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Interview with
Mark Pamensky
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It's a wrap!

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AUTO AFRICA

Who is representing SA Jewry at ANC conferences?

ANT KATZ

In a farewell message to Jewish communal leaders this week, Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk, insisted that if South African Jewry want to change the politics of the country, they need to be the change.

“If the ANC invites us to events, show up to those events. If they don’t invite us, show up anyway,” he said.

While he may have just been making an unrelated point, this brought to light a question that a number of people in the community have been asking: “Who is actually representing us at the ANC conferences?”

In a statement last week, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies spoke of a “delegation” who were warmly welcomed” at the ANC’s Policy Conference.

As it turns out, this delegation was in fact only one part-time representative, Marc Pozniah, vice-chairman of the Gauteng Board. Pozniah was only there for a day and a half because he had work commitments to attend to.

The only other Board representative was Chaya Singer, SAJBD Parliamentary and Diplomatic Liaison, who was only able to get in with media accreditation. This meant she was working from the very restricted press contingent, unable to sit in on discussion sessions, with very limited access.

She did attend the daily progressive business forum event hosted by the various ministers and ANC members.

There was a second invitation for the vice-president of the National Executive Committee of the SAJBD, Zev Krengel, but he faced accreditation issues on the first day and so couldn’t attend. He was not available for the rest of the conference because he went to Israel for a batmitzvah, according to the SAJBD.

“There was a logistical problem with Zev’s accreditation on the first day, and when he needed to leave for overseas, we attempted to transfer the invitation to another Board representative, which unfortunately was not possible,” said The Board’s head of communications, Charisse Zeifert.

The fact is that the Jewish community was not represented at all in the controversial foreign relations discussion that most affected the community because it discussed South Africa’s relation with Israel, with even diplomatic termination on the table.

Pozniah had been looking forward to attending that discussion, but had to leave before it happened. He said he was very impressed with the quality of debate at ANC branch level that he had seen in the sessions he managed to attend - and with the status afforded him as an invited guest. “It allowed me access to everything,” he said.

“What did stand out to me was the depth of debate in discussions,” he said. He says he got a very different view from that which one sees played out in the media. “What struck me was the depth of discussion - it was substantive.”

Zeifert says: “We requested observer invitations and were granted two.” She also said that ANC Secretary General, Gwede Mantashe, had invited Krengel and Pozniah. Pozniah, however, said that he and Krengel had secured their invitations themselves, in the name of the Board, due to their personal relationships with the ruling party.

Zeifert pointed out that as guest participants, the representatives would have enjoyed full participation at the conference, without any restrictions. “It is worth pointing out that the decision to deploy the two representatives, was not done in haste or with reckless abandon, but was rather a continuation of discussions and relationships formed

with key allies and individuals within the ANC, leading up to the conference, which ensured that the Board was represented in the best possible way,” she said.

Zeifert added that for the past 12 years, only Zev Krengel had attended ANC conferences. In fact, the SAJBD has never attended an ANC National Policy Conference before.

She says that the SAJBD is puzzled by the furore around the attendance by its members at the ANC Policy Conference. There seems to be a lack of understanding by those questioning the SAJBD’s role at a policy conference of this nature.

The ANC Policy Conference is an internal event in which ANC delegates from across the country gather to discuss policy around key sectors of society and make recommendations that will be approved or thrown out at the party’s National Elective Conference in December.

“There seems to be a serious lack of transparency from the Board as to how they are invited, who represents us and a lack of commitment to being there for the whole conference,” said a senior member of the community. “It is about time the Board was open with us.”

As the ambassador said in his farewell: “Make sure you are there to tell our story - it is a good story and one we should be sharing.”

Parshat Malot-Masei

Priorities and price tags

Is it the money or the man, the cash or the kids? What is most important in our lives? Of course, no one ever admits to putting money ahead of their children, but is it not an all too common phenomenon? Aren’t most parents, even good parents, guilty of making that mistake now and then?

Rabbi
Yossy Goldman,
Sydenham Shul



This week, the Jewish People are preparing for the conquest of Canaan.

In anticipation of entering the Promised Land, the tribes of Reuben and Gad make a special request of Moses.

They had abundant herds of livestock and the land east of the Jordan River was especially fertile and suitable for grazing. They asked Moses if they could inherit this land rather than the land west of the Jordan. In making this request they expressed themselves thus: “Pens for the flock shall we build here for our livestock and cities for our small children.”

Immediately, Moses chastises them and corrects their mistake. “Build for yourselves cities for your small children and pens for your flock.” Moses turns around their sequence, putting the children ahead of the animals.

Rashi observes that those tribes were more concerned about their money, i.e. livestock, than they were about their sons and daughters. Moshe needed to give them a lesson in values and priorities. Put family first. Possessions come later.

The veteran American spiritual leader, Rabbi David Hollander is renowned for always finding an appropriate anecdote to fit the message. Concerning this parsha, he once told me the story of a fellow who somehow managed to get himself locked in inside a big department store after they closed up for the day.

To compound the problem, it was over a holiday weekend. Cell phones had not yet been invented. When all his attempts to get out proved futile, he decided to give vent to his frustrations by taking revenge on the store management. He spent the time of his incarceration swapping price tags on the merchandise. It was long before bar codes. The result? A mink coat was now priced at \$29,99, a necktie at \$999,00. Furniture was going for the price of peanuts, the latest hi-fi for a song, and a set of underwear was absolutely unaffordable! Imagine the chaos when the store reopened.

And the question is: Are our own price tags correctly marked? Do we value the things in our own lives correctly? Are our priorities in order? Or do we too put the cattle and the sheep - the car and the office - ahead of our children?

How many workaholic husbands have told their wives: “Honey, I’m doing it all for you and the kids?” But the businesses we are busy building for them actually take us away from them in the most important and formative years of their lives.

Rightly has it been said: “The best thing you can spend on your kids is not money but time.”

I’ve seen many people become “successes” over the years. They achieve professional success, career success, business success growing their fame and fortunes. Too many in the process have become family failures.

At the end of the day, our deepest satisfaction in life comes not from our professional achievements but from our family - the growth, stability and togetherness that we have nurtured over the years - what our Jewish parents and grandparents simply called nachas.

“Jewish wealth is not measured in property portfolios or stocks and bonds” (to paraphrase the Previous Rebbe). True Jewish wealth is being blessed with children who walk in the ways of G-d. For that, we need to be there for them and with them.

Mired in Guptagate, Pamensky claims innocence

NICOLA MILTZ AND STEVEN GRUZD

Johannesburg-based Jewish businessman, Mark Pamensky, is on a mission to clear his tarnished name. He has been shunned and maligned by the community he claims is “so important to him” because of his entanglement with the notorious Gupta family and their dodgy business conduct.

It began when he was named and shamed in former Public Protector Advocate Thuli Madonsela’s 2016 State of Capture Report, implicating him in a highly controversial 2015 coal business scandal.

In an exclusive interview with the Jewish Report, Pamensky said he had applied to the courts to rectify the “factual errors” in the report, which show him in a bad light. He said the report falsely stated he had been subpoenaed by Madonsela, but the new Public Protector, Busisiwe Mkhwebane, has confirmed in writing that a subpoena was not served.

He insists he had “absolutely nothing” to do with the purchase of Optimum Coal Mine by Tegeta, part-owned by the Gupta brother’s Oakbay Investments, a deal dubbed one of South Africa’s most “audacious business hijackings”.

Pamensky said: “It has been inferred that I was involved with the transaction, but the dates speak for themselves... go back to the dates and the truth will be revealed.”

Pamensky’s name - along with those of many other businessmen and politicians - surfaced in a deluge of leaked correspondence related to the Guptas and their business dealings.

The trove of 100 000 – 200 000 e-mails making up the #GuptaLeaks - brought to light by investigative journalists from AmaBhungane and Scorpio - details shady deals, exposes huge kickbacks to middlemen, and provides indications of the alarming depth of state capture: buying off prominent politicians, officials and businesspersons to both secure profits and avoid investigation and



prosecution.

Pamensky, 43, was an executive at Blue Label Telecoms before he joined the board of Gupta-owned Oakbay Resources and Energy as a non-executive director in September 2014, and in December 2014, was appointed to Eskom’s board. Shortly after Lynne Brown became Minister of Public Enterprises in 2014, the Eskom board was stuffed with many Gupta-linked

“If Eskom management never told us, how could I have been involved? Just work it out. We never got privileged information, we never knew,” he claimed. “I had no idea - I wasn’t involved.”

members, including Pamensky. Pamensky’s role on both boards simultaneously raised conflict of interest issues, as the Guptas stood to make billions supplying coal to Eskom. Fin24 remarked that the sudden appointment of Pamensky to both boards was odd, given the high number of chartered accountants they already had, and his total lack of mining sector experience.

Madonsela’ wrote: “Mr Pamensky...would have or could have access to privilege (sic) or sensitive information regarding OCH [Optimum Coal Holdings] and various Eskom Contracts” Pamensky told the Jewish Report: “There was never a real conflict of interest, but a perceived conflict. When I found out from Atul Gupta that they were looking to purchase Optimum Coal, I duly informed Eskom to note the perceived conflict and to please recuse me and not send me any

documentation.” He insists that “Eskom management and not the Eskom board, dealt with the Optimum Coal transaction. “Therefore, I knew nothing about the transaction except what I read in the press. That’s the whole point! All the board members were not aware of the Optimum Coal deal. The only thing the board was informed of was that Optimum Coal was in business rescue. “If Eskom management never told us, how could I have been involved? Just work it out. We never got privileged information, we never knew,” he claimed. “I had no idea - I wasn’t involved.” He stated emphatically that people

do not understand the structures of the Oakbay Group. “A lot gets lost in translation and becomes confusing,” he said. “It is important to understand that Oakbay Resources and Energy had nothing whatsoever to do with Tegeta at the time of the Optimum deal. “I sat as an independent non-executive director on Oakbay Resources and Energy Ltd. I never worked for Oakbay Investments (the primary investment vehicle for the Gupta family) or Tegeta or the Guptas. I was never an employee of the Guptas. I sat on the board of a listed company. In other words, I was not given information

Continued on page 4>>

After 45 years of dedicated and loyal service to Sandton Shul, Rabbi Suchard has decided to retire, on appointment of a new Head Rabbi. Sandton Shul is searching for a Rabbinic couple, whom together will take full spiritual and executive management responsibility of the community and Shul.

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- the ability to provide members with spiritual guidance & personal mentorship and
- experience in overseeing the day to day functioning of a shul and be able to lead all life cycle events (from cradle to grave).

All interested and suitably qualified couples are invited to submit their CV’s to the President of Sandton Shul by no later than 31 Aug 2017 at president@sandtonshul.co.za. All applicants will be treated as strictly confidential.

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Chief Rabbi: Finding the way forward for SA Jews

ANT KATZ

Some South African shuls are brim-full every weekday and some battle to get a minyan, even on Shabbos. Some have an extremely young and vibrant community and some are filled with mostly elderly folk. Some modern Orthodox shuls have Chabad rabbis and would not have it any other way and some may not connect with their particular rabbi in a way they did with the rabbi of their childhood.

So, what is the way forward? This is something Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein has pondered and discussed at length with his fellow Union of Orthodox Rabbis. He has made it his mission to find the right strategy forward for the Orthodox community and their shuls.

While South Africa has one of the most successful Diaspora Jewish communities, Rabbi Goldstein wants to bolster it into a strong position to grow into the future.

“In an ever-changing world, our shuls need to innovate and stay ahead of the curve in order to remain relevant and engaging for our community,” he says. “In fact, more than ever, in a world that is increasingly digital and virtual, people crave the real bonds which are formed at shul.”

So, after months of planning, he has taken the first step in creating a strategy with a digital survey that has gone out to the South African community in the last week. To add to ensuring a successful result, he

threw in the incentive of five iPads that could be won. Rabbi Goldstein invited the community to participate in a survey based on the “Bright Spots” methodology. This cutting-edge research philosophy on change-management, is a very optimistic process, says Rabbi Goldstein, which “essentially says that there are things that are working - let’s expand on those ‘Bright Spots’ to improve everything. “The response has been astonishing,” says Rabbi Goldstein. Within days the survey had been completed by over 2 000 members of the community. At the time of going to print, on the day before the survey closed, they had received 3 397 completed surveys. This unique project recognises that the world is changing, and seeks to identify what works in our shuls and community. “To improve things,” he says, “one needs to identify what is working and then to expand it and make it even more powerful.” This concept of change-management was elucidated in a book called, simply, “Switch”, written by Dan and Chip Heath. Rabbi Goldstein believes this project will bring about a renewal at the shuls and bring about a “spirit of new energy and innovation to meet the changing needs of the community.” The public participation section of the Chief Rabbi’s campaign has three phases:

1. Gather the data The survey’s aim was to find out what is working and what is not working within their shul communities. In fact, two different surveys were sent out, one to South African Jewry as a whole, and another to the religious and lay-



leadership of shuls. The survey - and in fact the entire process going forward - is aimed at dividing the analysis into three elements: feeling of belonging and community; spiritual meaning; and food and fun. All the data collected is then gathered and collated and becomes the basis for the next phase.

2. Conference/workshops This is a “Bright Spots” conference/ workshop, to which rabbonim, rebbetzins, chazonim, committee members and secretaries, are invited. The first will be held in Cape

Town on Sunday, August 20 and the second in Johannesburg on the following Sunday, August 27. At these conference/workshops as Rabbi Goldstein refers to them, all stakeholders from all shuls will attend. Rabbi Goldstein is expecting hundreds to do so.

Apart from the plenary, the day will include dividing the delegates into three breakaway groups headed by professional facilitators to discuss the three topics canvassed in the survey. Each of the three groups will then give feedback to the plenary, which will, in turn, workshop each of them and formulate a strategy for future renewal, based on innovation.

3. The Rabbinical Conference Following the Cape and Johannesburg conference/ workshops, the outcomes of both will be collated into a document to

be presented and workshopped at the third public phase of the project: a rabbinical conference. This will only be attended by rabbis and rebbetzins and will follow the same format as the Cape and Johannesburg conferences. This will crystallise the outcomes,

says Rabbi Goldstein, and “will eventually lead to an action blueprint for the renewal of our shuls”. The broad thinking behind the project, which has been sponsored by Ivan and Lynette Zaltsman, “is the recognition of the fact that the environment is changing all the time and we need to be proactive,” says Rabbi Goldstein. He believes that this innovative and proactive approach will maintain the connection of South African Jewry to shul life - which “has been a vital part of making South Africa such a vibrant community”.

