



Sinai Indaba
kicks off in
Cape Town
with a bang.
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South African Jewish Report

www.sajr.co.za



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Paying tribute to South Africa's youth

Tuesday, June 16 belonged to the youth of South Africa. This public holiday commemorates the 1976 Soweto Uprising when black learners protested against being forced to use Afrikaans as a language of instruction. President Jacob Zuma paid tribute to the fallen of that event, while urging the country's young people to embrace education as the only way to better themselves. Youth unemployment at present hovers around 35 per cent and even graduates are not exempt from this scourge. Also remembered on this day is the death of Dr Melville Edelstein, an activist for the upliftment of black youth, ironically stoned to death by the enraged mob who only saw him as "white" and thus "the enemy". Edelstein, the deputy-chief welfare officer of the West Rand Administration Board in Soweto, was a sociologist, pacifist and observant Jew whose only goal had been to serve humanity. He had served the Soweto community for 18 years as a social worker. This week President Zuma again embroidered on his theme of South Africa as "a good story", paying tribute to some outstanding young achievers. "While working to solve all the problems affecting young people, we are also celebrating the achievements of our youth," he said. Pictured are youths at a rally in Soweto on Tuesday, with the inset a plaque commemorating Edelstein. See page 2.

Time to reflect on life and death of Melville Edelstein

He devoted his life as a social worker to the upliftment of the Soweto community, but an enraged mob of young protesters turned on him and stoned him to death.

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What will ADL lose when Abe Foxman leaves?

Long-time Anti-Defamation League leader Abraham Foxman steps down at the end of the month, after nearly 30 years. It is time to assess his legacy.



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Business mogul and philanthropist Sir Mick Davis knighted

Mick Davis has been honoured for his work on the Holocaust Commission, in the Queen's Birthday Honours List for 2015.

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Bridal supplement

Zulu Nyala Venues – for that truly unique experience – and the inimitable Summer Place in Johannesburg, where the most discerning demands are met.

8,9

UJW's Divas Concert has audience clamouring for more

The Union of Jewish Women's Divas in Concert on June 10, was an outstanding evening's entertainment with the excitement of the audience palpable.

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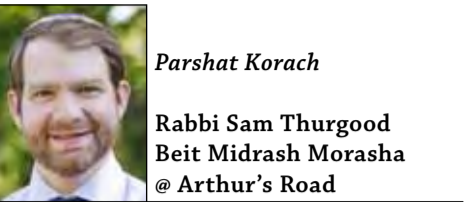
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May we merit to choose the path of truth



Parshat Korach

Rabbi Sam Thurgood
Beit Midrash Morasha
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Sidrat Korach immediately summons to mind what has become the archetype of unhealthy division - “machloket shelo lesheim shamayim - argument that is not for the sake of Heaven”.

This contrasts with the great arguments of the House of Hillel and the House of Shammai which, although intense and prolonged (and at times even bitter) to the extent that our Sages said that a tragic situation arose at the height of their argument that “it was as if there were two Torahs” - the Hillel-Torah and the Shammai-Torah - nevertheless since this was for the sake of Heaven, it was viewed as something of which Hashem approved.

Regarding Korach, however, the Sfata Emet (the great Rabbi Yehudah Leib Alter, rebbe of Ger 1847-1905) asks: Is the only problem with Korach that it was not for the sake of Heaven? It was an argument that involved many great sins, a rebellion against Moshe that cost hundreds of lives - surely it is missing the point if we describe this destructive conflagration as simply “an argument not for the sake of Heaven”!

The Sfata Emet explains that in fact Korach was destined to serve as the counterpoint to Aharon - using a few famous examples in the history of Torah scholarship - The Hillel to his Shammai, the Abaye to his Rava, the Raavad to his Rambam. Korach was given great wisdom and a unique perspective and he could have enriched Jewish life immeasurably by challenging Aharon and presenting a new path in the service of Hashem.

However, this path is only constructive and desirable if a person is willing and able

to negate his own self-interest in the service of Hashem. Only if he is able to seek the truth as he sees it, regardless of where this leaves him, regardless of the implications upon his career, or standing in the community, or the agenda to which he has devoted himself - only if he is able to acknowledge he is wrong when shown to be so.

This characterises the great disputes of Torah thought - fighting with all of one's energy to find and display the truth - and as Rabbi Jonathan Sacks says “being defeated by the truth is the only form of defeat that is also a victory”, provided of course that we are ultimately interested in the truth.

Korach and his congregation went wrong not in challenging Aharon - that was their sacred duty - but in their self-interest, in losing focus on the sake of Heaven, and somehow finding themselves arguing for the sake of Korach.

At that point, even great and terrible sins

can come about, as ego and status are harsh taskmasters that do not easily relinquish a person once they have him in their grasp - and destruction inevitably followed.

May we merit to choose the path of truth, the truth greater than our own selves, that we are willing to submit to the will of Hashem, and find that paradoxically, we have found our true selves.

Shabbat shalom.

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Korach June 19 / 2 Tammuz June 20 / 3 Tammuz		
17:06	17:58	Johannesburg
17:27	18:21	Cape Town
16:46	17:39	Durban
17:07	18:00	Bloemfontein
16:48	17:52	Port Elizabeth
16:51	17:45	East London

News

Time to reflect on life and death of Melville Edelstein

ANT KATZ

Dr Melville Leonard Edelstein, is one of only two white men who died in the Soweto Uprising of June 16, 1976 - murdered as a direct consequence of his compassion. This little-known Struggle hero's origins were typical of almost all of the first-generation South African-born Litvak community. Edelstein's parents, Nachum and Rose, were from Lithuania and Latvia.

But Melville Edelstein was by no means typical. A sociologist, pacifist and observant Jew, Edelstein was born in King Williamstown in 1919 where his parents had settled after landing in Cape Town in 1896.

Melville, who met and came to know David and Paula Ben-Gurion during his years in Israel, visited the founding couple often. He spent much of his life torn between his allegiance to Israel and South Africa - finally settling on the fact that it was in apartheid South Africa that he could best serve humanity.

He returned to South Africa in the early '50s and for the next 18 years served the Soweto community as a social worker.

Melville's philanthropic work was to serve the poor and oppressed and, by so doing, “he brought hope and light into the lives of many of Soweto's destitute and marginalised community”, commented Kevin Harris who made a documentary on Melville Edelstein. His only goal had been to serve humanity and he cared about people as individuals.

And it was this caring attitude that led to his murder on June 16. Once the situation became volatile in the township, Edelstein - officially the deputy-chief welfare officer of the West Rand Administration Board tasked with instituting many community projects for the youth and disabled - ensured that his staff was moved out of Soweto to safety.

When he realised he had not remembered to check on the safety of one colleague, he made the fatal decision to drive back to check. As it turned out, she had fled, but Edelstein was caught by a mob of enraged young people, dragged from the office and brutally slain.

His daughter, Janet Goldblatt, who recalls that he passed away one week before her batmitzvah, asked the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to build a monument dedicated to her father but her wish was not granted. She also appealed for any witnesses to recall her father's last words and reveal the circumstances of his death. She said her family was always plagued and mystified by it.

“His drive was for the people, for the underdog,” said Goldblatt. “He wanted to enable them; to help them find their own magnificence and high-potential. His death was a tragedy.”

For more details see www.sajr.co.za

Jewish outrage over al-Bashir being allowed to leave South Africa

ANT KATZ

The angry voices among South African Jewry have joined those of the general population in expressing their disquiet and incredulity at the government for allowing a man wanted by the International Criminal Court to face charges of mass-murder and genocide, to defeat the ends of justice. Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir was allowed to skip South Africa, in spite of an interim order issued by a South African high court prohibiting him from leaving the country.

Al-Bashir, who is wanted by the ICC for crimes against humanity in Darfur, arrived in South Africa on Saturday to attend an African Union summit, prompting a court bid by a rights group to have him arrested. South Africa is an ICC signatory, but that did not deter the government from allowing al-Bashir to return to Sudan.

In “Does being African mean choosing al-Bashir as our friend?” by columnist Geoff Sifrin in this issue of Jewish Report, he writes that SA Jews “need to be clear: Our government - led by the ANC - has helped a perpetrator of genocide escape justice by breaking its own domestic laws... Will we be silent for fear of antagonising them? Or shout it from the rooftops?”

Tali Nates, the director of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre (JHGC) and one of the foremost speakers worldwide on genocide in Africa, told Jewish Report that she was fuming. “It's a huge disappointment. I felt devastated. It was an amazing opportunity to assist in apprehending one of the biggest criminals in the world, guilty of the deaths of at least 300 000 people.”

At a professional level, said Nates, “we need to remember African genocides and we must try to learn lessons from them - for Africans and for humanity”. South Africa had “failed on many levels - this is a country that we as Jews do admire”, she said. “It had a chance, and it failed.”

