

south african
Jewish Report

■ Volume 21 – Number 36 ■ October 27 2017 ■ 7 Cheshvan 5778

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Shabbos
Project**

PORT ELIZABETH

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SHABBOS GO-TO GUIDE

CPT

Cape Town

JHB

Joburg

EL

East London

PE

Port Elizabeth

KZN

KwaZulu-Natal

PTA

Pretoria

Meal

Tea

Educational

For Women

Entertainment

Night

Day

Outdoors

Drinks

Kids

In a Home

Prayer

These are just a few of hundreds of Shabbos Project events and get-togethers happening across the country. Follow your nose, and listen out for the sweet sound of Shabbos songs to find one closest to you!

B

BLOUBERG

CPT

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Plant

Open Book

FRIDAY NIGHT & SHABBOS DAY | CHABAD OF THE WEST COAST | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Sunset Beach Pop-Up Shul
Shabbos day: Big walk to shul. Stop-off for prepaid water, then lunch and relaxation
Contact: 021 557 7560
Email: info@theshul.co.za

C

CAPE TOWN

CPT

Moon

CHALLAH BAKE | CT ICC | 25 OCT 2017 | 6:30 PM

Great CT Challah Bake
Email: ctchallahbake@gmail.com
Cost: no charge

CLAREMONT

CPT

Fork and Knife

Moon

Open Book

FRIDAY NIGHT | CLAREMONT WYNBERG SHUL | 27 OCT 2017 | 6PM

Royal Shabbat Banquet
Launching Koren Ani Tefilla Shabbat Siddur on The Shabbat Project to enhance the shul service
Email: marion@clarewynshul.co.za
Cost: Adults R220 | Students R150 | Under 12 R80

CPT

Moon

Microphone

HAVDALLAH CONCERT | CLAREMONT WYNBERG SHUL | 28 OCT 2017 | 8:30 PM

The Southern suburbs Havdallah concert with Ezra Altschuler and Shmuli Brill
Contact: 021 671 9007
Email: info@clarewynshul.co.za

CYRILDENE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER & SHABBAT LUNCH | CYRILDENE SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Contact: 011 616 3312

D

DOORNFONTEIN

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

KIDDUSH | LION’S SHUL | 6PM

Kiddush
Email: mbaum7@gmail.com

E

EDENVALE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

DINNER & SHABBOS LUNCH | EDENVALE SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Communal Friday night dinner and Shabbos day lunch
Email: earl.tamara@gmail.com

ELTON HILL

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Open Book

FRIDAY NIGHT MEAL | SALLY’S ALLEY | 27 OCT 2017 | 6PM

Sally’s Alley Friday night minyan and supper
Email: info@sosa.joburg

EMMARENTIA

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Microphone

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | EMMARENTIA SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Dinner
Shabbos day: Communal lunch, walk to Emmarentia Dam, Seudah Shlishit and Havdallah with Chilly Chrysler
Email: rodney@emmarentiashul.co.za
nicollemorrisrsa@gmail.com

F

FOURWAYS

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Y

DINNER & SHABBOS DAY | CHABAD OF FOURWAYS | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Interactive brocha, wine bar, challah and dips bar, fish and salad bar
Shabbos day: Lunch
Email: yael@chabadfourways.org

G

GARDENS

CPT

Fork and Knife

Moon

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER | GARDENS SHUL | 27 OCT 2017

Email: admin@gardensshul.co.za
Cost: Adults R250 | Kids R50 (under 12)

G

GLENDINNINGVALE

PE

Moon

CHALLAH BAKE | PE HEBREW CONGREGATION | 26 OCT 2017 | 7PM

Email: pehc@mweb.co.za
Cost: R80 per person

PE

Fork and Knife

Sun

LUNCH | PE HEBREW CONGREGATION | 28 OCT 2017 | 1PM

Shabbat Chavershaft Lunch
Email: pehc@mweb.co.za
Cost: Adults R150 per person - no charge for school children

GLENHAZEL

JHB

Fork and Knife

Sun

Graduation Cap

Globe

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | OHR SOMAYACH GLENHAZEL | 28 OCT 2017

Kiddush-brunch, learning programme focused on oneg Shabbos based on the Novaminsker Rebbe/Chief Rabbi material
Children’s programme, Seudah Shlishis for women
Contact: Rachael at 011 887 1321

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Microphone

SEUDAH SHLISHIT & HAVDALLAH | NORTHFIELD SHUL | 28 OCT 2017 | 5:15PM

Chabad of Glenhazel, Chabad of Lyndhurst & Northfield Shul combine for Seudah Shlishit and Carlebach Havdallah with Johnny Sklaar
Contact: Lauren 078 043 2203
Cost: Adults R180 | Kids (6-12) R120

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

SHABBOS DINNER | SUNNY ROAD SHUL | 27 OCT 2017

Contact: Lauren 078 043 2203
Cost: Adults R180 | Kids (6-12) R120

THE
DARK
TISCH

JHB

Moon

GLENHAZEL DARK TISCH

Sunny Road Campus
9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

FRIDAY NIGHT & SHABBOS DAY | THE BASE | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night Kiddush, Shabbat lunch
Cost: Adults R120 | Kids (under 12) R60 | free (under 6)

JHB

Fork and Knife

Sun

Open Book

Globe

Microphone

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | YESHIVA COLLEGE CAMPUS | 27/28 OCT 2017

Shabbos davening with special Kabbalat Shabbat. Shabbat lunch with children’s activities, Seudat Shlishit and musical Havdallah
Email: yeshivacollegeshabbosproject@gmail.com
Cost: R150 Adults | R50 Children

G

GREENSIDE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Open Book

Microphone

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | GREENSIDE SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Mincha, Kabbalat Shabbat followed by soup and perogen, Kiddush with guest speaker, Seudah Shlishit, Havdallah
Contact: 011 788 5036

GREENSTONE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Graduation Cap

DINNER & SHABBOS DAY | CHABAD GREENSTONE | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Dinner
Shabbos day: Lunch with Rabbi Baumgarten
Cost: Adult R100 | Kids R40 - for dinner

GROENKLOOF

PTA

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Microphone

SHABBAT EXPERIENCE | PRETORIA HEBREW CONGREGATION | 26/27/28 OCT 2017

WIZO Challah Bake
Email: wizopretoria@gmail.com
Shabbat supper under the stars
Shabbat day: Brocha followed by lunch and a Havdallah concert
Email: shabbosprojectpretoria@gmail.com

H

HOUGHTON ESTATE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER | WEST STREET SHUL | 27 OCT 2017 | 7:30PM

Email: herringfam@hotmail.com
Cost: Adults R200 | kids R120 (under 12)

K

KILLARNEY

JHB

Fork and Knife

Sun

SHABBAT LUNCH | OXFORD SHUL | 28 OCT 2017

Brocha followed by Shabbat lunch, no booking required
Email: info@oxfordshul.co.za

L

LINKSFIELD

JHB

Moon

LINKSFIELD DARK TISCH

5 Protea Street
9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

JHB

Fork and Knife

Moon

Globe

Sun

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER & SHABBOS DAY | LINKSFIELD SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Dinner
Shabbos day: Brocha, kids supper and Seudat Shlishit
Email: office@linkshul.co.za
Cost: R195

M

MILNERTON

CPT

Fork and Knife

Moon

Sun

Microphone

FRIDAY NIGHT & SHABBOS DAY | MILNERTON | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Sunset Beach Pop-Up Shul & dinner. Shabbos day: Brocha, Seudat Shlishit and Havdallah
Email: office@milnertonshul.co.za



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wristwatch c. 1970s
R45 000 - R55 000



William Kentridge,
India ink and collage
on atlas pages
R200 000 - R300 000

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south african Jewish Report

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United nations of Jewish leaders in SA

See pages 3, 12 and 13

Photo: Shawn Benjamin



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AUTO AFRICA

‘Bankrupting terrorism’

NICOLA MILTZ

“Money is the oxygen of terrorism, if you stop the flow of money you can stop the terror,” said Israeli activist lawyer, Nitsana Darshan-Leitner while in South Africa this week.

Darshan-Leitner is the founder of Shurat HaDin Israel Law Center, a civil rights organisation that aims to “bankrupt terrorism – one lawsuit at a time”.

Shurat HaDin uses courts around the world to fight terrorism. Its lawyers go on the legal offensive by putting terrorists and their financial backers on trial to financially compensate victims.

“We legally attempt to block the funding of terror,” she said at a breakfast held at Beyachad.

She and her husband Avi Leitner were in South Africa, hosted by Aish Hatorah. They spoke at its annual fundraising dinner earlier this week.

Darshan-Leitner has been lauded as a pioneer in the judicial battle against terrorism. Shurat HaDin has represented victims and their families in legal actions against Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestinian Authority, Islamic Jihad, the PLO, and North Korea, Iran and Syria.

To date it has successfully frozen more than \$600 million in terrorist assets, secured more than \$200 million for victims and their families and obtained over \$2 million in monetary judgments against terror organisations and state sponsors of terrorism.

“By blocking the flow of money, we can cut off the lifeline that keeps terrorist organisations alive,” she said.

“No amount of money can bring back a life, or heal a terror wound,” said her husband, lawyer Avi Leitner, “but financial compensation gives a measure of closure to the victims, a small sense of justice and accountability. To take money from those who kill and maim – from those directly responsible for the attack – helps in some way.”

Darshan-Leitner said many cases have had an effect on the way banks do business and on the



way “terrorism money flows”.

“Banks have changed the way they do business, they don’t open accounts for known terror organisations or wire money to them. Banks are becoming more aware of terror watch lists.”

The organisation is currently waging a legal battle against Facebook, Twitter and Google.

“Facebook has aided and abetted Hamas for years by providing valuable and essential services to the terror group,” she said.

This is in violation of US anti-terrorism laws. “Social networks equal social responsibility,” said Darshan-Leitner.

In July Shurat HaDin filed a \$1 billion lawsuit on behalf of five victims of terror and their families, against Facebook for “knowingly providing material support to Hamas”. Darshan-Leitner says Hamas uses Facebook to commit its terrorist activities.

This lawsuit follows a 2015 case that seeks an order compelling Facebook to monitor its platform and deny services to known terrorists.

Avi Leitner says that social media providers have largely “turned a blind eye” to the use of their services by terrorists. Shurat HaDin is actively challenging these companies for “their complicity” in the terrorism that their services are used to facilitate and promote.

The organisation is also actively involved in defending Israel, its leaders and soldiers against claims of war crimes.

Our readers – most educated

The SA Jewish Report readers are undoubtedly among the most educated demographic in South Africa. This titbit of information is gleaned from our readership survey.

You still have a few days in which to voice your opinion on what you think of the newspaper. We have so far had more than 700 people completed the survey.

What we know so far from you is that 33 per cent of our readers are shomrei Shabbat and 51 per cent consider themselves traditional.

We have realised that you want more technology and travel stories and love reading about South Africans who have made a real difference in our country.

While 38 per cent of you listen to ChaiFM, there are more of you who listen to 702.

The SA Jewish Report appears to be – according to the survey so far – the main source of news about Israel for our readers.

What we have also found is that there has been a dramatic decrease of our readers who still read mainstream newspapers and your most popular source of news is News24.

Almost all of our readers are on the Internet, use e-mail and the vast majority are on Facebook. Snapchat appears to be the least popular social media among our readers.

As our readers are so educated, it goes without saying there is a hugely disproportionate number of the community with post-graduate degrees. Don’t miss out – you have a few days left to have your say.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SAJR>

Shabbat Times this week		
Starts	Ends	
18:03	18:54	Johannesburg
18:15	19:46	Cape Town
17:56	18:48	Durban
18:14	19:06	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:17	Port Elizabeth
18:12	19:06	East London

Parshat Lech Lecha

Rabbi Yossy Goldman
Sydenham Shul



Leaving home – for good

The story is told of an encounter between two famous rabbis of yesteryear – the Vilna Gaon and the Dubner Magid. The Magid, or Preacher of Dubna, once visited Vilna and went to pay a courtesy call on the great sage, Rabbi Elijah of Vilna.

The Gaon asked the Magid to preach to him, as was his specialty. “Give me mussar (words of rebuke). Chastise me,” said the Gaon. “G-d forbid that I should have the chutzpah to chastise the great Gaon of Vilna,” replied the Magid, quite horrified at the suggestion.

“No matter, that is your forte and I want to hear mussar from you,” insisted the Gaon.

So, the Dubner Magid thought a while and then, most reluctantly, acceded to the wishes of his illustrious host. “Is it a great achievement to be a Gaon sitting

in Vilna in your little secluded kloiz (small study)? Go out into the world, mix with the people, and then let us see what kind of Gaon you will be.”

Indeed, it is much easier to be scholarly and pious in our sequestered ghettos than it is in the outside world, so often oblivious – or even hostile – to Torah and its values.

This, in fact, was the test of Abraham in this week’s parsha. “Go from your land, from your birthplace, from your father’s house to the land I will show you.”

And it was there – far from his natural environment and immediate comfort zones – that Abraham accomplished G-d’s mission of monotheism. He spread the name of the One G-d to a pagan world and, in the process, his own name and reputation was established for eternity. It was only after leaving home that Abraham became the founding father of the Jewish People.

A hundred years ago, a generation of Yiddish-speaking, observant Jews migrated from Europe. They came to America, the golden land of opportunity, to escape pogroms and persecution. With blood, sweat and tears they transformed themselves from rags to

riches and soon came to personify the American dream, an amazing and inspirational success story.