Pamensky claims innocence

>> Continued from page 3

or insights into any of the Group’s other companies. In a leaked e-mail from Pamensky to Atul Gupta in November 2015, as the Guptas were supposedly poised for the kill on the Optimum purchase, he wrote: “As I’m at the tail-end of the main acquisition of Optimal (sic) Coal, please ensure that a condition precedent is that the R2bn claim from Eskom is [that it is] withdrawn or it becomes the seller’s problem. “I’m happy to get involved to assist with this acquisition and monthly monitoring/analysing of all investments from today. I can meet anyone you require. If you need me in India or Dubai to discuss, I’ll meet you there.” This refers to a disputed R2,1 billion Eskom-imposed fine (related to sub-standard coal supply from 2012) that was reinstated by then Eskom CEO Brian Molefe in June 2015, allegedly in a ploy to force the sale of Optimum to Tegeta. Optimum was owned by the Swiss-based global mining giant Glencore, run by Jewish Johannesburg-born CEO Ivan Glasenberg. Optimum went into business rescue in August 2015, after Glasenberg flew to South Africa, but failed to resolve a dispute with Eskom. Optimum was managed in South Africa by Clinton Ephron, who recently made aliya. This week Pamensky stood firm: “Regarding this 22 November 2015 e-mail, all that I indicated was that the purchaser, Tegeta, (in respect of which I had no financial or other interest or directorship...) should not take on responsibility for the R2 billion claim and this should be the seller’s (Optimum Coal Holdings’) problem. “My view was that this was an obligation of Optimum Coal Holdings and that OCH would

“I have never suggested that the obligation be waived or extinguished by Eskom in any way and Eskom’s rights were always to remain intact. Ultimately the new purchasers of Optimum Coal took on this liability.”

have to address the matter with Eskom, rather than any prospective buyer of its subsidiary, Optimum Coal Mine. I merely suggested this because it seemed to make commercial sense. “I have never suggested that the obligation be waived or extinguished by Eskom in any way and Eskom’s rights were always to remain intact. Ultimately the new purchasers of Optimum Coal took on this liability. “No harm was done to Eskom by the expression of my views contained in the mail. On the contrary, I wanted to ensure that the party with an obligation to Eskom retained and discharged its obligation.” The then Minister of Mining Ngoako Ramatlhodi has alleged that Molefe and Eskom Chairman Ben Ngubane, pressured him to revoke all Glencore’s mining licences. He refused, and was “redeployed” three weeks later, replaced by the Gupta-friendly Mosebenzi Zwane. Zwane flew to Zurich to meet with Glasenberg, Rajesh (Tony) Gupta and close Gupta associate Salim Essa, according to the State of Capture report. The obvious inference was that the minister was there to midwife the deal.

On December 9 - termed “9/12” - MP Des van Rooyen was suddenly appointed finance minister in place of Nhlanhla Nene, only to in turn be replaced by Pravin Gordhan on December 14, after the JSE shed billions. The same day, Tegeta finally bought Optimum Coal Holdings for R2,1 billion. The fine was reduced considerably, with generous payment terms. This deal led to contracts to supply ever-larger amounts of overpriced, low-grade coal to Eskom. In another e-mail to his Oakbay colleagues, Pamensky wrote: “Just for info purposes, but Clinton called me now to make sure that I reply back to you that Ivan is 100% behind the closing of the deal and that Glencore are not behind these press statements. “ I don’t believe him about the press, but do believe him about the fact that closing the deal is important to Glencore. The fact is that Eskom will not deal with Glencore and the business practitioner mentioned same to me. Clinton was really concerned that I relay the message and ensure the deal closes. These guys are not to be trusted in any way, form or shape, but I have to pass on the message.” This second e-mail, Pamensky insists, was from January 30, 2016, after the transaction was concluded on December 10, 2015. Pamensky resigned from the Eskom board in December 2016, less than a week after Molefe’s resignation, in the wake of Madonsela’s report. Pamensky also resigned from Oakbay with effect from June 10, 2017. Clinton Ephron declined to comment. Well-placed sources say the current revelations are the tip of the iceberg. More as it comes.

World News in Brief

Dutch railway refers Holocaust survivor to customer service

AMSTERDAM - Responding to a restitution claim by a Holocaust survivor, the Dutch national railway company referred him to its customer service department, which told him they cannot find his paperwork. Salo Muller, who was a boy when he was separated from his parents 75 years ago in Amsterdam before their murder in an Auschwitz gas chamber, based his claim last year on the 2015 discovery of documents in which the Nederlandse Spoorwegen national railway company, or NS, billed German authorities for the transportation of Jews to transit camps. The company earned the equivalent of at least \$2,7 million from these transports on a per capita payment system. NS apologised for its role in the murder of 75 per cent of the pre-war Jewish population of the Netherlands, some 140 000 people. But NS has resisted calls to offer compensation to victims and their descendants, as the French railway system did in 2015 before paying out \$60 million. Muller, a retired physiotherapist, contacted NS directly requesting compensation. “My letters were answered at first by functionaries, then at management level, but the end of the story is that I got a letter from the customer service department,” he said. “The letter said: ‘Dear Sir/Madame, thank you very much for your letter. Your letter, as far as I can see, concerns a request for the payment of damages, among other issues. Unfortunately, I cannot find the correspondence to which you refer in our administration’.” (JTA)

Elections of the new Cape Jewish Board of Deputies

TALI FEINBERG

The Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies is in the process of voting in new members. The final step of this process will take place at its biannual conference on August 6. “The Cape Board of Deputies is the most democratic Jewish association,” says Liza-Jane Saban, the Board’s media officer. “Every two years, it runs two elections for membership of the Board. The first election is a public ballot, in which everyone on the Cape Town communal registers votes for three members, out of those people who have put themselves forward for election. As a result of this election, three sitting members of the Board have to be knocked off. “This happens at our conference, where the Board’s affiliated organisations, such as the SA Zionist Federation, Union of Jewish Women, all synagogues and schools, vote for the future Board members, thereby ensuring that all sectors of the community are represented in the voting process.” However, this year, only three people have put themselves forward for election, meaning there is no need for the first election - the public ballot. The new candidates are Michael Kushner, Marco van Embden and Adrienne Jacobson.

Jacobson is a psychologist in private practice, serves on the Herzlia PTA and participates in the Jewish Community Services’ Tikvah food project and the FAMSA domestic violence “Men Stopping Violence” programme in the Western Cape.

“There are only three places that need to be filled on the Board so three candidates is not a low number per se. The number of candidates varies from year to year - in some years we receive four or five candidates and sometimes fewer, like this year.”

“I have been saddened by the passing of so many wonderful leaders of our Cape Town community and I feel that it is time now for me and my generation to step up and contribute to the growth of a cohesive and dynamic community which is proudly Jewish,” she says. Michael Kushner is a candidate attorney and an accredited commercial and court-annexed mediator. He is an assistant to Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft in conducting religious services in outlying Jewish communities across southern Africa, including officiating at weddings and

funerals, visiting the sick and elderly as well as grief counselling. “I believe strongly in the relevance of the Board of Deputies, as a body which stands for the protection and advancement of all Jewish South Africans, regardless of their observance, affiliation or otherwise,” he says. Van Embden is a businessman who is the chairman of the David Susman Community Foundation (DSCF) which he initiated as a stabilisation fund for the community, the chairman of the Friends of the United Jewish Campaign which he established to obtain support for the community from out-of-towners who have residences in Cape Town, and co-chairman of the South African Friends of the Israel Museum. “We live in challenging times, both globally and locally, and as Jews, we are acutely aware of our role in making the world a better place,” he says. “It starts with our back yard, here in Cape Town and South Africa.” These three appear to embody the need for new, young and passionate leaders who want to be part of community service and who value the democratic process. They will stand alongside the current members of the Board in this election. The outgoing chairman of the Cape Board is Eric Marx. He will be replaced by a new chairman who will be voted in by the new Board members at their first meeting. “The Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies prides itself in the fact that we rely on a democratic process that calls on their entire community to participate in the voting experience. There are only three places that need to be filled on the Board so three candidates is not a low number per se. The number of candidates varies from year to year - in some years we receive four or five candidates and sometimes fewer, like this year.” Explaining the voting process, Saban says that the Board consists of 12 members. “Since three new members have been voted in by public ballot, three current Board members will need to be knocked off. This is done at the biannual conference where the Board’s affiliates



Marco van Embden

will vote for the 12 members. “The Board encourages new candidates to lobby for themselves, since this contributes to our democratic process. It is up to the individual candidates to rally support within all segments of our diverse community, so that ultimately they are voted in.” The conference, entitled “State of Mind, State of Nation”, will include panel discussions with top thought leaders; it looks to have an exciting line-up, including former Constitutional Court Judge Kate O’ Regan, Lawson Naidoo

(executive secretary of CASAC, instrumental in the Secret Ballot Ruling), acclaimed journalist and political commentator Richard Poplak, and groundbreaking anthropologist Dr Susan Levine, all in dialogue with each other and the audience. “We will be discussing issues that are at the heart of all South Africans, such as the state of law and higher education; looking at how these issues affect our community as well as looking for ways that we can affect change for the better in our capacity as Cape Jews,” adds Saban.

World News in Brief

Government gets deadline to allow same-sex couples right to adopt

JERUSALEM - Israel’s Supreme Court has given the government two months to reconsider its opposition to allowing same-sex couples to adopt in the country. The decision on Tuesday comes a day after the state told the court in response to a petition that the government remains opposed to allowing same-sex couples to adopt. The state’s decision not to change its stance on same-sex couples “takes into account the reality of Israeli society and the difficulty it may entail with regard to the child being adopted”, the government said on Monday in its response, citing Child Welfare Services. Welfare and Social Affairs Minister Haim Katz asked the court on Tuesday for an extension to re-examine the issue, saying he wanted to seek more professional opinions.

Amir Ohana, the first openly gay Likud lawmaker and a gay rights activist, said on Tuesday that he would not vote with the government coalition until the recommendation opposed to same-sex couples adopting is changed. Same-sex couples can be approved for adoption, but they can only adopt children for whom a heterosexual couple cannot be found. Consequently, the same-sex couples are generally offered special needs or at-risk children, or older children who cannot be placed. Many same-sex couples adopt babies from other countries. The Supreme Court petition regarding adoption by same-sex and common-law couples was filed by the Association of Israeli Gay Fathers, with the Israel Religious Action Centre of the Reform Movement, against the Social Affairs Ministry and the attorney general. (JTA)

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Jewish Report

Giving everyone a fair hearing

When a Jewish person does well, we klibe such naches and love to bask in their glory. Remember when Joel Stransky kicked that winning drop goal in the World Cup 1995? He became our hero and we were very proud that he was Jewish.

He may never have seen himself as part of the community, but we loved that one of us was behind South Africa’s World Cup win on our home turf.

I suppose it is only natural that we would enjoy and celebrate the success of members of our tribe. In the same way, we would be proud of a sibling who has excelled. No different!

But when members of the tribe stray or do something perceived as bad or wrong, it also affects us as a community very deeply. We take it very personally. And the community either rallies to support them, believing them to be wronged, or we get angry with them and may well alienate or disassociate ourselves from them.

This can be incredibly painful to the people on the receiving end, whether or not they are guilty. I make the analogy again of the family in that, when times are tough, you need those closest to you.

So, you may or may not be following #Guptagate and the hundreds of thousands of e-mails that are exposing deeds that the Guptas and their cronies certainly would prefer to hide.

The amount of information coming out at a rate of knots is quite astounding. There are a number of top investigative journalists who are piecing together huge revelatory stories from these e-mails. And so far, a few Jewish names have come up.

For most of us, when we hear or read about a Jewish person involved, our ears prick up. It isn’t something we can help - it is what I call our ‘Jew-dar (Jewish radar). Simply said, we take anything Jewish very personally, whether it makes us angry or proud.

My sense is that, whether we like it or not, when you do something, you are representing your family, your company and your community. Those people will see what you do as a reflection on them.

Earlier this week, I heard a group of people talking at gym about the “Jews of Guptagate” and I realised that it is not just us who recognise names as Jewish, other people do too. That is part of the reason that we react the way we do.

We know that other people see us as Jewish and will lump us all in the same box. If one Jewish person does something wrong, it has an impact. If three do, then it has more of an impact because of the concern that others will see us as all tarred with the same brush.

We would all like to believe that as ”People of the Book” we live a clean and perfect life. But, in truth, we are but human, and we all make mistakes - some bigger and some smaller.

So, when we see the people involved in #Guptagate, we may feel it is fine to ignore them or even shut them out of the community.

Now, at no point do I believe that it is acceptable to do wrong. Nor do I believe a person who crosses the criminal line should get away with it. No chance! Commit a crime and you should be punished.

However, I do believe we should give a person a chance to explain themselves and at least be given their day in court where justice can be done.

If your sibling did wrong and crossed a line, would you forgive them and hold their hand when the rest of the world won’t? You probably would.

All I am saying is: On the one hand, when we cross a line, we need to remember we do it in the name of all of us. On the other hand, if someone crosses a line, we should give them the benefit of the doubt and not shut the door to them and throw away the key.

Everyone deserves to be heard. Everyone deserves a chance to clear their name. Everyone deserves compassion and a fair hearing.

Shabbat Shalom!



PAULA SLIER

I have covered wars and had rockets explode behind me during live reports, and yet it wasn’t so long ago that I was uneasy just walking down a street in Jerusalem. There was a feeling of anxiety; not knowing who to trust and where to feel safe.

A wave of Palestinian-on-Israeli stabbings had been sweeping the city and others in Israel and the West Bank since October 2015 and social media was talking of a “Third Intifada” - or Palestinian Uprising. Back in September 2000, the previous Intifada had broken out after, most experts agree, then opposition leader Ariel Sharon visited the Temple Mount complex. It is this area again that is now back in the news.

Sacred to both Muslims and Jews, the Waqf, or Jordanian Islamic Trust, manages it, but Palestinians fear the Israeli government wants to impose changes. Muslim worshippers under the age of 40 are already prohibited from accessing the Al Aqsa Mosque while groups of Jewish settlers are allowed to go there. Palestinians fear this could become a permanent situation.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has repeatedly promised the contrary; that he has no desire to change anything, but it remains a real concern for Palestinians.

I have interviewed the Palestinian minister of the Waqf for different stories, but his underlying concern is always the same - a conviction that Israel is trying to undermine the Palestinian hold on the place.

Any disturbance therefore on, or near the mosque, has the power to ignite a religious war. Netanyahu understands this - as does Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas. And while there hasn’t been one phone call between the two in a year, it took last Friday’s terror attack in which two Israeli policemen guarding the complex were killed, for contact to be renewed.

It was the second time in just a few weeks that deadly attacks were carried out inside Jerusalem’s Old City. Two police officers, who happened to be Druze, were killed and another was wounded.

In a highly unusual move, Israeli police subsequently closed the Temple Mount to Muslim worshippers, citing security concerns. But Palestinians viewed it as a breach of religious rights and collective punishment, saying that the last time Friday prayers were banned in Al-Aqsa mosque was in June 1967, during the Six Day War.

As can be expected, the closure prompted the precise reactions Israel was trying to avoid. Some imams called on worshippers to break into the compound and right-wing Israeli parliamentarians stated it was high time that the



An Israeli police officer checks the identity of a Palestinian man next to newly installed metal detectors at an entrance to the Temple Mount, in Jerusalem’s Old City.

PESKY GREMLINS
On last week’s cover and in the related story, we erroneously claimed that South African Jacob Berman beat Jewish Agency chairman Natan Sharansky in a friendly match at the Maccabiah. Berman, in fact, drew with Sharansky. Apologies!

Dateline: Middle East

What happens now with Temple Mount?

status quo be changed and Israeli sovereignty over the area be established for good.

Keenly aware of this, in his phone call to Abbas, Netanyahu asked the Palestinian president to calm the situation. Abbas obliged, condemning the attack and saying that he opposed any, and all, kinds of violence, especially in places of worship. He asked Netanyahu to reopen the Mount to worshippers.

They were encouraging words from both sides, showing that while it may still be premature for the two leaders to reach a final status agreement on matters of mutual interest, they can act decisively and together. If anything good comes out of this horrendous incident, it could perhaps be the hope that another year doesn’t need to pass, or another deadly attack happen, before they talk to one another again.

But there are a lot of alarm bells ringing.

The perpetrators were Israeli Arabs from the northern Arab city of Umm el-Fahm. It is not clear where they trained and even more importantly how they smuggled weapons into the complex. Were there collaborators and if yes, are they waiting to strike again? No doubt these are real security breaches that need to be investigated.

Tensions between Israel and Jordan have also spiked. Amman accused Jerusalem of violating the status quo by barring Muslim worshippers from praying; Jerusalem responded by calling on Jordan to stop inflaming the situation.

These tensions reverberated throughout the Arab world, with condemnation coming from even those Sunni Arab countries with whom Israel is supposedly developing warmer ties - a rude wakeup call that when it comes to the Palestinian issue, there are divides that remain as big as ever to cross.

