1967 bout with Ernie Terrell. As recounted in George Plimpton’s “Shadow Box”, the two poets met at Toots Shor’s Restaurant, where Ali assumed the role of yeshiva bochar with the Rebbe Moore writing a collaborative pre-match verse warning to Terrell. The man known simply as “The Greatest” has left behind a catalogue of many bonding moments with the Jewish community dating

back to the tender age of 14 in 1970.

On December 27, 1975, The Jewish Week, reported that the then-19-year-old Ali gave a \$100 000 donation to the Jewish Self-Help Community Services Hillside Aged Programme of Washington Heights, New York.

In an article published in the Jewish Daily Forward on April 28, 2015, Gerald Eskenazi, a 44-year veteran sports writer at the New York Times, wrote that he once had discussion with a young Muhammad Ali. He was talking about empowerment and how historically blacks in America had been kept down. “Look at the Jews,” Ali had told Eskenazi, “they were barred from Miami Beach. So what did they do? They bought the place!”

Ali and top US sports broadcaster Howard Cosell (born Cohen) enjoyed a long and close friendship. The latter’s daughter, Jill, told USA Today about Ali’s attendance at her father’s 1995 funeral.

The relationship between Ali and Cosell saw the latter credited with being the first major journalist to use the name Muhammad Ali, while his more conservative colleagues continued to use his former name, Cassius Clay. The men remained close friends long after their professional careers had passed.

Muhammad Ali once invited Billy Crystal to go on a run with him at a local country club. Crystal replied that he’d love to, but Jews were restricted. Ali never went to the country club again.

Muhammad Ali crafted the plan for his final tribute years ago, long before he died. This Friday (June 10), his family will honour him just like he planned, with a global celebration. Ali has nine children from four marriages, and a string of grandchildren - including a Jewish grandson, Jacob Wertheimer, who had his barmitzvah on April 2, 2012 at Rodeph Shalom temple in Philadelphia.

What’s On

Friday (June 10)

• UZLC hosts Isaac Reznik “the walking encyclopaedia” on “Cheesecake and Blintzes”. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Venue: High Street/Jauncey Road and Spring Street. Contact: Gloria (011) 485-4851.

Saturday (June 11)

• Beit Emanuel Progressive Synagogue hosts a full Shavuot programme. The theme of the night is “pilgrimage”, as Shavuot is one of the three biblical pilgrim festivals. At 20:15 there will be an interfaith panel comprising Prof Farid Esack on “The Haj culture”; Frances Correiaof the Jesuits institute on “The inner pilgrimage”; Rabbi Sa’ar Shaked on “Why Jerusalem?” with Prof Simonne Horwitz as facilitator. At 21:30 Prof David Bilchitz will talk on “Peace in Jerusalem - practical political suggestions”. It extends into Sunday morning. Information: (011) 676-6170.

• Limmud celebrates Shavuot with “learning late into the night with a team of educators” (Adina Roth, Ilan

Solomons and Leanne Stillerman).

Venue: Sandringham Scout Hall, (next to Sandringham Veterinary Hospital).

Time: 21:00 - 01:00. Kosher catering. No entrance fee. RSVP to JHBevents@limmud.org.za for catering purposes or call Ilan on 072-299-053.

Sunday (June 19)

• RCHCC is rescreeing a documentary for art lovers, “Peggy Guggenheim: Art Addict”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378 or e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or email rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

• JJAC invites Jewish singles aged 27 - 49 to the Gateway to Space Exhibition at the Sandton Convention Centre. Cost R180. E-mail whatson@jjac.co.za to book.

• Second Innings hosts an outing to

the show “Joseph and his Famous Technicolor Dreamcoat” at Pieter Toerien’s Montecasino Theatre. Time: Show starts promptly at 17:30; the bus departs from Golden Acres promptly at 15:30. Cost: R180 per ticket in the best seats; R110 per person for the bus. Book with Fay Smaller (011) 640-5839 or Ros Berman (011) 880-6864.

• Second Innings hosts Daphne Kuhn, actress, director, producer, on “The Jewish Contribution to Showbiz”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

Monday (June 20)

• UJW hosts Dr John Kani, actor, director and playwright, chairman of National Arts Council SA, on “Arts and Change”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R40. Everyone welcome - men and women. Booking not necessary. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.