In “Al-Bashir and the Unabridged Birth Certificate” posted on Monday, Jewish blogger Howard Feldman said tongue-in-cheek: “It must be tremendously reassuring to the Department of Home Affairs that President Omar

al-Bashir is over 18 years old. Otherwise they could never let him leave. That is not without his full unabridged birth certificate and signed affidavits from his parents saying that he is allowed to travel.”

On a more serious note, he continued: “The fact that SA has allowed a global figure to slip through their duplicitous fingers by allowing al-Bashir to leave... is not even disappointing; it is what we have come to expect... What is relevant is that once again the SA government has proven to its people that whereas they might preach lofty ideals, nothing could be further from reality. And that is very sad.”

On a personal level, JHGC's Nates told Jewish Report that as a second-generation Holocaust Survivor she was traumatised in a different way. “My father always believed that the Holocaust would ensure that genocide would never happen again.” For the past few days she keeps hearing her father's voice saying that we have failed.

Agence France-Presse (AFP) quoted Archbishop-Emeritus Desmond Tutu on Tuesday slamming the South African government for even allowing al-Bashir into the country in the first place.

But, said Tutu, in a statement issued by his foundation, some of the blame lay with “powerful nations (which) have created the rationale for the SA government to allow al-Bashir into the country despite the international warrant of arrest hanging over his head, and then to allow him to travel home despite a South African high court order to the contrary”.

Alas, countries like the US, Russia and China refuse to recognise the jurisdiction of the ICC.

Tutu argued that allowing al-Bashir to leave, spoke volumes about South Africa's moral fabric, as it had on three occasions denied entry to the Dalai Lama.

Feldman told Jewish Report that he found it ironic that the South African government, which was always so quick to criticise Israel for so-called human rights violations, felt no shame in allowing someone considered to be one of the, if not the, biggest perpetrators of human rights violations, to escape the consequences.

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Sinai Indaba kicks off in Cape Town with a bang

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

Sinai Indaba V kicked off in Cape Town this year, with some 1 300 participants braving the wintry weather to hear world-class speakers at the Cape Town International Convention Centre.

Among them was the world’s foremost Nazi hunter Dr Efraim Zuroff, who spoke of his efforts at tracking down Holocaust perpetrators and bringing them to justice up to 70 years after their crimes were committed. Growing up in Brooklyn, New York, he said his fantasy had been to be the first Orthodox Jew to play in the NBA (National Basketball Association).

It was, however, when he was working as a researcher for the United States Justice Department’s office of special investigations in Israel, that his involvement in the search for the notorious Auschwitz concentration camp doctor Josef Mengele “changed my life” and set him on his present path.

The year was 1986, but Zuroff realised that, 41 years after the Shoah, there were many Nazi war criminals



still living. He resigned from the Justice Department and became the director of the Simon Wiesenthal Centre’s Israel office, established to locate and help bring these individuals to justice around the world.

It turned out that Mengele had died in 1979. “If the office had been set up 10 years earlier, we could have caught him,” Zuroff told the audience.

“The reason he wasn’t (caught) was a lack of political will that continues to plague us until today. Most countries don’t want to prosecute Nazi war criminals and that is the reality.

“They’d rather protect their societies from serial killers - what are the chances of a Nazi war criminal striking again - zero.”

What he has learned from his work, he says, is that most war criminals were “normal”

people. “They lived normal lives before and after the war, but did terrible things during it.”

Of former Jasenovac concentration camp commandant Dinko Sakic who was tracked down in Argentina, tried in Croatia and sentenced to the maximum term, Zuroff recalls: “He didn’t regret anything and asked to be buried in his uniform.”

In a question and answer session, Israel’s Chief Rabbi David Lau was asked how being the son of Chief Rabbi Israel Meir Lau and carrying the surname that had produced rabbis for many generations, had affected him. Rabbi Lau answered that his parents had never pressured him into becoming a rabbi, emphasising rather that one should do one’s best according to one’s personality. He had in fact decided when he became engaged not

to become a rabbi!

The chief rabbi, who is a reserve major in the Israeli Defence Forces Intelligence Corps, was asked his opinion on whether more “dati’ im” should serve in the army. “Everyone who’s learning Torah, I want them to continue to learn because we need it for our nation,” he replied. “We need to learn what we are fighting for.

“Those who are not learning must run to the army.” The reality, he said, was that more and more haredim were doing so, but it was not good for the government to enforce this by means of legislation.

In 1968, Rabbi David Grossman’s life took a dramatic turn when this heir to a famous Chassidic dynasty moved to Migdal HaEmek, a development town for im-

migrants from North Africa that had become a hotbed of criminal activity in Israel.

The sixth-generation Yerushalmi embarked on a mission to uplift the city’s disadvantaged youth, searching them out at nightclubs every night, “including Friday night”, in the process earning the nickname “The Disco Rabbi”.

Visiting the local jail, his “heart became broken” when he saw hundreds of Jewish youngsters incarcerated there. He started to teach them Pirkei Avot twice a week on a voluntary basis and developed a rehabilitation programme which was attended by over 1 000 prisoners.

The government has said that it is the most successful such programme, evidenced by the fact that 70 to 80 per cent of participants do not

return to jail.

“Every Jew has G-d inside, you only have to speak to them,” the rabbi, who has received the Israel Prize for his work, maintains. “If you give them love and education at the age of nine, 10, they can be the best boys and girls.”

What makes Jews different? According to renowned scholar and educator Rebbetzen Tziporah Heller, it is the spiritual connection that we can bring to the material world.

“You’re a Jew in how you conduct your life materially - in the way you eat, dress or do business,” she stated. Mitzvot were G-d’s way of stretching one, thereby strengthening one’s bond with Him, which she described as “the greatest pleasure this world has”.

Sinai Indaba continues in Johannesburg this weekend.

Don’t miss the excitement on our website this week

SAUJS LEADERS WANT TO MEET THEIR ELDERS: The SA Union of Jewish Students has invited the community to attend a gala dinner next month. While it’s billed as an “alumni” event, SAUJS’ special project portfolio head, Cayla Urdang, told SAJR Online that “everyone’s welcome”. They hope to “recapture the spirit of previous generations of student activists” and SAUJS is asking the community for help “to track down as many SAUJS alumni as possible”. They are also looking for memorabilia. Read how you can help SAUJS, and all about that banquet, too.

READ THE FULL STORY - SEE THE DOCUMENTARY: The story of the brave Jew who was murdered in the Soweto Uprising in 1976 due to his compassion for the community. Little-known hero Dr Melville Edelstein’s life started in the stereotypical manner of almost all SA Litvaks. But he was by no means typical. A respected academic, he had the ear of PM John Vorster and his Cabinet. When Edelstein - who worked in Soweto, shared a thesis with government outlining the dangers they faced, his warnings fell on deaf ears. If those who stoned him knew who he was, he wouldn’t have been murdered - or called him a “bleddie wit k*****”! (A bloody white k*****) He was the subject of a documentary which is linked for users,

as it provides much more on this complex and wonderful man all SA Jewry should be proud of.

TWO GREAT COMPETITIONS: SAJR Online. Look out for this logo because we have added another competition today and will keep adding one a week. So, this week users can enter to win:

- **OVER R8 000 worth of tickets to LEGO’s “THE ART OF THE BRICK EXHIBITION”** running in the Zone at Rosebank. “It is a marvel, something that appeals to all ages and all types,” writes DAVID KATZ. Read his review, check out the pics and see why it’s one of the most popular exhibits of all types in in the world right now. Next week SAJR Online will be giving away thousands of rands worth of tickets. Stay tuned...
- **Six copies of Howard Feldman’s best-selling book** Jewish Report Online is giving away six copies of Howard Feldman’s best-selling book. Read what you have to do to win one of them. Remember, www.sajr.co.za is interactive - users can comment on anything they read or watch - or on other users’ comments. And, it is updated daily.

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PROPERTIES



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El Al explains new flying times for Johannesburg-Tel Aviv

MICHAEL BELLING

Johannesburg-Tel Aviv is one of El Al’s most important routes, according to Oranit Beit Halachmy, the airline’s regional manager for Central Europe, South Africa and South America.

Beit Halachmy was visiting South Africa last week as part of a public relations campaign and to explain schedule changes over the winter.

Beit Halachmy told the Jewish Report that the importance of the Johannesburg-Tel Aviv route was reinforced by the high passenger numbers during Operation Protective Edge, the 2014 Gaza conflict, in contrast to Europe where there was a marked decline in tourist numbers. Traffic on the South African route showed hardly any drop.

“For us this was a very positive sign. It was a great help to have one of our routes operating with a high load factor,” she said.

Overall, the airline is happy

with the results of its three weekly flights from South Africa to Israel.

Roz Bukris, El Al’s general manager for Southern and Eastern Africa, said she and Beit Halachmy were giving the reasons for changes to flight times on Mondays and Thursdays so that people could understand them. There is no change to the Saturday evening flight time.

Beit Halachmy explained that El Al has changed its schedule for the period between June and August this year and that this would cause a delay in departures of the Monday and Thursday flights. The previous 11:00 Monday flight now departs 13 hours later, at 00:30 on Tuesday morning. The Thursday flight leaves some 90 minutes later, at 21:35, instead of 20:05.

