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Jewish Report

■ March 11 2016 / 1 Adar II 5776
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Truth about Israel? Come see for yourself!



Photo: Ian Ossendryver

The South African Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS) and Defend, Embrace, Invest, Support Israel (DEISI) co-hosted Israel Awareness Week on South African university campuses this week as a counter to Israel Apartheid Week, staged by the virulently anti-Israel NGO, Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions. While BDS was again “selling” the canard that Israel is an apartheid state, SAUJS and DEISI posted a series of innovative posters on university campuses nationally and on social media, in an attempt to bring across a different message. Pictured holding up some of the posters are SAUJS and DEISI representatives: Dineo Mpati, Ashraga Araro, Roi Mitt, Dani Hovsha, and Gila Janekowitz. See pages 3 and 4.

<p>Zayin Adar – a special day dedicated to a holy mitzvah</p> <p>Rabbi Jonathan Fox of the Chevrah Kadisha writes that Thursday, the 7th of Adar marks the yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu, our teacher. On this day the men and women of the Chev fast and repent as they recognise the great responsibility in performing the mitzvah of burial.</p> <p>2</p>	<p>World leading entrepreneurs shine at Helping Hands function</p> <p>Last week the Helping Hands division of the Chev, hosted Shai Agassi and Adam Valkin, who told a packed-out audience their success stories'. Agassi came from Silicon Valley to his venture, 'Better Place', while Valkin is a well-known venture capitalist.</p> <p>5</p>	 <p>5</p>	<p>Pew finding on expulsion of Israeli Arabs prompts sharp reactions</p> <p>In a survey that spanned politics, religion and interfaith relations, the Pew Research Centre found that 48 per cent of Jewish Israelis would like to see Arabs expelled from Israel, against 46 per cent who said no.</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Recent student protests are entirely counterproductive</p> <p>Prof David Bilchitz of UJ says student protests which had begun peacefully, had quickly turned violent. 'Unfortunately recent student protests demonstrate that the culture of protest in our country has failed to change in line with the transformation of our political system...'</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Grandma Beauty's hamantashen - with a healthy twist</p> <p>'From the time I could hold a spoon, my grandmother involved me in the cooking process,' says New York Times nutritionist Dawn Lerman. As a child she felt emotionally undernourished except for the loving attention she got from her grandmother.</p> <p>18</p>
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Guard against being too judgmental of others



Parshat Pekudei
Rabbi Alex Carlebach
Chabad of Lyndhurst

The Talmud teaches us that just like no two people look the same, similarly no two people think alike. Today’s society is all too quick to judge what personalities are acceptable. We decide who fits in with our society and we deem who is a misfit on the basis that they may act differently to us.

Sadly, there is often the situation that children are bullied in school for being different and it doesn’t become easier for them as they transition into adulthood. It can have dire effects and scar people for life.

This Shabbat is called Shabbat Chazak when we finish the Book of Shemot (Exodus) with the Sidrah Pekudei. The last five parshot or so

discuss the building of the Mishkan - a home for G-d in this physical world. This was a marvel and amazing feat, indeed.

The Torah describes how each and every man and woman used their G-d-given gifts to make each item necessary for the Mishkan. It includes the spinners, weavers, goldsmiths and every other talent.

The Torah teaches us that every person has his or her strengths and weaknesses, qualities and shortcomings. There are times we are too quick to judge who fits into our circle. We judge people by their social standing; how they look, how “frum” we think they are.

The Torah teaches us we are all creations and children of G-d A-mighty. We should try and view others through G-d’s eyes. To anybody who may feel isolated or looked down upon, know with certainty that you are a blessing and an only child of G-d A-mighty who loves you.

The Saintly Baal Shem Tov teaches that Hashem loves every one of us even more than a

parent who has an only child after many years of marriage. This is the Torah outlook and let no-one convince you otherwise. That includes not even allowing yourself to tell you otherwise; we need you as part of our people and community.

The Talmud recounts a story of Rabbi Elazar ben Shimon who, when he was walking towards a town, encountered a most vile looking person and commented: “Oy, are you ugly”, to which the traveller replied: “Go tell that to the one who fashioned my vessel!”, referring to our Creator.

Rabbi Elazar realised the mistake he made and had to go through a long struggle to attain forgiveness - this in spite of the fact that what the Rabbi meant was the man’s spiritual standing and that he was hoping to influence him to repent.

The greatness of Betzalel and Aholiav as well as Moshe Rabbeinu is seeing the specific talents of each person and putting them to good

use, ultimately for the greater good.
After every item that was fashioned, the Torah states: ‘Ka-asher tzeeva Hashem es Moshe’ - as Hashem commanded Moshe. The verse is repeated 18 times in our Sidrah, teaching us that while it is true that every person possesses their own potential, the goal, however, is that we all work to fashion the world, G-d’s Mishkan; in the way that G-d commanded.
Being different does not sanction us to go contrary to Hashem’s commands and desires.

Shabbat Times

March 11 / 1 Adar II
March 12 / 2 Adar II
Parshat Pekudei

Starts	Ends	
18:10	18:58	Johannesburg
18":15	19:41	Cape Town
17:59	18:48	Durban
18:15	19:07	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:13	Port Elizabeth
18:13	19:03	East London

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Zayin Adar - a special day dedicated to a holy mitzvah

RABBI JONATHAN FOX
CHEVRAH KADISHA

Thursday, the 7th of Adar (corresponding to March 17), marks the yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu, Moses our teacher.
On this day, which is known as Zayin Adar, the men and women of the Chevrah Kadisha fast and repent as they recognise the great responsibility that they have in performing the holy mitzvah of burial.

It was Moshe himself who taught by example the importance of ensuring the honourable burial of the departed. When the Jewish people left Egypt, all the Jews were busy gathering the riches from the Egyptians. All except for Moshe, who was occupied with searching for the hidden coffin of Yosef in order to transport it to the Land of Israel for burial.

Moshe sacrificed the opportunity for great wealth in order to ensure that Yosef would receive the burial he deserved. The Gemara tells us that as a reward for this mitzvah, Moshe was honoured by ultimately being buried by Hashem Himself in the valley in the plains of Moav.

The people of the Chevrah Kadisha, many of whom are volunteers, follow the example of Moshe. With tremendous selflessness, they ensure that all the needs of the departed are taken care of with respect and sensitivity. This includes collection of the body, arranging the funeral, washing of the body, purifying the body with water (taharah), dressing the body in shrouds and the burial itself.

Immediately after the fast, the Chevrah Kadisha volunteers and workers are treated to a dinner and are thanked by representatives of the community for their holy work.

If members of the community would like to send a message of thanks to the people of the Chevrah Kadisha who are involved in the mitzvah of burial, please e-mail rabbij@jhbchev.co.za. We will try to convey your message at the dinner.

On most Jewish calendars the 7th of Adar is not highlighted as a special holiday. However, as the yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu, it is a very significant date for us.

A yahrtzeit is the anniversary of a person’s passing from this world to the spiritual world and is commemorated by the surviving relatives of the departed. Since Moshe was the beloved teacher of all Jews, we all commemorate his passing on this date.

It is interesting to consider why, in particular, the yahrtzeit of Moshe Rabbeinu was chosen. The simple answer is that we do not know the precise date on which the forefathers passed away. The Talmud does tell us the date of Moshe’s passing. A personal yahrtzeit is a time to reflect on the ways that your loved one

impacted positively on your life and to commit to making a renewed effort to live a more spiritual, moral, and more giving life.

If you have been considering adding a little more Judaism to your life, yahrtzeit is an appropriate time to make such a commitment. Any element of personal growth that one undertakes in connection to the passing of a parent or relative, makes an eternal difference for that relative’s soul. It could be said that Moshe was the first Chevrah Kadisha. He set an example for future generations as to the importance of dealing with the burial needs of the deceased.

- Here are some of the practices that are observed on a yahrtzeit:**
- The son of the deceased recites Mourners’ Kaddish during the prayer services
 - One should try to visit the grave of one’s parent
 - It is praiseworthy to give charity for the elevation of the soul of the deceased
 - Some people fast
 - It is customary to study mishnayot for the elevation of the soul of the deceased

There are other commendable practices that apply on a yahrtzeit for one’s parent, including:

- Leading the prayer services
 - Receiving an aliyah on the Shabbat before the yahrtzeit
 - Leading the Maariv service on the motzei Shabbat before the yahrtzeit
 - Being called up for maftir on the Shabbat before the yahrtzeit

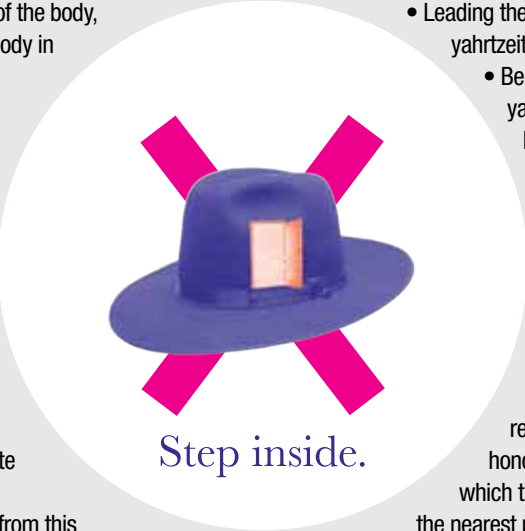
Lighting a candle
A yahrtzeit candle is lit by the relatives of the deceased at the start of the yahrtzeit and is left burning for the entire 24-hour day. One should not extinguish this candle even if it exceeds 24 hours. On the yahrtzeit, the soul of the deceased visits the world and derives spiritual pleasure from the lit candle

Making an Hazkarah
If the yahrtzeit falls on a day on which the Torah is read, an Hazkarah (memorial prayer) is recited in shul in honour of the deceased. If the yahrtzeit falls upon a day in which the Torah is not read, an Hazkarah is recited in shul on the nearest preceding day in which the Torah is read.

A day of gratitude

One day per year – the 7th of Adar - we get an opportunity to thank the people of the Chevrah Kadisha for the great kindness that they do for our community by taking care of all the burial needs of the deceased.

On March 9, the men and women of the Chevrah Kadisha fast and repent as they recognise the great responsibility that they have in upholding Kavod Hameit throughout the year.



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Campus ‘guerrilla war’ for soul of truth on Israel

Students walk past Israel Awareness Week graffiti on Wits campus.



Right: Poster for #SeeIsraelForYourSelf campaign.
Below: Israel Apartheid Week's Interfaith launch at Freedom Park in Pretoria.

ANT KATZ

The annual battle over Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) - where opposing sides, the SA Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS) leading Israel Awareness Week and the US-based NGO Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (Israel) in South Africa (BDS-SA) leading Israel Apartheid Week - was again “fought” on South African university campuses this week.

Despite the heckling on the ground, and the tussle between the “warring” parties for victory in the press and on social media, remarkably few incidents of violence have been reported. On Monday there was one incident that could have turned ugly on the UCT campus in Cape Town after an Israeli Druze speaker, Riad Hassoun, together with a group of SAUJS students, were verbally harassed after Hassoun spoke there.

On Tuesday (see video on www.sajr.co.za) on the Wits campus - mar- rining an otherwise peaceful day - while SAUJS representatives were putting up posters from their #SeeIsraelForY- ourself campaign, they were accosted by BDS supporters who had been following them and pulling the post- ers down.

Not satisfied with their “guerrilla”



efforts, the BDS supporters then tried to steal and run off with the posters.

One of the SAUJS students cleverly put the posters down on the ground and lay on top of them so that the BDS supporters could not grab them. The latter resorted to trying to destroy all the posters by tearing as much as they could off of each, while the second SAUJS supporter shot the video. Restraint on the part of SAUJS was all that saved it from becoming a violent incident.

Some of the other more noteworthy events from campuses around South Africa include:

Tuesday:

- Professor Mohammed Dajani - the well-known Palestinian former tutor at Al Quds University who left his post last June after months of intimidation over a field trip he had organised to Auschwitz, spoke on the

Wits library lawns on Tuesday evening. “We had a great turnout,” SAUJS National Chairman Dani Hovsha told Jewish Report Online on Wednesday.

- The DailyVox website, which had been sponsored for the week by Dubai-based 24-hour news chan- nel Aljazeera (as IAW was largely ignored by the mainstream media), fell foul of a group of concerned Israel Awareness Week supporters who bought all the ad space on Dai- lyVox’s home page on Tuesday. (By Wednesday morn- ing, the home page was advert-free and the website explained on their Twitter site why they had taken this action, blam- ing it on “Zionist interference”.)
- Black students



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#SeeIsraelForYourSelf
Went to Israel, Saw for Themselves
Armenian Quarter: Old City, Jerusalem
Kim, Kanye and North West in Jerusalem for North's baptism into the Armenian Apostolic Church.
Let's bring peace, not hate

were upset by the fact that when BDS chose to hang two manne- quins on the campus - one on a make-shift gallows and one from a tree - they had chosen to use black mannequins. In the morn- ing, “SAUJS were on that one like a rash”, says Hovsha, placing signs on the hung figures which read: “In Palestine, if you sell land to a Jew you can be hanged!” By the after-

noon the infuriated group of black students had ripped them down.

- No new incidents of unrest were reported from any campuses at the time of the print edition of Jewish Report going to press on Wednes- day afternoon.

Readers can follow our continuing coverage on the website at www.sajr.co.za.

WEDNESDAY'S SCHEDULED EVENTS:


- The leadership and members of the passionately pro-Zionist Lemba Christian Church were slated to attend the Wits event to show their solidarity.
- Winton Stewart who runs campus outreach programmes in the US was sched- uled to talk at Wits.
- One of the star attractions for the BDS side at Wits on Wednesday was a talk by Doron Isaacs
- Also speaking for SAUJS at Wits on Wednesday was the Israeli Druze speaker, Riad Hassoun, who had been almost accosted at UCT on Monday.

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SAUJS ran a well-planned awareness campaign

ANT KATZ

The South African Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS), under the leadership of National Chairman Dani Hovsha, who led the Israel Awareness Week campaign on South African university campuses this week to counter Israel Apartheid Week (IAW), appeared to outdo their rival, Boycott, Divestment and Sanction (Israel) - BDS-SA.

Both groups of students bring out speakers and hold events trying to outdo each other. Christian Zionist youth group DEISI (an acronym for Defend, Embrace, Invest, Support Israel) assisted SAUJS and also represented Israel Awareness Week on campuses where SAUJS does not have active branches.

SAUJS' strategy consisted of six tactical elements.

