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Their first steps in a 12-year journey



An apple for the teacher in the age old tradition... Malki Frenkel and Rivka Grinshtein on Tuesday present an apple to their grade 1 teacher Chanie Bacher on their very first day at Torah Academy Primary School. These little ones appear full of excitement for the journey ahead.

Elusive Rabbi Berland still keeps the headlines

The elusive Shuvu Banim Breslov sect leader, Rabbi Eliezer Berland, has, according to his son, received South African citizenship and “no longer needs to run”. But Berland, who has two Interpol “red tickets” against him – from Israel and the Netherlands – faces charges of a sexual nature in Israel.



Zuma discourages ‘ANC travel’ to Israel

President Jacob Zuma, with his ANC hat on, last week told a large crowd near Rustenburg that, “We reiterate that we discourage travel to Israel for ANC leaders, members and representatives for business and leisure purposes.” But trade between the two countries carries on at a very brisk pace.

They have all achieved - and all have dreams

We asked a handful of last year’s matriculants about their dreams for the future. The world is their oyster. Kevin Simon wants to become a pilot; Guy Elad is going to study actuarial science; Jason Smith is going to study business science, while Gabi Setzer sets her sights on Israel in the future.

Top Results: Class of 2015 keeps benchmark high

Jewish Report publishes its popular matric results supplement – a compendium of the Jewish day schools’ top achievers for 2015. The Jewish schools – and Crawford Schools with its contingent of Jewish learners – keeps the benchmark high with a 100 per cent pass rate.

Gird your loins for a tough 2016

We ask a number of people in the know how they see 2016 panning out. They all concede that 2015 was “difficult” and that 2016 will also be tough. Michael Bagraim points out that Zuma nearly destroyed the economy. Brian Kantor sees it chugging along “at a slow pace”.

WE KNOW

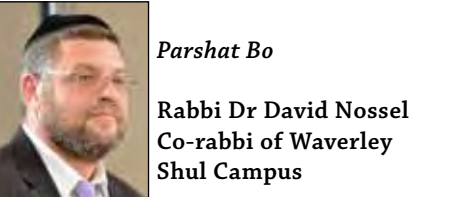
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Warn or warm?



Parshat Bo

Rabbi Dr David Nossel
Co-rabbi of Waverley
Shul Campus

And G-d said to Moses: Come to Pharaoh (Exodus 10:1).
Rashi: vehatreh bo. And make a warning [at/through] him.
Rashi’s comment is vehatreh bo. Bo can either be translated as “AT him” - place a warning AT him - that is - warn him; or “THROUGH him” - get together WITH him in order to warn.
The way we translate this one word in Rashi can change our lives. If we want it to.
How should we translate this short two-word commentary of Rashi? As “warn AT him” or “warn THROUGH him?” And how did Rashi

see in the words of the verse, “And G-d said to Moses: Come to Pharaoh” that Moses’ mission was to “warn [at/through] him” in the first place? And why does the verse use the specific four letter Name of G-d that signals mercy?
The solution to our questions lies in the verse’s big surprise: the use of the word “COME”. Why did G-d say “COME to Pharaoh” and not “GO to Pharaoh”?
The answer is: Don’t be divisive!
It is for this reason that G-d appears to Moses using His attribute of mercy. He tells Moses to come to Pharaoh. G-d says “COME to Pharaoh” because G-d, together with His attribute of mercy, is also headed towards Pharaoh! “Come with Me,” says G-d to Moses, “so that together we can try and help Pharaoh come with us.”
And then, says Rashi: And DON’T warn him. DON’T warn him. It’s not a typo.

When Rashi says vehatreh bo he means “warn THROUGH him” - get together with him in order to warn OTHERS. Engage him, establish a closeness with him, invite him to come with you.
Don’t WARN him - WARM him! And once you have established a commonality, together you can both warn (or warm) the Egyptian people that they are on a mistaken path.
Rashi is teaching us one of the most valuable lessons in life: Let us not wag our fingers at others. Not even at the Pharaohs in our lives. Let us accompany G-d’s attribute of mercy and come to them, reach out to them and engage with them. Tell them: “WE have a problem”, not “YOU have a problem”, or worse yet “YOU ARE the problem” ...
Don’t translate bo as AT!
If you fall into this finger-wagging translation of “AT him” you will find no expression

of mercy, you will not have explained why G-d said “Come” instead of “Go”, and you will have no life-lesson.
When WE adopt the latter translation of “THROUGH him”, WE will be able to tap into mercy, come closer together with G-d and man... and change our lives.

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Bo		
January 15 / 5 Shevat		
January 16 / 6 Shevat		
Starts	Ends	
18:15	19:39	Johannesburg
18:32	20:38	Cape Town
18:15	19:36	Durban
18:15	19:53	Bloemfontein
18:15	20:09	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:57	East London

News

Elusive Rabbi Berland still hogs the headlines

ANT KATZ

In what he touted as a “victory over the Israeli legal authorities”, the son of fugitive Rabbi Eliezer Berland (pictured) announced last Monday that his father had been issued South African citizenship and “no longer needs to run”. The Shuvu Banim Breslov sect’s spiritual leader is wanted in Israel on charges of child molestation.
His son Nachum had been in SA on Sunday January 3 for the Rabbi’s double celebration (of his 79th birthday and his being granted SA citizenship), he said on his return to Israel on Monday.
The party reportedly took place at the sect’s new Gauteng campus which has a school and shul and houses a growing number of followers since Berland arrived with around 200 of them before the High Holy Days.
Rav Berland skipped Israel some three years ago, accompanied by a few close followers and bodyguards. His early travels took him to Morocco, Egypt and Zimbabwe. Throughout his journey, the rabbi has kept in constant touch with his yeshiva in Jerusalem.
On April 14, 2014, the Breslovers were evicted from Zimbabwe and entered SA where they settled in and around Glenhazel. Many among the local Jewish community were upset by the behaviour of the followers. At the behest of Israeli authorities, SA issued an arrest and extradition

warrant which the priority crime unit known as The Hawks tried twice to execute.
Both attempts were, however, botched by the Hawks and on September 10, 2014, the rabbi, his wife and a friend boarded a KLM flight to Holland. On landing at Schiphol Airport, Dutch police arrested him at the request of the Israelis.
Dutch courts turned down Israel’s requests for an extradition order several times before finally granting it. The Dutch had initially been unhappy as the “paper work” had not been in order. Berland lost an extradition appeal in a Dutch court but skipped that country and returned to South Africa, accompanied by about 200 followers.
Rumours were rife that they had settled in a custom-built campus in Midrand for some time, but it was not until October 12 that Jewish Report was able to confirm and definitively report that Rabbi Berland was back in SA.
Although Nachum Berland’s claim that his father has SA citizenship has been substantiated by other members of the sect, questions remain about how he could have attained citizenship so quickly when it is normally a five year process.
In early December Jewish Report online worked with respected Dutch daily newspaper NRC to publish an interview with Berland’s Dutch lawyer, Louis de Leon, who said that the rabbi hoped that “a newfound diplomatic status” would be the game-changer in blocking Israel’s attempts to extradite him. The interview also

noted that Berland planned to plant roots in SA, explained how the ailing rabbi had escaped the Netherlands and gave Berland’s account of the purported sex crimes, which had turned him into the “rabbi-on-the-run” for the past three years.
Berland kept moving around South Africa, allegedly sleeping at different places every night.
As the year drew to a close, when Jewish Report tried to establish whether the arrest warrant was still valid, several SA Police spokesmen were unable to confirm this, or that he was in SA, despite there now being international Interpol “red tickets” out for his arrest - from Israel and, apparently, Holland.
Berland had reportedly instructed his followers to remain on the campus to avoid upsetting local Jewry as had happened in 2014.
De Leon would not comment further on the Rav’s “diplomatic immunity” but the charismatic rabbi was staying out of sight. His followers were in SA on tourist visas and they were getting bussed to neighbouring Botswana to renew the visas quarterly. According to SA immigration law, visitors can stay here indefinitely if they don’t seek work and renew their tourist visas quarterly from outside the country.
Construction of the “elusive” campus, said to be between Midrand and Pretoria, has apparently continued with the aim of ultimately accommodating thousands.
Since receiving his “SA citizenship” last week,



Berland apparently has felt safe. He has reportedly been staying at the campus on some days, and followers have been posting pictures of him with them in SA on his blog since last Monday.
However, a well-placed source, who asked not to be named, told JR this week that Berland flew to Israel with four bodyguards on Ethiopian Airlines on Monday evening. The son of the source was on the same flight and called from Israel on Tuesday morning to tell his parents he had davened Maariv with the rabbi on Monday evening in Addis Ababa on their stopover en route to Israel.



PHOTO CREDIT: RYAN GRAHAM



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Zuma discourages ‘ANC travel’ to Israel

ANT KATZ

Speaking at the ANC’s 104th birthday bash at the Phokeng stadium near Rustenburg over the weekend, President Jacob Zuma told the large crowd: “We reiterate that we discourage travel to Israel for ANC leaders, members, and representatives, for business and leisure purposes.”

There has always been a difference between what the ANC, as a political party, says about travel to Israel and what the South African government’s view on the issue is. Of course both are headed by Zuma...

The more pragmatic approach of the government has seen South Africa and Israel doing well over R8 billion in bilateral trade in 2015, according to SARS. This included an increase in imports from Israel to South Africa for the sixth consecutive year.

Zuma did not make a speech as such at the celebrations, but read significant parts of a document entitled: “Statement of the National Executive Committee” (NEC). The statements on the Middle East made up a mere three paragraphs of the 7 000-word document, but mark the first time that the president has personally uttered a statement discouraging travel - albeit with his ANC party political hat on.

This seems to herald a significant change over the same documents and speeches from previous years.

“The ANC encourages our government to continue its programme of talking to all parties in the Palestinian territory and calls on the people of Palestine to work together to bring about self-determination,” Zuma added.

Israel’s ambassador to South Africa, Arthur Lenk, told Jewish Report that he strongly believes that Israel and South Africa have much to offer each other,” and, referring to the issue of travel: “Just as one cannot understand South Africa’s current challenges and development without visiting or actively engaging, the same is true for Israel.

“The best way to access Israeli advancements in water management, technology and innovation, so needed in Africa, is to see what exists.”

In an interview with Jewish Report in November, for

example, the ambassador said that South Africans had flocked to Israel’s famous WATEC conference and exhibition in Tel Aviv, including a “number of South African government representatives and business leaders”.

“It seems impossible to understand Israeli security dilemmas in a massively unstable Middle East without visiting the region.” His embassy’s team remains “deeply committed to dialogue, developing trade and increasing understanding”, Lenk said this week. He added that they would “continue to interact with South Africans at all levels to share the story of Israel’s successes and opportunities for Africa.”

An Africa News Agency (ANA) report, carried in many mainstream South African newspapers, quotes Zuma reiterating the ANC’s “support for the isolation of businesses operating in the occupied territories”.

Zuma also read from the report on Saturday that: “The ANC is very concerned about the deteriorating situation in the Middle East as this has the potential to trigger a global conflagration. We urge parties to co-operate in line with principles of international law and resolutions of the United Nations.”

• See video, pictures and PDF of the complete NEC document on our website: www.sajr.co.za.

Tshepo plays rabbi again!



in to don a kippa and read the opening prayer from the Jewish community. This was the second year in a row that Tshepo had stood in for Rabbi Goldstein. See video on our website.

The ANC always invites religious leaders of mixed faiths to bless their major events. The honour is normally afforded to the Chief Rabbi, but the event was held on Shabbos. So, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein drafted a blessing and Tshepo Mdllovu, who works at the Israeli Embassy’s Trade Office and is an ANC member, was drafted

Snowy Smith finally gets his comeuppance

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Mary Kluk, president of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies and a court witness, was delighted at the turn of events during mid-December when on the 15th, the Durban Equality Court gave a verdict of “hate speech” against Snowy Smith, who disseminated by email, “extremely offensive”, racist anti-Jewish propaganda.

Smith had told the court he was not an anti-Semite and that he was distributing what was already on the Internet and YouTube, most of it posted by “the Jews”. He cited a list of what he described as “experts”, mostly Holocaust denialists, whose work he said he had researched and established to be the truth.