These changes are a result of pilot training required by the introduction of the new Boeing 767 planes which is taking longer than originally anticipated.



Later departure times from OR Tambo Airport mean that the planes could also leave Israel later. This means the crews spend less time in Johannesburg, which also allows for more training time and enables crew to be used earlier for other flights.

El Al said they were also excited that their passengers would now be able to use their own devices, such as iPads to see movies and other

entertainment, and would be able to use a phone, provided they had downloaded the application prior to the trip.

At present, only a limited number of El Al planes have this facility available, but it will be more widely available from the end of the year. It is worth downloading the app right away, El AL urged, because it might just be available on the plane on which passengers are flying now.

Bukris reminded passengers that they could still get SAA Voyager miles on El Al flights.

Finally, in response to a question about a flight that had been delayed recently because of operational issues, Beit Halachmy said the new schedules had nothing to do with technical delays. “All airlines have technical issues. We try to take care of passengers as best we can. These are not unusual issues.”

South Africans by birth, but proud Israelis by choice

SUZANNE BELLING

Some went to Israel as volunteers, others to reunite with their families who had made aliyah and many to fulfil the Zionist dream. But, for whatever reason, the former South Africans who attended a reunion lunch in Tel Aviv last week all agree: “We are here to stay.”

Gillian Benatar (née Flax) grew up in Cape Town and was a keen member of Habonim Dror. She came to Israel in 1971, met her former Rhodesian (now Zimbabwean) husband Vic on Kibbutz Yizre’el and they settled in Ra’anana. Fifteen years later, they moved to Alfei Menashe “on the Green Line” and have stayed there ever since.

“This is my home. I have two sons, three grandchildren and one on the way. I teach English privately and I love it here,” she said.

Former Capetonian sisters Freda Shuster and Tessia Gordin (née Levin) both live on Kibbutz Gan Shmuel.



Expats meet in Israel. Back: Natan Shalom; Michael Jankelowitz; Reva Rudolph; Tessia Gordin; Martin Furman; Linky Furman; and Monty Nussbaum. Front: Shirley Shalom; Riva Migdal; Hilda Stern; Freda Shuster; and, Sheila Nussbaum. Inset: Gillian Benatar.

Ra’anana, often dubbed “Ra’ananafontein” because of the many South Africans living there.

Shirley and Natan Shalom (he was active in the CSO in Cape Town) made aliyah 11 years ago. “It was not enough to see our six grandchildren in Israel only once a year,” say this couple who have settled happily in Netanya.

Riva and Cecil Migdal made aliyah 28 years ago. “We built our own house in Zur Yigal, where we lived for 17 years, sold it and now live in Ra’anana.” Two of their three children live in Israel, while one son is in London.

Martin and Linky Furman came to settle in Israel 40 years ago and spent two years on Moshav Kfar Daniel.

Martin, whose father was in the poultry business in the Cape, has spent the last 37 years as a poultry farmer on Moshav Timorim. Linky taught English in a government school. They are now retired, with three married children and 11 grandchildren “all living within an eight kilometre radius of our moshav”.

Former Glenhazelites Monty and Sheila Nussbaum, who made aliyah two years ago, are the newest olim in the group. “We always wanted to live in Israel to spend time with our children and grandchildren. We love it.

“However, we do miss our family and good friends in South Africa.”

Hilda Stern, who worked for two Jewish organisations in Cape Town, had no problems

finding a job in Jerusalem. She left eight years ago to join her children and grandchildren.

Hilda works for Honest Reporting and lives in Modi’in. She misses South Africa and is coming on a return visit for two months in July and August to see her brothers in Johannesburg and Cape Town and to attend her high school reunion.

Michael Jankelowitz, formerly of Port Elizabeth, has lived in Jerusalem since 1972. He is the retired spokesman for international media at the Jewish Agency, where he worked for 35 years.

Michael recently lost his wife Denise, from Luxembourg , whom he met in Rome at a Jewish students’ conference. He has two children.

“In Israel it is easy to live a full Jewish life - no problems with kashrut or taking leave for Jewish holidays. Israel is yours - it is part of you.

“I can only recommend to young people that it is a practical option for your future. There is an international atmosphere, with young people from all over the world.”

World News in Brief

Officer who beat soldier won’t be charged

JERUSALEM - The Israeli police officer who was caught on camera beating an Ethiopian-Israeli soldier, will not be charged.

Attorney General Yehuda Weinstein announced on Sunday that he was closing the case, which led to violent protests by Ethiopian-Israelis throughout Israel. Israel Police reportedly will still discipline the officer, who was suspended shortly after the April incident.

A Justice Ministry investigation found that the soldier, Damas Pakada, instigated the clash by refusing to leave an area closed off due to a suspicious object. A ministry statement said the film of the incident was reviewed carefully, including in slow motion, and showed that Pakada first pushed the policeman, who responded with force to remove the soldier. Also, the ministry said that it could not prove the officer hit Pa

kada due to racism.

The officer, identified as Y in an interview in May, has insisted he did nothing wrong.

Also on Sunday, the Israel Defence Forces court-martialled two soldiers who were caught on camera beating an unarmed Palestinian man last week Friday in a West Bank refugee camp near Ramallah. A third soldier, who was seen swearing at the man, also was court-martialled. The soldiers seen beating the man were given suspended jail terms of 28 days. The swearing soldier was given a sentence of 30 days detention to the base.

The IDF said the man approached the soldiers and tried to provoke a confrontation, according to reports. The soldiers reportedly believed the man was trying to grab one of their rifles. (JTA)

Does being African mean choosing al-Bashir as our friend?



TAKING ISSUE
Geoff Sifrin

The way Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir slipped out of South Africa a free man last weekend, after attending the African Union Summit in Sandton, touches a raw Jewish nerve. Perpetrators of genocide should face a reckoning. Eichmann tried hiding in Argentina, but was tracked down and brought to Israel for trial. Other Nazis were pursued, year after year.

In 2008, the International Criminal Court (ICC) indicted al-Bashir for war crimes committed in the conflict in Darfur, which led to the death of some 300 000 people and displacement of 2.5 million. Warrants of arrest were issued against him by the ICC in 2009 and 2010 on seven counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity, and three counts of genocide.

Al-Bashir has a history with Jews when it comes to Darfur. In June 2006, after saying he would bar United Nations Peacekeepers from entering the region, he accused the UN of wanting “to colonise Africa, starting with the first sub-Saharan country to gain its independence”.

He told journalists that Jews were causing trouble for him, referring to the Save Darfur Rally in Washington and other US locations that year: “It is clear that there is a purpose behind the heavy propaganda and media campaigns... If we return to the last demonstrations in the United States, and the groups that organised the demonstrations, we find that they are all Jewish organisations.”

ADL National Director Abe Foxman commented at the time: “In pointing the finger at Jewish involvement in the campaign to draw attention to genocide in Darfur, President al-Bashir is playing an old game. Those who engage in or tolerate genocide always try to divert attention from their actions. Blaming Jews is a favourite choice ... We in the Jewish community take pride in our leadership role in opposing this genocide and calling for international intervention. The Sudanese leader’s ranting is a badge of honour for the Jewish community.”

The South African Holocaust and Genocide Foundation includes the Darfur genocide among its examples of crimes against humanity in Africa – along with the Rwandan genocide. In 2007, an important exhibition Witnessing Darfur was displayed at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre, then toured the country in 2008.

At the AU summit, al-Bashir posed unashamedly for pictures with other African

leaders, then departed. This was despite the Pretoria High Court issuing an interim order prohibiting him from leaving the country until the case could resume on Monday regarding his possible arrest and handing over to the ICC. The government’s decision not to detain him is a slap in the face to the rule of law in South Africa. It ignored the court’s ruling. Its disregard for international law, as well as our own domestic law – our own courts! – is deeply troubling.

Amnesty International is outraged. It said Tuesday that the “shocking failure” to arrest al-Bashir was a betrayal to the hundreds of thousands killed in Darfur: “South Africa’s role was clear from the day President Omar

al-Bashir touched down in the country – he should have been arrested and handed over to the ICC to face trial for the war crimes he is alleged to have committed ... the South African authorities, under the leadership of President Jacob Zuma, have through their inaction, aided Omar al-Bashir in his quest to avoid justice.”

Why is our government cosyng up to one of the world’s most infamous villains? This saga has reinforced the growing feeling that South Africa is becoming more ‘African’ in a negative way, rather than a positive way. The international human rights language – largely European and western in origin – current during the anti-apartheid struggle and Man-


dela’s era is growing fainter. Different loyalties are taking preference: allegiance to other African leaders just because they are African, rather than universal principles of human rights. An anti-ICC movement has emerged within the AU, claiming the court disproportionately targets African leaders.