They had a poster campaign in which 25 different designs were produced on high quality A1 boards, consisting of four themes. Nelson Mandela, depicting his warm relationship with Israel

and many of his well-known quotes about the Holy Land; another series highlighting the civil and political rights of Israelis (including women's, gay, civil, democratic, and religious rights); a united colours of Israel campaign explaining that neither Jews nor Israelis are of any particular colour, highlighting the racial and cultural diversity of Israel.

And then there was the "Went to Israel and saw for themselves" campaign, highlighting the political and cultural experience and diversity of the country.

The second element of the campaign consisted of 44 images for use on social media. The students had volunteers who were tweeting and posting on social media. The volunteers consisted of members of both African Christian and Jewish communities, using the hashtag #SeelsraelForYourself.

The third element was the use of graffiti artists at Wits who created a Madiba Wall reading: "Let's Bring Peace Not Hate". The fourth element, also at Wits, was a picture wall called "Pics for Peace" where students had to take "selfies" in front of the wall, and post it on to Facebook to win great prizes.

The fifth element comprised T-shirts which were distributed with the word "Peace" printed in white on black in four languages: English, Hebrew, Arabic and Zulu.

The final element was the distribution of water bottles with pro-Israel slogans all over the campuses.



Board's Kahn slams ANC over support for IAW and BDS

ANT KATZ

The annual Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) - from this past Monday until Friday on South African university campuses - protesting what IAW supporters termed the "occupation" of the West Bank and Gaza, started with an endorsement from the ANC, issued by ANC Deputy Secretary General Jessie Duarte.

In a statement sent out to the community, SA Jewish Board of Deputies National Executive Director Wendy Kahn said the Board was perturbed by the ANC's "obsessive hostility towards the State of Israel". She slammed Duarte's posting on the website and said Duarte was aligning the ANC "with a movement that routinely promotes hatred not merely against Israel, but against the Jewish community in South Africa".

The Board of Deputies' response came in the wake of what Kahn referred to as the ruling party's "hostile rhetoric and unadulterated prejudice towards Israel".

As Duarte posted the statement on the official ANC website, said Kahn, the statement could therefore only be considered to be representative of the ruling party as a whole. The post was titled: "ANC's participation in Israeli Apartheid Week (March 7-13)" and was published on March 5.

Kahn called the ANC statement out of sync "with the President's commitment to South Africa playing a role in the resolution of the conflict," as well as being counter to former President Mandela's "commitment to continuously dialogue in areas of conflict".

The ANC statement, however, referred to the ruling party's January 8 birthday party speech by President Zuma, who, says Duarte, stated: "We reiterate our solidarity with the people of Palestine and... discourage travel to Israel for ANC leaders, members and representatives for business and leisure purposes".

The ANC statement said that members of its National Executive Committee would be speaking at various IAW events across the country.

Referring to the US-based NGO Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) organisation that runs IAW worldwide - but requires a strong showing from South Africa and the likes of Duarte and the ANC to give credibility to their "apartheid Israel" analogy canard, Kahn said their motives were merely to "be viscerally anti-Israel".

SA was welcome to show solidarity with the Palestinian people, Kahn pointed out, but this need not take the kind of "radical anti-Israel, and frequently anti-Semitic, form" that Duarte had used.

The ANC, on the other hand, said that it was "without any hesitation that the ANC will be participating in Israel Apartheid Week".

Said Kahn: "We are witnessing mounting instances of anti-Israel rhetoric crossing over into overt anti-Semitism, particularly on the university campuses."

Last week, says Kahn, attempts were made to disrupt a religious learning session for Wits Jewish students, "with the speaker

being rudely interrupted and participants subjected to offensive verbal abuse (such as that 'Jewish money' controls the university)".

Regarding the IAW, Duarte said the ANC was proud to be a participant and that the ruling party "particularly welcomes the involvement of members from the South

The Board of Deputies' response came in the wake of what Kahn referred to as the ruling party's "hostile rhetoric and unadulterated prejudice towards Israel".

African Jewish community who will be participating".

Responding on behalf of SA Jewry, Kahn's statement hoped to remind the ANC of the "intimidation, incitement and threats against Jewish students on South African university campuses over the past few years during the IAW campaign" and that the Board believes the ANC's statements are "irresponsible, provocative and dangerous".

They serve only to import a fraught and highly divisive foreign conflict into SA society at a time when there is a particularly pressing need to promote a culture of national unity and tolerance in our country, Kahn said.

She also took the ruling party to task for making such statements at a time when a "volatile situation prevails on our university campuses, significantly contributing to prevailing tensions and heightening the risk of further explosive confrontations".

Rather than supporting this hate-filled IAW week, Kahn appealed to the ANC to support the week of "dialogue, learning, exposure to different perspectives and, ultimately, of reconciliation" that Jewish students and the Christian Zionist community will be offering.

"This, surely, is the true South African way," Kahn said on Monday.

This is not the first time that Duarte has fallen foul of SA Jewry over her rabid criticism of Israel, a stance she shares with her boss, ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe. After Israel's incursion into Gaza in 2014, Duarte issued a statement in July 2014 in which she said, among other things: "(We) are reminded of the atrocities of Nazi Germany, surely we must ask the people of Israel: has the term 'lest we forget' lost its meaning?"

The Zionist Federation and the Board lashed out against what they called: "the ANC's venomous and insulting statement".

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, who was in Israel at the time, called on Duarte to put up or shut up - demanding that she retract her statement or debate him on it. She did neither.

• Read more on Jewish Report Online www.sajr.co.za.



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CONNECT INSPIRE EXPLORE EMPOWER

World leading entrepreneurs shine at Helping Hands function

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

Last Thursday, the Helping Hands division of the Chevrah Kadisha, schooled the rest of the Jewish community in how to attract young Jewish professionals into the community. And they came out in droves, as more than 600 women and men flooded into Investec wearing their pointy shoes, black tailored suits and pencil thin ties. This was the 10th incantation of the Jewish Entrepreneurs Insight, and it hosted two of the most remarkable international entrepreneurs, Shai Agassi and Adam Valkin, brother of the editor of this publication.

Shai Agassi, the international entrepreneurial superstar, spellbound his audience with the narration of his life. The descendant of refugees from Morocco and Iraq, Agassi graduated through the ranks of the Israel Defence Forces. He describes Israel as a process, not a country, which led him to Silicon Valley, rising to the position of CIO of German software behemoth SAP.

At age 40, Hasso Plattner, owner of SAP with strong links to South Africa, offered Shai, the position of CEO of the software giant. At that point, Agassi realised that he had to try and make the world a better place and rather than accepting the offer, he resigned from SAP and returned to Israel to pursue his newest venture, Better Place.

“You can either stop a missile with technology or you can stop the funding that pays for the missile in the first instance.” To do that, you need the oil price to drop to \$10 per barrel so, asks Agassi: “What happens if you could run a country without oil?”

When (then) President Shimon Peres heard of the idea, he adopted Agassi and decided to assist him to fundraise \$200m

for the development of a company that would create electric cars running on interchangeable batteries. Instead of filling up the car, you could merely swap out a new battery at a service station.

The venture was doomed, but Agassi rolled out the project in Israel, Denmark and Tokyo together with Renault Nissan. Infighting among the shareholders ultimately destroyed the \$2,5 billion technology unicorn.

Says Agassi: “If you are going to fail, fail big, don’t be mediocre; you have to be bold enough to try.” And therein lies the secret of Israel, no-one is afraid to fail, so no-one is afraid to try. “Success and failure are attached to each other - you cannot be timid.”

Internationally acclaimed venture capitalist, Adam Valkin, has gone from the tennis courts of King David Victory Park to being one of the great mavens of selecting tech companies destined for success. The venture firms he has worked for have invested in companies with household names such as Spotify, Snapchat, Fiverr and Class Pass.

Based in Boston, Valkin describes the three principles driving investment in Silicon Valley:

- A) Swing for the fences, go for the big win;
- B) Find entrepreneurs who have a vision of the future with the brilliance, perseverance and determination to drag the rest

of us to see that future; and
C) Jump on the back of the major trends that are changing the world, such as the rise of mobile, the creation of new distribution platforms and the millennialisation of the workforce.

One of his secrets to success has been to invest in consumer applications that are riding the incredible growth of smartphone proliferation such as games and music. Examples include Spotify (the online music streaming platform) and Vainglory (the popular online game).

Says Valkin: “The new centres of tech are the US, London, Israel, Paris, Berlin, Stockholm and Moscow.” Over recent years, he has made more than 200 visits to these locations looking for the next technology unicorn.

The world has changed and Valkin takes advantage of these new models of software distribution and platforms that sell spare capacity with subscription models. His

investment in Class Pass has created a subscription model for spare capacity for yoga and pilates classes. More than 13 million bookings have been made on the platform in the past two years alone.

Agassi enthralled the audience with a challenge to change the world. “If the business cannot change the world,” says Agassi, “it’s not for me.” He is currently looking at a business that uses 3D printers to build body organs.

He gives three tips to his audience, areas where the earthquake has already happened and we are merely waiting for the waves of the tsunami, three areas where major upheavals will disrupt entire industries:

- A) Cars will drive themselves, which will change many industries;
- B) The current energy blueprint is disrupted, solar is now cheaper than coal;
- C) The revolution in healthcare where we will go to a doctor to be fixed long before anything goes wrong.

As the 600 guests spilled out of the auditorium, no-one could forget the remarkable work done by The Chev and how it has managed to tap into a completely untapped demographic within the Jewish community.

Today 40 per cent of the Chev’s R250 million annual budget to support the needy in the community is obtained from people below the age of 40. Agassi spoke about the work of the Chev and how his parents had arrived in Israel as refugees and if it were not for organisations in Israel doing similar work to the Chev, he would never have become the international icon he is today.

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I merely pose the question...

A well-placed foreigner who has lived for the past few years in this community, made a somewhat controversial observation in conversation recently. He said that the South African Jewish community had “access” to government and major decision-makers, but little “influence”. It is a thought provoking comment.

While South African Jewish business people have powerful political connections, create desperately needed jobs and lead noble and effective philanthropic endeavours for this nation, in the bigger scheme, he felt our community plays a fairly marginal role; consequently, making us quite powerless to promote a more balanced view on Israel in government or local media.

In his columns, former Jewish Report editor Geoff Sifrin has often bemoaned the fact that Jews are today, in the main, absent from formal South African politics, yet, in the early days, were prolific at every level.

The Progressive/Democratic Party had Helen Suzman, Tony Leon, Selma Browde and Harry Schwarz.

The ANC boasted Joe Slovo, Ronnie Kasrils, who held Cabinet portfolios, as well as Denis Goldberg and Ben Turok - and for a short while Gill Marcus, before she became Reserve Bank governor - as prominent MPs.

But apart from one or two, how many from our community have ever been close and trusted advisers to a South African president or made major decisions about our country’s economy or foreign policy goals?

Although South African Jews have always courted the ruling parties for the pragmatic purposes of business interests or for the protection of our Jewish life, it is markedly different to the United States where Jews wield considerable influence in both politics and the media.

Consider former Secretary of the Treasury Bob Rubin and the last three chairmen of the Federal Reserve (Alan Greenspan, Ben Bernanke and now Janet Yellen) - American Jews have played critical roles in numerous White House administrations - and one may yet land up as the next president, namely Bernie Sanders.

In fact, there is a lot of criticism of “too much” Jewish influence in the United States. This camp points to the Sulzbergers who control the New York Times, Michael Bloomberg, founder of Bloomberg News, or the Newhouse family who, among other media interests, own the largest privately held newspaper chain in America, as prime examples.

Indeed, those who oppose Israel’s policies regarding the Palestinians often blame America’s consistent support of Israel on the “Jewish influence” in American politics. Others, like Sheldon Adelson who was the largest single donor to the last American presidential election, are accused of using their financial resources to “buy influence”. Adelson is also a newspaper owner and a major funder of anti-BDS activity on campuses in the US.

When he visited South Africa for a Keren Hayesod conference at the end of last year, he was told about the strong anti-Israel lobby in the media here and that it was de facto policy among ANC elite and Cabinet ministers not to visit Israel.

He was completely baffled that with all the financial clout South African Jewry has - and he had been at a conference with some of South Africa’s major benefactors - there were still no attempts by powerful Jewish South Africans, other than a few sponsored tours for youth leaders and journalists, to push for effectively clarifying the other side of the story, whether through media ownership or getting government members they had relationships with to visit Israel to see for themselves.

Why don’t South African Jews get more involved, he asked. Well, I uhhmed and aahed... South African Jews all live with their passports in their bags and their takkies (sneakers I translated) on and are a bit “disinvested”.

Also, I explained, because of their tiny numbers, they may feel powerless to implement any real change. Another principle that may be guiding the more religious element in our community, comes from the teachings of Pirkei Avot, the Ethics of our Fathers, which



South african Jewish Report

states that we should not hold any “domineering position”, nor “become intimate with the ruling power”.

Beyond these factors, fears about personal safety cause us, like others who can afford the luxury, to hide behind high walls and in our cars, without ever taking public transportation. This lack of real connection and engagement with the wider community might all add to a somewhat helpless and uninvolved, myopic view.

Are these reasons sufficient justification for our “access” but little “influence”? I merely pose the question...

– Vanessa Valkin, editor

Pew finding on expulsion of Israeli Arabs prompts sharp reactions

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In a survey that spanned politics, religion and interfaith relations, one statistic stood out: nearly half of Israel’s Jews support expelling the country’s Arabs.

The Pew Research Centre’s study of Israelis’ attitudes, which had its findings released on Tuesday, had asked respondents whether they agreed that “Arabs should be expelled or transferred from Israel.” Forty-eight per cent of Israeli Jews agreed, while 46 per cent did not. Among self-described right-wing Jews, 72 per cent agreed, along with 71 per cent of religious Zionists.

The figure was inconsistent with the findings of previous studies and provoked strong reactions in a country that sees its Arab minority as proof of its commitment to democratic values and respect for diversity. It has also shone a spotlight on what has been seen previously as a fringe proposal. No party in the Israeli Knesset advocates mass population transfer and it has never been seriously discussed as a solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

“The idea that the State of Israel could be a democracy only for its Jewish citizens is unconscionable and we must find a way to address this,” Israeli President Reuven Rivlin said at a meeting with officials of the Washington-based Pew Centre. “I believe that also our democratic values are born out of our Jewish faith, a love for the stranger and equality before the law.”

Rivlin called on the public to engage in “soul-searching and moral reflection”.

