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south african Jewish Report

■ Volume 21 – Number 19 ■ June 9 2017 ■ 15 Sivan 5777

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**What do Presidents
Donald Trump and Jacob
Zuma have in common?**

See page 3



Photo: Jason Crouse

Comrades in arms

South African Board of Jewish
Education general director Rabbi Craig
Kacev stopped for some “spiritual
nourishment” while running his first
Comrades Marathon. See page 8.

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Determined to take down cyber anti-Semites

NICOLA MILTZ

“You Jews think you are special just because the ANC keep bowing down to your demands. Well wait and see... You are covertly trying to take over our country and subject us to oppression like the one you did during apartheid. This time we are prepared and ready for you. We will ambush you in your homes and rape you... and drive you to the sea.

“You deserve to be kidnapped and tortured for the satanic actions against the noble Palestinian people. We know your names and addresses [three leaders in the community were named] and the rest of the Jewish Mafia that is eating our blood and subverting our democracy. WE ARE COMING AFTER YOU.”

This chilling message was posted on the South African Jewish Board of Deputies’ (SAJBD) Facebook site in July 2014. Three years later and an enormous effort on the part of the Board, and they are still no closer to bringing the perpetrator to book.

The “fake” individual who originally posted it, remains unidentified and safely ensconced in Cyberland.

It effectively requires a change of law, which is what the SAJBD is advocating, as well as a much needed change in the way cyber hate crimes are dealt with.

It has been an “immensely frustrating” journey into the heart of the cyber underworld with the SAJBD working tirelessly in a desperate bid to help curb the scourge of hate speech currently flooding online activity.



Wendy Kahn

“So much more needs to be done in terms of the law, to get international social media companies to assist local law enforcement agencies in identifying perpetrators of online hate speech,” said SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn.

“Cyber hate is a reality facing many communities in South Africa, not just the Jewish community. The lack of knowledge in dealing with this crime is horrific and concerning,” she said.

Law enforcement on the ground is “clueless” when it comes to timeously addressing potentially dangerous threats and incitement to violence threats that

“make us all very vulnerable”, she added. The Board vows to “stop at nothing”, in its fight to track down and apprehend perpetrators of cyber hate - a mission which it says has proven “much more difficult” than it ever imagined.

Members of the Board met with social media stakeholders, including representatives from Facebook, Twitter, Google and Yahoo, in New York recently in an attempt to address current problems faced by countries falling victim to this type of hateful online rhetoric and incitement to violence.

In New York, Kahn addressed top level players on the social media world stage. She told them of the Board’s frustrations about combatting local cyber hate in South Africa.

“It is all very well for cities like London, New York and Paris to fast track the identification process, but when you’re in Johannesburg where there is little if any social media representation, it is a different story,” she told representatives.

The meeting was convened by the US-based Anti-Defamation League (ADL), which is leading the way in combatting and exposing anti-Semitism worldwide.

Continued on page 4>>

Shabbat Times this week

Starts	Ends	
17:05	17:57	Johannesburg
17:26	18:21	Cape Town
16:45	17:38	Durban
17:06	17:59	Bloemfontein
16:57	17:52	Port Elizabeth
16:50	17:45	East London

Parshat Beha’alotcha

Mitzvah 384 helps us clear our minds

Only a few weeks ago, in Parshat Bechukotai, we came across the expression “walking casually with G-d”.

The habit of walking casually with G-d usually makes its appearance in times of abundance, when the source of our blessings recedes to the back of our minds and becomes marginal.

Mitzvah 384 in our Parsha will help us to clear our minds and dispel all the secondary causes of our situations, good or bad.

In order to bring out the full flavour of this mitzvah, I propose that you read the following from Sefer Hachinuch Mitzvah 384 Parshat

Beha’alotcha.

“The precept of sounding trumpets at the Sanctuary and in battle to sound the trumpets in the Sanctuary every day when every offering was sacrificed, and so likewise in times of troubles: for it is stated, ‘And when you

go to war, etc you shall sound an alarm with the trumpets (Numbers 10:9)’, and it is written afterward, as well. Also on the day of your gladness and your appointed seasons, and at the beginning of your months, you shall blow the trumpets over your burnt-offerings and over the sacrifices of your peace-offerings, etc (ibid. 10).

“Now, although Scripture gave instructions about a day of gladness, and appointed festive season, and the beginning of a month, these are not meant particularly. For every day they would sound the trumpets at the sanctuary over an offering.

“At the root of the precept lies the reason that at the time of an offering they had to focus their thoughts well about its purpose. As is known, it could become disqualified through certain specific thoughts. Moreover, an offering required perfect concentration of intention before the Sovereign Master of all who command us about it.

“So, also at a time of trouble, a man needs great concentration when he pleads before his Creator that He should have pity on him and rescue him from his misfortune. Therefore, they

Rev Joseph Matzner



were commanded about sounding the trumpets at these times. For man, being possessed of physical matter [the body], requires a great arousal to matters.

“For human nature, with nothing to arouse it, will remain asleep. And nothing will stir him like sounds of melody - it is known matter - and all the more certainly trumpets, the blast of which is the strongest sound among all musical instruments.

“And there is another benefit to be found in the blast of the trumpets, as it would seem, apart from the arousal to proper intention. For, by the sounds, a man will remove from his heart the thought of other affairs of the world, and will pay attention at that time to nothing but the matter of the offering.

“But why should I go on at length, when this is known (evident) to anyone who gives ear to trumpets and the peal of the shofar with proper intention.”

The Jewish people are reminded daily to “walk appreciatively with G-d”.

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Jacob Zuma and his Jewish grandson

NICOLA MILTZ

President Jacob Zuma has a Jewish grandson who lives in the heart of Jewish Johannesburg with his Jewish single mom who is a singer and works in the music industry.

The adorable, two-year-old toddler is the son of Duduzane Zuma, the President’s highflying, playboy son who is currently at the centre of a flurry of leaked Gupta e-mails which link him and the nefarious Gupta family to state capture.

In May 2015, while the millionaire Duduzane was walking down the aisle at his outlandishly lavish wedding - to another woman - this 35-year-old woman was about to give birth to his son.

Duduzane, also 35, known for his charm and roving eye, became the father to the child just two weeks after tying the knot with Shanice Stork. The wedding which cost in the hundreds of thousands was paid for in major part by the Gupta family.

The boy’s mom, whose identity is known to the Jewish Report, is a beautiful brunette and has been in the music industry for several years. The Jewish Report has chosen not to name her in the interests of protecting the toddler’s identity.

Following weekend newspaper reports, she has gone to ground in a bid to stay out of the limelight. According to a close relative she has been “bombarded” and wishes to be left alone to bring up her child.

This week she deleted her Facebook profile which only a few days ago showed her with her baby boy facing away from the camera and read: “Proud mommy to the cutest kid in the world”. She has deleted any Internet photographs of herself as a singer and all references to her life now. Her sister and the child’s bobba have also deleted images and references to the small child.

In the trail of invoices that were sent to Duduzane’s lawyers that formed part of her proof of the child’s expenses, Jewish Report pieced together that this much-loved little boy was born at the Netcare Linkwood Hospital in Linksfield. He and his mom frequent the usual shops in the north-eastern suburbs, including the Fairmount Pick n Pay and Norwood Hypermarket, the Spar in Savoy and Balfour Park Shopping Centre. She goes to Shula’s Bakery, Food Lover’s Market and Park Meadows Baby City.

According to leaked e-mails, it has been suggested that while Duduzane was enjoying a life of complete luxury going on first class business trips abroad, and attending cocktail



Duduzane Zuma

parties, the mother of his son was trying desperately to get money for basics like nappies and formula from him.

ama-Bhungane and Scorpio, who this week described Duduzane as “kept and captured”, said that as soon as the boy’s mother demanded maintenance from him, he turned to his close family friends - the

The Gupta’s lawyer, Gert van der Merwe, was apparently instrumental in drawing up the final R3,5-million maintenance agreement - but this was after months of protracted legal wrangling.

Guptas - for legal help and assistance.

The Gupta’s lawyer, Gert van der Merwe, was apparently instrumental in drawing up the final R3,5-million maintenance agreement - but this was after months of protracted legal wrangling.

Duduzane’s lawyers and her maintenance lawyers knit-picked over things like till slips, credit card bills and start-up costs for the child.

According to Sunday newspapers, Van

der Merwe advised Zuma to not rush into anything and cautioned him not to “go in blindly” when it came to final payments. He suggested the maintenance money be paid into a trust.

In a number of legal e-mails in the possession of Jewish Report, Duduzane’s lawyer called her initial demand for R30 000 a month until the final settlement “absurd” and said it “cannot be accepted”.

She had initially requested R39 353,65 to cover pregnancy and post-birth expenses. And his lawyers said Duduzane was prepared to pay R17 000 upfront. These costs included the baby boy’s circumcision, top of the range pram, night nurse and antenatal classes.

In an e-mail to Duduzane, sent in September 2015, his lawyer proposed that the “nanny must be included in monthly maintenance claims... and, if she has done any other work, such as household help, or will be doing so, this must be stated, as your client will then bear a portion of her cost for herself too,” the lawyer wrote.

The mother also attached the fees of a few private schools, including King David Schools, or Crawford for Duduzane to pay as part of his son’s monthly allowance.

According to other media reports, the mom was left with little if any money from the multimillionaire during the protracted negotiations. She allegedly e-mailed him

several times, asking for money for nappies and formula. “Luckily I’m breastfeeding for now,” one e-mail from her revealed.

The Sunday Times maintained that on October 8, 2015, Duduzane, wrote to his lawyer: “I have the sheriff of the court at my gate with a maintenance subpoena set for the 23rd of October. Should I accept or should I divert him to come to you.”

Apparently, he appeared in court and that is when a settlement was drafted where a one-off lump-sum payment would be made, which the mother could invest to look after their child.

The confidential agreement includes a provision for Duduzane to have limited access to his son.

Duduzane is the twin brother of sister Duduzile, and son of Zuma’s third wife, Kate Mantsho, who committed suicide in 2000 when he was 18. It is not known whether President Zuma has spent any time with his grandson.

The SA Jewish Report made numerous attempts to contact the mom and shortly before going to print, the newspaper received a letter from her lawyer saying his client did not wish to comment or be interviewed in the best interests of her and her child.

• We extend our thanks to City Press for their assistance.

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Cyber lawyers warn: “Think before you post...”

EMMA SADLEIR AND SARAH HOFFMAN

Every minute of every day, people turn to social media to air their views. Just had the best ever soy latte? Instagram needs to see it. Feeling #blessed by your husband and kids? Your Facebook friends need to know.

Feeling infuriated at the latest power outage? Tell Eskom via Twitter. And why not? We live in a country where freedom of expression is enshrined in our Constitution, and we have smart phones which allow us to publish content immediately.

And while, in the heat of the moment, it seems appropriate to join the online conversation - no matter how controversial or heated it may be - what even the smartest people fail to realise, is that what you do or say online (and even what you share, like or retweet) has serious legal, disciplinary and reputational consequences.

The week before last, Jewish Report broke the story of anti-Semitic vitriol on social media surrounding a Holocaust play put on by King David Victory Park.

Last week we saw the harsh consequences of Hellen Zille’s infamous colonialism tweet come to the fore. This may well be the end of her political career.

This week, the social media networks were once again up in arms when a racist voice note from a single Pietermaritzburg Girls High School learner to one other learner, went viral, sparking an onslaught of online attacks on the school.

Every single day companies, who are victims of false defamatory allegations on social media, contact us at our social media law offices.

What these and so many other stories occurring daily show us, is that the way we communicate, has fundamentally changed. Before smart phones and social media, the



most feasible way of sharing your views publicly was to write a letter to the editor of the newspaper.

The letter would be edited and checked by more than one person, and only if the editor was reasonably comfortable with the content, would it be published.

That editor would also have undergone years of training as to what may and may not be published.

Now, with each of us armed with a powerful publishing tool in our hands, there are no checks and balances and no editorial control. If we want to post something, we do so immediately - onto a very public, very permanent platform. In the era of citizen journalism, each one of us is a journalist and social networks are the newspaper.

What most citizen journalists fail to understand, though, is that in the eyes of the law, the content we post on social media is treated the same way as the content published on the front page of a newspaper.

The legal consequences are no different, if not stricter. And while there is so much to say when it comes to advising on how to use social media without getting into

trouble, here are two incredibly important legal concepts to understand:

1. No separate set of cyber laws
What we refer to as the “cyberspace fallacy” is the misconception that there is a separate set of “social media laws” or “cyber laws” that apply to the online world. This is absolutely untrue: the same laws that apply to your conduct in the real world apply to your conduct (and content) in cyberspace.

For example, as an employee, you owe a duty of good faith to your employer, which includes not bringing your company’s name into disrepute. If you post something online that damages the reputation of your employer (even if it is not related to the company at all), your employer has the right to discipline or even fire you.

A perfect example of this was when New York PR consultant, Justine Sacco was boarding a flight to South Africa, she tweeted to her 170 Twitter followers from her personal account: “Going to Africa. Hope I don’t get AIDS. Just kidding. I’m white!” This “joke” cost Justine her job and turned her into a global hate figure after it was re-tweeted by a tech blogger to his 15 000 followers.

In addition, any other regulatory

bodies which apply to your ordinary life, apply online too. This means that an employment contract, a school code of conduct or guidelines of professional bodies such as the Health Professions Council of South Africa for doctors are equally applicable to online conduct as they are in the real world.

2. The chain of publication
According to our law, where content has been published, every single person who has been directly or indirectly responsible for publishing it, can be held liable for it. So, if, for example, the SA Jewish Report published something defamatory about a person, that person can technically sue not only the newspaper, but the journalist who wrote the article, the editor, the printing company who printed it, the news agent who made the paper available for distribution, and so on.

However, in the case of secondary publishers, the defence of innocent dissemination applies, meaning that they only become responsible once they are aware of the illegal content.

What this translates to in a digital

context is that every single person who shares, likes, retweets content - even people who are tagged in defamatory content (and do not un-tag themselves) - can be held as liable as the person who posted the content themselves.

In the context of a Facebook page or group, the manager of the page or community group can be held as responsible for the content as the original author of the content.

In a landmark recent judgement in Switzerland, a man was successfully sued for defamation for liking a Facebook post accusing another man of anti-Semitism and racism. The judge compared liking a post to “spreading a value judgement” and said that a “like” is associated with a positive - meaning he clearly supported the posts.

Even if you share someone else’s content where this content is objectionable, you need to make sure that you are vocal about your distaste/disagreement with the content. If not, it might be construed that you are endorsing the content by sharing it, and you could be held as responsible as the original author of the content.

Finally, if there is one thing to remember, we should always do “The Billboard Test”. If you wouldn’t post content on a huge billboard on a major highway with your name, surname and the name of your company or school, do not let it exist in digital format! Indeed, the legal, reputational and disciplinary consequences of posting it on social media would be as

severe as if it were posted on that billboard.

- Emma Sadleir is a social media law expert, speaker, and author of *Don’t Film Yourself Having Sex and other Legal Advice for the Age of Social Media*.
- Sarah Hoffman is an Associate and Business Development Manager at Emma Sadleir Social Media Law.



Emma Sadleir



Sarah Hoffman

Determined to take down cyber anti-Semites

>> Continued from page 2

“We have been working with the ADL for several years dealing with our local challenges in particular,” said Kahn.