Magistrate Aletta Moolman didn’t agree with Smith and issued an immediate temporary restraint against him. About two days later, Smith issued an urgent interdict

in the High Court but it was struck off the roll by Judge Dhaya Pillay, who ordered that Smith pay the legal costs of the respondents.

Smith’s original e-mail recipients included a Durban attorney, a Cape Town news editor, a Cape Town teacher and a prominent South African businessman and former high court judge. He only cared that all were Jewish and lodged complaints.

Last year Smith had threatened to sue the Board for R10m for defamation after they had lodged a complaint on behalf of the Jewish community with the Equality Court.

Kluk told SA Jewish Report she was happy at the judgment of hate speech and that Smith’s interdict was dismissed.

“There is no place for hatred of this kind in these fragile times,” she said.

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Joel Harris 082 929 0287 | 011 880 3550



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ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

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Janice Heyman 082 330 2701 | 011 880 3550

They have all achieved - and all have dreams...

SUZANNE BELLING

A successful matriculant today is often far more than merely a good learner, and usually excels in a variety of fields and activities. Jewish Report spoke to four top achievers about their experiences and their plans.

The sky is (literally) the limit for **KEVIN SIMON**, who matriculated from King David High School Links-field; his aim is to be a commercial pilot.

Passing all seven of his matric subjects - Afrikaans, English, Geography, History, Life Orientation, Maths and Physical Science - was a major achievement for him after being part of the KDHSL educational support programme from grade 1 to grade 10.

He says he found grade 11 difficult and “really battled”, but he passed and went on to obtain a good matric result, including a distinction in Life Orientation.

His objective in 2016 is “to learn to fly, get my pilot’s licence and achieve my dream”.

He will be training part-time for his licence at the pilots’ school at Lanseeria Airport.

His followed his passion for flying during his school years and started training as a pilot two years ago.

“There have been hiccups along the way, with a few nausea problems,” he said. “I kept getting sick when trying to do certain things.”

He hopes to overcome the occa-



Kevin Simon in the cockpit.

sional bouts of nausea and eventually become an airline pilot.

This year he wants to go to university to study computer science (he has applied to the University of Johannesburg), or to get a part-time job, “anything to do with aviation”.

One of the aviation possibilities is training to be an air traffic controller at the Air Traffic and Navigation Services, which is responsible for running South Africa’s air traffic control systems.

His second passion is photography, “anything and everything”, he says. He combined his two main interests when he won a competition in 2014 taking pictures at an air show.

GUY ELAD matriculated from Crawford College with seven distinctions in spite of being diagnosed with attention deficit disorder at the age of five, spending over half his school career outside a mainstream school.

He obtained 100 per cent for maths, over 90 per cent in Advanced Maths, Physical Science, Life Orienta-



Guy Elad... accepted for actuarial science.

tion and Accountancy and over 80 per cent in Geography and IT.

He was initially placed at Crossroads School, which caters for bright children who have a learning challenge, where he remained for seven years. He then attended high school at Crawford College after much dedication and perseverance.

He received full academic colours in grade 10 and 11 and was given awards for Geography, Maths and Advanced Maths in grade 12.

He says he lives by three mantras: If you can dream it, you can do it; do not give up and always try harder; and your success is your greatest asset.

He has been accepted to study actuarial science.

A total all-rounder is how one best describes **JASON SMITH**, vice-head boy at Herzlia High School, and winner of the award at the school prize-giving in this category.

After obtaining an A-aggregate in his matric exams, he is going to



Jason Smith in action.

study Business Science, Finance and Accounting at the University of Cape Town.

He has a wide range of interests, ranging from being a DJ to playing sport.

He works as a DJ at any type of event, from bar- and batmitzvahs, weddings and home parties to clubs - mainly for under 18s.

“At the moment it is a great extra side thing I am doing with my partner. It is a fun thing.”

He plays several sports, loves the sea, the beach, wave boarding and water sports.

He was not only a first-team swimmer at school, but competed at the South African national youth championships.

He also played first-team water polo. Other sports he enjoys are table tennis and golf, where he plays off a 14 handicap.

He says he will carry on swimming, although perhaps not competitively, and will continue to play golf.

He also acted in school productions



Gabi Setzer... in Israel.

and played the guitar. He played lead roles and wrote and directed his own award-winning one-act play, “Stairway to Heaven”, about romance in an aged home. But he doubts whether he will carry on with his writing.

He is optimistic about the future of South Africa. “Although there are problems, hopefully the future will be good for us.”

“I am happy to stay here and study and see where it takes me after that.”

GABRIELLA (GABI) SETZER, who achieved a full house of eight distinctions at Torah Academy Girls’ High School, has devoted the time since her exams to more learning.

She has been attending the Neveh Yerushalayim seminary in Israel for observant girls. She was placed at a level known as shalhevet, where girls, usually from their childhood, can develop their Yiddishkeit further.

When back in South Africa, she says, “I want to come and learn”.

She obtained distinctions in English, Afrikaans, Life Orientation, Maths, Life Sciences, Physical Science, History and Hebrew.

“I worked hard throughout the entire year,” she says.

“Obtaining distinctions in all my subjects was always my goal, but the exams were tough and I wasn’t sure. I am so grateful to Hashem that I did.”

She will be studying occupational therapy at Wits this year and after her studies she plans to make aliyah.

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Excited pupils on their first school day, at King David Linksfield Primary.

Photo: Ilan Ossendryver



At Yeshiva (left to right): Yonatan Bricker, Yehuda Rau, Raffi Friedman, Yedidya Tomson and Gabi Goldberg.



Photo: Joel Merris

Herzlia Highlands Primary learners (left to right): Adam Levin, Daniel Merris and Oliver Crocker-Hall.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Offer Lidar wishes his son Itay good luck at King David Linksfield.

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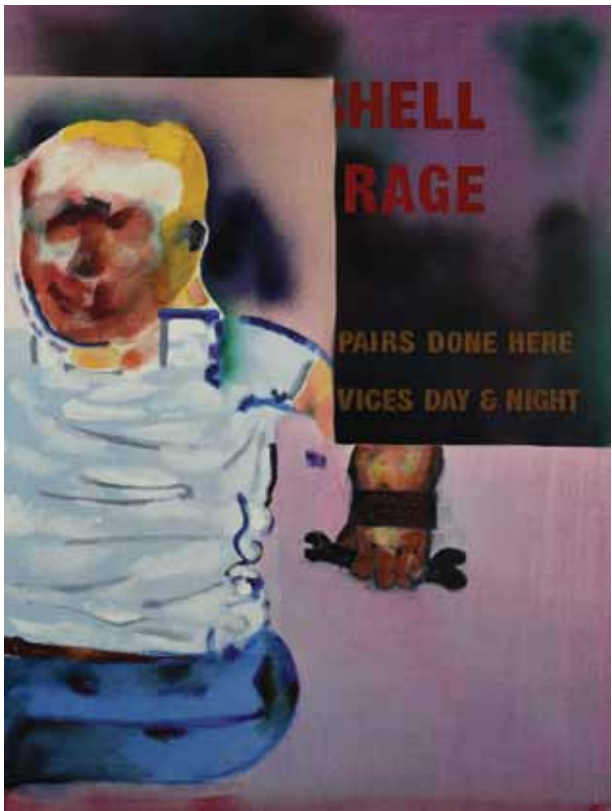
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Sushi on Muizenberg or partying with the jet set – Cape Town has it all



South African Jewish Report

Cape Town, the beautiful Mother City, is slowly recovering from the weight of the holiday-making crowds as people return home to start the new year. This is nothing new. Cape Town and its surrounds have been a desired summer holiday destination for as long as anyone can remember. What is noticeable is that over the past five to 10 years, it has become a playground for an international jet set: Africa’s own St Tropez.

Offering a new hub for the advertising, modelling and film industries and the latest frontier for those who scour the world for new places to party, Cape Town and its restaurants, beaches and hotels reverberate, particularly in December, with the hum of myriad international languages.

These visitors, seduced by the beauty and the favourable exchange rate, are staking their claim by snapping up properties along Cape Town’s beaches, mountains and winelands.

And highly visible among all the trendiness and desirability is South African Jewry. In fact, this year marks the 175th anniversary of the South African Jewish community and commemorates the very first official gathering for Yom Kippur services in a private home in Cape Town on September 26, 1841. The following week, these same worshippers established what later became known as the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation and the next year they bought land for a

Jewish cemetery in Woodstock.

The Jewish immigrants have come a long way since and have played a substantial role in the city’s evolution. Today, its 16 000 Jews are a force in all spheres of life with vibrant schools, shuls and other institutions.

Local Jewry aside, Jews from other cities and towns, for as long as they have called this country their home, have been coming to Cape Town on holiday. While some have opted for Umhlanga, Plettenberg Bay or the Kruger Park, for those who come to the Cape, it has offered a smorgasbord of tourist delights.

From the mid-1900s, Muizenberg was a very popular seaside resort town. The “snake pit”, as it was called, a small triangular-shaped piece of the beach, was a major hub of socialising for Jewish singles who often met their future partners right there on the sandy shores.

Families would also bring their children for long days of warm Indian ocean swims and roast chicken picnics. Muizenberg’s golden era has sadly passed, but the odd, nostalgic Jewish family can still be spotted under an umbrella. These days they are more likely to be eating take-out sushi with their Australian-accented children than the much-loved chicken legs and boiled eggs of yesterday.

Along the colder Atlantic Ocean shoreline, Clifton’s four beaches are also legendary in Jewish holiday folklore and their popularity continues. The apartments, bungalows and houses situated above these beaches and extending towards Bantry Bay, are among the most expensive in the country. Many are owned by South Africa’s Jewish moguls, both residents and those who have emigrated, who flock back in season.

The four beaches mirror the cycle of life: toddlers begin their journey on Fourth Beach, frolicking in the icy waters accompanied by parents; teenage and early adult years are spent on First and Second Beach and even Third; and

one comes full circle, when as parents and grandparents, they head back to Fourth Beach, where it all started.

In the last 50 years, however and growing all the time, is a whole new demographic of Jewry that visits Cape Town in December: the former South Africans who return to visit family and their childhood memories. They come with their pale, British-accented children or their American spouses. Sit on any beach, take a walk along the beachfronts, go to a Cape Town shul or visit the supermarkets along Main Road, Sea Point, and you will hear them.

This group has evolved even further as the children of South African-born parents grow up and come on their own to holiday here, visiting grandparents or friends they have made over the years.

These former South Africans also bring their new American or Canadian family members, college mates or friends with them. And so this South African-connected population of visitors is increasing. When they leave and return to the cold and snow of the northern hemisphere, they sing the praises of their Cape Town summers loudly and widely.

In fact, the high demand for all that Cape Town has to offer has priced many holidaymakers seeking reasonable hotel or rental rates out of the market. And if one wants to eat at any of the popular restaurants or attend any of the hot New Year’s parties during the December season, bookings must be made months in advance - so be prepared.

Yes, we are all returning now to 2016’s realities of an economy heading for junk status, a currency sliding to new lows, and an angry student population, but our precious gem, our own little St Tropez, with its beauty, vibrancy and commerce, makes it easier to forget the painful realities - even if it’s just for a while.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor

Bowie’s kabbalah and other Jewish facts

GABE FRIEDMAN



NEW YORK - It was clear long before the Internet swelled with heartfelt tributes to David Bowie (pictured) that the late musician was an artistic legend. The 69-year-old Englishman, who died on Sunday after an 18-month battle with cancer, reinvented himself countless times in a music career that spanned more than five decades.

From his Ziggy Stardust alter ego to his latest album - a jazzy, avant-garde rock release called “Blackstar” released just two days before his death - Bowie racked up some interesting Jewish connections.

1. He was into kabbalah, and sang about it

“Here are we, one magical movement from kether to malkuth,” Bowie sang in his 1976 song “Station to Station”. “Kether” and “malkuth” are two of the 10 elements of the kabbalistic tree of life.

Despite being high on cocaine for most of the “Station to Station” album’s recording process and describing it years later as the work of “an entirely different person”, Bowie was fascinated with kabbalah during this period. The back cover of the “Station to Station” album features Bowie drawing the kabbalistic tree of life in chalk.