But Alan Cooperman, the Pew study’s lead author, says support for expulsion comports with other data points in the sur-



Two Israeli Arab girls in Jerusalem, seemingly oblivious of the Pew Centre's findings.

vey. Cooperman pointed to survey findings that nearly four out of five Israeli Jews say

Israel should give preferential treatment to Jews, 60 per cent of Israeli Jews believe G-d gave the land to them, and that majorities of religious Zionists and haredi Orthodox Jews also feel Jewish law should be the law of the state.

“You see it really makes sense,” he said. “Support is strongest among [religious Zionists], very high among settlers.”

Analysts say Jewish animosity toward Israeli Arabs has been exacerbated by the recent wave of Palestinian terror attacks and a government response that some

consider inflammatory. Rawnak Natour, the co-director of Sikkuy, a nonprofit that works toward Arab-Jewish coexistence, pointed to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s speech decrying “two nations within Israel” following a January terror attack in Tel Aviv.

“I think there’s a feeling of fear here that’s strengthened by the political echelon,” Natour said. “There’s a lack of familiarity of the other side.”

The Pew finding on expulsion is significantly higher than other recent polls that have sought to measure Israeli attitudes toward coexistence. The 2015 Israel Democracy Index, a survey published annually by the Israel Democracy Institute, found 37,5 per cent support for the government merely encouraging Arab emigration.

A 2015 poll by Haifa University Professor Sammy Smoocha found that six in 10 Israeli Jews felt “it would be good for Arabs and Jews to always live together in Israel”. That

survey also found 32 per cent of respondents in favour of encouraging Arabs to leave Israel in exchange for compensation.

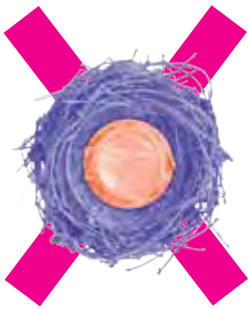
Israeli pollsters have laid blame on the question itself, calling it vague and misleading. Is the question about Israeli Arabs, West Bank Palestinians or both? When would this expulsion occur, and under what conditions? Would the Arab refugees be compensated?

“It was asked in a very unclear way,” said Tamar Hermann, academic director of IDI’s Guttman Centre for Surveys. “If we didn’t get a majority on a more cautious and less aggressive version [of the question], what happened here? I would say take it with a grain of salt.”

The statistic is a sign not only of extremism but also of polarisation in Israeli society, says Steven M Cohen, a sociology professor at New York’s Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion who consulted on the Pew study. Regardless of the exact level of support, he called the figure a “warning sign” for Israeli and Jewish leaders.

“There’s a lot of support for this notion that G-d gave this land to me - not to them, to me,” Cohen said at a panel discussion of the survey on Tuesday in Tel Aviv. “Is there a context in which it seems the authorities are trying to diminish the place of minorities in this country? Is that happening? If that’s happening, then this question becomes very critical.” (JTA)

The statistic is a sign not only of extremism but also of polarisation in Israeli society, says Steven M Cohen, a sociology professor at New York’s Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion



Mother nurture.

The big dream and little hope of Palestinians and Israelis



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Extremists on both sides of the Israeli-Palestinian divide will not like the ideas of Palestinian peace activist Professor Mohammed Dajani, who has been brought to South Africa by Jewish groups in response to Israel Apartheid Week. Extremists envision a win-lose scenario where one side wins and the other is vanquished. Dajani believes through recognising each other's humanity, peace is possible, where both sides win. South Africa's approach has important lessons.

Dajani was born into an anti-Jewish environment in West Jerusalem, where his family lived

for centuries. When Jewish forces arrived in 1948, the family fled and their property was confiscated. In 1967 in Lebanon he was involved in media relations for Fatah, thereafter leaving politics for academia in the UK and US. After returning in 1993 to Jerusalem, a change occurred in his attitude when his father had cancer and entered an Israeli hospital in Ein Karem.

Dajani saw doctors treating him purely as a patient, not as an Arab - as the "other". Later, when his mother suffered a heart attack near Ben-Gurion Airport after a family outing, Israeli paramedics took her to a nearby military hospital where doctors tried their best to revive her. He saw the other side's humanity.

Dajani started a movement called Wasatia - which means "centre" or "moderate". The Palestinian people are moderate, he says, and the Qur'an is peace-seeking. But extremist groups

is denied or distorted, and the idea taught that Jews are not a nation and not entitled to a state. Each side has its tragedy, however: The Palestinians have the Nakba - their "catastrophe" when Israel was established in 1948 and some 750 000 Palestinian refugees fled. Israel, he says, "has made a tremendous effort to wipe out the memory of the Nakba".

When, as a professor at Jerusalem's Al Quds University, he took Palestinian students to Auschwitz in 2014 to learn about the Holocaust, he was pressurised not to do it by other Palestinians. It was part of a project where Jewish students from Tel Aviv and Ben-Gurion universities would visit Dheisheh refugee camp to learn about the Nakba.

Israelis and Palestinians must move from the "Big Dream" to the "Little Hope", he says. The Israelis' big dream is that there are no Palestinians in the Land of Israel; for Palestinians, there are no Jews and Israelis. The small hope for both sides, however, is two states where each people have their homeland.

Dajani rejects BDS' approach of boycotting Israel. "We reject BDS walls and also Israeli walls; we want to build bridges." He says the Arab

world would normalise relations with Israel - in 2002 it proposed the Arab Peace Initiative. "The Palestinian aspirations for peace are similar to the Arab world today."

To allay Israeli security concerns, Palestine will not have an army, he says. Jerusalem's Old City - holy to Judaism, Islam and Christianity - will be internationalised; other sections of Jerusalem will be part of the settlement between Israel and Palestine.

He emphasises that the right of return for Palestinians is "holy". However, actual return is a different matter - there can be compensation, which would allay Israeli fears of being demographically swamped. Jewish settlers in the West Bank can choose to live in Palestine, or leave and receive compensation.

Dajani is pleased to hear the ANC is speaking to BDS. But the question he asks is most relevant: What is the message? Is it about reconciliation or hate?

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



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News

Alison Katzeff - very capable and knowing what she wants

Alison Katzeff, chairman of the UJC, addresses this year's campaign launch.



Photo: ARK Images – Shawn Benjamin

MOIRA SCHNEIDER CAPE TOWN

As chairman of the United Jewish Campaign (UJC), this community's fundraising arm, for the past 16 months, Alison Katzeff has noticed a change in patterns of giving, particularly as far as younger donors are concerned.

A seasoned community leader of some 25 years' standing - it's easier to ask her which organisations she hasn't been involved in - she is uniquely qualified for the position. A businesswoman for 39 years, she has the practical know-how, topped off with the prestigious - and notoriously demanding - MBA degree she obtained at UCT some three years ago.

Katzeff puts the decision to enrol for the "hectic" degree down to "a midlife crisis". Both her children had left for Israel, she had just completed her term of office as chairman of the United Herzlia Schools and she thought: "Okay, I'm finished with the school - now what am I going to do with myself? I hate being bored!"

Katzeff feels that women are becoming increasingly involved in decisions, a component of philanthropy's changing face. In addition, "It used to be that it was something you gave just from guilt and that was the end of your giving.

"Today, the younger generation wants to be involved, we're giving as couples, we are involved with how we're giving and what we're giving to. Young people want transparency - they want to see and touch what they're involved

with - they like projects." As a donor herself, Katzeff says she sees every donor with the same eyes that she would like to be seen with. "There's a certain way you want to be treated," she begins.

"There's a respect that's required - you can't expect people to give. It's part of a conversation. Philanthropy is a discussion.

"When somebody comes to me for a donation, I like to have the discussion: 'What are you doing, what project are you involved in?' Very important is transparency - all of us today want to see balance sheets and income statements.

"We want to understand what the organisations are doing. We want to understand their expense structures so that we know that most, if not all, of what we are giving is going to where it must go."

Katzeff has certainly been successful in her efforts, evidenced by the fact that she has been invited to stay on for a second term at the UJC. "I've taken a more strategic view," she explains, "opening it up from just 'campaigning' a donor (once a year) to the conversations we can have with the donors.

"Our objective is a fuller offering, trying to impact on categories of donors at specific times. I want to be able to engage over the year."

Recently a few donors attended a talk on the taxation of trusts. "So it's not just a take - we want to be able to give back," she stresses.

"We're a very cohesive community, which is extraordinary, and we need to have an offering for everybody." Obviously a winning formula!



ADVERTORIAL

Former Pres Shimon Peres' visit a resounding success

Pres Shimon Peres with Avrom Krengel.



The visit by former Israeli President Shimon Peres to Johannesburg was a resounding success. We have received extremely positive feedback and rave reports. We are thrilled that we were able to bring this world icon to the Johannesburg community and that he was able to uplift those who heard him with his positive message and encouraging words.

During his whirlwind stay, he met with the Jewish leadership and engaged with the community. He also managed to fit in meetings with South African politicians and business leaders.

On Sunday evening, February 28, the IUA-UCF presented to the community, President Shimon Peres, Man of Peace, at the Sandton Convention Centre. The venue was filled to capacity with close to 2000 people attending the event, including many Christian supporters of Israel.

Among the VIP guests were Prince Mangosuthu Buthelezi, Rev and Mrs Kenneth Meshoe, Prophet Banda and Mosiuoa Lekota. The entertainment was colourful and enjoyable.

The keynote speaker, former President Peres

spoke with passion, humour and inspiration. Media personality Paula Slier posed questions which were answered with candour and insight.

The audience warmed to Peres' sincerity and openness. He spoke about Israel being a start-up nation and contributing to the world through advanced agriculture, medicine and incomparable technology. He emphasised the need to be positive and optimistic and finished on a note of confidence.

Avrom Krengel, co-chairman of the IUA-UCF Gauteng, thanked the former President Peres and reminded the audience that the IUA-UCF is the "Iron Dome" of the community and appealed to the audience to assist by making contributions in order to continue this important work of securing the local Jewish community with a strong Israel in our hearts.

It was truly a memorable occasion and one which will be remembered for many years to come.

- A DVD of the event will be available for purchase shortly.



Pres Shimon Peres with Naomi Hadar.

Recent student protests are entirely counterproductive

DAVID BILCHITZ

South African university campuses have literally been burning in recent weeks. Student protests, which began peacefully last year, have regularly turned violent. In the process, the legitimate goals of the initial protests have been placed in jeopardy.

South Africa’s culture of protest developed initially under apartheid when there was an authoritarian government that would brook no dissent. While the liberation movements sought to use non-violent methods of protest in the 1950s, increasing repression by the Nationalist government led them to adopt more violent strategies from the 1960s onwards.

With the advent of a democratic South Africa, the days of violent protest were meant to end. The Constitution expressed this ideal clearly when it recognised the right, “peacefully and unarmed, to assemble, to demonstrate, to picket and to present petitions”.

In a country with a government that is elected legitimately by the whole population, the ethos should become one of persuading elected representatives and fellow citizens rather than a zero-sum game of coercion and force.

Unfortunately, recent student protests demonstrate that the culture of protest in our country has failed to change in line with the transformation of our political system. The violence is itself undemocratic: the vast majority of students want to have no part of it.

It has therefore split a potentially powerful movement. Moreover, it is entirely counterproductive: ensuring all qualifying students can study without regard to their ability to afford university fees is a noble aim, yet, if millions have to be spent on security and re-building existing infrastructure, this goal becomes even more difficult to achieve.

Professor Jonathan Jansen, vice-chancellor

of the University of the Free State, has also recently drawn attention to how these protests are causing some major donors to withdraw from the universities, thus jeopardising even further their financial positions and ability to provide life-changing opportunities to students.

South African students and academics need to pull back from the brink of disaster and develop a vibrant, democratic culture on campuses. In my view, this requires attention to three important elements.

The first is a recognition that the right to protest and advocate is the life-blood of democratic cultures. Some universities and interest groups are too quick to attempt to silence competing voices: the answer to most forms of speech (excluding clear hatred and incitement to harm) should be more speech.

The second is that the right to protest has its limits and must respect the ability of individuals and groups not to join a protest. If the vast majority of students wish to attend a lecture, a small group cannot be allowed to impose their will on the others: that is fascism not democracy.

Where students (or other citizens) engage in criminal behaviour such as violence towards other persons or property, there must be severe legal consequences, making it clear that the South African community will not tolerate such actions.

The last element is the importance of responsive leadership: physical violence often erupts due to a sense of frustration that no-



one is listening and unless something extreme is done, the status quo will remain. To address this problem, university management (and the government in other circumstances) must accept an obligation to engage with students and other interest groups and respond reasonably to them. I do not suggest that management must always agree with those they engage with: yet, where the demands are reasonable, management, academics and students can often find common cause and will be a more powerful constituency if they work together.

The means we adopt to achieve our ends matter: this is a basic ethical lesson in many traditions. Jewish ethics, for instance, teaches that G-d commanded Moses to speak to a rock to provide water for the people. Instead, Moses struck the rock. For this action he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land.

The same end was achieved – water flowed

from the rock – but the means differed fundamentally: the narrative draws our attention to the vast difference between the modality of “hitting” (of violence) and that of “speaking” (persuasion).

Those who resort to physical force lose the mantle of credibility and take us further away from a truly democratic society. The means we adopt affect the eventual goals that we can achieve.

It is the responsibility of us all to help nurture a different kind of society - and university in which speech and persuasion displace violence and coercion. Our future depends on it.

• David Bilchitz is a Professor of Fundamental Rights and Constitutional Law at the University of Johannesburg; Director of a leading research institute in advanced constitutional law (SAIFAC); and Secretary-General of the International Association of Constitutional Law.

News

A cherished teacher reconnects – 50 years on

SUZANNE BELLING

Rosh Beth Din Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag has been part and parcel of the Beth Din for so many years that it is difficult to envision him in another role other than his imposing presence in the Jewish Ecclesiastical Court.

But the Israeli rabbi, who married Batya Aloy in 1961, actually had a very different life before coming to South Africa in 1966. And for a few years after that.

He was rosh yeshiva of the Bnei Akiva Yeshiva in Netanya and recalls with affection his interaction with the grade 11 class of 1965. “My focus was on education - not judgements - and I came to Johannesburg to head the former Hebrew Teachers’ Seminary at Arcadia in Johannesburg.

“Then it was decided this type of training was unnecessary and I was recruited by the South African Board of Jewish Education to run the Jewish Students’ University Programme (JSUP). There were 120 boys and girls in the class and, as well as Jewish studies, the learners were enrolled in Unisa to obtain their secular degrees.

“About 20 shidduchim were made among the JSUP students,” the rabbi recalls.