The vile Facebook message was written by a fictitious “Phumza Zondi”. This was not the only message; there was a plethora of similar posts on social media by extremists who surfaced during the 2014 Israeli-Gaza conflict.

“The number of hate mail rose substantially during this period,” said Kahn.

The problem with 90 per cent of the posts at the time, was that the source could not be identified. “In the past perpetrators could easily be traced and charged, but now through social media they can hide behind the veil of anonymity,” said Kahn.

So, instead of brazenly vocalising their anti-Semitism in public using their own names, perpetrators successfully hide behind undetectable, fictitious names, “making it next to impossible” to trace and apprehend them.

While Facebook is willing to assist in identifying the user’s true identity, there

is a long and winding maze of legal and administrative processes to follow, often leading straight back to square one.

“Facebook will take a post down, but it is very difficult to take legal action when identities are hidden,” said Kahn.

The situation is further complicated by global freedoms and company law - different in each country.

SAJBD knew it had “a very serious problem” when it took its complaint to the Sandringham Police Station in July 2014. “No one in the charge office had a clue what Facebook was,” said Kahn.

Since the shock of realising that local law enforcement “was totally ill-equipped” to deal with matters of cyber hate crimes and cyber hate speech, she and members of the Jewish community have been determined to find a way to address this scourge.

But their efforts, which have taken them through the corridors of every available department of law enforcement, have met with

very little if any success.

“We have phenomenal laws against hate speech in South Africa and it is because of this that we have managed till now to keep anti-Semitism levels relatively low. But laws against online hate speech are inadequate,” said Kahn.

The Board vows to “stop at nothing”, in its fight to track down and apprehend perpetrators of cyber hate – a mission which it says has proven “much more difficult” than it ever imagined.

In August last year Kahn made a public submission to Parliament’s Portfolio Committee on Communications on this very topic, during public hearings on the Film and

Publications Amendment Bill.

While the SAJBD is no closer to identifying the fictitious “Phumza Zondi”, it is hopeful that new laws are being promulgated and law enforcement agents are becoming more equipped in dealing with the problem. The controversial Prevention and Combatting of Hate Crimes and Hate Speech Bill, still poses dangers in its current form to freedom of expression.

“But we now know the faces of Facebook and other social media companies. Going forward we will have improved channels of communication. Furthermore, we will continue to try and address our serious issues around assisting law enforcement personnel with accessing identity information.

“This is not just about the Jewish community,” said Kahn, “It is for all of us, foreign nationals, the LGBTI community, Muslims and women. We need a way to fight this scourge, this new form of hate.”



NEWSMAKER

Q & A

Coming out from the shadows

Michael Bagraim is a top attorney in labour law and a Member of Parliament for the Democratic Alliance (DA). Last week, he was appointed Shadow Minister of Labour.

How would you describe yourself?

A person who is not only interested in current affairs and politics in South Africa, but someone who wants to try his utmost to ensure the situation is improved and things are done to create a positive and workable democracy.

When did you decide you wanted to go into labour law and why?

When I was at university. I studied political science for my first three years and thereafter changed to law. In launching my career, I tried to combine both political science and law and found that this was a perfect mix to involve myself with the trade union movement. Initially, I represented a few small independent unions who were my clients for my first few years.

What drew you to politics and when was that?

The career as a labour lawyer inevitably drew me into politics and I became involved with civil society organisation over 25 years ago. Although I wasn't involved in party political activities, I appeared on many occasions in Parliament to represent the Chamber of Commerce movement in the Labour Portfolio.

Why the DA?

The DA is a party that has respect for the democracy and in particular for the free market system. It is forever changing in order to ensure the best for South Africa. The field of labour legislation is a dynamic one and the DA very carefully assesses the situation on a regular basis.

What was your introduction to

politics?

Approximately five years ago I became involved with the Democratic Alliance when they were rewriting their labour policy. I had a strong hand in helping them restructure their labour policy.

What is it about politics that you enjoy?

Politics is not only enjoyable because of the interaction, but it is the most wonderful feeling when you see legislation changed to create more jobs.

How has being Jewish impacted on your career?

My career has always been very strongly moulded by the "Ethics of our Fathers" and my Judaism has always constituted a strong golden thread through everything I do, both in politics and in law.

What does it mean to you to be chosen as Shadow Minister of Labour?

The Shadow Ministry of Labour is a vital position in all democracies. This entails the oversight of the implementation of our labour laws, the changes of our labour laws and certainly the oversight of the Department of Labour.

What are your goals as Shadow Minister?

My immediate goal is to ensure we tackle the dire unemployment situation in South Africa. Our understanding is that over 50 per cent of our youth are unemployed and that the Department of Labour is not doing much to turn this situation around. Changing this predicament has become my immediate

goal. I am helping to change some of the regulations to create a more user-friendly environment to enable small business to take on more employees.

How has being a politician impacted on your career as a lawyer?

I have had to employ more lawyers to ensure that my office is monitored on a daily basis. I am out of the office most afternoons.

Describe your worst and best days in politics to date

My worst day in politics was when the entire National Assembly Chamber descended into disarray with both violence and foul language, degenerating our political system into a mess. My best day was when the amendments I had suggested regarding various pieces of labour legislation, were accepted into new laws.

What is your advice to the Jewish community in terms of what we can do to enhance South Africa?


Our community needs to be more and more involved in civil society. Although we are a small community, we are capable, influential and positive. Our people make absolutely capable and effective politicians.


What do you believe will happen to Jacob Zuma as president?

I strongly believe that our ruling party will in fact remove Jacob Zuma as their president in December 2017. The removal of the president does not correct the mess that we find ourselves in, but it certainly is the first very positive step.

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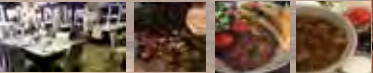
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World News in Brief

Sea of Galilee hits all-time-low recorded water level

EILAT - Israel's Sea of Galilee, also known as the Kinneret, hit an all-time-low recorded water level in May, prompting concerns about Israel's largest freshwater lake. According to Israel's Water Authority, the Sea of Galilee lost 15 centimetres of its water level in May, decreasing the level to nine million cubic metres, an all-time low since recording began in 1920. The situation in the Sea of Galilee has deteriorated in recent years, as Israel's north faces an ongoing drought. Hydrologists estimate that the water level will drop by a metre before the rainy season begins in November. The Sea of Galilee has played a prominent role in both Jewish and Christian history, with much of Jesus' early

ministry centred on the shores of the lake, according to the Christian Gospels. For modern Israel, the Sea of Galilee has played a key role in providing water for personal and agricultural use throughout most of the country's history, following the completion of the Israeli National Water Carrier in 1964. The lack of water flow into the Sea of Galilee has led to deep concern over the lake's vitality, as the drop in water levels causes the salinity of the lake to rise, threatening marine life. The low water level also poses a risk for the Dead Sea, which receives water from the lake through the Jordan River (JNS.org)



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Jewish Report

Living on the southern tip

I am so grateful we live on the southern tip of Africa. In the last few months, there have been a number of horrific terror attacks around the world. In the last week alone, there have been attacks in London, Paris and Melbourne. In Europe and the US, there is clearly a rise in terror and, with that, anti-Semitism.

In some places, individual Jews are even choosing to hide their Jewish identity.

This is not the case in South Africa, where Jews are very open about their religion. A prime example of this was evident during the Comrades Marathon on Sunday.

Comrades prayer

Here, runners stop (or keep running) while putting on tefillin, saying morning prayers, say tehillin, having something kosher to nibble on or drink some juice before continuing on their way. And those who need to say Kaddish, are assured of a minyan to enable them to do this mitzvah and still participate.

Think back a number of decades, particularly in Poland, Russia, Germany and other European countries, Jews - no matter how religious - did not openly display their religious rituals out of fear for their lives. Even in some places in South Africa, Jews were not that welcome and didn't "flaunt" their religion and rituals.

But here and now, it seems Jews stop in the middle of wherever, to do whatever needs to be done in the name of their religion. I find that wonderful! It makes me believe that, despite what is happening with the leadership of this country, we are able to stand up and be proud.

How many other countries have their chief rabbi in the forefront of the battle to unseat the president? We can be proud!

Terror attacks

Looking abroad at these horrific attacks, they all seem quite random and definitely not well prepared. Yes, Islamic State (ISIS) had claimed responsibility, but the organisation as such doesn't seem to have been involved in either.

In ISIS's claim, they said the attack "was carried out by a soldier of the Islamic State in response to the call for targeting the subjects of the coalition states". What makes someone a "soldier" of the Islamic State? Being sympathetic to their cause?

In London, seven people were killed and 40 were wounded. The "soldiers' weapons" were a rented van and knives. This represents ISIS's new global terrorism. Their soldiers don't appear to require training, any real co-operation or discussion with the ISIS leadership - they certainly don't seem to need any state-of-the-art weapons.

This type of terrorism is almost more concerning than flying planes into buildings, because all it takes is for a crazy person or three, to carry out an attack. It is almost impossible for security authorities to keep track of such small-scale attacks - but the damage they can do is endless.

RIP Hugo

Last week we told you of the saddest tragedy to befall our community in years - the story of Hugo Paluch who was fatally injured when a goalpost fell on him at school. Yeshiva College and religious leadership rallied around the family and the community did all they could to help his family deal with this freak life-altering accident.

When we were rushed to complete our newspaper last Tuesday before Shavuot came in, we were not sure if Hugo was going to survive until the newspaper hit the streets on Friday. We chose to believe he was going to survive and get well.

On Monday night this week, this precious boy passed away. You may ask why we haven't got an article about this in this week's newspaper. We believe we had a duty to write about this tragedy last week, as hard as it was, because we were all reeling from the shock.

But this week, the SA Jewish Report will not get in the way of the family's privacy. We wish the Paluch family and all their friends a long life.

Rest in peace Hugo, your legacy of chesed and mitzvah will live on...

Peta Krost Maunder
Editor



PAULA SLIER

It's often said that Israel won the Six Day War but lost the media battle. The defenceless David had defeated Goliath but also the sympathy of the world. From 1967 onwards, images of Israeli tanks and heavily armed IDF soldiers confronting stone-throwing Palestinians, would crowd their way into peoples' consciousness - and destroy any feelings of pity or empathy for the Jewish State.

If there is one question I am most often asked, as a journalist, it is why Israel gets such bad press. It's a question I find very difficult to answer.

Beit El is an Israeli settlement 20 km north of Jerusalem. It borders the Palestinian city of Ramallah. Some scholars suggest this is where Jacob dreamt of angels ascending and descending a ladder that reached into Heaven. It is said to be the place where G-d told Jacob that the nations of the world would be blessed through his family.

If you visit Beit El, there is an open piece of ground next to a huge wormwood tree, the oldest of its kind in Israel, called "Jacob's Rock". If you keep on driving along the main road, an IDF watchtower and barbed wire quickly bring you back to modern-day reality and the ongoing conflict between settlers on the one side of the security wall and their Palestinian neighbours on the other.

The first time I visited the Beit El crossing, it was Friday lunchtime and weekly protests between Palestinian youngsters and Israeli soldiers had just started. It was soon to become routine.

We showed our press credentials to a bored IDF tank commander who waved us through. He and some soldiers were drinking bottled water and asked us if we wanted some. The cameraman walked through first. I followed, tweeting and wondering when would be the right time to put on the bulletproof helmet I was holding.

The dirt road had the imprints of tank tracks and as we rounded a few concrete barriers, a Palestinian house on the left rose to meet us. Bored Palestinians watched us as we walked. In less than three minutes we had crossed into Ramallah. Soon we turned a corner and came face to face with Palestinian anger fused with Molotov cocktails and huge rocks. The helmet went on. I felt very exposed.

A few Israeli tanks suddenly appeared from behind us and in a quick, practiced fashion, soldiers jumped out, took up position next to one another and started firing teargas canisters at the several dozen, mostly young, protesters some few hundred metres down the road.

The only thing that separated the two sides was distance and a rubbish bin that had been set alight. There was a resigned casualness among the soldiers; they knew the drill. A few shouted for me and my cameraman to move back.

Others, through a megaphone, demanded in Hebrew that

Dateline: Middle East

Israel's image in the world media

the protesters stop. When they didn't stop and, instead, when a few protesters appeared on a nearby hillside, the soldiers (many of whom were women) aimed their teargas canisters at them.

Big rocks, with jagged edges, torn off the pavements lining the road, were thundering their way towards us. If they hit you on the head, they could be deadly.

And then as suddenly as they appeared, the soldiers got back into their tanks and drove back down the road we had walked up. It was like witnessing a drama with no ending. They'd be back again within 20 minutes...

I had a clear sign on me saying "press" but because it's unusual for foreign journalists to cover a protest from among the soldiers, it wasn't safe for us to be there.

Slowly my cameraman and I manoeuvred our way to the far left side of the field and - although some rocks were still falling at our feet - we gradually managed to join the protesters. Now we were clearly on their side.

Here, there was a lot of shouting and passing around of Molotov cocktails and rocks. There were some women, but they were huddled into little groups further back. The burning rubbish bin was a great protector and from behind it massive rocks were being hurled into the distance.

Most of the crowd was concentrated here, but off to the sides some lonesome youngsters, using slingshots to aim big rocks at the soldiers, were moving forward in the grass.

Everyone was wearing a scarf to cover his or her face against the sting of the teargas. There were bottles of water being handed around to help those who had been struck.

It felt like being in a sea of big waves and as new teargas hit us, we'd all bend and duck and then after the soldiers retreated, we'd surge forward, only to run backwards a short time later.

It was hard to see, breathe and speak with a teargas mask on and it can get quite stuffy. As luck would have it, a teargas canister landed right next to me as I was looking, mask off, in the other direction.

People started running and I heard the cameraman shouting, and immediately started gasping for air while frantically surging forward with the crowd. The tears were streaming down my face and as I ran, the gas followed.

Eventually I managed to take cover in a side alleyway. A few slow, painful, minutes passed before my breathing returned to normal. Children were passing me bits of cloth to breathe into.

It's no fun being caught in a demonstration. The world might be quick to decide who's right and wrong, but they forget it is dangerous on both sides. The images one sees in the media never properly capture the fear, frustration, anger and helplessness one feels - regardless of where you're standing.

• Paula Slier is the Middle East Bureau Chief of RT, the founder and CEO of NewshoundMedia and the inaugural winner of the Europcar Woman in Leadership Award of the South African Absa Jewish Achievers.



From a Midlands farm to top editorships in Israel

NICOLA MILTZ

As a young, carefree boy growing up in the upmarket suburb of Durban North, Steve Linde, the recently appointed editor-in-chief of The Jerusalem Report, always loved a good story and secretly fancied himself as a writer, from an early age.

The energetic Steve’s fertile imagination was given space to soar as he roamed his parent’s “dreamlike” 283-hectare farm near Ixopo, called Qunu Falls, during school holidays and over long weekends.

It was here under the beating African sun where the writer seeds were sown. But never in his wildest dreams did he even remotely think he would one day become one of Israel’s best regarded print journalists. He certainly didn’t dream of being editor of the internationally prestigious Jerusalem Post and then moving on to edit the bi-monthly Jerusalem Report, arguably Israel’s most prestigious news magazine in English.

And little did he know then that he would find himself in the esteemed company of some of the world’s most famous and influential people - the likes of whom many people only daydream about.

From the inspiring Holocaust survivor, Elie Wiesel and the Dalai Lama, to Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, and (then) US Vice-President Joe Biden.