But the fact is that for the most part, as their businesses succeeded, their religious lives failed. Unquestionably, Judaism took a severe body blow.

Most were unable to sustain their old-world values in new world America. The transition from shtetl to suburbia proved too formidable and children and grandchildren grew up blissfully unaware of their own sacred traditions. And the South African Jewish experience wasn’t all that radically different either.

It is when we leave our comfortable cocoons and spiritual safety nets into the wider society, that we may find ourselves losing our Jewish equilibrium. It is then that our faith, our values, our morals and beliefs, are truly challenged.

Please G-d, the children of Abraham will emulate their forefather who left his land and remained strong in faith and family, going on to achieve remarkable success, both spiritually and materially.



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EFF to march against the Balfour Declaration

NICOLA MILTZ

The Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) is planning a march to the Israeli Embassy in Pretoria next Thursday.

Mgcini Tshwaku, an EFF Member of the Gauteng Legislature, posted on Facebook about the planned march.

At 16:00 on October 21, Tshwaku posted a video of dancing EFF members and photographs of a planning session with the words: “Prep meeting for the March to the Israel Embassy, 2 November 2017 Ground attack, let’s go!” In another post about their preparatory meeting, Tshwaku specified that they were marching “in solidarity with the Palestinian people”.

His original post was then shared by the Boycott Divest Sanctions movement (BDS) on its Facebook page.

Protests are expected to take place across Britain next month as British Prime Minister Theresa May and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu celebrate the centenary together.

May said this week that her country would celebrate “with pride” its role in the creation of the State of Israel and the upcoming 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration, which pledged London’s support for a Jewish homeland.

Her comments came in response to Palestinian demands for a retraction and just one week before Netanyahu is due in London.

Leader of the Labour Party, Jeremy Corbyn, has declined an invitation to a centenary gala dinner.

National Director of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, Wendy Kahn said: “We live in a democratic country where the right to protest is protected by our Constitution. As always, we believe that dialogue would be a more constructive approach in resolving the Israeli-Palestinian conflict – one that is actually intended towards encouraging both Israel and Palestine to negotiate and talk peace.”

Rabbi Ramon Widmonte of The Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning, which is running a course on the Balfour Declaration, said yesterday: “It is important for people to know that the very same international legal process of which the Balfour Declaration was a part, also created the Arab states, such as (trans)Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Palestine and what has become Saudi Arabia.

“They were all created by the international legal process after World War 1. Anyone who criticises Israel’s legitimacy should have a hard look at the legitimacy of the other states in the region.”

The Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning is hosting a breakfast celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration on Friday, November 3. For details e-mail breakfast@theacademy.org.za

Photographs from Mgcini Tshwaku's Facebook posts



Tokyo urges Jews to “lean on” Israel for peace

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

Tokyo Sexwale has called on the World Jewish Congress (WJC) to play a more active role in bringing peace to the Middle East, to “lean” on Israel from time to time and not adopt a “knee-jerk” defence to whatever the country does.

He also stated that football was a “very, very powerful instrument” which could go a long way towards solving the problems of the region.

Sexwale, a former Cabinet minister and chairman of the Fifa monitoring committee for Israel and Palestine, was speaking at a gala dinner for the WJC National Community Directors’ Forum at The Lookout, V & A Waterfront.

The conference, held for the first time on South African soil, brought together delegates from 50 countries. Among those attending the event hosted by Eric and Sheila Samson, were Minister of Justice, Michael Masutha, premier of the Western Cape Helen Zille, leaders of political parties, members of parliament and other dignitaries.

In a pre-recorded video interview with journalist Mandy Wiener, Sexwale apologised for his absence due to his having to travel to London at short notice to attend a Fifa meeting.

“Our hearts go out to the Israeli and Palestinian people,” he began. “We’re trying to use football to try and bring people together, so football is not used as a political football but as an instrument to unify people.”

In a message to the WJC Sexwale said: “Here in South Africa, we have both Jewish and Muslim people. We can find one another – in that part of the world they’re killing each other.

“It’s not acceptable that the Palestinian people

should be digging tunnels to murder others but it’s also not acceptable that in retaliation there’s such a lot of collateral damage.”

The Palestinians claim that football is being played and managed by the Israeli Football Association in territories which are occupied by Israel and which they feel belong to them. Israelis say the final resolution of those problems has not occurred and they would remain in those settlements, he said of the divisions.

“Our job is to facilitate the movement of players – when we started three years ago, people couldn’t move. It would take the whole day. We’ve resolved that working with Israeli security and the Palestinians.”

Sexwale said that whatever decision Fifa took, it had to be aware of the sensitivities and the historical nature of the conflict. To critics of the Human Rights Commission and others who said it was taking too long to resolve the issues, he said: “We have to give the process ample time for people to find each other – you’re dealing not with football, but with sensitivities.”

Describing the WJC as a “very powerful organisation” he said: “There’s a need for them from time to time to lean on Israel and encourage them.

“At the checkpoints, I see kids in uniforms of the Israeli Defence Forces who feel that they’re surrounded and indeed they’ve got a small state there. Sometimes it’s easy to make a mistake and to overreact.

“People must be careful that the reaction is not one that negates the good name of the Jewish state.”

He appealed to the WJC not to adopt a “knee-jerk defence” towards whatever happened in Israel and to work with the Palestinians too.

JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

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Kerryn Du Rand 076 835 0410



ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Waverley – Inviting buyers from R2.499 Million

10, Casa Bodo. For seekers of that lock up & go, urban lifestyle. A 3 bed, 3 bath duplex unit with tiled open plan living area, a clean neutral palette & illuminated by good natural light. Secure undercover parking for 2. Pet friendly. Web Ref: 121725

Directions: North along Scott St from Stirling, right into complex

Chrissie Hammer 082 568 0440 | 011 880 3550



ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Linksfield – Asking R3.899 Million

Kloof Rd. Classic Contemporary Newly Renovated Home. Open plan kitchen with separate scullery, granite tops, gas hob and place for a Pesach Kitchen. Large lounge area with fireplace and built in bar. Stacking doors lead onto patio and large garden. 4 Bedrooms, study N/F. 2 modern bathrooms (mes) Dressing room. Private Pool area. Walking distance to KD Linksfield and Shuls in the area. More to see!! Web Ref: 124520

Directions: Follow pointer boards from Tregoning and Club Street.

Laureen 083 789 0229 | 011 622 1820



ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Glenhazel – Inviting buyers from R2.399 Million

Park Circle. 4 Bedroomed modern home in unique road. Charming double volume 4 bedroomed home, 2 bathroomed. Great open entertainment area. Large entrance hall, leading to kitchen, dining and living room, ticks all the boxes. Large land and walled. Asking more.. Web Ref: 122233

Directions: Goerge Avenue into Park Circle.

Joel Harris 082 926 0287 | Marco 082 048 2644

Going down to a waterless Cape Town

TALI FEINBERG

The crippling drought in Cape Town will seriously impact this year’s holidaymakers going down for the end of year festive season. Water-saving will be THE priority at every hotel, Airbnb apartment, guesthouse and restaurant, as the region faces what has been called a major natural disaster.

“We need all visitors to save like a local,” wrote Atlantic Seaboard City Councillor Shayne Ramsey on Facebook last week. As tourists enter the Cape, they will be asked to use just 87 litres of water per person per day, and they can expect buckets in showers, bath plugs removed, pools covered and a set of water-restricting rules presented on arrival, depending where they stay.

“The city will rely heavily on the tourism sector to spread awareness that Cape Town is a water-scarce region which is experiencing its worst drought in recorded history. The ‘New Normal’ requires us to adapt the way that we have been doing things, in all aspects of our lives,” Ramsey wrote.

The City has entered Phase One of its Disaster Management Plan, with water rationing and “water-shedding” starting imminently. The City has advised that each household should store up to five litres of water for essential usage in the event of intermittent supply.

The Disaster Management Plan outlines an apocalyptic picture for Cape Town, with the very real threat of the water running out by March 2018; and the SA National Defence Force patrolling the streets to keep law and order in such a scenario.

“We are treating the situation as ‘business as usual’, but abiding by the bylaws of the city



requesting all guests use a maximum of 87 litres of water a day,” says Peninsula Hotel General Manager Chris Godenir.

“We’ve emptied our outdoor jacuzzis and placed restrictors on showers and taps, removed bath plugs (although they can be requested for special cases, like those with disabilities, or a baby to bath), and we have groundwater filtering through, so our pool and public area are fully operational,” explains Godenir.

The groundwater pumped to rooftop tanks feeding the hotel’s flushing system means that the Peninsula’s toilets will be working over periods of potential “water shedding”. Other small steps with a big impact at the hotel include placing waterless hand sanitisers in the bathrooms and re-looking at laundry and cleaning operations.

For those who do not abide by regulations, “we do have rules of occupation, and a direct flouting of the City’s bylaws could lead to the eviction of a guest. It would be difficult to prove, as individual suites do not have water metres to record actual consumption, so to impose a fine would be difficult,” says Godenir.

But in his experience, “tourists do care and it is only a few individuals that would abuse the regulations.

“We assure you that within our control, your experience won’t be negatively impacted and you can have as good a holiday as you normally would – just be water wise.”

The nearby President Hotel has also removed bath plugs from all rooms, which will only be available upon guest request; reduced the water pressure in the public bathrooms of the hotel and installed water restrictors on all the shower heads in hotel rooms; switched off water features and installed artificial grass that does not need to be watered; and will only replace towels on request.

President Hotel Manager Nikki Vardan agrees that it remains difficult to ensure that tourists adopt a “water-wise” lifestyle while on holiday, and to “police” actions of tourists. “We can only educate, inform and advise our guests and hopefully trust they would be empathetic

enough to care and abide by the restrictions as we all do.”

But some hosts are taking a more proactive approach. “We are renting out our home over December. In our booking terms we mentioned compliance with applicable laws dealing with water restrictions. We also said that tenants are liable for fines for any failure to comply,” explains Paula Janks, who has been implementing water-saving measures in her home for months.

“We have buckets in every bathroom and I have removed the plugs from all baths. The level 5 water restriction rules will be printed and placed in our bathrooms and kitchens. We have a pool, but it will not be in use for guests as we can’t fill it.”

Federated Hospitality Association of South Africa (Fedhasa) Cape Chairman Jeff Rosenberg agrees that the message should be that “this is everyone’s problem”. The organisation has vowed to increase water-wise efforts in the hospitality industry and has created a Cape Water Wise Pledge which each member of the organisation has signed and will display prominently at their establishment.

“Day Zero is not an option. Water saving is a unified effort and hoteliers can’t do it alone,” said Rosenberg. He advised that efforts will “start in the lobby” and will include “in your face tactics” to communicate the need to save water.

Dr Lana Marcus, who lives in Johannesburg, visited Cape Town for Yomtov and describes the situation as “stressful but doable”. She and her family stayed with their in-laws, and put a lot of thought into saving water.

“With five of us we would have increased their water usage by more than 200 per cent. So I packed more than usual to minimise washing. My children had quick showers, and all dishes were piled up in a sink before quickly being hand washed in another sink – even on Rosh Hashanah first night!

“You need to go with a positive mindset and know that you may have to give up certain little luxuries while you are there,” she said.

In terms of maintaining Jewish life while in the city, Rebbetzin Esther Maizels assures visitors that the mikveh in Sea Point will remain operational. “The mikveh has sufficient rain water.”

A night of camaraderie and love of Israel



OWN CORRESPONDENT

South Africa Night to Honour Israel on Sunday evening was a magnificent display of faith, support, love and friendship to and for South African Jewry and Israel.

It was a DEISI – South African based Christian organisation that promotes the ethos housed within its name – to Defend, Embrace, Invest in, and Support Israel – event. In its second year, this event also focused on the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem.

In attendance were kings, queens, princes, princesses, chiefs, members of Parliament,

pastors, judges and many other influential and notable individuals, but most important of all, friends.

Deputy Ambassador to Israel Ayelet Black, reiterated this in her address to the audience and thanked DEISI and the entire Meshoe family for the support and assistance they have given her in the country in her role.

Olga Meshoe, DEISI founder and daughter of Reverend Kenneth Meshoe, leader of the ACDP, moved the audience with her endearing charm, immaculate delivery and overwhelming sincerity. Reverend Meshoe also gave a deeply inspiring and stirring address.



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Taking Zion to Zion



ZCC leader Bishop Barnabus Lekganyane and President Reuven Rivlin
BENJI SHULMAN

Members of the Zion Christian Church (ZCC) are an integral part of the South African landscape. With their distinctive silver stars and green broad hats, it is hard to imagine a Sunday going by when you would not see a group on their way to church or gathered devoutly in circles under trees.

The members of ZCC are known as faithful, moderate and hardworking. The doctrines of this church forbid smoking and drinking, and a strong emphasis is put on the Bible, especially the words of the prophets and fulfilment of prophecy.

The church is also very large, founded in 1910. It now boasts by some estimates as many as 15 million members. The centre of the church is based in Moriah, in Limpopo Province, where every year millions of its congregants gather on Easter and in September, to be part of church ceremonies and celebrations.

The centre of the gatherings is Bishop Barnabas Lekganyane, universally referred to as “His Grace”, who speaks to congregants through multiple translators. Other than on these occasions, the Bishop never speaks in public. Through their strong belief and identity as well as huge numbers, the ZCC is a key force sculpting the contours of moral life in our country.