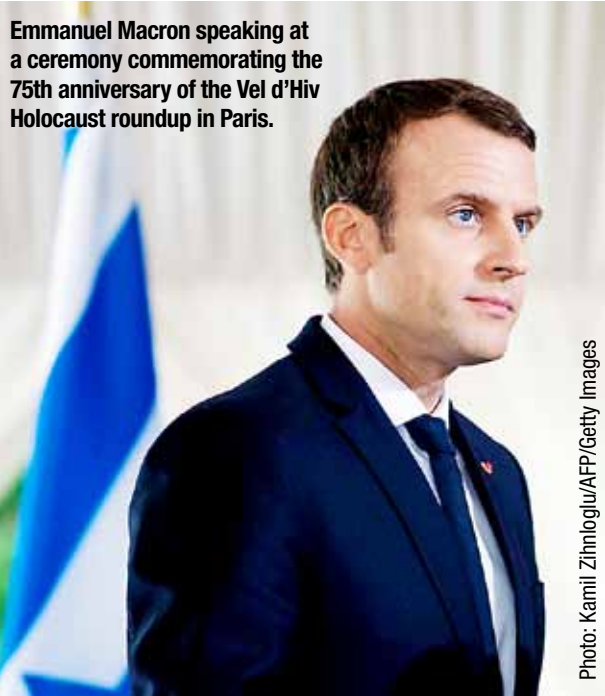
Tensions are also running high between Israel’s Muslim and Druze communities. The fact that the attackers were three young Israeli Muslims who killed two young Israeli Druze, has left both communities reeling, particularly in areas with mixed Muslim-Druze populations. Since Friday’s shooting, some Druze have condemned the perpetrators while some Arab Israelis have expressed understanding of their motives against an ”occupation army”.

What is important to remember is that this attack on the Al-Aqsa compound was not a spur-of-the-moment incident. It was the result of a decades-long violent conflict. And while Israel introduced metal detectors and turnstiles to try to deal with the security risks, this has only intensified Arab condemnation.

We might not be heading for another Intifada just yet; but ironically, Israeli efforts to prevent further religious incitement might just provoke the situation even more.

• *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.*

Why Macron’s speech about the Holocaust in France was groundbreaking



CNAAN LIPSHIZ
PARIS

PARIS (JTA) -- It wasn’t the first time that a French president acknowledged his nation’s Holocaust-era guilt, but Emmanuel Macron’s speech on the weekend was nonetheless groundbreaking in format, content and style.

Delivered during a ceremony at the Vel d’Hiv Holocaust memorial monument 75 years after French police officers rounded up 13 152 Jews there for deportation to Nazi death camps, the 35-minute address was Macron’s first about the Holocaust since the centrist won the presidency in May.

Evocative and more forthright than any of the speeches on the subject delivered by Macron’s predecessors, his address “relieved the feeling of isolation” experienced by many Jews due to anti-Semitism today, according to Rabbi Delphine Horvilleur, who leads the Liberal Jewish movement in France.

Macron’s speech “made me proud to be French and Jewish,” she said.

Here are six significant ways that the address differed from those of previous French presidents, including in scope; the unusual role played at the event by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu; its references to present realities, and Macron’s emotional delivery.

Monsieur le Premier Ministre

It was the first time that an Israeli head of state attended the annual commemoration for the Vel d’Hiv deportations of July 16-17, 1942, named after the Velodrome d’Hiver stadium that used to stand near the monument.

Netanyahu was invited despite objections on Muslim websites, by the Communist Party and the party of the far-left leader Jean-Luc Melenchon -- although the invitation came from the CRIF federation of French Jewish communities and not by the Elysee Presidential Palace, as reported by some French media. The Elysee, which organised the event, did not object publicly to Netanyahu’s attendance and facilitated it.

The arrival of Netanyahu and his wife, Sara, in a motorcade whose limousines sported gold-fringed Israeli flags electrified the predominantly Jewish audience of 1 200 people. Holocaust survivors in their 80s and 90s approached the monument railing to catch a glimpse of the Israelis as others reacted with thunderous applause.

They nodded as he urged Macron to stand with Israel and fight “the cancerous spread of militant Islam” and “hate that starts with the Jews but never ends there,” as Netanyahu defined it.

But their enthusiasm for Netanyahu was dwarfed by the deafening applause they gave Macron.

Anti-Zionism and the reinvention of anti-Semitism

Addressing Netanyahu, Macron assured the Israeli leader and listeners that “we will continue our fight against terrorism and the worst kinds of fanaticism,” adding: “So yes, we will never surrender to the expressions of hatred; we will not surrender to anti-Zionism because it is a reinvention of anti-Semitism.”

Macron’s statement was the first time an incumbent president in France equated anti-Zionism -- a fairly popular sentiment in France -- with anti-Semitism. It triggered several emotional yelps from the audience and applause so vigorous, it caused the tarp strung up over the monument plaza for security reasons to vibrate.

Deeper, farther

Much of Macron’s speech was devoted to establishing France’s complicity in the murder of 25 per cent of its Jewish population during the Holocaust and deconstructing apologist views on the subject.

Speaking plainly and avoiding metaphors, Macron sounded less like a politician than a historian or a prosecutor who is committed to factual accuracy.

In the first admission of Holocaust culpability by a French president, Jacques Chirac in 1995 said that “Frenchmen, the French state assisted the criminal folly of the occupier,” resulting in a failure to uphold the nation’s values and an “irreparable crime.”

The Macron address delivered on Sunday “was a precedent-setting speech that went deeper, on a pedagogic level, than addresses that preceded it by French presidents,” said Serge Klarsfeld, a historian and one of France’s leading researchers on the Holocaust.

Macron’s speech was the first presidential address that named individual collaborators who helped the Nazis kill Jews, including René Bousquet, a police chief who was indicted for planning the Vel d’Hiv roundups, but died in 1993 before his trial.

“France organised the roundups,” Macron said. “Not a single German participated.” And so France “in almost every aspect organised the death” of the victims.

“Ministers, civil servants, police officers, economy officials, unions, teachers” from the Vichy government were all incorporated into the Third Republic that replaced it, Macron said.

Macron said he “does not judge” his predecessors who remained silent on the issue.

During his speech, Macron said: “It is very convenient to view Vichy as a monstrosity, born of nothing and returned to nothing.” But it is “false. We cannot base any pride on a lie.” Rather than weaken the French nation, as argued by National Front politicians, admitting its guilt “opened the path to correcting” its faults, Macron said.

Refuting revisionists

Speaking about the Vichy puppet government, Macron deconstructed the main revisionist talking points put forward by the French far right led by the National Front party under Marine Le Pen. In April, Le Pen argued that the government’s actions in the Second World War do not represent France as a nation.

“I reject the attempts to absolve one’s conscious by those who claim Vichy wasn’t France,” Macron said. No other French president had said this in these terms.

L’affaire Halimi

Responding to repeated pleas by French Jews -- including at the Vel d’Hiv event during a speech by CRIF President Francis Kalifat -- Macron for the first time commented on the death of Sarah Halimi.

Halimi, a 66-year-old physician, was killed by a Muslim neighbour, Kobili Traore, who shouted about Allah before he killed her. Halimi’s daughter said that Traore had called her a “dirty Jew.” Yet in what CRIF considers a “cover-up”, the indictment filed against Traore last week does categorise the killing as a hate crime.

In his address, Netanyahu counted Halimi among other French Jews murdered in recent years by Islamists.

Macron replied: “Despite the denials of the murderer, the judiciary must as soon as possible provide maximum clarity on the death of Sarah Halimi.”

Emotion

A rational and analytical thinker with a background in banking and economics, Macron surprised many of his listeners with the apparent intensity of his intonation and body language during the speech.

Vision

Like many others Horvilleur, the Liberal rabbi, was “deeply moved” by Macron’s remarks at the end of his speech about how the children deported from Vel d’Hiv informs how he views his role as president.

Children “who wanted to go to school, graduate, find work, start a family, read, watch a show, learn and travel,” he said. “I want to tell those children that France has not forgotten them. That she loves them. That their tragic fate demands of us never to give up to hate, rancour or despair.” (JTA)



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Lenk’s farewell message: Don’t stand on the sidelines

PETA KROST MAUNDER

As Israeli Ambassador Arthur Lenk’s tenure in South Africa comes to an end, he has been hosted at a number of farewells... such is the love and respect he has engendered in his four years in South Africa. These sentiments were pervasive at the community farewell party hosted by the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), Board of Deputies (SAJBD), Israel Centre and IUA-UCF. Lenk is seen as a strict, but ever-welcoming sage whom people in the South African

to engage with you’ and the embassy doors were opened wide and he was there to bounce ideas and get direction and endorsement.” Swartz maintained that while the goal of Israel’s enemies in South Africa is to stop this country and others on the continent doing business with Israel, the opposite is happening. “The Ambassador reminds me that business between the countries continues to grow and no doubt that is as symptom of the work Arthur has done here,” he says. SAJBD Gauteng Chairman Shaun Zagnoev agrees, saying Lenk had changed many South

Africans’ perspective on Israel. “There is a vein of support for Israel, which Arthur unlocked and tapped into to show Israel beyond the controversy.” Despite that, Zagnoev adds, Lenk didn’t shy away from the hard political reality that engulfs Israel and her relationship with South Africa. Lenk spoke about the memorable moment when he was proved right that South Africans were not all anti-Israel, in fact there were many supporters. He recalled the 12 000

South Africans, more non-Jews than Jews, who gathered at the Solidarity Peace Rally at Huddle Park in August 2014. People came in their droves to support Israel during the Gaza War. “One of the things I had been saying from the beginning became very clear to everyone - the Jewish community and Israel weren’t alone and that it

is a misconception that all South Africans are against Israel. “Going around South Africa and visiting Limpopo, Mpumalanga, and Eastern Cape, you see we all have insane amounts in common and there is an incredible amount of friendship, fellowship and partnership.” He said that as Israel and the South African Jewish community, it was important to reach out to the rest of South Africa and find friends and partners. “And if we want to change the politics of this country, we have to be the change,” Lenk said. “We have to get involved in politics and in the economy, creating jobs and opportunities. We have to show what value add the South Africa community and Israel have for South Africa.” To do this, he insists, one cannot stand on the sideline. “If the ANC invites us to events, show up to those events. If they don’t invite us, show up anyway.



“Tell them our story. Our story is a good story, it is a great story, the world’s oldest one. Do it every day. “You have a great legacy in South Africa, a complicated but a great one. In Israel we also have a complicated but great legacy. He says that the ANC and South Africa is interested in Israel, whether it is a real interest or because they want to see Israel fall, is irrelevant. “We have a stage, so don’t let people tell bad stories, let’s tell them good stories. Ours is a worthy story.”

Photos: Ilan Ossendryver



communal leadership would go to for sound advice and guidance. “He always has a response to us and is not an ambassador who sits in his ivory tower in Pretoria. So many of us had the opportunity to work with him,” said Ben Swartz, chairman of the SAZF. “You simply needed to say: ‘Arthur, we need

Eleven things I learned in South Africa

ARTHUR LENK

As I approach the end of four wonderful years as Israel’s ambassador in South Africa, I have been reflecting on many lessons learned here which will be even more valuable to take back home to Israel than the souvenirs I have collected. Here are 11.

1. Africa and Israel have so much in common and have much to share with each other. The concerns of so many people: food security independence, successful water management and a government capacity to protect us from the dangers of uncertain, often dangerous neighbourhoods, have all brought Israel and Africa closer in recent years.
2. South Africa’s liberation story still has resonance and inspiration for so many of us around the world. South Africa’s peaceful resolution, as imperfect as it may seem in 2017, offers hope to people where conflicts seemingly have no solutions. Just as you had great leaders who understood that change comes via compromise, negotiation and rejecting of violence, many lessons can be applied to other conflicts.
3. Both Israel and South Africa were born from great tragedy. Although Israel was born a mere three years after the end of the Holocaust, its leaders immediately focused on development of our people and our society. Such a world view allowed Israel to transform from a tiny, besieged, agricultural based country to today’s developed, creativity rich “start-up nation”.
4. In the main, South Africa’s Struggle movements clearly rejected terrorism. Despite an intimate connection with various Palestinian liberation groups, it pointedly did not hijack airplanes, deploy suicide bombers or target civilians.
5. The South African conversation on responsibility, privilege and transformation, has been a meaningful learning experience when it is respectful and builds bridges instead of being abused for political score-keeping, recrimination and laying blame. The Jewish tradition of “tikkun olam”,

- repairing the world, is an important response to this conversation.
6. My Jewish brothers and sisters have played a key role in South Africa over the years. Despite comprising less than one fifth of one per cent of the population of this country, they have had an outsized impact on its economic and social development.
 7. Surprisingly perhaps, South Africa’s Jews and Muslims have much in common. Both are very small minorities with long histories of social and political activism here while building proud, traditional communities. Both have deeply integrated into life over generations with similar interests, voting patterns and concerns.
 8. Despite radically one-sided media coverage and despite limited engagement by the ANC, a majority of South Africans, of all backgrounds, are friendly to Israel and to constructive partnerships. A Facebook page for “South African Friends of Israel” has over 102 000 followers.
 9. The Palestinian lobby in SA scares lots of people. They have violently broken up a classical music recital, put a pig’s head in a supermarket, chanted “Shoot the Jew”. But they offer South Africans nothing - not jobs, exports or technology, or even bring support of actual voters for any political party. They don’t even really offer solidarity for Palestinians
 10. The lazy use of the word “apartheid” in regard to Israel, is insulting to South African history and factually wrong. Just like Jews are justifiably defensive about abuse and watering down of the loaded word “Holocaust”, so too, South Africans should forcefully reject an attempted hijacking of “apartheid”.
 11. Israelis and South Africans are already working together. Bilateral trade is significant and has room to grow because of complementary focuses. Over the past few years, Israeli exports to South Africa have increased despite the economic slowdown here.

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Maccabi SA coming home with 36 medals

JACK MILNER

The decision to employ a fulltime sport director was the catalyst for Maccabi South Africa’s success at this year’s Maccabi Games. That is the opinion of Maccabi SA Chairman Cliff Garrun who returned from Israel on Wednesday morning.

The South Africa team returned with 36 medals, 19 of which were Gold, 11 Silver and six Bronze. While more medals were won in 2013 (44), the tally of 19 Golds was only surpassed in 1993 when 26 Gold medals were won. The delegation was also substantially bigger in those days.

In terms of the total medals tally, South Africa finished sixth on the log behind Israel, US, Australia, Canada and Argentina. These countries had much larger teams than South Africa.

“We had a wonderful Maccabiah and in my view there is little doubt that having a fulltime sports director has helped us immensely,” said Garrun. Alain Nathan was appointed as the fulltime sports director a few years back.

The 19 Gold medals came from the open rugby sevens team, the junior and senior cricket teams, two in athletics for Adam Lipschitz, one for bowls, four for cycling, two for golf, two for swimming and five for tennis.

The Silver medals were, one for cycling, two for golf, two for rugby, three for squash, two for swimming and one for tennis.

Bronze medals went to the junior rugby sevens team, two to the bowlers, one to the junior boys futsal team, one for junior netball and one for squash.

Garrun, who actually came away with three of the four swimming medals - two Gold and one Silver - added that this year the Israelis were far better organised as well.

“There were no unpleasanties; it went overwhelmingly smoothly. You always have the odd issue, but nothing of note this time. The juniors were all housed together near Hadera at an Israeli Defence Forces recreational facility. The facilities were excellent and I had immensely positive feedback,” said Garrun.

He also pointed to one team who did not win a medal but performed with aplomb.” The Under-18 boys football team do deserve a mention. They won through to the semi-finals but sadly lost to Mexico who went on to win the Gold.

“This was a team supported by Craig Nossel and were closely associated with the Selwyn Segal. Their division was strongly contested and they played with such enthusiasm. They were such a great bunch of youngsters.