Bowie’s kabbalah and other Jewish facts about him

Les Conn, born to a Jewish family in Stamford Hill, a traditionally Jewish part of London, failed to make much headway in the music business before connecting with the 17-year-old Bowie - then still going by his birth name, David Robert Jones - in 1964. Conn managed to get Jones’ first band some gigs, but he couldn’t sell his talent to The Beatles’ publisher, Dick James. When Conn’s contract with Jones expired, the rocker left for a new band and changed his name to Bowie.

3. He was close to Jewish rockers Lou Reed and Marc Bolan

Bowie connected with Lou Reed, of the Velvet Underground and pop artist Andy Warhol on a trip to the US in 1971. He later produced Reed’s breakthrough solo album “Transformer” in 1972. Marc Bolan, lead singer of the glam rock band T-Rex, had a more complicated and competitive relationship with Bowie. They became close friends early on in their careers when they were both managed by Conn.

Tension ensued when Bolan found success years before Bowie did. But Bolan’s producer, Tony Visconti, eventually began devoting more of his time and energy to Bowie’s albums, which began climbing the charts as Bolan went downhill into alcohol and drug addiction.

4. He went through a bit of a Nazi phase

In a drug-induced state leading up to the release of “Station to Station”, Bowie was criticised for saying in an interview that Adolf Hitler was “one of the first rock stars”. In the same month, he said Britain could “benefit from a fascist leader”.

Bowie later assumed a persona called the “Thin White Duke”, described as an “emotionless Aryan superman”. In 1976, he drove up to London’s Victoria Station in a Mercedes convertible and gave what was reported to be a Nazi salute. Bowie denied the reports. (JTA)

Are we heading towards a racist society again?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

The racial furore in South African social media over recent weeks brought hideous comments from across the spectrum. It started with one Penny Sparrow calling black revellers on Durban beach on New Year’s Day “monkeys” – a posting which quickly went viral. One of the worst responses was a Facebook comment by a black, Gauteng province employee calling for blacks to do to whites what “Hitler did to the Jews”. He said he hated all whites.

The ethos of a liberal South African society where all are treated as individual human beings regardless of race, is retreating, despite laudable proposals by jurists to criminalise racist comments.

Increasingly in public discourse, people are described according to the group they are perceived to belong to and forced into that category, whether they feel part of it or not -

whites and blacks can’t escape that identity.

South African Jews are caught in a double bind. On one hand they belong to the white minority in a country where the black majority is increasingly outspoken at white privilege deriving from apartheid, and the ideology is to break down black-white barriers.

On the other hand, South African Jews have their own strong group identity, marry and socialise mostly with other Jews, send some 85 per cent of their children to Jewish schools, and have their own welfare institutions.

This essential aspect of Jewish culture, always present in whichever country they live, is one reason Jews have survived for centuries. They have no desire to relinquish this identity.

Thus far there have been few major anti-Jewish incidents - except from some marginal individuals - and authorities have quickly denounced those that have occurred. The vitriol has rather concentrated on whites and blacks as groups. But history shows repeatedly that once extreme identity politics starts to boil, it usually ends up

targeting Jews as part of its madness.

This trend coincides with a resurgence of identity politics worldwide based on ethnicity, race, religion or nationalism. In Europe, the rising nationalist backlash - starting from the right, but increasingly across the political spectrum - against Middle Eastern immigrants and refugees, is palpable.

One example is rightwing German anti-immigrant movement Pegida, which has called for Chancellor Angela Merkel’s ouster for permitting such a liberal policy towards Muslim immigrants and threatening German identity.

In the United States, Donald Trump, the rising GOP candidate for president, unashamedly sprouts racist jargon against Muslims and immigrants. He says he is simply saying what lots of Americans are thinking but won’t actually come out and say, because of political correctness.

In the Middle East, radical Islam is on the march; groups like ISIS pursue an agenda to dismantle existing states and create an Islamic caliphate, and to subvert the Western world and turn it into an Islamic

realm.

A recent example of identity politics in Israel - far less radical but still ominous - is disqualification of the novel Borderlife by Israeli author Dorit Rabinyan from inclusion in the high school curriculum.

It is about a love affair in New York between a Jewish Israeli woman and Palestinian man. A senior Education Ministry official deemed it inappropriate for Israeli high schoolers, declaring: “Young people of adolescent age tend to romanticise and don’t, in many cases, have the systemic vision that includes considerations involving maintaining the national-ethnic identity of the people and the significance of miscegenation”. Uproar ensued, with some seeing this as defending racial separation.

How to prevent extreme identity politics destroying liberal society? People need a group identity, but also the right to be treated as individuals. Sadly, the balance and wise leadership necessary are both in short supply today.

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

TOP RESULTS 2015

National Senior Certificate & Independent Examination Board

Compiled by Britt Landsman tel: 082-292-9520 e-mail: britt@sajewishreport.co.za or visit www.sajr.co.za

‘Class of 2015’ keeps the benchmark very high

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Traditionally, the Independent Examination Board (IEB) is first off the mark with its results (including those of most of the Jewish day schools) setting an extremely high benchmark for the (much bigger) National Senior Certificate (NSC) stream which is released a week or two later.

Although Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga as well as Prof John Volmink, chairman of the quality monitoring body Umalusi, prepared everyone for a drop in the NSC pass rate - from 75,8 per cent in 2014 to 70,7 per cent in 2015 - it still left a series of aftershocks. There are many reasons for the decline, one being the large number of “progressed” learners (those pushed up to Grade 12 even though they failed Grade 11) who didn’t make it. Of 124 105 learners writing NSC, 66 088 were “progressed” learners.

The private IEB schools, with better resources and teaching material, are largely immune to these shocks and year after year they boast 100 per cent pass rates, to such an extent that even one failure would generally be viewed as a catastrophe. The year 2015 was no exception; all the Jewish day schools - again - boasted 100 per cent pass rates.

Some 10 500 learners wrote the IEB examination, with an incredible 98,3 per cent pass rate. Of those, no fewer than 85,26 per cent qualified for university studies.

One Jewish day school, Herzlia in Cape Town, writes the NSC exam as does Crawford College which traditionally has many Jewish learners.

But the best resources, dedicated teachers etc, to be found in the Jewish day schools, without the full support of the parents (and grandparents!) and the learners themselves, would be of no avail. Because one has become so accustomed to Jewish day school “full-houses”, one tends to overlook the painstaking work put in over 12 school years.

Eleven distinctions, or 10 or nine or eight, hog the limelight - and rightly so, because those learners surely earn their top spots. But not all learners are “10 distinction” material and those less academically inclined, who passed this last school hurdle, deserve the accolades as much as the top achievers.

Jews are traditionally called “the people of the book” and hard work academically is ingrained in the collective psyche. But if one looks at the resumes of the top achievers, it becomes clear that their talents extend to sports and the arts as well.

King David High School Linksfeld has maintained its status as one of the top academic schools in the country for 2015. Once again the school achieved a 100 per cent pass rate.

The school continues to make overall advancements in the results with 70 per cent of its candidates achieving one or more distinctions. Equally impressive is the wonderful achievements of the learners in the Educational Support Programme who make up 11 per cent of the group, where in addition to all now earning a matric certificate,



more than half of the candidates earned university exemption and half achieved at least one distinction.

The school in 2015 produced some of the top-achieving candidates in the country. Three KDL learners, Jared Hodes, Rachel Shear and Ro-ee Tal, achieved a commendable rating as they were within the top five per cent of learners in five subjects and scored 80 per cent or more for Life Orientation. Six of the learners, Aaron Fainman, Rachel Klevansky, Guy Shemesh, Natasha Silverman, Jessie Wainer and Taliya Weinstein, achieved an outstanding rating as they were within the top five per cent of learners in six or more subjects and scored 80 per cent or more for Life Orientation; 15 have been placed in the top one per cent of their subjects.

These statistics are testimony to the hard work and commitment to success of the learners, as well as the expertise and dedication of the school’s exceptional teaching staff. The class of 2015 is to be congratulated on these excellent academic successes.

King David High School, Victory Park is equally proud of the achievements of the class of 2015. Sixty four learners wrote the IEB examination and they achieved not only a 100 per cent pass rate, but every learner also achieved a university entrance pass. The school boasts an average of 3,3 distinctions per candidate.

Congratulations to Ilan Malkin, Asher Klug and Jeremy Croock who made the IEB Outstanding Achievers list and to Benjamin Benguri-Karstaedt who made the IEB Commendable Achievers list.

Makin obtained 10 distinctions and was placed as one of the top achievers in the country. Yossi Bank, Tamir Schlaz, Eli Smith and Bradley Segal achieved an outstanding nine distinctions. The schools pays special tribute to its dedicated staff for all their efforts in assisting the learners in producing these results.

Herzlia School’s Headmaster Marc Falconer says many school communities see

the release of the matric results as “the moment of truth”, but this is not necessarily the case; it is neither about a moment, and nor does it present the entire truth of what education is about.

“It is, however, one way of being able to mark the progress of one key aspect of a school and because it is the only national, standardised and moderated set of results, it is an important one.”

Herzlia is delighted with the 2015 matriculants’ 100 per cent pass rate and the distinctions achieved - with an average of 3,7 distinctions per candidate. Fifty one per cent of candidates achieved four or more distinctions. Herzlia values the (sometimes less obvious) personal triumphs of each of the learners and is proud of the holistic and Jewish education the school offers. “Herzlia is an inclusive school and is proud of the fact that our pupils are not selected by entrance examinations. Our school seeks to nurture and extend each individual pupil. We are also proud of the values and the preparedness our pupils take into their worlds after school.

“This is a good opportunity to thank our parents for the ongoing support of their children and our school and it is also appropriate to acknowledge and thank all in the Herzlia family: support staff, lay leaders and especially teachers, from pre-school to high school, for the part each one has played in offering our pupils their superb education.”

CrawfordSchools™ is synonymous with academic excellence and at no time is this more evident than at the release of the matric results every year.

Once again, the matric group of 2015 did not disappoint. The Crawford matriculants celebrated their individual achievements with the release of the matric results on Wednesday January 6.

“We are very proud to announce that Crawford College Pretoria was awarded the accolade of the Top Independent School in the NSC by the Gauteng Department

of Education,” Crawford Schools said in a media release.

Crawford College Sandton was placed second and Crawford College Lonehill third. “Congratulations to the class of 2015 and good luck with your future endeavours.”

Yeshiva College in Johannesburg - writing the IEB examination - achieved brilliant results

Rabbi Leron Bernstein, MD of Yeshiva College, and principal Denese Bloch say they are “exceptionally proud” of the class of 2015 for upholding “a consistent 100 per cent pass rate, obtaining an astounding 3,82 distinctions per candidate, and having three of our learners make the IEB’s Outstanding and Commendable List”.

Yeshiva’s raison d’être is to ensure that Jewish learners can benefit from a superb Torah education while competing with the top schools in the country in terms of a general studies education.

“We are confident that our dual curriculum provides our learners with a comprehensive and all-encompassing education. The devotion of a third of their day to Torah study does by no means diminish the time available for general studies, but rather, provides our learners with an invaluable ability to learn, question and acquire skills needed for discursive reasoning and all-round development - something which we believe actually contributes to their success throughout school.”

They stress that Yeshiva believes in the development of the entire learner. Sports and culture play an integral role in the holistic education at the school.

“Yeshiva College strives to provide a holistic, vibrant, warm and energetic environment focused on educating the whole person, nurturing individuality and the leadership qualities of each and every learner thereby equipping them to make a meaningful contribution to the world around them.”

UNITED HERZLIA SCHOOLS Nsc



Justin Marcus: Accounting, Afrikaans, AP Maths, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Darren Peyron: Accounting, Afrikaans, AP Maths, Economics, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Michael Cohen: Accounting, Afrikaans, AP Maths, Economics, English, LO, Maths, Physical Science.



Matthew Symon: Accounting, Afrikaans, CAT, English, IT, LO, Maths, Physical Science.



Olivia Bernstein: Afrikaans, Consumer Studies, Drama, English, LO, Maths, Physical Science.



Ashlee Blacher: Afrikaans, Drama, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.



Jessica Capstick-Dale: Afrikaans, Consumer Studies, English, History, LO, Maths Literacy, Visual Art.



Arad Cohen: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Life Sciences, Physical Science.



Hayli Geffen: Afrikaans, Drama, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Tayla Goldberg: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Kayla-Jade Gradidge: Afrikaans, Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths Literacy.