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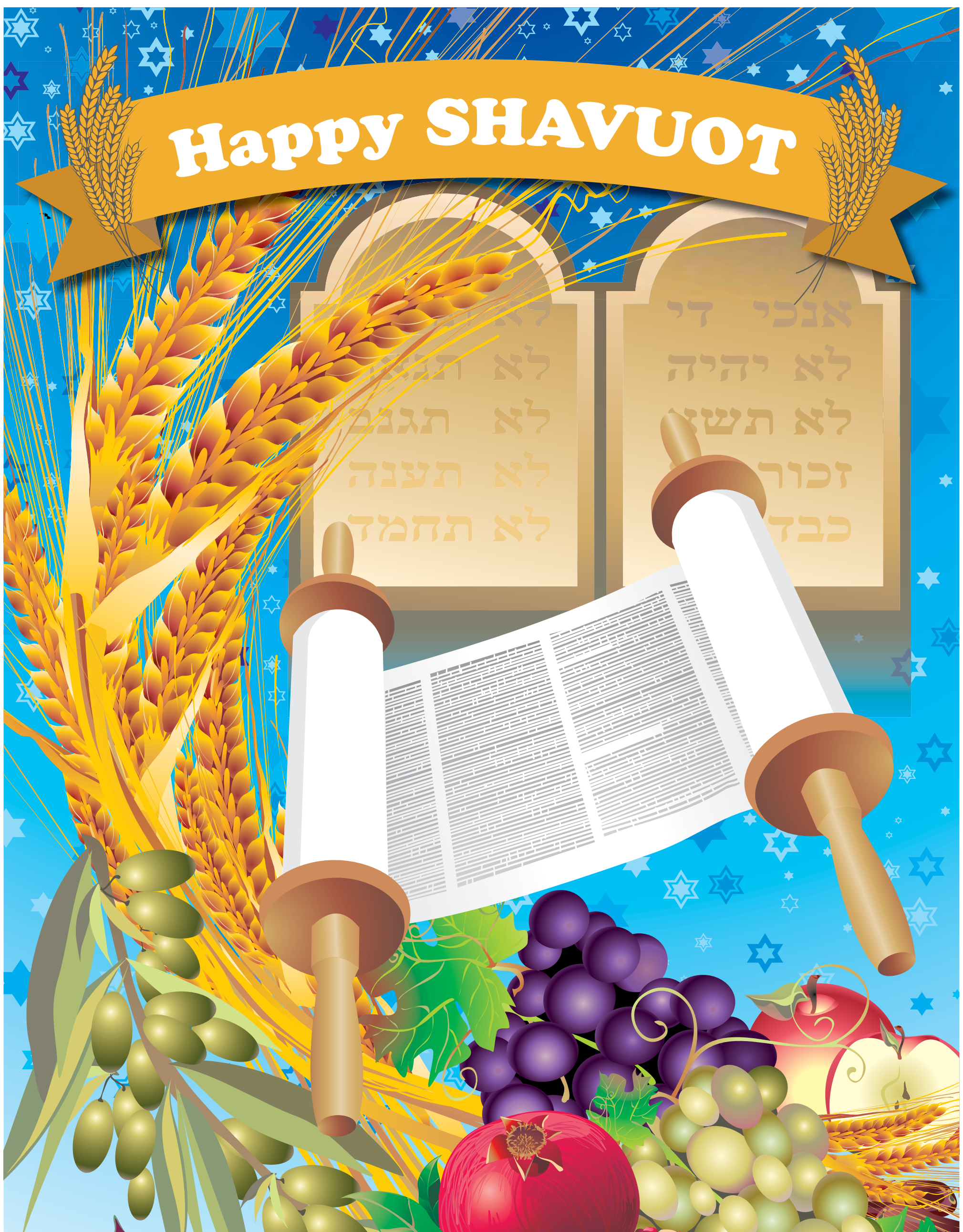
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Happy SHAVUOT



FROM BABY CITY AND TOY ZONE
MANAGEMENT AND STAFF...



Vic Boston joins elite Comrades Quadruple Green Number club

JACK MILNER

Vic Boston joined an elite group of runners when he became a fully-fledged Comrades Marathon Quadruple Green Number member after this year’s race in Durban on Sunday May 29.

Vic joined Tommy Neitski and Zwelitsha Tiger Gono as the newest group to complete their 40th Comrades at this year’s 91st race of this prestige ultra-marathon.

Vic ran his first Comrades as a 17-year-old in 1977 and has not missed a single race in those 40 years. He runs for Rocky Road Runners and holds 17 silver medals, nine Bill Rowan medals, 13 bronze medals and one Vic Clapham medal with his best time of 7:08:21 coming at the 1984 Comrades.

There are only 12 members in the Comrades Marathon’s Quadruple Green Number club and they have run a combined total of 498 Comrades Marathons.