He joined the Beth Din on a part-time basis in 1976 and was appointed Rosh Beth Din in 1989. “This is obviously what G-d wants me to do,” he told the SA Jewish Report.

But recently, out of the blue, he was contacted by members of his grade 11 class from the Bnei Akiva Yeshiva. “They were planning a 50-year reunion, together with their wives, and wanted me to send them a bracha to use in their golden anniversary brochure.

Rabbi Kurtstag wrote that it was amazing that, after 50 years, the learners had remained in contact.

“Torah is the unifying force among Jews scattered all over. All Am Yisrael is connected through the Torah, like one man with one heart,” he said.

“Then I decided to give them a big surprise. I travelled to Yerushalayim to meet with my former learners and their wives. It was such an exciting experience. They were



Photos supplied



Above: Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag with his class 50 years later. Left: The rosh yeshiva Rabbi Moshe Kurtstag with his grade 11 class a couple of years after graduation.

teenagers and now they are zeidas!”

Twenty members of Rabbi Kurtstag’s original class of 23 were present. One had died, one was living in the United States and a third fell ill and could not attend the reunion.

“Although all observant Jews, there was not one rabbi among them - doctors, lawyers, accountants, businessmen, but not one rabbi!” Rabbi Kurtstag said.

On motzei Shabbat, photographs were taken of the “old boys” and their wives with Rabbi Kurtstag. “Now I can see I am getting old,” he quipped.

Ben Swartz’s open letter to BDS



Ben Swartz,
National Chairman,
SAZF

Dear BDS,

I would like to offer this message of thanks to all the members and supporters of the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement around the world. As chairman of the Zionist Federation it remains my task to strengthen and galvanise the support of the Jewish State not only among all South African Jews, but beyond, to include all those who share and appreciate the values and relevance of the State of Israel in the context of global affairs.

You have made our job that much easier ... You have tried to threaten us and what we stand for. Through your endless tirades of hatred from calls to “Shoot the Jew”, to fomenting calls to expel Jews from campuses around South Africa. From consistently lying to and entrapping the media, academia and civil society, and by leading marches on business (perceived by you to be run by Jews) – you have forced more Jews and friends of Israel to stand up and be counted.

You have made us realise that we can never take the gift of Jewish sovereignty in our historical and biblical homeland for granted. You have forced us to work very hard to show the world that you are neither telling the truth, nor representing the best interests of the Palestinian people. You have helped us build a friendship circle of pro-Israel ambassadors, all willing to share the truth of what is really taking place in the Middle East.

We thank you for showing those who were “on the fence” that racism and hatred can never lead to peace.

Through your efforts to intimidate and propagate blatant lies, you have only strengthened our resolve to appreciate who we are, where we come from and what we represent.

You have forced us to break the shackles of isolation that for so long we have used to protect ourselves and you have pushed us to reach out and engage with the outside world like never before. We have made many new friends!

You have been instrumental in bringing people of all faiths, cultures, nations and societies of the world together – whether it be massive parts of the Christian world, including the Evangelic Church, the Catholics and the largest black churches in Africa, or

the mighty nations of India, China and all of Africa.

Thank you too for helping us educate the world by your actions that have caused us to explain the importance of a place one can freely practise their own religion – no matter what it may be – and showcase the democracy that is Israel.

You have pushed the mighty nations of the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany and France to pass legislation that not only protects Israel against your devious efforts but has strengthened and fortified the economic relationship between Israel and these nations.

Thanks to you the US Congress has agreed “to increase the use of its voice, vote, and influence in international organisations and other appropriate international forums to actively oppose politically motivated acts of boycott, divestment from, and sanctions against Israel”.

Thanks for ensuring that Britain took a decision in February planning to completely outlaw BDS. The measure is expected to make Britain the second major EU country to outlaw boycotting Israel.

The difference between us and you is that we are defending our right to exist – not just as free people but as a people who understand that, when people threaten us, it is never to be taken lightly. Over the past 2 000 years we have learnt that when others say “Shoot the Jew” – we know what they mean.

But now, most South Africans and the rest of the world have seen through you.

Thanks to you, BDS, the community of nations has been able to find ways to work together to help Israel to help themselves through leading-edge technology, water management, agri-tech, medicine and business innovation. The world’s fight-back against your movement, in the Arab world and even among the Palestinians, continues to gain incredible momentum.

But now let me tell you what we don’t thank you for...

As much as you have tried to get our fellow-South Africans to further embroil themselves in a conflict thousands of miles away, you have shown them that you don’t really care

about the issues facing us as South Africans.

When it comes to the key issues of food or water security, health and medicine or business innovation – areas unsurpassed in excellence by Israel – yet issues that remain so critical to South Africa today - your hatred for Israel remains so great that you would rather see South Africans go hungry, without water or with no access to revolutionary medical solutions and exposure to innovative ways of doing business - all at the expense of your hateful agenda.

Even more so, as all South Africans are today confronted by the demons of racism, you deem it wise and expedient to throw as much fuel onto this flame as possible.

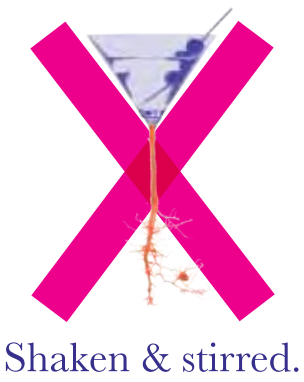
When it comes to the Palestinian cause you should be ashamed of your arrogance and its consequences in exacerbating the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians.

You are no better than any state or organisation that for the last 70 years has been guilty of instructing the Palestinians not to resolve their differences with the Jewish State by shackling and inciting the very people you claim to represent, as opposed to encouraging the Palestinians to seek a constructive and peaceful resolution to the very painful conflict that affects everyone involved.

How do you justify the disingenuous concept and belief that “You” will sort out their problems?

To paraphrase Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, supreme leader of Hezbollah (and I never thought I would ever be quoting him) who just this week stated: “Arab regimes have never done anything for the Palestinians.”

Well, let us be very clear on this - neither have you and it is clear to all that you never will.



Shaken & stirred.

This column is paid for by the SA Zionist Federation

World News in Brief

EU businesses demand ‘occupied territories’ labels

JERUSALEM - The European Union, responding to demands by businesses in its member nations, plans to step up its labeling measures for Israeli products by requiring farmers based beyond the 1967 lines to clearly label produce as coming from “the occupied territories”, Israel Hayom reported last week Friday.

Farmers in Israel’s Jordan Valley were recently informed by two companies that export their produce to the EU that the new directive will take effect in mid-April. In November 2015, the EU had already decided to remove “Made in Israel” labels from settlement products. According to Israel Hayom, one Israeli exporter said he was recently approached by several German supermarket chains which told him that Israeli manufacturers must now label their products prominently to indicate to consumers that they were “manufactured in territories occupied by the Israeli government”. Additionally, the Dutch Agriculture Ministry reportedly informed importers that Israeli settlement products must be clearly labelled before leaving Israel.

“This is a purely anti-Semitic decision,” David El-hayani, head of Israel’s Jordan Valley Regional Council, told Israel Hayom. “This is because we’re Jews. This is an act of humiliation, and the EU are trying to make it look like we’re occupiers and land thieves.” (JNS.org)

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Applications including CV and references should be sent as soon as possible to Jonty Cohen at execd@sydshul.co.za

>>Continued from page 5.



Marc Kahn (mediator); Shai Agassi and Adam Valkin.



Shai Agassi.



Byron Goldberg, Daniel Isaacs, Josh Moritz, David Bernstein, Yishai Mark and Jeff Rosen



Kerri Fox, Laurie Coleman, Maxine Ohayon



Good turnout.

Opinion and Analysis

Alas, it seems all about ‘babies’ and ‘bathwater’...



BARBARIC YAWP

David Saks

Early in April 1990 I arrived, still wet behind the ears, at the Johannesburg Public Library to begin what would be a seven-year stint as Curator: History of the Africana Museum (now MuseumAfrica). Mine was a new position, created as part of the museum’s seeking to reposition itself in a rapidly changing society.

It had been recognised that if the museum was to remain a respected and properly funded cultural and educational resource, it had to move decisively away from the heavily Eurocentric focus of the past.

No more, for example, could the importation of slaves be attributed to the “unwillingness of the Hottentots to work for the white man”, nor could Bartholomew Diaz be described as the man who “discovered” the Cape.

Since leaving MuseumAfrica, I have occasionally taken my kids there, but after my last visit in December, am unlikely to do so again. Empty spaces abounded, whole sections were unlit, interactive displays no longer functioned and hardly anything new seemed to have been added since I was last there.

Even more revealingly, we were the only visitors, despite this being a Sunday. What used to be the offices of a range of curators - among them a geologist, ethnographer, two historians and curators for the costume and picture collections, have been unoccupied for years.

Whatever reasons there might be for the disastrous state of neglect, it cannot be attributed to a failure to adapt to post-apartheid realities. If anything, successive curators have swung too far in the other direction for fear of being accused of pandering to notions of white cultural domination.

As a result, the “old” was jettisoned almost in its entirety in favour of installations whose themes carefully, even slavishly, mirrored what was felt to be the acceptable post-colonial “Struggle” narrative.

The new-look MuseumAfrica certainly mounted some ground-breaking displays, but in the end, though, far too little of its remarkably rich and diverse collection has been put on display post-1994.

Over the decades, MuseumAfrica has amassed a vast array of artefacts. Certainly, this includes material reminiscent of the bad old days of Eurocentric historiography - all those 1820 Settler tea cosies, Royal Visit memorabilia, Great Trek flintlocks, Randlords’ furniture and the like - but the greater part of it is ideologically neutral: radios, washing machines, gramophones, ornaments, toys and whatever else one might think of.

There is even a Sefer Torah, which the descendants of the original donor sought in vain to have returned to the family.

The museum also houses an extraordinary pictorial collection - photographs, prints, water colours, oils, engravings and more. Virtually all of this also now languishes in storage, unseen by all except the curator in charge and the occasional researcher.

The (apparently permanent) consignment to

storage of the greater part of MuseumAfrica’s collections, is undoubtedly one of the reasons why the museum is today so little visited. It was something I used to harp on continually when I was there, although invariably, my bleats along the lines of “babies” and “bathwater” were disregarded.

Ultimately, however, this immeasurably rich and varied repository of South Africa’s heritage is today in crisis because it has been starved of resources by the City Council. It would seem that those in charge of such matters simply do not see its value, whether as a public recreational space, tourist attraction, research and educational resource or historical conservation facility.

Something similar has happened to the Johannesburg Art Gallery, whose superb collections have likewise been put into storage since they represent in the main the white European tradition. (The fact that it is not entirely unknown for Europe to have produced the occasional talented artist, was apparently not enough of a factor in the decision).

It would not be so bad if at least indigenous African art had gone up to replace those irredeemably tainted works - Gerard Sekoto, for example - but that has not happened either. Instead, one finds the same empty, unlit spac-

es, with hardly anything to see, even in areas that are being used. And, like MuseumAfrica, the gallery is now all but unvisited.

I’m probably sticking my neck out here, but I believe that all this neglect - MuseumAfrica and the Johannesburg Art Gallery are just two such examples - reflects a profound disinclination on the part of many black South Africans to relate to and connect in any meaningful way with the physical record of their country’s history. It is almost as if the past is too painful and traumatic, too redolent with memories of cultural subservience and racial humiliation, to be dwelt on, let alone cherished and celebrated.

Even heritage sites and artefacts exclusively relating to black history and culture (such as the graves of the Xhosa chiefs Ngjika and Maqoma and MuseumAfrica’s impressive repository of items illustrating multiple aspects of traditional African life) are greatly under-exploited.

It could be that institutions like museums and art galleries are seen as being irredeemably the products of a white, colonial era, and that no amount of politically correct twisting and turning will ever remove that taint. Personally, I am just depressed by the gigantic waste of it all.



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NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE SA INVOLVEMENT IN MIDEAST POLICY

I read the article of Steven Gruzd with regards the Palestinian issue being hijacked by foreign policy in last week’s Jewish Report. I sit on the Parliamentary committee for International Relations and Co-operation and thus have a bird’s eye view of both our policy and the decision-makers that have a bearing on it.

Many party leaders sit on this committee and some of the most professional officials I have ever worked with make up the department. We have been privy to the department’s strategy documents, foreign briefings and South Africa’s involvement in organisations such as the SADC, AU and IPU.

While I agree with everything that Gruzd says, I think it is important to note some naked truths.

- The Middle East features very prominently in most strategic documents of the committee. The department believes in a two-state solution. However, although they would prefer a balanced approach, it was admitted in one of the meetings that their main involvement is to ensure the Palestinians get to the peace table and that they get a fair deal.
- The ANC, as a party, is far more aggressive in pushing the Palestinian position. The party shares platforms with lobby groups and skew the line between Israel and Jewry. In a public discourse between the chairman and myself a few weeks back, I had to point out the error and misconceptions of all Jews being Israeli and all Israelis being Jews. The most astounding point of the conversation was when I challenged the chairman to tell me how many Jewish people live in this country. He never ventured an answer but judging by the dialogue, his mind was in the millions.
- South-Africa is lobbying hard for a permanent UN Security Council seat for itself or one of its allies. This is where my fear lies. It is their persistence and perseverance in achieving this feat that makes me question their ultimate motive. It is also for this reason that I believe we must never relax or underestimate the South-African involvement in Middle-East policy.

Darren Bergman MP
Cape Town

SAJFP PROVIDES AN ALTERNATIVE JEWISH VIEW ON MIDEAST CONFLICT

The SAJFP’s political views obviously diverge from what seems to be the mainstream Jewish perspective on Israel-Palestine. Nevertheless, we feel strongly about these views and about the importance of there being alternative views heard within the community.

A recent letter, by Allan Wolman, (in the March 2 edition), expressed confusion regarding two South African Jewish organisations which are raising questions about the policies of the Israeli government.

SAJFP campaigns for the recognition of the 1948 borders and oppose the continued, ethnic cleansing of Palestine. It advocates for equal rights across the whole of Israel-Palestine.

Wolman accuses these groups of having a “selective morality”. He writes: “Let’s try to understand why these groups seem to care less about the Palestinian populations of Syria, Lebanon and other Arab countries, than missing the bus.”

In fact, the plight of the Palestinians in these countries is central to our concerns. SAJFP advocates for the return of these refugees to their proper home. Not only is the right of return enshrined in international law, but there are also particular resolutions adopted by the General Assembly of the UN, legislating that the Palestinian refugees have the right to return. Until this issue is addressed, there cannot be a just resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Wolman then repeats what has become a common refrain: “If their Jewish conscience troubles them so, why discriminate against the hundreds of thousands of victims of Syria, Yemen and Islamic State? Surely their Jewish concern for the rest of humanity demands that they speak out against all these as well?”