Joshua Kadish: Afrikaans, Economics, English, History, IT, LO, Maths.



Geena Kopping: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Science.



Amy Marks: Afrikaans, Economics, English, LO, Life Science, Maths, Physical Science.



Daniella Solomon: Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Ruth Stein: Afrikaans, Drama, English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.



Kira Stone: Afrikaans, English, History, LO, Maths, Music, Physical Science.



Romy Bloch: Afrikaans, Drama, English, History, LO, Life Sciences.



Dean Cohen: Accounting, Economics, English, IT, LO, Maths.



Dax Finkelstein: Accounting, Afrikaans, Economics, IT, LO, Maths.



Michaela Franco: Economics, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Visual Art.



Joshua Goldberg: Afrikaans, IT, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Shai Kadish: Business Studies, Economics, English, LO, Maths, Physical Science.



Gabriel Loeb: English, History, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.



Tatiana Marks: Business Studies, Consumer Studies, English, History, LO, Maths Literacy.



Zachary Meltzer: English, History, IT, Maths, Physical Science, Visual Art.



Ryan Roup: Business Studies, Economics, English, History, LO, Maths.



James Russak: Accounting, Economics, English, LO, History, Maths.



Gabriella Saven: Afrikaans, Drama, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.



Shannon Wonfor: English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science, Visual Art.



Sasha Abramowitz: Accounting, English, IT, Maths, Physical Science.



Samuel Codron: Business Studies, Economics, English, History, LO.



Graciella Lazar: Business Studies, English, History, LO, Visual Art.



Zachary Levin: Business Studies, Economics, English, History, LO.



Savanna Mendelsohn: Afrikaans, Business Studies, Economics, LO, Life Sciences.



Jessica Pamensky: Business Studies, Economics, English, LO, Life Sciences.



Jamie Traut: Business Studies, English, History, LO, Maths Literacy.



Levi Uranovsky: Afrikaans, Drama, English, IT, LO.




Gabriella Wilensky: Afrikaans, Economics, English, History, LO.



Alexia Zetner: Accounting, Economics, History, LO, Maths.


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FOUR DISTINCTIONS




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FOUR DISTINCTIONS




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Alexandra Gutman: Consumer Studies, LO, Life Sciences.

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NINE DISTINCTIONS




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The Media Centre at King David Victory Park



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<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Ryan Beder: English, Maths, Hebrew, Physical Science, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Gidon Nerwich: English, Afrikaans, Maths, Hebrew, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Daniel Riesenburt: English, Maths, Hebrew, Accounting, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Yisrael Zagnoev: English, Maths, Hebrew, Physical Science, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Sarit Bregman: English, Hebrew, Life Sciences, Consumer Studies, LO.</p>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Malka Hodes: English, Maths Literacy, History, Dramatic Arts, LO.</p>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Gabriella Katz: English, Afrikaans, Life Sciences, History, LO.</p>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Daniel Rapp: English, Hebrew, Business Studies, Economics, LO.</p>
<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Lior Ronthal: English, Afrikaans, Hebrew, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Alon Shulman: English, Maths, Physical Science, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Alexa Blechman: English, Hebrew, History, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Michi Carno: English, Maths, Physical Science, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Aaron Chazen: English, Hebrew, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Kayla Gisken: English, Hebrew, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Meiron Jacobson: English, Maths, Physical Science, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Gilad Kohaly: English, Maths, Hebrew, LO.</p>
<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Marc Labe: English, Maths, Geography, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Tamara Nussbaum: English, Hebrew, History, LO.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Shane Serebro: English, Maths, Life Sciences, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Abigail Ackerman: English, Maths Literacy, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Barak Henen: Maths, Geography, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Daniella Sher: English, Consumer Studies, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Ariella Trope: Maths Literacy, LO, Travel and Tourism.</p>	

Justine Levy and her son Joshua on his first day of grade 1

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A paradigm shift may be needed in SA’s education system

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Does the five per cent drop in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) matric pass rate in 2015 - down from 75,8 per cent in 2014 to 70,7 per cent in 2015 - spell disaster, or should it be seen as a natural development? Is the emphasis not in the wrong place?

Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga and standards control body Umalusi Chairman, Prof John Volmink, have proffered many reasons for the drop; one being that more people wrote matric including a substantial number of people who failed grade 11 but were “progressed” to grade 12. Prof Volmink has been adamant that standards won’t be dropped to make the pass rate look better.

Prof Sarah Gravett, dean of the faculty of education at the University of Johannesburg, maintains that “we pay too much attention to pass rates” and that fluctuations in those rates are not necessarily a bad thing. She says that in order to ensure quality results, there should be greater emphasis and investment in education, beginning at the lowest junior level. “Matric starts in the first grade.”

Instead of obsessing on the pass rate, more attention should be given to individual subject results to see where pupils and teachers need intervention, she contends.

The silver lining in the results was that 455 825 learners passed - the highest number ever. The number of learners who passed maths increased from 120 523 in 2014 to 113 1212 in 2015.

Economist Azar Jammine says merely passing matric does not put a person in a great position to get a decent job or progress in the workplace.

“What is holding back economic growth is that too few people are educated enough to execute certain jobs needed in the economy,” he is quoted as saying.

Lobby group Equal Education said in a media release that as far as education is concerned, “several contextual factors must be taken into account.

“For a number of reasons the NSC pass rate is a limited measure of the quality and performance of the schooling system.”

The pass rate only captured the percentage of learners who have written the test who have met minimum requirements. “This fails to account for learners who never make it to matric and for variation in quality of performance among those who pass the test.” Generally, only about half the matric cohort that began school in grade 2, reach matric. Most of these learners fall through the system’s cracks between grades 10 and 12.”

It said if half or nearly half of all learners never make matric, this was a major problem in itself and required specific interventions targeted at the grades 10 - 12 level.

“The department must do more to retain grade 10 learners and substantially decrease the dropout rate. The department should conduct in-depth transparent nationwide research into the causes of the high dropout rate and must develop effective strategies to address these issues.”

Equal Education says schools’ intentional discouraging or withholding of poor-performing learners from writing matric, called culling, is another reason. “Culling arises partly because of a single-minded obsession over the matric pass rate, one that is as much the fault of the media as the minister (Angie Motshekga) who likes to pull a single misleading percentage out of an envelope each year.”

Prof Volmink was unapologetic when he said Umalusi would not be defensive about how the high standard of question papers may have been the main contributing factor

to the dropped pass rate. Another reason may be the improved quality of marking.

Prof Volmink also suggested as another major reason the progression policy of 2013, “preventing learners from being retained in the same phase for more than four years”. In 2014 there was an estimated 30 000 progressed learners writing the NSC examination. In 2015 there were 65 000 “progressed learners”, making up 10 per cent of the total cohort.

Then there was “a real problem” with teachers’ knowledge of major subjects such as maths, science and accounting. “Teachers quite frankly often don’t understand the subjects they teach.”

SA Democratic Teachers Union (Sadtu) said through its general secretary, Mugwena Maluleke, that a sustainable education system is what is needed to deal head-on with all the problems.

“A lot more investment is needed, particularly in early childhood development, so that we don’t have to worry about matric camps, because at the moment we are having a sick system which is relying on extra work.”

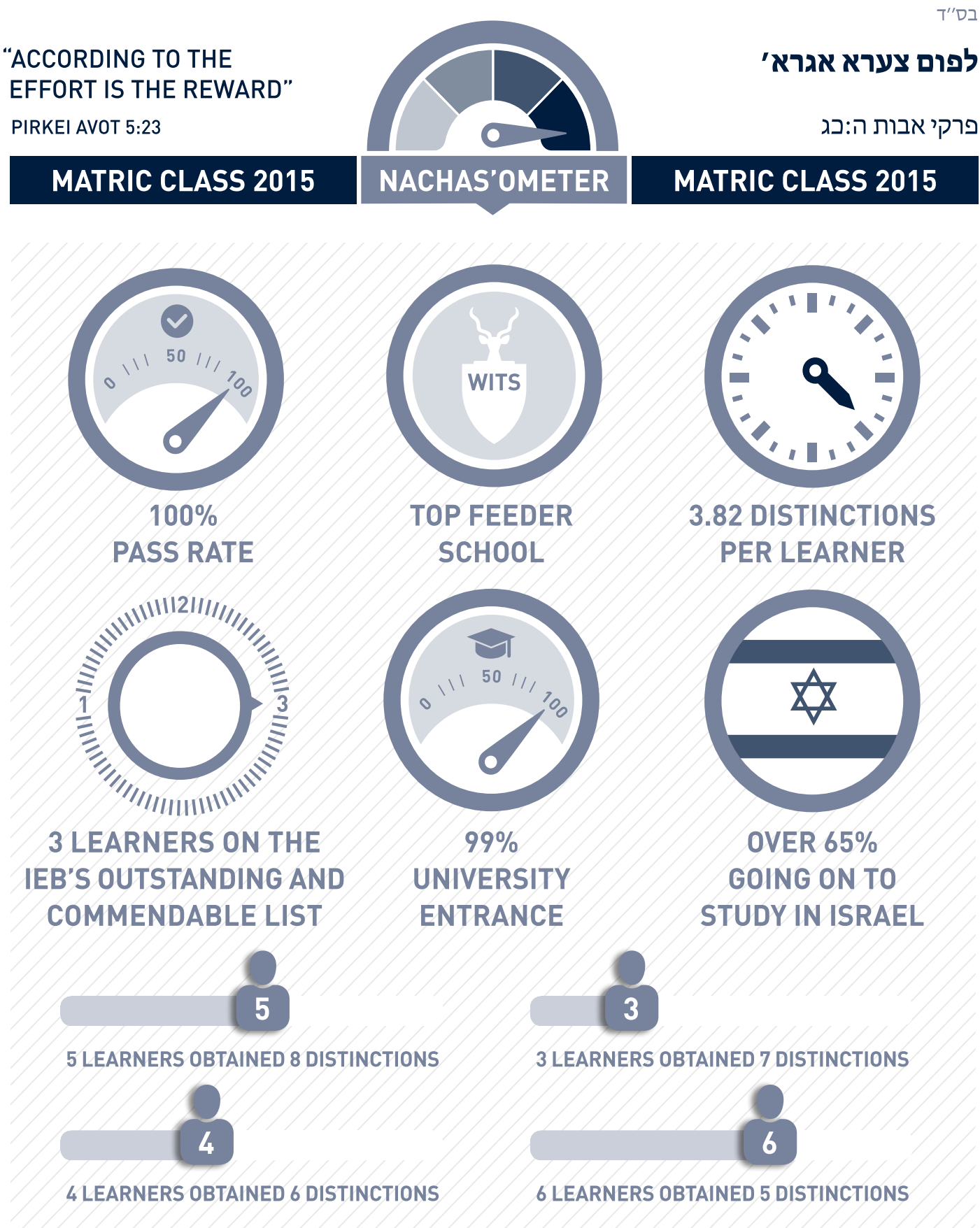
A major worry has been the “increasing devaluation” of an NSC matric certificate.

Prof Nic Spaull, researcher in the department of education at Stellenbosch Univer-

sity, is sceptical about how Umalusi adapted the pass rate in 2015.

Christina Watson, executive head of the publishing house Via Afrika, says increased pressure on schools to improve on their pass rate year after year, was not in the best interests of the learners. The whole system is geared to ensure that all learners pass matric, she says. This jeopardises an education system geared to prepare children for the modern world.

“To memorise a handbook isn’t going to get you anywhere in life. We have to teach children life skills and to think critically.”




Yeshiva College is grateful to have once again achieved truly exceptional Matric results. With our vision firmly calibrated on producing well-rounded individuals rooted in Torah and equipped with the abilities to make a profound difference to the world around them, the ‘Class of 2015’ has exceeded our expectations! We wish our Matrics a hearty Mazeltov and much success in the promising futures that lie ahead of them.



CRAWFORD SANDTONNSC

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS




Gilad Shorer: Advanced Maths, English, History, Information Technology, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.

SEVEN DISTINCTIONS



Guy Elad: Accounting, Advanced Maths, Geography, Information Technology, LO, Maths, Physical Science.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Cassia Rieckhoff: Dramatic Arts, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.

