



In death, 3  
Israeli boys  
unify Jews  
worldwide.  
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# South African Jewish Report

www.sajr.co.za



Photo: Ian Ossendryver

## Unified by the murder of three young Israeli boys

A year ago, on June 3, 2014, Jews in Israel and all over the world frantically searched or prayed for three young Israeli boys abducted near Gush Etzion by Palestinian terrorists. Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Sher and Naftali Frenkel, alas, were murdered on the same day they disappeared. The Jewish world reeled with shock and seethed with anger. This senseless deed, so cynical in its horror, took on a surreal aspect. Then the mothers of the three made a request: Every year, on the yahrzeit of their boys’ death, let Jews all over the world come together in a gesture of unity. This remembrance has become known as “Unity Day”. Last week Wednesday evening, thousands gathered in Johannesburg as well as in Umhlanga on the KwaZulu-Natal North Coast, part of events held in 19 countries and over 30 cities worldwide, to “stand in unity”. Jewish day schools in South Africa actively took part in this remembrance and in Johannesburg gathered at Yeshiva College. Among the speakers was Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein who said the Jewish reaction to the murders should be to implement the core Torah values of kindness, respect and charity in their daily behaviour. Pictured at the Yeshiva College gathering are five head boys at Johannesburg Jewish day schools: Daniel Riesenburt, Yeshiva College; Justin Glass, Hirsch Lyons; Meir Rosendorff, Torah Academy; Yossi Bank, King David High Victory Park; and Jake Gore, King David High Linksfield. See page 2.

### Even continents apart, they still call South Africa home

A cross-section of young South African Jews - some who have stayed and some who have left - talk about SA and its future.

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US court ruling to keep Israel off passports of Jerusalem-born Americans is a delicate subject.



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Europcar has sponsored a new category in the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards to recognise Jewish women’s entrepreneurship and leadership.

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# Lashon tov - good speech



Parshat Shelach

Rabbi Siggy Suchard  
Sandton Shul

In this parsha we are taught that slander – “lashon hara” - is not only when speaking evil against a person but also finding fault in the land itself. The fruit of Israel was not normal, the people were giants and the land consumed its inhabitants.

To speak evil about a person is recognised as a bad characteristic. At many funerals, one hears the praise of the departed - that he or she never had a bad word to say about somebody. This is a remarkable trait. We all remember Pinocchio the wooden puppet whose nose grew long when he spoke ill of people.

The Torah dedicates two entire portions dealing with a type of leprosy which results from “lashon hara”. The Torah uses the word “metzorah” - leprosy - which we read as “One who gives a bad talk” about someone. It can

harm relationships, break up families and cause people to lose finances.

There is a true story about the Reshash, a great Talmudic scholar who was also wealthy. People came to him for loans which they readily repaid. A poor person borrowed a large sum of money from his business. After three months he knocked on the rav’s door with the loan in a packet.

The rav was immersed in his learning. The tailor gave the envelope to the rav who did not look up. He was so immersed in his Gemarah and left the money in the Gamarah.

After the time set for the tailor to pay, he was asked to do so by the Beth Din, where he told the rav that he had paid the debt.

The people of the village spoke ill of him, which caused him to find a job in another town.

A year later, the rav was learning the same Gemarah and found the envelope. He was shocked and looked for the tailor. The only way he could console the tailor was to take the tailor’s son as his son-in law. Talk is so dangerous.

I would like to coin a new saying: Instead of

being careful of “lashon hara” one should talk “lashon tov” - to speak good of people.

Look for good attributes in a person, see that there are points about the person which one can acclaim, and give him or her redeeming characteristics.

In the Torah we find that Noach was called by Hashem, righteous and perfect. Although Noach did not save his generation and was not as Avraham, he was praised by G-d, as being righteous and perfect.

In Pirkei Avoth (2:13) the pupils of Rabbi Yochanan ben Zadok were asked what is the good way that a person should cling to. Rabbi Joshua said a good friend, Rabbi Yossi said a good neighbour, Rabbi Eliezer’s dictum was a good eye.

I believe that this is what a good eye means in Pirkei Avot when his pupils were told to find the good traits par excellence.

A good eye means to see the good in another.

We know from the Torah that the reward of doing good is five hundred times more than evil.

“Lashon tov” - a good tongue - can bring about so much love and powerful energy about Hashem’s salvation. During the period of Sefirah, the pupils of Rabbi Akiva died. The Talmud gives as the reason that they did not conduct themselves with their peers in an honourable fashion. They did not honour each other.

They did not honour each other with a good eye, to recognise their peers’ good traits.

If we concentrate on “good speech”, then we will not bad mouth either people or the land.

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Shelach June 12 / 25 Sivan June 13 / 26 Sivan		
17:05	17:57	Johannesburg
17:26	18:20	Cape Town
16:45	17:38	Durban
17:06	17:59	Bloemfontein
16:57	17:51	Port Elizabeth
16:50	17:44	East London

## In death, 3 Israeli boys unify Jews worldwide

DAVID SAKS

This time last year, world Jewry was anxiously waiting to learn of the fate of Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Sher and Naftali Frenkel, three teenage yeshiva bochrim who were kidnapped by Palestinian terrorists near Gush Etzion on June 3. Tragically, it transpired that the boys were already dead, murdered that same day by their abductors.

Last week Wednesday evening, thousands gathered in Johannesburg and Durban to commemorate the first anniversary of the deaths of the three boys. The gatherings, held between mincha and maariv in the Glenhazel Shul and Umhlanga Jewish Day School respectively, were among special “Unity Day” events held in 19 countries and over 30 cities worldwide.

The Johannesburg event was co-ordinated by Yeshiva College, with participants including the SA Zionist Federation and the King David, Hirsch Lyons, Yeshiva Maharsha, Shaarei Torah and Torah Academy schools.

Among the speakers were Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, Rabbi Avraham Tanzer, rosh yeshiva of Yeshiva College, SAZF Chairman Ben Swartz and Yeshiva College director, Rabbi Leron Bernstein.

A DVD presentation featured comments by a range of Jewish day school learners, all of whom stressed how the tragedy had served to bring the Jewish people together and the importance of maintaining that unity.

Rabbi Goldstein said that the Jewish reaction to the murders should be to implement the core Torah values of kindness, respect and charity in their daily behaviour. The Torah was replete with real and tangible directives regarding the lengths one had to go to avoid causing emotional pain to others.

The abduction and murder of the three boys had created an unforgettable spirit of unity among the Jewish people, and in their merit, Jews everywhere should build on this through showing increased love, respect, concern for and sensitivity towards each other.

Swartz commented that what made the incident so devastating was that in life, Eyal, Gilad and Naftali had represented “everything we stand for and everything we want to be”, while those who abducted and murdered them epitomised those wishing to destroy the Jewish people in their homeland.

It was nevertheless the very spirit of Jewish fellow feeling and mutual concern that ensured and would continue to ensure the survival of the Jewish nation.

- As an expression of unity, the community was invited to make a donation to Hatzolah, an organisation that served the entire community in its efforts to save Jewish lives. Banking details: Hatzolah Medical Rescue, Standard Bank (Norwood branch), account number 001815024 – Ref. #UNITYDAY.



## It’s winter camp time again!

ANT KATZ

While our northern hemisphere kin are sending their youngsters off to long summer camps, as we will ourselves in December, four of South Africa’s five Jewish youth movements are offering winter camps this year. The dates differ considerably; one is a day-camp while others are a week or two in the Wilderness. All offer to take any Jewish kid along, whether he or she is a member of the movement or not, and one is even offering subsidies. But hurry, because at least one of the movements told Jewish Report that they only had a few places left.

**BETAR:** Hadley Shapiro is rosh Betar, probably the fastest-growing youth movement in South Africa since its reintroduction in 2013. Shapiro told Jewish Report that they would be holding their winter camp at Bela-Bela (the old Warmbaths), tentatively,

from July 7 to 14. It is open to any Jewish child seven years or older.

- For more information, e-mail info@betar.co.za or visit it at [www.betarsa.co.za](http://www.betarsa.co.za). Shapiro says Betar still has space for more campers and still has subsidy money available for those in need.

As for December, Betar will use the same venue for their camp as they did last year. Shapiro says that the movement has booked the site for the entire month but has not yet set the exact camp dates. “We are aiming for three weeks,” he says, with final dates still to be confirmed.

**BNEI AKIVA:** Aharon Chemel, who is rosh Bnei Akiva (as well as the current chairman of the Zionist Youth Council), told Jewish Report that Bnei would hold its winter camp in Limpopo Province near the northern Drakensberg mountains from July 6 to 12.

All Jewish school-goers from grades seven to nine may attend, says Chemel, but available space “is running out quickly”.

- For more information on Bnei’s winter camp go to [www.bnei.co.za](http://www.bnei.co.za) or e-mail [wintercamp@bnei.co.za](mailto:wintercamp@bnei.co.za).

Chemel says that the summer camp, which has yet to be themed, will run from December 9 to 28. (Maddies will be there from December 2) and for enquiries about summer camp, send an e-mail to [roshmach@bnei.co.za](mailto:roshmach@bnei.co.za).

**GAN YISRAEL:** Chabad’s winter camp is a day camp, as usual. Rabbi Pini Pink from Chabad House says the camp will be running from July 6 to 17. It is open to any Jewish child and will be taking place at three venues. The three- and four-year-olds, he says, will be at Torah Academy Nursery School, the five- to 12-year-old girls will go to Torah Academy

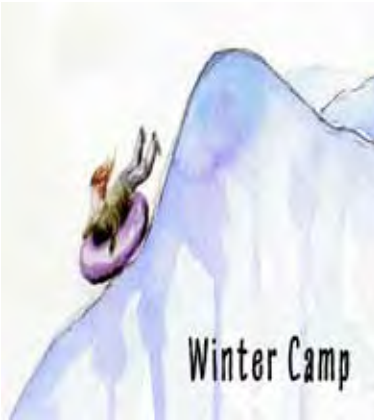
Primary while the five- to 12-year-old boys will be at King David Linksfield High School.

- For further information on Gan Yisrael’s winter day camps, go to [www.cgijoburg.co.za](http://www.cgijoburg.co.za) or call Rabbi Pink at (011) 440-6600. Rabbi Pink can also be contacted for information on Chabad’s summer camp, which will be held as usual at Uvongo on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast.

**HABONIM DROR:** Rosh Habonim, Micaela Browde, said while they are not holding a winter camp, there will be winter events.