Linde has interviewed, written about and shared the same stage with well-known jurists Alan Dershowitz and Irwin Cotler, internationally renowned Rabbi Jonathan Sacks and South Africa’s own Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein.

He has conversed with photographer David Rubinger, interacted with sex therapist Dr Ruth, and talked to Hannah Pick (Anne Frank’s friend who lives in Jerusalem) and interviewed two of his all-time favourite Israeli singers, David Broza and Rita - to name but a few.

By all accounts an interesting life far removed from his early days as a learner at Sharona Primary School and Carmel College.

“I had a wonderful childhood. We lived in a beautiful house which had a big garden, a soccer field and a swimming pool,” he recalls, “It was only in my later years of school that I discovered the evils of apartheid and how my privileged youth was hardly typical of the average South African,” he said this week from his Jerusalem office.

Linde studied journalism and sociology at Rhodes University in Grahamstown and then did a graduate degree in sociology at



“One of the highlights of my career was interviewing actor Michael Douglas.”

the University of KwaZulu-Natal under Prof Fatima Meer, focusing on Ghandi, and then a master’s in journalism at the University of California at Berkeley.

During his journalism studies in South Africa, he worked for a number of media outlets, from the SABC, to The Daily News in Durban.

He made aliyah in 1988 after spending five years in the US, where he taught junior high for a while. He immediately

“The most meaningful stories I covered under my editorship were the release of Gilad Shalit by Hamas and Jonathan Pollard in the US, even though I am still waiting for him to be able to come to Israel.”

enlisted into the IDF, where he was put in the Artillery Corps. After his stint in the IDF he joined Israel Radio English News Department, which was run by former South African Zvi Pantanowitz. He worked as a radio broadcaster for 21 years, a time he “really enjoyed”.

“I’ve always wanted to be a writer and I’m a news addict,” he confessed.

While he was working at Israel Radio,

he was approached by the Jerusalem Post to work as a night editor there, and that’s when his “love affair with print journalism flourished”, he said.

He landed up working for The Post for 20 years, five years as its editor-in-chief.

During his editorship, the newspaper launched an annual conference in New York for its American readership, and an annual conference in Jerusalem for the diplomatic community posted in Israel.

“The highlights of my career were interviewing President Shimon Peres on stage at the local diplomatic conference, and actor Michael Douglas on stage at the conference in New York.

“The most meaningful stories I covered under my editorship were the release of Gilad Shalit by Hamas and Jonathan Pollard in the US, even though I am still waiting for him to be able to come to Israel.”

The challenges he has faced as editor-in-chief of an Israeli daily newspaper, have been varied and seemingly unending. ‘There have been many challenges from law suits, budget cuts, and reader complaints, to ensuring that our coverage was fair, balanced and truthful.’

When asked how he thought the challenges of being a journalist in South Africa compared with the challenges of being a journalist in Israel he said: “I think the challenges are different in each country. Both countries have bad images, but in both, the media are relatively free, independent and diverse.

“I think the primary challenge working in both countries is to maintain our

independence in the media, and ensure that our reporting is as fair, balanced and truthful as we can make it.”

As far as challenges moving forward are concerned he says: “The magazine world doesn’t have the same stress as daily journalism, and I’m looking forward to publishing a magazine with good stories and quality writing that provides context, which is such an important part of reporting, especially when it comes to Israel, the Middle East and the Jewish world, which are the focus of The Jerusalem Report.”

The coming years for journalists in Israel will be “tough ones”, but there will always be a place and hopefully a job for good journalists in the society, he said.

“We are, after all, the People of the Book, and if we don’t cherish the written word, who will?”

In his first letter to the readers of The Jerusalem Report in the upcoming edition, Linde recounts how Elie Wiesel once quipped that G-d created people because “He likes a good story”.

“Good stories are the foundation of good journalism. The story of Israel and the Jewish people is a great one... context is key, and that’s why history, culture and the situation in the Middle East are all vital elements of the story.”

The SA Jewish Report looks forward to reading some of these stories. In the meantime, there is a lot Linde misses about South Africa - “mostly family and friends, but also the people, the culture and the beauty of the country... and, of course, things like biltong, sour figs and gooseberry jam”.

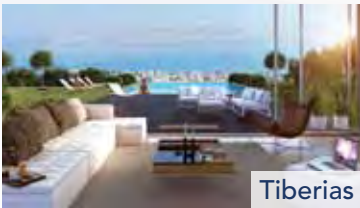
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Securing your future in Israel



Taking Yiddishkeit to the Comrades Marathon

TALI FEINBERG

Jews take saying Kaddish very seriously - and if it means missing out on running the Comrades Marathon, what choice do we have? Truth is, as Kevin Utian found out this year, you can simply say Kaddish and put on tefillin en route. You don't have to miss a thing.

"My dad passed away in December and it was incredibly important for me to be able to say Kaddish during the race," says Utian, who just completed his second Comrades Marathon. "I have really not wanted to miss a day without saying Kaddish for him and without a minyan I would have missed it on the day of Comrades. This would have bothered me immensely.

"Fortunately, Rabbi Shlomo Wainer organised a minyan along the way and I was able to stop and say Kaddish," he says. Rabbi Wainer from Chabad of the North Coast, Umhlanga, and his team of volunteers, have been supporting Comrades runners for the past 22 years.

"We wanted to spiritualise the ultimate race. The Comrades is all about mind over matter, and having access to their Judaism means that runners are supported through the tough moments. We put the neshoma into the race," says Rabbi Wainer.

Selwyn Kahlberg



"Indeed," Utian adds: "Without sounding cliched, the experience of saying Kaddish during the Comrades made my run. Before reaching the tent, I was feeling really tired and uncertain as to whether I was going to reach my goal time.

"After putting on tefillin and saying Kaddish I felt a renewed energy and managed to reach my goal with time to spare. It was both a physically and spiritually uplifting experience. It was certainly one of the highlights of my day and a moment that will remain with me for the rest of my life."

A major part of Rav Wainer's work is supporting runners from the sidelines, where they can stop at the Chabad tent for both physical and spiritual nourishment. They are able to do a "mitzvah on the move", whether it is saying a brocha over food, putting a coin in a tzedaka box, laying tefillin, joining a minyan, saying the Tefilat Ha'Derech (prayer for a safe



journey) or saying Kaddish.

"Many runners stop so that the run isn't simply about running but rather has a special spiritual element to it. It also gives them a boost at a difficult time in the race," explains Levi Lipskar, who has run three Comrades Marathons.

"Those who stop, feel that it even helps them to get their times, as it gives them that extra boost." Runner Marc Green, who also completed his third Comrades, quips: "Shlichim descend to lay tefillin with the efficiency of a racing pit stop team."

Laying tefillin and davening, or saying Kaddish with a minyan of runners and supporters during the Comrades, has brought grown men to tears. "It is often very emotional," says Rabbi Wainer, who adds that for some men, the only time they lay tefillin is on the Comrades!

Despite the race being so physical, it also has many spiritual aspects. "The Comrades teaches you to have humility coupled with the knowledge that a challenge is not insurmountable," says Lipskar.

South African Board of Jewish Education general director Rabbi Craig Kacev, ran his first Comrades this year.

He stressed that it certainly is a challenge to the normal order of the day to stop for davening, "yet using halacha as a guide, one is able to infuse the day with a good measure of spirituality.

"Our small group shared a Dvar Torah at each major hill in the first 50 km before we took off at our own pace."

He was particularly inspired by Psalm 121, which talks of "looking at the mountains contemplating where help will come from".

"In life we face many mountains - challenges we are not sure we can overcome. Yet Hashem the Creator of those 'mountains', empowers us to achieve things we could never imagine," says Rav Kacev.

"One moves ahead feeling His embrace, support, energy and guidance. Watching and experiencing the kindness and abundance of the Comrades day, I know we tap into our real

core in those moments."

Jewish runners enjoy the hospitality of Chabad as soon as they arrive in Durban. A buffet Shabbat dinner is organised, with top guest speakers from the athletics world, and runners and their spouses have access to the newly-built mikvah. Kosher food, shul services and community support are all provided.

Talking with enthusiasm, Rabbi Wainer feels that besides Yomim Tovim, the Comrades weekend is the highlight of his year, and it is easy to see why. It is Jewish values in action.

It is a time when Jewish runners enjoy the enrichment of their Jewish identity, but also being part of wider South



African society.

Says Lipskar: "Standing at the starting line and throughout the day, one realises that despite the huge challenges that we face as South Africans, we are an unbelievable nation, a miraculous nation in fact - no colour, creed, religion or race matters on Comrades day. Everyone is an equal South African and the unity is immense."

Utian says: "We often judge the country by the negativity that we are exposed to; however the Comrades comes to remind us that it is only a few people who are fuelling the negativity. There are millions of great people out there who only want to do good. In addition, when one meets international runners along the way and hear how complimentary they are about our country and how iconic this event is, one is reminded of how grateful and proud we should be to be South Africans. The event is brilliantly organised and is an example of what us South Africans can actually do."

 <p>VIEW BY APPOINTMENT</p> <p>Web Ref 104963115</p> <p>FAIRMOUNT Bold & Beautiful 5 recep, 4 bed, 3 bath, gourmet kitchen, pool, lush garden and more. FROM R4 MILLION</p>	 <p>ON SHOW SUNDAY 2-5</p> <p>Web Ref 105117804</p> <p>ROUXVILLE Ideal Family Home N/f, flowing recep, mod kitchen, 4 bed, 2 mod bath, lush large garden, sparkling pool and more. Viljoen Street (Pan Handle). FROM R2.2 MIL.</p>	 <p>VIEW BY APPOINTMENT</p> <p>Web Ref 105178774</p> <p>SYDENHAM/SANDRINGHAM Light bright and delightful 3 recep, mod kitchen, 4 bed, 3 bath (mes), lush garden, large pool and more. R2.5MIL</p>	 <p>VIEW BY APPOINTMENT</p> <p>Web Ref 104946368</p> <p>SYDENHAM Stunning family home 3 recep, large eat-in mod kitchen, 3/4 bed, 2.5 bath (mes), work from home, sparkling pool, garden and more. FROM R2.2MIL</p>	 <p>VIEW BY APPOINTMENT</p> <p>Web Ref 104946368</p> <p>PERCELIA ESTATE Ideal starter in secure boom 3 recep, 3 bed, space for 4th, 3 bath (mes), eat-in kitchen, pretty garden and much more. ONLY R1.8MIL Hurry!</p>
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A giant has fallen in the SA art world



ROBYN SASSEN

Everything you may have wanted to know about South African art history and artists in the 1970s, but were too afraid to ask, was something art historian Esmé Berman made her domain. In doing so, she completely redefined the field of South African art, giving it the kind of credibility in which European art history was couched. Her book, *Art and Artists of South Africa*, remains an iconic and ground-breaking resource, and a classic in its own time. It was constructed like a visual dictionary, was revised and republished in 1983, and has since gone through four editions.

On Monday, June 4, Berman succumbed to Parkinson’s disease at her home in Johannesburg. She was 87. Last year, Wits University conferred an honorary doctorate (honoris causa) on the art historian, which she described in an interview with the *Jerusalem Post* as the “climactic moment” of her career, mentioning that the first great pinnacle of her life was the vision of hundreds of copies of her newly published tome at the popular bookshop, City Books, in Johannesburg at its formal launch on November 2, 1970. Born on July 2, 1929, Berman read art history and visual arts at Wits University, under the tuition of Professor Heather Martienssen, graduating in 1950. She later completed an honours degree in psychology at the same university and also was awarded her Licentiate in Drama through the Trinity College in London. Effectively changing the nature of the discourse of South African art history,

Berman’s book was constructed along the lines of Vasari’s *Lives of the Artists*, a great Renaissance classic which was published in 1550. To this end, she spent literally years conducting personal interviews and generating vital primary resource material. Berman’s *Art and Artists of South Africa* was criticised in more recent years because it focused on the lives and careers of white South African artists. This indeed, is a reflection on the times, both then and now, rather than on Berman’s immense research output and passion for the arts. Her research ambit covered the important work of South African artists such as Cecil Skotnes. In establishing the Polly Street Art Centre in 1952, Skotnes represented an outreach focus on art-making for young black art practitioners before it was legitimately acceptable to do so, under apartheid rule. Berman was a contemporary of such artists as Larry Scully, Christo Coetzee and Skotnes, known collaboratively as The Wits Group, who nursed a reputation for being revolutionary in their approach to life and art. Berman later became a critic for the publication *Newscheck* in the 1960s, where she worked alongside the late contemporary South African artist Robert Hodgins. In 1965, Berman hosted a celebration of the life of Maria Stein-Lessing, an art historian of the previous generation who taught Berman as an undergraduate student, opening up her awareness of the value of African art and its aesthetics in South Africa. Over the years, Berman also earned her chops as a critic on radio and conducted interviews, which were sharp and entertaining, informative and warm.

In her hey-day, Berman was the permanent art critic of the SABC. She was also one of the primary movers and shakers in several art-related organisations, such as the South African Association of Artists in Pretoria, the Rembrandt van Rijn Association and the Children’s Art Centre, which was based in Johannesburg. Immensely prolific in her writing and research, Berman authored several monographs on South African artists, such as Irma Stern, J H Pierneef, Maggie Laubser and Alexis Preller. For her 80th birthday, the art history fraternity, with Berman’s friends and family, pooled its intellectual resources to create an anthology celebrating her contribution to the country and the discipline. A close friend of Preller’s, Berman played a considerable role in the large-scale exhibition of his work, mounted by the Standard Bank Gallery in Johannesburg in 2009, with the curatorial assistance of well-known contemporary South African artist and collector, Karel Nel. Born Esmé Cohen, Berman married businessman Hi Berman in 1952. They had three children: Michael, Russell and Kathy. Tragically Russell was killed in a car accident as a teenager in 1973. The late 1970s saw the Bermans becoming the mayoral couple of Sandton, but apartheid troubled them deeply, and they immigrated to America in 1987. After living in Los Angeles for some 16 years, the family returned to South Africa to celebrate their golden wedding anniversary, shortly before the sudden death of Hi in 2003, whereupon Berman returned to live in Johannesburg. Berman leaves her son Michael, in Dallas, her daughter Kathy in Johannesburg, and two grandchildren.

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World News in Brief

Senate passes legislation supporting Jerusalem embassy move

WASHINGTON - The US Senate urged President Donald Trump to fulfil his campaign promise of relocating the American embassy in Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, on Monday unanimously passing legislation in support of the move. The Senate voted 90-0 in favour of a resolution introduced in May by Majority Leader Senator Mitch McConnell (Republican Kentucky, commemorating the 50th anniversary of Jerusalem’s reunification and acknowledging Israel’s sovereignty over its capital. The resolution urges the “president and all United States officials to abide by” the 1995 Jerusalem Embassy Act, which calls on the U.S. to relocate its

embassy and recognize Jerusalem as Israel’s capital. Since the law’s passage, every sitting president has signed successive six-month waivers delaying the move. Most recently, Trump signed the waiver on June 1. Trump “has repeatedly stated his intention to move the embassy, the question is not if that move happens, but only when,” White House Press Secretary Sean Spicer said after the president signed the waiver. McConnell said the Senate resolution’s passage serves “as yet another indication of the United States’ commitment to standing by our Israeli friends”. (JNS.org)

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Healthcare builds Israeli-Arab bridges

SUZANNE BELLING

The Israeli healthcare system is a model of Jewish-Arab co-existence. This is evident in “Heroes of Health”, a report written by Tali Rosner for the Israel Religious Action Centre and the Israel Movement for Reform and Progressive Judaism.