Due to their strong theology, they are also connected to the Holy Land.

For many years Israeli ambassadors have been invited with other leaders, to attend ZCC celebrations in Moriah. Bishop Lekganyane has also regularly attended Yom Ha’atzmaut celebrations at the Israeli embassy.

According to Ben Swartz, chairman of the South African Zionist Federation, “for these reasons it was decided to invite the ZCC to Israel through the South African Friends of Israel (SAFI), who do grass roots outreach

work to the broader community”.

An initial meeting over the trip proved positive with interest from the church in undertaking an official tour “to spread the message of peace”. According to Mark Hyman, co-chairman of SAFI, “it took seven months of intensive work and engagement, including a trip to Moriah, to meet the Bishop himself, to put the tour together”.

After much preparation, seven members of the church and three members of the Jewish community, jetted off on a historic visit.

An important part of the tour was focused on sites of significance to the Christian faith. Visits included the Galilee, Bethlehem and of course the holy city of Jerusalem.

The delegation got the opportunity to meet with the Mayor of Jerusalem. They were impressed with the fact that the mayor works for a salary of one shekel a year and that he was bringing ideas from his entrepreneurial background to help run the city.

Reverend Emmanuel Motolla, the spokesman for the ZCC delegation, said that “it is good to see that the city is kept open and that all different religions are respected”.

The delegation spent time in a number of official meetings, including with representatives of government departments and President Reuven Rivlin. At the meeting, the President was presented with a silver ZCC star. The ZCC has never issued its stars to anyone outside the church. Rivlin thus became the first president ever to receive one.

Perhaps the most fascinating encounter occurred at the meeting of the South African embassy in Tel Aviv. The group was met by the South African ambassador, Sisa Ngombane who was honoured to host the Bishop.

Continued on page 9>>



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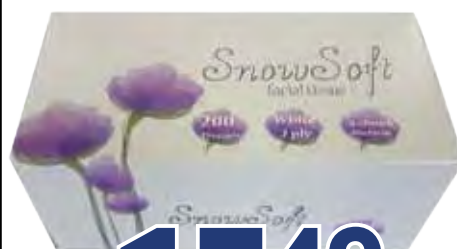
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Dreaming of having a bar- or batmitzvah at the Kotel?

TALI FEINBERG

“It was the best experience of our lives,” says Michelle Collet, describing her son’s barmitzvah at the Kotel. “I have three sons. The older two had barmitzvahs here in South Africa. What a waste of money! To have all the aggravation that people give you, and your function is over within a few hours.”

She compares this with the barmitzvah at the Kotel for her third son. “It was wonderful - cheaper and more meaningful, and we spent another two weeks together as a family in Tel Aviv.”

Elana Kruger agrees, saying her son, Jamie, “loved every minute”.

Wondering how to organise your own son’s barmitzvah at the Kotel?

“It is the simplest process,” explains Kruger. “I e-mailed The Western Wall Heritage Foundation at thekotel.org and advised them of the date and time I required. I was told by people who had been previously, to book it for 09:00. I also requested an English-speaking guide and a table right next to the mechitzah.

“It is better to do the ceremony on a Monday or Thursday instead of a Saturday, so you can take photos.”

There may be a number of barmies on the same day as yours, but, says Kruger, “you are so fixated on your own family that you don’t even notice”.

Kruger’s family had drummers and shofar blowers dancing them out of the Kotel, “which added to the uniqueness”. She says the entire

process was well-organised: “There is a desk at the gate, and they have your name and booking. You get a certificate for your son.

“They then call your guide. You do not pay for the barmitzvah. We were advised that the organisation is highly subsidised by the government and not to tip or pay anyone as they would feel insulted. It is a free service.”

A representative of the Western Wall Heritage Foundation explains: “All our guides are trained in leading prayers and in helping to create a festive atmosphere. They are familiar with the proper Torah reading tropes (musical cantillation notes) and can assist as needed. They will also assist you in all logistics, such as finding a table in the Kotel area, bringing a Torah scroll and prayer books, and the like.”

However, you can also utilise the services of a rabbi of your choice. For example, Rabbi Yisrael Krengel, who hails from South Africa and lives in Israel, has been performing barmitzvah ceremonies at the Kotel for more than 14 years.

The barmitzvah ceremony at the Western Wall is divided into two parts: The first consists of the blessings, putting on the tefillin and reciting the Shema. The second is the high point – calling up the barmitzvah boy to recite the blessings on the Torah reading.

The ceremony includes honours given to men in the party, which should be decided on in advance. From start to finish, the ceremony will be accompanied by singing and great joy.

After the ceremony, time will be given for personal prayers and placing a note between the Western Wall’s ancient stones. Then the group



Jamie Kruger at his barmitzvah at the Kotel

You can also celebrate a shared barmitzvah at the Kotel with a cousin, which is what the Kahanowitz family did for their son Aaron and his cousin Jake, who are two months apart in age.

There is always the risk of things being very busy at the Kotel, and to avoid this, they had a December barmitzvah, which is much quieter than the summer months in Israel. “We also organised for our simcha to be first and early in the morning (08:30 or 09:00) to avoid big crowds. It worked out perfectly.”

Bernice Berson says her son, Josh, felt humbled by the experience and recommends spending a Shabbos evening at the Wall.

The Kotel also facilitates batmitzvah celebrations. A guide provided by the Western Wall Heritage Foundation will lead the 30-minute, no-cost ceremony. The celebration begins when the family and friends meet your guide at the Western Wall’s Upper Plaza. After the batmitzvah girl’s father recites the traditional children’s blessing, she heads to the women’s prayer section with the female guests.

The ceremony takes place adjacent to the mechitzah, so the men can watch from their side. At the end, the honoree receives a certificate signed by the Rabbi of the Western Wall.

Another ceremony, for which there is a fee, is held in a hall in the Western Wall Tunnels. This event includes candle-lighting and a workshop where glass candlesticks are decorated.

Families from Egalitarian or Progressive Jewish communities can have bar- or batmitzvahs at the Kotel. “Some do them at the regular men’s section and some choose to have them at the Egalitarian section,” explains Rabbi Greg Alexander of the Cape Town Progressive Jewish Congregation.

“At the Egalitarian section, men and women can be together and women can read from, or be called to, the Torah.

“In most cases, we prepare those families who want to have a bar- or batmitzvah in Israel with our tutors here. We then make contact with one of the Israeli Progressive rabbis, who are in touch with them on Skype to help them prepare a d’var Torah and get to know the family. They then meet up in Israel before the barmitzvah to finalise preparations, and then it’s simcha time!”

The ceremony is divided into two parts: The first consists of the blessings, putting on the tefillin and reciting the Shema. The second is the high point – calling up the barmitzvah boy to recite the blessings on the Torah reading.

will gather at the upper level of the Western Wall Plaza. Personal greetings and blessings can be included in the ceremony with the help of your guide.

Janet and Sion Gelgor’s son, Liad, recently celebrated his barmitzvah at the Kotel, and they say that the multiple barmitzvahs going on at the same time, was a positive aspect, as he doesn’t like being the centre of attention and was happy to be among other barmie boys.

The Western Wall Heritage Foundation has set aside a special section for refreshments opposite the Kotel. The area includes tables ready to be set up by you. Light refreshments can be brought, but don’t bring anything that needs refrigeration. The food can be left in the special area during the ceremony, with someone you have selected, watching over it.

There is no rehearsal or preparation on the day, but barmitzvah boys can sign up for a six-to eight-week preparation programme. Lessons take place in the city where the boy lives and are given by teachers specially trained for this. The programme is subsidised and requires advanced registration.

There is no limit to the number of people who can attend the barmitzvah ceremony at the Kotel. However, some of the tours and activities offered, are limited to a group of 35 people. If there are more people in the group, they can be divided into several groups.

All you need to bring with you are the tallit and tefillin you bought for the barmitzvah boy. You can also bring sweets that guests can throw towards the barmitzvah boy during the ceremony.

For a fee, the Western Wall Heritage Foundation has a range of tours and activities that can be incorporated before or after the ceremony.

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Chag Sameach from a new home...



Aliya – the good, the bad and the meshuga

Benita Levin

As “chaggim fever” subsides for Jewish families around the world, I can’t help but smile when I think of our first Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot festivals as new olim. Apple and honey, shofars and sukkahs have been a part of life for millions of people around the world during the past few weeks.

It’s heart-warming to know that many customs and traditions are marked in much the same way, wherever we are. But, there are also some stark differences:

Why are the streets closed?

We’ve always associated street closures with an accident, protest action or festive parade. So, the closure of streets during the Yom Kippur fast, seemed a surprising move. Yom Kippur in South Africa was the one chag when our young children used to stay home, leaving the adults time to focus and reflect in the synagogue.

Here, children of all ages are out in their droves, making the most of this time – from sunset to sunset – by walking, cycling, roller-blading, or riding scooters in the roads. You can even see parents pushing prams on highways. It feels like the country has come to a standstill – no cars, buses or taxis. Just thousands of people either in shuls, or spending time outdoors.

What is causing this traffic jam?

A friend sent an SMS to advise us to avoid parts

of the main road in Ra’anana. He wasn’t sure why there was a traffic backlog on Ahuza Street. Was it a bumper-bashing? Maybe roadworks? No? Palm leaves were being cut off trees in the middle of the road, and residents had come out in their droves to collect “shcach” for their sukkahs.

These outdoor dwellings range in size from those on tiny balconies with two chairs, to the garden version that caters for several families. It feels as though everyone is somehow connected during Sukkot, regardless of your level of observance.

The standard greeting is ‘Chag Sameach’

It’s heartwarming to hear a range of people greet you with the words “Chag Sameach”, including the security guard at a mall, the butcher and strangers in the street. It still makes me smile when I hear an array of accents – including people from France, Russia and Argentina – who are all

Smile of the week

Walking in Jerusalem during the Shabbat of Sukkot and bumping into friends from South Africa and London – we spent the afternoon catching up in a sukkah in a nearby park.

Moment of the week

While visiting the Kotel over that Shabbat, a Danish man approached us while walking back through the bustling Mamilla Mall, to say he was visiting with a Christian organisation, and he just wanted to offer us a blessing for peace.

New food discovery

Dates stuffed with walnuts or pecan nuts or any nuts. Addictive.

using the same greeting. It seems like it’s the standard phrase over this period, and it feels like we’re surrounded by people who are celebrating together.

Women delivering speeches from inside an Orthodox shul?

The last time I delivered a speech from inside a synagogue, was at our batmitzvah ceremony in Durban, with 11 other girls... some decades ago! I’ve been lucky enough to speak in the past at many community events in shul halls or nearby venues.

But when I was asked to speak inside the synagogue on a Saturday morning after the shul service, as part of a TED-talk style event, must admit to being surprised. The four speakers included two women. We each spoke on different topics from the pulpit downstairs in an Orthodox synagogue. An interesting and refreshing new normal.

Friends who start to feel like family... from all over the world

The hardest part of celebrating chaggim in a new country, is being away from your immediate family and close friends. In South Africa, our parents and siblings live in Durban, Cape Town and Johannesburg. We were always in one of those three cities for the main festivals.

Rosh Hashanah this year was spread over three days, because of Shabbat. We were blessed to be asked to different people, who all welcomed us into their homes, in the same way they had been welcomed by fellow olim when they were new in town. An incredible honour to spend time with new friends who are already starting to feel like family...

Taking Zion to Zion

>> Continued from page 5

There have been discussions in certain circles that the South African embassy in Israel should be closed. Rev Motolla brought up the issue during the meeting saying: “You know the minister (Maite Nkoana-Mashabane, Department of International Relations and Co-operation) grew up as a girl across the road from me.

“I know her very well. But I must tell you that this place (the embassy) is our small piece of land in the Holy Land. You must look after it and not change it. And I am telling you, tell your minister, and you must tell this to your president and you must tell this to your deputy president.”

Besides some official meetings, the delegation also met with organisations that aim to help improve society at large. At the Israeli Agency for International Development Co-operation, known as Mashav, Ambassador Gill Haskel, said he would like to “craft a way forward in South Africa”. At Magen Dovid Adom the group learnt about emergency medical healthcare and met with Innovation Africa, regarding effective use of solar power in rural areas.

The ZCC has an official church greeting “Kgotsong”, meaning Peace be Unto You, to which the appropriate response is “Ayatend” – which means Let it Spread.

Hopefully the ZCC visit to Israel will be a first step in helping to spread peace, prosperity and blessings to all inhabitants in South Africa and Israel.

• Benji Shulman is the executive director of the South Africa Israel Forum







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The Balfour Declaration – intrigue and providence

RABBI RAMON WIDMONTE

The Balfour Declaration was a 67-word letter written by British Foreign Secretary, Arthur Balfour, to Lord Walter Rothschild on November 2, 1917, the first official, public support for Zionism by a world power.

The question is: Why would Great Britain, in 1917, in the midst of the Great War, even think of wasting mind-space and time, on this declaration? What was their intention and what in it for them?

The Balfour Declaration concerns power, money, courageous Jews and Jewesses, who boldly stepped into the annals of Jewish destiny. And of course, it rests upon the most amazing coincidences; or as others would put it, Providence.

Behind closed doors, what Britain was doing, was what it had always done: striving to build the British Empire and win its wars. The British were playing a four-way game between the Arabs, Turks, European powers and the Zionists.