South African Jews need to be clear: Our government – led by the ANC – has helped a perpetrator of genocide escape justice by breaking its own domestic laws. Jews are a tiny white minority group in this country, with reason to be cautious about our relationship to the powers that be. Will we be silent for fear of antagonising them? Or shout it from the rooftops?

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by Sage Pastel

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south african • Jewish Report

The good news and the bad news

We in the media constantly face dilemmas on what we choose as our focus. Here in South Africa, government corruption and controversies like Jacob Zuma’s Nkandla, power outages and the inadequacies of Eskom, easily fill the pages of The Star and The Cape Times, among other dailies, and usually do.

For a Jewish audience, the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions movement locally, the rift between the US and Israel, constant tension between Palestinians and Israelis, misconduct by people in power in religious institutions, are all ongoing sagas that could and sometimes do fill the pages of our own Jewish Report and others of our genre.

Numerous articles have been written about the negative effects of negative media and how they create a feeling of hopelessness about a situation. Any economic crisis is a good illustration. When the stock market drops, news coverage of sinking stocks and declining consumer confidence perpetuates the cycle, becoming part of the very reason why the markets continue to drop further.

Some have theorised that we have a negativity bias in our brains. A study performed at Ohio State University found an increase in neural firing in the brain when people were shown negative images in the news media compared to when they were shown positive images.

They found that more information processing was occurring when audiences viewed war and destruction in a country, for example, than when aid workers were seen doing wonderful humanitarian work and rebuilding. The evidence shows that we tend to hold onto the negative imagery rather than the positive.

While a generally held assumption is that the media has a responsibility to report on bad news if it is happening, Charlie Beckett, veteran journalist and media professor at the London School of Economics in Britain, asserts that news doesn’t have to be positive or negative and that it is possible to write critically about a negative topic, but still present solutions, empower readers to act, and offer tools to help turn the bad stories into good ones.

Several US news organisations are embracing the idea that positive, solutions-based journalism can still attract a significant audience. The Huffington Post’s “What’s Working” initiative, The Washington Post’s “The Optimist”, The New York Times’ “The Fix” - are all platforms that deliver positive news stories or even negative ones with solutions. And, according to Arianna Huffington, of The Huffington Post, their Good News section has grown considerably and the positive content on their site is shared three times more than the combined average of all their other sections’ share rate.

“If we don’t cover positive stories, ideally with the same relentlessness and the same resources that we cover negative stories, we are basically not giving our readers the full truth,” says Huffington.

In the book, “Raising an Optimistic Child”, therapists Bob Murray and Alicia Fortinberry argue that the most precious gift one can give one’s children is an unwavering sense of optimism by taking control of one’s own emotions and creating a positive, solution based household.

The book even instructs parents on how to cope with children seeing coverage of traumatic news events on television and tells them to let their children know that despite what they are seeing, their own lives are good and safe.

So too, just as parents have a responsibility to their own families to construct positive narratives about life, we as journalists have a responsibility to our readers to give them the hard and sad truth, but also the stories of hope, solutions and connection that will inspire and empower them.

– Vanessa Valkin, Editor



Photo: Kevork Djansazian/Getty Images

Abraham Foxman holds a replica of his Hollywood Walk of Fame Star as he is honoured by the ADL’s 2014 Annual General Meeting at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, on November 7, 2014.

What will ADL lose when Abe Foxman leaves?

URIEL HEILMAN
NEW YORK

If there’s one thing that can be said of long-time Anti-Defamation League leader Abraham Foxman, who is stepping down this month after nearly 30 years at the helm, it’s that he never holds back from speaking his mind. In an age of canned, anodyne statements from public figures reticent to say what they really think, Foxman offers an authentic, unabashed voice free of artifice, hesitation or restraint.

Foxman also has something else when he speaks: listeners. Though the ADL doesn’t represent anyone but itself and Foxman is not an elected official, he is widely seen by journalists, the public and especially the White House as representing American Jewish opinion - to the consternation of many community activists to Foxman’s right and left.

“Abe is one of the three or four people you have to speak to on any given issue,” said former White House official Jarrod Bernstein, who did Jewish outreach during President Barack Obama’s first term.

“Abe was like an uncle to me. If you did something he thought you were on the wrong side of, he was going to let you know about it,” Bernstein told JTA. “On the flip side, if he thought you were being treated unfairly, or you did something right, he wouldn’t hesitate to say that either. That’s important and we need more of that in the American Jewish community.”

Foxman, who has run the ADL as national director since 1987 and worked there since graduating from law school in 1965, will be succeeded next month by Jonathan Greenblatt, a White House aide and social entrepreneur.

Under Foxman’s leadership, the ADL has become a \$60 million-a-year juggernaut that runs anti-bias educational and training programmes, monitors anti-Semitism in the United States and around the world, advocates for anti-discrimination legislation, and maintains regional offices around the country to discharge these functions.

It has also served as a bully pulpit for Foxman, who managed to become the world’s chief arbiter of what qualifies as anti-Semitism - and the granter of absolution when warranted.

“He has an uncanny sense to know what to get involved with,” said Myrna Shinbaum, who worked at the ADL for 20 years and served as Foxman’s director of media relations and public information.

The case of fashion designer John Galliano represents a classic case of Foxman’s capacity to censure and forgive. When Galliano was caught on video in February 2011 going on a drunken, anti-Semitic tirade, the ADL helped lead the charge that resulted in Galliano’s firing by Christian Dior. But once Galliano made amends, Foxman was just as vociferous in defending Galliano and vouching for his rehabilitation.

In 2013, after Galliano had gone through counselling and was making his return to the design world, the New York Post accused Galliano of dressing in hasidic garb and thereby mocking Jews. Foxman immediately jumped to Galliano’s defence, calling the story “a deliberate, malicious distortion” of Galliano’s outfit and intent.

“For the past year and a half, Mr Galliano has been on a pilgrimage to learn from and grow from his mistakes. Now people are trying to distort and destroy him,” Foxman said in a statement. “He has spent hours with me and with others in the European Jewish community, including rabbis and Holocaust scholars, in an effort to better understand himself and to learn from his past mistakes. He is trying very hard to atone.”

Kenneth Jacobson, the ADL’s deputy national director, said this was one of Foxman’s signature moves: The ability to turn someone who had crossed the anti-Semitism line into a friend of the Jews.

After a high-profile Christian evangelist, the Rev Bailey Smith, said in 1980 that G-d did not hear the prayers of Jews, the ADL blasted him. But then Foxman, who at the time was ADL’s associate national director and director of international affairs, orchestrated a visit to Israel for Smith. By the end, ADL officials said, Smith was calling him Rabbi Foxman.

“He’s able to take a very negative situation and turn it into a very positive one,” Jacobson said.

Along the way, Foxman has also become a confidant of presidents, prime ministers and too many celebrities to count.

But on the central question of ADL’s raison d’être - fighting anti-Semitism - did Foxman make any difference?

It’s not hard to find anti-Semitism around the world today. In Europe, it’s evident in deadly attacks, anti-Israel demonstrations and boycott efforts. In Venezuela, Turkey and elsewhere, it comes from the mouths of public officials. On the Internet, it takes the form of virulent expressions of hate. In the Arab world, Jews are caricatured as they used to be in Nazi newspapers.

By the same token, anti-Semitism in the United States is at historic lows. The Jews in Israel live in relative safety. In Russia, Ukraine and elsewhere in Europe, governments are protective of their Jewish populations. It’s hard to connect any of this to the ADL’s work, for better or for worse - though Foxman says the ADL is part of the reason America is one of the least anti-Semitic countries in the world.

“I don’t take credit for it, but I’m part of the effort - not only of the American Jewish community, but of decent people in this country, to fight it,” Foxman said.

“The most significant difference between the United States and the rest of the world is that in this country, there is a consequence to being a bigot and an anti-Semite. If you’re in commerce, if you’re in politics, if you’re in the arts - whatever it is - and you act out as an anti-Semite, you will pay a price.”

Foxman’s personal story has lent moral authority to his work. Born in 1940 in Poland, Foxman’s Jewish parents left him in the care of his Polish-Catholic nanny during the war in a bid to save his life. Raised as a Catholic, Foxman didn’t discover he was Jewish until after the war, when his parents came to claim him. His nanny refused to give him up, resulting in a custody battle.

After Foxman’s parents eventually won, they took their son with them to America, and only gradually did he let go of his Catholic habits and embrace his parents’ religion.

“I’m a product of the worst in humankind and the best in humankind,” Foxman told JTA.

Foxman said he ended up at the ADL more by chance than design. He did some freelance translating for the organization — then known as the Anti-Defamation League of B’nai B’rith — while in high school at the Yeshivah of Flatbush in Brooklyn, and followed reporting on the ADL in the Jewish press.

Foxman planned to be an engineer, largely so he could help Israel or America in the age of Sputnik, he said, but he changed his mind after suffering through two years of chemical engineering at City College. He switched to political science, attended New York University law school and reached out to the ADL’s general counsel, Arnold Forster, when he was interviewing for jobs. Foxman was offered a position on the spot.