- For information on Habonim’s winter activities or summer camp, email [micaela@habo.org.za](mailto:micaela@habo.org.za).

**NETZER:** Kathryn Henning, Rosh Netzer, says that they will be at a campsite in the Magaliesberg from June 27 to July 3. All Jewish pupils



from Grades 8 to 12 are welcome to join and they still have places available.

- Visit them at [www.netzer.org.za](http://www.netzer.org.za) where you can find all the information and even do an online sign-up. Their summer camp will be at their usual campsite outside Cape Town from December 13 to 29. Booking and information about the summer camp will also open shortly on the website.



# Around the Jewish World

## ISRAELI WINS HALF A MILLION DOLLARS AT 2015 WORLD SERIES OF POKER

LAS VEGAS - Idan Raviv, 24, of Holon, finished first in the \$1 500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em Six-Handed tournament, a three-day competition at the Rio casino in Las Vegas. It was the second year in a row that an Israeli has won a World Series of Poker title. In 2014, Asi Moshe took the gold bracelet in the \$1 500 buy-in No-Limit Hold'em event. Raviv, an IT professional, defeated a field of 1 650 to take the \$457 007 top prize. Last year he finished in 181st place. The World Series of Poker consists of a number of tournaments.

Raviv described himself as an aspiring “poker pro” who plays the game recreationally mostly while attending major events in Europe part-time, according to the World Series Poker website. - JTA and Times of Israel

## CANADA'S WONDERLAND WON'T RENEW KOSHER VENDOR'S CONTRACT

TORONTO - Kosher consumers enjoying Canada's Wonderland will notice one less attraction at the park this summer. Howie T's, the lone vendor of kosher consumables in the 330-acre venue in Maple, Ontario, north of Toronto, will not be back. Howie Rosenberg, the man behind Howie T's Burger Bar, was told shortly before the amusement park opened on May 3 that his services were no longer required. Rosenberg had provided kosher hamburgers, hot dogs, veggie burgers and other items at Wonderland for the past two years.

Rosenberg is puzzled by Wonderland's decision. He had been in talks with park officials for months about a new, high-traffic location for his food cart, as well as improvements that would make the provision of kosher food more convenient. But over the course of several months, talks went from discussions about improvements to his arrangement at Wonderland to notice that he would have to bid for the contract, to word that Wonderland would no longer have a dedicated kosher vendor.

He was told that Wonderland was going in a different direction and that pre-packaged kosher food would be available at other restaurants in the park. - Canadian Jewish News

## NAKED SAUNA SESSION RABBI APOLOGISES

NEW YORK - A rabbi accused of encouraging young men to undress and join him in the steam room, has addressed the allegations in a letter to members of his synagogue. After an article published on May 29 in The New York Times accused him of improper conduct spanning several decades, Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblatt remained quiet for almost a week. Last week Thursday, the rabbi wrote to his congregants: “I want to assure you, however, that it was never my intention to cause any harm, nor did I ever do anything that was unlawful.” He added, however: “If any of you feel that my behaviour, even if innocent, was inappropriate, I apologise to those affected.”

His lawyer advised him not to comment on the allegations publicly. But in a statement given to the Jewish Week, he noted: “There is significant reason to believe that the attack on my reputation is being promoted by those whose real attack is on my beliefs and principles.

“The respected rabbi of an important congregation would, for some, represent a significant trophy in the predatory quest to discredit his ideas and, possibly, an opportunity to change the nature of the community he leads.” - Jewish Chronicle

## KLIMT PORTRAIT RETURNED TO JEWISH FAMILY – AND SOLD FOR £18M

LONDON - A Klimt portrait that a Jewish family were forced to leave behind when they fled the Nazis in 1938 is to be returned to them - and sold for up to £18 million (R346 million) at auction. Gertrud Loew was 19 when Gustav Klimt painted her portrait in 1902 as her father, Dr Anton Loew, was friends with the celebrated artist. The family were forced to flee Vienna after the Nazis seized power in 1938, leaving behind the

painting and Gertrud's grand home, which eventually became a headquarters for the occupiers. The portrait was acquired by one of Klimt's sons, Gustav Ucicky, a filmmaker who made propaganda movies for Nazi Germany and who kept it as part of a collection about his father's work. The painting of an ethereal Gertrud has now been returned to her descendants, who are to sell it at auction in an agreement brokered with The Klimt Foundation. Gertrud settled in America after fleeing Nazi persecution. – Daily Mail

## ‘MOST HIV CARRIERS HIDE CONDITION FROM PARENTS AND EMPLOYERS’

TEL AVIV - Seventy per cent of HIV carriers do not tell their parents that they were infected with the AIDS virus, according to a survey of the homosexual community carried out by the Israel Aids Task Force. In addition, 30 per cent of HIV carriers remain “in the closet” generally, while only 7,4 per cent speak of their condition openly.

The voluntary organisation has opened a new centre for anonymous testing in the Florentin quarter of south Tel Aviv. Dr Zohar Mor of the Health Ministry and Tel Aviv University, conducted the survey for Gay Pride Week, at a time when the number of Aids carriers in the homosexual community has risen.

Some 300 HIV carriers and 1 300 whose blood tests were found to be negative (HIV free) participated in the survey. More than 86 per cent of carriers do not inform their employers that they are carriers, the survey found. Two thirds of carriers have sexual partners who are not infected with HIV. Sa'ar Maoz, co-ordinator of social services in the gay community, added that despite “the impressive medical advances in treatment for HIV carriers that has significantly extended their lifespan and provided a higher quality of life, the social stigma and ignorance still exist. - Jerusalem Post

## MAN CHARGED OVER THREAT TO KILL 2 JEWS IN LONDON

LONDON - A man has been charged with a racially/religiously aggravated offence after two Jewish men were allegedly racially abused and threatened. The men, described as “visibly Jewish”, were approached while walking on the River Lea towpath in Hackney, east London, and subjected to a tirade of anti-Semitic abuse.

A member of Shomrim, the Jewish neighbourhood watch group, said: “A male suspect allegedly shouted ‘f\*\*\*ing Jews’ before walking right up to the victims, threatening them [and saying] ‘I’ll f\*\*\*ing kill you’ and ‘I’ll f\*\*\*ing break your neck’.” Police closed off the area of the towpath after the incident. A Metropolitan Police spokesman said that officers arrested a 27-year-old man “on suspicion of threats to kill and a racially aggravated public order offence”. - Jewish Chronicle

## TECHNION TO HELP BUILD DESALINATION PLANT IN JORDAN

HAIFA - Researchers from the Technion's Stephen and Nancy Grand Water Research Institute in Haifa were part of a team that won a \$125 000 honourable-mention grant in the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Desal Prize competition. The Desal Prize aims to incentivise the creation of an environmentally sustainable small-scale brackish water desalination system that can provide potable water for people and crops in developing countries. The prize money will be used toward building the team's wind- and solar-energy-powered Green Desal system to treat groundwater in Jordan. “Hundreds of proposals from around the world were submitted in this competition,” said Professor Ori Lahav, head of the Water Research Institute. “The water-treatment process was based on an innovative combination of three technologies - reverse osmosis, ion exchange and nano-filtration,” explained Lahav. “The challenge was to find a solution for problematic water characterised by particularly high concentrations of dissolved calcium and sulfate.” - Israel 21c

# Israeli tax expert sheds some light on complex issue

## MICHAEL BELLING

Tax is a complex area of the law and people considering aliyah or doing business in Israel should obtain legal advice to take full advantage of the available concessions, according to Dr Avi Nov (pictured), a leading Israeli tax lawyer. Nov is currently visiting South Africa for the first time. He spoke at Beyachad on Tuesday, focusing on various Israeli and international tax issues that could be faced by people in South Africa contemplating aliyah or who might wish to do business in Israel. Good information on tax exemptions in Israel and how they apply to businesses and individuals is not always available, he told the Jewish Report. “Government literature does not always make it clear,” he said. “You can’t always get the answers from the government, therefore a lot of people approach a lawyer to show them what to do and what they are entitled to. The exemption issue and how it applies to individuals and businesses is also not clear,” he added. Israel’s tax system actually has various benefits for foreign investors, and for new immigrants and returning residents with an excellent framework for international tax planning. Nov highlighted four areas of tax benefits and planning opportunities:

- Foreign investors - such as capital gains tax exemptions and on certain bonds;
- New immigrants and returning residents - such as exemptions on all types of income



- and using holding companies;
- General tax benefits - such as a comparatively low company tax rates and various exemptions; and
- Rental income - three possible valuation options.

The major focus areas of Nov’s practice are operating companies and businesses and individuals. Nov, who has advised Israel’s finance minister on aspects of the country’s tax laws, international taxation and tax policy, deals with a wide variety of corporate tax issues, including establishing low tax holding structures, tax on approved enterprises and overseas investment. His work for individuals extends to international taxation, taxation of trusts and tax benefits for new immigrants and returning residents. He has lectured on Israeli tax law at several universities and published a book on tax.

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# Even continents apart, they still call South Africa ‘home’

SHIRA DRUION

South Africa’s future has long been of concern for young Jewish South Africans as they contemplate whether to stay or leave, or once they have left for a while, whether to return. Jewish Report spoke to some who have left and some who have stayed - about their sentiments.

South African entrepreneur Warren Moss, 23, CEO of online advertising agency Demographica, says he is very positive about the future and would not immigrate even if he was offered the opportunity.

“I think that the standard of living is still incredible and unrivalled anywhere in the world. From a commercial perspective, South Africa is the land of milk and honey. It offers people a plethora of opportunities, as long as they are willing to go out and make it happen.

“I work with very intelligent, educated and savvy people who are actively driving change in government and this inspires me with real hope for our future,” he adds. His only disappointment is with the current leadership which is “at the lowest it has been since Apartheid”.

Moss is not alone in his “sunny skies” views, and even young people who have chosen to leave – are still proud to call South Africa home and believe in its future.

Batya Bloch, 25, who made aliyah in 2013 and is now working as a graphic designer in Jerusalem, says: “South Africa is a vibrant and exciting place filled with incredible opportunities especially for young people. I am proud to tell people that is where I come from and am envious of those who are now a part of developing the country.”

For Batya however, Israel offers more in terms of a fulfilling, observant Jewish life. “I do feel that life as a Jew in South Africa is limiting, something which I never realised the extent of until I came to Israel. There are so many avenues and ways to be Jewish here without it being limited by where you can live, what you can eat and what you believe in.”