“I don’t think we have ever had an Under-18 football team reach that stage of the competition in the Maccabiah,” commented Garrun.



The other team to which he gave special mention was the Under-18 futsal team who took the Bronze medal. “That was also a strongly contested sport and they beat some top teams to win their medal.”

On the other side of the coin, Garrun played down his three medal wins. “The truth is, as you get older the competition becomes weaker.”

The cricket teams retained their high reputations by once again winning Gold. Maccabi SA have won a medal at every Games since 1973, including 10 Golds.

The juniors had lost to Australia by two runs in the round robin stage of the competition but when they met in the final the South African won comprehensively by five wickets.

They were coached by Braydon Dixon and managed by Joanne Tankle and comprised a mix of learners from King David Linksfield, King David Victory Park, Crawford College Sandton, Jeppe Boys, St Davids, Rondebosch High School and SACS. Team captain Guy Sheena was named Man of the Match in the final.

Captained by Wayne Josselsohn, the seniors also suffered one defeat in the round robin but then beat the UK in the final. and once again it was a comfortable victory. They were beaten by the US in a match refereed by Jonathan Kaplan, so nobody could accuse him of favouritism.

The Junior rugby team also won Silver and were beaten by Israel in the final.

Tennis is the sports that has been the biggest medal winner for Maccabi SA over the years and that was the case again, but it was all down to the ladies.

Jacqui Boyd has been competing in the Maccabiah since 2005 and has amassed a

2017 Medals List: Team Maccabi SA = 36 medals	
SPORT	RESULT
GOLD MEDALS (19)	
Rugby (Open) Team 7's	Israel 12 - South Africa 19
Cycling (Open) 22km Time Trial 30-49	Jodi Zulberg placed 1st
Cycling (Open) 22km Time Trial 50+	Issy Zimmerman placed 1st
Cycling (Open) 22km Time Trial Elite 19+	Jared Poulton placed 1st
Track and Field (Open) 10km Road Race	Adam Lipschitz placed 1st
Swimming (Masters) 200m	Cliff Garrun placed 1st
Golf (Junior) Singles	Judd Sundelson placed 1st
Golf (Junior) Team	South Africa (Judd Sundelson, Benji Stein and Jonty Kotzen) placed 1st
Cricket (Open)	South Africa 146/10, Great Britain 126/10 - South Africa won by 20 runs
Track and Field (Open) 5000m	Adam Lipschitz placed 1st
Swimming (Masters) 55+ 100m Freestyle	Cliff Garrun placed 1st
Cricket (Junior) - South Africa 130/5 Great Britain 129/7	South Africa won by 5 wickets
Cycling (Open) 63km Road Race 50+	Issy Zimmerman placed 1st
Tennis (Masters) 35+ Singles	Jacqui Boyd win 6-1, 6-1
Tennis (Masters) 65+ Doubles	Lynne Gottschalk and Anthula Markovitz win 8-2
Tennis (Masters) 35+ Mixed Doubles	Jacqui Boyd won
Tennis (Masters) 65+ Singles	Lynne Gottschalk won 6-4, 4-6, 7-10
Tennis (Masters) 70+ Singles	Maeve Samuels
Lawn Bowls (Open) Singles Round Robin	Trevor Rosenberg placed 1st
SILVER MEDALS (11)	
Golf (Masters) Grand Masters tournament	Moshe Duek 2nd in the Nett, score of 219
Squash (Masters) Team 50+	South Africa (Dennis Basserabie, Rael Segal and Russel Suchet) placed 2nd
Swimming (Junior) 50m Freestyle	Daniella Solkow placed 2nd
Golf (Junior) Singles	Benji Stein placed 2nd
Rugby (Junior) Team 15's	Israel won 24-0 South Africa placed 2nd
Swimming (Masters) 55+ 50m Freestyle	Cliff Garrun placed 2nd
Cycling (Open) 63km Road Race 30-49	Jodi Zulberg placed 2nd
Tennis (Masters) Mixed Doubles 70+	Maeve Samuels
Squash (Masters) Singles 60+	Russel Suchet
Squash (Masters) Singles 60+	Dennis Basserabie
Rugby (Open) Team 15's	USA win 31-21
BRONZE MEDALS (6)	
Rugby (Junior) Team 7's	South Africa 10 - Argentina 15
Lawn Bowls (Open) Triples	South Africa placed 3rd
Squash (Masters) Singles 60+	Rael Segal
Lawn Bowls (Open) Fours Round Robin	South Africa placed 3rd
Netball (Junior) Ranking 3-4 ISR vs RSA	South Africa wins Bronze 47-32
Futsal (Junior) Ranking 3-4 RSA vs GBR	South Africa wins Bronze 4-2

number of medals, including Gold, since then. This year she competed in the Masters Division for the first time and won two Gold medals - in the 35+ singles and the 35+ mixed doubles where she teamed up with a player from Finland.

Lynne Gottschalk and Anthula Markovitz won Gold in the 65+ Masters women’s doubles competition, Gottschalk added another in the 65+ singles and Maeve Samuels struck Gold in the 70+ singles and Silver medal in the 65+ mixed doubles.

As far as golf is concerned, a legacy continued when Judd Sundelson won Gold in the individual boys competition and another in the junior team event. He is the son of Barry Sundelson and the third generation Sundelsons to have played and won medals in the Maccabiah.

It was started by Neville Sundelson and continued by sons Barry and Dean.

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THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

Netanyahu unwittingly lashes EU’s Israel policy in public

RAPHAEL AHREN
BUDAPEST

Unaware that his remarks were also being transmitted to reporters outside, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticised the European Union in unusually harsh terms on Wednesday for its treatment of Israel, urging the leaders of four Central European countries to use their influence in the organisation to ease its conditions for advancing bilateral ties.

“I think Europe has to decide if it wants to live and thrive or if it wants to shrivel and disappear,” he said in a closed-door meeting whose content was accidentally broadcast to journalists outside the room.

“I am not very politically correct. I know that’s a shock to some of you. It’s a joke. But the truth is the truth - both about Europe’s security and Europe’s economic future. Both of these concerns mandate a different policy towards Israel.”

During the meeting, Netanyahu also urged the leaders of Hungary, Slovakia, Czech Republic and Poland, to close their borders to refugees from Africa and the Arab world, and praised the administration of US President Donald Trump for its “stronger” position on Iran and Syria.

“The European Union is the only association of countries in the world that conditions the relations with Israel,

that produces technology in every area, on political conditions. The only ones! Nobody does it,” Netanyahu said.

“It’s crazy. It’s actually crazy,” he said, referring to the EU’s insistence on conditioning some agreements with Israel on progress in the peace process. He referred to the EU-Israel Association Agreement, which has not been renewed since 2000.

He urged the prime ministers who were present - Hungary’s Viktor Orban, the Czech Republic’s Bohuslav Sobotka, Poland’s Beata Szydlo and Slovakia’s Robert Fico - to work toward convincing Brussels to advance talks about renewing the agreement without reference to progress in the peace process.

“Please help us, and help Europe, in expediting this association agreement,” he said.

“It’s not about my interests, Israel’s interest. I’m talking about Europe’s interest,” Netanyahu said.

China, Russia and India all have special relationships with Israel that aren’t contingent on progress in the peace process, Netanyahu said. “They don’t care about the political issue.”

“If I can suggest that what comes out of this meeting is your ability, perhaps, to communicate to your colleagues in other parts of Europe: Help Europe... Don’t undermine the one Western country that defends European values and European interests and prevents another mass migration to Europe.”



Britain’s Prince William and his wife Kate visited the site of a former Nazi concentration camp at Stutthof in Poland this week, near Gdansk, where they met with two British survivors of the facility where 28 000 Jews were murdered during the Holocaust.

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge saw displays of discarded shoes, clothing and other personal items that were taken from prisoners after their arrival. They were also shown a gas chamber where prisoners too sick to work, were murdered.

“This shattering visit has reminded us of the horrendous murder of six million Jews, drawn from across the whole of Europe, who died in the abominable Holocaust,” they wrote in the guest book at the camp, according to the Daily Mail.

“All of us have an overwhelming responsibility to make sure that we learn the lessons and that the horror of what happened is never forgotten and never repeated.”

They were accompanied by two Holocaust survivors, Manfred Goldberg and Zigi Shipper.

IN LANDMARK RULING, COURT SAYS WOMEN SHOULD PAY CHILD SUPPORT

SUE SURKES

In a landmark decision, the Israeli Supreme Court ruled on Wednesday that divorced women should also participate in child support payments. The dramatic ruling brings to an end the current norm, whereby fathers are solely responsible for alimony, even if their wives earn more than they do.

The ruling, handed down by an expanded bench of seven justices, applies in cases where the children are aged 6 to 15, and was in response to petitions lodged by two divorced fathers.

Fathers will continue to pay all child support for children below the age of 6.

The judges also suggested that courts consider whether joint custody is the right arrangement in cases where the parents’ financial situation may not enable optimal care for the children in two separate homes.

“When there is joint custody, and the economic situation of the mother is the same as that of the father or even better, and where both parents have to pay similar sums for the needs of the child during the month, the current law is liable to harm the best interests of the child and to deplete the father’s resources... to the point of actually impairing his ability to keep up his share in the joint custody over time,” Judge Uzi Fogelman wrote in the court’s decision.

Giving the example of one of the appellants, he said: “When you take off apartment rental costs from both parents’ salaries, the respondent [ex-wife] is left with NIS 8 795 [R31 778] while the appellant [the father] has NIS 6 467 [R23 355]. After the appellant pays NIS 2 875 [R10 334] in child support to the respondent each month... the appellant is left with just NIS 3 592 [R12 914] to cover his own regular

expenses costs and all the expenses of the three children for half the month. In contrast, the respondent has NIS 11 670 [R42 099] for the same needs.”

The ex-husband’s “ability to meet the full needs of his children while they are with him, falls far short of the appellant’s ability, creating a significant economic disparity between the two homes” that could be harmful to the children’s well-being, he wrote.

The gap could affect the emotional state of the children, their relationships with each parent and their willingness to co-operate with the joint custody arrangements.

“In the absence of a relevant reason to distinguish between the father and the mother regarding the obligation to provide child support between the ages of 6 and 15, there is no escaping the conclusion that the current law is discriminatory.”



Divorced men protesting for men’s rights in divorce during a lecture series called “Judges on the Bar” at the Machane Yehuda Market in Jerusalem, on June 5.



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RAPHAEL AHREN
BUDAPEST

Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban on Tuesday acknowledged Hungary’s “sin” in not protecting the country’s Jews during the Second World War, seeking to quell a controversy over his recent praise for Hungary’s wartime leader and Hitler ally Miklos Horthy.



On a four-day official visit in Hungary, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, (centre) and his Hungarian counterpart Viktor Orban (left) walk during the reception ceremony in front of the Parliament building in Budapest, on Tuesday.

Standing next to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, the Hungarian leader also promised a “zero tolerance policy” toward anti-Semitism. “We are aware of the fact that we have quite a difficult chapter of history behind us. And I wanted to make it very clear to him that the Government of Hungary, in

can never, ever happen again, that the Hungarian Government will in the future protect all its citizens.” Hungarian officials later pointed out this was the first time Orban referred to Horthy’s actions as a “sin”. During the joint appearance with Netanyahu, Orban pointed out that a “sizeable” Jewish minority

Hungary’s PM acknowledges ‘sin’ of WW1

a previous period, committed a mistake, even committed a sin, when it did not protect the Jewish citizens of Hungary,” Orban said. “I want to make it clear that it is our belief that every single Hungarian government has the obligation to protect and defend all of its citizens, regardless of their birth and origins.” Some 600 000 Hungarian Jews were killed during the war, through deportation to death camps or in massacres on Hungarian soil. Orban said Hungary failed to live up to its commitment to its citizens during the Second World War, “both morally or in other ways. And this is a sin, because we decided back then, instead of protecting the Jewish community, to collaborate with the Nazis. “I made it very clear to the prime minister that this is something that

lives in Hungary today. “I made it very clear to the Prime Minister that their security, being Hungarian citizens that they are, will be fully guaranteed by the Hungarian state, “I’ve also made it very clear to the Prime Minister that the Hungarian Government has a zero tolerance policy against all forms of anti-Semitism.” There is a renaissance of Jewish life here in Hungary, Orban added. “And this is something that we are proud of. We think that the renaissance of Jewish life is a substantial contribution to the common achievements of the Hungarian nation, quite clearly.” Orban praised Netanyahu as a “dedicated patriot”, adding that this is the key to his country’s success. Netanyahu said he raised with Orban “concerns” about his recent praise for Horthy and an anti-immigration billboard campaign, focused on Jewish billionaire George Soros, many Jews felt was anti-Semitic.

“He reassured me in unequivocal terms, just as he did now, publicly. I appreciate that. These are important words,” Netanyahu said. The prime minister also thanked his host for standing up for Israel in international forums. “You’ve done that time and again. We appreciate this stance, not only because it’s standing with Israel, but it’s also standing with the truth.” Budapest is at “the forefront of the states that are opposed to this anti-Jewish policy, and I welcome it”, Netanyahu added. Before their statements, Netanyahu and Orban witnessed the signing of a bilateral culture agreement and declarations of intent, regarding co-operation in innovation and technology.



News and views from the Fed Israel Birthright tour – through the eyes of a madrich

ISAAC LIPSCHITZ

When I first applied to go on Birthright South Africa 2017 as a madrich (councillor), I didn’t know what was to be expected. Having been to Israel on three previous occasions, this would be my first opportunity to visit in some sort of a leadership position. With the phenomenal experiences that I had, my goal was to provide the Birthright participants with an insightful and bonding experience, one that would forever connect them to the Holy Land. After an excruciating three hour wait in the queue at passport control at Ben-Gurion Airport on the Tuesday morning, our tour eventually commenced... We were joined by a mixed group of Israelis, made up of students and soldiers. They provided invaluable insight into the culture and intricacies of their country (throughout the tour). With everyone “on board” the tour kicked off, and we spent the first two days in Tiberias. We saw the north of the country during the day, and then had the opportunity to relax and get to know each other in the evenings. The North was both educational and fun, with highlights including kayaking on the Jordan River and a tour of the ancient and mystical city of Safed. On the Thursday, we travelled from Tiberias to Jerusalem, and over the course of three days, we explored much of the city. After experiencing the electric atmosphere of the Mahane Yehuda Market on a Friday afternoon, we walked to the Kotel (Western Wall) for Kabbalat Shabbat. There we experienced an incredible Friday night service, which pulled at our heartstrings. The group spent a relaxing Shabbos in the city centre, which gave everyone an opportunity to gather their thoughts from the preceding week’s hectic schedule. We then made our way to the Negev region on Sunday, following an emotional visit to Har Herzl (military cemetery). The Israeli soldiers’ presence made the experience more poignant and meaningful. We then spent the night in Bedouin tents and spent the next day exploring the surrounding area. On Monday we spent the night in Arad, which is located on the border of the Negev and Judean deserts. A magnificent sunrise greeted us upon summiting Masada, and the day continued with a visit to the Dead Sea. Everyone enjoyed floating in the lowest place on the planet - a tourist must! We travelled onwards towards Tel Aviv that evening and spent the next two days in the bustling city, before our departure. Birthright was far more enjoyable and inspiring than I could have ever imagined. There is no doubt in my mind that every one of the participants had an amazing time and will be returning to Israel soon! A special bond was formed between everyone, and we all left having made some great new friends.