“To what extent did my experiences in the Shoah, the DP camps, my Catholicism have to do with that, I don’t know,” Foxman said. “I have been very lucky. To get up every morning and to have an opportunity to try to make a difference in both fighting hate and building love - wow. I have been very privileged.” (JTA)

Business mogul and philanthropist Sir Mick Davis, knighted by the Queen

OWN CORRESPONDENT

South-African-born Sir Michael Lawrence “Mick” Davis (pictured) has been honoured for his work on the Holocaust Commission in the Queen’s Birthday Honours List for 2015. Davis has both British and South African citizenship.

He was appointed a Knight Bachelor by the Queen “for services to Holocaust Commemoration and Education”, and therefore granted the title “sir”.

Davis, head of the Jewish Leadership Council and chairman of Prime Minister David Cameron’s Holocaust Commission, received the honour for supporting the commission’s international engagements.

The cross-party, multi-faith group was set up by the prime minister to investigate ways to educate future generations of Britons about the Shoah.

Speaking from London, Davis, 57, told the SA Jewish Report: “It’s great to have received the honour. I am very pleased.”

Davis said he was very honoured to have been given the task of leading the Commission and deeply appreciates the recognition, but noted that there were many others who have dedicated their lives to the commemoration of and education about the Holocaust.

“My contribution pales into insignificance when I think of the very brave and resourceful survivors who every day relive that horror so that this and future generations will understand and act to prevent it from happening again.”

He added: “I pay tribute to the many that have promoted and funded Holocaust education and particularly research into how best



to educate society on this dark, dark hour of human history when humanity was thrust into the deepest abyss of moral depravity.”

Davis served as CEO of Xstrata plc, an Anglo-Swiss multinational mining company from 2001, until 2013 when it merged with Glencore International Plc. After leaving Xstrata, he formed mining venture, X2 Resources. Prior to Xstrata, Davis was the chief financial officer of Billiton Plc and executive chairman of Billiton Coal, and before joining Billiton, was an executive director of Eskom in South Africa.

He was educated at Theodor Herzl School in Port Elizabeth, where he was a school friend of Ivan Glasenberg, CEO of Glencore. He studied at Rhodes University.

Davis is also chairman of UJIA, and a member of the Jewish Leadership Council.

He is on the Board of Governors of the Jewish Agency for Israel, and a member of the World Executive of Keren Hayesod - Israel United Appeal.

He lives in London with his wife Barbara and their three children, Sarah, Ronit and Eitan.

Jews recognised in Queen’s Birthday List

A substantial number of Jews, besides Sir Mick Davis, from a wide variety of fields, such as education, business, inter-faith relations and philanthropy, have been recognised in the Queen’s birthday honours.

Iraqi-born entrepreneur Naim Dangoor was knighted for his “extraordinarily generous philanthropy to a range of health, educational and religious charities”.

He is the grandson of former Chief Rabbi of Iraq Ezra Dangoor. At the age of 101, he is the second oldest person to be made a knight.

Dangoor was granted asylum in the UK in the 1960s, where he set up a successful property development company.

Nicola Mendelsohn, vice-president of Facebook, has been made a CBE. Manchester-born Lady Mendelsohn began working at the social networking site in 2012, having previously had a 20-year career in advertising.

Former Lord Chief Justice Lord Woolf was made a Member of the Order of Companions of Honour for his services promoting the rule of law, human rights, prison reform and inter-faith dialogue.

He is a patron of the Woolf Institute, an organisation dedicated to promoting inter-faith relations between Jews, Christians and Muslims.

Journalist and TV presenter Loyd Grossman was honoured for services to heritage, being made a CBE for his work as chairman of The Heritage Alliance.

He presented numerous TV show including Masterchef and Through the Keyhole. His lifelong passion for history, arts and heritage led to his work with the Heritage Alliance, an umbrella group of almost 100 heritage organisations. He was made OBE in 2003.

Tower Hamlets councillor Peter Golds was made a CBE for services to local government. “I am very honoured and very pleased, he said. “For what Jewish community is left in Tower Hamlets I think it is a tribute to them.”

He was awarded an OBE in 1996 and was a founder of the Jewish Gay Group.

Peter Kessler, founder of Jewish free school Eden Primary, was honoured with an MBE for services to education.

Kessler helped set up Eden, the first truly cross-communal Jewish primary school in the country, in Muswell Hill, north London, in 2011 with the aim of creating an institution that provided a Jewish education for Jewish and non-Jewish children from all backgrounds.

Loraine Warren, president of the Jewish women’s charity WIZO, received an OBE for charitable services to women and children in Israel.

Also honoured was former president of the Board of Deputies Dr Lionel Kopelowitz who was made an MBE for his services to inter-faith relations.

Julia Hobsbawm received an OBE for services to business. She is the world’s first professor in networking and an honorary visiting professor at the Cass Business School in London.

Publisher Ernest Hecht was made an OBE for services to publishing and charity. Hecht, who owns Souvenir Press, one of the few remaining independently owned major publishing houses in the country, set up his charitable foundation in 2003. Since then it has supported a range of charities helping the disadvantaged and promoting the arts and education.

Rebecca Masri, former chairman of Young Afikim, a group supporting projects aiding disadvantaged Israeli families, was made an MBE for services to charity.

Around the Jewish World		World News in Brief
<p>NEO-NAZIS PLANNING TO DESTROY ISRAELI FLAGS</p> <p>LONDON - Neo-Nazis plan to destroy Israeli flags during a protest at the heart of the Jewish community next month.</p> <p>Organisers of the July 4 demonstration in Golders Green, north-west London, have also urged supporters to attend a secret burning of the Talmud ahead of the event.</p> <p>Joshua Bonehill-Paine, a white supremacist activist, wrote on his website that a “private ceremony” would be held to burn the religious texts “in recognition of its racist anti-white teachings”.</p> <p>He said his group of nationalist demonstrators would hold further protests against the Jewish community in Finchley, Stamford Hill and other locations later in the summer.</p> <p>The decision to destroy Israeli flags would be “in solidarity with those oppressed by the illegal state of Israel”, Bonehill-Paine wrote.</p> <p>“Activists are welcome to bring Israeli flags on July 4 as we will be destroying them in an act of opposition to Israel.</p> <p>“This will be a show of solidarity by English people who recognise that Israel is a corrupt state which is responsible for horrific war crimes.</p> <p>“To avoid prosecution we will not be burning flags, we will dismember them by hand.”</p> <p>Bonehill-Paine also outlined opposition to the Shomrim volunteer security group. He claimed the Jewish group had approached his supporters and urged them to patrol with Shomrim volunteers.</p> <p>But he added: “We are an ideological force of oppo-</p>		<p>sition, the agenda of this movement is clear and we will not coward away from our objectives or goals.”</p> <p>Bonehill-Paine has faced a series of criminal charges for incidents including malicious communications and harassment. - Jewish Chronicle</p> <p>A SOLUTION FOR SOUTH AFRICA?</p> <p>EILAT - A new demo village in southern Israel’s Arava Desert showcases cutting-edge Israeli solutions for housing, energy, water and agriculture needs of populations out of reach of national water and energy grids in any part of the world.</p> <p>The village, built in the environmentally forward Kibbutz Ketura ahead of last December’s sixth annual Eilat-Eilot Green Energy Conference, is a central feature of the Eilat-Eilot Off-Grid Hub, a project of the nonprofit Eilat-Eilot Renewable Energy Initiative.</p> <p>The village has three solar-powered model structures constructed by volunteers from Kibbutz Lotan’s Eco-Building Programme - a thatch-roofed communal building with simple yet innovative sources of natural light and ventilation; a straw-and-wool insulated plywood house roofed with palm leaves (for ventilation) and metal (for protection from the elements); and a dome-shaped, thermally balanced “Earth Bag” house made with sacks of local soil.</p> <p>These structures spark creative thinking about inexpensive, sustainable green building, says Tomer Weinstein, manager of the Eilat-Eilot Off-Grid Hub.</p> <p>The first four Israeli start-ups demonstrating their products in the village are HomeBioGas (backyard biodigesters that convert organic waste into clean biogas for cooking, heating and lighting, as well as organic</p>
<p>liquid crop fertiliser), Kalisaya (portable solar energy generator), Ulysses (remote, real-time monitor for production and consumption of energy and water) and SunDWater (solar-powered water-purification system for drinking and agriculture). - Israel 21c</p> <p>‘ZIONISTS STOLE MY SHOE’</p> <p>LONDON: A Muslim leader has attracted ridicule over claims that “Zionists” broke into his house and stole one of his shoes.</p> <p>Asghar Bukhari, a founding member of the grass-roots group Muslim Public Affairs Committee UK, posted the accusation on Facebook under the heading “Are Zionists trying to intimidate me?”</p> <p>Bukhari wrote: “Someone came into my home, while I was asleep. I don’t know how they got in, but they didn’t break in - the only thing they took was one shoe.</p> <p>“Now think about that, the only thing they took was a single shoe - they left one shoe behind to let me know someone had been there. Of course I can’t prove anything and that’s part of the intimidation.</p> <p>“The game is simple - to make me feel vulnerable in my own home. It’s psychological. Neither can I do much about it.”</p> <p>Thousands of tweets were posted in response, with people including Maajid Nawaz, the founder of anti-extremism group Quilliam, making fun of Bukhari under the nationally trending hashtag #MossadStoleMyShoe.</p> <p>Bukhari, who regularly posts anti-Israel messages through his Twitter page, has since removed the post from his Facebook page, though not before uploading a video to YouTube in which he also accused Zionists of stealing his slippers. - Jewish Chronicle</p>		<p>‘Palestinian unity government on verge of collapse’</p> <p>JERUSALEM - The Palestinians’ unity government forged last year between Hamas and Fatah will dissolve within the next 24 hours, a senior Palestinian official has said.</p> <p>“The government will resign in the next 24 hours because this one is weak and there is no chance that Hamas will allow it to work in Gaza,” Amin Maqbul, secretary-general of the ruling Fatah movement’s Revolutionary Council, said on Tuesday, according to the French news agency AFP.</p> <p>The unity government has been stymied by disagreements over the governance of Gaza, which has essentially remained under Hamas control and been in disarray since the Israel-Hamas war last summer. An unidentified Palestinian government source denied to AFP that dissolution was imminent. The source did confirm, however, that the idea had been under discussion for weeks, since a government delegation was forced to abort a late April trip to Gaza because of a dispute with Hamas over salaries for government workers there.</p> <p>The unity government established in May 2014 followed a reconciliation agreement between the two rival Palestinian factions. Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas belongs to the Fatah party. (JNS.org)</p>