The British held talks with each group separately, and only a few people in the entire empire (notably

level; while the other line was one of bribery and corruption. The former option would have entailed Turkey retaining much of its territory, including Palestine.

For the latter option the agent negotiating on behalf of the British was the infamous arms merchant, Basil Zaharoff, codenamed, “ZedZed”, by MI6.

The proposal was: the Allies would pay the Turkish government, and in particular, some of its highest-ranking members, to turn on Germany. In return for his, ZedZed was going to get a share of the money. But he also demanded “chocolate” – his codeword for a Knighthood. In November 1917, the British Prime Minister sanctioned paying \$2 million to two high-ranking Turkish officials.

This offer was rebuffed. But ZedZed was not to be deterred, so in January 1918, he bid \$5 million for safe passage through the Dardanelles for British submarines, which would then sink two German warships that were being used by Turkey. Another \$2 million was offered if Turkish troops were pulled out of Palestine.

Two weeks later he increased



The Balfour Declaration

the banner of Britain.

Ten letters were exchanged from July 14, 1915 to March 10, 1916 between Sir Henry McMahon and Sharif Hussein, in which detailed discussions were held on borders and the interests of other colonial powers.

Perhaps our secret weapon was anti-Semitism. Some in the British establishment truly believed Jews really had a large degree of control over two countries which were part of the Alliance, but needed shoring up: the US and Russia.

The cloak and dagger was deadly stuff – including letters written in invisible ink and smuggled in cakes, servants’ shoes and sword handles. It all culminated in the Sharif, who trusted the British, proclaiming a jihad against the Turkish Empire and launching the insurgency with his sons on June 5, 1916.

The famed Lawrence of Arabia-led guerrilla assaults against the Turks, was part of this campaign. The revolt failed to garner major Arab support and fizzled out. But the Sharif got a consolation prize: the short-lived Kingdom of Hejaz (western Arabia), his son Abdullah was given a brand-new country, made in England, called Transjordan (later to be renamed “Jordan”); and another son, Faisal, was given another country fresh out of the box, called “Iraq”.

Play 3: Meanwhile, just a month prior to the Arab Revolt, on May 16, 1916, the British, Russians and French, had been plotting to carve up the Middle East and had crafted a secret protocol – the Sykes-Picot agreement – which chopped up the Turkish Empire, leaving no place for a preserved Turkish state, Sharif Hussein’s Arab state or a Jewish state either.

When the Bolsheviks found these maps (which Sykes and Picot had outlined), they publicised

them on November 23, 1917 (only three weeks after the British had published the Balfour Declaration). The British were embarrassed, but Sharif Hussein was livid.

One would think that all this scheming would be enough to satisfy one government, but one would be wrong!

The British had another plot in the pot: the Jews!

Play 4: Last on the list, seemingly with the least to offer were the Jews; and the British War Cabinet wanted them in the mix too. But why? We can understand what the Turks, Russians, French and Arabs had to offer, but what ace did we have up our taleisim?

This is a question which has confounded researchers for 100 years.

Perhaps our secret weapon was anti-Semitism. Some in the British

both the US and Russia.

Their theory was that most Jews were Zionists (which was incorrect at the time) and that they would want the Allies to fight and win the war and conquer the Turks and thereafter gain a “national home” for the Jewish people.

The network of Zionist activists, begun more than 20 years previously by Theodor Herzl, pounced on the opportunity. Aware of the British concerns, people like Vladimir Jabotinsky (who created the Jewish Legion), Chaim Weizmann, Nahum Sokolow, the Rothschilds, Louis Brandeis (in the US) and others in Russia, all pulled in the same direction, giving the impression that Zionism indeed was representative of the world’s Jews and that the Jews demanded a state in Palestine immediately.

Another reason was perhaps that



Sara and Benjamin Netanyahu reviewing the original declaration

the War Cabinet) were aware of this. Each approach would yield a tremendous benefit for the Empire in the long run, and in the short run, would help them win the war.

Let’s review the plays:

Play 1: The Turks (Ottomans) were never a clear enemy of Great Britain, and even after Turkey joined the war on Germany’s side, the British attempted to lure them out of Germany’s embrace. They would have been happy for Turkey to remain a strong buffer against the Russians who were trying to expand their empire to reach the Mediterranean.

In November 1917, at the same time that the British were issuing the Balfour Declaration, they were secretly negotiating with the Turks to withdraw from the war. There were two lines of negotiation – one was run by Henry Morgenthau (an American ambassador) on a political

the offer to \$10 million if the Turks opened up the Dardanelles completely and allowed Britain to occupy forts on the Bosphorus. His final offer was in August 1918 for \$25 million, but... the deal was never finalised. ZedZed, though, got his “chocolate” in the form of a knighthood.

Play 2: Prior to this, the British Government was enticing the Arabs. As early as 1914, the British attempted to conclude a deal with Hussein Bin Ali, who had immense religious authority as the Sharif of Mecca and as a claimant of direct descent from Muhammad.

The British urged him to lead an Arab uprising against the Turks, which would divert Turkish military power from the larger war effort. Lord Kitchener, specifically, tempted him with the promise of a new Arab empire under his control, detached from the Turks, but of course under



Theresa May and Benjamin Netanyahu

establishment truly believed Jews really had a large degree of control over two countries which were part of the Alliance, but needed shoring up: the US and Russia.

In mid-1917, the Americans had just joined the war, but were not overly enthusiastic about it; while the Russians were about to have a revolution. In both cases, the British believed that playing to the Jewish “race” would engender large-scale Jewish support for the war effort in

the British wanted a sympathetic state as a buffer between the Suez Canal and the rest of the Middle East. Perhaps it was just our time, or perhaps there were other factors at play...

• Rabbi Ramon Widmonte is the dean of The Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning. The Academy is hosting a breakfast celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Balfour Declaration. Details on www.theacademy.org.za

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PM immunity bill shelved for month amid Jewish Home opposition

TOI STAFF

The Jewish Home party announced on Wednesday that it would oppose the so-called “French Bill” granting immunity to serving prime ministers from corruption investigations until their terms are ended.

According to Hebrew media reports, votes on the immunity bill were subsequently delayed by a month. But the coalition agreed to advance in its wake another bill to end police recommendations for prosecution, which will likely receive coalition support, reports said.

According to the immunity bill’s author, Likud MK David Amsalem, it is intended to prevent sitting prime ministers from having to deal with investigations into their affairs during their terms, leaving them able to focus on the business of

governing the country.

The bill excludes from its protections any investigation already launched, and so would not protect Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu from ongoing probes into him.

Critics, including Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit and many lawmakers, have said the measure would place prime ministers above the law for years at a time, making them more likely to act unethically while they occupy the highest office in Israel’s government.

According to a letter sent on Wednesday from Jewish Home’s Knesset faction chairman, MK Shuli Moalem-Refaeli, to Likud’s coalition chairman MK David Bitan, Jewish Home’s opposition to the bill follows a “substantive and detailed discussion” in the party’s faction meeting on Monday.

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, with Education Minister Naftali Bennett at the weekly Cabinet meeting.



“The discussion revealed significant disagreements between members of the faction, and no agreement was reached” within the party. In light of that disagreement, Jewish Home decided to formally oppose the bill’s passage, Moalem-Refaeli

writes.

According to the coalition agreements that underpin the current ruling government, no changes to Israel’s semi-constitutional Basic Laws can be passed without the agreement of all six coalition

parties, giving each coalition partner a veto over such bills. Amsalem’s bill is just such an amendment to the Basic Law: The Government.

On Sunday, Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked (Jewish Home) postponed a vote on the bill.



This photograph published by a Colombian pop star posing beside a Border Police officer, has led to a passionate debate among his nearly 30 million followers on social media.

Singer Maluma, who performed in Tel Aviv on October 12, shared on his Instagram account the picture with the smiling female Israeli Border Police officer above the caption “New security” in both English and Spanish, reported the Enlace Judio news website on Sunday.

The photograph has garnered nearly 1,3 million likes and 28 500 comments, mostly debating Israel and its policies toward the Palestinians. While several followers supported the photograph, others wrote messages such as “You lost all your Palestinian fanatics and I am the first of them”, “Did you ask how many Palestinians she killed before posing for a photo with her?” and “Posing with a member of Israel’s killer army”.

In addition to Maluma’s Instagram followers, he has 23 million on Facebook and 4,7 million on Twitter. Colombia is home to some 3 500 Jews in a population of about 49 million people. – JTA

EUROPE HAS A ‘JEWISH’ SOCCER TEAM PROBLEM

CNAAN LIPSHIZ
ROTTERDAM

Seventeen-year-old Sjuul Deriet, standing outside this port city’s main soccer stadium on a rainy Sunday, vividly explains why he hates the people he calls “the Jews”.

“They have the money, they run the business from management positions and they think they’re better than blue-collar people like us,” said Deriet, who works at a catering business.

Yes, the statement sounds like typical anti-Semitic clichés. But it has nothing to do with actual Jews, Deriet hastened to tell JTA.

“I have nothing against your people. When I say I hate Jews, I just mean supporters of Ajax,” he said, referring to the Amsterdam soccer team that is an arch-rival of Deriet’s beloved Feyenoord Football Club of Rotterdam.

For the uninitiated: Fans of Ajax are often referred to as “the Jews”, likely because of the historical presence of Jews in the Dutch capital. As it happens, there are several soccer teams across Europe that are known as “Jewish” for similar reasons, including England’s Tottenham Hotspur – they once had a strong fan base among the Jewish immigrants of North London – as

well as Italy’s Roma and Germany’s Bayern Munich.

Both supporters and detractors often call the clubs Jewish, leading to some complicated situations. For example, it’s not uncommon at matches for fans of these teams to wave Israeli flags or shout their adoration for “the Jews”.

At the same time, however, the detractors often display acrimonious hatred of “the Jews” – an uncomfortable situation that, depending on whom you ask, is either fed by or feeding anti-Semitism’s seeming comeback in Europe.

“Anti-Semitism in the stadiums has allowed the hate songs to gradually seep into society at large,” Manfred Gerstenfeld, a researcher of anti-Semitism and fellow at the Jerusalem Centre for Public Affairs, wrote in a 2011 research paper titled “Anti-Semitism and the Dutch Soccer Fields”.

Gerstenfeld’s paper shows how the chant “Hamas, Jews to the gas” has moved in Holland from the soccer pitch to anti-Israel protests.

In the case of Ajax, its “Jewish” nickname dates to the 1970s. It has the Amsterdam locale, and the team has had several Jewish managers and players – notably the late Johnny Roeg and Daniël de Ridder.

Hamas chief: We won’t discuss recognising Israel, only wiping it out

DOV LIEBER

The Hamas leader in the Gaza Strip, last Thursday dismissed US and Israeli demands that it lay down its arms and recognise the Jewish State, saying the terror organisation is instead debating “when to wipe out Israel”.

The remarks came during a closed roundtable discussion between Yahya Sinwar and Gazan youth about the ongoing reconciliation negotiations with rival Palestinian faction Fatah, to which some media outlets were invited to attend.

“Over is the time Hamas spent discussing recognising Israel. Now Hamas will discuss when we will wipe out Israel,” Sinwar said, according to the Hamas-linked news agency Shehab.

A Hamas spokesman released a few official quotes from the meeting. The Sinwar comment about discussing “when we will wipe out Israel” was not included in the transcript, which featured the Hamas leader again rejecting disarmament and Israel recognition.

“No one in the universe can disarm us. On the contrary, we will continue to have the power to protect our citizens,” Sinwar said, according to the official statement. “No one has the ability to extract from us recognition of the occupation.”

Since its inception nearly three decades ago, Hamas has sought to destroy the State of Israel.

Sinwar’s comments last Thursday, came as much of the international community was scrutinising the terror organisation as it attempts to join the internationally recognised government of the Palestinian Authority, which is controlled by PA President Mahmoud Abbas’ party, Fatah.

Last Thursday, the United States called for Hamas to disarm and renounce violence before being allowed to implement the highly touted unity deal with Fatah.

“Any Palestinian government must unambiguously and explicitly commit to nonviolence, recognise the State of Israel, accept previous agreements and obligations between the parties – including to disarm terrorists – and commit to peaceful negotiations,” said White House Mideast peace envoy Jason Greenblatt in a statement released by the US Embassy in Tel Aviv.

“If Hamas is to play any role in a Palestinian government, it must accept these basic requirements,” Greenblatt said, in comments later commended by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

One issue that threatens to derail the reconciliation process is the question of what will be the future of Hamas’s 25 000-strong military and its weapons arsenal. Abbas said he wants full control of all guns in Gaza.

Last Thursday, Sinwar doubled down on Hamas’s stance that it will not relinquish its armed forces. “No one can take away our weapons,” he said.

He also reportedly admitted that the talks could collapse. “There is a danger to the reconciliation project,” Sinwar was quoted as saying.

Last week, the two rival Palestinian factions signed an agreement in Cairo to allow the PA to take full control of the Gaza Strip, which it was kicked out of 10 years ago by Hamas in a violent conflict.

Speaking immediately after signing the deal, Saleh al-Arouri, the Hamas deputy political leader, said Palestinian unity was vital “so that we can all work together against the Zionist enterprise”.

Sinwar last Thursday reiterated his group’s desire for the reconciliation process to be successful, and personally invited Abbas to hold the next meeting of his party’s central committee and of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), in Gaza.