It seeks to describe the unique nature of the Israeli healthcare system, where Jews and Arabs work in full co-operation, equally and with positive relations.

“Such a reality is exceptional in the Israeli landscape. Accordingly, we aim to draw inspiration from this system and to consider how this model of successful co-existence might be

replicated in other fields and workplaces,” says Rosner.

She points out that the laws and regulations alone cannot bring “genuine and profound change”, but “must be accompanied by initiatives and actions in the social and public domain to change the current mindset and collective consciousness.

“At the end of the day, there is no alternative to personal



acquaintance, which knocks down walls and removes prejudices.”

The report says Arabs in the healthcare system have a sense of belonging and an affinity to their workplace.

“They also feel an absence of discrimination and obstacles - and believe that they have a genuine chance to advance alongside their Jewish colleagues.”

The nature of their work - saving lives - is paramount and overshadows cultural differences. It encourages a sense of partnership between Jew and Arabs, and the outside political tensions become irrelevant.

“The intensive period of study, followed by long hours in hospitals... forces the Arab and Jewish workers to get to know each other more deeply than in other sectors... Barriers fall and relationships of respect and professional appreciation develop, accompanied in most cases by personal friendships.”

Dr Khaled Azam, a radiology specialist at Hadassah Hospital, Mount Scopus, believes in professional values and comments: “Why doesn’t it work elsewhere? Because medicine is the treatment of all people - before they are a Jew or an Arab, a Muslim or a Christian.

“If I find someone who is injured or feels sick, I don’t need to find out whether they are Jewish or Arab, I just need to treat them. That’s my job.

“Maybe because of this perspective, we can successfully make peace between Jews and Arabs in the hospital. We treat people, we don’t treat an Arab or a Jew. They are a patient; it doesn’t matter who.”

However, he says, it only works in medicine.

“Outside of Hadassah isn’t good.”

Prof Raphael (Raphi) Walden, deputy director of the Sheba Hospital in Tel Aviv, speaks of the “common

enemy” that unites ranks: “I may be a bit naïve, but I’d like to believe that there is a special kind of solidarity that is related to the world of medicine, because we are all on the same side, facing a common enemy - death and disease.

“This enemy is so clear and distinct that it unites us. Ultimately, when you care for the human body, there are no distinctions.”

Dr Suheir Assadi, director of nephrology at the Rambam Medical Centre in Haifa remarks: “The essence of our work is the great value of life. We talk about life, not about death... Other problems are dwarfed by the things we treat.”

Nurse Siham Shibli, head nurse in the catheterisation rooms at Jerusalem’s Hadassah Ein Kerem, says: “Getting to know each other from the beginning of our studies, and the constant need to cope with life and death, connect us more closely to the wonder of life and the desire to preserve it.”

The report states that the public healthcare system stands out - contrary to hatred, “an alternate reality prevails.

“Unlike other employment sectors in Israel, this is a system that allows Arab citizens to integrate fully in senior positions.”

Dr Bishara Bisharat, director of the English Hospital in Nazareth, quotes Prophets - “the lamb lying down with the wolf... Why shouldn’t we study peace?”

Anat Hoffman, executive director of the Israel Religious Action Centre, says in the foreword to the report that racism flourishes on a backdrop of fear and ignorance.

“This report serves as a reminder that every day the number of Arabs who take part in saving lives in Israel is larger than the number of Arabs who have taken part in the harm of Israeli lives from the foundation of the State until today.”



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Seen drinking coffee in a treif restaurant...

ANT KATZ

Can kosher people drink coffee in a non-kosher restaurant? The answer is simply: Yes and No!

“Coffee beans, like potatoes, are inherently kosher,” says Dayan Boruch Rapoport, the senior dayan of the Johannesburg Beth Din, who has served there for over 30 years.

However, says Rapoport, when it comes to drinking coffee, there are other factors at play. One is the question of kashrut of the coffee; and the other, lesser known factor, is the perception: “What does it look like to others?”

Rapoport is referring to the halachic concept of *marit ayin*, which literally translates to: “appearance to the eye”. This concept refers to certain actions, which are intrinsically permitted, but are prohibited in situations where it might seem to other people to be in violation of Jewish law.

Put plainly, says Dayan Rapoport, a person passing by might wonder if the person inside the non-kosher restaurant could be consuming *treif*.

So, while it may be permissible in terms of kashrut to drink a coffee or a Coke in a treif restaurant, it is not allowed due to rabbinic enactments that were put in place to prevent surrounding onlookers from arriving at a false conclusion.

The same question could be asked of drinking a Coke from a can in the same restaurant. Kosher Coke is kosher wherever it is consumed. But, says Rapoport, “you shouldn’t do anything which can be misperceived as a prohibited act”.

Dayan Rapoport - who was instrumental in co-founding Ohr Somayach of Johannesburg - gives another example, namely that of a woman who goes into labour on Shabbos. It is halachically okay for her husband to drive her to hospital, he says.

However, the Chazon Ish (a leader of Haredi Judaism in Israel, who was recognised as an authority on matters relating to Jewish law and life) recommended that the husband should put on a tallis so that anyone seeing the observant husband driving on Shabbos, will realise that these are special circumstances.

Of course, the question of the kashrut of the coffee per se is also in question: From original roasting to the addition of flavours and colourants, to the packaging, grinding and even the machine at the coffee shop. This is why the drinking Coke from a can analogy better explains the concept.

Another well-respected rabbi, who asked not to be identified, said that “many, many frum people drink coffee in treif coffee shops.” He himself would have no qualms about drinking a glass of Coke, poured from a tin, in a non-kosher eatery, he said.

He told Jewish Report that in general, modern Orthodox Jewry would not apply *marit ayin* in this instance.

However, he agreed with the Chazon Ish example and of its application, such as the wearing of a tallis when driving during a medical emergency on Shabbos.

In all, three dayanim who spoke to the SA Jewish Report this week, said they would not personally drink coffee in a non-kosher establishment, but acknowledged that they were speaking in their personal capacities.

The Beth Din does not take an official stance on the issue, because as far as can be established, they have never been asked to.

And so, it seems, there is no black-and-white answer, and that this question remains a slightly grey area.



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THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Haley says she has ‘no patience’ for ‘bullies’ like the UN

RAPHAEL AHREN

The winds at the United Nations are changing to Israel’s benefit, US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley said on Wednesday in Jerusalem, during her first-ever visit to Israel, calling the international body a “bully”.

“We’re starting to see a turn in New York. I think they know they can’t keep responding in the way they’ve been responding,” she said at a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, referring to countries that routinely bash the Jewish state at the UN’s various agencies.

“They sense that the tone has changed. We were talking with some ambassadors in Geneva that are all on the Human Rights Council, and we talked to them about Agenda Item 7,” Haley said. “Some of them were embarrassed by it. They acknowledge the fact that it just makes no sense.”

Haley was referring to the fact that since 2007, Israel has been the only country whose alleged human rights abuses are regularly discussed in the framework of a single permanent item on the Human Rights Council’s agenda.

On Tuesday, at a speech in Geneva, Haley had urged the council to abandon Agenda Item 7 (“the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories”), which singles out Israel for perpetual censure. If the 47-member body failed to do so, the US would quit and seek to promote human rights in other forums, she warned.

“There is no legitimate human rights reason for this agenda item to exist,” she said later on Tuesday, at the Graduate Institute of Geneva, hours before taking off for Tel Aviv.

“It is the central flaw that turns the Human Rights Council from an organisation that can be a force for universal good, into an organisation that is overwhelmed by a political agenda.”

Welcoming her in his office on Wednesday morning, Netanyahu thanked the US envoy and US President Donald Trump for their staunch support of Israel, including international bodies such as the UN.

“Thank you for all your help and standing up for Israel, standing up for the truth, which is standing up for America. Actually, I think it’s standing up for the UN as it was



originally conceived,” Netanyahu said.

“People appreciate truth. We have an ancient Hebrew saying that when somebody tells a truth, you can feel it. So, people feel it, they not only understand it, they feel it. And we feel it.”

The prime minister went on to praise Haley’s “uncommon common sense”, and said he already sees her efforts bearing fruit.

“President Trump and you, I think, have changed the discourse, have drawn new standards, and everybody’s taking up, and that’s great,” he said. “I think it makes a world of difference, both for Israel and the US.

“Again, I felt that the UN would collapse, you know, that whole scaffolding of lies would just collapse. I think you’ve put in that simple word, truth.”

Haley said she was surprised by the tremendous love Israelis have showered her with.

“You know, that’s all I’ve done - tell the truth - and the reaction is kind of overwhelming,” she said. “It was a habit. It was something that we’re so used to doing. And if there’s anything I have no patience for it is bullies, and the UN was being such a bully to Israel, because they could.”

After her meeting with Netanyahu, Haley met with President Reuven Rivlin, who likewise praised her for having started a process of change at the UN in Israel’s favour.

“With your support, we see the beginning of a new era. Israel is no longer alone at the UN. Israel is no longer the UN’s punching bag,” he said.

But while Israel’s standing at the UN has improved, “sadly, we have a long way to go”, the president added, “both in holding to

account, public statements made by officials, and in supporting regulation to reduce the ridiculous number of discussions and

US Ambassador to the UN Nikki Haley, meets Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Jerusalem, on Wednesday. AMOS BEN GERSHOM/GPO

resolutions against Israel.

“This is also true in the Human Rights Council - which has been hijacked as a weapon against Israel - and in Unesco, where they seek to rub out the history of the Jewish people.”

Haley responded by saying that it was “an absolute thrill to be here in Israel” and expressed her appreciation for the support she has received from Israelis.

“But I feel somewhat guilty because all I did at the United Nations was tell the truth. I have never taken kindly to bullies, and the UN has bullied Israel for a very long time, and we are not going to let that happen”.

UK POLICE NAME THIRD LONDON ATTACKER AS ITALIAN NATIONAL

LONDON - British police have named the third man who carried out a terror attack in London as 22-year-old Youssef Zaghba, an Italian national of Moroccan origin, confirming a report in Italian media.

Police say Zaghba was “not a police or MI5 subject of interest” after Italian reports said Italian intelligence had notified British and Moroccan secret services about his status as a potential extremist.

British police announced on Tuesday that they had made an arrest in the investigation into the London terror attack, a day after saying they had released without charge all 12 people arrested so far.

“A 27-year-old man was arrested under the Terrorism Act,” police said, adding that the arrest took place in Barking, the east London suburb that had been the focus of police raids since Saturday’s attack. - AFP



US-BACKED SYRIAN LAUNCH OFFENSIVE TO CAPTURE IS-HELD RAQQA

DAMASCUS - A US-backed Syrian force said it had begun an offensive to capture the northern city of Raqqa, the de facto capital of the Islamic State group, after months of clearing operations.

Talal Sillo, a spokesman for the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces, told reporters that operations had begun in co-ordination with the US-led coalition.

“We declare today (Tuesday) the beginning of the great battle to liberate the city of Raqqa, the alleged capital of terrorism and terrorists,” Sillo told a news conference held in northern Syria. “Morale is high and military readiness to implement the military plan is complete, in co-ordination with the US-led coalition.”

Raqqa was among the first cities captured by IS, in January 2014, and has been the home of some of the group’s most prominent leaders, including those who planned the November 2015 Paris attacks and other international assaults. The battle for the city is expected to be long and bloody, and could mark a major turning point in the war against the extremists. - AP





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Seeking to boost ties, Netanyahu meets with African leaders

ECOWAS to build off his July 2016 visit to the East African nations of Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda and Ethiopia, which marked the first time in decades an Israeli premier had travelled to Africa.

“Israel is returning to Africa in a big way,” the prime minister said last Saturday, reiterating a message he repeated throughout his previous trip to the continent.

Netanyahu noted that the trip marks the first time a non-African leader will speak at

and regional security issues.

In December, Jerusalem hosted seven ministers and many other top officials from over a dozen Western African countries at an agricultural conference, which was co-sponsored by ECOWAS and Mashav, Israel’s Agency for International Development Co-operation.

Starting in early 2016, Netanyahu made strengthening ties with Africa one of his main foreign policy goals. Besides seeking new markets for Israeli



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is seen at the airport in Liberia’s capital Monrovia after arriving for an official state visit last Sunday. KOBİ GIDEON/GPO/FLASH90

ECOWAS - an organisation that includes 15 nations with a combined population of some 320 million - which he called a “badge of honour for the State of Israel.”

Last Friday, however, Morocco’s foreign ministry said that Mohamed VI had scrapped his plans to attend the meeting in light of Netanyahu’s attendance, saying the king “wishes his first visit to an ECOWAS summit not take place in a context of tension and controversy.”

Last July, de Souza became the first leader of the organisation to visit Israel. He met with Netanyahu and President Reuven Rivlin to discuss economic co-operation

agriculture, hi-tech and security know-how, the prime minister was also keen to improve African nations’ voting record on Israel-related matters in international forums such as the United Nations Security Council or Unesco.

“In seizing the future, Israel is coming back to Africa in more than a verbal way,” he said in February.

Netanyahu is also scheduled to attend an Africa-Israel summit in Togo in October, where the prime minister is expected to meet with the leaders of 25 African countries to discuss cooperation in high-tech, security and development.



News and views from the Fed

Response to John Trengove’s decision not to travel to Israel

BEN SWARTZ, NATIONAL CHAIRMAN, SA ZIONIST FEDERATION

Writing to the upcoming Israeli LGBT Tel Aviv film festival, John Trengove wrote: “It is with sincere regret that I have to inform you that I will not be attending...”

Clearly, there is a lot to regret for his decision. The first is that he decided not to attend, following his being approached by “activist organisations” urging him to respect the cultural boycott against Israel.

While parading as “human rights” movements, those calling for boycotts of Israel, have no problem also calling to “Shoot the Jew”, as the BDS movement did at a concert held at Wits University.

While in certain instances there may be a clear line between anti-Zionism and anti-Semitism, this line is without failure, blurred by these “activist” organisations. They have even been denounced by pro-Palestinian organisations for their stance against South African Jews.

The second “regret” is that by supporting a cultural boycott against Israel, he is widening the gap between the parties to the conflict, rather than bringing the parties together. The festival organisers have gone on record to say that the festival “strives towards equality and tolerance regardless of sexual orientation, gender, race, or political view”.

Not only are cultural boycotts useless, but in fact they undermine genuine initiatives of peace, by bringing people together and resolving conflicts. It is for this reason that leading artists from around the world of great moral stature, continue to perform and support Israel.

Our third regret is that Trengove did not see fit to visit Israel and the Palestinian territories and see for himself the reality. He would have got a very different view from the one fed to him by the “civil society” who approached him not to go.

Perhaps he would have got a first-hand account of the issues facing both sides and ways in which the parties themselves would like to see issues resolved.

Our fourth regret is around the hypocrisy he is showing, specifically with regard to failing to highlight the real issues experienced by the LGBT community in the Middle East.

It is ironic that he is boycotting a country where LGBT rights are safeguarded by law - this in light of the fact that LGBT communities continue to be murdered by ISIS and Hamas just 200 km away from Tel Aviv.

Bibi blasts Hebrew University over report it nixed Hatikvah

STUART WINER

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and politicians lined up last week Thursday to slam the Hebrew University of Jerusalem over a report that said the national anthem would not be sung at a graduation ceremony that evening, so as not to offend Arab students.