Zach Fouche, 23, former head boy of King David Linksfield High, is another South African who believes it has a promising future, even though he left in 2010 to follow his dream of being an actor and is currently auditioning for roles in Los Angeles.

“We think we are the only country in the world with damaging problems. It only takes a nine-hour flight to a “First World” country to comprehend how new we are, how fresh our foundations are,” says Fouche. “I believe that we

are building and rebuilding simultaneously and that as a country we will be able to solidify our place in the world as a force to be reckoned with, politically, economically and culturally.

“Having lived in the US for the last four years I have come to realise just how much we do have. I have also realised what it means to live in a country that is comprised of so many languages and struggles and which has an overwhelming sense of common, unified hope.”

Fouche says he has encountered many bitter former South Africans while living in the US. “People who have chosen to leave, and berate the country instead of persevering to bring about change, which is precisely what we so desperately need.”

One young South African who is committed to staying and making a difference, is Talya Michaels. “This country is young and evolving and I love the fact that as South Africans, we have the ability to evoke meaningful change”, says the 18-year-old King David Linksfield alumnus. Michaels is currently studying for a bachelor’s degree in creative communications at Vega in Cape Town.

“My generation was born into an era of revolutionary social change and growth and it has become our social responsibility to engage with diversity and sustain the rainbow nation through togetherness and community.

“The future of our nation is reliant on the optimism of those who live in it. Our voices are empowered, our country, beautiful.”

Jonti Strimling, 19, former head boy at King David Victory Park High, who is studying for a degree in actuarial science at Wits, sees lots of challenges here but is committed to the country.

“South Africa is going through a very rough patch at the moment,” he says. “It is difficult to speculate what will happen... The single biggest issue is the lack of education which is depriving our children of the chance to fulfil their dreams.

“I believe the government intentionally keeps its youth uneducated, so that they will not vote rationally and can be easily manipulated. In order to preserve this country we need to provide for and educate the youth and play our part in the preservation of this country.”

And for those who leave, there is always the pull of the place of one’s birth and the pull of a practical need to adjust to new surroundings.

“I miss my family and friends and aspects of the culture such as the warmth of the people,” says Bloch. “But Israel is home now and what I have realised is that you can have more than one place you call home.”

## US agrees: being anti-Israel can be anti-Semitic

ANT KATZ

On the fifth anniversary of the US State Department’s publication of an expanded definition of Jew hatred to include denying Israel’s right to exist, the University of California (UC) has agreed to adopt it on all of its 10 campuses.

The 3-D principle of modern anti-Semitism, defined by the US State Department in 2010 after the EU published what the US felt was too narrow a guideline, links anti-Zionism to Jew-hatred when the State of Israel is subject to “Demonisation, De-legitimisation or the application of Double-standards” to the country. After months of anti-Semitic incidents on UC campuses, the prestigious institution’s president, Janet Napolitano (a previous Secretary of Homeland Defence), announced last week that she believed UC should adopt the State Department’s definition in all its environments. The scale of this victory in the fight against anti-Semitism cannot be underestimated. UC’s 10 campuses are among the finest in the world and embrace a community of over 400 000 people and have over 1,6 million living alumni.

The State Department’s 3-D definition espouses Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky’s formula, which has also been followed by Canada’s renowned Professor Irwin Cotler. Notably, both men were keynote speakers at the recent SA Zionist Federation’s

elective conference in Johannesburg.

The key is that the State Department’s definition of Jew-hatred includes denying Israel’s right to exist.

While the State Department’s definition takes into account the European view that anti-Semitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews and discusses the physical manifestations of anti-Semitism, it goes beyond it to consider the ways in which anti-Semitism manifests itself with regard to the State of Israel.

This includes demonising Israel by blaming it for religious or political tensions or drawing comparisons with the Nazis; applying double standards by requiring a behaviour from Israel not expected of any other democratic nation and delegitimising Israel by denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, and denying Israel the right to exist

The State Department’s definition, however, ends with a cautionary note, which reads: “However, criticism of Israel similar to that levelled against any other country cannot be regarded as anti-Semitic.”

Mort Klein, president of the Zionist Organisation of America, applauded Napolitano on Monday for accepting the State Department’s definition.

• Read more on this and join the conversation at [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)

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## Beit Ha’am Seminar 2015



Beit Ha’am panelists from left to right: Reeva Forman, Aviad Sela, Micaela Browde, Gusti Braverman, Neal Daskal, Benji Shulman and Aharon Chemel.

Israel Centre was honoured to host the Beit Ha’am Seminar and delighted to have Mrs Gusti Yehoshua Braverman, head of the WZO Department for Diaspora Activities, who arrived to South Africa from Israel to run the workshop, with us.

Opening introduction and greetings were presented by Gusti Braverman along with Benji Swartz, chairman of the SAZF and Aviad Sela, Israel Centre director.

Kathy Kaler of ChaiFM opened the session and facilitated the discussion between the representatives from the various Jewish community organisations.

Reeva Forma, life vice-chairman, SA Zionist Federation 2004.

Neal Daskal, head of Youth & Leadership.

Micaela Browde, Habonim rosh machaneh

2015 Benji Shulman, SAZF and JNF SA environmental education programmes in the Jewish community.

Bev Goldman, founding editor of the SAZF FedSpeak newspaper.

Workshop group discussions took place on different topics - Jewish, Zionist, South African and universal. The goals of the workshop were to understand the importance of dialogue among diverse groups of people and to understand that we can be critical of Israel while still standing under the banner of Zionism.

The last session of the day was presented by Holocaust survivor Veronica Phillips, who enabled us to hear first-hand about the survivor’s thoughts towards the creation of the State of Israel.



**Gusti Braverman, WZO head of the Department for Diaspora Activities.**



# Pragmatism rather than divine promises may bring peace



**TAKING ISSUE**  
*Geoff Sifrin*

One reason we achieved a settlement in South Africa was that religion was not an obstacle. Face-to-face dialogue between wise leaders acting rationally on behalf of their people, produced a pragmatic compromise each side could live with. Mandela and FW de Klerk did it for us. Why can't Benjamin Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas do it in the Middle East?

Partly because Pretoria is not Jerusalem, and the Magaliesberg is not the hills of Judea and Samaria. The religious sites between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean are claimed by a huge portion of the world's population - billions of Christians, Muslims and Jews. Citing "ownership" of a particular spot because of a Divine promise, ensures there will never be peace.

Muslims have done that: "Muslim land is forever Muslim - therefore we cannot accept the Jewish state of Israel!"

The Zionist movement was wise enough not to do that. Israel was successfully created partly because Theodor Herzl's Zionism defined itself as a political, not religious movement, and could therefore make necessary compromises.

David Ben-Gurion accepted the UN's partition plan and declared the state of Israel in 1948 even though its borders did not include numerous Jewish holy sites. The pragmatic approach.

A potentially problematic line was taken by Israel's new Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely last month upon taking office, when she said the promise of the Land of Israel by G-d to the Jewish people as recorded in the Torah, should be cited in defending Israel's rights internationally. Which immediately sets the Torah in confrontation with the Qur'an and the Christian Bible. "Your" G-d against "my" G-d.

If Hotovely's approach were to dominate politically - that we cannot negotiate about a Palestinian state in the West Bank because "G-d promised us Judea and Samaria" - there will be no two-state solution.

This is not a left-versus-right issue, but has to do with Israel's survival as a Jewish state. A heated debate took place on Monday at the Herzliya Conference between two rightwing Likud politicians - Hotovely and former top Likud Minister Dan Meridor. She opposed the two-state solution, he defended it.

Meridor said that reliance on the Torah regarding Israeli rights to the land, "endangers our ability to manage this difficult conflict with reason and maybe also solve it when the day finally comes".

In the Israeli Declaration of Independence no reference to religious rights to the Land of Israel are made: "We cite the history, and not the religion that explains we left the land because we sinned and were exiled from it."

He wants Israel to submit a plan to the UN to establish a Palestinian state based on the 1949 Armistice lines "with changes", which were agreed to by former US President George W Bush and current President Barack Obama.

Without this, as former Israeli President Shimon Peres warned at the Herzliya Conference, Israel would eventually become an Arab state with a Jewish minority.

When negotiations are cast in political, pragmatic terms, all sorts of things become possible, such as co-operating with countries you thought would always be enemies. For decades, Saudi Arabia was a foe - an ultra-conservative Muslim country. Now it appears the Saudis may be allies (of a sort), based on pragmatism.

A credible opinion poll conducted recently found the Saudi public more concerned about threats from Iran and Islamic State than Israel - only 18 per cent saw Israel as the main enemy. The vast majority - 85 per cent! - support a 2002 Arab Peace Initiative offering Israel peace with dozens of Arab and Muslim countries in exchange for withdrawing from territories captured in the 1967 war and establishing a Palestinian state.


The proposal came from the Arab League, and was re-endorsed at the Riyadh Summit in 2007. Israel cannot accept every detail of the plan, but as a starting point for negotiations, there is much to work with.

The threat from Iran and Islamic State have created mutual interests between Israel and pragmatic Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan. It is time for the pragmatists - Israeli and Arab - to seize the moment.

REMINDER

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## The Freedom Charter:

Lessons for today with Kgalema Motlanthe

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The visionary principles of the Freedom charter became the foundation of South Africa's remarkable constitution and the bedrock of our democracy which was realized 40 years later.

Former President Kgalema Motlanthe will discuss this pioneering document and the lessons for today as we commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Charter.

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**RSVP:** [jenni@sajbd.org](mailto:jenni@sajbd.org)

**SAJBD**  
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**World News in Brief**

## Saudis consider Iran 'much greater enemy than Israel'

HERZLIYA - A new survey that an Israeli college conducted in Saudi Arabia reveals that Saudis consider Iran a much greater enemy than Israel.

In the poll, commissioned by the Interdisciplinary Centre (IDC) in Herzliya together with the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, 53 per cent of the 506 Saudi respondents named Iran as their main adversary, compared with 22 per cent choosing the Islamic State terror group and 18 per cent picking Israel.

Additionally, 85 per cent of respondents said they supported the Saudi-led Arab peace initiative, which calls for an Israeli-Palestinian peace deal based on Israel's withdrawal to its pre-1967 borders.

The survey results come as Israel and Saudi Arabia, which do not have diplomatic relations, are both opposing the emerging nuclear deal between Iran and world powers. (JNS.org)

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# south african Jewish Report

## World finally wakes up to the fight against BDS

World Jewish leaders seem to be in the midst of intense preparation for battle. This enemy they are gearing up to fight - the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement - although not new, is suddenly being taken a lot more seriously.