Yahya Sinwar, the new leader of Hamas in the Gaza Strip, attends the opening of a new mosque in Rafah in the southern Gaza Strip.

Female soldier unleashes martial arts on angry Jerusalem mob

TAMAR SHARON

A lone woman finds herself surrounded by a mob of angry, violent men. It sounds like a nightmare scenario. But when a female soldier found herself in just that predicament in Jerusalem this week, encircled by raging ultra-Orthodox anti-draft protesters, she decided to use some martial arts skills to become their nightmare instead.

The soldier’s car became trapped by a crowd of incensed protesters during

a demonstration in the capital – one of a series of violent rallies following the arrest of two members of the community who failed to show up to the Israel Defence Forces’ draft offices, as is required by law.

Video footage of the protest shows the soldier as she attempts to help her car navigate the crowd. Several dozen protesters harass her, spitting on her and calling her a “whore” and a “shiksa” – a pejorative Yiddish term for a non-Jewish woman.

Uncowed, she fights back, kicking

out at her tormentors and spreading out her arms in a combative gesture, as if daring the men to come at her. When one kicks her while her back is turned, she immediately lunges at him and returns the favour.

The soldier, identified by Channel 2 as “Cpl N,” is a combat soldier in a mixed-gender infantry battalion.

Speaking with the news channel after the fact, Cpl N once again exhibited a no-nonsense attitude. “Listen, just so we’re clear, I was in a hurry, I needed to get somewhere,” she told a reporter in a phone call. “I did what was needed in order to do that and left. That’s it.”

Asked how she’d found the boldness to act as she did, the corporal replied glibly: “I don’t know. Ask G-d, He made me.”

As to the reactions she’s received to the video, she answered tersely: “I don’t care about reactions. I did what I did.”

Wasn’t she afraid? “Sometimes you do things without thinking.”

And in case you had doubts: “I’d do it again.”



News and views from the Fed

The Balfour Declaration – 100 years on

BEN SWARTZ: NATIONAL EXECUTIVE CHAIRMAN SOUTH AFRICAN ZIONIST FEDERATION

August 29, 1897: First Zionist Congress in Basel, Switzerland

“If you will it, it is no dream.” (Theodor Herzl) November 2, 1917: Foreign Office, London

“His Majesty’s government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people... it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by Jews in any other country.” (Lord Arthur James Balfour).

And so the dream became reality.

As Israel celebrates the centenary of this momentous occasion, we reflect back on the significance of the permission given by Britain to create a homeland for the Jews. For the first time in world history, a people regained control of its homeland and revived its ancient tongue; and it is today an economic, military, moral and scientific powerhouse.

Yet, to the Arabs who lived in the region, it was seen as an act of dishonesty and betrayal by Britain, and they were determined to oppose its creation.

As a result, controversy dogged its heels every step of the way and efforts to prove its illegitimacy and eradicate the rights of the Jewish people, have continued unabated from then till now.

The Arab world persists in foiling Israeli claims to the most ancient and sacred Jewish sites, resulting in wars, guerrilla attacks, rockets and mortars, and the most reprehensible of curses heaped on the heads of the Jews. Yet nothing has stopped – nothing will stop – Israelis’ resolve to persevere in claiming what is theirs, whether by Divine promise, history, or law.

According to Dr Daniel Gordis, the celebration of the Balfour Declaration centennial “affords us an opportunity to reflect on the international consensus it once represented, the commitment to freedom and self-determination which lay at its core, and the extraordinary success that Zionism has been since Lord Balfour wrote a brief letter that changed the world.”

Were it not for the Balfour Declaration, it is doubtful that the Jews would ever have had their homeland, nor would there have been a place of safety where, after the two world wars, the millions of refugees from European and Arab lands, could find shelter and sanctity.

The timing of the Declaration was most propitious. By being ratified decades before the Holocaust, there was thus an acknowledgement by Britain and other European countries of the right of the People of Israel to establish a national home there, because of their historical ties to the land, rather than because of the tragedy that was to befall them some two decades later.

The Declaration promoted the creation of a “national home” where Jews and non-Jews would enjoy religious and civil rights. Israel was not guaranteed then, and since 1948 has had to strive to be a Jewish state in the midst of a hostile and militant Arab region of 23 states: 8 500 000 Israelis (of whom some 75 per cent are Jews) as against almost 400 000 000 Arabs.

Israel has survived, and will continue to grow and flourish, through tenacity, an unimpeachable belief in the legacy it has inherited over the millennia, and Jewish chutzpah.



A female soldier faces off against ultra-Orthodox protesters in Jerusalem, this month.

ular ☐ Not Jewish. **How would you describe your personal political views:** ☐ Very Liberal ☐ Liberal ☐ Conservative ☐ Very Conservative ☐ Disinterested. **How would you describe your personal views on Israel:** ☐ I believe that Judea and Samaria are an integral part of Israel and should never be surrendered ☐ I believe that Israel occupies the West Bank and should get rid of the occupation as soon as possible ☐ I believe Israel should, when the time is right, trade land for peace ☐ Disinterested. **How often do you go to shul?** ☐ Every day or almost every day ☐ Usually on Shabbat and/or Yom Tov ☐ Occasionally ☐ Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur ☐ Almost never ☐ I'm not Jewish. **How do you receive the Jewish Report?** ☐ E-mail ☐ Download the entire edition from the Internet ☐ Read individual articles on the internet ☐ Collect from a synagogue ☐ Collect from a shop/supermarket/caf



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Printer, can you please make me a low-fat burger with fries?

TOI STAFF

If two Hebrew University of Jerusalem researchers have their way, we could be printing our hamburgers and French fries from a 3D machine within five years.

Researchers at the Yisum Research Development Company, the technology transfer company of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, said they have created a 3D printing technology

that will be able to produce nutritious meals, for use in homes, restaurants and institutions, using nano-cellulose, a natural and edible calorie-free fibre. They have so far used their technology to “print” dough, but not a full meal.

The technology was to be presented for the first time this week at the 3D Printing and Beyond: Current and Future Trends conference at Hebrew University, and the researchers hope it will be the basis for a product on the market within the next two to five years.

The technology was developed by Professors Oded Shoseyov and Ido Braslavsky, both of the Robert H Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment, at Hebrew University. In a phone interview, they explained what 3D printing of food involves.

Imagine an espresso machine for whole meals. The technology relies on two basic elements: cartridges containing the meal’s ingredients – in powder or solution form – and hardware that applies heat and shapes the matter.

The cartridges contain crystalline nano-cellulose as a core element, along with proteins, carbohydrates, fat, antioxidants and vitamins. Following individualised specs provided by the consumer on a 3D printer, the technology

applies localised heat and shapes the raw material through infrared lasers.

Created through extraction from cellulose, the most



An illustrative vegan burger

abundant biomaterial on earth, nano-cellulose has a variety of technological and biomedical applications and is an expanding global market.

Unlike starch – which is commonly used in food to “bind” meals together – nano-cellulose has no calories and is easily degradable by the body’s enzymes.

Shoseyov and Braslavsky researched nano-cellulose for years in Hebrew University’s laboratories, publishing academic papers and experimenting with extraction methods. They developed a method for the extraction of crystalline nano-cellulose (CNC), which paved the way for their current project.

Suspended in water with other food elements – in powder or solution form – in the cartridges the platform uses, the CNC naturally binds the meal together as the water is removed through heating, using infrared laser and local heating that can replicate the effect of baking, frying and grilling.

“The binding property (of nano-cellulose) is essential,” said Shoseyov. “By controlling the amount of nano-cellulose and the amount of water (in the cartridge) we can determine the texture of the food.”

This level of control, they say, will enable their technology to produce food – even burgers – that taste just like they should.

“Printing food is an idea that exists,” said Braslavsky. “We are putting forward a completely new way to form this food.”

The solution can serve a variety of markets and populations, including the gluten-free, vegetarian and vegan markets, low-calorie diets and diets for people with diabetes, for athletes and more, the researchers said.

The food will be able to resemble personal favourites – like a burger and fries – and also allow people to experiment with new forms of food.

Much of the research for the platform has been made possible by a grant from the

Israel Innovation Authority. Yisum is currently in talks with investors to take the platform to the marketplace and has filed for a patent, said Shoseyov.

The researchers said they hope to have the first products in restaurants or institutions within two or three years, and in homes within five.

“The ability to automatically prepare, mix, form and cook personalised food in one device, is a truly revolutionary concept,” said Yisum president and CEO Yaron Daniely in a statement.

“The idea is to enable full control of the substances used, for the purpose of creating healthy and tasty meals that can be eaten immediately. This has the potential to address a variety of challenges facing the field of nutrition, from the demand for personalised food for people with disease, such as celiac or diabetes, personal nutritional habits such as vegetarians, to addressing the problem of lack of food in developing countries,” he said.

Einstein’s modest theory of happiness sells for \$1,56 million



Gal Winner, owner and manager of the Winner’s auction house in Jerusalem, displaying two notes written by Albert Einstein, in 1922, on hotel stationery from the Imperial Hotel in Tokyo.

AGENCE FRANCE PRESSE

A note that Albert Einstein gave to a courier in Tokyo briefly describing his theory on happy living, sold at auction in Jerusalem on Tuesday for \$1,56 million, the auction house said.

The winning bid for the note far exceeded the pre-auction estimated price of between \$5 000 and \$8 000, according to the Winner’s auction house website.

The buyer was a European who wished to remain anonymous, a spokesman for the auction house said.

“I am really happy that there are people out there who are still interested in science and history and timeless deliveries in a world which is developing so fast,” the seller told AFP on condition of anonymity after the sale. The note, on the stationery of the Imperial Hotel Tokyo, says in German that “a quiet and modest life brings more joy than a pursuit of success bound with constant unrest”.

A second Einstein note written at the same time that simply reads “where there’s a will, there’s a way” sold for \$240 000, according to Winner’s.

Israeli envoy warns of ‘growing trend’ in Ukraine

GAVIN RABINOWITZ
ODESSA, UKRAINE

Israel’s ambassador to Ukraine warned last Friday of rising nationalism in the country, after the erection of a new statue of a Ukrainian nationalist who is blamed for the murder of tens of thousands of Jews during the Russian Revolution.

On Saturday, officials unveiled the monument to Symon Petliura in Vinnitsa, in an area of the city once known as Yerusolimka (Jerusalem), just some 200 metres from a small, functioning synagogue.

“What really matters is not this specific statue in Vinnitsa, but the trends. There is a trend, nationalism is on the rise,” said Israeli Ambassador Eliav Belotzercovsky, speaking at a conference organised by Limmud FSU, a Jewish educational outreach group, at the Black Sea port of Odessa.

Vinnitsa, located 260 kilometres southwest of the Ukrainian capital, Kiev, already has a street named for Petliura.

Soldiers of Petliura’s Ukrainian People’s Republic were responsible for 493 out of the recorded 1 236 pogroms and other violent incidents against Jews in 524 Ukrainian towns during the Russian Revolution, from 1918 to 1921.

Between 35 000 and 50 000 Jews were killed in the violence, although Petliura’s actual role remains unclear.

The erection of the statue is part of an ongoing move by Ukrainian authorities to replace Russian street names and monuments with Ukrainian ones as a reaction to the ongoing



war against Russian-backed separatists in the eastern Ukrainian areas of Donetsk and Lugansk.

Israel has remained largely silent on this issue.

A new statue of the Ukrainian nationalist Symon Petliura, which was unveiled in the Ukrainian city of Vinnitsa.

Fliers found at Cornell read ‘Just say no to Jewish lies’

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

Anti-Semitic fliers with swastika-like symbols, were discovered on the campus of Cornell University in upstate New York on Monday.

The posters, which read “Just say no to Jewish lies!” and urged students to “join the white gang”, were taken down the same day. They promoted the “Solar Cross Society”, but there is no such group at Cornell and it does not have an Internet presence.

The Ivy League university’s president, Martha Pollack, denounced the fliers.

“Whoever is responsible for these fliers is hiding under the cover of anonymity, having posted them overnight,” she said in a statement.

“Whoever they are, they need to ask themselves why they chose our campus, because Cornell reviles their message of hatred; we revile it as an institution, and I know from many personal conversations that thousands of Cornellians deplore it individually.”

Police were investigating the matter and increasing patrols around Jewish buildings on campus.



Anti-Semitic fliers were discovered on the Cornell University campus in Ithaca, New York.

Insight into the latter years of David Ben-Gurion

PETER FELDMAN

Two Israeli filmmakers happened to stumble across rare interview footage of David Ben-Gurion while restoring an old feature film. The footage lay undisturbed in boxes in the vaults at the Steven Spielberg Jewish Film Archive in Jerusalem, for years. Writer and director Yariv Mozer and award-winning film editor Yael Perlov, uncovered this lost interview by chance. They were busy restoring the feature about Ben-Gurion by Perlov’s late father, David Perlov. They first found silent film reels. It then took a further six months for them to find the soundtrack, which they did in the Ben-Gurion Archives in the Negev. They married the two and the result is a stirring and enlightening documentary called the David Ben-Gurion Epilogue.

Almost six decades after the filming of the interview, Mozer’s Epilogue film is a sterling revisiting of Ben-Gurion’s opinions and prophecies. The work is interlaced with newsreel and other film archives, radio recordings, and still-photographs. The interviewer, Dr Clinton Bailey, was a recent immigrant to Israel, who had come to live at Kibbutz Sde Boker in the footsteps of Ben-Gurion.