Bridal supplement

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Only one week left to get nominations in!

We have received 300 nominations up to now for the 17th annual SA Jewish Report Absa Jewish Achievers. With only a week left to nominate someone for one of the host of categories, hurry up if you haven't done so yet.

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The closing date for nominations is June 26. All nominations can be e-mailed to nominations@sajewishreport.co.za – see more on www.sajr.co.za - and anyone can nominate anyone. The closing date for nominations is June 26, so time is running out to nominate a deserving person for one of the host of awards.

The annual fundraiser culminates in a gala banquet which is, without question, the highlight of the Johannesburg Jewish social calendar. The glittering dinner honours members of South African Jewry who have excelled in business and the humanities.

The judging, especially in the audited business categories, has been described by many top financial people in the know, as the most rigorous and credible business awards process in the country.

Nominations should include:

- The nominee's name, telephone number and e-mail address
 - The award for which the nominee is nominated
 - A short motivation for the nomination
- The Business and Entrepreneurial awards are judged by a panel of independent business people, financial journalists, stockbro-

kers and Absa representatives, who interview all of the candidates. The results are audited by Grant Thornton accountants.

The Absa Jewish Business Awards are:

- The Absa Listed Company Award, going to a Jewish person in a senior leadership position within a listed company who has achieved great success that is worthy of recognition.
- The Absa Unlisted Company Award, going to a Jewish person who is in a senior leadership position in an unlisted company and who has achieved significant success worthy of recognition.
- The Absa Entrepreneur Award, going to a Jewish person who has shown enormous entrepreneurial flair and business innovation.
- The Creative Counsel Young Jewish Entrepreneur Award, going to a Jewish youth. This award recognises entrepreneurship in young Jews aged 30 or younger.

Jewish Report Humanities Awards are:

- The Lifetime Achievement Award, in honour of Helen Suzman, awarded to a Jewish person who has contributed in an extraordinary manner, in their specific field, over a lengthy period of time.
- The Community Service Award, going to a Jewish person who has served the Jewish

- community with remarkable distinction.
- The Arts, Science, Sports & Culture Award, going to a Jewish person who has excelled in any of these spheres.
 - The Chivas Humanitarian Award, in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, awarded to either a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has contributed substantially to the betterment of the lives of the people of South Africa.

NEW AWARD: Europcar Jewish Women in Leadership Award

- Europcar has sponsored a new category in the annual Jewish Achiever Awards to recognise Jewish women's entrepreneurship and leadership.
 - Dawn Nathan-Jones, Europcar CEO and herself a former business achiever nominee in the unlisted companies award category, said: "Being a woman in business and a woman leader, I feel strongly that women need to get more exposure."
- Nominees for the new award do not have to be leaders in the corporate world; they can be leaders who have excelled in the community, or showed great leadership qualities that otherwise might go unrecognised.

The black-tie awards evening is replete with music, comedy and a sparkling array of the who's-who of South African Jewry. There is



no other event on the social calendar which attracts as many high profile individuals as the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards.

2014 winners

In 2014 the Jewish Report Humanities Lifetime Achievement Award, in honour of Helen Suzman, went to Meyer Kahn; the Chivas Humanitarian Award, in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, went to Professor Jonathan Jansen; the Art, Sport, Science & Culture Award went to Professor Valerie Mizrachi and the KIA Community Service Award went to Rabbi Dovid Hazdan.

The 2014 Absa Listed Company Award went to Steven Braudo, deputy CEO of Liberty Life. In the Absa Unlisted Company Award category, Ivor Ichikowitz of the Paramount Group won. The Absa Entrepreneur Awards went to Popimedia's Daniel Levy, Ryan Silberman and Gil Sperling. The newest award, the Creative Counsel Young Entrepreneurs award, went to Nadav Os-sendryver.

Please send your nominations to nominations@sajewishreport.co.za

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The SA Jewish Report is looking for a senior executive to be responsible for the financial and commercial wellbeing of the SA Jewish Report media company.

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- Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of Helen Suzman
- Chivas Humanitarian Award in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris*
- Kia Community Service Award
- Jewish Report Art, Sport, Science & Culture Award
- Absa Entrepreneur Award
- Absa Unlisted Company
- Absa Listed Company Award
- The Creative Counsel Young Jewish Entrepreneur Award
- Europcar Jewish Woman in Leadership Award

NOMINATIONS SHOULD INCLUDE:

- The nominee's name, telephone number and email address
- The award for which the nominee is nominated
- A short motivation for the nomination

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* Awarded to either a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has contributed substantially to the betterment of the lives of the people of South Africa. Members of the Board and Staff of the SA Jewish Report are not eligible for nomination.

UJW’s Divas Concert has audience clamouring for more



CINDY KREE AND JONATHAN BIRIN

The Union of Jewish Women’s Divas in Concert on 10 June, produced by Jonathan Birin and directed by Vicky Friedman, was an outstanding evening. The excitement and delight of the audience was palpable in the theatre, and the applause was hearty for the group of talented, professional and entertaining women - and one man!

Performances included the “Honey” Acapella Girl Group; Lindiwe Bungane (winner of a Naledi Award for Dreamgirls); Carly Graeme from We Will Rock You and Starlight Express; Sivan Raphaely from Rent and We Will Rock You; Sharon Spiegel-Wagner from Grease and The Rocky Horror Show; Naomi Gottlieb Lieberman, composer and arranger for From the Mouths of Babes; Lorri Strauss (of High School Musical, Spotlight SA, MNet’s Backstage and The Rocky Horror Show);Vicky Friedman, from Chicago, Hairspray and Thoroughly Modern Millie; Grease’s Natasha Millar; and Naledi Award winner Harry Sideropoulos who presented 94.7’s Rude Awakening and participated in Hairspray, Big Band Blast, and No Sugar - Canderel Please.

Proceeds of this event went to the various projects of the UJW Johannesburg which serve both the Jewish and broader communities.



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OSTENTATION DURING BAT-/BARMITZVAHS SHOULD BE DISCOURAGED

I want to congratulate Vanessa Valkin on her insightful editorial in the June 5 edition of Jewish Report - “Deconstructing the ritual” (on bar-/batmitzvahs).

What this vulgar ostentation succeeds in doing is preventing less well-off persons “enjoying” their simchas for fear of being ridiculed. They fear that theirs will be like a Salvation Army soup kitchen.

What a pity that we show the world who we are by our material acquirements and in so doing destroy the others’ genuine gifts to

their children.

We have “undercatered” if there is less food left over than to start with - how we love to embarrass the less fortunate!

I was privy to a concerned and caring community in Israel. Irrespective of your wealth you were only allowed a spend X-amount on your simcha. Any amount exceeding that, was welcomed as a contribution towards those unable to “compete”. Could it happen here?

Jeff Katz
Cape Town

LISA SEFTEL’S LOUIS BOTHA BRT EXPLANATION RINGS HOLLOW

I read with plausible laughter, the comments made by Lisa Seftel (in last week’s Jewish Report) regarding the Rea Vaya construction along Louis Botha Avenue. Residents and business-owners along this “Corridor of Freedom” section, our sympathies reach out to you.