This past weekend in Las Vegas, US casino mogul Sheldon Adelson hosted a gathering of major Jewish philanthropists and American Jewish organisations to plot and plan co-ordinated efforts to counter BDS and other anti-Israel activities on college campuses.

And then on Sunday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu opened his weekly Cabinet session with the announcement that Israel was establishing both an offensive and defensive campaign against efforts to boycott and delegitimise Israel.

Later that day, he announced that the Israeli government was allotting 100 million shekels to the Strategic Affairs and Information Ministry under Gilad Erdan to fight BDS.

“Against the efforts to harm Israel with threats, false accusations and boycotts, we must stand - right and left - as one, to deflect the pressures, uncover the lies, and attack the attackers,” he said defiantly.

Israel said it is also launching an initiative through its embassies in Europe to try to prevent a European Union directive that could negatively impact sales of Israeli products there by labelling goods that originate in the West Bank settlements, East Jerusalem and the Golan Heights.

So, this then begs the question why the sudden call to arms against BDS? Until now, the virulent criticism that has been levelled at Israel has mostly fallen on deaf ears in the Israeli government even if it had been a cause for concern amongst certain Diaspora Jewish leaders.

The answer must surely be certain recent events that have caught the Israeli government’s attention. Firstly, Israel has been facing the threat of expulsion from the world soccer governing body, Fifa.

Then last week, Orange telecom chief executive Stefane Richard said in Cairo that he would terminate his contract with its Israeli subsidiary, Partner Communications, “tomorrow” if he could.

And yet another blow was the announcement by the UK’s National Union of Students that it was joining the international BDS movement and its condemnation of “Israeli military presence in the West Bank and Gaza”.

And of course, a conference called specifically to counter BDS activities by Sheldon Adelson, a big supporter of the Israeli prime minister, would definitely have been taken seriously by Netanyahu and been a motivation for his timing for Israel’s focused efforts against BDS.

According to Peter Beinart, a well-known Jewish political commentator in the US, the news of Adelson’s conference for Jewish groups aimed at countering BDS is evidence that “pro-Israel” activism in the United States has entered a new era.

Because Iran’s new leader, Hassan Rohani, has made Iran appear less menacing and in Barack Obama, Netanyahu has found a partner eager to end the long-standing US-Iranian cold war, Iran is a much less worthwhile cause for American Jewry, says Beinart. As a result, pro-Israel activism has had to find another outlet, argues Beinart, and the perfect new war to wage is one against BDS.

And so too for Palestinian activists, BDS is the perfect fight because Palestinians have given up on the idea that Israel can deliver them a state anytime soon and Mahmoud Abbas has failed to end the occupation, or stand for election. For them, Beinart says, BDS offers a route to bypass their divided, corrupt political leaders and take the struggle against Israel into their own hands.

At the conference this weekend, Adelson said the main focus of his efforts would be college campuses where the BDS movement was making a lot of “headway”. He and fellow philanthropists are planning to fund Jewish groups who could organise effective activities on campus to counter BDS.

Some reports said that famous Kosher Sex author and Rabbi, Shmueli Boteach, would likely lead these efforts to create “Campus Maccabees” to fight BDS in a co-ordinated way. And it is likely that we in South Africa (and many other countries) will start to see the efforts of these American and Israeli funds on our own doorstep.

Interestingly, we in South Africa have been fighting BDS for much longer than our fellow Americans and Israelis and our community’s efforts have been fairly effective.

The South African Union of Jewish Students’ Israel Awareness Week to counter Israel Apartheid Week; the relationships the Zionist Federation continues to build with other faith groups; our community’s efforts to win friends in government and the Israeli embassy’s attempts to build bridges and highlight Israel’s positive contributions to science, technology, medicine and more - are all important initiatives.

They certainly offer significant lessons for other Diaspora communities and even Israel itself, who are only now starting their own battles against the BDS movement.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor

More news on our website [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)



Menachem Zivotofsky, left, and his father Ar, posing in front of the Supreme Court with their attorney Alyza Lewin and Lewin's father Nathan, on November 3, 2014.

## Limited ruling on Jerusalem passports met with mixed feelings

RON KAMPEAS  
WASHINGTON

Justice Anthony Kennedy, writing for the majority in the Supreme Court decision that will keep “Israel” off the passports of Jerusalem-born Americans, begins by calling Jerusalem a “delicate subject”.

Competing claims to the Holy City were not the only timeworn and sensitive issue the justices contended with in their 6-3 decision on Monday, which upheld the State Department’s policy of not allowing Americans born in Jerusalem to list “Israel” as their birthplace.

The Supreme Court in Zivotofsky v Kerry waded into tensions dating to the founding of the United States over whether the executive or the legislative branch determines foreign policy.

The ruling effectively nullified a law passed by Congress in 2002 requiring the State Department to list “Israel” as a birth country for Jerusalem-born Americans, should the citizens request it. Like its predecessor, the administration of President George W Bush, the Obama administration said recognition of another nation’s sovereignty over territory was a matter strictly for the executive branch.

Pro-Israel groups had hoped for a decision that would determine US recognition of Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. But after hearing judicial interjections during oral arguments on the case last year, some feared that that case was mutating into a broader issue over Congress’ role in determining foreign policy.

Marc Stern, who wrote the amicus brief filed by the American Jewish Committee arguing that recognition of another nation was a matter for Congress as well as the president, said the decision left intact the traditional American ambiguity over which branch determines foreign policy.

“This issue has been unsettled for 200 years, and the court leaves much of it unsettled today,” he said.

Stern, the AJC’s general counsel, called the decision “as good a defeat as we could have suffered”.

That’s because Kennedy’s majority decision considered only the president’s right to recognise another nation’s sovereignty. “A formulation broader than the rule that the president alone determines what nations to formally recognise as legitimate - and that he consequently controls his statements on matters of recognition - presents different issues and is unnecessary to the resolution of this case,” Kennedy wrote.

In its statement responding to the ruling, The American Israel Public Affairs Committee noted that Congress, where the lobby was most influential, retained its foreign policy clout.

“Clearly, we are disappointed by the ruling,” AIPAC’s spokesman, Marshall Wittmann, said in an e-mail. “However, the court opinion, viewed in its totality, clearly recognises the important role that Congress plays in US foreign policy - a role that has been critical in strengthening the US-Israel relationship.”

In addition to Kennedy, a conservative who sometimes swings liberal, the majority included the bench’s four liberals, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor, as well as Clarence Thomas, a conservative. Breyer, Kagan and Ginsburg are the court’s three Jewish justices. The dissenters were all conservative: Chief Justice John Roberts, Samuel Alito and Antonin Scalia.

The constitution “does not give the president exclusive power to determine which claims to statehood and territory ‘are legitimate in the eyes of the United States’,” Scalia wrote in the dissent. “Congress may express its own views about these matters by declaring war, restricting trade, denying foreign aid, and much else besides.”

The decision was a defeat for much of the pro-Israel community on an issue close to its heart - the Israeli and Jewish claim to Jerusalem.

The Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations said it was “deeply concerned” by the decision.

“We hope that a constitutionally acceptable path can be found to assure that Americans born in Jerusalem will be accorded their full rights, including the designation of their country of birth,” the Jewish community’s foreign policy umbrella said in a statement.

Yet the decision’s narrow cast drew expressions of relief from Alyza Lewin and her father Nathan Lewin, lawyers known for their pro-Israel and Jewish advocacy who represented Menachem Zivotofsky, the 12-year-old Jerusalem-born American at the centre of the case, as well as the array of Jewish groups that had backed Zivotofsky in friend of the court briefs.

“Justice Kennedy acknowledges that ‘the subject is quite narrow: The Executive’s exclusive power extends no further than his formal recognition determination,’” the Lewins said in a statement. “Congress’ broad powers to deal with foreign policy remain extensive and virtually unlimited.”

It appeared during oral arguments last November that the justices were considering whether to settle a constitutional argument on who controls foreign policy that has dogged relations between presidents and legislators going back to the time of George Washington.

“What you’re saying is that Congress can’t compel speech by the president with respect to foreign relations,” Sotomayor said to Donald Verrilli, the US solicitor general who was arguing on behalf of the policy.

A wider decision limiting congressional influence might have had an immediate impact, AJC’s Stern said, on efforts in Congress to assert a role in determining whether the United States agreed to an emerging nuclear deal with Iran.

Pro-Israel groups back an assertive role for Congress in overseeing any deal.

“This was a defeat, but a limited defeat,” Stern said. The decision “doesn’t determine the result regarding Congress’ powers regarding Iran”. (JTA)

Photo: Rikki Gordon Lewin



# Jewry turns up the heat on BDS even in South Africa

ANT KATZ

Writing in the UK Guardian newspaper last week, Peter Beaumont noted how Israel and world Jewry were turning “up the heat” on the US-based NGO anti-Israel activist group “Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (Israel)” (BDS), labelling it as “anti-Semitic” and as a “first-rate strategic threat” to Israel and world Jewry.

The Guardian’s article was prompted by a vote last week by the British National Union of Students to formally ally itself with the aims of BDS. This, in turn, inspired Israeli MPs to hold a special session in the Knesset to discuss the issue. It also resulted in US casino tycoon Sheldon Adelson convening a conference in Las Vegas last weekend to discuss the issue and come up with a strategy to counter it.

The initial nonviolent grassroots movement, founded by journalist Ali Abunimah and activist Omar Barghouti, was modelled on the anti-apartheid campaigns and called for an end to Israel’s occupation of Palestine, equality for Palestinian citizens of Israel, and for a resolution for the Palestinian refugees of 1948.

“Critics of BDS describe the call for the refugees’ right to return and the opposition of some leaders of the movement to a two-state solution,” wrote Beaumont, “which they have described as a mistake, as evidence that BDS is anti-Semitic.”

In an interview with Jewish Report this week, newly-elected SA Zionist Federation National Chairman Ben Swartz said that the damage that BDS-SA, the local arm of the organisation, could do in this country was underestimated by Israel and world Jewry.

Luckily for Israel and the Jewish world, however, what BDS-SA’s activities have done “has shown the world that the organisation has a fundamentally anti-Semitic narrative”.

From day one, BDS-SA has acted as an anti-Semitic organisation. Even Jews who had been sympathetic to the BDS-SA stance in the beginning, such as members of the political far-left or anti-Zionist Jews, have come to see that BDS-SA’s agenda is not political but anti-Semitic, says Swartz.