Ben-Gurion was one of the most prominent Zionist leaders in the world and the first prime minister of the State of Israel. He was a visionary, a down-to-earth leader with immense intellect and an ability to communicate his thoughts clearly and concisely.

“The Old Man”, as he was fondly called, is depicted in meetings with foreign leaders, delivering a speech in Israel’s Knesset and celebrating birthdays. The film is described by The New York Times as “a wistful ode to a lost generation of leaders who viewed simplicity as a virtue, even as they strove for giant goals.”

In 1968, when Ben-Gurion was 82, he was living in the seclusion of his home in Sde Bokor in the Negev Desert, a symbol of his devotion to the settlement at the southern reaches of Israel. It was a place where he would live out his days until his death five years later. He was buried next to his beloved wife, Paula.

Ben-Gurion’s home was remote

from all political discourse, which allowed him a perspective on the Zionist enterprise. His introspective soul-searching, is the focus of this film, and his reflections provide a surprising vision for today’s crucial decisions and for the future of Israel.

In the interview he says: “The most important thing which I learned, I learned by living here. I want to live in a place when I know that my friends, and myself, we did it! Everything. It’s our creation.”

Last Thursday night, at a Nu Metro cinema in Hyde Park, the SA Zionist Federation and the World Zionist Federation (in association with the Israel centre IUA-UCF) held a special screening of this engrossing documentary.

The film showed how this statesman may have been short in stature, but he stood awesomely tall with his thinking

to be unpopular. This came to the fore in a meeting between him and German Chancellor Konrad Adenauer regarding German reparation over the Holocaust.

In the on-screen interview, he said he regretted making a speech after the Sinai Campaign in 1956, as he was drunk with victory. His own personal view was that he would have given back the captured land in favour of peace.

Ben-Gurion had a penchant for doing head stands. He considered it to be part of his daily health routine, initiated by a Dr Feldenkrais whose methods intrigued Ben-Gurion and whom he visited on many occasions.

He once challenged a famous personality (it might have been Albert Einstein) to see who could do a head stand for the longest period of time. His head stands became something of a party trick.

He regularly visited Frishman’s Beach in Tel Aviv where he was photographed standing on his head and which became an iconic image. Today the spot has become one of Tel Aviv’s most popular photo spots where a funny statue of Ben-Gurion standing on his head was created by the Tel Aviv Municipality in 2015.

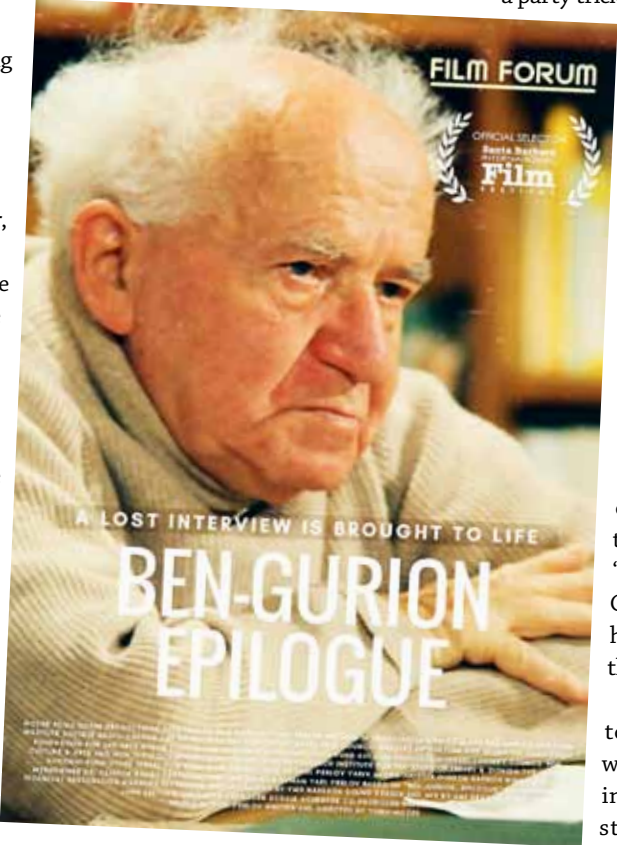
He discussed the topic of when people used the phrase “talking” or “turning” to G-d, saying G-d was all around us and he found it hard to visualise this act.

“They didn’t really talk to G-d,” he said, “it was what they were thinking in their mind. G-d is not standing there, so you can’t turn to Him.”

On the question of leadership, Ben-Gurion said one man cannot lead alone. He needs the people who came before him and the people who are with him at the time.

Asked at some point in his leadership whether he feared for Israel, he responded: “Oh, I always feared. Not only now. This state does not yet exist. It’s only the beginning.”

And while it is long past the beginning, this stateman’s impact is still felt in Israel today.



and his philosophical take on the world at the time.

He defined in clear terms his approach to Zionism, his decision to declare a State of Israel on Friday, 5Ilya 5708 (May 14, 1948), his relationship with his political colleagues and his overseas counterparts.

He said the essence of Judaism is love, truth and treating a stranger as one of your own and he showed his pragmatic outlook on life. His was forthright in his decision-making, even though it caused him

• WIZO hosts a visit to two of Johannesburg’s prettiest gardens in Westcliff and Parktown, landscaped by Patrick Watson. Bookings and information: Helen Maisels Trisk 083-267-2607 or Michelle Maserow 082-413-8903. First garden 10:00 - 11:00, second garden 11:00 - 12:30. There will be a talk and tea in the second garden. Tickets: R220 per person. For credit card bookings: Jenny (011) 645-2515.



Friday (October 27)

- UZLC hosts Jack Mink on “Old favourites by Jack Mink”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127- 9421 or (011) 485-4851.
- Shalom Seniors Club welcomes everyone who would like to make new friends and have some light-hearted fun on the last Friday of each month. Time: 14:30 for 15:00. Tea will be served, and there will be a selection of board games to play, cards etc. Maurice Reznik will talk on “Yesterday’s Centre Page versus Tomorrow’s Headlines”. Contact: Esther (011) 485-5619 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday mornings.

Sunday (October 29)

- WIZO invites you to visit two of Johannesburg’s prettiest gardens in Westcliff and Parktown. First garden: 10:00 - 11:00, second garden: 11:00 - 12:30. There will be a talk and a tea in the second garden. Tickets R220 per person Bookings and information: Helen Maisels Trisk 083-267-2607 or Michelle Maserow 082-413-8903. Credit card bookings: Jenny (011) 645-2515.
- Second Innings hosts The JNF Choir. The topic is: “The JNF Choir Celebrates New Beginnings” Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: Tea at 10:00. Meeting at 10:30 sharp. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

Monday (October 30)

- UJW hosts Marlene Bethlehem, president of Holocaust Memorial Foundation, on International Holocaust Day in Hanover, Germany. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 10:00. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

Wednesday (November 1)

- WIZO Aviv hosts Mandy-Lee Ginsberg who will share her personal journey of a 17-year battle with bulimia. Venue: Ohr Somayach Savoy. Time: 19:00 for 19:30. Donation R200 per person (incl light supper). Booking essential. Contact: Shereen 082-683-1554 or WIZO office (011) 645-2515.

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Lithuanian Jews want closer ties with SA Jews

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

Greater co-operation between South Africa’s Jewish community and that of Lithuania, is the dream of Renaldas Vaisbrodas, executive director of the 4 000-strong Lithuanian Jewish community. Speaking to the SA Jewish Report on the sidelines of the World Jewish Congress National Community Directors’ Forum, he spoke of an interest in Jewish heritage on the part of the government and non-Jewish Lithuanians and the fact that local Litvaks, custodians of that heritage, could make a meaningful contribution in this regard.

“I hope that we will have the chance to speak to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies about the need for co-operation between our two communities in a structured manner given the many natural links that exist,” he said.

“We have not had this to date and I think it’s long overdue – there is so much we can do in relation to heritage preservation, information for people to trace their roots and building Jewish life here.

“Litvaks who left for South Africa, carried the Litvak tradition with them that after the war, was not replenished.”

Jewish life in Lithuania today consists of the maintenance of Jewish traditions – keeping up with religious life, supporting the seniors and offering club activities for the children and youth.

“It’s a lot about loss, the community that perished, preservation of mass grave sites and Jewish cemeteries. Sometimes in this work, you feel that you are dealing with the past rather than the future and life,” he says.

“We want to change that – to bring

more life to the community, more activities that attract members who don’t feel that the community is something that they want to be part of.”

Lithuanians who were there pre-war either perished during the Second World War or immigrated – 70 per cent of South Africa’s Jewish community traces its origins to that country. The Jews who are there now, are descendants of those who arrived in transit from other parts of the former Soviet Union, and stayed.



Photo: Moira Schneider

Gita Umanovska, executive director of the Jewish community of Latvia

As for anti-Semitism, he says there are incidents of “serious concern” which the community follows closely and reacts to. But there is no mainstream political party in parliament that holds a blatantly anti-Semitic position.

“On the contrary, the political establishment has shown a lot of interest in promoting ties with Israel and acknowledges that the country’s Jewish heritage is something that it should be more sensitive to and through which it should be promoting the country’s image.

“This has opened many doors in the United States, Israel and South Africa, where Litvaks still recognise themselves as part of the country their ancestors once called home. They want to find themselves and

their roots in that country.

“In my view, we’re experiencing a certain renaissance of interest in Jewish culture, life and traditions on the part of non-Jewish Lithuanians and we’re happy that the Lithuanian Jewish community can contribute to that.”

In pre-war times, almost 40 per cent of the country’s population was Jewish. “This is an incredible part of the society that has disappeared and the story needs to be told,” he adds.

The community has made “great strides” in its relationship with government over the years and the restitution of Jewish religious properties has been finalised. The government is fulfilling its annual commitment to contributing to a goodwill foundation that operates with “substantial resources” to support projects that promote heritage, culture and community life, of which the Jewish community is the main beneficiary.

“In the post-Soviet era, we have quite a privileged position in relation to the government,” he states.

It is “very easy” to be a Jew in Latvia, says the executive director of that community Gita Umanovska. “You can wear what you want – a Magen David, kippot...”

Numbering some 10 000 to 15 000, she says it is possibly the largest Jewish community in northern Europe.

A crisp “No” is her answer to whether there is anti-Semitism in the country. “But of course, we have people who don’t like Jews or write bad things about them. There are, there was and there will be – you can do what you want.

“Maybe once in five years, some teenage idiots will draw swastikas at the Jewish cemetery.” What is relevant is the swift reaction of the official structures to these incidents.

“We are absolutely satisfied,” she says. “The people who have done it, are always caught.”

Needless to say, the community enjoys very good relations with the powers that be, exemplified by the fact that after the fall of the Soviet Union, parliament decreed July 4 Holocaust Remembrance Day, the annual commemoration of which is attended by the top echelons of government as it is in Lithuania.

Half the community are descendants of survivors of the war, the other half came to the country from Russia, Belarus and Ukraine after the war, not only because of better development, but there was less anti-Semitism there than in other parts of the Soviet Union. “In Ukraine it was very problematic for a Jew to study in university, in Latvia not,” she states.

During Soviet times, the one remaining synagogue in Riga, the capital, was even allowed to function. Matzot were made there and distributed to the Baltic States and others. Today most of the community is based in that city.

Two years ago, the Norwegian and Latvian governments restored one of the oldest wooden synagogues in a small city, Rēzekne (previously Rejitsa), where 50 Jews reside. But it is not so simple to just take up where they left off all those years ago.

“They don’t remember, they don’t know the language – we brought talleisim and everything. They had only one Torah scroll which they put upside down in the Aron Kodesh.

“The Latvian people, who have never seen this, come every Shabbat to see how the Jews pray. The Jews are learning now and praying every Shabbat because the Latvian people are expecting it!”

Another synagogue was restored in Ludzin (now Ludza), where there are



Renaldas Vaisbrodas, executive director of the Lithuanian Jewish community, at a community event with a Jewish calendar featuring Vilna’s Great Synagogue on its cover.

12 Jews, last year. Before the war, Latvia’s Jewish population numbered 93 000; 73 000 were killed by the Nazis and local collaborators. Of the country’s 200 synagogues, a mere 17 remained.

Latvia today boasts two Jewish schools, three Jewish kindergartens, a Jewish museum and a kosher cafeteria. “Maybe 200 keep to the rules (observant),” she says.

“But of course, for the High Holidays, the synagogues are full.”

The three Baltic states, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia, organise youth camps and Limmud conferences together. These events have resulted in several inter-state marriages.

The only problem, she says, is that there hasn’t been restitution of most of the communal property – synagogues, clubs and schools built with Jewish money before the war. The authorities’ argument is that the local Jewish property owners were killed, so how does one establish ownership?

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Tackling anti-Semitism in Europe on the streets and in cyberspace

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

France is one of the European countries in which anti-Semitism is rife, but Robert Ejnes, executive director of the Representative Council of French Jewish Organisations, is quick to clarify: “France is not an anti-Semitic country but there are anti-Semites in France.”

While there has been a rise in anti-Semitism since 2000, last year the number of anti-Semitic acts and threats in France went down about 50 per cent which, he says, is “very good news”.

When the numbers were analysed, however, several reasons for this were pinpointed. “Firstly, for the past two years (in the wake of the deadly attack on the Hypercacher kosher food superette in Paris), we have had thousands of soldiers and police in front of all the synagogues, Jewish schools and community centres, that probably prevented a lot of anti-Semitic acts.