The answer to this is simple: “Syria, Yemen and Islamic State” do not claim to perpetrate atrocities in our name. (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu openly purports to act in the name of global Jewry. We contemptuously dismiss this claim and will continue to campaign against discrimination and injustice - especially when it is built on an identity - our Jewish identity - which we hold dear.

Merlynn Edelstein (SAJFP)
Johannesburg

JUDAISM IS A TREE WITH MANY BRANCHES - AND WITHERING LEAFS

On behalf of “The Society for the Reconciliation of Jews in Difficult Times” I am writing this letter. I address it to all Jews, irrespective of their religious affiliation.

Humanity can be likened to a forest. Judaism is like a tree in the forest, (albeit a special tree). The trunk represents the observant Jews; the branches represent the various (numerous) offshoots.

The seeds may give rise to new trees, such as Christianity, which in turn gives rise to other branches such as Roman Catholicism, Lutheranism, Calvinism, Anglicans, Presbyterians etc. Some seeds give rise to Islam with branches such as Sunni, Shia, Alawites and extremists such as ISIL.

The leaves represent Jews who are removed from their Judaism. Once their work is done, they fall off, decay and become nutrients for other trees. The leaves are permanently lost to the trunk. Examples of these Jews are Einstein, Freud, Marx, Theodor Herzl, Franz Kafka, etc.

Of special interest is Kafka. One of his books may have been the template for civil servants, government ideologies, commercial call centres etc in South Africa where dealing with bureaucracy is a nightmare.

Collins Dictionary says of Kafka’s writings: “He portrays man’s fear, isolation and bewilderment in a nightmarish dehumanised world.”

John Brenner
Johannesburg

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ZUMA KICKED GORDHAN WHERE IT REALLY HURTS

If I were Minister of Finance Pravin Gordhan or his predecessor Nhlanhla Nene, then President Jacob Zuma’s statement that Des van Rooyen (who served only four days as finance minister because of pressure brought to bear on Zuma to recall him) is the most qualified of all the finance ministers that he ever appointed, then to me it would have felt like a concomitant

punch in the gut, a kick in the testes and a slap in the face.

Did Zuma not realise the full impact of that thoughtless statement? Or is he impervious to the insults he dishes out?

Jack Miller
Gresswold, Johannesburg

IN THE NAME OF UNITY, LET’S AGREE TO DISAGREE

Having participated in the Orthodox/Reform debate on the letters pages of Jewish Report, I have realised that there are sincere and well-meaning people on both sides of the divide. We humans have a tendency to generally consider our own views as correct, while demonising other viewpoints.

Rather than playing the ball, we often play the man and things can get ugly. Instead of disagreeing with an opinion, it, alas, often becomes

WITH ALL HIS FAULTS, TRUMP IS BEST OF THE US HOPEFULS

I am sorry to read in last week’s edition of Jewish Report that some Jewish political figures in the US Republican Party think about voting for Democratic Party frontrunner Hillary Clinton should Donald Trump (who is leading the Republican contest for electoral votes so far) be elected as that party’s presidential candidate.

Trump may not be the ideal presidential candidate - and I disagree with some of his political views - but he is the one who is likely to ring the change which humanity desperately needs. No more influence of Saudi-Arabia and other oil-rich dictatorial countries over the foreign policy of the US; no more wars of aggression; no more Ukrainian-style US-inspired “revolutions”, which topple democratically elected governments in favour of murderous dictatorial regimes.

And no more of the US policy of bullying European countries, and “peaceful relations” with Russia.

Each of these kinds of changes is important for the future of the world and Trump is the only US presidential candidate who is likely to bring the blessing of fulfilling these wonderful ideas.

Neutrality over Israel is not a bad thing at all, because Israel is the one who should make decisions regarding peace with the Palestinian Authority - if such a kind of peace can be achieved. Obviously, giving up its independence and demonising other peoples for the sake of appeasing bullies, is bad for Israel.

And for example, how many lives of Boer farmers could have been saved, had Israel refrained from arguing about whether it is an apartheid state or not? This is because talking about how “terrible” apartheid was (and indeed it is not the ideal kind of rule, but in the situation of South Africa it was at least understandable).

Indeed, the Jewish community happily thrived in South Africa back then. This only fuels black-on-white hate and violence.

Avner Eliyahu Romm
Jerusalem

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

THREATS OF ARREST AND VIOLENCE COULDN’T DETER PERES

Last weekend’s visit to Johannesburg by Shimon Peres, the Israeli elder statesman was a resounding success. More than 1 500 people packed the Convention auditorium to hear a man of infinite wisdom, speak.

However, MRN (Media Review Network) put out a statement prior to Peres’ visit, saying that “the MRN is pleased to announce that urgent steps are underway to secure the arrest of a senior Israeli war criminal, Shimon Peres”.

Not content with this absurd statement, the group announced that lawyers from the Muslim Lawyers Association (MLA) had been briefed to lodge documents with the National Prosecuting Authority, requesting its intervention.

Many South African luminaries attended the event, such as Mangosuthu Buthelezi, and Mosiuoa Lekota, to name but two.

Peres is not only an elder statesman but also a mensch. He was never going to be put off by threats for his arrest, let alone by the MRN and MLA (Muslim Lawyers Association). In a similar manner to the “arrest warrant” relating to the Mavi Marmara incident, their threats were hollow and were never manifested.

Peres’ political life spans many decades and he is credited with much wisdom. He said: “The most important thing in life is to dare. The most complicated thing in life is to be afraid. The smartest thing in life is to be a moral person.”

Perhaps the extremists have never read about the life and sayings of Shimon Peres. Hence their partisan and unmerited request for his arrest.

He also wanted people to understand Israel’s history, and once said: “Look, we have existed for 4 000 years - 2000 years in Diaspora, in exile.

Nobody in the Middle East speaks their original language but Israel. When we started 64 years ago we were 650 000 people [in the newly-proclaimed country]. So, you know we are swimming a little bit against the stream, but we continue to swim.”

In the light of Peres’ words on the Jewish people, I continue to be bewildered by BDS, MRN, MLA and others that attempt to attack and obstruct Israel and Jews from their routine by protest, violence, threats and war.

What do they not understand about Israel and the Jews’ ability, throughout history, to sustain themselves, and survive all the tribulations confronting them?

Nathan Cheiman
Northcliff, Johannesburg

KDLPP welcomes its spanking new school building



Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein; Rabbi Craig Kacev; and Sheva Messias, principal of King David Pre-Primary Linksfield, at the official opening ceremony of the new school.

GABY COHEN

Last Sunday, King David Pre-Primary School Linksfield hosted an official opening ceremony for the new school.

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein addressed the invited guests and emphasised the important role that pre-primary schools play in creating a solid foundation for Jewish education.

Rabbi Craig Kacev, general director of the SA Board of Jewish Education, thanked the King David Schools’ Foundation for making this dream a reality, and affixed a mezuzah on the entrance door.

KDL’s Shane Bassin heads President’s Award Youth Committee

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL TOM JOHNSON

Shane Bassin, a grade 11 learner at King David Linksfield, has unanimously been voted in as chairman of the Gauteng President’s Award Youth Committee.

His appointment was confirmed last week, when representatives from many schools in Gauteng elected him into this leadership role, at a workshop in the President’s Award offices.

Bassin has been passionately involved with The President’s Award (TPA) since the age of 11, three years before he was officially able to enrol, and he has since successfully completed the bronze, silver and gold awards.

He has worked on projects involving international participants, engaged with inmates at Barberton Maximum Security Prison and assisted the needy in local squatter camps.

This year he aims to be involved in fundraising for other teenagers from disadvantaged backgrounds, giving them the means to enrol in the life-changing TPA awards and to drive a number of community service projects.

Thembi Klaas, a fellow President Award member and Shane Bassin (grade 11), part of the President’s Award.



KD Schools Tennis Teams shine bright



Coaches Brad Bloch and Vanessa Behrmann together with the winning King David tennis teams. Back: Aaron Stoch; Samuel Witt; Gabriel Etkind; Haydn Cigler; and Ethan Goldberg. Front: Tenielle Israelsohn; Amy Bloch; Liora Chertkow; Talya Atie; and Mikayla Plitt.

GABY COHEN

Two King David Senior Primary School tennis teams played in the Primary Schools Tennis Tournament held at Sun City last week, with the boys’ team winning the tournament and the girls coming third.

Ten schools from across South Africa participated in this prestigious tournament.

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Yiddish Folk and Little Saints tots enjoy zoo outing

ANDY HAEFNER

Grade R learners from King David Yiddish Folk Pre-Primary School enjoyed a wonderful outing to Lory Park Zoo together with their friends and fellow grade Rs from Little Saints Nursery School in Kensington last week.

Yiddish Folk partners with Little Saints as their “outreach school” and throughout the year involves the learners in various learning activities and teaching opportunities.



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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

Jewish students stand firm against IAW hate, intimidation

“Israel Apartheid Week”, an annual anti-Israel hate fest masquerading as human rights activism, got underway this week. The Board, as on previous occasions, combined with the SAZF, SAUJS and other organisations in opposing it. This included our responding vigorously to ANC Deputy Secretary-General Jessie Duarte’s press statement enthusiastically endorsing IAW.

The main battlegrounds, as always, have been the university campuses. For Wits, the showdown commenced a week early following a brazen piece of fraud by the Wits Palestinian Solidarity Committee.

The PSC booked the library lawns on the false pretext of representing the orienteering society and proceeded to mount their own illicit exhibitions there. When the deception was discovered, they were asked to remove their displays, but refused to do so. The university has indicated that disciplinary action will be taken against those responsible, which will be closely monitored by the Board.

SAUJS responded by mounting an effective silent counter-protest, and also went ahead with its weekly learning session on the lawns. Despite the latter being a Jewish study gathering, with nothing to do with Middle East politics, IAW supporters proceeded to interrupt proceedings and to taunt and insult participants.

Thus, and not for the first time, the true nature of IAW was glaringly revealed. It is not about promoting peace, human rights or even the welfare of the Palestinians themselves; rather, it seeks to demonise Israel as the state of the Jewish people, and in doing so seeks

to create hostility against the local Jewish community.

It is for this reason that it singles out businesses known to be owned, run or at least founded by Jews, for its attempted boycott campaigns, even though there are many other companies that maintain links with Israel.

SAUJS themselves have taken up the incident with the university authorities, and will follow up as required to ensure that the culprits are appropriately dealt with.

We are extremely proud of our students for standing their ground in the face of such abuse and lawlessness and for doing so, moreover, in such a restrained and dignified way. As we know, our campuses are currently hotbeds of tension, and matters could easily have spiralled out of control had our students taken the proverbial bait.

Throughout this time, the Board has been in constant consultation with the SAUJS leadership, providing logistical assistance and advice, whenever required.

As part of our “Israel Awareness Week” counter-campaign, we have brought to South Africa the distinguished Palestinian academic, theologian and peace activist Professor Mohammed Dajani. The Board has been centrally involved in arranging his itinerary, including setting up media interviews and speaking engagements.

Formerly a professor of political science at al Quds University, Prof Dajani is the founder of the Wasatia movement of moderate Islam. For him, the solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict lies in both sides listening to and understanding one another’s aspirations, fears and historical narratives.

Such voices urging moderation and empathy are desperately needed in our troubled world today.

• *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

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

What’s normal?

Last week the Chev arranged a shloshim service at Yeshiva College for the late Brent Sloman, pictured here with me. Brent was always ready with a welcoming smile and friendly words whenever people visited Selwyn Segal. His loss will be deeply felt by his family, residents and staff at the Centre. It will also be felt by the community.

Every household has its own “normal” - those behaviours that for them are routine and expected. The same is true of every community and even every country. Cultures vary and we can sometimes find the actions of others strange if they differ from our own.

Growing up in the Yeshiva College community, it was quite normal for frequent interaction with the residents of Selwyn Segal to be encouraged. People would visit the home, invite the residents over for Shabbat and Yomtov meals, take them out and celebrate special occasions with them. That was normal.

Now that I am involved in an official capacity, I can see the heroism in those “normal” behaviours and have a clearer understanding about why they should never be taken for granted. Our community is remarkably generous in every way - with its money, time and compassion - and we are grateful for the gifts, and the giving, that comes so naturally to you.



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Group CEO

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Feedback@jhbchev.co.za



This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

Youth

The Lew Crew rode for Wayne in the Argus Cycle Ride

CARON LEVY, PRINCIPAL

Ruth Lewis is the mom of Camden who is in Grade R at the Rosabelle Klein Nursery School in Johannesburg and he has been at the school since Baby Playschool. Camden’s dad Wayne, a dedicated cyclist, passed away in July 2014 after suffering terminal peritoneal mesothelioma.

Wayne never got to ride in the Argus Cycle Ride in Cape Town and in honour of a life well lived and his tenacity and optimism, his wife Ruth and 10 of Wayne’s friends and family rode the taxing race last weekend - as the Lew Crew - in his memory.

To this end, T-shirts were sold bearing the “Riding for Wayne” logo. All the Rosabelle Klein children and staff wore those T-shirts last Friday, the day Ruth, Camden and the Lew Crew left for Cape Town and the Argus Cycle Ride. The intention is to purchase something for RKNS in Wayne’s name, with the monies received.

Last Friday was emotional and euphoric at the same time as the children and staff wore those T shirts in a fitting tribute to a friend, mom, parent and wife.



Photo: Caron Levy

Ruth Lewis; Lisa Klaff, grade R teacher and Camden Lewis.

Great fun watching carnivorous plants eat insects

SUE BENJAMIN

The Grade R children of Sydenham Pre-Primary School went on an outing to Jozi Carnivores last week Tuesday morning. It was a wonderful hands-on learning experience for them. They learnt about carnivorous plants, such as the Venus Flytrap, a Tropical Pitcher, a Sun Dew and an American Trumpet Pitcher. The young ones had an amazing time running in the garden, exploring the vegetation and collecting insects to feed to the plants.

Magnifying glasses were on hand and the children could view the various plants and they had the unbelievable experience of observing a fly caught in the Venus Flytrap!

The little plants were transplanted into containers and the children had great fun mixing the soil and water. Snacks were enjoyed under the shade of a huge old oak tree and to the delight of all the children, they were allowed to swing from a giant circular swing suspended from one of the trees.



Photo supplied

The learners had great fun on the giant swing.