Today, however, many among South African Jewry who were previously sympathetic to BDS have changed their stance. Swartz points to a BDS demonstration at Wits last year where they chanted “Shoot the Jew”

and the more recent by Wits’ SRC president’s “I Love Hitler” statements.

People have “totally underestimated the importance of BDS in South Africa,” says Swartz, because South Africa is at the “coalface of the worldwide movement.

“South Africa is ground-zero in the fight to delegitimise Israel; it is being modelled here... it is critical to their ability to (falsely) create the Israel-apartheid analogy.”

Luckily, says Swartz, the efforts of BDS-SA have been largely unsuccessful among the general South African population, “and therefore they can only go for people who they perceive as supportive of Israel.”

This, he says, has backfired as BDS-SA’s attempt to create a parallel between the struggle for freedom in South Africa and the situation in the Middle East “has been seen as an insult by all South Africans who suffered and lived under the apartheid regime”.

BDS-SA chief executive Muhammed Desai disagrees. He told Jewish Report that the fact that Israel, as well as the local Jewish community, were stepping up efforts to counter their activities, means that “BDS is moving from an irritation to a serious problem and threat to Israel in its current form”.

While always a danger, Swartz believes BDS-SA has seen its support reduced and the ties between Israel and South Africa are growing stronger.

He says BDS-SA shows its anti-Semitism by only attacking Jewish-owned businesses, while non-Jewish businesses in the same sector may do far more trade with Israel. He quotes the example of BDS-SA’s anti Woolworths campaign (the company has a Jewish chairman) while other retailers, he suggests, import many-fold more goods from Israel.

Other examples he puts forward are: Reggies, Dis-Chem, and German-Jewish pianist Yossi Reshef, whose performance in the Wits Great Hall was disrupted by BDS demonstrators, simply because he was Jewish. “The only common denominator here is that BDS is attacking Jews,” says Swartz. “It is anti-Semitism, not politics.”

Desai insists that BDS-SA is not an anti-Semitic organisation and they are opposed to all forms of racism. He calls on any members of the Jewish community to “bring to the attention of both the relevant authorities as well as ourselves, any anti-Semitic actions by our members”.

## Prizes galore to be won on our website!

It’s competition season again. Jewish Report Online users stand to win lots of super prizes in a series of competitions running all the way through to Rosh Hashanah.

• To kick things off this week, we have launched a competition to win one of six copies of Howard Feldman’s book “Carry-on baggage”, which became an instant best-seller after its release in December 2014. Go to [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za) and tell us why you think you should win the book. You have to be in it to win it.

• Next week we will start giving away R9 000 worth of tickets for the stunning Lego® “Art of the Brick” expo in Rosebank - this is one of the top-rated expos in the world at the moment. Read the review right now on [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za).

• Then we have a fabulous and unusual opportunity for our readers and users. You can win the services of a professional chef at home for

an entire day! Have family and friends around to breakfast, others for lunch and still more for dinner and treat them like royalty. This novel prize can be worth thousands, depending on how you choose to use it. Don’t miss our article and competition starting next week on the novel services of Doron Gavronsky and his unique business “Chef en Route” on our website. This is someone, and something, you should know a lot more about.

And that is just the start of our season of competitions and fun.

Last year hundreds of Jewish Report Online users entered our competitions and won some stunning prizes. This year, we have lots more fun and prizes in store for you. Watch the print edition, our Facebook page and website, for details every week.

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# Young KDL pupils learn what unity means

GABY COHEN

To honour Unity Day, grade 1 to 7 learners at King David Linksfield Junior and Senior Primary Schools, participated in a joint initiative in memory of the tragic kidnapping and murder of three Israeli boys, Gilad Sher, Naftali Frenkel and Eyal Yifrach, by Palestinian terrorists near Gush Etzion a year ago.

The King David pupils learned about what it means to be unified as a Jewish nation and about working together. Individual paper links with special words about what unity means to them were connected to make a whole chain around the children.

Pictured are the learners on the school field with the paper links, making a chain.



# United Yeshiva stands in memory of the 3 Israeli boys killed



OWN CORRESPONDENT

A year ago, Yeshiva College and the entire Jewish world were shaken to their core by the tragic and senseless murders of the three boys who had been learners at Yeshiva’s partner school, Yeshivat Mekor Chaim.

This year their families asked the Jewish world (on the yahrzeit of their deaths) to come together as one nation to honour the memories of these precious souls and Yeshiva College also took on this task in their memory.

Pictured are Ruth Kinkel, principal of the Yeshiva Pre-Primary School, with some of the grade Rs, in support of Unity Day.

# Unity Day commemorated by KDVP

HANNA BEN-MOSHE

Last week Tuesday, 15 Sivan, Jews around the world observed the first yahrzeit of the three teenagers, Eyal Yifrach, Gilad Sher and Naftali Frenkel, who were brutally murdered by terrorists near Gush Etzion in Israel last year.

A service was held at Yeshiva College, paying tribute to the boys and their families and to promote the concept of “Unity Day”. King David High School Victory Park’s SRC and grade 11 learners took part and KDVP also held a special assembly at the start of the school day to mark this tragic event.

Pictured are Jarred Wood; Tori Ichikowitz; Paige Butkow; Franki Friedman; Yair Bisnowaty; Liora Katzew; and Keagan Parsons.



# The 3 murdered Israeli boys remembered at Sandton Sinai

AMY JAFFE

Sandton Sinai Primary School and Nursery School held a special “Unity Davening” at the school last week to honour and commemorate the yartzheit of the three Israeli boys so tragically lost.

The school responded to a call by the mothers of the boys to have a worldwide “Unity Day” in memory of their boys.



## Are growth prospects looking brighter?

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

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

EMMA DAITZ’S RESEARCH LACKS INDEPENDENT BALANCE

Emma Daitz, writing under a number of different banners such as “Jews for a Free Palestine” and “Jewish Voices for a Just Peace”, got considerable opinion space on the pages of some newspapers, despite claims that this newspaper group is impartial. The SAJR also published a letter relating to her visit to the village of Lubyia in the Galilee.

There have been a number of responses to Daitz’s articles, with some of her colleagues accusing those writers of demonising Daitz. Perhaps those springing to her defence view argument and criticism as “demonising”.

Why Daitz needs Shereen Usdin and David Sanders to write on her behalf, is a puzzle. However and not to be seen “demonising” these good folk, surely they would indulge in some counter-argument and criticism? No doubt Daitz, Usdin and Sanders will all agree that there are three sides to every story – theirs, mine and somewhere in between, the truth.

Both Sanders and Usdin, have quoted Ilan Pappé, professor of history at Exeter University, referring to “authoritative documents now contained in Israeli military archives”. Some would argue that Pappé’s research “is manipulating evidence to fit a doubtful theory”.

There are other historians who would certainly argue a different case based on investigation of those same

documents. I could recommend a host of well-qualified historians including the late Sir Martin Gilbert CBE, professor of history at Oxford University and Churchill’s official biographer, among others.

But the point is that Daitz et al are only looking through one window and ignoring any other authoritative view. As a researcher, Daitz’s training must demand this.

All three have made a number of accusations aimed at the “Palestinian Jews” as they were called at that time, about ethnic cleansing; if such things happened they would surely be able to quote some reliable source other than Pappé’s sighting of documents, documents that they themselves have not viewed?

Again they claim that Gaza is the largest open-air prison in the world, but they don’t tell the whole story:

Aren’t there two jailers to that prison? Why do they only mention one?

Surely they are aware of Egypt’s complicity in the blockade of Gaza and surely they read somewhere how Egypt destroyed thousands of homes in Gaza clearing a one kilometre no-go zone on the Rafa crossing?

**Allan Wolman**  
**Rosebank, Johannesburg**

ACCEPT IT: MAYOR PARKS TAU HAS GIVEN JEWS THE FINGER

Vanessa Valkin’s report on the SAJBD meeting with Johannesburg Mayor Parks Tau made interesting reading but what struck me most, was the naivité of the Board of Deputies in thinking that Tau was able to be persuaded to their way of thinking.

Firstly, Tau supports BDS and was the keynote speaker at the opening of Israel Apartheid Week.

Secondly, Tau, despite having been invited to many Jewish events in the city, had not attended any.

Thirdly, Tau was not available to meet with Nir Barkat (mayor of Jerusalem) in March this year.

Surely, if one applies a small amount of logic, one will come to the conclusion that Tau has given us Jews the finger. He wants nothing to do with us.

Whether we look at it in legal terms or not, beyond a reasonable doubt or on a balance of probabilities, Tau does not wish to associate himself with Israel, nor with Jews.

How difficult is that to understand and accept?

BDS is an organisation which is anti-Semitic and even moderate Muslims know this and many do not support this racist ideology.

All South Africans know that when the mayor wants to buy a luxury vehicle, or when he takes a trip overseas for one reason or another, he makes time for those very important things.

He could have made time for Barkat and other invitations.

So, when it comes to things Jewish, the mayor has no time at all.

The excuse that he tried to set up a meeting with Barkat, but he had already left the country, is so disingenuous and immature that it is indicative of his anti-Jewish stance.

But a further question must be asked, namely: Why is it important to get anti-Semites in government to like us?

The mere fact that Johannesburg has twinned itself with Ramallah surely must speak volumes for what posture our country has adopted, not only against Israel, but it also has ties with Iran, North Korea and Cuba.

Apart from that, the dysfunctioning state entities (SAA, Sapo, Eskom etc) and our president’s expenditure on his Nkandla homestead (and the handling thereof by the authorities), and now our alleged involvement with Fifa’s corruption scandal, have made us virtually global nonentities, perhaps, even polecats.

For these reasons our country under this government is the laughing stock of the world. I wouldn’t waste a worry about Tau and friends.

**Nathan Cheiman**  
**Northcliff,**  
**Johannesburg**

PAPPE SEEMS QUITE CONTENT TO LIVE A LIFE OF HISTORIC DELUSION

In leaning upon the “expertise” of “new-historian”, Prof Ilan Pappé of Exeter University, to substantiate their claims, David Sanders and Shereen Usdin strip their argument of any legitimacy. Like virtually all other antagonists towards the “case for Israel”, Sanders and Usdin appear blissfully unaware that Pappé, who can be relied on to consistently provide “facts” and “information” designed to show Israel up in the worst possible light, is probably the most ridiculed and discredited historian addressing the subject of the Israel/Palestinian conflict.