“Secondly, we observed a movement of anti-Semitic threats from real life to the Internet where people are much freer and it’s less dangerous to post anti-Semitic comments and threats.”

There has recently been a worldwide increase in the phenomenon due to cyber hate – the use of electronic communications technology to

spread anti-Semitic, racist, bigoted, extremist or terrorist messages or information.

“We also noted a move from anti-Semitism to anti-Zionism – the justice system does not yet know what to do with anti-Zionism, even though politicians at the highest level have labelled it a new form of anti-Semitism.

“We realised that things have shifted and we have to keep up with the newest forms of anti-Semitism and anti-Semites,” Ejnes told the SA Jewish Report at the World Jewish Congress (WJC) National Community Directors’ Forum.

A global campaign to convince Internet companies to face up to their responsibilities in this regard, is in the pipeline – there are programmes in place with the WJC to drive this and call in the companies.

What about the “freedom of speech” argument that they are likely to face? When they were approached in 2014, they said that they were American companies and subject to United States law which provides for free speech in its First Amendment.

Three years later, the narrative has changed in that the French government is pushing for greater application of French law in which hate speech, racism and anti-Semitism is forbidden.

“We tell the Internet companies – we can

attack you in justice or we can work with you and little by little we bring them to the table of negotiation and decision.

“As an example, Holocaust denial is forbidden in France and Germany. So, whenever there is a comment which is obvious Holocaust denial, (the Internet companies) would remove it in France and Germany, but anybody elsewhere could see it.

“So, they have the tools. It’s a real combat,” he says of the situation. “We always give them the example:

‘You know very well how to combat child pornography and nudity’ (by American standards these are totally unacceptable) ‘but you don’t know how to combat anti-Semitic comments.’

“They explain that it’s much more complicated, but little by little, we are making progress. Now we have special reporting tools and they react pretty well.

“We’re now trying to wipe the Internet in France of anti-Semitic content – it will be difficult, but we’re working with very high-quality people. Our aim is to combat hate in general, because we realise that in teaming up with all people who combat hate – racism, sexism, anti-



Robert Ejnes, executive director of the Representative Council of French Jewish Organisations.

LGBT – they will fight with us.”

The Internet companies don’t operate on moral grounds, Ejnes points out, but rather on economic principles. “If we can’t get them on the ethics side, we’ll get them on the commercial side.”

Ideas include a campaign headlined “Who wants to promote hate on the Internet?”

“If we start a real campaign to prevent their clients investing in commercial campaigns in the media, we’ll start talking seriously with

them.” The French Jewish community has very good relations with the authorities at all levels making sure that the Jews are protected in fighting rising anti-Semitism. Nevertheless, there is a feeling of non-tranquillity – mothers are not confident having their children in the streets of the French towns, they’re not confident with them walking in the street with a kippah.

Despite this, Ejnes does not agree with Barcelona’s chief rabbi who, after the recent terror attack in that city, told his congregation that Europe was lost to radical Islam and urged Jews to move to Israel.

Tackling the banning of brit milah and shechita

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

South African Jews take their freedom to practise the age-old traditions of brit milah and shechita (kosher slaughter) very much for granted but in other parts of the world, Jews are not so fortunate.

“The threat comes and goes in pretty much every country within the European Union,” Yohan Benizri tells the SA Jewish Report. “This is why the World Jewish Congress (WJC) has adopted a resolution at its executive committee meeting in September calling on governments to be very sensitive to this issue and to express the fact that it would be unacceptable to curb religious liberties in a way that would not be according to the rule of law.”

Benizri, an international trade lawyer, is president of the Belgian Federation of Jewish Organisations and a vice president of the World Jewish Congress. He was in town to attend the fourth annual WJC National Community Directors’ Forum, held for the first time in this country.

“The message that the WJC is sending is that any attempts to ban shechita or brit milah, would be completely unacceptable,” he stresses.

He says there are many different levels at which such moves could be challenged. Firstly, there is the traditional court appeal that exists in many European countries. One step-up is the Luxembourg courts for European countries and if all else fails, one could approach the European Court of Human Rights.

“In Belgium we’re trying all available options because the country has recently passed two laws, in the northern and southern regions, banning shechita indirectly by imposing stunning of animals before they’re put to death (contrary to Jewish ritual slaughter).

There is a transition period of two

argument doesn’t end at the borders and the next step is to have meat imports being banned as well if they were not stunned prior to putting them to death – there are more and more calls for that.”

Another issue with saying that one can still import meat, he says, is that the more countries that ban shechita, the less convincing the argument is. “It will become impossible and economically unviable for Jews to procure kosher meat in Belgium.”

The irony is that the laws of shechita are based on the humane treatment of animals, not only during religious slaughter, but there are “very strict” laws that regulate how they should be treated during their lifetimes, Benizri notes.

“The entire chain of the (non-kosher) meat industry does not meet those standards,” he adds, “and so when people point their fingers at us saying those are barbaric type of rituals, it’s adding insult to injury.

“We’re seen as opposing animal welfare whereas the Jewish tradition was probably the first to recognise animal welfare.”

Notwithstanding these considerations, Benizri feels that the crux of the argument is not about science, it’s about respecting the right of Jews to live a life as normal citizens in Europe.

“People say that Jews are an integral part of society and of course they are – they’re a model of integration in most European countries, if not all of them. If you say: ‘We’re not going to allow this particular tradition of yours’, you’re basically telling Jews that they are not welcome in your country anymore.”

In Switzerland, shechita has been outlawed for decades. In Denmark it is also outlawed, despite the fact that there was never any shechita there. Both



Yohan Benizri, president of the Belgian Federation of Jewish Organisations and a vice president of the World Jewish Congress.

“They stopped short of proposing to outlaw the practice, but they did say that it was mutilation. That is already a step too far for us,” says Benizri.

“The crux of the matter is not to label this practice – an integral part of our identity as Jews – as barbaric or mutilation. It would be terrible to feel that my own country would not allow me to do what I feel is best and what my father thought was best and what my grandfather thought was best.”

Should the practice be outlawed, would Jews perform it in secret? “Jews typically have not done that,” says Benizri, “instead favouring those countries that allow for religious freedoms to be exercised.

“With such a symbolic measure that affects the identity of every Jew in Belgium, I fear it will drive Jews away from the country. The same is true in Denmark and other countries in Europe and this is why the issue has been taken up by the WJC as a very significant and important one.”

The same is true for the regional European Jewish Congress (EJC) which has been pushing very hard to have those laws completely set aside.

While the primary responsibility rests with the Jewish communities of each country, the EJC and the WJC provide “incredible” support with regard to resources to enable them to defend their rights, he says. The Jewish community in Belgium, for instance, initially favoured discussions with the government requesting that long-existing exceptions in the law should remain.

However, with the introduction of the laws, “we took it upon ourselves to hire lawyers and to defend our rights before the courts, in respecting the rule of law. This is really our main message: We don’t want an exception to the law.

“We want the law to be adequate and proportionate, while respecting the religious rights of the Jewish people.”

As for the WJC, its resolutions signify its commitment to helping local Jewish communities facing these issues and entering into political discussions with heads of state and others to explain the position of the world Jewish community.



World Jewish Congress CEO Robert Singer, President of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, Mary Kluk and Mike Masutha, SA Minister of Justice and Correctional Services

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Tunes may change and over the millennia new songs have been added, but what has remained constant is the spiritual depths of our zemirot (songs) and the universal nature of Jewish practice though time and space.

So, whether you will be singing loudly in shul, at home or at a Dark Tish, take a few moments to ponder on some of the songs Jews around the world will be singing on this and every other Shabbos.

Lecha Dodi, a beautiful, stirring song, written in Safed in the 15th century, draws its inspiration from the Gemora (Shabbat 119A), which speaks of Rabbi Chanina who would wrap himself in a garment and stand at nightfall at the beginning of Shabbos and say: “Come, we will go out to greet the Shabbos Queen”.

Rabbi Yannai would get dressed on erev Shabbos and say: “Bo’i Kallah, Bo’i Kallah (Enter O bride, Enter O bride)”. The author of the song Rabbi Shlomo HaLevi Alkabetz was a brother-in-law and teacher of Rabbi Moshe Covdovero, and a leading figure in the Safed Kabbalistic circle of great rabbis that also included Rabbi Yosef Karo and the Arizal (Rabbi Isaac Luria).

Covdovero, inspired by Rabbi Chanina and Rabbi Yannai who lived a millennium and a half before him, had established the custom of walking out into the hilltop fields around Safed, before twilight on erev Shabbos, to greet the incoming Shabbos bride and queen. The song “Lecha Dodi (Come My Dear One)”, which is an invitation extended either to Hashem or a close friend to welcome in the Shabbos, was composed to be sung for this outdoor greeting of Shabbos.

Nowadays the practice is to turn to the back of the shul when we say “Bo’i Kallah”, rather than walk outside at the moment Shabbos enters.

The author has also made the song an acrostic, with the first letter of the first eight stanzas spelling his name. This is a common practice in classical Hebrew poetry and appears in many Shabbos songs.

Lecha Dodi is a recent addition to Jewish liturgy, when viewed from the perspective of the epic sweep of 2 500 years since the Men of the Great Assembly formalised the Torah mitzvah of prayer, at the beginning of the Second Temple era, into the basic structure of the siddur.

Shalom Aleichem, the first song to be sung in a Jewish house on Shabbos, is also a fairly recent addition to Jewish liturgy, but is based on a Talmudic tradition that is at least 2 000 years old.

First appearing in print in 1641, Shalom Aleichem was also written by the Kabbalists of Safed in the late 16th or early 17th century. In the Gemora (Shabbos 119B), Rabbi Yosi bar Yehuda speaks of two ministering angels who accompany a person on Shabbos evening home from shul, one good, one evil.

If the person reaches his home and finds a lamp burning, the table set, and his bed made, the good angel would say: “May it be Your will that it shall be like this for another Shabbos.” The evil angel answers against his will “Amen”.

If the home is not prepared for Shabbos the evil angel says: “May it be Your will that it shall be so for another Shabbos”, and the good angel against his will answers “Amen”.

Despite the criticism that as Jews we address our prayers and requests directly to Hashem and not via angels, Shalom Aleichem is now an almost universal practice.

Eishet Chayil is an ancient song, being the last 22 verses of the final chapter of Mishlei, the Book of Proverbs, written by King Solomon. Allegorical in nature, the praises in these verses are interpreted to refer to a number of subjects: the Shechinah (the Divine Presence), the Shabbos, the Torah, wisdom and the soul.

To connect Eishet Chayil to the praise of a specific

woman, the Midrash Tanchuma offers a beautiful reading of Eishet Chayil as Abraham’s eulogy for Sarah, in Parshat Chayei Sarah.

Midrash Mishlei goes even further and finds praises for 20 great women from throughout the Tanach within Eishet Chayil, cementing it as the most beautiful, powerful and appropriate praise a husband can offer to his wife, before the Shabbat Kiddush.

Nobody knows who wrote one of the most popular Shabbat songs, Tzur Mishelo, or exactly when it was written. This four-stanza song basically follows the structure of the first three blessings of Birkat HaMazon (grace after meals), with the refrain calling on those partaking of the meal to give thanks to G-d, analogous to the Zimun (responsive introduction to Birkat Hamazon).

As with benching, we first praise Hashem for sustaining us with food (in the first stanza), then for giving us the Land of Israel (in the second) and then for Jerusalem and the kingship of the House of David (in the third stanza).

The fourth stanza speaks about the final redemption and Mashiach rather than reflecting the fourth brocha of benching, which was added many centuries after the first three had been formulated.

The fact that the last brocha is not reflected in Tzur



MiShelo, has led to speculation that the song was written before the fourth bracha of benching was added, which would have been in the period between the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE and the aftermath of the fall of the fortress city Betar in 142 CE, 72 years later.

Interestingly, Rabbi Chaim of Volozhin, a student of the Vilna Gaon, cautioned against singing Tzur Mishelo at the end of the Shabbas meal, maintaining that it might be a successful substitute for benching.

His opinion was not accepted, but serves to highlight the manner in which this beloved song reflects the praises of Birkat HaMazon.

A much overlooked Shabbos day song is Yom Shabbas Kodesh Hu, written by Rabbi Yahonatan Chazak whose name is also inserted acrostically into

the poem. The first eight stanzas reference many Torah verses, a number of Shabbos laws, stories from the Talmud about honouring Shabbas and the Sambatyon River. The latter is a mythical river that raged with rapids and could not be crossed for the six days of the week and rested on Shabbas. The Ten Lost Tribes were said to have been exiled by the Assyrian King Sanchairiv to beyond the Sambatyon River. They could not cross the

river on the only day it was crossable because of the laws of Shabbos. The ninth and final stanza of this song recounts an event involving the song itself.

The lyrics tell that the author had lost this poem, only to be at a Shabbos table when another person presented this song as their own. His protestations of the theft, the injustice and conclusive proof of Rabbi Yahonatan’s authorship, make up the ninth stanza.

Whether you are singing the words of King Solomon, a Kabbalist from Safed, an anonymous poet or an aggrieved wordsmith, you will be joining with Jews from around the world and across the ages.

In the words of Mordechai Ben David: “Just one Shabbas and we’ll all be free, just one shabbas come and join with me, we’ll sing and dance to the sky, with our spirits so high...”