TA boys recharge batteries at Magalies Retreat

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The entire Torah Academy Boys’ High School went on a five-day Shabbaton to the Magalies Retreat in the Magaliesberg last week.

“The theme of the Shabbaton was Hakhel, the ingathering of the Jewish people, and Achdus (unity),” said Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, principal of TA Boys’ High.

They were joined by Kodesh teachers and the guest speaker was trauma surgeon, Dr Reuven Jacks.

The boys went on hikes, played foosball, gathered around bonfires, took part in obstacle courses, discus throwing and had Shabbos services, having brought a Torah with them. They also conducted daily services.



Photo supplied

Torah Academy Boys’ High School learners on a hike in the Magaliesberg.

Holocaust poem makes young Gemma a big winner

SUZANNE BELLING

Gemma Davies, a grade 10 Redhill School learner (pictured), conjuring up images of the Holocaust through her history lessons and the testimony of a survivor on video, produced the prizewinning poem in the Writing, Poetry and Art Competition of Chapman University in the United States.

Joseph Gerassi, executive head of Redhill, commented: “Reading Gemma’s poem I was immediately struck by her ability to identify with the victims who lived and died at the hands of the Nazis.

“While Gemma is not Jewish and has not been brought up imbued with the Holocaust, her poem clearly demonstrates the power of survivor testimony to evoke a visceral response generations later. I am incredibly proud of her achievement.”

The contest has been running for the past 17 years. This year it focused on “Telling it Forward: Making Memory Matter”, honing in on the transmission and subsequent preservation of Holocaust survivor memory. It was presented by the Rodgers Centre for Holocaust Education at this top California university.

This contest allows young high school learners from around the world to put a memory of a Holocaust survivor forward into a piece of art or writing. The contest is the largest of its kind, reaching some 20 states in the US as well as Canada, Poland and South Africa.

About 5 700 learners from public and private schools submitted essays, poems, films and artwork to the contest, inspired by the stories of Holocaust survivors via video testimonies made available to learners by the USC Shoah Foundation Institute and The 1939 Society.

Three works per participating school were then chosen and sent on to be entered officially in the contest. Those works were judged by a panel of Holocaust survivors, local business people, professionals, organisational leaders and Chapman faculty and students.

“For each learner, there is always one memory to which they especially connect, the memory they know they will never forget

and that they want to share with others, that they want to ‘tell forward’, the theme of this year’s contest,” said Marilyn J Harran, director of the Rodgers Centre for Holocaust Education and Stern Chairman in Holocaust History.

Dr James L Doti, Chapman University’s president, has been a strong supporter of the contest since its inception.

The contest is presented in partnership with The 1939 Society and sponsored by the Samueli Foundation; Yossie and Dana Hollander; in co-operation internationally with The Forum for Dialogue for entries from Poland; Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre for those from South Africa; and both the Sarah and Chaim Neuberger Holocaust Education Centre and The Vancouver Holocaust Education Centre for those from Canada.

Gemma, who has never visited a Holocaust Centre or been to a camp in Europe, told the SA Jewish Report she would really like to go.

Initially she did not experience empathy with the survivor testimony on the video she was shown, but “then I tried to imagine how I would have felt if I lost a sibling in the Holocaust”.

Her winning poem, which earned Gemma \$500 and the school \$200, appears alongside.



Brother
By Gemma Davies, Grade 10
Redhill School, Johannesburg, South Africa
Teacher: Michelle Kalify
Survivor Testimony: Engelina Billauer

*Brother, you left me behind
To live in crowded isolation
Wide-eyed and headstrong and alone
Brother, you left me behind
In a derelict town where no one spoke
No one listened
And no one but me could hear the roaring silence*

*Brother, you left me behind
To walk streets of crystal
Burning under a blazing sun
And brutalised under a daffodil star*

*Brother, you left me behind
With girls as much like orphans as those with living parents could be
While train tracks and strangers in black
Stole our families from our sides*

*Brother, you left me behind
To slave my gullible youth away
Making German grenades, detonated with irony
Fuelled by a fruitless and desperate optimism*

*Brother, you left me behind
Under siege from a downpour of explosions
A rain of carnage
On a parched landscape*

*Brother, you left me behind
To hold my wasting form upright
With the barrel of a gun in my side
While courage taunted from behind the façade of a brave face*

*Brother, you left me behind
Until I was left with near to nothing
A void where my vibrant heart should have been pounding
Left to barter hope for my survival*

*Brother, you left me behind
And when we were liberated
I was no more than oxygen rasping its way through an unwilling host
I had freedom but lacked someone with whom to share it*

*For you escaped long before me, and, Brother, you left me behind
But, Brother, I wish you'd left alive*

Bronya Shaffer coming to SA to conduct all-women seders

SUZANNE BELLING

Born in France and raised in Montreal, Bronya Slavin Shaffer (pictured) will be coming to South Africa for Pesach and to conduct all-women seders at the Bon Riviera at the Vaal, where her son-in-law, Rabbi Ari Kievman, has arranged a Pesach retreat for the entire Passover period.

No stranger to South Africa, Shaffer has visited this country on several occasions, including on an invitation by Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein as an opening night speaker at the inaugural Sinai Indaba in 2011.

She has represented the observant Jewish woman’s point of view on many panels, including with Oprah Winfrey, Erica Jong and Manhattan Borough President Ruth Messinger.

Shaffer raised 10 children with her husband Gedaliah (obm), all devoted to Chabad Chassidic practice, but without discrediting secular knowledge and ideas. Indeed one of her daughters is a physician, another a lawyer and a son of hers served in the IDF.

During her 38 years of marriage, the Shaffers’ home in New York was the centre of extended family Pesach celebrations.

Then tragedy struck, when in March, 2007, a drunk driver went through a red light and killed the scholarly and beloved Gedaliah. He was 61.

“That first Pesach without Gedaliah - for the first time in their lives - my children and I didn’t have a seder at home. We went to my siblings,” Shaffer told SA Jewish Report.

“By the time Pesach came



again a year later, I told my children that I was determined that we experience Pesach differently, so we thought about how we could create a new, different experience.

“It would never be the same, so it was up to us to create - out of this difference - something of significance.

“I decided to do what I’d never been able to do before, and that was to provide a place where women could enjoy a seder that was not child-centred. At first I thought to invite singles, men and women... but, as usual, there were many more women... so I decided to do it for women only.

“I am blessed with family and with children... and could have any number of opportunities to spend these evenings with the wonderful sounds of young grandchildren reciting the Four Questions... but I thought of women who didn’t have that... so the sedarim are meant to be meaningful and fun... with the unique vibe of an ‘adult women only’ evening.”

As a result, Bronya’s Women’s Seder was born. Over the years she experienced the gratitude of

participants.

Reinforced by decades of counselling singles and couples, it occurred to Shaffer that for women who had never married, or those who were divorced or widowed, “being even a much-welcomed guest at a family seder wasn’t always a satisfying experience”.

Does she feel it is empowering women?

“One participant mentioned how her self-respect had eroded as she watched her younger siblings, for whom she’d babysat, grow up and establish their own seder tables while she was still in the same position as a child among other children because she didn’t have a husband.”

Another squeezed Shaffer’s hand in thanks: This was the first time she’d ever felt the power of Pesach as it was meant to be, as a full participant.

When asked how she gets around the tenet that the “man of the house” is supposed to relate the story of the Exodus, Shaffer said: “Where there is a man of the house, it is his obligation to lead the telling. Women are obli-

gated in the mitzvah, and in the absence of a ‘man of the house’, the woman will take the leading role.

“Indeed, traditionally, the seder was led by the ‘man of the house’, but we live in very different realities and traditional male and female roles are vastly reimaged... the seder is meant to be experienced by every single individual Jew - woman or man - and it’s meant to be a personal experience.

We would sit together and the seder conversation would be as diverse as the participants,” Shaffer said. She is confident that her seder debut in South Africa at the retreat - only a 45-minute drive from Johannesburg - will be a success on the first two nights, April 22 and 23.

• For more information on the retreat and the Pesach programme for men, women and children, e-mail PesachSA@gmail.com.



Start-up notion.



south african

Jewish Report

OMG... I don't believe you aren't advertising in the Jewish Report

Monica Solomon is new SAUPJ Gauteng chairman

Monica Solomon (pictured) has been elected as the new chairman of the Gauteng region of the South African Union for Progressive Judaism (SAUPJ).

Solomon has been active in the movement since 1997 and is also a member of the Board of Women of Reform Judaism, headquartered in New York.

“As the newly-elected chairman of this illustrious organisation - which celebrates 65 years since its formation - I am hoping that my tenure will be one marked by simchas and celebrations,” said Solomon.

The first event the SAUPJ will host is one commemorating the building of Temple Israel in Hillbrow 80 years ago.

“Situating in the heart of Hillbrow, this shul caters for all who wish to worship there,” says Solomon.

Delegates from the World Union of Progressive Judaism will be joining the local community for the July 9 festivities.



Later in the year, the new Bet David campus will be officially opened in Morningside. Besides a beautiful new shul, the grounds will also be home to the purpose-built Mitzvah School and Jolly Dee Nursery School.

“One of the most important issues I will continue to focus on will be the clean-up programmes of different sections of West Park Cemetery. Initiated by members of the Bet David congregation, the first project embarked upon was a clean-up of the children’s section.

“The area was terribly overgrown and neglected and today it is clean and tidy and boasts a well-maintained hedge nestled in the shadows of beautiful trees.

“This is a project every progressive-thinking Jew in Johannesburg can get involved in. We would welcome their support and look forward to engaging in further projects as the year progresses.”

Opening doors to quality Israeli education

SUZANNE BELLING

In South Africa this week to recruit for South Africans Studying in Israel (SASI) are Rabbi Dorron Kline, CEO of Telfed (the SA Zionist Federation in Israel), and Stephanie Miller, registrar of the International Disciplinary Centre (IDC), which incorporates the Raphael Recanti International School.

The IDC International School is headed by Jonathan Davis, a former shaliach in Cape Town.

The IDC enables South African students to study in English after matric, Rabbi Kline told SA Jewish Report.

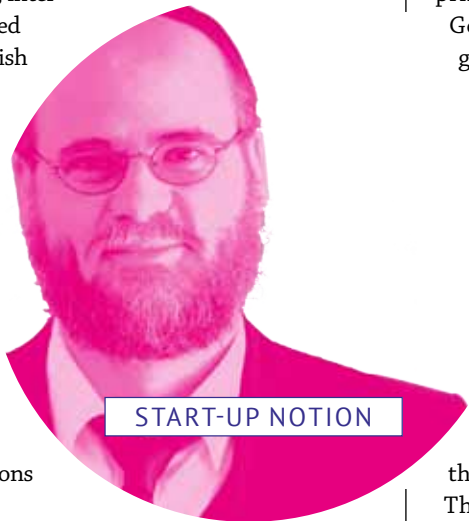
“Because of the rand-dollar exchange, Jonathan Davis agreed to lower the fees up to 50 per cent and we at Telfed have agreed to match dollar for dollar whatever the IDC gives, with our contribution to cover accommodation costs.

“All the Telfed klitah staff will be on hand to assist students with their absorption into Israel society.”

Rabbi Kline and Miller visited King David Linksfield, King David Victory Park and Herzlia; and held a meeting at

the home of Howard and Heidi Feldman. SASI also gives students access to Hebrew language classes, accommodation at subsidised rates, bursaries to eligible students, internationally recognised qualifications, English language tuition and exams, a variety of courses from which to choose at this “Ivy League” college and exposure to all the opportunities available in Israel.

Psychometric entrance examinations are not required.



Jonathan Sacks awarded prestigious 2016 Templeton Prize

Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks (pictured), former Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the Commonwealth, who has spent decades bringing spiritual insight to the public conversation through mass media, popular lectures and more than two dozen books, has been awarded the 2016 Templeton Prize, his office said in a media release.

The Templeton Prize, valued at £1,1 million, is one of the world’s largest annual awards given to an individual and honours a living person who has made exceptional contributions to affirming life’s spiritual dimension, whether through insight, discovery, or practical works.

The announcement was made at a news conference last week at the British Academy in London by the John Templeton Foundation, based in West Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

The Prize anchors the Foundation’s international efforts to serve as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to human purpose and ultimate reality.

Rabbi Sacks, 67, first gained attention by leading what many consider the revitalisation of Britain’s Jewish community during his service as Chief Rabbi from 1991 to 2013, a feat he accomplished in the face of dwindling congregations and growing secularisation across Europe.

During his tenure he catalysed a network of organisations that introduced a Jewish focus in areas including business, women’s issues and education, and urged British Jewry to turn outward to share the ethics

of their faith with the broader community.

Central to his message is appreciation and respect of all faiths, with an emphasis that recognising the values of each “is the only path to effectively combat the global rise of violence and terrorism”, the release states.

In his most recent book, “Not in G-d’s Name: Confronting Religious Violence”, Sacks writes: “Too often in the history of religion, people have killed in the name of the G-d of life, waged war in the name of the G-d of peace, hated in the name of the G-d of love and practised cruelty in the name of the G-d of compassion.

“When this happens, G-d speaks, sometimes in a still, small voice almost inaudible beneath the clamour of those claiming to speak on His behalf. What He says at such times is: ‘Not in My Name’.”

He also boldly defends the compatibility of religion and science, a response to those who consider them necessarily separate and distinct.

“Science takes things apart to see how they work. Religion puts things together to see what they mean,” he wrote in his book, “The Great Partnership: Science, Religion, and the Search for Meaning”.

The Prize anchors the Foundation’s international efforts to serve as a philanthropic catalyst for discoveries relating to human purpose and ultimate reality. That catalyst includes presenting each year’s Prize laureate with a series of what the Foundation calls “Big Questions”, a tradition that echoes the legacy of founder Sir John Templeton, the legendary investor



and philanthropist who sought to foster and recognise spiritual progress.

In videos on the Prize website, Sacks tackles many issues, including the recent spread of religious violence which he argues has been sparked by the export of Western secularisation.

Unfortunately, he says that secularisation has failed to provide guidance on core issues of human identity, creating a vacuum being filled by religious fundamentalism that often stokes hatred. The parallel rise of social media has engulfed an ever larger swath of the population, especially youth.

The solution, he contends, is to match the violence with “a message of love as powerful as the message being delivered

by the preachers of hate”, adding: “It really has to speak to young people and we have to use the same social networking, the same technology as the extremists and we’ve got to do it as well and better than they do.”