Hardly, if ever, do Sanders, Usdin and their ilk quote established and esteemed historians such as Martin Gilbert, Benny Morris and Ephraim Karsh, who boldly focus on Israel’s failings (where applicable) but do so within the necessary context and according to acceptable precepts of historic research.

In Pappé’s case the exact opposite applies and his deliberate distortions appear to be a source of self-pride.

To quote just one example: In his book “The Ethnic Cleansing of Palestine” (2006) Pappé offers a damning quote which he attributes to David Ben-Gurion in 1937, citing a number of plausible-sounding references.

What Pappé seemingly failed to anticipate was that other historians of greater reliability, who had learned not to accept Pappé’s claims as indisputable fact, discovered in their own investigations that Pappé’s “Ben-Gurion quote” never existed in a single source that he

listed.

Further research revealed that an existing quote from the same era attributed to Ben-Gurion and which tackled the same subject matter, conveyed the totally opposite meaning to that claimed by Pappé.

Despite repeated challenges to defend this blatant act of subterfuge, Pappé has yet to do so and appears content to live a life of historic delusion, provided it vilifies Israel, to which Sanders and Usdin appear content to subscribe.

This is just one example among many about which Pappé had the following to say in an interview given to Belgian newspaper “Le Soir” in 1999: “Indeed the struggle is about ideology, not about facts. Who knows what facts are?

“We try to convince as many people as we can that our interpretation of the facts is the correct one, and we do it because of ideological reasons, not because we are truth seekers. ”

Pappé openly admits that his distorted “history” is not about facts but ideology. If facts get in the way, construct new facts.

This is the man bleeding heart liberals rely on, as does much of mainstream academia.

**Victor Gordon**  
**Brooklyn,**  
**Pretoria**

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# New Europcar Award set to inspire women in all spheres

MICHAEL BELLING

Europcar has sponsored a new category in the annual Jewish Achiever Awards to recognise Jewish women’s entrepreneurship and leadership.

Dawn Nathan-Jones (pictured), Europcar CEO and herself a former business achiever nominee in the unlisted companies award category, says: “Being a woman in business and a woman leader, I feel strongly that women need to get more exposure.”

Nominees for the new award do not have to be leaders in the corporate world; it can be leaders who have excelled in the community, or showed great leadership qualities that otherwise might go unrecognised.

The award will encourage women to excel in any field they chose, showing a willingness to embrace a leadership role. It will

also promote recognition of that leadership and achievement.

The award will recognise people making a difference through their vision, actions and strategy, influencing others and achieving something that contributes to a better world.

She says that in business, “a lot of the time I feel that women don’t have a chance against the captains of industry and their male counterparts”.

Europcar is an example of appointing women on merit to top posts. Nathan-Jones followed Carol Scott as CEO of what was then Imperial Car Hire, which was later rebranded as Europcar, a well-known name internationally, but previously virtually unknown in this country.

Nathan-Jones insists that she is “not a great feminist”, which indicates that

the new award is to recognise leadership excellence rather than pushing a specific agenda.

But she believes that “women need to be encouraged in business really to put their hands up for leadership roles”.

The new award will help women see that they can compete with their male counterparts, she says.

Women were talented in their ability to juggle career and family responsibilities - a remarkable achievement.

For Europcar, the new award will be “great exposure for us. It’s a great win for us. It is a great platform not only for the candidates and nominees, but for all the people involved to meet and engage with really good leaders. The award is about inspiring women to come forward, the aspiration this will bring.”



## Community

### These Yiddish articles are now accessible in English

MOIRA SCHNEIDER  
CAPE TOWN

A world lost forever is memorialised in “There was once a home”, an anthology of memories of life in the Lithuanian shtetls, that first appeared in the Johannesburg Yiddish newspaper, Afrikaner Idishe Tsaytung (African Jewish Newspaper). Published as a series of articles between 1952 and 1954, in a first for this genre, the stories and anecdotes have been translated by Dr Veronica Belling and serve as a poignant memento for the South African Jewish community of its Lithuanian roots.

Belling, who was the Jewish Studies librarian at the Kaplan Centre for 31 years, studied Yiddish on the Uriel Weinreich Yiddish Summer Programme under the auspices of the Yivo Institute for Jewish Research and Columbia University in New York.

The book affords one glimpses of the religious and secular life in the 25 featured shtetls, including Shidlova, Rakishok, Oran, Poshelat, Ponevezh, Kupishok and Birzh, among others. Descriptions relate to the period 1918 - 1940 and are illustrated with photographs that, together with information, were sent in by readers of the newspaper.

Belling has also included photographs of Jewish sites and memorials that she took on a tour to Lithuania in 2013 that included 13 of the 25 towns mentioned in the book.

It is, however, the inclusion in all too many captions of the simple words: “The majority in the photo perished”, that drives home the reality of the destruction of 90 per cent of the 220 000-strong Jewish community during the Holocaust, more than any elaborate descriptions could.

The main focus of the articles is on the people who lived in the shtetls. Also reflected is the richness of communal and cultural life, with Zionist societies constituting the largest political grouping.

One reads of the “first lady” of Kurshan, a Mrs Gelbart, whose husband was the director of the Jewish People’s Bank. “She was a milliner by trade, who was involved in fashion so that the whole atmosphere in her home was very modern, very European.

“Moreover, Mrs Gelbart was also an exceptionally beautiful woman with excellent taste and true European manners. The secular intelligentsia of the shtetl used to gather in and around the Gelbart home, because in the same way that the rabbi’s home was an expression of religious Zionism, the Gelbart’s home was a synonym for Jewish worldliness.

“Both small worlds, however, lived in harmony in the small world of the shtetl in true friendship and deep mutual respect.”

While the support from Africa was a great help to many families in Lithuania in the years leading up to the Second World War, this was particularly the case for the Jews from Krak-inova, where the majority survived thanks to this help.

“The Jews of Africa exported pounds to the shtetl, but in turn they imported Jewish spirituality, warm bonds, and a great deal of love that was conveyed in heart-warming letters and close family ties,” writes A Sarid, the initiator of the project and author of the majority of the articles, who lived in Lithuania until approximately 1942 before emigrating to this country.

In the tiny shtetl of Vashki lived a Dr Ganandski who “would travel for miles to attend to a wretched peasant couple, in rain or snow. . . . The doctor doesn’t ask for money. The peasants know that he will accept whatever they are able to pay him.”

For his trouble, the beloved doctor lies buried in a mass grave along with all the Jews of Vashki, murdered by the very people he had helped.

“There was once a home” is published by the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies and Research and is available at the South African Jewish Museum shop. E-mail: [info@sajewishmuseum.co.za](mailto:info@sajewishmuseum.co.za)



The cover of “There was once a home”, a collection of articles on life in the Lithuanian shtetls, translated from the Yiddish by Dr Veronica Belling.

## Opinion and Analysis

### Synagogues must protect their members, not their reputations

DEBORAH ROSENBLOOM  
WASHINGTON

When I read the article in The New York Times detailing the accusations against Rabbi Jonathan Rosenblatt of the Riverdale Jewish Centre, I was deeply saddened.

This is the synagogue and community where I grew up. My parents moved to Riverdale in the 1950s and are among the RJC’s founding members. Rosenblatt - like the synagogue’s four rabbis before him - played an important part in the life of my family. However, my focus is not the RJC or any one rabbi.

My concerns are with the institutions in which we place our trust - institutions that seem to ignore the simple fact that rabbis and teachers are human and subject to temptations and personal demons. We hold our leaders in high esteem, but our institutions fail to monitor them to ensure that their power is not being abused and that the esteem is merited.

Whispers, like those in Riverdale, have been present in dark corners of many communities over the years. Those whispers have been hushed by men and women who choose to protect the institution to the detriment of those it’s supposed to serve.

This is what happened at Penn State, which ignored or mishandled numerous episodes over the years in which football coach Jerry Sandusky sexually abused children. Our leaders often demonstrate poor judgement, pretending that if they ignore the underlying problem or handle it quietly among themselves, the behaviour will stop and the problems disappear.

But today social media amplifies whispers. Victims hear the whispers of other victims, awareness grows, and what happens behind closed doors is exposed and headlined. I have seen this in my work at Jewish Women International - on college campuses, on football fields, even in the military. Victims are speaking out.

Our synagogues and rabbinical institutions need to wake up. Responding in secret or in an ad hoc manner - being reactive - does not work. This modus operandi inhibits response, discussion and community resolution. Secret “solutions” end up being neither secret nor solutions.

Instead, we repeatedly see the accused relying on his or her relationships with powerful supporters, and together they spread the fear of public revelation of scandal. Time and again, the message to the victims and communities is that only with silence can the institution be protected. That is

another way of saying that those who are victimised are less important than the institution itself.

This past Shabbat I was at the RJC, down the street from where I grew up, visiting my parents, who still consider the RJC home. We went to shul there, we went to school there, we served on committees and boards, shared countless meals, danced and wept together. We felt safe at the RJC.

What a delusion! The very organisations - synagogues, community centres, schools - that should be protecting and nurturing constituents instead seek to protect reputations. But reputations worth protecting are not made by marginalising victims.

The back-room, hush-hush solution is inappropriate, dangerous and unsustainable. We need policies and protocols for organisational responses to these situations.

Make no mistake about it: Despite all the vetting and background checks, creeps will attain leadership roles and use their power for their own ends. We need processes to examine rumours with speed, transparency and neutrality.

We need guidelines that will reduce the risk of sexual harassment, abuse and assault by staff, lay leadership and volunteers, and we need a process for redress. This approach enables a neutral response free from the influence of wealthy donors, powerful members, colleagues or former interns. Policies should reflect the character of the organisation, but certainly some standard provisions should be included:

1. Anyone who feels victimised or is aware of any misdeeds must be able to speak with someone who has no personal stake in the institution - for example, a social worker, therapist, lawyer or all of the above - on retainer to the institution.
  2. Any investigation must be done by a third party, not someone from within the institution.
  3. Rules for communication and confidentiality must be established and followed.
  4. All lay and professional leadership must be trained in the laws of mandated reporting.
  5. Educational and prevention programmes should be made available to members.
  6. Relationships should be established and maintained with a local sexual-assault response agency and local law enforcement.
- Institutions responsible for protecting and nurturing our communities must focus on protecting those who are in their charge rather than protecting those who are in charge. (JTA)
- *Deborah Rosenbloom is the vice president of programmes and new initiatives at Jewish Women International.*



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# Seftel tries to allay concerns about Louis Botha Rea Vaya

STAFF REPORTER

The current construction of the Rea Vaya Bus Rapid Transit system (BRT) along Louis Botha Avenue in Johannesburg is causing major disruptions and discontent among local residents and businesses.