Army Radio reported that it had obtained a recording of a student querying the decision to not sing Hatikvah during the ceremony at the Mount Scopus campus, and being told by an employee of the Humanities Faculty that it was out of “consideration for the other side” - an apparent reference to Arab students.

Netanyahu called it “a disgrace. It is the height of servility, the opposite of national pride,” he said in a statement. “We are proud of our country, our flag, our anthem, and it only strengthens my resolve to pass the Jewish State bill that we are leading, in order to anchor in law the national symbols that are so dear to us.”

The university said the graduation ceremony “has followed the same format for years”, and that there had been no new decision taken to “cancel” the anthem. It said the national anthem is always played at the state ceremonies that it holds, and that the university president had made this clear to the education minister.

The controversial Jewish State bill, currently making its way through parliament, would enshrine Israel’s status as a Jewish nation-state, and national symbols such as Hatikvah, in its Basic Laws.

The national anthem, whose lyrics express the yearning of Jews throughout the ages to return to Zion, has been the subject of protests by some of Israel’s non-Jewish citizens.

Arab MKs have frequently left the Knesset plenum in protest when it was sung. In 2015 President Reuven Rivlin said he understands why

Israel’s Arab citizens feel uncomfortable with the national anthem and maintained they should not be forced to sing it.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett, who leads the nationalist Jewish Home party, contacted the president of the Hebrew University, Prof Menachem Ben-Sasson, to protest the exclusion of the anthem.

A ministry statement said that Bennett clarified to Ben-Sasson that “at every state ceremony that is held at the university, Hatikvah should be played.

“The Hebrew University is a public state institute, it is not a private institute,” he said, according to the statement. “A public body should respect the state that stands behind it. Academic freedom doesn’t mean one can harm national values.”

Bennett clarified that “also at non-state events”, such as the graduation ceremony, “the consideration whether or not to sing Hatikvah cannot be influenced by considerations of hurt feelings”.

The ministry said that Ben-Sasson committed to ensuring Hatikvah is sung at state ceremonies in the university and said he would look into the circumstances of last week Thursday’s graduation ceremony with the deacon of the Humanities Faculty, Prof Dror Wahrman.

Other politicians took to social media to vent their criticism of the university.

Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked tweeted: “The Hebrew University. A disgrace.”

Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman, a graduate of the university, wrote: “I call on the heads of the university to change this surprising decision.”

Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein wrote on Twitter that “in an institution where it is forbidden to sing the national anthem, there is no hope and no humanity”.



Israel’s R1bn Africa solar move shows up red tape at home

MELANIE LIDMAN

An Israeli company will oversee \$1 billion worth of solar field projects in Africa, harnessing the power of the sun, even as Israel itself struggles to bring its own plans for large solar fields online.

The massive deal to install the solar panels, is part of an agreement that came out of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu’s trip to Liberia to attend the Economic Community of West African States last week Sunday.

Jerusalem-based Energiya Global’s deal will start with a \$20 million solar field next to Liberia’s main airport, producing 10 megawatts of power, and eventually expand to other ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) countries, though further fields are still in the preliminary planning stages.

Energiya Global CEO Yossi Abramowitz, who was in Liberia with Netanyahu and was part of Israel’s negotiating team for the COP21 Paris Climate Accords, said Israel’s legacy of bureaucracy and its struggling infrastructure mean that the deals his company is inking with African countries, will put those countries ahead of Israel in terms of percentage of renewable energy consumption.

Gigawatt Global, another company overseen by Abramowitz, is exploring solar fields in 10 African countries. In Rwanda, the 7,8 megawatt solar field it opened in 2015, now produces approximately five per cent of the country’s electricity.

“In Africa, they deeply feel the effects of climate change because of increasing desertification,” said Abramowitz. “They are looking to Israel as a world leader to hold back desertification, and a lot of conflicts in the region are due to scarce water and food conflicts.”

He noted that the joint communique from ECOWAS and Netanyahu identified the top area for co-operation as agriculture, but the second area for co-operation was climate change and climate mitigation.

“If they have energy in these countries they’re using heavy fuel oil, which is super expensive, super polluting, and super greenhouse gas emitting,” he said. “Why should the poorest people on the planet, who may only have electricity if they’re lucky, pay the highest possible amount for the worst kind of electricity?”

“The economics is much easier here than trying to duke



it out with cheap natural gas in the Mediterranean. It’s much better to do solar today in Africa than in Israel,” said Abramowitz. “Because here, they want you.”

Abramowitz and others say Israel still has a long way to go before it utilises the solar capabilities it is exporting to the rest of the world, blaming red tape.

“We are among the leaders in energy research,” said Dr Jonathan Aikhenbaum, a campaign manager at Greenpeace Israel, who led the fight to ease solar regulations. “You can find so many creative solutions for solar and energy collection, but the bureaucracy creates the situation that many start-ups that have solutions, don’t get off the ground.”

Israel announced in 2015 that as part of the Paris Accord it aims to have 10 per cent of the country’s energy come from renewable sources such as solar, wind, and biogas by 2020; 17 per cent from renewable energies by 2030.

The figures are far below the OECD goals of 20 per cent energy from renewable sources by 2020 and 27 per cent by 2030, and many countries are well beyond that. In 2016, 32 per cent of Germany’s energy consumption came from renewable forces.

“Israel has the lowest target for any of the OECD countries for renewable energy,” said Abramowitz.

Still, just 2.6 per cent of Israel’s energy currently comes from renewable sources, making the goal of 10 per cent in the next two and a half years highly unlikely, said Abramowitz.

Until eight months ago, regulations from a variety of authorities made it very difficult for individuals to put solar systems on their homes that would supply their power needs with the excess going to the electricity company, or for companies to build large solar fields.

“There was not any leadership from ministers or anyone, including a prime minister like [David] Ben-Gurion, pushing the issue of solar [regulations],” said Aikhenbaum. “As a result, it created a lot of really complicated bureaucracy.”

Every authority that was tangentially involved in solar, made its own regulations. The Tax Authority required anyone putting in a solar system to register as a commercial business, including filing taxes and receipts as a business.

Each local authority in the country had different requirements for solar systems in their jurisdiction. The Finance Ministry required additional paperwork from individuals who wanted to put in a solar system. The Israel Electric Corporation dragged its feet, not knowing how to charge people who were both consuming and creating energy.

Greenpeace worked with various authorities for more than two years to streamline the process. After some resistance, both the Tax Authority and the Finance Ministry co-operated fully and cancelled many of the stringent requirements for private solar installation last October.

Aikhenbaum said that many of the authorities wanted to ease the bureaucracy burden, but without governmental leadership were at a loss how to proceed and needed external pressure.

Although it is now easier for individuals to obtain solar systems for private homes, Aikhenbaum said the next step is securing funding for interested individuals.

Currently, an 8-kilowatt solar system, about the size needed for a private home, costs about NIS 50 000 to install, said Aikhenbaum. A system this size would save a family approximately NIS 7 500 per year on its electricity bill, so it would take about seven years to recoup the cost of installation.

Solar panels cannot provide 100 per cent of the electricity for a home, because they produce electricity during the day, but people also need electricity at night. Currently, storing energy produced during the day for later use, is prohibitively expensive on an individual basis.

A solar system on a private house can work for 30-40 years, making it a solid investment. But because the field is new, some banks are reluctant to provide loans for solar installation, which is why Greenpeace and Aikhenbaum are trying to identify foundations that could provide loans at favourable rates for individuals to install solar panels.

Apartment dwellers can also install panels on the roofs of their building - each apartment needs about 30-40 square metres of space on the rooftop for their solar panels - but it also requires approval of the neighbours in the building through a separate process.

Aikhenbaum hopes that the country’s solar use catches up to its reputation as a leader in the solar field.

“Everything that Israel does with hi-tech agriculture and medical technology, [the government] really supports it, but with energy they’re not doing this. They haven’t yet taken energy and put it in the same place as a strategic thing,” he said. “Taking large solar fields and learning how to store it, that’s really the future and how Israel will save itself.”

Abramowitz noted that Israel has already proved that solar can be effective. “When we started the solar industry in Israel, we had an audacious goal: we wanted the Red Sea to the Dead Sea to be 100 per cent solar during the day, but the electricity company and everyone said it’s silly and stupid,” said Abramowitz, who was one of three co-founders of Arava Power along with Ed Hofland and David Rosenblatt.

Currently, the Arava region is 70 per cent powered by the sun during the day, and at 2020 will be at 100 per cent.

Is Ivanka America’s most powerful Jewish woman?

GABE FRIEDMAN

CNN, look what you’ve started! An article published last Friday bears the headline “Ivanka Trump: America’s most powerful Jewish woman”.

Authors Maeve Reston and Betsy Klein discuss Ivanka’s Jewishness (her Orthodox conversion, her trip to the Western Wall, yada yada yada) and posit that the president’s daughter is in a unique position to “guide a national conversation about the rising



Ivanka Trump attending a bill signing in the Diplomatic Reception Room of the White House in Washington DC, last Friday. ALEX WONG/GETTY IMAGES

number of threats to Jewish community centres and places of worship.”

The piece, however, doesn’t offer much evidence to back up its headline.

Naturally, commentators on Twitter seized the opportunity to critique the article and offer their own thoughts on the most powerful Jewish women in America. Federal Reserve head Janet Yellen as well as Supreme Court Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg and Elena Kagan, were frequently named.

Journalist Steve Goldstein even quickly wrote an opinion piece in MarketWatch with the headline: “No, Ivanka Trump is not the most powerful Jewish woman in America”. His pick? Yellen.

“Federal Reserve Chairwoman Janet Yellen can, on certain days, be considered the most powerful person, male or female, Jewish or gentile, in the entire world,” Goldstein wrote.

“The power of US monetary policy can help create, or take away, millions of jobs and move billions of dollars around the globe, and the Fed chief usually holds sway over the policy-making Federal Open Market Committee, regardless of a dissent or two.”

Actor Zach Braff commented on CNN’s original tweet of the article, suggesting that “Wonder Woman” star Gal Gadot might actually be the most powerful Jewish woman in the US (despite the fact that she’s Israeli and new to Los Angeles).

It has been a rough few days for Ivanka. After taking a break from Twitter during Shavuot, she logged back on last week Thursday night to mark LGBTQ Pride Month - and was swiftly condemned by gay rights advocates for being “complicit” in the anti-gay policies of the Trump administration.

Radiohead frontman slams BDS efforts to derail Israel show

TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF

Radiohead leading man Thom Yorke, last week Friday heavily criticised the “extremely upsetting” efforts by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement and various



Thom Yorke with Radiohead performs at Philips Arena on Saturday, April 1, in Atlanta. ROBB COHEN/INVISION/AP

who want to learn stuff in another country? Really? The one place where you need to be free to express everything you possibly can. You want to tell these people you can’t do that? And you think that’s gonna help?”

Yorke noted that Radiohead guitarist Jonny Greenwood was particularly hurt by the hatred the band had been subjected to over the upcoming concert.

“He has both Palestinian and Israeli fans and a wife who’s an Arab-Jew,” Yorke said. “All these people to stand there at a distance throwing stuff at us, waving flags, saying: ‘You don’t know anything about it!’ Imagine how offensive that is for Jonny.

“And imagine how upsetting that it’s been to have this out there; just to assume that we know nothing about this; just to throw the word ‘apartheid’ around and think that’s enough. It’s weird. It’s such an extraordinary waste of energy, energy that could be used in a more positive way.”

Ending with a message to Waters, he said: “Thanks, Roger. I mean, we’re best mates for life, but it’s like, f**k

me, really?”

Jonny Greenwood’s wife Sharona Katan was born in Israel. She described herself on Twitter as an Arab-Jew who is proud to have Arab roots as she traces ancestry to Iraq and Egypt.

Waters had conceded in April that despite his urgings on behalf of BDS, the iconic British alternative rock group was resolved to perform in Tel Aviv this summer.

“I have engaged in a correspondence with some of Radiohead and they seem to have decided that they’re going to go ahead and do a concert in Tel Aviv, so there’s very little more I can say on the matter,” Waters said.

“They have to make up their own minds about what they decide to do with their lives and they have to go wherever their consciences lead them,” he said. “So, I’m not going to sit here and badmouth them or harangue them.

“My personal view is that there is a valid and legitimate picket-line that has been organised by [the boycott movement] and I would prefer it if colleagues in my business did not cross that line. But if people choose to, that is entirely a matter for them and their own consciences.”

Other signatories of the letter to Radiohead, included novelists Alice Walker and Hari Kunzru, Thurston Moore of US alternative rock pioneers Sonic Youth and Nick Seymour of Australian rockers Crowded House. Retired bishop and Nobel Prize-winning anti-apartheid campaigner Desmond Tutu, also signed the letter.

A cultural boycott campaign against Israel has had mixed success. Stevie Wonder, Carlos Santana and Lauryn Hill have scrapped shows but Santana then played in Israel last summer and many other major names, including Paul McCartney, the Rolling Stones, Elton John, Lady Gaga, and Bon Jovi, have performed in recent years. Britney Spears is playing in Israel next month.

Israel’s defenders have denounced the boycott campaign as hypocritical, saying the democratic country has been singled out when some prominent musicians are willing to play in dictatorships.

Radiohead last played Israel in 2000. That concert was part of a now-legendary Mediterranean swing where Radiohead previewed songs from “Kid A”, often called the band’s masterpiece, which were swapped online before the album’s release.

‘Wonder Woman’ leaps to record \$100,5 million opening

ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK - “Wonder Woman” conquered milestones and movie myths at North American theatres, where the Gal Gadot superhero film powered its way to a \$100,5 million debut last weekend and became the biggest blockbuster ever directed by a woman.

The well-reviewed movie, directed by Patty Jenkins, easily surpassed industry expectations with one of the summer’s biggest debuts, according to studio estimates last Sunday, pulling in more than \$100 million in the US.

Starring Israeli Gadot as the Amazonian warrior princess, “Wonder Woman” is the rare - and most successful - female-led film in an overwhelmingly male superhero landscape.

It proved a hit with moviegoers, earning a CinemaScore of A. While skewing somewhat female, it drew a fairly evenly split audience. Warner Bros said 52 per cent of the audience was female and 48 per cent male. “Wonder Woman” added \$122,5 million internationally, including \$38 million in China.

“It shows that superhero movies

aren’t just about men. They’re about women as well,” said Jeff Goldstein, distribution chief for Warner Bros. “All the noise about Patty Jenkins breaking the glass ceiling for directors, I think that added to it as well.”



Gal Gadot in a scene from “Wonder Woman”. CLAY ENOS/WARNER BROS ENTERTAINMENT VIA AP

Reviewers were overwhelmingly positive about the film, with many gushing over Gadot as “electric” and an “inspired choice” for the

role.

Gadot, 32, a former Miss Israel, was born in Rosh Ha’ayin, the daughter of a teacher and an engineer; her mother’s parents were Holocaust survivors. A former model, she is married with

female island of Themyscira, and her mission to help save the world during the First World War, during which she becomes known as Wonder Woman. The film has been banned in Lebanon, because of its Israeli star.

Jenkins, who previously directed 2003’s “Monster” starring Charlize Theron (for which Theron won an Oscar), now holds the record for biggest domestic opening for a female director. The previous mark was Sam Taylor-Johnson’s “Fifty Shades of Grey”, with \$85,1 million in 2015.