Reflecting on the ups and downs of aliya

TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF

“I had no return ticket home,” Akiva Gersh recalls of the flight to Israel that changed his life. “This time, I was coming to live for the rest of my life. To plant my roots in the land. To change the course not only of my life but of my future children’s lives as well, and their children’s and their children’s. To be part of the greatest and most miraculous migration the world has ever seen. “I took out my guitar and, without any conscious thought as to what song to sing, ‘Am Yisrael Chai’ burst from my lips. More than that, it burst forth from deep in my soul,” Gersh writes in the introduction to his new book “Becoming Israeli: The Hysterical, Inspiring and Challenging Sides of Making Aliyah”. In the book, to be launched at a Times of Israel event in Jerusalem on Sunday,

in association with Nefesh B’Nefesh, Gersh has collected the experiences and reflections of more than 40 English-speaking Israelis, many of them Times of Israel bloggers, including Sarah Tuttle-Singer, Dov Lipman, and Benji Lovitt. “I made aliya, I would say in my first years here, because I wanted to know the Israeli story in its fullness - not only the headlines but the ‘back pages’ of Israeli life,” award-winning journalist Yossi Klein Halevi writes in a foreword, adding that he told his children: “The main plot of the Jewish story was once again being written here.” The book features advice. “Bring Ziplocs”, suggests Jessica Levine Kupferberg, a former litigation attorney who made aliya from La Jolla, California with her family in July 2014. “Bring your old yearbooks, your

favourite face cream, and some good English books.” It also features personal struggles with identity. Alex Rychvin was born in Kiev, educated in Australia and whose family left the Soviet Union as refugee refuseniks in 1987. “Time and time again, I would be posed the question: ‘Where are you from?’ And, in response, I would sigh, pause, and then unleash my complex personal narrative, complete with a polemic on the delicate interplay between race, religion, culture, language, and countries of birth and residence.” And there is the sudden realisation that all the skills you learned in your native tongue disappear when you don’t have full control of the language. “It’s hard to be charismatic when your Wisconsin Hebrew school

language skills amount to ‘Notebook. Pencil. My teacher is pretty.’ (Thanks, Mrs Schwartz.),” writes Hilary Faverman, a content marketer from Wisconsin celebrating a decade in Israel. “This is a hard place to get used to. Especially when you arrive with no linguistic, historical or cultural knowledge, and get pregnant within four minutes. Then, you find yourself alone in an Arab-Jewish neighbourhood (I wanted to be open-minded) with a screaming new-born (maternal instinct triumphs over sleep deprivation, right?). I was wrong on both counts.” Funny, moving, scary and thoughtful, the essays in this collection “give an inside look into the never-ending joys and challenges, inspirations and frustrations that we have experienced along our journeys of aliya,” writes Gersh.



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First medic to respond to Temple Mount terror attack was Muslim. Here’s his story.

ANDREW TOBIN
JERUSALEM

When Nedal Sader first heard the crackle of automatic weapon fire last Friday morning, he couldn’t believe it was coming from the Temple Mount.

As a Muslim, he regarded the complex just outside his apartment as a sacred and peaceful place. He prayed there nearly every week.

But as a seasoned first responder, he knew what gunshots sounded like echoing off the stones of the Old City. He finished dressing, threw on his medic’s jacket and raced to the scene.

Sader, a 37-year-old nurse and father of five, was the first medical professional to arrive at the Temple Mount following the attack in which two Israeli Druze police officers were shot dead. The three Arab-Israeli gunmen were then killed by police on the scene.

Amid the carnage at the politically and religiously fraught complex, Sader said he simply tried to save whomever he could.

“It doesn’t matter who the person is,” said Sader, a Muslim volunteer with United Hatzalah, the Orthodox Jewish-run ambulance service. “Whoever needs help most gets help first.”

Sader joined the mostly ultra-Orthodox rescue service in 2012, soon after his father died of a heart attack while waiting for an ambulance. He said he hoped to improve emergency medical care in the Arab quarter of the Old City, which like other Arab neighbourhoods in East Jerusalem has long suffered from lack of services.

It is illegal for Jewish medics to enter Arab villages or

neighbourhoods without a police escort because of security concerns.

“I had to do something,” he said. “I didn’t want the same thing to happen to anyone else in my neighbourhood or in Israel.”

United Hatzalah has about 300 Muslim, Druze and Christian volunteers EMTs, paramedics and doctors, who account for about 10 per cent of the total, according to spokesman Raphael Poch. He said the organisation began recruiting Muslims to serve their own neighbourhoods about a decade ago.

Sader said that in the past five years, he has responded to seven major Palestinian attacks in the Old City, often on a motor scooter provided by United Hatzalah. When responding to calls, Sader said, he leaves on his helmet and sometimes his sunglasses to avoid being identified as Arab. He also tries not to speak much.

“I don’t want to deal with being seen. Some Arabs might get upset. Some Jews might get upset,” he said. “I focus on helping people. That’s what’s important.”

After Friday’s attack, police officers on the Temple Mount saw Sader coming and urged him to treat their fallen comrades. But he had to wait for a moment until the attackers - later identified as cousins from northern Israel - were subdued.

The first casualty Sader came upon was one of the slain officers, whom he quickly determined was beyond help. Moving southward, he passed the bodies of two of the attackers and saw the third prone on the ground,



Nedal Sader sitting on his United Hatzalah motor scooter in the Old City of Jerusalem, last Friday.

surrounded by police. The officers directed him to the second fallen officer and, finding no pulse, he began CPR.

Soon thereafter, the subdued gunman leapt up and attacked the officers surrounding him with a knife - a moment that was caught on video. The resulting hail of police bullets, which killed the attacker, whizzed around Sader as he applied compression with the help of another officer. Still, he continued for about 15 minutes, until an ambulance arrived. But the officer was never revived.

When it comes to the tensions on the Temple Mount, Sader said both Arabs and Jews are to blame. The former site of the ancient Jewish Temple is the holiest in Judaism. Meanwhile, two Arab prayer sites, the Dome of the Rock and the Al-Aqsa mosque, make it among the most important places in Islam as well.

Since Israel captured the Temple Mount from Jordan in the 1967 Six Day War, the site has become a flashpoint in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Anti-Semitic attacks in UK up 44 per cent



A photograph taken on a mobile phone shows British police cars blocking the entrance to London Bridge, in central London on June 3, following an attack on the bridge.

TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF

Hate crimes against Jews in 2016 rose by 44 per cent since 2014, according to a new report published by UK’s Campaign Against Anti-Semitism (CAA).

One in 10 of an overall 1 078 anti-Semitic crimes were violent, but only one such attack was prosecuted in the past year.

In addition, police prosecuted just 15 cases – 1,4 per cent – of overall anti-Semitic crime during that period, according to the group’s 2016 National Anti-Semitic Crime Audit.

The group found that the total rate of hate crimes against Jews rose roughly 15 per cent in the past year and nearly three times that since 2014.

The group emphasised that the numbers depicted the “worst year on record,” though the NGO only started collecting data in 2014.

The report highlighted an enforcement failure of UK authorities, calling police conduct a “betrayal” against the country’s Jews.

“There is a very real danger of Jewish citizens emigrating, as has happened elsewhere in Europe unless there is radical change,” the group’s chairman

Gideon Falter wrote.

The report made the same recommendations to law enforcement as it did last year, saying their proposals had not been implemented despite promises from UK authorities.

The NGO operates as part of the Co-ordination Forum for Countering Anti-Semitism, an international monitor linked to an Israeli government effort to fight anti-Semitism.

The CAA suggested appointing a senior officer in each police unit to ensure that proper responses to hate crimes against Jews are carried out.

Nearly two-thirds of reported incidents took place in London and Manchester, which are home to the UK’s two largest Jewish populations.

Last month, arsonists targeted two kosher restaurants in the north Manchester neighbourhood of Prestwich within five days of each other.

On June 2, a firebomb was thrown at the Taam restaurant in an attack caught on surveillance cameras.

On June 6, unknown attackers forced open a window at the JS restaurant and poured in flammable liquid, which they ignited.

• JTA contributed to this report.

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Roman Amphitheatre in Caesarea sold by Greek Orthodox Church to foreign buyer

TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF

The Roman Amphitheatre and the hippodrome in the ancient Israeli coastal city of Caesarea, have been sold off, in secret, to a mysterious overseas holding company by the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate.

In total, over 700 dunams of land (172 acres) in Caesarea were sold in the deal last month, Channel 2 news revealed last Sunday, including large chunks of what is designated as a historic national park.

The amphitheatre is often the venue for Israeli and international performers. The Pixies are set to give two concerts at the site later this month.

The deal - for an undisclosed amount - was finalised last month between the Greek Orthodox Church and a company by the name of Saint Ventures Limited, which according to Channel 2 is registered somewhere in the Caribbean. A number of countries in that region are known tax havens.

News of the sale followed revelations earlier this month that the church also secretly sold off some 500 dunams (123 acres) of property in some of the wealthiest parts of Jerusalem.

The Caesarea sale shocked officials in the Israel Nature and Parks Authority and the Jewish National Fund, as well as those in the Israel Lands Authority and the Justice Ministry, according to the Channel 2 report .

The Justice Ministry called for a meeting in the coming days to discuss how to handle the issue of land sales by the church - the second

biggest owner of land in Israel after the Israel Lands Authority.

The latest deals, one senior justice ministry official told the channel, require “the intervention of the relevant bodies”.

Another official, from the Parks Authority, which manages nature reserves and national parks, said the government agency “will act to ensure the protection of the ancient assets on the land”.

Caesarea was built some 2 000 years ago by King Herod and became the commercial capital of ancient Judaea. New discoveries are often made in the ancient city.

Earlier this month, some 1 500 owners of properties in Jerusalem’s most affluent neighbourhoods discovered that the land on which their homes sit, had been sold by the church secretly to a number of private real estate companies.

Similarly to the Caesarea sale, the two deals in Jerusalem were reportedly made not only behind the backs of the

homeowners, but also without the knowledge of the Jewish National Fund - to which the church originally leased the land for 99 years - and the state.

The Greek Orthodox Church acquired some 4 500 dunams (1 110 acres) of real estate in the centre of Jerusalem during the 19th century, primarily for agriculture. In the 1950s, just after Israel’s independence, it agreed to lease its land to the JNF for 99 years - with an option to extend. Even Israel’s parliament, the Knesset, is built on Greek Orthodox-owned land.

The cost of the deals, one in 2011 and other in 2016, is estimated at NIS 114 million (\$32,4 million) - a figure which is said to reflect the fact that relatively few years remain on the leases still being paid by the JNF.

The 2016 deals, for some 500 dunams (125 acres) in central Jerusalem, were all registered through the legal offices of Ephraim Abramson and included an appendix naming many of the properties and property owners included in the deal, the report said.

The deals included more than 200 plots in the wealthy neighbourhood of Talbieh, where the prime minister’s and president’s residences are located, and in Nayot, near the Israel Museum - leases that will run out in 30 years.

The sales have pitted Palestinians and Greek nationals within the church against one another and are causing tensions between Palestinian Christians inside and outside of the Palestinian Authority.

Palestinians in the West Bank and Jordan have called for the ouster of the current Greek Orthodox Patriarch Theophilos III, over the sale in West Jerusalem, land that was part of Israel even before the 1967 war.



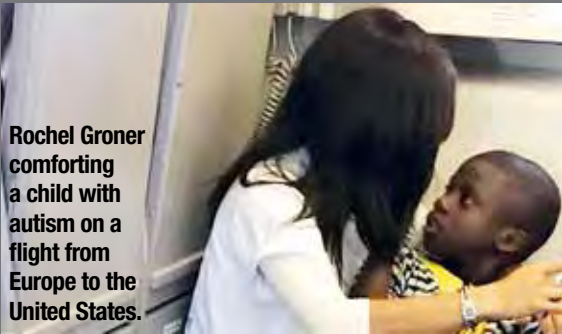
The Roman Amphitheatre in Caesarea.

Chabad emissary on plane ‘had to do something because no one was going to’

JOSEFIN DOLSTEN
BRUSSELS

A Jewish woman comforting a distressed child was captured in heartwarming photos that quickly gained traction on social media. The photos show Chabad emissary Rochel Groner holding and comforting the young boy on a flight from Brussels to New York.

About an hour into the flight last Friday, the young boy started crying and shrieking loudly, and the atmosphere inside the plane started growing tense.



“His cries were heard throughout the plane and you could feel the tension among the other passengers. No one wanted to say anything but it was getting very uncomfortable,” Groner’s husband, Rabbi Bentzion Groner, wrote in a Facebook post, which had amassed close to 4 000 likes as of Monday afternoon.

The couple, Chabad emissaries in North Carolina, were travelling back from Israel by way of Belgium after chaperoning a Birthright Israel trip.

“I felt I had to do something because no one

was going to do something,” Rochel Groner, 33, told JTA. “I didn’t know if someone was going to get up and scream at this kid or if they were going to make an emergency landing.”

Groner approached the young boy and extended her hand. The boy looked to be about eight years old and was sitting with his mother, who was wearing a traditional Muslim head covering and spoke little English.

“There were tears streaming down his face,” Groner said. Based on the boy’s behaviour, Groner, who runs two organisations that help special needs children and youth, surmised that he was autistic.

“I put out my hand, and he took my hand. It was such a surreal moment, and he just took it, and he stopped crying,” she said. “He kind of just followed me into the aisle. I walked to the bulkhead, and I sat down and I put him in my lap, and I gave him a gentle but firm hug and I just started to rock him. He calmed down.”

She got creative, using a pen to trace their hands on unused nausea bags and letting him play with her phone. After about two hours, the boy got up and returned to his mother.

“It was beautiful to see. It was incredible, the transformation. Whatever had been bothering him wasn’t bothering him, he was in a better place,” she said.

“While most of the passengers watched in awe, little did they know that for Rochel this is her life,” her husband wrote in the Facebook post. The couple co-directs Friendship Circle and ZABS Place, two organisations in North Carolina serving young adults with disabilities. ZABS Place is a thrift store that offers training and employment to young adults with special needs.

British director Ken Loach calls for an Israel boycott

TIMES OF ISRAEL STAFF

An English director known for advocating cultural boycotts of Israel, has come under fire from his Israeli distributor, who said the filmmaker has been showing his movies in the Jewish state for years.

“It is a conundrum that has puzzled me too. It seems that Ken Loach feels himself exempt from the cultural boycott,” Guy Shani told The Guardian newspaper.

Shani, who owns Shani Films and Israel’s Lev movie theatre chain, said that he has purchased the rights to show Loach’s films in the country for over 20 years, despite the director’s anti-Israel stance and never heard any grumbling from the filmmaker.

“Since 1993, when we bought Raining Stones, we bought every film apart from two.

“I can’t tell you how absurd this is. We’ve been showing his movies for years. I have been paying him money every year. His latest film I, Daniel Blake, has been really successful in Israel.

So successful that we had some private events with Israeli government institutions where they booked the film to show to employees because of interest in the subject,” Shani said.

Shani also struck down the notion that he screened Loach’s films without the director’s consent.

“You don’t sell a film to someone a director doesn’t want a film sold to. It is a serious business. You have a list of regions and they approve country by country and then you need to get approval by producer and director,” he said. “And if you have a relationship, a sales agent with a director who is really important to you, of course you don’t sell against their wishes.”

A producer for Loach denied Shani’s assertion that Loach exempts himself from boycotting Israel, telling The Guardian that the director’s most recent film was “accidentally” allowed to be shown in Israel.

“We have asked Wild Bunch before not to sell to Israel,” Rebecca O’Brien said. “But what happened this time - and what has happened before - is that during Cannes, things happen very fast and a junior member of the company went and sold it to Israel in the heat of the moment, forgetting we had asked for it not to be sold there.”

O’Brien also said that while “mistakes have been made”, the fault did not lie with Loach himself, who has “no influence” over where his movies are shown.

“We have no influence over it at the time - we just say: ‘Do your job, sell the film’, and then in retrospect we realised: ‘Oh G-d, the film has been sold to Israel, that’s really bad.’ We’re pissed off with them, but once you’ve sold it you can’t backtrack,” she said.