SIX DISTINCTIONS




Sine Tager: Accounting, Business Studies, Dramatic Arts, English, History, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Tamar Assabi: Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Rachel Kopel: Design, Dramatic Arts, LO, Visual Arts.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS




Daniella Price: Accounting, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.

THREE DISTINCTIONS




Daniella Bizjak: Business Studies, History, LO

THREE DISTINCTIONS




Kaela Butler-White: Design, History, LO.

THREE DISTINCTIONS




Talia Herzfield: Dramatic Arts, History, LO.

THREE DISTINCTIONS




Jayna Krost: Design, History, LO.

THREE DISTINCTIONS



Skye Lucas: Dramatic Arts, History, LO.

THREE DISTINCTIONS



Marc Marsden: LO, Maths, Physical Science.

SIX DISTINCTIONS



Mor Funis: English, Maths, LO, Dramatic Arts, History, Life Sciences.

TWO DISTINCTIONS

Gilad Tabul: LO, Hebrew.

TWO DISTINCTIONS

Olivia Cloud: Dramatic Arts, LO.


ONE DISTINCTION

Erin Courtney Goodman: LO.

CRAWFORD PRETORIA

CRAWFORD LA LUCIA NSC

EIGHT DISTINCTIONS



Yuval Ardenbaum: Accounting, Afrikaans, Business Studies, Dramatic Arts, English, Lo, Maths, Physical Science.

TWO DISTINCTIONS

Micha Calo: Dramatic Arts, English • **Devan Marcus:** Dramatic Arts, LO.



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KING DAVID LINKSFIELD IEB

<div>TEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Ro-ee Tal: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, Information Technology, LO, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths, AP English.</div>	<div>NINE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jaydin Krok: English, Hebrew, History, Information Technology, LO, Maths, Life Sciences, AP Maths, AP English.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Aaron Fainman: Afrikaans, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths Music Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Rachel Klevansky: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jordan Ross: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Guy Shemesh: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science, Maths.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Natasha Silverman: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, Geography, LO, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jessie Wainer: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>
<div>EIGHT DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Taliya Weinstein: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Riley Freeman: Accounting, Afrikaans, English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jacob Gore: Accounting, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jaydon Hanan: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jordan Hertz: English, Geography, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Jared Hodes: Accounting, English, Geography, LO, Maths, Physical Science, AP Maths.</div>	<div>SEVEN DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Tamar Miller: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Oren Blass: English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Music, Physical Science.</div>
<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Nina Gamsu: English, Geography, IsiZulu, LO, Maths, AP English.</div>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Kelly Odes: Afrikaans, English, Hebrew, History, LO, Music.</div>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Daniel Stone: Accounting, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>SIX DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Matan Traube: Accounting, English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Gideon Amoils: English, Hebrew, History, LO, AP English.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Romy Ben Melech: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Gabrielle Berkowitz: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Talya Friedland: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Physical Science.</div>
<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Roy Gusinow: English, Geography, Information Technology, LO, Maths.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Brittany Joffe: English, Hebrew, History, LO, Maths.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Lindsey Katz: Maths Literacy, Dramatic Arts, Hebrew, History, LO.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Doron Levin: Geography, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Kiara Liebmann: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Adam Rabinovitch: Accounting, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Rory Rubin: Business Studies, English, Geography, History, LO.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Casey Sack: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths.</div>
<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Eli Seidle: English, Information Technology, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FIVE DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Gavriel Weinberg: English, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Avigael Brown: Business Studies, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Sera Brozin: Accounting, Geography, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Tori Emdin: Accounting, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Dalya Gerson: LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Daniel Zada: Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO.</div>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div> <div></div> <div>Daniel Kartun: English, History, LO, Visual Arts.</div>

KING DAVID LINKSFIELDIEB

<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Joseph Marcus: English, Hebrew, LO, Maths.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Temima Mayer: Consumer Studies, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Danielle Mensky: Business Studies, English, LO, Visual Arts.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Emma Porter: English, History, LO, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>FOUR DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Joel Trapido: Accounting, History, LO, Maths.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Kayla Bacher: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Amber Brenner: Geography, LO, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Natasha Cohen: Hebrew, LO, Maths Literacy.</p>
<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Paula Cohen: LO, Life Sciences, Maths.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Zachary Davidovitz: Hebrew, LO, Maths.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Jonah Fouche: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Raelene Godfrey: Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Jenna Gruskin: Business Studies, Computer Studies, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Dalia Hackner: English, Geography, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Tammy Hershberg: Business Studies, English, Hebrew.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Jonathan Krok: Maths Literacy, Business Studies, LO.</p>
<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Marc Landau: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Aaron Levinthal: Accounting, Maths, Physical Sciences.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Megan Michalow: History, LO, Maths Literacy.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Laurie Morris: Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Jayde Moss: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Ryan Polakow: Accounting, Geography, Physical Science.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Alexa Reichenberg: English, LO, Visual Arts.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Coral Schneider: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>
<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Greg Surmany: Afrikaans, Business Studies, Maths.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Dean Zackon: Accounting, Business Studies, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Liat Zaken: English, Hebrew, LO.</p>	<div>THREE DISTINCTIONS</div>  <p>Elai Zlotnick: English, Hebrew, Visual Arts.</p>	<div><h2>Mazel tov to all KDL matriculants</h2></div>			

Three Kroks equal 29 matric distinctions

What an achievement for one family! Three Krok boys - Jaydon, Devin and Adam - have notched up 29 distinctions among them; Jaydon for 2015, Devin in 2012 and Adam in 2014.

“I am so proud of them, especially Jaydon, because he has health issues,” said their elated mother, Karen.

Jaydon battled in his senior years. He was diagnosed with fibromyalgia and chronic fatigue towards the end of his matric year. Also, before he attended high school, a bicycle accident resulted in fractured ribs and a damaged spleen and he spent a long time in hospital, missing school and getting low marks.

However, in grade 11 he made a concerted effort to overcome his problems, catching up on all the work he missed and staying after school for discussions with his teachers.

Although more tired than his peers, he insisted on taking part in sport. He was given a time concession when writing his finals and received nine out of 10 distinctions in the IEB matric exams.

All three boys attended King David High School Linksfield. They are the grandsons of well-known philanthropist and business tycoon, Solly Krok.

Devin is studying political science at Stanford University, USA and Adam is studying engineering at Yale.

Jaydon is taking a six-month gap and also intends to study in the US next year.





**Mazaltov to the
Matriculants of
King David Linksfield!**

Instagrand



408

distinctions

2.6

ave. distinctions
per pupil

100%

pass rate



10 Distinctions

Ro-ee Tal



9 Distinctions

Jaydin Krok



8 Distinctions

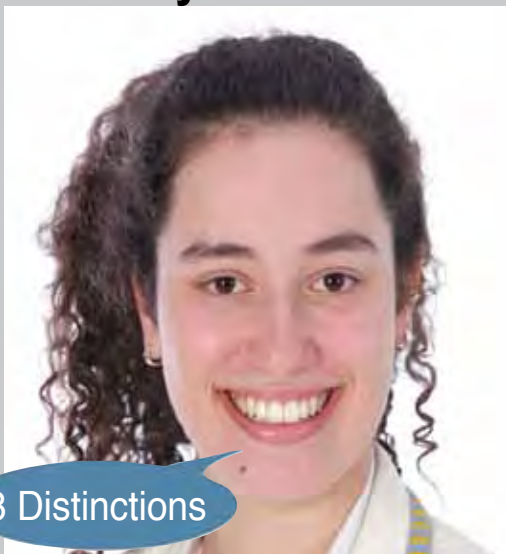
100% for
Maths

Natasha Silverman



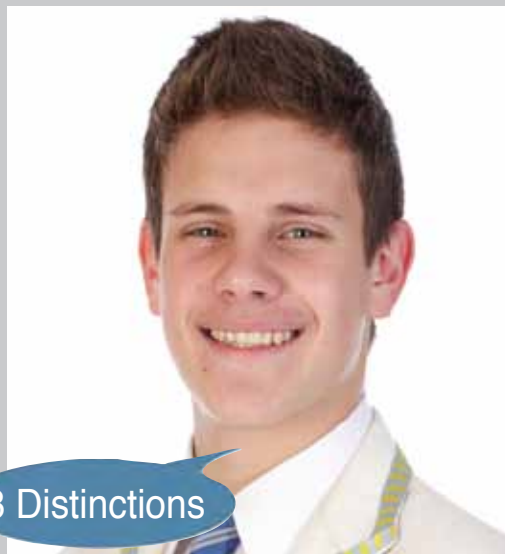
8 Distinctions

Aaron Fainman



8 Distinctions

Rachel Klevansky



8 Distinctions

Jordan Ross



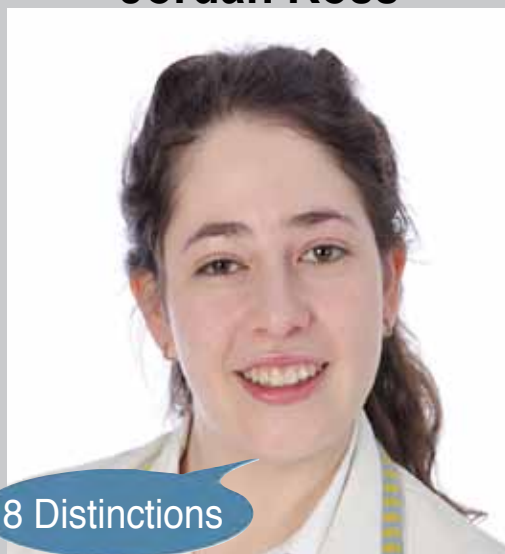
8 Distinctions

Guy Shemesh



8 Distinctions

Jessie Wainer



8 Distinctions


Taliya Weinstein

7 Distinctions: Riley Freeman, Jacob Gore, Jaydon Hanan, Jordan Hertz,
Jared Hodes, Tamar Miller, Rachel Shear




HIRSCH LYONS IEB

SIX DISTINCTIONS




Justin Glass: Accounting; English, Hebrew, LO, Maths, Physical Science.

SIX DISTINCTIONS




Betzalel Goldfein: English, Hebrew, LO, Life Sciences, Maths, Physical Science.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS




Gershon Koral: English, LO, Maths, Physical Science.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS




Benjamin Levin: Business Studies, English, Hebrew, LO.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Yonatan Sackstein: Accounting, Hebrew, LO, Maths.

FOUR DISTINCTIONS



Yehuda Sevit: Accounting, Hebrew, LO, Maths.

‘Class of 2015’ keeps the benchmark very high

Continued from page 7

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, dean of **The Torah Academy**, says the school is proud of the outstanding achievements of its class of 2015.

“We congratulate the educators, and particularly the principals Rebecca Sarchi and Rabbi Yossi Chaikin for their commitment to realising the potential of each individual learner at Torah Academy - the ‘School with a neshama.’” Torah Academy achieved a 100 per cent pass rate.

Rabbi Hazdan points out that “these exceptional results in matric are achieved in addition to the students’ accomplishments in a full and comprehensive Torah studies programme. The dual educational faculties complement each other, and afford our graduates the choice of tertiary education at the finest yeshivot and universities.

“Education at The Torah Academy is much broader than the achievement of the finest matric results. It inspires Jewish values, commitment to Torah, self-discipline, work ethic, love for learning, and appreciation and respect for all the diverse ‘derech’ communities and affiliations that are represented at our school.”

Rebecca Sarchi, principal of **Torah Academy Girls’ High School**, wishes all the matric girls of 2015 a warm mazaltov. She says: “Everyone has his/her own definition of success in life. It is not our ambition to live up to somebody else’s perception of success. Our accomplishments and successes are ours, defined and measured by our own standards. However, success, according to your personal standards and values, does not come to you; you go to it.

Each one of the matriculants, she says, has set personal goals “and whether you have attained a full house of distinctions, obtained distinctions in certain subjects or attained a matric or university exemption - I salute you”.

The final matric results, she stresses, do not define who these girls are, (but) “they definitely are testimony to 12 years of commitment and diligence. These excellent results are their passport to the next leg of their journey”

Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, principal of **Torah Academy Boys’ High School**, says, addressing the boys: “The country’s eyes are currently on your academic achievements. But this is not what the past 12 years of school have been about.

“Long after you have forgotten the information you learnt in class, you will remember the core values you absorbed: how to live life like a Jew and like a mensch. The world is now yours: go out there and conquer it and, most importantly, make a difference, but remember to always remain true to who you are.”