Women have long struggled to get behind the camera of Hollywood’s biggest productions. Female directors accounted for just nine per cent of the 250 top-grossing movies in North America in 2015 and only seven per cent in 2016. Some still had issues with “Wonder Woman”. Online critics complained of gender inequality after the Alamo Drafthouse scheduled a handful of female-only screenings across the country.

Nevertheless, “Wonder Woman” represents a turning point for Warner Bros and DC Comics, which have together

struggled in recent years to match the Marvel-Disney juggernaut.

While “Wonder Woman” didn’t match the box-office might of “Batman v Superman” (a \$166 million opening) or “Suicide Squad” (\$133,7 million), it was much better received than those roundly derided releases.

“This is a dramatic step in the right direction,” Goldstein said. “We’ve heard fans. We’ve heard critics. These properties are very complicated and beloved. To get it right, it takes a lot of work. I think on this movie, all of us got it right.”

The week before last’s top film, “Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Men Tell No Tales”, slid dramatically to \$21,6 million in its second week. It landed in third place, behind Fox’s “Captain Underpants: The First Epic Movie”. The animated release opened with \$23,5 million.

But “Pirates” still sails well overseas. It’s made \$386,6 million internationally, driving the Disney sequel to more than \$500 million globally.

The success of “Wonder Woman” gave the summer box office a much-needed charge.

Aliyah – the good, the bad and the meshuga



Benita Levin

Being schooled in a new school system...

“Knowledge is Light” was our school motto when I was a child in Durban. The importance of education was made clear to us from as far back as I can remember. It wasn’t taken for granted. A good education was a privilege.

To this day, I shudder when I hear stories of schools, varsities or libraries being vandalised. Places of learning are sacrosanct. As former South African President Nelson Mandela said so beautifully: “Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

If there was one change we weren’t fully prepared for in Israel, it was the different schooling system. Firstly, our children go to school six days a week. Granted, Friday is a shorter day and many high schools have a five-day week, but for us at this stage, our bodies are still confused when that alarm clock goes off early on a Sunday morning.

School uniforms, as we’ve always known them, are a thing of the past. There are no grey pants, white shirts or ties and there are certainly no blazers. It’s distinctly more casual. Children here wear a T-shirt - any colour - with a badge ironed on the front.

Then it’s tracksuit pants, jeans or shorts for the boys, and skirts for the girls. Any type of skirt - flared, straight, denim, striped or spotted! Gone are the days of racing to buy “Bata Toughies” at the end of each school holiday. Children here wear “runners” - better known to South Africans as “takkies”!

The comfortable shoe concept makes perfect sense, because most children are either walking or cycling to school. From the age of nine, a child can legally cross the street alone in Israel.

Seeing so many children chatting together as they make their way to school each morning, with their oversized backpacks, still makes me smile. Older children in primary school are given traffic duties - they stand at the pedestrian crossings in bright yellow vests, making sure cars stop in time. They’re given responsibilities from an early age. It’s an exciting new normal.

A less exciting new normal was adapting to the new school culture. Teachers and parents here often comment about the “extremely polite South African children”. They generally speak softly, listen to instructions and wait their turn in a queue.

Here it is clear we need to “toughen up” a little if to be heard, to ask a question or secure a piece of birthday cake at a party. More than once, I’ve explained to our children that while we might be integrating into a louder, more outspoken, more “assertive” culture, the so-called South African manners are here to stay.

There is far less emphasis on homework, certainly at primary school level. Children don’t seem to be under too much pressure. Their

Word of the week -
Achdut – unity.

New phrase of the week - Gam Ve-Gam – both.

Smile of the week - Our first-ever school event for parents had the theme of a “shuk” during the week of Yom Yerushalayim. Various outdoor stalls offered humus, pitot, shawarma, nuts, sweets and marshmallows. Could have stayed for hours!

after-school banter seems to focus on soccer, basketball and the latest video games.

If they choose not to work, it’s their problem. You also don’t seem to hear stories of mothers staying up late to help finish their children’s projects. Each child must make their own deadline, finish their own project... or not.

It seems decidedly more laid back than the school system and enforced discipline we knew before, but we’re told the focus on actual results happens down the line...

As new olim, our children are part of an “ulpan” Hebrew class, which is during school hours. They join other new pupils - from England, America, France, Spain, Brazil, Italy and Mexico - as they focus on their language “catch up” programme. One of the advantages of arriving here with young children, is that they are like language sponges at the age of nine and 10.

They aren’t concerned about mispronouncing words or using the wrong gender - they just speak, and the progress is fascinating to see.

Despite glaring early differences in the schooling priorities, I have a sense that the system simply must work. This is after all a country known as the “Start-Up Nation” with regular stories doing the rounds about having the latest hi- tech companies to shatter global expectations.

The advantages of the more casual system are becoming more clear each day - children make their own decisions about their school work, their arrangements and what they do in their free time. They also don’t seem to stress about the small stuff.

It almost makes up for the early morning Sunday alarm clock. Well, almost...

Give generously... but stick to money

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Jewish National Fund-SA’s ubiquitous “Blue Boxes” is a wonderful way of helping to keep Israel green - but South African Jewry appear to be contributing far more than just money.

Sharon Sack, who has been collecting these tins and counting the contents for over 26 years, told Jewish Report that JNF staffers and volunteers are used to finding all sorts of things in the tins.

A recently-collected tin from a Jewish day school, really took the cake, she said. When Sack emptied it into the counting tray, she found a condom! “It was a used one at that,” she says indignantly.

Coin-counters always find things like foreign currency, jewellery, paper-notes, chewing gum, dirty tissues and even small toys.

JNF volunteer Benji Shulman, says that while there are so many modern electronic ways folks can donate to the JNF, the Blue Box remains the most popular with the public.

“Despite modern technology like EFTs, debit orders and credit cards,” says Shulman, JNF supporters still “like to do things the old-fashioned way”.

At its peak, there were over 5 000 Blue Boxes around Johannesburg, says Sack, but there are fewer now. Some of the metal tins have been replaced by a cardboard version. There is also an electronic version and even a giant blue box that sits outside Jewish schools.

The contents of each box are emptied into a tray and, before rubber-gloved counters start sorting, they first separate the debris.

The Blue Box was first used to raise funds in the 1890s. Since then, community members have been diligently supporting the work of the JNF in purchasing land, planting and growing trees, saving water and creating tourism in Israel.

The Blue Box has been around for over 100 years, and, if the support people pour into them is anything to go by, they seem set to be working for another 100 - at least.



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Rapped in Jewish Hotline Bling

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

When Michael Jackson’s oldest son, Prince Jackson, announced the Billboard Music Awards’ top artist, he called on the same artiste who had come up on stage 12 times previously that night, to accept awards. A huge entourage followed him onto the stage including his own father, Lil Wayne and Nicki Minaj.

Never before had one musician accomplished such a convincing sweep of the Billboard Music Awards.

When the royalty of music gathered on the Las Vegas strip for the annual Billboard glamourfest, there was little doubt that Adele, the reigning queen of popular music, would scoop most of the coveted awards.

In a lyrical palace coup, a dethroned Adele gave way to Drake, the black Jewish Canadian rapper who was anointed the new king of music. In true poetic irony, it was the son of the late King of Pop who crowned the new heir.

Drake who bridges the musical divide between hip-hop and rap, has become one of the most successful artists of his generation.

His song, Hotline Bling, and his collaboration with Rihanna on Work, has skyrocketed Drake to international fame and made him a household name.

Smashing Adele’s previous record, Drake took home 13 Billboard Music Awards, the most ever won at one ceremony.

During the course of the evening, Drake won top artist, top male artist and top Billboard 200 artist for his smash hit “View”, top hot 100 artist, top rap artist, top streaming songs artist and many more.

In the competition for top artiste, Drake trounced musicians such as Beyoncé, Justin Bieber, Rihanna, Ariana Grande, Twenty One Pilots, Shawn Mendes and the Chainsmokers.

Drake’s father attended the ceremony wearing a purple suit, leading the musician to comment: “I want to say my dad got on a

purple suit with purple shoes. Boy, if you don’t stop!” But

day school in Toronto, and had a barmitzvah.

“I went to a Jewish school, where nobody understood what it was like to be black and Jewish,” he says. “When kids are young it’s hard for them to understand the make-up of religion and race.”

He tells the story that he was regularly called a “schvartze”, at school. “But the same kids that made fun of me are super proud [of me] now. And they act as if nothing happened.”

Drake told Vibe magazine in 2014: “It was just stupid,

annoying rich kids that were closed-minded and mean, so I dealt with that more than anything.” Drake later told late night TV talk show host Jimmy Fallon how the day he had an audition for the TV show Deglassi: The Next Generation, “it was also the day I finally got accepted by these really cool Jewish kids at my school”.

In his hit music video, HYFR,

the real influence in Drake’s life is his Jewish mother.

Drake, often described as the most famous Black Jewish musician since Sammy Davis Jr, was born Aubrey Drake Graham. His parents divorced when Drake was just five and he was brought up by his mother Sandi Graham (née Sher), a teacher. Drake attended a Jewish



Drake reimagines his barmitzvah. Drake, draped in a tallit and wearing a kippah, laysns from the Torah, before doing hagbah (lifting the Torah), smashing a Torah cake and hotboxing the shul smoking weed.

Drake spends most of the Jewish holidays with his mother. “My mom has always made Chanukah fun,” recalls Drake. “When I was younger, she gave cool gifts and she’d make latkes.”

He remains close to his mother and often raps about her in his songs. In his song, You & the Six, he sings “retired teacher/but your words still got me evolving”.

Drake explains: “One thing I make sure I do is I always talk to the Big Guy upstairs. I always let him know what my purpose is on that stage. It’s not to further my reputation... I want to make these people happy.”

Drake, who recently filmed a music video in Hillbrow, wears a diamond-studded Chai and explains: “At the end of the day, I consider myself a black man because I’m more immersed in black culture than any other. Being Jewish is kind of a cool twist. It makes me unique.”

When Harry met Ady – he nearly platzed

NIA MAGOULIANITI-MCGREGOR

Actor and producer of The Whole Megillah, Harry Sideropoulos, has been described as the Johannesburg Jewish community’s “most favourite Greek”.

Harry met his Jewish BFF Ady at university 25 years ago.

“Hi, I’m Ady, are you Greek?”

“Yes, I am.”

“Do you know my accountant George? He’s also Greek and drives a white 325i?”

That was the start of a beautiful friendship where Harry and Ady put the fun back into dysfunctional. It’s also how Harry - Haralambos in Greek - was given a third name: “Ha”.

This was just the beginning of Ha’s Jewish journey. The Whole Megillah is an account of Harry’s discovery of a secret world, where a Jewish mummies WhatsApp group rules Johannesburg, where names are always shortened - Laura is La, Caron is Ca - and where no-one orders exactly off the menu. “Add avo, no bagel, no egg yolk just whites...”

When Harry cracks his first Shabbos dinner invite - and to Shtetl Central, Glenhazel, doll, - well, of course, he nearly platzes!

It might have been then, he let slip his first “oy”. Voops, vaps: The Good Greek Boy has morphed into the Shabbos Goy.

Realising he is going to be the only “oulos” in a sea of “itzes”, that he doesn’t know his kvetch from his klutz, he almost commits social suicide by mixing up the dairy and meat plates. He needs that like a loch in kop.

It’s then that Harry must dig deep to find the answer to life’s big questions, including the one he asks Ady’s son Josh who witnesses his crime: “And how does one make kosher this yellow Mr Price

Like Jewish mothers, Greek mothers will make you feel guilty about everything, because calling her daily is just not enough contact - after all, she carried you for nine months and gave up her life for you!

plate...” (When Ady learns of this, she’s furious. She. Does. Not. Do. Mr Price!)

Before you can say, “schlemiel”, Harry has become the Greek Larry David, trying to understand the joys of gefilte fish and what to do with that matzah ball sliding around his soup plate.

He learns to “mmmmm” until wassing is over, even though he’s now hungry as a Greek who is used to being fed meze on the way to the dinner table. “My body felt as though it was experiencing some sort of glaecemic meltdown.”

Even then he has to wait to speak - never mind eat - until someone says a blessing for the challah.

In all this, he realises the Greek and Jewish communities are “connected” - at least by Club Street, anyway.

“You guys have an old age home. A radio station. Publications. Fertility funds. Feeding schemes. We as Greeks do too. But there’s one magic trick that you can pull out the kippah that we can’t match... your own medical services. In a community with more eminent doctors than the Oxford College of

Surgeons: Hatzolah. Genius!”

And, of course, says Harry, “more unites us than divides us”. Especially “mother’s guilt”.

Like Jewish mothers, Greek mothers will make you feel guilty about everything, because calling her daily is just not enough contact - after all, she carried you for nine months and gave up her life for you!

Harry says the two sets of moms should really get together to write a self-help book: Tough Love: How to cultivate greatness in your kids, through the power of

guilt.

The coup de grace of the show, shows Harry trying to leave Ady’s house - with a missing remote, a deactivated gate beam, a sleeping domestic and Ady not being able to hit the buzzer this being Friday night - with a “gentle” 400 metre sprint to the car.

Okay, I’ll admit it: You’d be meshuggah to miss it. Mazeltov Ha.

*The Whole Megillah, the Oys and Joys of being a Good Greek Shabbos Goy, runs until June 18 in the Pop-Up Theatre in Melrose Estate. Cnr Glenhove and 5th Avenue.

Book via quicket.co.za or tickets at the door.



Gabisile Nkosi’s legacy lives through her art



Sandile Nkosi and Alan Berkowitz

ROBYN SASSEN

“My mum was an angel,” said Sandile Nkosi (21), the son of the late artist Gabisile Nkosi at the moving launch of his mother’s collection of hand-pulled prints at ORT’s premises on Tuesday. The Gabisile Nkosi Collection is the gift to ORT of Alan Berkowitz, a friend of Nkosi’s and a passionate art collector.

Today, a graphic design and animation student in KwaZulu-Natal, Sandile was 13 when his mother was murdered by her boyfriend in 2008.

“He is absolutely wonderful,” said Berkowitz of Sandile. He described how he had only met Sandile as a child and did not know what to expect, when he began seeking him out, as a guest for this launch.

“My mum liked seeing people happy,” Sandile remembered. “She used to say to me ‘Why do you want to be an apple when you know you’re a pumpkin?’ It was about embracing who I am. She also always remained humble through good and bad times. And she always did what she loved.

“Another thing she often said was: ‘To know and not to do is not to know’. She taught me how to listen. When she was gone, those were the values that kept echoing in my life.”

Associated with ORT for 26 years, and a member of the National Executive Committee of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, Berkowitz is an accountant by profession. He met Nkosi by chance while on holiday in the Natal Midlands in 2005.

“There was something immediate about her,” he told the SA Jewish Report. “I’ve never met anybody as pure. Her use of metaphor was fresh, alive and sophisticated. Gabisile’s death was a major loss to more than the artworld. It was a loss to humanity,” he added, visibly moved.

“These works are so much a part of me. It was a difficult decision to donate them, but that has been a gift to me as well - the ability to share these works with

others.”

It was the self-portrait with a bird on her head that first grabbed Berkowitz’s attention. “I had never seen anything like it,” he said. “I was mesmerised. My love affair with Gabi’s art started. I bought it. It was the first.”

As a printmaker, Nkosi was greatly respected in the artworld. Though her life ended prematurely, the mark she left was significant. Not only an accomplished printmaker, Nkosi was also trained as a master printer at the Caversham Press under Malcolm Christian, where she worked alongside artists such as William Kentridge, Robert Hodgins and Deborah Bell, among others.