In remarks prepared for the media conference, Sacks says: “Religion, or more precisely, religions, should have a voice in the public conversation within the societies of the West, as to how to live, how to construct a social order, how to enhance human dignity, honour human life, and indeed protect life as a whole... Each religion, and each strand within each religion, will have to undertake this work, because if religion is not part of the solution, it will assuredly be a large part of the problem as voices become ever more strident, and religious extremists ever more violent.”

Sacks joins a distinguished group of 45 former recipients, including Mother Teresa, who received the inaugural Prize award in 1973, Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn (1983), and philosopher Charles Taylor (2007). Last year’s Prize winner was Canadian theologian Jean Vanier, founder of L’Arche, an international network of communities where people with and without intellectual disabilities live and work together as peers.

Sacks was knighted by the Queen in 2005 and awarded a Life Peerage in the British House of Lords in 2009.

He has been married to the former Elaine Taylor since 1970. They have three children and eight grandchildren.

Young ballet medallists donate prize money back



Teacher and SAIBC judge, Valentina Kozlova from New York, with her award-winning students, Justine Valentine, who won the Junior classical bronze medal, Caroline Grossman, who won gold and Nikita Boris.

ALLISON FOAT

In an astonishing display of generosity, the winners of the gold and silver medals in the scholar classical section of the 5th South African International Ballet Competition (SAIBC), have donated their winnings - prizes valued at R7 500 and R5 000 respectively - back to South Africa.

Gold medallist Caroline Grossman, (12), representing the US, will be giving her money to a township ballet project (yet to be named), as part of her batmitzvah project. Nikita Boris, (15), also representing America, has given her money towards ballet training for a South African dancer in need.

Both dancers train at the Valentina Kozlova Dance Conservatory in New York. Kozlova, a former Russian ballerina who was a judge at this year’s SAIBC, also invited South African competitor Savannah Ireland from Johannesburg to compete in the Valentina Kozlova International Ballet Competition next month and to attend a five-week summer school at her academy later this year.

Caroline’s mother said that, “She was so inspired by what we saw and how the power of dance and the arts can change lives and this world”.

The next SAIBC is in 2018.

Holocaust trigger morphs into thrilling detective story

Film: *Remember*
Cast: *Christopher Plummer, Martin Landau, Bruno Ganz, Jürgen Prochnow, Heinz Lieven*
Director: *Aytom Egoyan*
Classification: 13 LP

REVIEWED BY PETER FELDMAN

“Remember” is an engrossing film that while embracing a Holocaust theme, transforms into a tense, detective-type thriller.

The always reliable Christopher Plummer portrays Zev Guttman, a 90-year-old man struggling with memory loss and living out his final years in a serene retirement home. A week after the death of his beloved wife Ruth, he suddenly gets a mysterious package from his close friend Max (Martin Landau), containing a stack of money and a letter detailing a shocking plan that includes the purchase of a gun.

Zev only intermittently un-

derstands or remembers exactly what’s going on, but Max has planned everything, sending Zev on a cross-continental road trip that will change his life forever. He intends bringing justice once and for all to the man who destroyed their lives.

Zev and Max were prisoners in Auschwitz, and the same sadistic guard was responsible for the death of both their families - a guard who, immediately after the war, escaped Germany and has been living in the US ever since under an assumed identity. Max is wheelchair-bound but in full command of his mental faculties.

Zev’s quest leads him to various characters bearing the same name, Rudy Kurlander, as the fugitive, and in one instance he confronts a man (Bruno Ganz) who believed Hitler had the right idea, but the wrong approach. Another Rudy is already dead, but Zev is welcomed into his house

by the man’s affable state trooper son - the name of whose dog, Eva, is a clue to his political leanings. This is the film’s most gripping sequence, played with a touch of black comedy, and show-stealing support playing from Dean Norris of “Breaking Bad” and “Under the Dome” TV fame.

Ignoring depressing concentration camp imagery (apart from fleeting flashbacks), renowned Canadian director Atom Egoyan has focused his energies on the detective work involved by Zev in tracking down the man who had become a hated figure.

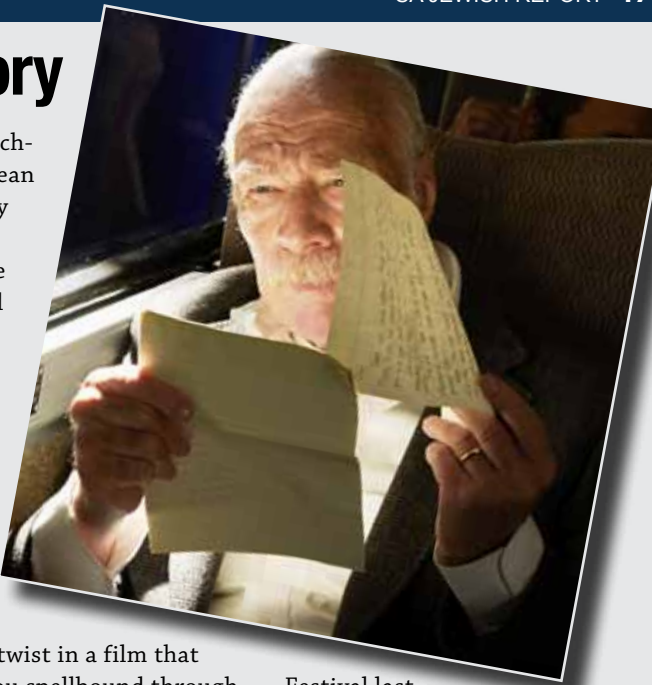
Egoyan, working from a script by Benjamin August, uses the Holocaust as a trigger to create a powerful thriller. He adroitly builds upon Plummer’s towering performance, one in which the esteemed actor imbues his character with dignity, charisma and vulnerability.

Martin Landau, Bruno Ganz,

Jürgen Prochnow and Dean Norris, may have less screen time but they all contribute immeasurably to the overall impact of the production.

The climax packs an intriguing twist in a film that will hold you spellbound throughout.

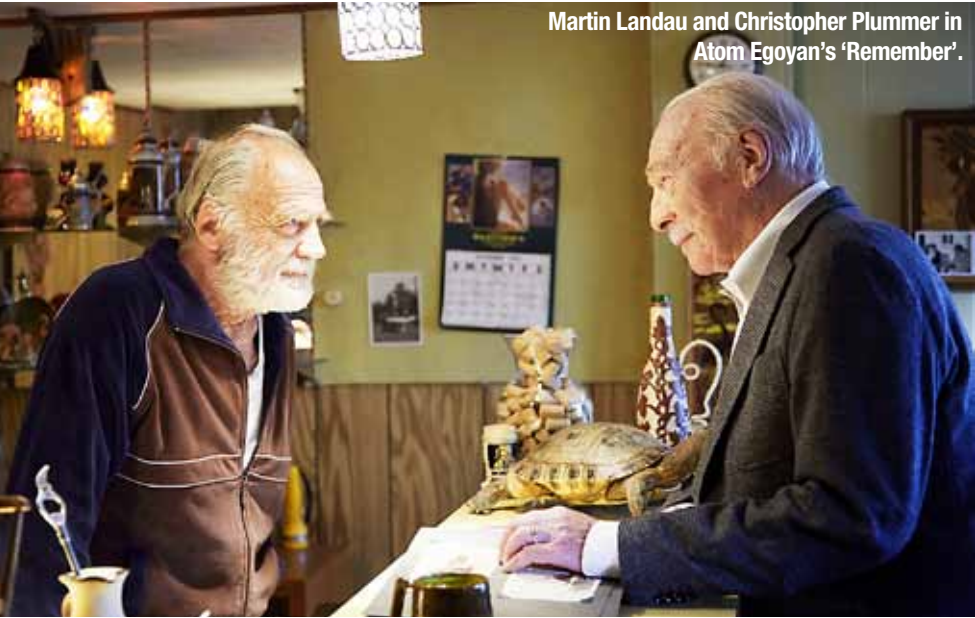
The film has a strong South African connection. It’s the first collaboration between renowned South African producer, Anant Singh, and Canadian producer Robert Lantos, and it had its world premiere in competition at the Venice International Film



Festival last year.

Singh said that he and Robert had been long time friends and he was delighted to be able to work with him on “Remember.” He added that “it’s wonderful to have a Canadian/South African collaboration on a project as illustrious as this”.

Martin Landau reminisces on a long, illustrious career



PETER FELDMAN

Martin Landau is one of Hollywood most revered actors who, at 87, is still doing a remarkable job.

He says acting is a career that, unlike dancers and opera singers, can continue for many years and he once again proves his point in his new thriller, Atom Egoyan’s “Remember”, in which he stars opposite Christopher Plummer.

He plays a mysterious man who sends the 90-year-old resident of an old age home (played by Plummer) on a mission to find and kill the Nazi officer responsible for the death of their families in a concentration camp.

The film, which opens on March 18, is a compelling story.

In a telephone interview, Landau told me that what attracted him to the script was the chance to work with director Atom Egoyan and also that the story was different. Ten years ago it would have been difficult to make a movie of this nature, he feels, because of the sensitivity of the subject matter at the time.

Talking about the film, he said it was important to observe the various little clues that were being presented in order to discover the bad guy and he felt audiences should see it more than once to gain the full impact of what the story was telling them. Who was the bad guy and how would he be revealed, that was the mystery and the thriller element.

He also spoke about the film serving as

a history lesson for a generation of people who were forgetting the past, and which he believed should be kept alive.

At his ripe age, Landau is still active in an industry that has brought him great joy. With countless films and TV series under his belt, he finds it difficult to name his favourite, though winning an Oscar for his role as Bela Logosi in “Ed Wood”, was a highlight.

Today he still finds time to make movies - his next one is called The Last Poker Game and is set in an old age home where he acts opposite Paul Sorvino - and he applauds the fact that there are still roles for older actors.

He is critical of today’s Hollywood and feels most of the films coming out are “comic strips” aimed at teenage audiences where there is no character development but plenty of explosives and action.

He spoke lovingly about his role as artistic director of the Actors Studio in Hollywood training young actors. He was one of 2 000 applicants who auditioned for Lee Strasberg’s Actors Studio in 1955 - only he and Steve McQueen were accepted. Landau was a friend of James Dean and McQueen.

Asked what made a good actor, he said they must be “unpredictable” and tackle things that you wouldn’t expect.

Landau was only 17 when he was hired by the New York Daily News as a staff cartoonist and illustrator. His major ambition, however, was to act, and in 1951, he made his stage debut in “Detective Story” in Maine. He made his off-Broadway debut

that same year in “First Love” and has never looked back.

He joked that although he was “still perpendicular” he didn’t get to travel much and would like to have visited South Africa, when I broached the subject of coming one day to our part of the world.

Asked about today’s younger generation, Landau commented on how the technologi-

cal age had taken over their lives, that there was a distinct lack of face-to-face communication and he once attended a family dinner where children were texting each other from different rooms.

Listening to Landau’s unflagging enthusiasm for life and work, makes one hopeful that he will still have much to contribute to a film industry he so dearly loves.

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Jewish Report

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WW II: 2 Polish non-Jewish sisters save a Jewish family of 13

PETER FELDMAN

Over the decades there have been countless stories of the heroics of ordinary people, many of them non-Jews, who went out on a limb to help save Jews during the Holocaust.

Some of the stories have been well documented, each raising the issue of what motivates an individual to place his/her own life in jeopardy in order to save another.

A TV series, “True Movies,’ (DStv channel 138), investigates this phenomenon with “Hidden in Silence”, a remarkable true life event in which 13 members of the Diamant family were hidden by two Polish orphans in their attic.

“Hidden in Silence” tells of the orphaned Catholic sisters Stefania and Helena Podgorski, ages 16 and 9, who hid the Diamant family in the attic of their home during the Second World War. Stefania had worked in the Diamant family’s grocery store before the Nazi invasion of Poland.

The Diamants remained in the attic for two-and-a-half years and survived the Holocaust. In 1979, the Podgorski sisters were honoured as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

Last year the Times of Israel revealed that a private entrepreneur plans to establish a museum in the same house located on Tatarska Street in Przemyśl, which hid the members of the Diamant family.

The house, which is in disrepair and poor condition, was purchased by Polish businessman, Maciej Piorkowski.

“You can call it a whim, but I wanted this historic building saved from death so I could show its history,” Piorkowski told the Virtual Shtetl portal, according to Polish Radio Rzeszow.

“At this stage, I do not have more specific plans. I would like the facility to be available for visitors, so that they can, for example, watch a movie about the history of the hiding.”

Winner of the Writers Guild of America Award for Best Original Long Form - Television, this production will be aired on Friday, March 18, and again on Wednesday, March 23, at 19:00.



Recipes

Grandma Beauty’s hamantashen - with a healthy twist

DAWN LERMAN/JNS.ORG

In her recently published memoir “My Fat Dad: A Memoir of Food, Love, and Family, with Recipes” (Berkley Books, September 2015), New York Times wellness blogger and nutritionist Dawn Lerman shares her food journey and that of her father, a copywriter from the “Mad Men” era of advertising at the Leo Burnett and McCann Erickson firms.

As a child, Dawn felt undernourished both physically and emotionally, except for one saving grace: the loving attention she received from her maternal grandmother, Beauty.

“My maternal grandmother always told me

that if just one person loves you, it is enough to make you feel good inside and grow up strong. For me, that person was my grandmother, Beauty.

“I spent most weekends with my grandmother because my parents liked to go out and stay out late, and my mother hated to pay good money for a babysitter only to find her asleep on the couch.

“Each and every Friday night, when I arrived at my grandparents’ house, my grandmother would run down her front porch stairs in her lacy matching nightgown-and-robe set and scream in excitement: ‘My little beauty, my little beauty!’ I thought when I heard her say ‘beauty’

over and over again, she was trying to tell me her name - so ‘Beauty’ is what I called her. The name stuck, and soon everyone in her small neighbourhood of West Rogers Park in Chicago knew my grandmother as Beauty - including my grandfather ‘Papa’, my mother, and all the neighbours.

“The cooking aromas coming from her kitchen made my mouth water. Beauty always had a pot of something cooking on the stove.

“Beauty was the perfect name for my grandmother. She was like a shiny star that radiated light on the top of a Chanukah bush.

“Beauty would say: ‘G-d is in my kitchen, not in temple’ - which was really upsetting to her very good friend and neighbour, the rabbi next door. My grandmother lived in a neighbourhood with many religious families, although Beauty

never believed in organised religion or going to temple herself. ‘I am a culinary Jew,’ she’d proclaim. ‘I honour tradition and those who came before me and I want to pass the history of the food on to you.