The **Hirsch Lyons** class of 2015 achieved excellent results in the IEB examinations. Once again all learners achieved a university exemption. All in all 16 learners achieved 44 distinctions, and two thirds of all symbols were As and Bs.

Many learners combined a full academic programme with high level Torah learning, attending daily Gemorah Shiur throughout their matric year. Two learners achieved six distinctions; 4 achieved four distinctions; and two achieved three distinctions.

Comments the school: “Our learners managed to balance Torah and academics all within a framework of menschlikheit and Derech Eretz, gaining the foundation for a life that Hirsch Lyons has become famous for – Torah growth, personal development and becoming a productive member of society.”

Jeremy Evan Matan Zachary Lauren Martha Adam Dalia Hannah Eidan Jeremy Tori

Croock Danziger Davis deWet Diamond Diner Ederi Emdin

Fairman Feinberg Feller Flaum Fouche Franklin Freeman Friedland Friedlander

Aaron Altman-Rose Romy Eriella Jonah Tiffany Riley Talya Jayden Franki

Sharon Friedman James Furman Nina Gamsu Joshua Gershtorn Dalya Garson Raelene Godfrey Chelsey Goldberg

Jonathan Talia Liat Doron Jacob Gore Benjamin Guskin Roy Dalia Darjan Jaydon Jared

Goldblatt Goldblatt Goldsmith Gordon Guskin Guskinow Hadner Hershberg Hefner Hanan Harris

Jordan Harris Jordan Lauren Tammy Jordan Carly Kelsey Hirshowitz Tevin Jared Devon Daniel

Hoshid Hrustinsky Isaacs Isenberg Joffe Kelsey Joffe Joselowitz Judin Kadish Kampel Karstaedt

Erin Joshua Amy Brittany Kelsey Carlie Jonathan Matthew Gabriel Benjamin Daniel

Kartun Lindsey Katz Michael Rachel Ariella Asher Klug Hayley Kobrin David Koshuk Danielle Kofsky Dylan Koonin David Kopping Alexa Jonathan Jaydin Jonathan

Krok Kuming Landau Lazarus Lefkowitz Lester Levenberg Doron Caleb Doron Talia Aaron Levinthall Paula Levitt

Cale Marc Benjamin Adin Caleb Doron Talia Aaron Levinthall Paula Levitt

Sigaliya Levy Kiara Liebmman Danielle Jayde Danya Kelly Ifan Romi Shannon Dylan Joseph Marcus Evan Marcus

Max Matuson Temima Mayer Neil Mayers Romy Melech Danielle Mensky Nicole Meyerson Megan Midzuk Adam Miller Tamar Tiffany Miller Alon Mizrahi

Zoe Modlin Laurie Morris David Moss Jayde Moss Adam Mosselson Tal Nagar Norwitz Novick Kelly-Dee Odes

Gina Amy

Jessica Ostrin Brennan Pack Keagan Parsons Paris Pencharz Barak Peretz Brett Phillips Carla Phillips

Joshua Pincus Ryan Polakow Emma Porter Benjamin Adam Michael Adam Rauff Alexa Reichenberg Kelsey Ross Jordan Ross Rory Keren Haylee Casey

Sack Tal Saniya Coral Schneider Bradley Eli Jade Selesnik Chelsea Selvan Shapiro Shear Thea Rachel Guy Shemesh Erin Sher

Segal Seidle

Natasha Silverman Kevin Simon Danielle Cayla Simpson Dina Singer Skey Skey Holly Eli Smith Dylan Solarsh

Tamara Solomon David Solomon Daniel Greg Joshua Ariella Steven Ro-Ee Joel Ethan Traub Matan Traube

Darin Ungar Georgia Ungar Lauren Vituli Jessie Wainer Gavriel Weinberg Taliya Weinstein

Joel Wilensky Joel Wolfson Jarred

Wood Brandon Wysoke Natasha Zackon Zaken Maya Zaken Julia Ziman Elai Zlotnick Sam Zlotnick Dina Zollmann Steffan Adler

Gilad Alkalay Roni Allen Gidon Amois Sarit Angel Anolik Arnott Bacher Back Bank Becker Berkowitz Berman Brandon Benitz Jordan Benvenit Kayla Bernstein Yair Blisnowsky

Joshua Blacher Oren Blass Janna Lee Bloch Talya Blumenfeld Daniella Bolel Sean Brenner Amber Brenner Amit Broide Lee

Brook Avigael Brown Sera Brozin Paige Buttow Chimes Brandon Cogill Alexia Cohen Carly Keegan Natasha Cohen Paula Cramer

100% IEB PASS RATE

98% UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE

10%

OF TOP STUDENTS IN SA ARE KING DAVIDIANS

OVER 70%

THE 2015 GRADE AVERAGE

16%

OF STUDENTS ON THE NATIONAL OUTSTANDING LIST

225 LEARNERS ACHIEVED A COMBINED TOTAL OF 620 DISTINCTIONS

★

2 LEARNERS WITH 10 DISTINCTIONS

★


5 LEARNERS WITH 9 DISTINCTIONS

★

12 LEARNERS WITH 8 DISTINCTIONS


★

10 LEARNERS WITH 7 DISTINCTIONS




KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL VICTORY PARK

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South African Board of Jewish Education ועד החינוך היהודי בדרום אפריקה



KING DAVID HIGH SCHOOL LINKSFIELD

The melting pot moulding SA’s Jewish community



BARBARIC YAWP

David Saks

The mood of general negativity that marked the end of 2015 seems to have carried into the new year. South Africans of all races, persuasions and political creeds continue to snarl and point fingers at one another, even as the country’s already formidable economic and social problems mount.

From a Jewish point of view, though, there is at least the prospect of celebrating a significant milestone in the community’s history.

The year 2016 marks the 175th anniversary of the birth of South African Jewry as an organised entity, since it was for the Kol Nidre service of 1841 that 17 Jewish citizens of Cape Town came together to form the first-ever minyan in sub-Saharan Africa. The latter went on to form the Cape Town Hebrew Congregation, the Mother Congregation of South African Jewry that continues to function to this day.

Anniversaries of this nature are in the main treated as an occasion for looking back on what has happened, as well as what has been accomplished. It is certainly interesting to reflect on the various elements that have, over the years, come to constitute that entity broadly referred to as the Jewish community of South Africa.

It is, of course, a community whose roots are primarily in the Eastern Europe of the late 19th century, in particular in the area constituting modern-day Lithuania and the territories adjoining it.

However, while the Litvak element is unquestionably the dominant one in the community’s make-up, it should not be emphasised to the exclusion of other groups, of which there are a fair number.

In the first instance, it should be remembered that the community’s founders were in the main English Jews, whose arrival dated back roughly to the beginning of the 19th century when the Cape passed from Dutch to British rule.

For the first 100 years at least, and even after the great East European influx, the spiritual leadership of the community was drawn from the ranks of the Jewish clergy back in the “Mother Country” (England was the original “Der Heim”).

As for the position of chief rabbi, British-born incumbents held this office right up until the end of Rabbi Cyril Harris’ 17-year term in late 2004.

German Jews made up the second-largest element of the community in the early decades. Like their English counterparts, they were generally fairly assimilated (few rigorously observant Jews would have considered coming out in the first place to what, Jewishly speaking, was largely a desert).

Nevertheless, they dutifully joined in establishing congregations where possible and following the basic festivals, rituals and life cycle events. English Jews tended to have rather obviously Jewish, Biblically-flavoured names - Solomon Isaacs, Simeon Lazarus and the like. To this mix was added such German-sounding names as Bergtheil, Baumann and Mosenthal.

The greatest German-Jewish influx, however, was still to come, comprising the 6 000 or so refugees who arrived after 1933 before special legislation reduced Jewish immigration to a trickle.

A third, often overlooked component of early South African Jewry was that of Dutch

origin. During the 1890s, President Paul Kruger of the Zuid-Afrikaansche Republiek (Transvaal) brought out a large number of Hollanders to, among other things, help staff his civil service, and these included a fair number of Jews.

These tended to be, in the tart assessment of a Litvak contemporary Jane Mendelsohn, “Jews who would not own up” [to being Jewish, that is], but some, at least, were committed enough to remain in the fold. As a result, among the pantheon of South African Jewish names even today, one still finds the occasional De Jong, De Wijze, Van Gelderen, Goudvis or Zwarenstein.

On the eve of the Second World War, all of these elements had been eclipsed by the flood of East European immigrants, a veritable sea of Karks, Kaplans, Pinchuks and Podlashuks and people with names ending in -nik, -kin, -sky or -witz.

After the war, the community’s diversity was nevertheless broadened by the arrival of Jews from very different backgrounds. They included Ladino-speaking Sephardim from the Aegean island of Rhodos (today part of Greece), and former Israelis from various parts of the Middle East and North Africa.

The Rhodos Jews in the main arrived via the Belgian Congo, Zambia and Zimbabwe, where they had first settled after leaving Europe. They and their descendants are identifiable by such names as Benatar, Hasson, Elkaim, Turiel and Habib.

There has also been a steady trickle of new immigrants from other parts of the world, such as the US, Argentina, France and Switzerland. Many of these were specifically brought out as rabbis and teachers for a community that was becoming increasingly more religious; in quite a few cases, local Jews of a “frummer” bent went abroad to find their spouses and brought them back to South Africa. The tendency now is unfortunately for the South African partner to relocate.

Finally, converts to Judaism over the decades should not be forgotten in this brief overview of the community’s make-up. They include a growing number of Afrikaans families that have converted “en masse”, as it were, albeit that they have tended to move on to Israel. While we do not, as yet, have a “Rabbi Pretorius” in our community, that day may not be too far away.



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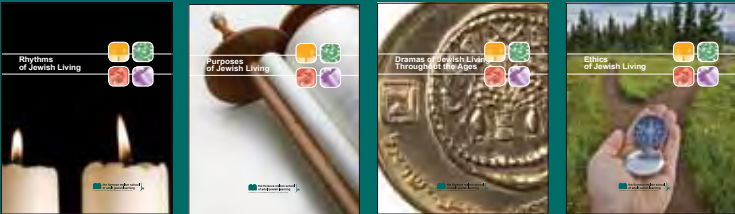
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20
SA JEWISH REPORT
Community Columns
15 – 22 January 2016

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

Say ‘no’ to online racism

One of the main stories in the media in the opening weeks of 2016 has been the public’s outrage over various racist comments that have appeared on social media. Such outrage is welcome and indeed overdue. For a long time now, we have seen a steady escalation in online platforms being abused by hate-filled individuals to propagate virulent racism against their fellow citizens.

The SAJBD was one of the organisations that staunchly supported the condemnation of the racist comments in question, but ultimately it is up to South Africans as a whole to take a stand against this kind of offensive discourse, at the very least by vigorously denouncing it, and by naming and shaming those responsible.

No cause, whether political or otherwise, can ever justify resorting to racism and/or incitement to violence, nor does the right to freedom of expression ever extend to protecting such behaviour.

It is not news to our Jewish community that social media is being used in certain instances to propagate racist views, including incitement to violence. Rabidly anti-Semitic sentiments have become commonplace in such forums, and an increasing proportion of the Board’s time and energy is being expended in dealing with these incidents.

Rabid anti-Semitic discourse is especially prevalent during times of heightened conflict on the Israel front, but even in times of relative quiet, grossly offensive comments continue to surface.

As an illustration, one issue that the Board is now dealing with through the SA Human Rights Commission are Facebook comments by one Maureen Jansen, an attorney from Port Elizabeth, who inter alia has referred to Jews as “monsters” and “cockroaches”, and expressed the view that Jews everywhere “who support Israel by action or silence” should be “exterminated”.

As with all previous cases of anti-Semitic hate speech that the Board has dealt with, or is currently still dealing with, we will pursue this matter through all the appropriate channels and for as long as it takes to ensure that the writer is called to account for her comments.

The year ahead: challenges and opportunities

We are now well into the lead-up to South Africa’s fifth municipal elections in the post-1994 era.

For the 2014 national and provincial elections, the Board conducted a multifaceted election awareness campaign and volunteer drive for our community and, albeit on a smaller scale, we hope to do so again this time round.