As residents of Parktown East, we have been adversely affected by the same inexcusable inconvenience. The project along Empire Road is a classic example. The delays, the damage caused to water pipes and subsequent water wastage, no pedestrian walkways for the general public as well as school children from two primary schools, traffic lights that have taken months to install and to get to work properly, street lights that do not work, removal of street-lined oak trees, never-ending dust, noise and pollution from heavy machinery, the complaints can go on ad infinitum.

I have an undertaking from the contractors that this

“mess” will be sorted out by the end of June. Watch this space, as this project has taken far too long to complete and moreover, far too long for any apologies forthcoming from the relevant parties.

The same drivel that Lisa Seftel has delivered in her article was heard by representatives of Parktown East Residents Association at last year’s meeting (convened at St John’s College).

Furthermore, let’s not be fooled by assumptions that there will be fewer taxis on the road. Ms Seftel, we do not buy into the fact that taxi owners who are shareholders in the Rea Vaya BRT, have or will “give up” their taxis in exchange for this.

Shaun Rossouw
Chairman, Parktown East Residents Association
Johannesburg

SINAI INDABA IS A GRAND EXERCISE IN BRAINWASHING

I would like to put the spotlight on the massive assimilation rate of Jews on the American continent.

It is obvious that Jews have become disappointed with Judaism. Religious Jews, as all other religious people, are fanatics. Fanaticism is more and more rejected by the majority of people. This is a worldwide trend.

Today, changes and developments in technology, in knowledge, as well as in other domains, occur at high speed. What we believed 2 000 years ago, is no more relevant today.

To pretend that the Torah is Divinely inspired and eternal, is childish. Sinai Indaba is a grand exercise in brainwashing.

It may well be a nice social event, but will ultimately not change the reality. Sadly, I am afraid that the Jewish Diaspora will disappear in just a hundred years and it will be a “secular miracle” if Israel will survive.

Yossi Bogacz
Johannesburg

MANY LOUIS BOTHA BRT ISSUES MUST STILL BE RESOLVED

Lisa Seftel’s vision of the way the Bus Rapid Transit system should work (in last week’s Jewish Report) is lofty and wishful. How it will actually work is going to be the test. But the present problems are not wished away with the hopeful future outcomes.

There are many issues which are very irritating for residents at the moment and solutions need to be found. Traffic law enforcement must be stepped up, directional signage must be improved, the promised nighttime construction should actually happen to alleviate congestion and taxi rat-running needs to be controlled.

Inadequate right turns to the west and the Osborn intersection must be reassessed by traffic engineers and the fence erected in the median for the safety of pedestrians, should be re-thought so as not to cause a visually conceived “divide”. Then maybe the citizens of Johannesburg would be more ready to accept the present Johannesburg administration’s vision.

Marcelle Ravid
Ward 73 Councillor
City of Johannesburg

HABONIM HAS A FULL CAMP PROGRAMME

In last week’s issue in “It’s winter camp time again”, we omitted Habonim Dror’s winter activities which are as follows:

Cape Town: Bonim (grade 7) and Amelim (grade 8) Winter Getaway June 19 – 21; Mini Machaneh August 28 - 30.

Johannesburg: Eish (Matric) Winter Seminar July 12-14; Sollelim (grade 9) Winter Getaway July 17-19; Mini Machaneh August 28 – 30.

Port Elizabeth: Winter Mini Machaneh June 26-29.

Durban: Fun event in August. Dates to be announced.

National: Bogrim Seminar (grade 12+) to the National Arts Festival in Grahamstown; South Africa Leadership tour:10 days travelling around SA and learning about South African civil society August 6 - 16.

Israel Leadership tour: 10 days travelling Israel and learning about our beloved homeland July 30 - August 6. Habonim’s summer machaneh will take place on its Onrus campsite December 9 – 29. For information e-mail micaela@habo.org.za.

World News in Brief

U of Illinois censured for cancelling prof’s job over anti-Israel tweets

WASHINGTON - A national professors’ organisation has voted to censure the University of Illinois for rescinding a job offer to a professor over his anti-Israel tweets.

The vote by the American Association of University Professors took place last Saturday at its annual meeting in Washington, DC. In April, the association released a report that found the university had violated the principles of academic freedom and tenure in the case of Steven Salaita.

Also in last Saturday’s voting, Yeshiva University in New York was removed from the association’s censure list.

The condemnation, a relatively rare move by the professors’ group, can damage a university’s reputation in the academic world, according to The Associated Press. There are 56 institutions of higher learning on the association’s censure list.

Last summer, the university announced that Salaita would be joining the faculty. Chancellor Phyllis Wise later revoked the appointment, however, after being made aware of tweets by Salaita attacking Israel and its US supporters in harsh language during Israel’s operation in Gaza last summer. The tweets appeared on Salaita’s personal Twitter account.

Donors to the university reportedly had complained about the tweets and called on the university to rescind the appointment.

Salaita has filed a lawsuit against the university, the board of trustees and several administrators claiming that they violated his constitutional rights, including to free speech and due process. He also is suing for breach of contract and intentional emotional distress. Salaita is seeking compensation and the job as a tenured professor in the American Indian studies department.

Meanwhile, Yeshiva University was taken off the list after rectifying issues over some of its hiring and firing policies and practices. (JTA)

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Cassidy scoops drama and communication awards

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Sixteen-year-old Cassidy Gordon (pictured), a grade 11 learner at King David Victory Park, who is a passionate drama student, has been involved in drama and public speaking since the age of nine, with the guidance of her speech and drama teacher, Roz Jaff. Cassidy has demonstrated extraordinary talent and commitment and has won numerous awards. She achieved distinction in the Junior exams of the South African College of Speech and Drama and did outstandingly well in the recent Johannesburg Speech and Drama Festival. She won the following awards at the festival:

1. The Shirley Bloch Trophy, going to the best grade 10, 11 or 12 pupil in the “Individual Poetry Speaking” section.
2. The Patti Kramer Trophy for the best senior in the “Public Speaking” section.
3. The Patricia Grady Trophy for a monologue from the “Classical” repertoire (monologues written prior to 1900).
4. The Dorothy Gardner Award - a dramatic



Photo: Supplied

programme consisting of a monologue and one other item for “Performers 16 - 18 Years”.

In addition, she was recognised for achieving 90 per cent and more in the “Contemporary Monologue” and the “Dramatised Poetry” sections.

YC Primary School does Mandela Day proud

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Union of Jewish Women recently sent out a call for a collection of baby goods to help mothers with new-born babies in Johannesburg’s public hospitals in commemoration of Mandela Day.

It had become evident that many of these moms did not have what they needed for their babies. Yeshiva College Primary School exceeded all expectations by collecting more than 200 boxes of items.

The Union of Jewish Women’s initial target had been 200 boxes from all schools! The Yeshiva College pupils embraced this act of chesed with all their heart.



Pictured are Joseph Beer, principal; Dani Aires; Ella Salkinder; and Oren Kalmek, with some of the goods collected.

Fruitful interaction between KDVP High and Pholosho School

LORETTE VIEREN

The Mitzvah School learners from King David High School Victory Park have had a very exciting second term with Alexandra township’s Pholosho School learners.

The meetings took place last week Tuesday afternoon and the Pholosho pupils were assisted with challenging homework during the course of the afternoon, with an emphasis on extending creative abilities. Discussions were also held

regarding their social and emotional wellbeing.

The learners played sport and participated in various other fun activities. KDVP who is “partnered” with Pholosho School, says it is a privilege to engage in activities with them.

The King David Schools Foundation provided lunch and the get-together enabled KDVP to end the term on a high note. The input of the Mitzvah School participants and the Foundation is always valuable and the continued effort and support are greatly appreciated by both schools.



Photo: Yael Gordon

KD Victory Park High School Mitzvah School learners together with learners from Pholosho School in Alexandra township, enjoying lunch together at the end of the second term.

TA Primary School brings winter cheer to orphanage

KIM ISAACMAN

The pupils of Torah Academy Primary School for Youth Day on Tuesday, adopted the Orlando Orphanage in Soweto.

They handed over to the orphanage more than 40 blankets for the “67 Blankets for Mandela” project, linked to Youth Day.

They were told that without the youth of today and tomorrow, there would be no future.

Pictured are Kayla Kay; Shayna Unterslak; Dinah Sekhothe (from the Orlando Orphanage); Denise Nisselow; and Gavi Shaw. In the background is Pascalina Vilakazi who works in the primary school and was responsible for bringing Orlando Orphanage to the attention of Torah Academy.



Photo: Kim Isaacman

Are growth prospects looking brighter?



To find out about growth prospects for South African businesses, read the Grant Thornton International Business Report (IBR) which provides insight into the views and expectations of more than a thousand South African businesses each year. We are Grant Thornton and we help our clients understand the issues that impact on their business decisions. Contact us to help unlock your potential for growth.