They are (under name, finishes): Dave Rogers - 45, Barry Holland - 43, Louis Massyn - 43, Alan Robb - 42, Dave Lowe - 42, Clive Crawley - 42, David Williams - 41, Kenny Craig - 40, Riel Hugo - 40, Zwelitsha Gono - 40, Tommy Neitski - 40 and Vic Boston - 40.

But, as Vic points out, only six of them have run 40 consecutive Comrades. “It does take a lot to finish that race, mentally and physically,” he commented.

But despite all the sweat, blood and tears, he is already thinking about breaking the record of 45 runs.

“I’m still running. I run all the time, I never stop, I don’t even think about the Comrades. I’ve fully recovered from this year’s down run and I’m ready for next year. I’m running, swimming, pushing weights.”

However, this year Vic had to take it a little easier than usual and nursed his way through the race. “My hernia worries me and I wanted to play it safe. I didn’t want to go hard and then have to pull out.”

He also had to deal with an upset stomach but admits he bears responsibility for that. “I took food with me from home and by the time we ate it in Pietermaritzburg it was a bit dodgy.”

He also prefers the up run, not because it is any easier but because of the weather. “At that time of the morning



Vic Boston holds up his Quadruple Green Number earned for running his 40th Comrades Marathon on May 29.

it’s much warmer in Durban than Pietermaritzburg. When you do the down run for the first two hours you run into a cold valley. With the up run you don’t even have to put on gloves.”

One must realise that despite his wonderful Comrades records, Vic’s achievements do not stop there. “I’ve also done

Iron Man and over 20 ultra-Iron Man competitions where I’m a multiple gold medallist.”

Jewish runners have traditionally had “a good presence” at the Comrades. They are generally a competitive lot, but also revel in the camaraderie.

One person who believes Vic can own the record of Comrades runs is Ronnie Dribbin, who has just completed his 27th Comrades. “Vic has completed all these Comrades and he has the determination. As long as he stays healthy, he will do it.”

Ronnie’s 27 Comrades runs have just one blemish. That came in 2012 when he suffered a severe injury to his right knee which required surgery. “I was told I would never have full use of that knee again. Since then I have done Iron Man and Comrades.

“I still have pain 99 per cent of the time, but I enjoy it too much to stop. I’ve done more this year than any other year.”

Last November Ronnie went to Bahrain to participate in an Iron Man event and finished second in the 55 to 59 age group. “As a result I have been invited to the World Championship on the Australian Gold Coast in September. Somehow I’ve got extra energy because going next month I’m participating in an Iron Man event in Budapest.”

He admits he does it all firstly to keep healthy and because he enjoys it so much. “I run with the most unbelievable group of people. They are younger than I am but are happy to let the ‘old man’ run with them.”

As far as the Comrades is concerned Ronnie is indifferent to an up or down run. “When I first started I preferred the ups, then later the downs. But if I look at my best times there is just 20 seconds between my up and my down times. For me it all comes down to the day. If you wake up and feel well, then it goes well.”

He also has a simple approach to the Comrades: “You compete against yourself - not your friends or teammates - and if you complete the race, you’re a champion.

“If you look at what a guy like Vic has achieved, he is more of a champion than some of those who run once or twice and maybe even win the race.”

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JACK MILNER

Many youngsters enjoy playing different sports, especially those with good hand-eye co-ordination. But as they get older they finally settle on the one sport they really enjoy.

That is certainly true for Saul Moss.

After a successful time playing football for the Balfour Park under-11 and under-12 sides as well as the North Rand District under-11 and under-12 teams, Saul decided to quit football and focus his attention on golf.

His interest was no doubt buoyed by the fact that his father, Russel, is a keen golfer who represented South Africa in the Masters Division at the last Maccabi Games in Israel. So, at the age of 13 Saul joined Glendower Golf Club and within one year his handicap was down to single figures.

He started to participate in the Ekurhuleni Junior Golf tournaments and won his first event at the Benoni Lakes Club in the B Division in February 2014. In December of that year he achieved a top 25 finish in the South African under-15 championship in Rustenburg.

Last year, now 14 years old, he was selected to play in the Ekurhuleni under-17 side and to participate in the interprovincial meetings and they won the Far North Quadrangular.

This year he has already won two Central Gauteng tournaments, one at Kyalami and more notably, at Randpark with scores of 67 and 74 for a 36 hole total of three under par. He was also runner-up at Benoni Country Club at the Ekurhuleni Tournament .

He is a regular in the Ekurhuleni under-17



Saul Moss has set his sights on golf with great success.

side and is ranked third in his age group for the province.

Saul and four other players have been picked by Ekurhuleni to represent the province at the South African Championship at George in July.