In general, I am firmly of the view that if we, as Jews, want to live in a successful South Africa, we need to start getting more involved in the fabric of South African society, be it in politics, social services, education, job creation, human rights activism or other such areas.

We cannot stand back and wait for others to do what needs to be done; rather, we should try wherever possible to take the initiative and find ways in which to positively contribute to improving our country.

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

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

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Back to school is cool

Partners in Chesed
Michael Sieff
Group CEO

I’m not kidding, but then I’m a parent, not a child.

Actually, in their most truthful moments our children might admit that the holidays can get long and boring after a while and that some structure to their days is not a bad idea.

But I’m going a step further here by pointing out that attending school is a privilege in our country and one that is not available to every child. An appreciation of education is deeply-rooted in the Jewish psyche and has always been treasured among our people. Countless theories are offered to explain why it is that Jews have historically been more educated than the average population of the countries in which they have lived. These range from the mandated study of Torah and Jewish culture ingrained from a very young age, to the fact that Jews, often forced to be nomadic, were not permitted to own land or conduct business in many countries and therefore developed transportable expertise in the study of law, medicine, accountancy and more.

We may never know exactly why we have a characteristic acumen for learning but we do know that some of the world’s greatest scientists have been Jewish and that despite the fact that we make up less than 0,2 per cent of the world’s population, 20 per cent of all Nobel Prize-winners have been Jewish.

Furthermore, Jews have been recipients of all six awards: Physics, Chemistry, Medicine, Literature, Peace and Economics. Astoundingly, 41 per cent of Economics Nobel Prizes have been won by Jews. Our numbers are small but our impact is undoubtedly significant.

These are remarkable statistics that support the belief that many among us are blessed with brilliant and enquiring minds and that leadership is an intrinsic part of our heritage.

That’s why, although education is not a core Chev responsibility, we are involved in supporting it as an investment into the future of our community.

It’s top of mind at this time of year as we assist 75 students with the enrolment and (unsubsidised and therefore costly) fees at remedial schools; provide long-term student loans to over 100 tertiary students and do the sums on the monthly contributions we pay toward Jewish nursery, primary and high schools for 150 children.

Not only is it cool to go back to school, it’s an invitation to greatness.

May our partnership continue to thrive!
Feedback@jhbchev.co.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

Gird your loins for a tough 2016

SUZANNE BELLING

The year 2015 was not a good one in South Africa: the falling rand, falling statues, the #FeesMustFall campaign, crises in education, the mining sector, continued crime and globally, the threat of terrorism.

Says **Michael Bagraim**, MP and veteran Jewish communal leader, “We ended 2015 on an incredibly difficult note where our president has almost singlehandedly destroyed our economy. “We go into the new secular year with the rand almost having collapsed and the rating agencies are just about to relegate us to junk status. We also enter 2016 where the majority of the business community see no reason to create jobs and much of the regulatory environment acts as a hand brake for job creation, which is the real elephant in the room.

“We will start almost immediately building up to the local elections which will be held in May. Service delivery will be one of the main issues and the government will try to do everything in its power to ensure that both electricity and water are kept on an even keel until just after the elections. Clearly 2016 and onwards will result in massive service delivery problems.”

Bagraim feels minority communities will be used as “wedge issues” in the run-up to the local elections. “It is absolutely clear that the ruling party is going to make a desperate bid to try and recapture the Cape Town Metropole.

“One of the ways in which the ANC has run previous elections is to run a negative campaign and try and invoke a dispute between minority communities and the majority. Negative campaigning often involves South African Jews and on a few occasions this does devolve

into anti-Semitic comments during the heat of campaigning.

“We as a Jewish community need to understand that anti-Semitic comments will be reported to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies who will pick up the cudgels on our behalf. We also need to understand that despite the use of negative campaigning, it does not mean that the majority of that political party is anti-Semitic and that the country has become untenable.

“Politically, 2016 will be stressful for us as a community, but if we understand the reasons behind this stress, it will be easier to cope.”

Brian Kantor, chief strategist and economist at Investec Wealth and Investment, says the South African economy will meander along at a slow pace in 2016.

There will be some growth, but no pick-up, although a recession is unlikely.

But the “Zuma episode” - the severe consequences of the firing of Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene - has made us weaker.

“I feel much better now that Cabinet stood up to his [Jacob Zuma’s] selfish, authoritarian tendencies.”

Fiscal authority and skills are now in the right, competent hands, Kantor says, although the markets are not back to where they were before the dismissal of Finance Minister Nhlanhla Nene. The weak oil price is helping the country. It is down in rand terms as well as in dollars - the weak local currency has not yet pushed up the rand price of oil.

“That is a plus - otherwise inflation would be rising,” he says.

“Hopefully the Reserve Bank doesn’t raise rates - it would be a big mistake. The Reserve

Bank should just stand pat.”

The government should demonstrate a lot more respect for market forces, for businesses that work well.

Delegating many economic functions to private business would help, such as the SA Airways and the Post Office, but the government seems unwilling to do this.

On the labour front, Kantor says the national minimum wage is “a disaster waiting around the corner. That is something we should worry about.”

It will be a very tough year because of all the uncertainty around South Africa, according to **Bryan Hirsch**, director of investment advisers Bryan Hirsch and Colley.

“Markets will be very volatile. The reason for this is currency uncertainty, with the strength of the dollar and also concern about the possible weakness in the Chinese economy,” he says.

“However, many companies who have geared up and structured their businesses correctly are well positioned to compete, both nationally and internationally.”

Hirsch said that if overseas investment agencies downgrade South Africa’s investment rating further, “it could have a horrific impact in this country.

“Our Treasury is going to have to do some very fast talking to the rating agencies to satisfy them not to downgrade South Africa further.”

If this happens, interest rates will rise, which means higher inflation.

“The borrowings of many in South Africa who have debt will cost them so much more to finance.”

From an investment point of view, “if your portfolio is structured correctly, you’ve just



got to sit tight and look to some good local and offshore opportunities”, he says.

Fashion guru **Charlotte Resnekov**, owner of Ten to 4 boutique in Sea Point, who was on the list of South Africa’s best-dressed women, foresees “Victorian flounces, pussycat bows, lace and sheer fabrics worn with slips and camisoles showing through, as the fashion trends for 2016.

“Soft and sensual suede from the ‘70s, also fringing on shawls, kimonos, sleeves, the hems of dresses and on bags, is a definite trend.”


Hot colours for 2016 are peach, rose quartz pink, coffee, lilac, grey, blue and navy. The brights are red, green and a touch of yellow.

The winter look will incorporate greys and blacks, with lots of jerseys and slouchy pants.

“My advice for 2016 is to choose a trend that suits your age, lifestyle and of course body type.”

There is plenty of choice, says Charlotte, who dresses her clients from top to toe, and keeps a selection of hats to lend them to complement her outfits for special occasions.


“Remember fashion is a lot of fun, but is transient... style is forever!” she says.



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Disclaimer
The letters page is intended to provide an opportunity for a range of views on any given topic to be expressed. Opinions articulated in the letters are those of the writers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff or directors of the Jewish Report.

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

CAN SA’S JEWISH COMMUNITY EMULATE AUSTRALIA’S MUSLIMS?

I recently viewed a video emanating from Australia where purportedly the Muslim communities pressure companies into submitting to Halaal certification for their products under threat of boycott by their communities. I doubt that such a system prevails here for companies to obtain the Beth Din certification for kosher products. (Perish the thought!)

We are privileged to have a caring and thorough Beth Din. However, I understand that such certification comes at a hefty price - especially at times like these when many are battling to make ends meet.

Jack Miller
Johannesburg

FORGET 2-STATE MIDEAST SOLUTION, EMBRACE 3-STATE SOLUTION

I refer to the letters by Choni Davidowitz and Avner Romm in Jewish Report’s November 27, 2015 edition, equating the two-state Mideast solution with flogging a dead horse.

Davidowitz’s and Romm’s stance is reasonable, thus the practical solution is a “three-state solution” where:

1. Egypt mandates Gaza, with a United Nations mandate (like South Africa mandated South West Africa).
2. Jordan administers some of the West Bank, starting with 17 – 21 per cent.
3. Israel, Jordan and possibly Egypt join the Commonwealth. A canal from the sea along the Jordan River with desalination will rejuvenate the region.

Details of the three-state solution are on Wikipedia ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3 state solution](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/3_state_solution)). Both Egypt and Jordan are important stakeholders. Perhaps statehood will be reached after several years of administration.

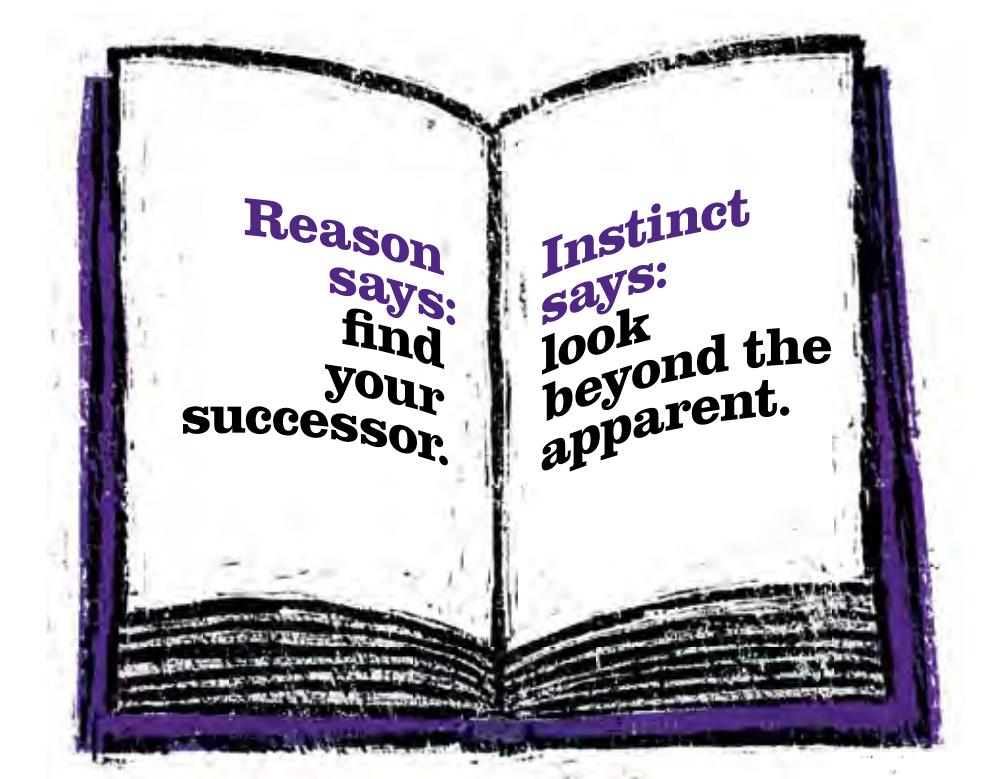
Gerald Levin
Orchards, Johannesburg

REFORM JEWS ALSO HAVE RABBIS AND NOT MINISTERS

I read Isaac Reznik’s article in Jewish Report of December 11, “Reflecting on the life and times of Rabbi Bernard Casper”, with interest. I would, however, like to point out to Reznik that Reform Jews are Jews, and not Christians. We do not have “ministers” - we have rabbis.

Monica Solomon
Johannesburg

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TRUMP’S ANTI-MUSLIM ‘BAN’ REPORTED WAY OUT OF CONTEXT

Certain Jews in America have criticised (Republican Party presidential hopeful) Donald Trump for his recent remarks about not allowing Muslims into America if he were elected president.

The media selectively reported these alleged offensive remarks, preferring sensationalism rather than accuracy.

Trump has already placed on record, prior to these comments, that he has no axe to grind with the US Muslim community.

He did indeed preface his contentious “ban” remarks with the words “temporarily, until we ascertain what the hell is going on”.

It seems clear that what Trump attempted to articulate, (but fell short), was that the authorities would need to first scrutinise each application for immigration by Muslims. This is inoffensive if properly combined with previous remarks he made.

Clearly, Trump has the security of the American people as one of his priorities. There is nothing untoward about that.

Unlike Trump’s suggestion (to screen applications), many countries today do not allow Jews entry, nor citizenship. This is reminiscent of Nazi Germany during the 1930s.