Lisa Seftel (pictured), executive director of transport, City of Johannesburg, said in an interview with Jewish Report that many Jewish residents living in the north-eastern suburbs of Johannesburg had been affected, mainly because of the new, no-right turns policy recently implemented along this busy road.

“The problem is that many people still don’t understand the Bus Rapid Transit System and how it will work. All they see at the moment are massive road works and temporary lanes which are being put in, in preparation for the final system,” she says.

There were going to be rumble strips and red lines painted along the lanes of the bus route which motorists should not cross, she said.

The main cause of concern was the new, no-right turns along Louis Botha Avenue.

“We unfortunately had to close some of them because we have to give public transport right



of way. There will be further consultation with communities about these turns once we see how the traffic patterns change once the bus system is up and running,” she said.

Seftel said people should remember the old days when trams ran along that road and when they, too, were given preference over cars.

“People will be inconvenienced - there is no doubt about that - but it will be in the interests of a good quality, public transport system,” she emphasised.

The Rea Vaya will also bring along with it the upgrade of sidewalks to make walking easier.

Already in Catherine Street, Sandton, where the bus system was being built, there were many more people walking along the landscaped pavements. This, in turn, would upgrade the suburbs and improve the value of people’s properties, she maintained, countering the view of some residents and shopkeepers along Louis Botha, that the system would devalue their properties or businesses.

Another concern of communities was that, with the lanes restricted, there would be chaos with cars and taxis.

“But, the idea of building this public transport system is to take cars and other vehicles off the road; we are in consultation, not only with the Alexandra Taxi Association, but also with the Ivory Park and Midrand Associations.”

Taxis would also probably be used on the feeder routes.

The city was also hoping that once all the new public facilities along this “Corridor of Freedom” in Orange Grove were operational, there would be no need for people to be using taxis and private cars, she posited.

A further concern was the safety of pedestri-

ans, especially of children attending Maryvale College and Torah Academy.

“There is a budget for a pedestrian bridge if necessary and we will make a call on that once we see how the new traffic patterns pan out,” she said.

Such bridges had been built in Pennyville and Westbury, areas in which the bus system was already operating.

The newly-erected fence which had gone up on the middle island along Louis Botha Avenue, was also causing concern among residents - and Seftel admitted this was creating a division between the community and retail businesses.

“We put it up because there are numerous pedestrian accidents because of people randomly crossing the road, but we are reviewing it and will soon come up with solutions,” she promised.

Seftel, who was a political activist in her student days, has worked in government most of her life, including in the national Labour Department and the Gauteng Premier’s Office. She was municipal manager in the Vaal/Sedibeng area before she moved to the City of Johannesburg to head up the transportation department. She has been there for the past six years.

# You pay for the privilege of being Jewish

MICHAEL BELLING

Being Jewish is often not easy, but it is also expensive. The costs involved in Jewish identification, education, living and even dying, are high - yet most Jews bear them willingly and even gladly.

Taking the example of a Jewish family - husband, wife and two children, a boy of 16 in grade 10 and a girl of 13 in her final year of primary school in grade 7 - the expenses can be considerable.

Jewish day school fees take a substantial chunk out of any family’s budget. These fees come to a combined total of almost R15 000 a month for the two children - around R8 330 a month for the boy and R6 645 for the girl. The total cost over the year comes to almost R180 000.

The costs of non-Jewish private schools are similar, if not higher than those of Jewish day schools.

Public schools, such as King

Edward and Parktown are, of course, much cheaper, but still not insignificant, at around R5 500 a month for the two children (around R66 000 a year). But it is not easy to get white Jewish children into these schools, as some parents who have tried unsuccessfully to send their children to a public school, have discovered.

Another unavoidable area of additional costs for observant Jews is kosher food. Kosher chicken costs R64,99 a kilogram, compared to R39,99 a kilogram for non-kosher birds. An average kosher chicken (say 1,6 kilograms) will cost R104, while a similar non-kosher chicken will sell for R64. Ignoring any further additional costs of other kosher food that might be purchased for a meal, the difference of R40 a day over a year amounts to R14 600.

This figure rises sharply if we use lamb chops as an example. Kosher chops are R184,99 a kilogram, compared to R99,99 for the non-kosher



version. This would provide around 10 - 12 chops, probably enough for one meal for the family. The annual difference on this basis would be around R30 000.

Another substantial amount is spent on the Jewish festivals, particularly Pesach. Buying kosher food for Pesach and conducting two Pesach seders at a conservative estimate will come to well over R10 000. Having large dinners on other festivals will increase this over the year.

We all belong to shuls, a further cost of being Jewish. Annual membership and seat charges vary from around R550 a month (R6 600 a year) to almost R700 a month (R8 280 a year). This will be higher if seats are purchased for the children as well.

Then there are the costs of various Jewish rites of passage - from a bris to a barmitzvah or batmitzvah to a wedding and a funeral.

To begin with the last, a Jewish funeral costs in the region of R20 000, which compares well with the costs of a non-Jewish funeral, so there is little additional outlay involved in being Jewish. There is one

significant difference in the case of a Jewish funeral - if the family cannot afford to pay, the full burial is done without question and any amount the family cannot afford will be covered by the Chevrah Kadisha.

Barmitzvah and wedding costs are not standardised. A modest bar-/batmitzvah, limited to a small meal and close friends and family, is likely to come to around R50 000. An “average” bar-/batmitzvah of a Jewish day school pupil will probably cost some R200 000 while an ostentatious function can run into millions.

The same applies to wedding costs; while they probably start at around R100 000 – the sky is the limit. The sums paid for a bris and the accompanying function also vary hugely from family to family.

For the average Jewish parent, knowing all these costs brings a nice Jewish song to mind – “If I were a rich man...”

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World News in Brief

Jihadist attacks on French Jews planned

PARIS - Prosecutors in Paris presented their case against 15 defendants accused of planning jihadist attacks on French Jews and other targets. The trial against the men, alleged members of the banned terrorist group Forsane Alizza, began on Monday at the Correctional Tribunal of Paris and is expected to continue through June 23. They are accused of “participating in a group formed with a view to preparing terrorist acts”, according to metronews. Among the alleged targets were five Jewish supermarkets of the Hyper Cacher chain, the news site ouest-france.fr reported, and several other Jewish businesses. A Hyper Cacher market in the Paris area was the scene of a deadly terrorist siege in January. The names of the businesses targeted were recovered from a computer seized in 2012, when the group’s leader, 37-year-old Mohamed Amchalane, was arrested with other suspects during a police raid in the vicinity of Nantes, in western France.

In Amchalane’s possession, police also found three AK-47 assault rifles, a grenade and a pistol, Le Figaro reported. He also had manuals on how to carry out terrorist attacks using explosives, including dirty bombs, which contain radioactive material. Amchalane maintained that Forsane Alizza, Arabic for “knights of pride”, was a group dedicated to fighting Islamophobia, Amchalane’s lawyer said. (JTA)





I don't think like them.

I think freedom never gets old.

I think having more can make you less.

I think the things you own shouldn't own you.

I think my car is for getting around, not getting along.



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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

## The SAJBD and world Jewry

In fulfilling its mandate as the spokesbody and civil rights lobby of South African Jewry, the Board benefits greatly from its relationships with international Jewish organisations. Through our maintaining contacts with these bodies and participating in global forums dealing with issues of concern to world Jewry, we have ready access to the skills, expertise and knowledge that our counterparts abroad can provide.

The relationship is by no means a one-sided one, since we bring to the table our own insights and experiences. Indeed, our community plays a very active role in international Jewish affairs, well out of proportion to its relatively small numbers.

This week, our Cape Chairman Eric Marx, National Director Wendy Kahn and Head of Communications Charisse Zeifert, attended the American Jewish Committee Global Forum in Washington DC.

Our close relationship with the AJC goes back many years, and here I can fulsomely acknowledge the friendship and support we have unfailing received from Stan and Marian Bergman and Eliseo Neumann. Stan, a former South African, is today president of the AJC while Eliseo heads its Africa desk.

Wendy gave presentations on anti-Semitism in South Africa to both the AJC and the Anti-Defamation League. During her visit, she also met with SA Ambassador MJ Mahlangu and Political Counsellor Mgojo and with the US State Department.

Last week, I participated in an International Conference on Genocide Prevention, Culture of Peace Education and Holocaust Education in Africa, held in Dakar, Senegal and hosted by Unesco and the Aladdin Project. The subject of the presentation I gave was “Racism, Discrimination and the



**Above Board**  
**Mary Kluk**  
National Chairman

Holocaust: the South African Experience”. It was inspiring to see a roomful of Senegalese students coming together to learn about the Holocaust, which increasingly is being included in the school curricula of African countries.

**Upcoming events**  
Also coming up soon is this year’s much-anticipated Sinai Indaba, which kicks off in

Cape Town on June 16, moving to Durban the next day and concluding in Johannesburg over the weekend. Billed as “an annual Torah convention led by the foremost international Jewish thinkers and leaders”, the Sinai Indaba was an instant success when first introduced in 2011, and has if anything been even more enthusiastically supported by our community since then.

A second important upcoming event is a commemorative evening to mark the 60th anniversary of the Freedom Charter, to take place under the auspices of the SAJBD at the Great Park Centre on June 23.

Former President Kgalema Motlanthe will be speaking on this auspicious occasion and sharing his thoughts on the significance of the Charter in the struggle for democracy in our country. We hope to see as many of our readers as possible joining us in remembering the men and women - many of them from the Jewish community - who were involved in the birth of this visionary document, thereby helping to lay the foundations of our democratic, non-racial society.

• For more information or to RSVP, contact Jennie Fearnley on (011) 640-2521/ jenni@sajbd.org.

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

This column paid for by the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

## Protecting children is paramount

Two weeks ago I received an official-looking letter from the Department of Social Development. I opened it carefully. It was my clearance certificate confirming that I am not a sexual offender and giving me permission to work with the children in our care.

I was not the only one. Every single person in this organisation with access to children had to be fingerprinted for police clearance and checked against the National Sexual Offenders Register - and that included our Board members, staff and volunteers.

The reason for this is that paedophiles often seek employment and volunteer opportunities to gain access to children. Being part of International Social Services, the Chev is able to confer with other countries with regard to both immigrants and emigrants.