Israel abuzz with tourists

Aliya – the good, the bad and the meshuga

Benita Levin

Israel is brimming with tourists at the moment. The two-month school holidays kicked off on July 1, and the scorching temperatures see thousands of visitors flocking to the beaches.

There is no shortage of popular tourist spots, both along the coast and inland, with a range of buses regularly ferrying holidaymakers around the country. Throw in the fact that the Maccabi Games sees 80 countries competing in the space of a few weeks, and you can play your own games guessing the different languages you hear when walking down the street.

It's an exciting time for new olim because we get to catch up with family and friends who are visiting from around the globe. Our many conversations with visitors on the many student, family and women's tours here, have prompted the following potentially helpful list:

Five fun facts that seemed to surprise some visitors to the country:

1. The buses here leave on time. Drivers won't wait for you to finish your phone call.
2. The price of a shawarma at a restaurant on Tel Aviv beach, can reach up to 70 shekels.
3. The price of parking in Tel Aviv over lunchtime could be more than the cost of said shawarma, on the sand. (Around R300)
4. Taxis aren't cheap either. Mobile Apps like "Moovit and Gett" can help with travel plans. Shuttle services are also useful.
5. The bill for lunch on the beach could well be brought to you on an iPad. The tip options are also available on that iPad.

(About R280). It will be a huge portion. It will be delicious. It will cost the earth.

Five fun tips to think about before staying at people's homes:

1. If you leave a towel on the floor on Wednesday night, it will still be on the same spot on Thursday morning.
2. There is no Woolworths here. We cut our own vegetables. Ourselves.
3. Disposable dishes are said to be increasingly popular here. The reasons will become clear as your stay progresses.
4. If you - or your children - are making a lot of noise between 14:00 and 16:00, there is a slim chance a neighbour may arrive to ask you to keep quiet.
5. Neighbours can pop in for a drink at 22:00. It does happen. Often.

Five incidents that will leave you wanting more:

1. People here will travel the length and breadth of the country to catch up with old friends and people they haven't had contact with in decades.
 2. The impatient taxi driver will veer through traffic at a ridiculously dangerous pace, while sweetly smiling as he corrects your Hebrew grammar. A friend of mine was once offered dating advice in a taxi on his way to a first date.
 3. The food here is beyond delicious, including the far more affordable "humus", schnitzel and shawarma take-out.
 4. There is an electric "cosmopolitan" feel to the country, with so many olim and visitors from around the globe.
 5. People here are incredibly proud of this country. They want you to love the visit, whether it's a religious and spiritual experience or a family holiday at the beach.
- So, consider your next trip.
- Meanwhile, does anyone know if Woolworths is wanting to expand to the Northern Hemisphere?

New word of the week - Sharav - heatwave.

New phrase of the week - Chatich or Chaticha - good-looking man or woman - spotted often on Tel Aviv beach... and all over the country!

Smile of the week - parking next to a pole with a sign that gave three simple instructions in Hebrew: "Hug, Kiss and Go". Thought it was a rather unusual "instruction". Took me a while to realise it was a "drop and go" area outside a primary school, with the sign encouraging parents not to linger outside when dropping their children at school!



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Inspiration for the Achiever Awards



The secret is out – the Muses will be bringing inspiration to the Absa Jewish Achievers Awards 2017. These beautiful and hugely talented classically-trained musos, will be entertaining in the real sense of the word.

The Muses are a Johannesburg-based foursome who perform as an electric string quartet, with their two electronic violins, an electric viola and a cello that looks like it came from Mars.

This funky quartet will enhance the experience of the Absa Jewish Achievers' black-tie gala fundraiser, turning it into the most sensational Jewish social date of the year.

Make no mistake, these ladies are not one of the most popular banquet acts in the country for their good looks - nor for their singing as they don't. They are classically-trained virtuosos and famed for getting as many people on their feet and dancing the night away with their musical skills.

The Muses were founded by Olivia Kotze in 2011. In just six years they have become one of the most active performers, entertaining audiences up to six times a week.

Expect the classically-trained, pop-prepped Muses to play some of their best-known hits like "Party Rock", "Pata, Pata" and "Don't You Worry Child".

The Muses will rock the socks off those attending the Absa Jewish Achievers Awards Gala Dinner, "A Galaxy of Stars". With a record number of nominations in all award categories, and an unprecedented demand for seating at the Sunday August 13 gala dinner, anyone wishing to book seats or tables, had better do so quickly.

Readers who wish to reserve a seat or table at the event can simply click on the graphic at the top right corner of any page of the Jewish Report website – but don't dilly-dally, the event is always a sell-out!



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Being Indian, Jewish and South African

NICOLA MILTZ

The unexpected bromance between Prime Ministers Narendra Modi of India and Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel which culminated in Modi’s recent historic Israel visit, has brought to light the many Indian Jews there are in Israel and the rest of the world.

Here in South Africa, there is a tiny minority of Indian Jews within the local Jewish community who have lived and prospered on our shores for many years.

They were delighted at scenes of Israeli Indian Bollywood dancers, in particular, who took part in a concert held in Tel Aviv in the Prime Minister’s honour.

There may only be a handful flickering in Johannesburg’s northern suburbs, but they are Jewish. They are South African. They are also Indian. Not necessarily in that order. This tiny cluster has happily made South Africa their home while maintaining close ties to family in both Israel and India.

One Johannesburg businessman, (Jewish and Indian-born) who asked to remain anonymous, has met Prime Minister Modi and was part of a delegation that introduced him to Israel several years ago.

This man came to South Africa with

Photo: Kobi Gideon/Israeli Government Press Office



Prime Ministers Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and Narendra Modi of India visit the water desalination plant at Olga Beach in Haifa, Israel, July 6, 2017.

his young children for work nearly 30 years ago. His daughter said this week: “I was born in Israel but raised here,” says the mother of two, “We are very private people, wishing to go about our daily lives as part of the South African Jewish community, attending Jewish day schools and shuls.”

Her father was born in Ahmedabad, India, and her mother, was born in Mumbai. Both were brought up in kosher homes and have maintained a kosher home throughout their marriage. Like most Indian Jews, they made aliya many years ago and met when they were in Israel. They decided to come and live in South Africa almost three decades ago and have never looked back.

A Shabbos or special Yomtov meal is not complete without the traditional Indian cuisine, including a hearty breyani with an array of aromatic vegetarian rice dishes - all carefully prepared without mixing milk and meat.

“My mom is a great cook and has a way of creating dishes that combine typical Jewish foods with Indian and North African spices. There is always challah, but there may be a Moroccan fish dish or a chicken breyani with a twist or a lamb curry and dal.”

“South Africa is our home. When I arrived, Hebrew was my first language; I had to learn to read and write English,” she says. Now, her children attend Jewish day schools and they find the community is very accepting of them.

“We were always welcome in this country, we fitted into the community right from the beginning,” she says. “People may have been fascinated but they were never mean.”

South Africans often mistake her for being an Israeli not Indian and when she is in Israel she is often thought of as being from Yemen or Morocco.

If she is ever questioned by a member of the CSO, she quickly converses in Hebrew and is accepted.

When she was growing up, her parents insisted she marry a Jewish man.

“This was very important to them. They are very old school and it is very important to keep the religion alive after so many years. Marrying out would have been a big thing,” she said.

Her South African husband’s family were very accepting of her Indian ancestry, pleased that she “came from a good Jewish home”, she said.

Our history books are filled with elaborately entwined stories of South

Jews in India, unlike those across the globe, are divided into three distinct groups as per their geographical location. There is the Cochin Jews, the Bene Israeli and the Baghdadi Jews.

African Indian communities dating as far back and further than the Dutch East India Company. But as far as the South African Jewish Indians are concerned, the information is thin. Indian Jews to South Africa rarely chose to settle among other Indian communities, opting instead to live among pockets of Jewish communities.

During his visit, Prime Minister Modi attended a special event in Tel Aviv that gathered about 10 000 Indians living in Israel. The programme included several Bollywood dance performances and a concert.

There are about 80 000 Jews of Indian origin living in Israel, as well as thousands of students and workers. It has become common for Israeli soldiers to visit India on completion of the army.

Modi ended his historic three-day visit to Israel by asserting that the “successful visit will add more energy to India-Israel relations”.

At present, there are some 6 000 Jews across India. They are busy protecting the last remnants of Jewish heritage in the country, like the 35-odd synagogues spread across India, some cemeteries and schools; they are also known to have made significant entrepreneurial and cultural contributions to India’s rich history.

Chabad has been instrumental in connecting local Indian Jews and Jewish tourists at its centres throughout the country.

According to The Indian Express, the Jewish community in India is one among a large number of groups who had come from outside the country’s modern territorial borders and made India their home. However, “what marks the Jews out is their ability

to blend into the local culture of the region”, it says.

Reports suggest that the tiny community in India is trying to demand minority status for itself “more as an attempt to get recognition for the large contributions they have made to India’s socio-cultural life, rather than for distinguishing themselves from the Indian majority”.

Jews in India, unlike those across the globe, are divided into three distinct groups as per their geographical location. There is the Cochin Jews, the Bene Israeli and the Baghdadi Jews.

Each of these three categories arrived at different points in time and formed their own distinct Jewish identities. After Israel’s independence in 1948, a large number of Jews left India in the hope of going back home. While most went in the hope of a better lifestyle and prosperity, breaking the ties with India was apparently not easy.

Modi’s visit to Israel was the first there by an Indian head of government. The visit comes 25 years after the establishment of diplomatic ties between the two countries.

Spokesman for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, Marshall Wittmann, said: “Prime Minister Modi’s visit to Israel is a watershed moment that reaffirms the strong political, economic and security ties between two important partners of the United States who share our interests and democratic values.”


Modi, perhaps more than any of his predecessors, believes in engagement with the Indian diaspora. He made a point of meeting with Indian Israelis.


• Additional reporting by JTA

There are about 80 000 Jews of Indian origin living in Israel, as well as thousands of students and workers. It has become common for Israeli soldiers to visit India on completion of the army.

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Jewish Report

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Touching their own history in Lithuania

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

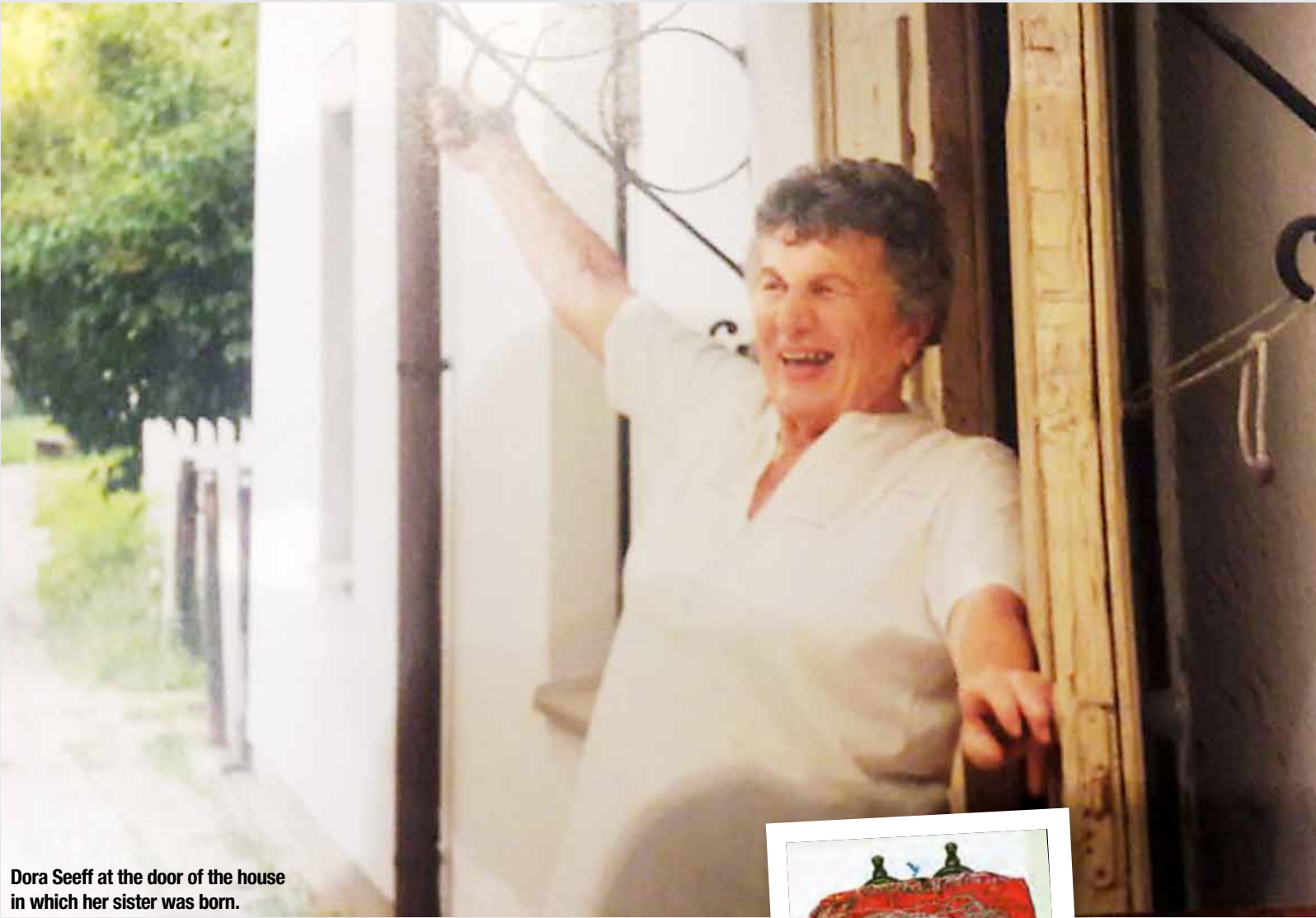
In delving into their ancestry, many South African Jews have travelled to Lithuania and not just rediscovered their roots, but actually touched their own personal history on these life-changing journeys. An estimated 70 000 Lithuanian Jews came to South Africa mainly in the first half of the 20th century. Through taking trips to Lithuania, either to visit their own birthplaces or those of their ancestors, these are a few of many whose journeys helped them connect deeply with their past.

Joyce Levin and Dora Seeff

Joyce Levin first travelled across Lithuania with her parents, Dora and Morris Seeff, and with her uncle Sydney Seeff in 1992, after the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Seeff brothers were invited on a family tour taken by Mendel Kaplan, as they had come from the same shtetl as Kaplan’s grandmother.

Joyce was invited as a member of the next generation. “We went to my father’s shtetl, Krakenowa,” she explains. “We were there all of 20 minutes, but it was the most important 20 minutes of my entire life.

“My father threw down the stick he used to walk with and just started running around the entire town, recognising the shul,



Dora Seeff at the door of the house in which her sister was born.

houses and so on. It was up to me to capture this for my family with my cameras and audiotape. It was quite dramatic and my dad got quite ill the next day. The experience had such an impact on me.”

Joyce and Dora returned to Lithuania for a family reunion in 2009. “A group of 37 of us went back to Ramygala where our grandfather came from and we had a big family photograph there - we had four generations with us.

“I returned to my father’s shtetl and because he’d now passed away, I became my father and jumped off the bus and ran around.”

Also in the process of doing research between the two trips, Joyce found her mother’s sister’s birth certificate, which said she

was born in Ukmerge Street in Ponevezh. “When we got to the street, my mother said: ‘You’ll find nothing’ and then she got off the bus... Looking around, she saw a green door and said: ‘I know that door - that’s where my sister was born.’

“She told me how she’d been sent to a neighbour when my granny gave birth and she remembered returning to the news of her sister when she came back through that green door. I fell apart,” said Joyce. “It was amazing to be with my mother, a living person who remembered that detail.”

Carole Smollen

Textile artist Carole Smollen was so struck by her visit to Lithuania, that she began making Torah scrolls and even wrote a book about the experience, detailing three generations of her family - Linking the Threads: A Tribute to a Litvak Tailor.