In addition, she took part in artists’ advocacy portfolios during the 1990s and 2000s, engaging with issues such as human rights, HIV/Aids awareness, and issues surrounding abuse. Indeed, abuse and violence, are like motifs running through the stories behind the prints.

In one image, the artist defends herself with a chair. There are images that deal with the traditional values of cattle and others which introduce text and rhythm into the line work. Playful and violent, documenting horrors with beautiful linework, it’s an extraordinary collection.

These 31 pieces bear testament to Nkosi’s skill. Each piece is premised on a story, but each piece also features a diversity of printmaking techniques, from blind embossing and silkscreening to dexterous linocuts on shaped plates.

Said ORT’s chief executive officer, Ariellah Rosenberg: “Most of our projects revolve around ‘STEM’: science, technology, engineering and maths. Thanks to Alan, we are now turning it into ‘STEAM’: science, technology, engineering, art and maths.”

The event featured music by a young band called Black Yoghurt. The collection is on permanent display on the ORT campus in Houghton.

Know any Jewish stars?

ANT KATZ

Do you have a boss, a friend, business colleague or family member who you believe belongs in SA Jewry’s “Galaxy of Stars”? Well, now is the time to nominate them for the 19th annual Absa SA Jewish Report “Jewish Achiever Awards” before it is too late. The glitz and glamour occasion takes place on Sunday, August 13.

The annual fundraiser culminates with a black-tie gala banquet which is the highlight of the social calendar of SA Jewry and honours members of the community who have excelled in business and the humanities.

Nominations are open to the public. Simply send an e-mail to nominations@SAJewishReport.co.za for each nomination. You

can nominate as many people in as many categories as you wish. Each nomination should include the nominee’s name, telephone number and e-mail address; the award for which the nominee is nominated; and a short motivation.

The three Absa business awards are for listed and unlisted companies, and entrepreneurship. The audited judging in the business categories is considered the most rigorous and credible business judging process in the country by top financial pundits.

The Jewish Report humanities awards include: Lifetime Achievement Award; Community Service Award; Arts, Science, Sports & Culture Award; and a Humanitarian Award.

Pick the person - or people - who you believe should join the gallery

of over 100 past winners like: Brian Joffe, Adrian Gore, Raymond Ackerman, Stephen Kossef, Gill Marcus, Brett Levy, William Kirsh, Abe and Solly Krok, Johnny Copelyn, Arthur Gillis, Jeff Zidel, William Kentridge, Danny K, Phillip Tobias, Ina Perlman, Johnny Clegg and Dr Ali Bacher.

But hurry. Do it before nominations close.





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Kirk Douglas: How the iconic centenarian found true love

TOM TUGEND
LOS ANGELES

When movie star Kirk Douglas married Anne Buydens in Las Vegas, the justice of the peace asked Anne to raise her hand and repeat after him, “I take thee, Kirk, for my lawful husband.”

Anne, who had recently arrived in the United States from Europe, raised her hand and proudly proclaimed, “I take thee, Kirk, as my AWFUL husband.”

At the time, the mispronunciation was not too far off the mark. In Hollywood, the handsome, muscular actor was already notorious for his inflated ego and the endless parade of women - from movie queens to casual pickups - whom he bedded at a record pace.

Four years later, in 1958, Kirk was away shooting a movie when he wrote to his wife: “If I live to be 100, there will still be so many things unsaid.”

Douglas celebrated his 100th birthday on December 9, last year and he sent a follow-up note: “As I have now reached that milestone, I can attest that it is still true.”

Both declarations are included in the couple’s newly published book, “Kirk and Anne: Letters of Love, Laughter and a Lifetime in Hollywood”, which was written with Marcia Newberger.

The book, which is Kirk’s 12th and Anne’s first, draws upon the couple’s decades of correspondence to chronicle the ardent, if sometimes stormy, relationship between the two strong personalities - he the son of a hard-drinking Jewish immigrant ragman and junk collector, she the daughter of a prosperous German family.

The enduring bond between the Douglasses is palpable to a reporter who recently visited the couple at their spacious but not ostentatious



Kirk and Anne Douglas at their 60th wedding anniversary in 2014.

Beverly Hills home for an interview.

During the lively conversation, Anne, 98, reminisced that while living in Europe, “my dream had always been to come to the United States, the country that had everything”.

Asked whether her vision of America had been fulfilled, Kirk, with his characteristic dry humour, quickly interjected with a smile: “Sure, she married a rich movie star.”

Throughout his long film career - during which he has appeared in some 90 movies - and the couple’s 63-year marriage, Kirk was away frequently for long periods on location shoots. But the husband and wife wrote to each other

constantly, using paper stationery even as the era of e-mail set in.

Anne kept every letter the couple exchanged, along with an impressive cache of photos. One stack she preserved in the couple’s temperature-controlled wine cellar in their Beverly Hills home; another was secreted away in the couple’s bedroom in their second home in Montecito, on California’s coast.

The memoir is a complication of the couple’s letters and photos. In its 221 pages, the reader learns about their love life, including Kirk’s infidelities, and is treated as well to some graphic accounts of the affairs of other Hollywood stars.

But that’s only part of the book. The pair befriended several US presidents and their wives, from John and Jackie Kennedy and Lyndon and Lady Bird Johnson, to Ronald and Nancy Reagan and Barack and Michelle Obama.

The Douglasses, of course, also played and worked with Los Angeles’ rich and famous. They cast a frequently jaundiced eye on the predominantly Jewish - and often imperious - magnates who dominated Hollywood, in a time before studios transformed into bland corporations.

Anne addressed her love letters to Isidore or Izzy; Douglas wrote back to Stolz. Thereby - like almost every other entry in the book - hangs an intriguing backstory.

Kirk’s father was named Hershel Danielovitch, but upon arriving in New York from Russia, he Americanised his name - sort of - to Harry Demsky. When his son entered St Lawrence University in northern New York state on a wrestling scholarship, he enrolled as Isidore Demsky. Kirk was usually called Izzy by his friends, a salutation adopted later by his wife.

Anne’s family had left Germany shortly after the Nazis came to power; she was living in Brussels when the German army invaded Belgium. With the help of a friend, Albert Buydens, she escaped by car to France, where the two joined in a marriage of convenience and she was able to gain Belgian citizenship.

A multi-linguist, Anne quickly found public relations work in the French movie industry; she was also a writer of movie subtitles. When Kirk, who had divorced his first wife, actress Dianne Dill, came to Paris in 1953 to star in “Act of Love”, he met Anne, who was pretty, brainy and divorced.

Though he was already engaged to Italian-American actress Pier Angeli, Kirk made a play for Anne and immediately asked her out for dinner. He was stunned when she declined this and subsequent invitations. That’s when Kirk started to label her “Stolz” - a German word

usually translated as “proud”, but also means “stubborn”, according to Anne.

In 2003, after 49 years of marriage, Anne decided, on her own, to convert to Judaism under the tutorship of Rabbi David Wolpe of Sinai Temple in West Los Angeles. During the interview, she described her mikvah experience.

“After removing all nail polish, I entered the swimming pool and put my head under the water,” she recalled. “I came out looking like a wet dog - but I was Jewish.”

She announced her new status at a large party marking the Douglas’ 50th wedding anniversary. “Kirk has been married to two shiksas,” she said at the time. “It is time he got a nice Jewish girl.”

She announced her new status at a large party marking the Douglas’ 50th wedding anniversary.

“Kirk has been married to two shiksas,” she said at the time. “It is time he got a nice Jewish girl.”

Over his life, Kirk has developed his own definition of Judaism.

“I grew up praying in the morning and laying tefillin, but I gave up much of the formal aspect of religion,” he said. “I believe in G-d and I’m happy to be a Jew. But I think too much religion has not helped civilisation. Caring for other people is my religion.”

Kirk learned about anti-Semitism early on, he said. His father couldn’t get a job at the local mills because they didn’t hire Jews, and young Izzy was turned down for a newspaper delivery route for the same reason. And when he was elected class president at St Lawrence College, a major donor threatened to withhold major donations unless the election result was nullified.

Even as a bona fide movie star, Kirk - along with the likes of Walter Matthau, Peter Lorre and Billy Wilder - could not escape prejudice in the 1950s and ’60s.

As Kirk writes in the book: “Sometimes it was easy in Hollywood to forget that anti-Semitism, polite or overt, was still mainstream. Jews ran the major studios. With Anglicised names and beautiful blonde shiksas replacing their starter wives, they lived like the wealthy WASPS of their movies: entertaining lavishly at their grand estates; presiding over screenings in projection rooms hung with museum-quality art; voting Republican.” (JTA)

Reason says: look for more diversity in senior management.

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On Women’s Day, the business issue of gender diversity at board and senior management level becomes a focus. With only 26% of senior management positions occupied by women in South Africa, how do businesses improve parity and yield the growth benefits associated with it? Contact us to help unlock your potential for growth.



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Jared Kushner’s family is a legend in this Belarus town

CNAAN LIPSHIZ
NOVOGRUDOK, Belarus

People in Jared Kushner’s ancestral town tend to speak very highly of President Donald Trump. That’s generally the norm in the former Soviet Union. After all, Trump’s style goes over well in this part of the world - a survey conducted in November in Russia found that 45 per cent of respondents said they would vote for Trump, compared to a four per cent approval rating for Hillary Clinton.

In Novogrudok - a picturesque city of 30 000 in western Belarus, about halfway between Minsk and Bialystok, Poland - Trump’s election is especially celebrated because it adds Kushner, the president’s son-in-law and key adviser, to the city’s short list of international success stories.

“Of course I am very proud that there is someone from Novogrudok in the White House,” said Boris Semyonov, a 57-year-old businessman, when asked about the subject last week.

Yulia Silevskaya, a jurist in her twenties, said Kushner’s post “adds prestige” to her city.

Unlike many people - including residents of the United States - the citizens of Novogrudok had known about the Kushners long before the presidential election.

In Novogrudok, the Kushners are remembered and revered - not for their Trump connections or their real estate empire.

The Kushners are known for the daring escape from the local ghetto in one of the most famous acts of Jewish resistance to the Nazis.

The Kushners’ story features prominently at Novogrudok’s humble Museum of Jewish Resistance. The two-room museum, which opened in 2007, features pictures of Kushner’s paternal family - his great-grandfather, Zaidel;

his wife, Hinda; their daughter, Rae; and her two siblings.

In addition to Novogrudok’s wartime Jewish population of 6 000 - about a quarter of its total population - the Nazis crammed an additional 24 000 Jews into a ghetto.

“The Kushners were a well-off family that, before the war, owned several shops in the centre, was known to many people here,” said Marina Yarashuk, director of the Museum of History and Regional Studies in Novogrudok.

But what really makes the Kushners’ story stand out, Yarashuk added, is how they stuck together through a remarkable escape. Their plan seemed doomed to fail, but ultimately enabled them to survive the Holocaust and fight the Nazis alongside Jewish partisans.

The Kushners’ unlikely survival centres on the actions of Rae Kushner, Jared’s steel-willed paternal grandmother, who was 16 when the Germans placed her with her parents, sister and brother in the ghetto.

Having survived at least five “selections” for murder by machine gun - including the one in which her mother was killed - Rae joined her brother in leading a daring escape through a tunnel dug underneath the heavily-guarded ghetto, surrounded by electric wire.

Rae recalled her role in the escape - which included removing dirt, as well as obtaining work tools and information from non-Jews who had entered the ghetto with the Germans’ permission - in a two-hour interview she gave in 1982.

In Belarus’ best-known Holocaust stories, Rae helped lead prisoners through the escape tunnel, which was the longest of its kind in Nazi-occupied Europe and facilitated the biggest escape through a tunnel by Jews.

The diggers - who concealed the earth they removed inside double walls and attics - led 350



men and women to freedom through the tunnel and into the woods. There, the survivors joined the Bielski partisans, a group of some 1 000 Jews named after the three brothers who led them, and whose bravery was the subject of the 2008 film “Defiance”.

As organisers, Rae and her brother, Honie, had earned a spot among the first to crawl out - what was considered a far safer position than at the end of the line. But she gave up her prime position to be with her 54-year-old father and 15-year-old sister. “If we live, we live together. If we die, we die together,” she recalled in the interview.

That decision may have saved her life, as well as that of her sister and her father, who was so weakened by months of malnutrition that he needed his daughters to carry him. Rae’s brother, who was among the first to emerge, disappeared without a trace, never to be seen. Today, the tunnel - which was dug inside a barrack and is now the site of the museum - is commemorated by a red-pebble path that traces its 206-metre trajectory all the way to the exit point.

The attention devoted to the Kushners and

their escape - as well as the general awareness of the story among Novogrudok’s locals - are typical of the success of Holocaust education in Belarus, according to Yuri Dorn, a former leader of Belarus’ Jewish community of 15 000 people.

Rae recalled how she forced a farmer to lead her family into the woods, where they lived for months on food given to them by locals, until they were discovered by the partisans, who had heard about the escape and sought out survivors in nearby villages.

The Kushners lived in the woods for a year, keeping watch for German troops and helping maintain the partisans’ camp until liberation in May, 1945.

Rae then took her family to a refugee camp in Czechoslovakia and, later, to Italy. She married her husband, Joseph Berkowitz, also from the Novogrudok area, in Budapest.

They emigrated to the United States in 1949 and settled in Brooklyn, where they raised four children, including Jared’s father, Charles. Joseph Kushner got a job as a construction worker, but by the time of his death in 1985, he had built a real-estate empire comprising more than 4 000 apartments. (JTA)

Letters

LET THE JEWISH GOOD TIMES ROLL!

There was once an editorial in one of the newspapers describing how Jews are highly intelligent, yet when there is just a hint of anti-Semitism we become hyper-sensitive. This is hardly surprising given our often difficult history. Yet it hasn’t all been bad as we tend to assume; there have been good times and even golden eras.

Following on the Holocaust, mainstream anti-Semitism has taken a massive dive. It is no longer considered acceptable to openly bait our people. Gone are the days when the Czar or a priest could get up and incite a pogrom. Nowadays it would be immediately and widely condemned if a political leader made any such racist statements.

We enjoy full citizenship and equal rights in all countries, including Germany, Russia and Iran. In America, Jews are the most popular minority. Our people are no longer subject to curfews at night, in any country.

Anti-Semitism has, however, remained among the extreme right-wing fringe. But even there, much of this hatred has shifted towards Islam which they now see as a bigger threat. Some of these extremists even praise Israel for its handling of the Muslims!

Traditionally, Jews were often better treated in Muslim lands than they were in Christian countries. But since the rise of Zionism, most

Muslim attitudes have hardened against us. This is likely to change if peace is found in the Holy Land - bigger miracles have occurred in the establishment, survival and prosperity of Israel.

We usually assume that those who oppose Israel are only motivated by anti-Semitism. Yet over two thirds of nations voted in the UN in 1947 to establish our homeland, in spite of the Muslim countries voting against it.

When Israel was still young and weak, many supported her. Since she is no longer seen as the underdog, she has lost much of that support. The side which is seen on TV with bombed cities and dead babies, is the side which wins in the court of public opinion.

Some say yes, but what about France where it is unsafe to wear a yarmulke? There are many Muslim immigrants who have not managed to integrate well with the French. Most of them live in poorer neighbourhoods where many experience alienation and rage.

It is in these Muslim areas where it is unsafe to wear a yarmulke. The average Christian Frenchman has no issue with the Jewish population. In fact, the president of France has asked the Jews not to leave the country.