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Today Friday (June 19)

• Chabad presents “It’s Friday Night Live! Soups and scotch on the menu, and an inspiring Shul service with Rabbi Ari Kievman at Shul in Sandton Central. Time: 18:00. Information: 079-434-1293 or rak@chabad.org.za

• UZLC hosts The Star’s Metrowatch reporter Anna Cox on “Updates on the City of Johannesburg”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time 12:45 - 14:00. Information: Gloria (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

• Chabad’s Seniors Club on a daily basis presents “Educational Academy for the Elderly”. It includes free transport, occupational therapy, lectures and discussions, refreshments, lunch, Yiddish Club, iPad lessons, blood pressure and sugar tests, and much more. Venue: Chabad House, Savoy. Time: 09:00 - 13:00. Information: Rabbi Ari Kievman (011) 440-6600 or www.chabadsouthafrica.org/seniors

Monday (June 22)

• Chabad presents “Minyan in the CBD”. Quick, dedicated daily Mincha/Mariv with refreshments. Optional learning opportunities. Venue: 8 Stella St, Sandton. Time: 17:20. In formation: Rabbi Ari Kievman 079-434-1293 or rak@chabad.org.za

• Chabad Seniors Club for men and women, offers memory enhancement with Cynthia Liptz lectures and discussions, refreshments, lunch, iPad lessons and much more. Includes free transport. Venue: Chabad House, Savoy. Time: 09:00 - 13:00. Information: Rabbi Ari Kievman (011) 440-6600.

• UJW adult education division hosts Prof Malcolm Purkey, dean of African Film and Drama Academy (AFDA), on “The Making of ‘Sophiatown’, the Musical - Slide Presentation”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (June 23)

• Chabad offers a multiplex of shiurim at Chabad House, Savoy. Time: 09:45 - lecture for men and women - “Fascinating Facts” with Rabbi Ari Kievman and 11:15,

Sunday (June 21)

• Chabad presents Sinai Indaba’s Shacharis Minyan. Power Sundays; Learn, shmooze, pray. Start your week in a soulful way at Shul in Sandton. Time: 08:15. Information: (011) 440-6600.

News

‘Le Zulu Blanc’ is recognised in the Queen’s Birthday List



OWN CORRESPONDENT

“Le Zulu Blanc” or “the white Zulu” as French audiences affectionately call him, South African music legend Johnny Clegg (pictured) has been awarded an OBE by Queen Elizabeth in her Birthday List for 2015. He had previously also been honoured by the French government.

“Buckingham Palace has released the 2015 Birthday Honours list and the British High Commission is delighted to announce that South African artist, activist and philanthropist Johnny Clegg has been honoured with the Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE),” the High Commission said in a statement on Sunday.

British High Commissioner to South Africa Judith Macgregor said: “This is a recognition of Johnny’s unique services to the arts, vulnerable people and children and to democracy in South Africa. I am particularly pleased that we are able to celebrate his achievements of the past three decades.”

Clegg, who will receive the OBE at a date still to be announced, said it was “a tremendous moment” for him to receive the honour and acknowledgement expressed in the award.

“It has been a long journey of more than 30 years from when I first began to experiment with truly South African cross-over music, and at the same time becoming a cultural activist in the struggle against apartheid.

“Our music was banned or restricted on national radio, as well as shows being closed down from time to time by apartheid’s security police; we were faced with many obstacles that we had to contend with.”

Clegg has worked with the End Conscription Campaign, the trade union movement, the Free the Children in Detention campaign, taken part in efforts to resist the forced removals of rural communities, and raised funds for the United Democratic Front, and other progressive causes.

Clegg has received honorary doctorates from Wits and the University of Kwazulu-Natal and he was the first recipient of the Jewish Report’s own Jewish Arts Award as part of its annual Absa Jewish Achievers. “They’re honours, but don’t add to my career. They acknowledge my journey,” he told the Jewish Report at the time.

Another honour conferred on him was decades earlier, maybe more significant, but less glamorous. His dance mentors in the servants’ quarters of Killarney in the 1970s called him “Wabaleka no Checkers”.

It means: “You ran away with your Checkers bag” - the Checkers bag contained his dancing takkies; he ran from the caretaker who felt a white boy hadn’t a place with black men, and was police - worthily contravening the Group Areas Act.

Clegg argued in that early interview that what had been reflected as racism, resulted from economic factors, not innate hatred.

“The competition for resources is desperate,” he said at the time. “Our government must create balance between the immigrants who bring wealth and those who bring their appetite to grow a future. In a melting pot society like ours, the immigrant communities stick together, which enables scapegoat identification.

“These problems are exacerbated: we don’t have economic means to integrate local people. Often Malawians and Zimbabweans are better educated and get better paying jobs. This sets up an identifiably foreign economic niche. Like with the Indians. And the Jews.”

Foreignness is not foreign to Clegg himself, who, over the years, has called many places, from England to Zimbabwe to Zambia to South Africa, home. “The link between immigrant communities in Africa and Jews is about remembering roots,” he said.

“I am African. My horizons were not affected by Israel’s identity or her politics,” he said.

Spirit of Rebbe drives jockey Espinoza to Triple Crown

JACK MILNER

What is the difference between religion and superstition? This is a subject that one can talk about for hours, but perhaps the definition I liked best was that superstition doesn't dictate morals. It might tell you to not walk under a ladder because something bad will happen to you, but it doesn't dictate to you what is good or what is right.

Jockey Victor Espinoza, who was born in Mexico and is a practising Catholic, was about

to ride American Pharoah in the final leg of the American Triple Crown. The horse had won the first two legs - the Kentucky Derby and the Preakness - and was looking to become the first horse in 37 years to win all three races.

To help his cause, Espinoza prayed for success at the grave of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Queens, New York on the Thursday before the race.

Espinoza recited psalms at the Rebbe's ohel at the Old Montefiore Cemetery in Cambria Heights. He also wrote out

his own prayer note in Spanish that he added to a pile of prayers left at the sacred site.

While at the grave site he carried the biography, "Rebbe: The Life and Teachings of Menachem M Schneerson, the Most Influential Rabbi in Modern History", by Joseph Telushkin.

Espinoza was accompanied by Rabbi Efraim Zaltzman, director of Chabad of Kingsborough in Brooklyn, Kabbalah teacher Rabbi Berel Lerman and Rabbi Motti Seligson, director of media relations at

Chabad.org.

"No matter what religion you are, or what temple you go to, you always come out with a different energy, which is good," he said about visiting the gravesite, adding that he was not superstitious.

Talking about the upcoming race, he said: "Whatever happens, if it's meant to be, it's meant to be. If not, then I move on like last year."

Espinoza added that he was a "spiritual man". He said he prayed about 10 times and meditated probably five or six times a day. After receiving a blessing last month from Chabad Rabbi Sholom Ber Korf in Florida, he scheduled the gravesite visit, a detour from his regular preparations.

"So much energy right here," he said of the shrine. "It would kind of build you up right here. It's like good energy drinks."

The jockey told CBS the most important thing he prayed for was health because, "without health, we cannot do anything". His Jewish publicist, Mike Weitz, said Espinoza believed that "with G-d's help and the Rebbe interceding for him... he's going to be very



Jockey Victor Espinoza adds his own prayer note in Spanish to a pile of prayers left at the grave of the Lubavitcher Rebbe in Queens, New York, before the running of the Belmont Stakes.

successful and very safe".

American Pharoah's owners, the Zayat family, are observant Jews who originated from Egypt. The family said they would observe Shabbat on race day and would camp overnight in RVs on Belmont's grounds.

Espinoza and American Pharoah won the Belmont Stakes in emphatic style, ending the 37-year wait for a new Triple Crown winner.

Espinoza said that if his prayers were answered, he would not mind making the trip to the Rebbe's grave a new Belmont Stakes tradition. It did help that Espinoza was on a brilliant horse who many pundits had been predicting before the start of the event, would win the Triple Crown.

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Comrades No 39 for Vic Boston

JACK MILNER

Vic Boston, an osteopath and acupuncturist, completed the Comrades Marathon in 11 hours 45 minutes and 35 seconds to finish in position 10 727 of 16 588 starters. In his category Vic finished in position 1 343 of 2 379 starters.

He received the Vic Clapham medal, which goes to athletes who finish the race in between 11 and 12 hours.

Vic Clapham was the man who founded the Comrades Marathon. He fought in the First World War and after the war, wanted to establish a memorial to the suffering and deaths of his comrades, as well as their camaraderie in overcoming those hardships.

His idea was to establish an extremely demanding race where the physical endurance of entrants could be put to the test.

He asked for permission to stage a 56-mile (89,60 km) race between Pietermaritzburg and Durban under the name of the Comrades Marathon, and for it to become a living memorial to the spirit of the soldiers of the Great War.

Permission was at first refused but was eventually granted. The first Comrades took place on May 24 1921, Empire Day, starting outside the Pietermaritzburg City Hall, with 34 runners.

The constitution of the race states that one of its primary aims is to "celebrate mankind's spirit over adversity".

In that regard Clapham would have been very proud to see Vic Boston receive his special medal, as he embodies that very spirit.



Vic Boston completed his 39th Comrades this year and it would take some major catastrophe to stop him making it No 40 next year.

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