“I can find my heritage in a bowl of soup. I believe in the power of sweet-and-sour meatballs. I believe that when I combine, eggs, raisins, cottage cheese, yogurt, and baby shells into a kugel, I honour my own grandmother. I believe that stuffed cabbage connects me to my father, whom I miss. My bible is recipes that fill your soul and will keep you healthy and nourished for years to come’.

“From the time I could hold a spoon, my grandmother involved me in the cooking process”.

The hamantashen recipe

(Can be gluten-free or vegan) • Yield: 12 cookies

This hamantashen recipe includes almond and oat flour, coconut oil, and some flaxseed - making it not only delicious, but nutritious. It’s a win-win as both a dessert or an on-the-go breakfast/snack.

Ingredients

- 8 tablespoons coconut oil or softened butter (put a tablespoon aside for greasing the baking sheet if you are not using parchment paper)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons non-dairy milk
- 1/3 cup maple syrup
- 1/2 cup almond flour or oat flour (plus additional, as needed, for thickening)
- 1¼ cups oat flour (you can make your own oat flour by blending oats in a blender)
- Pinch of sea salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/4 cup strawberry jam or preserves
- Powdered sugar for dusting (optional)

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine the oil or butter, egg, vanilla, non-dairy milk, and maple syrup, and mix well.
2. In a separate bowl, mix together the flours, salt, and baking powder. Then combine the ingredients from both bowls and mix together with your hands until they form sticky dough.

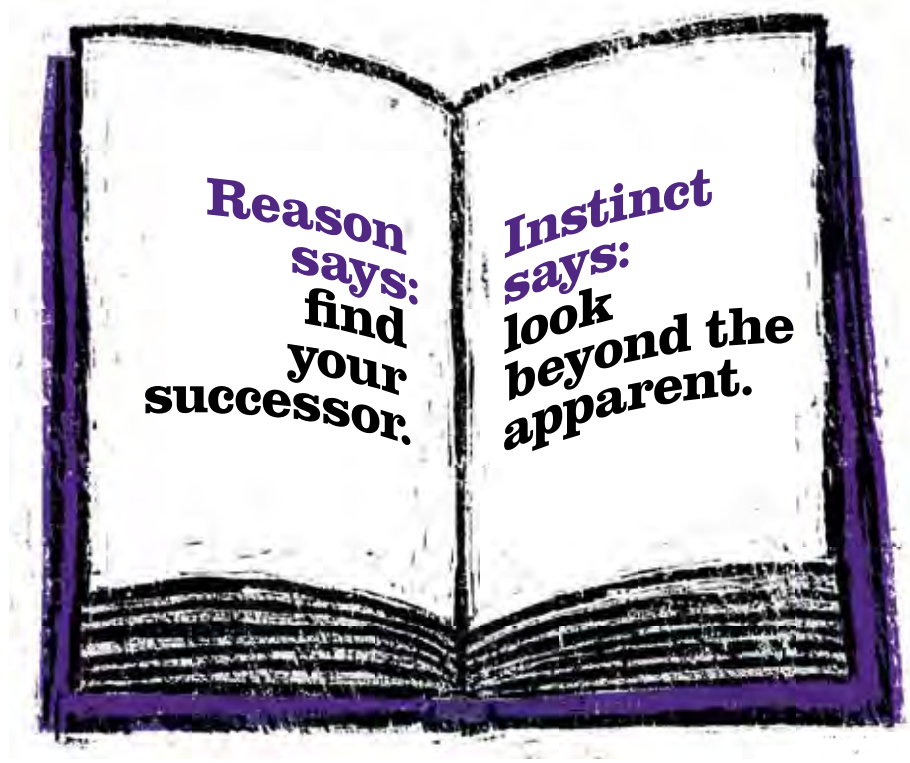


3. If the dough feels a touch dry, you can add a splash of water to thin it. And if it feels a bit wet, you can add a touch more almond or oat flour.
4. Chill the dough for 10 minutes, then roll out to 3,18 mm (1/8-inch) thick. Make sure it is firm but not dry. Cut in 76 mm (3-inch) circles, or larger if you prefer. The larger, the easier to fold and fill.
5. Make sure your jam for the filling has been refrigerated so it is thick, not runny. Use about one teaspoon per cookie.
6. Place filling in centre and pinch the edges firmly together to create a triangle, leaving the centre open to expose the filling. Repeat with the remaining cookies.
7. Bake for 15 minutes or until lightly brown on the bottom. Let cool and sprinkle with powdered sugar before eating.

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Friday (March 11)

• Bet David's Kabbalat Shabbat Service
has as guest speaker Riad Hassoun.
Time: 18.00 - 19.00. Venue: Bet David, Morningside: Contact: Sharon (011) 783 7117.

Saturday (March 12)

• WIZO Tzabar presents "Songs from our Beloved Israel" with Nir Dishon and his singing group "Gvanim. Venue: The World of Yamaha, Sandton. Time: 19:30 for 20:00. Cost: R250. Bookings: Batya (011) 645-2517 or wizojhbaccounts@beyachad.co.za; Nava: 082-789-9118; or Raya 083-377-2970.

• Bet David Torah Study and light breakfast from 08:45 - 09:45. No charge. Youth service and activities for all children ages 3 - 10. Time: 10.00 - 12.00. Shabbat morning service at 10:00 followed by a brocha. Youth sleepover from after shul to Sunday, for kids aged 7 to 15. Enquiries: youth@betdavid.org.za

Sunday (March 13)

• Second Innings hosts Candice Greenland, schools consultant For Enviroserv, on "Waste Not, Want Not".

Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time 10:00 for 10:30.
Cost: R20 members, (incl tea and light refreshments). Information: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

• JWBS is holding a movie premiere "Remember" at Killarney Mall. Time: 14:00. Cost: R150pp incl. popcorn and Coke. Information: (011) 485-5232 or e-mail admin@jwbs.joburg

Monday (March 14)

• Cape Town Holocaust Centre in partnership with the Jacob Gitlin Library, screens the SA premiere of the acclaimed documentary "Night Will Fall". Venue: 88 Hatfield Street, Gardens. Time: 20:00. (Please note: This film contains graphic footage of victims of the Holocaust. Viewer discretion is strongly advised.) Entrance free, but donations welcome. RSVP: (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Elaine Katz, research professor in history at Wits, on "American Mining Engineers and Mining in South Africa" Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (March 15)

• JJAC invites Jewish singles aged 27 - 49 to "Movie night". Meet at 19:00 at the bottom of the escalator at Sandton City. E-mail whatson@jjac.co.za to book.

Wednesday (March 16)

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, formerly of Dpt of English at Wits, on "The Written Word Leaps off the Page" Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (March 17)

• Bet David's weekly discussion group with Rabbi Adrian Schell covers "The Prayers of our Siddur". Time: 18:00 - 19:30. No charge. Venue: Bet David, Morningside. Enquiries: Sharon (011) 783 7117.

• RCHCC hosts a talk by Dean Murinik on "Levelling the Playing Field". Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Donation: R80 (incl refreshments). Time: 19:30. Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, e-mail: rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net

Around the Jewish World

Common blood test may diagnose Alzheimer's

HAIFA - The progressive dementia of Alzheimer's disease affects some 35 million people worldwide and is expected to affect some 115 million by 2050, yet currently it is not possible to detect the disease before it has caused loss of memory and function. Even then, the tests available are invasive and/or expensive.

The quest to develop a simple blood test for Alzheimer's is therefore top priority.

As Israel21c reported in December last year, the Israeli company NeuroQuest is working with the University of California-San Diego on clinical validation trials of its blood test for very early diagnosis of Alzheimer's, based on award-winning research led by Prof Michal Schwartz of the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot.

Now, researchers from three Israeli institutions - Tel Aviv University, Technion and Rambam Medical Centre in Haifa - and from Harvard University, have published a study in the Journal of Alzheimer's Disease that proposes testing a novel biomarker in the blood for cognitive ageing and Alzheimer's disease.

The marker, called activity-dependent neuroprotective protein (ADNP), is essential for brain formation and cognitive function.

"This study has provided the basis to detect this biomarker in routine, non-invasive blood tests, and it is known that early intervention is invaluable to Alzheimer's patients," said Prof Ilana Gozes, lead researcher.

"We are now planning to take these preliminary findings forward into clinical trials - to create a pre-Alzheimer's test that will help to tailor potential preventative treatments." - Israel 21c

Little chance of Israel at war this year

JERUSALEM - The probability of war this year was low, according to the National Intelligence Estimate for 2016, drafted by the research department of Military Intelligence with input from the research departments of Mossad (the external espionage agency) and the Israel Security Agency (the domestic service - Shin

Bet).

This applied on all fronts from Gaza in the south to Lebanon and Syria in the north.

Neither Hezbollah nor Hamas had plans or any interest to initiate a war against Israel. Hezbollah was bleeding in the killing fields of Syria. The Lebanese Shi'ite organisation also had 15 000 reservists called to duty for training or field missions for up to 40 days a year.

So far, Hezbollah had lost nearly 1 500 soldiers, killed in action - many of whom belonged to its elite units - and more than 6 000 have been wounded. Hezbollah's losses were a heavy blow to its military capabilities and had dented its morale to go to war with Israel.

Hezbollah was also suffering from a serious economic crisis. In the south, Hamas had not recovered yet from the war in the summer of 2014, which inflicted heavy casualties on its military forces and capabilities and, even more importantly, caused severe damage to the civilian population. In other words, deterrence is working. - Jerusalem Post

StandWithUs launching in Australia

SYDNEY - Plans are underway to launch an Australian branch of the international Israel education and advocacy organisation StandWithUs, with the local chapter aiming to educate Jews and non-Jews with facts about the Holy Land. Based in Los Angeles, StandWithUs has 18 offices and chapters across the US, Canada, Israel and the UK.

The principal goal is to empower youth to feel confident about their knowledge and ability to stand up for Israel.

StandWithUs Australia will organise speaking tours within Australia, workshops to train advocates and a seminar for Australian gap year students in Israel. Thousands of StandWithUs brochures will be distributed on university campuses and throughout communities, as well as hundreds of hours of activism - training for student and community advocates.

Ilana Kempler, one of StandWithUs Australia's three directors, told AJN it was important that today's university students, both Jewish and non-Jewish, were educated with facts about Israel including its history. - Australian Jewish News

Israel lick wounds after shock Davis Cup loss

JACK MILNER

Hindsight is 20/20 vision, they say but it is often fun looking at what is said prior to a sporting event and then what is said once the curtain has fallen - and reality has set in.

A few years ago Israel had a dream run in the Davis Cup tennis competition, reaching the semi-finals before going down to a Spanish team comprising Rafael Nadal and David Ferrer. The tie was played in Spain, which made it almost impossible for Israel to win and it came as no surprise when they failed to win a match.

Since then, considering the level of their players, Israel has dropped out of the World Group but has done well to stay in the Euro/Africa Zone, Group 1. The last time it played in

the World Group was in 2013 but lost 5-0 to France in the opening round and was relegated. The Israelis certainly have performed better than their South African counterparts with the country languishing in Group 2 for a number of years now.

This past weekend Israel travelled to Hungary to play the first round encounter and although it played away and on clay, the team remained confident of putting up a good performance. A win would see them remain in Group 1 and secure a hopeful playoff later this year for a place in the World Group.

Israel secured itself another year in Group I by beating Slovenia 3-2 in Tel Aviv last July, and before the tie the reports claimed they would be “confident of progressing, even though the tie

will be played on an indoor clay court surface”.

The match-ups saw Israel’s No 1 Dudi Sela, who is ranked No 89 in the world, against Hungary’s Peter Nagy, ranked 612. The second rubber pitted Amir Weintraub (ranked 197) against Marton Fucsovics (ranked 203).

Yoni Erlich and Edan Leshem were named as Israel’s doubles players by captain Eyal Ran with Fucsovics and Levente Godry, although Leshem may still be replaced by Sela or Weintraub.

Sela said: “In the past few ties I was drawn to play in the first match, so I’m hoping I can win and that will give Amir confidence ahead of his match. We will be ready.”

Erlich, now 39 years old, missed both of last year’s ties due to injuries and illness and was excited to be back in the team, representing the blue-and-white once more. “I’m in good form and brimming with confidence. We are the favourites, but that should give us confidence and not make us nervous,” said Erlich.

Israel captain Ran expressed the view that he did not believe playing on clay would harm his team’s chances. “Playing on this surface demands a lot of patience and of course this isn’t our favourite surface. On the other hand, we have played a lot on this surface and beat Slovenia on it.”

They were all very wrong.

The only accurate comment came from Sela who said: “In the Davis Cup there are always surprises and lower ranked players beat higher ranked opponents.”

Israel did not even get out of the starting blocks. By the time the doubles rubber was played at the weekend, they fell to an unassailable 3-0 deficit in Budapest.

Despite all their comments earlier, the reports claimed that the Israeli players never looked comfortable on the indoor clay court. Sela went down in five sets 6-2 6-3 4-6 4-6 6-1 to Nagy, ranked 523 places below him.

They went 2-0 down after Weintraub lost in straight sets 6-4 6-2 7-5 to Fucsovics and Erlich and Sela couldn’t even send the tie into a third and decisive day. Erlich and Sela lost 7-6 (7-2) 3-6 7-6 (7-5) 7-6 (9-7) to Fucsovics and Godry which clinched the tie for the hosts with a day to spare. The Israelis lost all three tie-breakers.

The visitors managed to save face on Sunday with Weintraub beating Nagy 5-7 6-4 6-2 and 19-year-old Edan Leshem, who replaced Sela, beating Gabor Borsos 4-6 6-4 7-6 (7-3)

Israel is now in danger of dropping to Group II for the first time since 2001, but that



Dudi Sela was by far the highest ranked player at the Israel versus Hungary Davis Cup tie in Budapest, but he failed to win a match.

will all depend on whether it can beat Sweden in September in the first round playoff of Group I, with the winners to maintain their status, while the losers will play a tie against relegation.

In Israel’s favour is that the tie will be played in Tel Aviv.

“We did everything we could, but it wasn’t enough,” said Ran. “We win together and we lose together. I don’t see what we could have done differently. This is a painful defeat. We didn’t think we would find ourselves down 3-0 on Saturday.”

What they could have done differently was not lose all those close tie-breakers in the doubles rubber.

Sela is hoping to make up for last weekend’s disappointment and once again is realistic: “This is disappointing and I didn’t think we would be trailing 2-1 after two days. We will be the favourites against Sweden, but we saw this weekend that you never know what might happen in the Davis Cup.”

For the record South Africa won through 5-0 against Luxembourg with Marcos Ondruska captaining the team for the first time.

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