Today, (85 years later), almost every Islamic country forbids Jews to enter. Most recently, a Jewish family, one of whom was wearing a kippot, was denied entry to Jordan, an Islamic country.

Significantly and moreover, Christians, Hindus and other religions may not build temples or places of worship in these countries.

Kuwait Airlines recently abandoned a route in the US because they do not allow Jews on their aircraft. The US authorities threatened them with penalties and rather than accommodate all passengers, they abandoned the lucrative route.

Trump has pledged (along with other candidates) to move the American embassy to Jerusalem.

This is notable, because it shows solidarity with Israel, something that many Western countries lack. What is the reason for so many Jews opposing Trump’s suggestion regarding immigration of Muslims?

Jews need every ally that is prepared to back the State of Israel. If Jews had united, opposed and stood up to Hitler and the Nazis, who knows what the outcome may have been!

These pseudo-liberals who suggest Trump is a racist, place Americans in jeopardy as they fail to take into account the reality of the current global crisis regarding ISIS and terrorists.

The entire Europe, including Scandinavia, is hostile towards Jews and Israel.

Trump says he is on Israel’s side and Jews criticise him for his temporary anti-Muslim immigration stance, notwithstanding the atrocities perpetrated as a result of Islamic teachings, instead of welcoming him and trying to secure a less antagonistic attitude towards Israel (and Jews).

The similarities between Nazi Germany and radical Islam are clearly apparent in their resemblance to barbarity and their hatred of Jews and any other religion they regard as unfaithful to Islam (infidels).

Surely, it’s time that Jews universally stand together and realise who our true friends are, instead of trying to appease people who have an innate hatred of Israel (and Jews).

Nathan Cheiman
Northcliff, Johannesburg

DOES ANYONE KNOW JOLENE TOBIAS' WHEREABOUTS?

Patricia Lewis is looking for an old friend, Jolene Tobias, who trained with her as a nurse at Groote Schuur Hospital between 1971 and 1975. After qualifying, she went to the UK for further training. Jolene and her family lived in Sea Point.

Patricia may be contacted at pelewis6@gmail.com or 082-350-6217 or (021) 705-1548.

DON’T BEND OVER BACKWARDS TO APPEASE MUSLIMS AT ALL COSTS

I’m disgusted that Chief Rabbi of the Commonwealth Ephraim Mirvis has recommended teaching Islam in Jewish schools in Britain. His destructive recommendations are now being set in place.

Manfred Gerstenfeld wrote in Arutz Sheva: “Jewish children are taught the Ten Commandments from an early age, which explicitly forbid murder. How are teachers at Jewish schools going to explain that leading Muslim religious authorities issue fatwas (religious legal decisions) to murder certain individuals?”

“A case in point is the fatwa issued in 1989 by Iran’s highest Muslim leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, against Salman Rushdie, the British-Indian author of the Satanic Verses. This should be mentioned in schools, as the UK was Rushdie’s country of residence at that time.

“Will Jewish children be taught that we are referred to in the Qur’an as ‘sons of apes and pigs’? Will we remove Zionism and love for Eretz Yisrael and the State of Israel from the curriculum to build better relations with Muslims?”

“This is only one revolting episode in the macabre dance between British Jewish community leaders and rabbis and the Muslims.”

In the closing months of 2015, given the invasion of Europe by hordes of Islamic migrants, 100 British rabbis signed a petition demanding that Prime Minister David Cameron allow tens of thousands more Muslim migrants or so-called “refugees” into the UK.

Demanding this against the wishes of the indigenous population is a chillul Hashem.

When a British soldier was hacked to death by Muslims on a London street, British rabbis reacted by paying solidarity visits to mosques and the haredi vigilante group, the Shomrim, set up patrols to protect mosques.

Given what is happening in Israel, with our people being murdered by Muslims, we as Jews should sympathise with victims of Muslim aggression. There have been thousands of attacks in Britain on native British people by Muslims, many on young women. Muslims have declared sections of cities in Britain “sharia zones” and have attacked women who walk through these areas not dressed according to sharia codes.

These elites are silent when the followers of Anjem Choudary declare large parts of British cities “sharia zones”. They were silent when homecoming British soldiers were attacked and spat at in Luton, but condemned the response of English working class people when they formed the English Defence League. They are oh so worried about being seen to discriminate against Muslims that they discriminate against anyone else!

Attacks on Jews by Muslims in Europe, such as the murder of children at a school in Toulouse in 2012, prove that Muslim immigration into Europe endangers Jewish communities. A Muslim takeover of Europe will mean another Muslim empire with a nuclear arsenal and vast power threatening Israel from the European continent.

British and European Jews need to stop this lemming-like rush to favour Muslims over everyone else.

Gary Selikow
Johannesburg

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Santa Pelham made an indelible mark



SUZANNE BELLING

Santa Pelham, a legend in her time, who gained worldwide acclaim with her commissioned memoir “Santa’s Story” and its one-woman dramatic adaptation performed by her diva daughter Aviva Pelham (Sulcas), passed away in Cape Town on the last day of Chanukah at the age of 97.

“She died on the Festival of Lights, the light in her having inspired all with whom she came into contact,” a heartbroken Aviva told SA Jewish Report.

Santa was born in Knapsack, Germany in 1918 to Polish parents who moved to Germany during the First World War to replace soldiers on the front. With her parents, Simcha Meilach and Maita Erder and two brothers Leon and Chaim, (the younger of whom was born as the result of Maita having being raped by a Nazi), she moved to the industrial town of Beerenrath.

Illiterate, though highly intelligent, Maita sold soap to workers and the family built up a business until anti-Semitism got out of hand. Santa, as a Jewish child of five, was refused milk at school and was accused of killing Christ.

Apart from that, the family continued with its Friday night traditions, passed on down the generations. But in the middle of one Shabbat dinner, the Gestapo and a policeman came for Simcha who was taken to a penitentiary and tortured despite the policeman’s objections. Simcha refused to leave until the prayers had

been completed.

The family was then on the run - to Spain as other doors in Europe were shut. But Santa stayed on to complete her schooling and joined them a year later. “As it turned out, they should have remained in Spain as the Spanish Jews escaped persecution. My grandmother sold linen in various villages to eke out a living.

“Later, as refugees, they landed up living in one room in France.”

The boys were offered passage to South America with the help of ORT but their mother did not want to split up the family.

Then a member of the French Jewish community came forward, offering Santa a “shidduch” with a man, Jack Pelham, who lived in Salisbury (Harare) in the former Rhodesia. In his proposal, he offered to buy her shoes, a new dress and a cinema ticket.

To escape the mounting attacks on the Jews, Santa accepted and travelled alone by ship from Marseilles, down the Suez Canal and along the coast to Beira (Mozambique).

Jack Pelham was too impatient to wait for Santa’s train to Salisbury and met it in Beira. Santa, preparing to meet her intended, had her hair in rollers and cold cream on her face. She opened the door to a knock on her compartment and there stood Jack. They were married 10 days later in June,1939.

Meanwhile, Santa’s family was murdered in Auschwitz. Even her brother Chaim, being half German, was not spared. But Leon survived after being in a POW camp.

Alone, save for her stranger husband, Santa settled down to life in Salisbury. But it was a low ebb in her life. Both she and Jack spoke several languages - he taught her Yiddish. Gradually Santa resumed her life. But tragedy struck again when she lost her first baby Barbara at the age of five months.

She joined WIZO and participated in community activities and gave birth to three more daughters - Ruth (Steiner), Naomi (Jaff) and Aviva. Jack was a successful businessman. Santa was delighted with her eight grandchildren and just before her passing met her 17th great-grandchild.

The family settled in Cape Town where Santa enrolled in UCT in her 60s, majoring in religious studies, and was awarded 98 per cent for her French oral.

She used to give shiurim, assisting converts and even “frum” people, who flocked to her lessons. Jack died in 2002 at the age of 91.

Santa continued her Yiddishkeit and was renowned for her Shabbat dinners and, of course, her singing. “Our entire family sang - we were like the Von Trapps!” Aviva said.

“Santa’s Story” performed by Aviva and her klezmer band was a hit throughout South Africa and abroad and, despite her age, Santa would sing before the curtain came down.

She was sought after by a German archivist and the family travelled to Beerenrath, where a street was named after Santa’s parents. Her story is one of courage, perseverance, talent and achievement.

What’s On

Today, Friday (January 15)	& Breakfast” at 08:15 at Shul in Sandton Central. Information: 079-434-1293 or rak@chabad.org.za	rak@chabad.org.za or 011-440-6600. Venue: Chabad House Savoy. Time: 09:00 - 13:00 daily .
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Legal Eagle soars in L’Ormarins Queen’s Plate

JACK MILNER

It is more than two years since Anton Marcus last rode the winner of one of South Africa’s three big races - the Durban July, the J&B Met and the Summer Cup. His last victory in one of those events was aboard Yorker in the 2013 Summer Cup which is run at the end of November.

Yorker is owned by, among others, Bernard Kantor and Markus Jooste of Steinhoff but Marcus, so prolific in these big races a few years back, has been going through - by his standards at least - a lean feature race spell.

That all changed last weekend when Marcus won the R1 million L’Ormarins Queen’s Plate

on Legal Eagle. Ironically, this horse, who is trained by champion trainer Sean Tarry and owned by Markus Jooste and his wife, Ingrid, was already the highest rated runner in the country.

For those who do not follow horseracing, every runner is assessed with a merit rating by the national handicappers which determines how good they are and what weight they will carry in a race.

Legal Eagle won the SA Derby last year and after another victory in the Jubilee Handicap, which is a minor feature event, his rating was lifted to 120, putting him on a par with Futura, who had won three grade 1 races, including last year’s Queen’s Plate and Met.



Anton Marcus returns to the winner's enclosure aboard Legal Eagle following their win in the L’Ormarins Queen’s Plate.

Photo: Liesl King

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Most pundits thought they were stark raving mad, and after Legal Eagle only managed to finish fifth in last year’s Durban July, all the detractors looked pretty smug. However, that all changed last weekend when, in only his second run since the Durban July, Legal Eagle took on the best the country had to offer in a race over 1 600m, a distance short of his best, at level weights.

His connections - as well as Marcus himself - would have been happy for him to have run a place in the race. A win was a major shock for everybody. It was not only the fact that he won, but how he did it.

He got out of the starting stall in a flash; Marcus managed to sit second, he went to the front early in the straight and nobody looked like catching him.

“It was a great training feat from Sean and his team,” said Marcus. “I had faith in this horse. There were a few questions after his last run, but Sean and I weren’t overly perturbed. Sean didn’t have him wound up so I gave him a ‘sympathetic’ ride.

“Analytically it wasn’t a good run because Bezanova gave him weight and finished on his heels. He showed today what he’s capable of.

“We do believe he’s a 120 (merit rated) on the outside course at Turffontein and thought if he could bring that form to Kenilworth he’s certainly got the opportunity to be very, very competitive.”

Marcus was originally slated to ride Act Of War who was more distance suited but after hours of debate he jumped ship to ride Legal Eagle. Many people were surprised by his

move but others thought that he should have opted for Legal Eagle in the first place.

Based on the Green Point Stakes form, Act Of War had little chance of winning the Queen’s Plate and with Legal Eagle being his Met ride, it made sense for Marcus to be aboard the four-year-old.

“It was a big call to ride this horse but I had faith in him and I’m glad that he came to the party,” said Marcus. “He’s just too genuine not to come to the fore, even though this was a trifle on the short side. I’m elated.”

He also spoke about Legal Eagle’s disappointing run in the Durban July. “You’ve got to excuse that run. It was his first run at Greyville and he didn’t have a tremendous amount of fortune in the run.”

On January 30, Legal Eagle will line up in the J&B Met. That race is over 2 000m, which will suit the son of Greys Inn, himself a Durban July winner for the Oppenheims and trainer Mike de Kock, to a tee.

The Met is a Conditions Race and that has added to Legal Eagle’s chances as he is by far the best horse in the race. In a handicap he would have to give weight to the entire field but in this race, many of the top runners will have to give weight to him.

On his Queen’s Plate form, Legal Eagle will be very hard to beat in the Met and although he is already a very short price at 12-10, he could be worth a bet. The draws still have to be announced and that could be relevant.

However, despite everybody’s (new-found) optimism, Marcus remains as cautious as ever. “We’ll take it one race at a time,” he cautions.

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