It’s a sad reality that so many cases of child molestation occur worldwide. Almost daily we hear news reports of some or other celebrity having to face up to misdeeds. Gone are the days when such behaviour was ignored, swept under the carpet or tolerated in silence.

In America, a group calling themselves Jewish Community Watch has named and shamed teachers and community leaders for abuse crimes often going back decades, and here in South Africa, huge strides are being made in forcing offenders to face charges,



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no matter how far in the past.

At the Chev, our focus on child protection manifests in many practical ways beyond police clearance.

Our latest Social Services report, which I receive monthly, states: “97 families are currently being case managed as requiring family preservation with the potential to become pre-statutory or statutory in respect of the Children’s Act no 38 of 2005”.

We watch, monitor and work together with families when children are vulnerable to maintain the family unit wherever possible.

In addition, our social workers receive ongoing training in the area of child protection. Last month, as an example, professionals from the Teddy Bear

Clinic lectured to our staff on child physical and sexual abuse: forensic medical and psychological assessments. It’s tough to watch what can happen, but important to know.

All this says something good about our world: that laws have evolved to protect the safety and innocence of children; that people are finding the courage to come forward and confront those who have hurt them; that it’s simply unacceptable to abuse those who are vulnerable. It says, in fact, that protecting children is paramount.

May our partnership continue to thrive.  
feedback@thechev.org.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

## Braving a Highveld winter’s night for a good cause

MICHAEL BELLING

Jewish CEOs are among the many top executives who have volunteered to sleep out under the stars on a freezing winter night next Thursday, June 18, to bring hope and a home to South Africa’s most vulnerable children.

The 702 Sun International CEO SleepOut has invited business leaders to unite for this good cause - requiring each to contribute R100 000 in addition to spending the winter night in the open air. The target is to raise R25 million.

The CEO SleepOut movement has raised millions of dollars worldwide and has now reached South Africa. The



executives will sleep outside in Gwen Lane in Sandton to show their courage, compassion and grit.

The Jewish CEOs are: Mark Levy, Blue Label Telecoms; Brett Levy, Blue Label Telecoms; Asher Bohbot, EOH; Yossi Mazoz, Thurloe Corp; Ran Neu-Ner, The Creative Counsel; Wayne Abraham, AIG SA; Stephen Koseff, Investec; Ray Levin, KIA Motors; Adrian Gore, Discovery Group; David Smollan, Smollan Group; Jonathan Broomberg, Discovery Health; Kim Feinberg, Tomorrow Trust; Richard Friedland, Netcare; Dawn Nathan-Jones, Europcar; Guy Golan, Performanta; and Herschel Jawitz, Jawitz Properties.

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**Today, Friday (June 12)**

• UZLC hosts Reeva Forman on “The Other Face of the Israel/Palestinian Conflict - a Positive One?” Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421

**Sunday (June 14)**

• RCHCC hosts an exhibition of paintings by Miriam Perkel and Arline Jaffe, Time: 18:00. Exhibition closes Sunday July 5. Gallery Hours: Monday - Thursday 09:00 – 16:00. Friday 09:00 – 12:00. Saturday closed. Information: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088, a/h (011) 728-8378 or e-mail rchcc@telkomsa.net or rene.s@telkomsa.net

• RCHCC screens a documentary “Dancing in Jaffa”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, or rchcc@telkomsa.net, or rene.s@telkomsa.net or www.greatpark.co.za

**Monday (June 15)**

• Big Band Music Appreciation Society meets at St John’s College Auditorium, Houghton. A short DVD on Liza Minelli and Friends will be followed by an audio programme by Lionel Gordon, “Say it With Music”. After interval a DVD will be screened - “James Last at the Albert Hall - Two Bands, Two Continents - The 60s - 80s”. Time: 14:15 sharp. Enquiries: Marilyn, 072-243-7436 or Jack, 082-450-7622.

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Joanne Gordon, former chairman of the theatre department of California State University and artistic director of California Repertory Company, on “Why Stephen Sondheim Matters - Broadway Lyricist and Composer”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

**Wednesday (June 17)**

• JH&JC and partners, to mark World Refugee Day, host the screening of a documentary “Kinderblock66: Return to Buchenwald”. Venue: Investec ground floor auditorium, Sandton. Time: 19:00 Admission free but booking essential. Information: shirley@jhbholocaust.co.za or (011) 640-3100/2148.

• Second Innings hosts an outing to Mapungubwe Museum, and the Ceramic Museum, University of Pretoria. Meet the bus at 08:30 at Golden Acres. The tour at the University of Pretoria Arts Building starts at 10:00. Cost: R150 (incl tour and bus). Enquiries: Book with Betty Jankelowitz, (011) 532-9701.

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the Dept of English at Wits, on “Contemporary Poetry and its Relevance to Our Own Lives”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

News

# Felicia Kentridge: Tribute to a most remarkable woman

ROBYN SASSEN

Deemed a “remarkable force of nature” by friends and colleagues alike, lawyer, teacher, academic, political activist, wife and mother, Lady Felicia Kentridge (née Geffen), who established the Legal Resources Centre in 1979, passed away in London last Sunday after a debilitating illness. She was 85.

Born in 1930 in Johannesburg to Irene and Max Gef-fen, immigrants to South Africa of Lithuanian Jewish heritage, who both became lawyers - Irene was South Africa’s first woman advocate - Felicia was educated in law during the 1940s at the University of Cape Town and the University of the Witwatersrand.

While completing her LLB degree, she attended a tennis party where she met Sydney Kentridge QC; they married in 1952. In the 1960s Sydney became famous as counsel for the defence in the Rivonia Treason Trial and other high profile political hearings.

Directly after graduating, Felicia joined the Legal Aid Bureau as a leave substitute for a colleague who was on maternity leave. It was in those four short months that the seeds for her politically articulate career were arguably sown.

In an interview on the archives of the Legal Resources Centre, Kentridge recalls being told: “You must never lose your outrage” - advice which she clearly never forgot. More than 20 years later, she persuaded the Wits Law Faculty to set up a legal clinic, which she ran in collaboration with the likes of Arthur Chaskalson, Geoff Budlender and others.

It was designed to offer free legal services to thousands of disenfranchised poor black South Africans, during and after apartheid.

Humble to a fault, Kentridge often referred to herself as a “lapsed lawyer”, and described her professional impetus in running the centre and being proactively anti-apartheid, as the rule of law.

The Kentridges relocated from their home in Houghton to London in 1981. In 1999, Sydney was made a Knight Commander of the British Order of St



Michael and St George, which rendered Felicia a titled Lady.

The late South African Nobel laureate for literature, Nadine Gordimer, a cousin of the Kentridges, once commented that when Felicia walked into a room, the impact she made took your breath away. She referred to the Kentridge couple - Felicia and Sydney - as brilliant, magnetic people with a refined sense of value.

Kentridge leaves her husband, Sydney, four children: Catherine, William - arguably South Africa’s most highly acclaimed living artist - Matthew and Eliza, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

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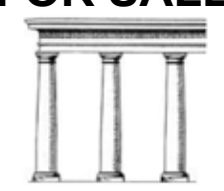


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# Zach Taitz shines at Van Persie Tournament

ILAN HERRMANN

Last week an exciting youth soccer tour - The Robin van Persie Tournament - in Holland, held every two years, saw two South African teams taking part.

This tournament, named for famous Manchester United striker Robin van Persie, brings together teams from across Europe in the under-9 and under-10 age groups. It is one of the most recognised of its kind and is by invitation only.

This year two sides from South Africa went on the tour. Manager and co-trainer Guy Taitz seized the opportunity when he was informed that Barcelona had pulled out and an invitation came through for sides from South Africa to enter. Taitz worked hard to put the tour together.

The South African teams took part under the name “The South African All Stars”. The players got a taste of what soccer is like out there in the heart of the soccer world against teams such as Chelsea,

Manchester City, Tottenham Hotspurs, Borussia Dortmund, Feyenoord and a whole host of others.

Five of the South African players who went across are Jewish and play for local clubs: Zach Taitz, goalkeeper and captain of the under-9 team (Balfour Park & KDL); David Joseph, under-9, defender (Balfour Park & KDL); Jonathan Azoulay, under-9, striker (Pro Athletico & KDL); Daniel Froehlich, under-10, right wing (Balfour Park & KDL); and Noah Sarakinsky, un-



A group of the South African players gathered by the large Van Persie banner. Back: head coach Gavin Prangley; Guy Taitz; and Sheldon D’aubrey. Middle: Brogan Wright; Oliver Leishman; Matthew Costa; David Joseph; Luke Cannon; Caleb Raubenheimer; and Jonathan Azoulay. Front: Kaelo Sono; Brogan Clark (vice captain); Zach Taitz (captain); Brandon Blak; and Cruz Rodrigues.

der-10, goalkeeper (Highlands Park & Bellavista).

Taitz had good things to say about all the players and that considering the difference in experience and exposure that the foreign sides have compared to the South African boys, “we did well”.

The one week trip included warm-up games; the actual tournament; a few more friendly games and then a day touring the city.

“This was a once-in-a-lifetime experience which literally changed the lives of these kids,” said Taitz. It’s a dream opportunity and an eye-opener from a soccer point of view. While the SA players played with heart and had some individual moments of brilliance, they were a fair distance from the European sides.”

“I think nerves played their part in the kids’ mental space,

which obviously affected their game in the tournament. This showed itself when in the friendlies which followed the tournament, the boys played far better. It was the sight of seeing teams like Manchester City and Chelsea running onto the pitch that unnerved them.”

The game is inordinately more difficult in Europe with speed and acceleration, control and distribution, all on a much higher level. The boys are groomed from a young age to be tested on far more challenging levels of physique, training and often from very experienced coaches.

Another highlight at the tournament was the attendance of Manchester United’s celebrated striker and the ambassador of the event, Robin van Persie, who met with the kids, had pictures taken with them and spoke with

the teams. One of the players who stood out for the South African group was Zach Taitz, the goalkeeper, captain of the under-9 squad and son of Guy. Scouts were on the lookout for talented future prospects, and Zach was approached and asked to stay behind the next day for a training session with the head goalkeeping coach of Feyernoord FC.

He was granted an invitation to join the Feyenoord Youth Academy.

It’s a monumental consideration and a decision his parents are contemplating. While being a great opportunity, it has many surrounding complications and the regulations for players under 16 are particularly difficult to work around.

“Zach had a good tournament and pulled off some outstanding saves,” said his father.

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