Born in Port Elizabeth, Carole developed a love of cloth in her Lithuanian grandfather’s tailoring room. Years later, living and working in London, she was invited to Vilnius to make a mural for the previously communist Tolerance Centre that was being rebuilt. She used the opportunity to trace her heritage.

Armed with only a photograph of her great-grandparents, as well as her grandfather’s ticket to South Africa, bought in 1906 in Lithuania, Carole flew to PE to visit her grandparents’ gravesites to find her great-grandparents’ names, Reb Shlomo and

“We went to the archives in Vilnius and found amazing things. I found the physical shipping ticket for my great-grandparents and grandmother from 1935 when they escaped Lithuania, which blew my mind.”



Torah mantles

Gittel Levinthal, before departing.

“In Lithuania, I took a car and a guide and I went to all the shtetls and found my great-grandfather’s house,” she says. “Opposite the house was their shul, all boarded up, but still standing. The last Jew in Zagare remembered my great-grandfather. It was indescribable - I had goose flesh,” she says.

“I also found a miniature Torah at the Tallin Museum. I proceeded to make 150 miniature Torah mantles and I exhibited them at the Yeshiva Museum in New York and also in London.”

These mantles told the story of Carole’s family exodus from Lithuania to South Africa, incorporating fragments of family travel documents and ketubot, photographs, and other memorabilia.

“Now the mantles I make are ordered for special simchas. By going to Lithuania, I gained a whole life - I gained my ancestors, and the inspiration for all the art I’ve done for the last 10 years.”

Dina Diamond

Together with two friends, Sorelle Cohen and Michelle Rosen, Johannesburg-based businesswoman Dina Diamond, recently returned from a weeklong journey to Lithuania and Latvia.

The friends decided to make the journey, when they travelled to Poland two years ago, which awakened a desire to explore where they came from.

“Before we left we all did a huge amount of research,” says Dina. “I had a book that my gran’s brother had written about their lives in Lithuania before they left, but it all became more real for me when we were there.

“We were referred to genealogist and tour guide, Regina Kopilevich, who helped us in Lithuania. We went to the archives in Vilnius and found amazing things. I found the physical shipping ticket for my great-



Michelle Rosen, Sorelle Cohen, Dina Diamond with Fania Brantsovsky in Paneriai Forest (memorial here to 70,000 Jews who were murdered)



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grandparents and grandmother from 1935 when they escaped Lithuania, which blew my mind.

“We hired a car and drove through the towns we’d heard about - there are over 200 shtetls in Lithuania and they’re still shtetls - but without Jews! It was such a rich but bittersweet trip.

“Sorelle found the grave of her great-great-grandfather in a decimated cemetery and Michelle found a family grave too. There were 240 000 Jews in Lithuania at its peak and of that 220 000 were murdered. Today only about 5 000 Jews remain in Lithuania.

“All that our grandparents spoke about, came alive during the trip - I can still hear them with their Yiddish accents. I went to my grandmother’s school in Ponevezh; it was absolutely surreal. I phoned my father and said: ‘Can you believe where I am?’ It gives you an appreciation for how we live today - for the freedoms and quality of life we have - all because our families decided to leave. If they hadn’t left we all would have perished.

“We’d been told to find Fania Brantsovsky, a woman who escaped the Vilna ghetto with a friend of hers two hours before its liquidation. We didn’t have time to look her up, but coincidentally, we went to the Paneriai Forest where 70 000 Jews were killed and when we got there, she was there conducting a tour! It was an honour to listen to her; she was a survivor who was literally giving us a part of her life.”

“To me, the most important aspect of visiting Lithuania was meeting the people, especially the elderly men like Josefas Levinsonas who catalogued around 220 mass murder sites - it’s estimated there are over 250 sites.”

Dr Saul Issroff
Born in Port Elizabeth, Dr Saul Issroff grew up in Johannesburg and moved to London in 1980. Currently the project manager of the Migration and Genealogy project at the Isaac and Jessie Kaplan Centre at UCT and deputy chairman of the International Institute of Jewish Genealogy headquarters in Jerusalem, Dr Issroff is a retired dermatologist.
“My bobba used to tell me stories of the shtetl Linkuva and our family in Lithuania. She came to South Africa in March 1905 with my father, aged nine, and his two younger sisters. My mother came from London and her parents were from Marijampole in south-east Lithuania,” he says.
“With the fall of the Soviet Union, I visited in 1993. Four of us went from a genealogy

conference in Jerusalem. In a week, we covered a lot of Lithuania. I’d been told about one Jew, Isak Mendelsohn in Zagare.

“Our guide was adamant that no Jews were alive, yet he helped us find him. Isak had been to school with Grunjia, an elderly cousin of mine; he thought she’d been killed in the Holocaust.

“When I told him she was still alive in Israel,



Rose Cohen with her son, Ari.

he actually cried. We became friends and he took us all over. He described how, when the killing started in the town square, he was 16. He rode his bike to Riga in Latvia and joined the Red Army. He took out his jacket with medals to show us.

“When he got back, amidst the chaos of the defeat of the Germans, he found out that his friend from school had actually killed his parents. He described to me in Yiddish how he went in the middle of the night and strangled the man. Isak became secretary of the Co-operative in the area. His wife Daljia helped him maintain the local cemeteries.

“A very moving experience for me was also finding the tombstone of my great-grandmother, Grunjia Girs in Linkuva. I had a photograph taken by my father in 1923 when he went back to Lithuania, a distinctive tombstone which had a rounded top in a brick ohel. The brick had disintegrated, but I actually stumbled over the stone in thick grass, as though I had been led there!

“To me, the most important aspect of visiting Lithuania was meeting the people, especially the elderly men like Josefas Levinsonas who catalogued around 220 mass murder sites - it’s estimated there are over 250 sites.”

On visiting the mass murder sites, the group realised that no one knew who was killed there.

“With Rose Lerer Cohen, I started a project researching the names and published The Holocaust in Lithuania, a book of Remembrance 1939-1945. The list is still incomplete though.”

Dr Rose Lerer Cohen
Genealogist, provenance researcher and independent Holocaust researcher, Dr Rose Lerer Cohen has been to Lithuania more than 20 times. Now based in Israel, she hails from Parow in the Cape.

“I embarked on family research and decided to visit the places where my parents were born and meet survivors of the Holocaust of my family,” she says. “On my first visit in 1993, a few months after my father passed away, I met my father’s sister who survived the

Holocaust (now deceased) and his cousins, who were born soon after the war and whose father survived the Holocaust.

“My travels have been of family discovery. My son Ari accompanied me in 2016 to participate in the

75th anniversary memorial of the murder of my grandparents’ aunts, uncles and cousins in the Pasilve Forest in Uzventis in Lithuania.

“We travelled to places of interest relating to both our personal history and the history of the Jews of Lithuania. The destruction and murder of our family in particular, and of the Jews of Lithuania in general, moved him deeply. He couldn’t understand how neighbours and friends turned on one another.

“Watching my son walk down the streets of Uzventis and Plunge where his grandparents had lived before immigrating to South Africa and take photographs at the Telz Yeshiva building where his grandfather after whom he is named studied for 10 years, was most rewarding, and proved the worth of my research of 27 years; it closed a circle.”



A memorial outside Ponevez where family members were killed - Payoste Forest

• To research your Lithuanian Jewish origins, visit www.litvaksig.org and view the “All Lithuania” databases on www.jewishgen.org.

“My travels have been of family discovery. My son Ari accompanied me in 2016 to participate in the 75th anniversary memorial of the murder of my grandparents’ aunts, uncles and cousins in the Pasilve Forest in Uzventis in Lithuania.”

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Tombstone 1923

Hedy over heels for a loving marriage

ELIANA CLINE

International relationships coach and therapist, Hedy Schleifer, exudes an enigmatic warmth and vitality. As people around the world seek her and her husband Yumi out for guidance, they appear to have the perfect marriage.

But it wasn’t always like that, Hedy told Jewish Report in a Skype interview from her home in the United States. She says her journey began when in the early years of her and Yumi’s marriage, things were not going as she expected. “We were young and unconscious,” she describes it.

As a trained psychotherapist working extensively with couples, she realised that the challenges they faced were not her and her husband’s alone. “I became aware of a sense of frustration and occasional despair about my own marriage. Neither my personal relationship, nor my work with relationships in couplehood, was working as I thought it should.”

Propelled by her deep-rooted Jewish heritage, Hedy knew that marriage had the potential to be a sacred union and she set out to discover how to enact this in her personal and professional life.

“The Jewish sages tell us to make a sanctuary between us, to sanctify the space between husband and wife. While Judaism defines shalom bayit (harmony in the home) as the highest, we realised through our own marriage that many people - of all religions and backgrounds - were missing the how-to, which would enable them to achieve this ideal.”

Hedy embarked on a journey to search for ways to actualise this connection in her own relationship and with the couples she worked with.

Delving into contemporary philosophies and

methodologies, she found places where these ancient ideals were articulated in a relevant manner and the couple began to build their own approach.

“Our work is very much grounded in Martin Buber, the famous 20th century Jewish philosopher. He was the first one to give a name to the space between the couple. He called it an ‘encounter of souls’, and says that the couple is a space where the two souls meet.

“Our sages teach that when there is harmony in the home (shalom bayit), the Divine spirit (the shechina), rests between the couple.

“Imago relationship therapy was a turning point in our lives. It was there that we learned that everyone marries the one person that’s capable of giving them their single worst

relationship nightmare. We hire them for the job, and then are angry when they fulfil it.

“It really is a description of the Jewish concept of ‘ezer knegdo’ (loosely translated as ‘a helper opposite him’.)”

In fact, Yumi and Hedy were catalysts in the

establishment of Imago communities in South Africa, Israel, Austria, Switzerland, Sweden and Canada and pioneered the expansion of Imago relationship therapy in many other countries.

As the couple evolved in their own relationship and in their work with other couples, they developed their own integrated approach, which sees the couple as a place where true self-actualisation can occur.

Hedy is adamant not to call their teachings therapy.

“There is nothing wrong with people. Rather, we teach a way to reclaim their own potential as individuals and as a couple. Our life’s work has been spreading the message that a couple’s goal is to sanctify the space between them in order to create a sanctuary. It’s about transformation.”

What makes their workshops unique is

that the Schleifers run their courses for couples together. Married for 52 years, they are an institution in their own right. The two have travelled to 40 countries around the world, facilitating transformation, as well as offering participants the chance to witness a truly actualised relationship in the flesh.

“Yumi is my 27th husband. He has the courage to let himself grow. I would never have dreamed of him becoming the man he is today; I am in awe and have kept choosing him.”

Hedy’s work across the globe has shown her that all couples, no matter what country, culture or background, long for deep connection; and that a miraculous thing occurs when couples are given the right tools.

“We give them a profound paradigm shift, and they reconnect at a deep level. We show couples how to visit each other over the bridge, and to re-establish something inherent between them. We teach them to transcend the unconscious and move into a conscious connection.”

According to Hedy, the remarkable aspect is that the state in which the couple enter the training, is irrelevant. Even if the relationship is in complete disrepair, or on the verge of divorce, during the three days they find a way to establish a depth of connection which settles between them.

Hedy does not take her ability to impact people so profoundly, lightly. She says that spreading this work has been her biggest



blessing, and seeing the rewards of the seeds they have planted, is incredibly moving and humbling.

“We knew that this work was our calling. We felt that we were bringing something bigger than ourselves into the world, and that it was worth it even if one couple was touched by the work.”

It’s clear that Hedy and Yumi continue to touch the lives of not one, but thousands of couples worldwide, and offer both a paradigm and example of what is possible when human beings open their hearts and minds.

• *Hedy and Yumi will be in Johannesburg from August 7 – 22, offering various trainings for couples, therapists and professionals. There are scholarships available on application. For more information, contact Carol at imagocd@gmail.com or 082-463-1467.*

News

SA start-up takes off in Israeli embassy competition

DIANE WOLFSON

Hearing the name Multifractal Semiconductor, you might wonder if it is some high-scoring scrabble phrase, rather than an exceptional business that last week won the Embassy of Israel’s “Start-Up Tel Aviv South Africa” competition.

Multifractal challenged over 170 other South African young start-ups which entered this prestigious contest - and won. The theme of the competition was: “Innovating to make the world a better place”.

Multifractal Semiconductor chief operating officer and co-founder, Nishant Singh, won an all-expenses paid trip to Israel to participate in the Tel Aviv Digital-Life-Design Innovation Festival in September. There, he will meet prospective investors and learn from leaders in the start-up ecosystem there.

“This is the fourth time we found South Africa’s best start-up via our Start-Up Tel Aviv South Africa contest,” Ambassador Arthur Lenk told the guests and finalists at the Innovation Hub in Pretoria last Wednesday. “Israel is proud to add value to the local start-up ecosystem and share some of Israel’s start-up nation culture.”

Singh explained that his start-up

has developed complete transmission systems on a silicon chip. These systems will increase efficiency and throughput and will be an enabler of the huge amounts of data that will be transmitted in the future, he said. He believed this may also be the way to decrease costs of data, going forward.

In an Internet-of-things smart world, where everything is connected, including smart cities, smart buildings, smart cars, the amount of data a connected person will use, will be huge, maintained Singh.

“Wireless data traffic is projected to increase seven-fold from 2016 to 2021 and 1 000-fold by the year 2030,” said Singh.

In Israel in September he hopes to make contacts and form partnerships in innovation, which he believes will benefit all South Africans. In the short term, winning this competition will give him a great deal of confidence and recognition that the three years of hard work on this system will keep them going forward.

He hopes that this will bring in much needed investment to setting up offices in South Africa, where they can find and train apprentices to keep their business going for the future.

“We are so grateful to win this amazing opportunity, as all South Africans can benefit greatly from



Third prize winner, Tieho Tsiane chatting to Laura Sher, PRO at the Embassy of Israel

the Israeli ecosystem. We look forward to creating partnerships at the festival in Israel and learn from other entrepreneurs from all over the world,” said Singh.

His co-founder, Piotr Osuch added: “It has been a long journey to get to where we are today and we hope to transfer this reward on to others and to continue to develop this product to make the world a better and more connected place.”

Second prize winner, Benji Meltzer from Cape Town, started Aerobotics, an engineering technology company. Using aerial data from various sources such as drones, to help specifically farmers (at this stage),

hoping to attend the conference in Israel.

Tieho Tsiane, the third prize winner in the competition, started a technical app IN- Pocket while studying at the University of the Free State. IN- Pocket is a device that aims to assist disabled people to use their phones while in their pockets.

The device consists of hardware, which a disabled person can attach to his or her wheelchair or walking stick, to easily navigate their phones, using the hardware and a Bluetooth headset for listening purposes.

Tsiane is thrilled to be in the top three and hopes to get exposure to the greater public. Through a local competition in the Free State and partnering with the Centre for Technology, he has already started the process of building a prototype of his product.

Past winners include: WhereIsMyTransport which has gone on to win two international awards and has opened a second office in London. Webfluentia has expanded their footprint into the UK, Europe, the Middle East and South America and My30DayHealthCare which merged their company in October 2016 and is now known as Health Cloud, has made significant progress in the South African market.

These are some of the nominees for the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards 2017 for the Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of Helen Suzman



Beatrice Tollman



Colin Datnow



Dr Brian Jude



Dr Russell Seider



Dr Eve



Dr Susan Klugman



Eric Ellerine



Hazel Feldman



Jos Zaslansky



Martin & Judy Moritz



Michael Bagraim



Monty Hilkowitz



The Lubner Family



Motty Sachs



Patsy Dakes



Rabbi Moshe Kurstag



Shihān
Malcolm
Dorfman



Sol Kerzner



Dr Stanley Bergman



Suzanne Ackerman Berman



Vivian Immerman



Winky Ringo



Joan Block



Clive Blechman



Simon Sussman



To find out who wins, please book a table for the
Absa Jewish Achiever Awards Gala Banquet
13 August 2017 • rsvp@sajewishreport.co.za



Tables R36 000 (plus VAT) Seats R4 000 (plus VAT)

SA led to the cliff-edge: Whose fault?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Even with so many South Africans desperate to rescue this country from President Jacob Zuma’s train of destruction, last week’s report of a R2bn amnesty package offered to him from frantic private sources to leave office - including amnesty for 783 corruption charges and other misdemeanours - is wishful thinking.