**Martin Zagnoev
Johannesburg**

THE CHEVRAH KADISHA DESERVES BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS

It would take many more than 400 words (allowed for a letter) to express appreciation for the Chevrah Kadisha.

Let us just point out that this unique organisation is truly “holy”. Every week the column by Michael Sieff relating to the multiple acts of kindness by the various departments of this wonderful group of tzaddikim, brings joy and comfort from all the depressing news we read and hear in the world of today.

Every time one feels a little sad, there is nothing more comforting than a visit to the Selwyn Segal or Arcadia. How uplifting it is to see the happy faces of these exceptional people, made possible

by the efforts of the entire staff of the Chevrah Kadisha. How wonderful it is to see attentive faces when Rabbi Gidon Waks gives his daily shiur.

The list of kindness and support to all residents and other recipients of the Chev’s “holy work” would take up pages and pages.

May Hashem’s richest blessings be bestowed upon the management, staff, donors and volunteers of the Chevrah Kadisha.

**Choni and Miriam Davidowitz
Golden Acres,
Johannesburg**

INSPECTION IN LOCO SUGGESTED FOR DUDUZANE’S DUBAI PAD

I would like to address a letter to President Jacob Zuma’s son Duduzane, a business partner of the Guptas:

It was recently reported that in 2015 you purchased a swanky Dubai flat for nearly R18 million in the prestigious Burj Khalifa. I am pleased your association with the Gupta brothers has not only been an enriching experience, but one that has taught you to geographically diversify your property portfolio.

Although I, and many South Africans have never met you, we do have a special relationship. As South African taxpayers we funded the purchase of your flat through an exclusive VIP-funded programme, the brainchild of you know who, infamously known as “State Capture”.

Inasmuch as I, and my fellow taxpayers are third party beneficiaries in the purchase of your flat, we clearly share in the fruits thereof. I suggest a timeshare arrangement managed by your friends at the Saxonwold compound.

I plan to be in Dubai in two weeks’ time to check out the place and report back to my fellow timeshare beneficiaries. Please ensure a plentiful supply of Chivas and caviar, not forgetting fresh sheets on the beds.

I, and my fellow South African taxpayers are keen to meet you. I suggest we do so over a drink - that’s what new friends do.

**Errol Horwitz
Cape Town**

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.

Email: editorial@sajewishreport.co.za

Fierce journalism takes on the Mafia state



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Is escape possible for President Jacob Zuma from the Mafia state he has created with the Guptas in South Africa? If he flees to the Dubai mansion he reportedly owns to evade prosecution for corruption - as some people predict - he will probably be allowed in.

But high-profile crooks don't always find refuge. A famous case is American Mafia kingpin Meyer Lansky who tried immigrating to Israel under the Law of Return.

Lansky and "Bugsy" Siegel were central 20th century Jewish mobsters, involved in bootlegging, extortion, murder and gambling. They helped build the National Crime Syndicate in the 1930s and '40s, a partnership between Italian and Jewish organised crime.

Founding members included Al Capone, Frank Costello and Dutch Schultz. As a Jew, Lansky couldn't be part of the Italian-American

Mafia, but worked with members such as Charles "Lucky" Luciano. Police and government officials were routinely bribed.

During the Second World War in 1941, Luciano was imprisoned for racketeering. Lansky helped free him through a deal with the government: The New York Mafia, which controlled docks and shipyards, would report and thwart suspected Nazi sabotage.

In 1970 the government charged Lansky for tax evasion. In 1972, he sought to immigrate to Israel under its Law of Return, but his application was denied because of his criminal past. Israel said the Law of Return doesn't apply to Jews with criminal histories.

It might seem extreme to compare Zuma and the Guptas to American mobsters. But excellent investigative journalism by amaBhungane and Daily Maverick's new unit Scorpio, which has exposed South Africa's Mafia state through 100 000 to 200 000 leaked e-mails, shows the Guptas run the country at the highest level.

The harm done to the population and economy by their looting, is just as criminal, even if blood is not spilt in quite the same way.

The journalists say they have carefully



protected whistle-blowers, stressing: "This information is both too dangerous and too important not to share."

This South African Mafia may yet act against journalists through intimidation and violence. They have attempted control of media. In January 2016 the Guptas considered buying the Mail & Guardian, an avid critic, to add to their puppet outlets, television channel ANN7 and The New Age paper.

Former chief executive of Gupta company Oakbay, Nazeem Howa, said in an e-mail to one of the Guptas: "[The M&G claims that Zuma] is corrupt and should be relieved of his responsibility" and that the family has become "pawns in their strategy to unseat the President".

South Africa's strong civil society is increasingly opposing state capture, but is fragmented. The Zuma-Gupta Mafia state, however - just like Lansky's erstwhile American mobster network - is sharply focused.

Zuma is like a wounded animal and his fightback will be dirty. "You don't want to see the real Jacob Zuma," he reportedly said

during an outburst at the recent NEC meeting of the ANC, threatening members not to "push me too far".

Real journalism - the hard slog of uncovering and checking facts, and balanced reporting - is a craft, not a science. Skilful as its practitioners may be, crooks will exploit rough edges to protect themselves. Zuma already claims to be victim to a media campaign.

We are justified in being despondent about South Africa's situation. But we must celebrate its independent, aggressive media.

Veteran Italian journalist Vittorio Zucconi of the Italian newspaper La Repubblica, wrote about how Italy's government tried in vain to sanitise the media for its nefarious ends after the Second World War. But information is like water, he said: "You can try and channel and contain it as much as you want, but unless you find a way to dry it up entirely, it will find its way through the cracks."

The South African mafia can't plug those cracks. Dubai may be their only escape.

Community Column

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

The SAJBD and the SA Human Rights Commission

The SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) is one of the key "Chapter Nine" organisations established under the Constitution to give practical expression to the implementation of constitutional democracy in South Africa.

In performing its core function of upholding the safety and civil rights of the Jewish community, the Board works closely with this body, which provides a crucial vehicle through which to address incidents of anti-Semitism.

The SAHRC process enables us to take up incidents that, while definitely requiring action of some kind, are not of so extreme and/or threatening a nature as to necessitate approaching the courts directly with all the trouble and expense that entails.



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

and communities who feel that their right to dignity have been transgressed, to obtain redress. As such, they play a critical role in our society.

The reality, however, is that the SAHRC has a very heavy case load, therefore the Board is very discriminating when deciding which matters to refer to it. Generally, this means that instances of hate speech have to contain a clear element of incitement to cause harm to the Jewish community for us to take action.

Honest, ethical conduct incumbent on all citizens

Although it is essential to combat racism and prejudice, this is only one aspect of maintaining a healthy, functional society. Just as crucial is ensuring that fundamental standards of honesty, integrity, transparency and ethical behaviour are upheld. This obviously applies even more so to elected leaders, CEOs and public servants.

Today, we are confronted with a situation where these values have patently been betrayed in multiple ways and at all levels of governance and which clearly cannot be allowed to continue if South Africa is to succeed.

That being said, the duty to conduct one's affairs in an honest and above-board manner, is incumbent not only on our leaders, but on all of us. As I have previously stressed in this column, we must ensure that we never lose our sense of integrity, particular at a time where there is so desperate a need to reinstate morality-based values in our society.

Members of our community should further see themselves as being ambassadors for the Jewish people, and for that reason strive to conduct all their affairs in a scrupulously honest and ethical manner at all times.

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

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Sydenham pre-schoolers celebrate Shavuot



Enjoying the festivities, are Jaron Riesnik; Ricky Cohen; Kayla Hanson; and Samuel Kursman.

KDVP moms and pupils share a shavuot ritual

LEEAT CONFAIT

King David Victory Park Pre-Primary hosted a very special “mommy and me” morning last week to make their own bikkurim baskets for Shavuot. These baskets were filled with kosher food and other items and then donated to Yad Aharon.

In ancient times the people would perform the mitzvah of bikkurim and bring their first and finest choice of fruits to the Holy Temple. They would do so by using trays of gold and silver or baskets made of grass and reeds. They would adorn these baskets with gifts for the rabbis.

In today’s times, Jews still carry on the spirit of the mitzvah of bikkurim. A primary theme or thought of this mitzvah is that of thankfulness, of gratitude and appreciating the good we are given.

The school teaches children to show appreciation for all the blessings, including the ability to do the mitzvah of tzedakah and give to those less fortunate than themselves. Just as Shavuot is a holiday of learning, at KDVP Pre-Primary there is a special



Esther Chaves Corcos; Aron Freinkel; Yahli Shapiro; and Samantha Blend.

effort made to teach the children all about Shavuot itself and in addition to this, special attention is paid to using practical day-to-day examples that the children can relate to.

For the children spending quality time with their parents turning an ordinary box into a beautiful gift for someone less fortunate, is something that will stick with them for a long time.

Torah Academy brings cheer to Silwood Lodge

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The children from Torah Academy Primary School, have been encouraged to perform random acts of kindness. Among these acts was visiting Silwood Lodge, an aged home in Savoy.

Pictured are Myrna Rosenthal, a resident of Silwood Lodge; Ari Levin; Yehuda Mandelberg; Sonia Witz, also a resident; and Zally Smith.



SUE BENJAMIN

Sydenham Pre-Primary gathered in the shul to celebrate Shavuot with lots of fun, singing and dancing. Rabbi Yossy Goldman gave the kids some insightful wisdom on Shavuot.

A “Bikkurim Parade” was held in the garden and the children marched with their decorated baskets filled with non-perishable foods. which they donated to Yad Aharon, to be distributed to the less fortunate.

Shavuot at Mina Lopato

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Shavuot at Mina Lopato Nursery School was a wonderful opportunity for the children to learn about the chag and sing songs with Tami Morris from the Greenside Shul.

Their beautifully decorated boxes were overflowing as parents generously sent in food for distribution to those less fortunate than ourselves.



Open view of King David Linksfield High

OWN CORRESPONDENT

King David Linksfield High School was bathed in soft autumn sunlight on a very special Yom Yerushalayim day, as the prospective grade 8s and their parents were led on an informative and exciting tour around the school by the grade 11s.

The Open Day festivities then moved to the hall where each of the school’s eight committees presented colourful displays, educating the guests as to what each one does and why the grade 7s should join that particular committee when they become part of the energetic school next year.

An informal assembly was held to showcase a variety of the fantastic opportunities on offer. Principal Lorraine Srage addressed the crowd, emphasising how grateful she is to be part of a community that places value on Judaism, Zionism, the ideals of integrity, belonging and unity.

“It was not by chance that we chose to have our Open Day on Yom Yerushalayim; we wanted to emphasise that we are a proudly Jewish and Zionist school,” said Srage.



Prospective King David High pupils as they enter the Open Day festivities.

Joe just keeps walking



Joe Yudelowitz (82) can be justly proud of his framed Walk for Life certificate awarded to him on a distance of 22 000 km, completed in under 20 years. Joe, who lives in Sandringham, is delighted with his award and intends to keep walking.

Friday (June 9)

- UZLC hosts Cliff Matthews on “The Little-Known Hero Jan Zwaarzendijk - Truly a Righteous Person”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time 12:45-14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Saturday evening (June 10) and Sunday (June 11)

- Lewandowski Chorale presents “Music From the Time of Salome Rossi”, choral and instrumental music from the late 16th and early 17th centuries. Time: Saturday, 19:30 for 20:00, at R160 a ticket and Sunday, at 15:30 for 16:00, at R150 a ticket. R200 at the door. Venue: Villa Arcadia, 22 Oxford Street, Parktown. Tickets available on Webticket www.webtickets.co.za. Contact: Hanneli 082-342-1341. Light refreshments included.

Sunday (June 11)

- Sydenham Pre-Primary School has an open day fun day, including a fishpond, mini market, tea garden, crafts and many other fun activities, from 10:00-12:00. Venue: 24 Main Street, Rouxville. Information: (011) 640-5011 or e-mail hello@sydpreschool.co.za.
- Big Band Music Appreciation Society meets at the Beit Emanuel Slome Auditorium. Programme is compiled by Ian Young with an audio from his playlist. After interval a DVD on Andre Rieu. Time: 14:15 sharp. Enquiries: Marilyn 072-243-7436 or Jack 082-450-7622.

WHAT'S ON

- Temple Israel Heritage Centre presents a one-woman show, “From Koe’sisters to Kneidlach”, written and performed by Chantal Stanfield and directed by Megan Furniss. Venue: Auto and General Theatre on the Square, Sandton. Time: 14:00 for 14:30. Tickets: R250 each. Booking through the theatre (011) 883-8606 or www.theatreonthesquare.co.za or computicket.com. Enquiries: Reeva Forman 083-228-7777 or reeva@intekom.co.za
- Second Innings hosts Linda Levy on “Life is a Do-It-Yourself Project”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres, Sandringham. Time: 10:00. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.
- UJW hosts Dr Greg Mills, director of the Brenthurst Foundation, on “Can We Make Africa Great?”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 10:00. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.
- Cape Town Holocaust Centre hosts Dr Robert Beachy on “Sexual Minorities in pre-Nazi Berlin”. Venue: 88 Hatfield Street, Gardens, Cape Town. Light refreshments will be served. Time: 18:00. RSVP: Dianne (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

Another year of UJW’s sterling service



The Union of Jewish Women Johannesburg looked back on a successful year at its recent 85th annual general meeting. Executive Director Cindy Kree gave a comprehensive overview of the many successful ongoing projects the UJW undertakes on an ongoing basis, paying special tribute to the many loyal volunteers who give so unstintingly of their time and expertise.

These include Kosher Mobile Meals, the House and Garden Circle, the Adult Education Programme, Brain Boost Stimulation Group, the Sewing School, the Granny-Headed Households Feeding Scheme, Alexandra Aftercare and other feeding schemes.

Kree thanked volunteers and donors whose involvement and generosity again enabled the UJW to succeed in all its projects and functions.

The UJW’s upcoming events and projects were mentioned, with Kree making specific mention of the upcoming Mandela Day project which will be launched as a long-term project. Then there is “Bags for New Beginnings” and she also announced that the UJW’s fundraiser for the following year will be the award-winning musical, “The Colour Purple”, to be held in February next year.

Kree reflected on the importance and the value of volunteers to the organisation and how the work done by the UJW could not have been completed without the commitment and dedication of each volunteer.

Miriam Isaacs received the Volunteer of the Year award for her commitment and dedication to the UJW Alexandra Aftercare.

Guest speaker Tali Nates spoke about “Remembering the Holocaust and the Rwandan Genocide”. She stressed the importance of learning about the past in order to stop history from repeating itself, something that everyone should do, but which was always accompanied by its own challenges.

Nates also spoke on the newly-opened Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre in Parktown and extended an invitation to all those present to visit the centre, although it had not yet had its official opening.

KosherWorld

TRULY KOSHER

A circular logo with the letters 'KW' in blue and white, set against a background of a menorah.

MANY MORE SPECIALS IN-STORE

A glass jar of Nescafe Classic instant coffee with a brown lid and a label showing a cup of coffee and coffee beans.

NESCAFE CLASSIC

79⁹⁹ 200g

Two plastic bottles of Cape Aqua Still water, one large and one small.

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A package of Prime Cut Mehadrin Viennas, showing several sausages.

PRIME CUT MEHADRIN VIENNAS

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A package of Tenta Gums, showing various flavored candies.

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ACHVA LONG LIFE CAKES

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Bishul Yisrael

Light Meat Tuna Chunks

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