He apparently rejected the deal, said to have been proposed by a faction backing Deputy President Cyril Ramaphosa, who aspires to be president. But maybe behind the scenes he is bargaining for more? Yet even if he accepted it, would it be worth it for the country?

The deal has a precedent in a similar settlement in Ireland in the 1990s that ended the civil war. And in the United States in 1974, President Richard Nixon, facing impeachment and removal from office, resigned and was pardoned for crimes committed while in office by his successor Gerald Ford, making it feasible for the country to rid itself of Nixon.

Apartheid leaders got away scot free with an amnesty from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Nelson Mandela led the process, believing it was preferable to civil war.

Leadership is a complex concept with multiple meanings about where power lies. One of the world’s great Talmudists, Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz, on a 1999 South African visit, commented to a Jewish gathering: If a man is walking a dog on a leash, with the dog in front, the dog appears to be the leader. But he can only go where his master lets him.

Countries get the leaders they deserve, says the old adage. South Africa, including its political parties and civil groups, agreed to Mandela reconciling with apartheid villains. But, bizarrely, it has also allowed Zuma to lead it to the cliff-edge, threatening to destroy the country.

It must seriously examine why. All are to blame - not just the ANC, as popular opinion claims in many quarters.

The marking earlier this week of Mandela’s birthday, is a reminder of the weakness in looking for solutions in one man. Some gym devotees will recall an unforgettable sunny afternoon in 2002 at Old Eds gym in Houghton, Johannesburg.

People in shorts and sneakers bustled through the doors, overlooking the cricket field, as a military helicopter arrived and landed on the field. A police car, a brown car containing three black security men, and a silver Mercedes drove to the ‘copter.

A familiar face appeared from inside, instantly recognisable. Madiba. He stepped down to the grass, waving and smiling to all. People shouted from the gym: “We love you, Madiba!”

A blonde-haired white woman in a red track-suit dashed across the field towards him. The guards intercepted, then let her through. She threw her arms around Madiba, kissed him, then ran back across the field, beaming. The cars pulled off, driving to Madiba’s house a few blocks away. South Africa’s saviour embodied in one man.

Now it is 2017. Imagine a helicopter landing on that cricket field with Zuma, on his way to the Gupta family - the “mafia chiefs” - mansion in Saxonwold, also a few blocks away. Hordes of security would have searched the gym before his arrival, and surrounded him as he stepped down.

No gymmers would applaud, or young girls run to hug him. His blue-light convoy of at least 10 very-expensive cars and motorbikes with sirens blaring, would convey him to the Guptas, freezing other traffic. He would not wave – nobody would wave back. The country’s problems embodied in one man.

Will R2bn go-away money for Zuma start fixing things, or be yet another pot of money down the drain?

South African society needs to make sure the next “dog on the leash” will go where it is best for the country, not just where it suits him.

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

----- **A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies** -----

Thanks and congratulations to Ambassador Arthur Lenk

Last week, the Board together with the SAZF and IUA-UCF, hosted a farewell function for outgoing Israeli Ambassador Arthur Lenk. It was an opportunity to reflect on and pay tribute to Ambassador Lenk for all that he has achieved over the past four years.

For Israel’s envoys, South Africa is certainly one of the more challenging diplomatic postings. Historically, the ruling party has identified strongly with the Palestinian cause, while during the apartheid years the African National Congress was closely aligned with countries and movements overtly hostile towards the Jewish State, among them Libya, Cuba and the Soviet Union along with all its client states in Eastern and Central Europe.

In South Africa today, the heinous charge, aggressively advocated by vociferous and influential anti-Israel propagandists, is that of Israel being an apartheid state. Since our transition to democracy in 1994, Israel’s ambassadors have had to work hard to break down these negative preconceptions. Their job has been made even more difficult by the numerous failures in reviving the Israeli-Palestinian peace process, for which the blame is routinely and unfairly left exclusively at Israel’s door.

Despite the negative publicity, there continues to be deep support for Israel in South Africa beyond the confines of the Jewish community. It is to Ambassador Lenk’s eternal credit that he was able to reach this largely silent constituency, in the process establishing many warm relationships and in general making the wider South African public aware of an Israel beyond the conflict, and the value, both actual and potential, of a continued strong South Africa-Israel relationship.

All this was achieved despite numerous and strenuous efforts by anti-Israel elements to

block such initiatives. Ambassador Lenk was always an eloquent defender of Israel, resolutely and fearlessly representing Israel in what more often than not

was a deeply hostile environment. This was never more so than during the traumatic months of the 2014 Gaza conflict, in which he and then Deputy Ambassador Michael Freeman, seized every opportunity to speak out for Israel at a time when such voices were being all but drowned out.

For all this and more, we thank and congratulate Ambassador Lenk, and wish him only further success in his career as a representative of our beloved State of Israel.




Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

Jewish Affairs journal to commemorate three major anniversaries
The upcoming (Rosh Hashanah) issue of Jewish Affairs, a journal of Jewish thought, history and culture brought out by the SAJBD since 1941, will be focusing on three important milestones relating to the history of Zionism and the State of Israel.

Recently, we celebrated the 50th anniversary of the Six Day War and the liberation of Jerusalem.

Two further anniversaries being marked in 2017, are the centenary of the famous Balfour Declaration and the 70th year of the UN Partition Plan that gave international legitimacy to Israel’s formal establishment in May 1948.

The Rosh Hashanah issue will feature various articles, book reviews and photographic essays, devoted to these topics.

Anyone interested in contributing, whether in the form of personal memoirs or original essays, are invited to please get in touch with the editor, David Saks, on david@sajbd.org. Since 2009, Jewish Affairs has also been published online, and can be accessed at <http://sajbd.org/pages/jewish-affairs>.

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

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

Letters

HEBRON'S INDISPUTABLE JEWISH HERITAGE IS WRITTEN IN BLOOD

I'd like to express my outrage at Unesco's travesty of claiming Hebron's Tomb of the Patricarchs as endangered Palestinian heritage.

While Jerusalem became Jewish 3 000 years ago under King David, Hebron became Jewish 4 000 years ago under Abraham.

In fact, there was a sizable Jewish community in Hebron for hundreds of years before the community was massacred in a 1929 Arab pogrom.

This bloody pogrom and massacres of Jews, that spread throughout Israel, were sparked in September 1928, by Jews at the Western Wall contravening the dhimmi laws, by erecting benches to sit on at the wall, and partitions to separate men from women.

Jews were first massacred in Jerusalem and then the horrific massacres by Arabs of Jews, of the ancient Jewish community of Hebron, took place.

Jews and Christians living under early Muslim rule were considered dhimmis, a status that was later also extended to other non-Muslims like Hindus... The dhimmi communities living in Islamic states had their own laws independent from the Sharia law, such as the Jews who had their own halachic courts.

Sixty-seven Jews were killed in Hebron, including a dozen women and three children under the age of five. The violence continued in Jerusalem and then spread across the country, Six

kibbutzim were raised to the ground and the Arab terrorists even attempted to attack Tel Aviv. On August 30 of that year, 20 Jews were murdered in Safed.

An eyewitness testified about the 1929 Hebron massacre: "House to house they went, bursting into every room looking for hiding Jews. Religious scrolls or books were burned or torn to shreds.

"The defenceless Jews were variously beheaded, castrated, their breasts and fingers sliced off, and in some cases their eyes plucked from their sockets. Infants and adults, men and women, it mattered not.

"The carnage went on for hours, with the Arab policemen standing down. Blood ran in streamlets down the narrow stone staircases outside the buildings. House by house, room by room, the savagery was repeated."

Since the Jews returned to Hebron in 1967, there have been countless killings of Hebron Jews by Arabs, including babies and young kids, to get Jews off the land.

Today, Palestinian privilege means Palestinians can bully Jewish children, attack Jewish babies in strollers, murder Jewish parents, send rockets to Israeli civilians and still be regarded as the victim.

Gary Selikow
Johannesburg

DR LEVY DESERVES MORE THAN HE GOT IN 100TH BIRTHDAY REPORT

I cannot allow your report in the Jewish Report of July 7 relating to Dr Denzil Levy's 100th birthday, go without comment.

Quite frankly, a personality of such stature and huge lifetime achievement as Dr Levy, does not deserve to have a tribute of 100 years' service to be conflated with another issue with which his late father was vitally involved, however important that may have been.

The Greyshirts trial in the 1930s was a huge and significant one in Jewish history, yet a report on Dr Levy's 100th birthday and his extensive achievements in Jewish and non-Jewish affairs, does not deserve to be relegated to about 20 per cent of the full-page article in your newspaper.

If this was so important, why did your correspondent not feel it appropriate to remind the public of the Greyshirts trial, by publishing a separate article entirely on this?

Dr Levy's record of communal achievement and reaching his century, has been widely acknowledged in the Jewish and non-Jewish world and did not deserve a relatively minor acknowledgement in a full-page article.

No mention is made of the Lexus Lifetime Achiever award which he received in 2007

at the age of 90. When he addressed the audience of over 500 in Johannesburg, there was an audible gasp when he told them of his age and that he had a message for them.

You make scant mention of his achievements, which include being vice president of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues for many years, nor of the Ivan Sackheim Memorial award he received in 1997 for 60 years' distinguished service to the Jewish community. Dr Levy is an absolute model of personal dedication and an example to South African Jewry and the comments reflected in the article unfortunately do no justice to this.

May I suggest that your article reflects inadequately on the incredible life achievement of Dr Levy, an individual of unimpeachable integrity, dignified and articulate in the extreme.

Arnie Z Katz
Port Elizabeth

It was at my insistence that we put the Greyshirts and the 100th birthday stories in one, not the writer who initially wrote it as two stories. – Editor

A brave little boy pays kindness forward

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Jed Kagan is the kind of 10-year-old who can’t just take kindness, he has to give it back in truckloads. He is that kind of kid.

In giving back, he and his family recently handed over R13 000 to Red Cross Hospital, an iPad and gifts for the children recovering there. “This is for the best hospital ever,” said Jed.

His tale of bravery began when he first started suffering pain in his left knee at the age of two. “Strep knee”, the doctors said... He could not walk for two weeks, but luckily, he recovered, but what wasn’t realised is that this dreaded disease could recur.

When he turned 10 in 2016, that pain came back. This time, he was diagnosed with CRPS, complex regional pain

syndrome. He was bed-ridden, unable to attend school or play any sport or even play with his friends.

He had to take 32 pills a day, sat in doctors’ rooms for many hours; he gave up a lot. Fortunately, he was directed to the Red Cross Children’s Hospital.

The hospital put Jed’s parents in touch with other families who had gone through the same trauma. “We underestimated how much support these families would give us,” said Shana Kagan, Jed’s mom. “We realized that we were not on this journey alone.

The day eventually came for him to be admitted to the hospital’s Pain Clinic “where they instilled nothing but love and positivity”, said Shana. After a week of ketamine infusions, Jed was finally relieved of the excruciating pain he suffered. Jed

came home with no pain - and had to learn to walk again.

CRPS can be triggered by an injury or a trauma. In Jed’s case, it was a virus that lodged in his knee. It is caused by a dysfunction in the nervous system. The nerves get abnormally stimulated, leading to abnormal impulses along the nerve paths. CRPS can spread, if not treated soon enough to other joints.

Shana calls Red Cross Children’s Hospital, “a most spectacular place”. The fact that all the doctors and therapists, who made up “Jed’s team”, have taken time to worry about the 10 children in Africa, who have suffered from this disease, is nothing short of a miracle.

The overwhelming support from the Jewish community and from the Red Cross Children’s Hospital, prompted Jed to “do something to honour them” and to show them the family’s appreciation.

“We decided to sew a Jedi Tedi a day for a year, and to have them sponsored for doctor’s rooms and therapy rooms. We would hand sew them to raise money for therapy and doctors’ rooms at the hospital,” said Shana.

The family believed it was imperative to educate doctors and other people who need



to know about CRPS in children. So, doctors were to be given “Jedi Tedis”, with the story of Jed, so that they can learn about the disease. The Jedi Tedis are made from socks, as Jed longed to wear a pair of socks when he was in pain, but could not.

The balance of Jedi Tedis will go to the little ones at Red Cross Children’s Hospital and at the end of a year, 365 Jedi Tedis will be delivered to the hospital.

“Anyone can help sew a Jedi Tedi with us, or sew at their school or while enjoying a cup of coffee anywhere,” Shana said. The rest of these little “reminders” made will be sold and the money made will be donated to the hospital’s Pain Clinic.

On May 17, Jedi Tedis made the trip to the Weizmann Primary School and over 150 Jedi Tedis were sold. It was money from these sales that Jed and his family gave to the Red Cross Hospital. And they are not done yet.

ORT JET refreshes team to become leading NPO

OWN CORRESPONDENT

ORT SA has become a leading non-profit organisation, having grown from a mentoring service for stressed businesses to offering a host of support interventions for Jewish business owners.

The organisation, under the chief executive officer Ariella Rosenberg, has pressed the refresh button when it comes to their team. Helene Itzkin is now acting head of ORT JET as well as ORT SA fundraiser.

“Helene brings a breath of fresh air to ORT SA and ORT JET with her vast knowledge and diverse skills set,” says Rosenberg.

They have also brought in Samantha Rau and Tracey Catania as contact point for mentors, mentees, training and ORT2TALKS. Gidon Varejes now manages marketing and the ORT JET social media platforms and has achieved an amazing Facebook following.

ORT JET now offers cutting-edge courses

such as “Lean Startup” for new businesses, “Social Media Marketing” using LinkedIn and Facebook, “Breakthrough Boot Camps” to revitalise businesses.

The ORT2TALK monthly sessions, which are open to the public, offer a line-up of interesting and trendy topics.

ORT JET offers the Jewish community sustainable business know-how and aims to make Jewish businesses financially independent. It has expanded to KwaZulu-Natal and Cape Town and into Jewish day schools.

Paul Bacher will be taking sabbatical leave as a committee member and trustee of ORT SA. He was instrumental in founding ORT JET and was the inspirational force driving the organisation for the past 13 years.

Under the guidance of chairman Ellis Falkof and the national executive committee, the organisation has formalised operations and is well-resourced to fulfil the “Educating for Life” message.



ORT JET’s Samantha Rau, Gidon Varejes, Helene Itzkin and Tracey Catania.

Friday (July 21)

• UZLC hosts Gideon Shimoni on “650,000 hours”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (July 23)

• Second Innings hosts Dr Dean Allen, academic, lecturer, historian and author, on “Empire, War & Cricket in South Africa”. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: Tea at 10:00. Meeting starts promptly at 10:30. Cost:

R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Information: Linda Fleishman (011)-532-9701.

Wednesday (July 26)

• JWBS hosts a “Business Breakfast” with journalist and political analyst Justice Malala. Venue: Investec. Time: 07:00. Cost: R540 pp. Information: (011) 485-5232 or e-mail gloria@jwbs.co.za

Friday (July 28)

• Shalom Masorti Seniors Club meets on

WHAT'S ON

the last Friday of each month. Make new friends and have some light-hearted fun. Tea will be served, and there will be a selection of board games to play and cards. Cindy Kree will speak on “Work in Prisons”. Time: 14:30 for 15:00. (Donation of R15.00 will be appreciated). Contact: Esther (011) 485-5619, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday mornings.

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