Farewell to Barney Hurwitz

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Philanthropist, top businessman, proud Jew and family man, Dr Barney Hurwitz, died last week at the age of 95. He was described by friends and family as “a giant among men”.

Speaking at his funeral at West Park Jewish Cemetery, Rabbi Mendel Rabinowitz, of the Greenside Hebrew Congregation, said: “He played a major role in the advancement of medical facilities in South Africa.”

While most were aware of this aspect of his career, not everyone knew he was also a successful property developer and farmer.

Born in 1922 in the shtetl of Rakow – at that time part of Poland, but today, Belarus – he grew up in a rural area. He experienced the scourge of anti-Semitism first hand between the First and Second World Wars.

Most vivid to him from his childhood was the times, usually before Pesach, the locals believed that Christian children were killed, and their blood used for matzah – the blood libel.

They embraced this myth and increased their violence towards the Jewish community. But, despite this, Hurwitz kept going to Hebrew school and contended with being marginalised from economic and social activity and general education.

He was eight years old when he was forced to take a job as a security guard in an apple orchard close to the Polish-Russian border, to make some money. “He never stopped working for 87 years thereafter, right up to the week before his passing,” his grandson, Jarren Hurwitz told the SA Jewish Report.

In 1934, Hurwitz arrived in South Africa by ship. He was 12 years old. As it happens, Leah – who later became his wife of 68 years – was also on the same ship.

When he got here, he could only speak Yiddish, Polish and Hebrew. All his life, he was well known for his love of Yiddish.

In spite of not being able to speak English initially, Hurwitz excelled at his school, Forest Hill High, in Johannesburg. He was made a prefect in matric, but had to decline the position as his family could not afford to pay for the mandatory prefect’s tie.

His ambition was to become a medical doctor, but lack of funds led him to qualify as a pharmacist in 1946. He was registered as a chemist and druggist with the South African Pharmacy Council, prior or establishing his own pharmacy.

However, he studied pharmacology, bacteriology and biochemistry some years later in the United Kingdom.



In 1948, he opened a pharmacy on the corner of High and Bree Streets in Fordsburg. His business acumen came to the fore and his pharmacy became one of the most popular in Johannesburg.

He befriended anti-apartheid activist Yusuf Dadoo. When Dadoo, Nelson Mandela and Ahmed Kathrada, were on the run from the security police, Hurwitz took them in and hid them behind a showcase in his shop, until it was safe to emerge.

When private hospitals were a rarity in the fifties and sixties, Hurwitz saw a gap in this market. He bought the Rand Clinic in Hillbrow. Thus, began the Clinic Holdings Group, now Netcare, with Hurwitz as executive chairman and chief executive officer. It was later listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange.

Hurwitz’s hospitals were distinguished by accessibility, the most modern and advanced medical equipment and technology in SA and a concern for staff training and development.

He felt that technology could be best implemented by highly-trained, efficient and motivated nursing staff and he established the St Augustine’s Nurses Training College in Durban.

This served as a fully-fledged training college for nurses and qualifications obtained there were recognised locally and internationally. Similarly, he started a training college in Johannesburg in conjunction with the then Rand Afrikaans University (RAU) where graduates received a university-recognised qualification.

He was awarded two honorary doctorates in 1997 by the University of the Free State and Unisa. He was a director and board member of over 90 national and international companies.

Philanthropically, the Jewish community was close to his heart and millions benefited from his work. He served many terms as chairman of the Emmarentia Hebrew Congregation and remained an active member of Greenside Shul.

“I will miss his face in the shul and his appreciation of the shiurim,” Rabbi Rabinowitz said.

Always cognisant of his Jewish roots, he returned to his home-town in Rakov after the fall of the Iron Curtain the 1990s and restored and preserved the Jewish cemetery, with his “landsman” the late Aaron Grinholz.

Hurwitz leaves his wife, Leah, children Charmian Roffey and Jeffrey and Arlene Hurwitz; grandchildren Justin, Michael, Jordan and Ashley Roffey; and Rabbi Ricki, Shaun, Simeon and Jarren Hurwitz; and great-grandchildren Cole Roffey and Bayla, Eliyahu, Tzophia, Ella, David, Shayna and Asher Hurwitz.

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World Zionist Organisation expert guides local youth debate

BETH AMATO

Zionism and loyalty to Israel is not a given to the much-maligned millennial generation of Diaspora Jews. Engaging these young people and giving them a platform to critically engage with Jewish identity, is imperative.

This is advice given by Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman, the head of department for Diaspora Activities at the World Zionist Organisation, who was in South Africa this week to work with Jewish youth movements to foster dialogue about issues relating to Zionism in the 21st century.

She explains that the youth today – the millennial generation – are a tough nut to crack. They seek meaning in their lives and want to know “What can Israel do for me?” rather than vice versa.

Some view this as being spoilt and entitled,

but Yehoshua-Braverman has a knack for engaging with millennials and sees past that. “They want to be heard and debated with,” she says. “They want the conversation to be open-ended and don’t want to be preached to.”

It’s for this reason that she insists the gatherings she holds, are about dialogue and that controversial subjects should not be forbidden, but rather tackled and spoken about.

“There is nothing taboo. There is no right answer to any of the questions we ask. This is what the millennials appreciate.

“Youth in the Diaspora often view Israel as their safe haven, should problems arise in their country, but they struggle to articulate what else Israel means to them and why it’s important to them,” said Yehoshua-Braverman.

“It’s easy being a Jew, but it’s not easy to be pro-Israel. In my travels to France, Chile, Lithuania, Colombia and the like, this is what comes up strongly.”

Youth tackling the tough questions



BETH AMATO

“I strongly disagree with the phrase that the BDS movement pushes the anti-Semitism agenda like the Nazis did,” said a spirited young Habonim Dror member at the “Walking a Tightrope – balance between Israel-Diaspora connections” youth seminar last weekend.

He noted that it was dangerous to make such a comparison and that by doing so, any common ground or negotiation with the Boycott, Divest and Sanctions (BDS) movement would be thwarted.

Another, from Betar, was vehement that the BDS shouldn’t be entertained and must be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

Clearly the debate among the youth in Jewish youth movement – including Habonim Dror, South African Union of Jewish Students, Netzer, Bnei Akiva and Betar – was no holds-barred and heated at the Beit Ha’am debates organised by the World Zionist Organisation (WZO) at the seminar in Johannesburg.

Questions raised included whether the BDS movement was legitimate and whether it was right for Jews in the Diaspora to support the movement. Another issue discussed was whether there was a difference between the boycott of Israeli products and the boycott of products from settlements.

“I guess the youth needed to clarify what paths we all take together and which paths we won’t take together,” says Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman, head of Diaspora Activities at the World Zionist Organisation. “We have to determine whether our shared historical destiny necessarily leads us to a future of mutual responsibility and commitment.”

Yehoshua-Braverman notes that Jewish people have been conducting a loving, painful, challenging and complex dialogue with one another. “It’s a continuous and winding dialogue that is unparalleled among other peoples.”

The WZO, South African Zionist Federation and Israel Centre, arranged this event with the aim of bringing South African Jewish youth to debate the meaning of Zionism and to find ways to connect in their common Jewry and history. The last such event in South Africa was four years ago.

The event centred on the debate of four topics: The right of Diaspora Jewry to exert their influence on policy in Israel; the decision to put a freeze on the Western Wall plan; the Diaspora Jewry’s commitment to the State of Israel and; the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement.

Yehoshua-Braverman explains that debates about Jewish identity and Zionism with youth movements are rare. “We find that many Jews in the Diaspora, especially among the younger generation, choose to ignore or sever the connection between their Jewish ancestry and the Jewish state – the State of Israel.

“This concerning phenomenon requires from us an in-depth examination where we try to clarify for ourselves what the future between Israel and the Diaspora Jewry is.”

Holding such discussions is a way for the WZO to foster common ground among youth movements, where every voice and philosophy is heard and acknowledged.

“This was an opportunity for each and every one of us to reflect on issues and discuss the meaning of Zionism in the 21st century and the degree of relevance to our lives,” noted Yehoshua-Braverman.



Gusti Yehoshua-Braverman chats to delegates at the youth seminar.

In fact, she says, many youth recall being ashamed of being Jewish because of the obvious link to Israel. “Many of the youth in the Diaspora are embarrassed by Israel’s actions and policies and don’t want to admit to others in their home countries that they are Jewish. It’s very disconcerting,” says Yehoshua-Braverman.

Recently when she was in Australia a student said he never tells people he’s Jewish because he gets “boxed”. There is no way, he told her, that he would even mention he was pro-Israel. He was afraid of being bullied.

The conflicted relationship with Israel and the tenuous connection to the Jewish homeland, is a thread that she feels runs through all of the youth Diaspora communities. The programme she runs through the World Zionist Organisation, Beit Ha’am, has the intention of showing how Zionism as a philosophy and way of life, is above conflict and the limits of the state and must endure for the Jewish people to have a real sense of continuity.

Israel, she says has much to offer.” Our

programme highlights its rich variety of art, delectable cuisine, literature and good music.”

Yehoshua-Braverman has a tough task: that of ensuring the young Jewish millennials find meaning in their relationship to Israel so that there is a lasting affinity with the country. “If we lose this generation and it’s simple – we won’t receive any donations.”

However, Yehoshua-Braverman is at peace with the slow progress of changing negative attitudes and beliefs about Israel. She knows that she can’t be too gung-ho because Jewish identity is deeply complex for many youth in the Diaspora.

She is in office until 2020 and hopes to help realise Theodor Herzl’s initial wish for Israel, contained in the Declaration of the Establishment of the State of Israel: “After being forcibly exiled from their land, the people kept faith with it throughout their dispersion and never ceased to pray and hope for their return to it and for the restoration of their political freedom.”

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Smiling her way back

NICOLA MILTZ

Mandy-Lee Ginsberg has her smile back and like a butterfly has emerged triumphant from a cocoon of tortured silence following a crippling eating disorder that almost killed her. For nearly two decades Mandy-Lee has suffered with bulimia, an illness that is characterised by episodes of binge eating, followed by purging – by eating copious amounts of food and vomiting. On first night Sukkot, she took a bite of a gherkin and her temporary front teeth fell out. In that moment of sheer terror, her whole life flashed before her and she knew deep down that this was the end of her torment and the beginning of an entirely new chapter in her life.

“I looked at myself in the mirror. There I was at 42 years old, unmarried, childless and with no front teeth and it hit me. I did not go through this journey for nothing.”

After cancelling her Yomtov and Shabbos plans, she spent the next few days soul-searching and contemplating her life going forward. She had been binge- and purge-free for almost two years. She had spent countless, agonising hours in the state-funded dentist’s chair, repairing her entire mouth which had succumbed to severe acid damage from years of throwing up.

After 15 root canal treatments and porcelain crowns, numerous implants and hours of excruciating gum surgery – the laboratory costs alone leaving her bankrupt – it was time to reveal her new recovering-self to the world and become a beacon of light to others experiencing similar hell.

So, with incredible courage and bravery she decided to let her secret out. On October 7 at 19:40 Mandy-Lee came out of hiding with a Facebook post on the Jewish Joburg Mommies page.

In it she said: “The aim is to be brave enough to expose my struggle with the hope that it will in some way help others.”

She pleaded with readers to “Please, please” inbox her privately if anyone they knew found themselves “in the web of using food to punish” because she exclaimed: “I can help, I want to help.”

She added: “There is a reason I lived

Mandy-Lee Ginsberg



through this and it’s not to sit behind a mask with shame, guilt or embarrassment.”

With a rawness of emotion, she exposed the heartache of living with bulimia for 17 years, describing how it left her virtually penniless, isolated and having to undergo unaffordable mouth surgery.

In just 24 hours following her heartfelt, brave post, the response has been “overwhelming” she says.

She has received a flood of messages, both of support and from people desperate to reach out for help.

“There are so many people out there needing help,” she said. “The response has changed my life! Girls have already reached out... some have... offered to try help contribute to massive dental bills.”

Mandy-Lee spoke to the SA Jewish Report and revealed how her journey into hell began.

She was separated from her mother from birth, being six weeks premature, literally able to fit inside a shoebox. For the first six months of her life she battled to feed. Mandy-Lee comes from a dysfunctional, broken family with both parents who suffered from various forms of drug and alcohol addiction.

It was never easy on the home front. She did not experience a conventional upbringing and her parents were never truly present in her life growing up.

“I even had to waitress to get myself through matric,” she recalls.

It was never easy on the home front. She did not experience a conventional upbringing and her parents were never truly present in her life growing up.

But it was only in her twenties that her love-hate relationship with food began.

She remembers the day well. Suffering from a broken heart after a recent break-up with a man she thought she loved, she found herself eating a McDonald’s burger during a lunch break.

“I felt fat afterwards, so I went to the toilet and brought it up.” What she actually felt was “abandoned and rejected”, feelings that had accompanied her, her whole life, she said.

And so began the cycle of self-hate and before she knew it, bulimia had taken over her entire being.

In her post she describes bulimia as a brutal “private hell of self-loathing, isolation, self-punishment and torture on a daily basis” and a vicious addiction that “clutches you until you’re a shell”.

She says: “It starts off slowly and before you know it, you’re planning your next binge.”

Last week after two torturous years of

mouth surgery to repair her rotten teeth, she finally received her last set of crowns.

Recalling her years as a bulimic she says: “You don’t have a thought process when you binge. You just eat and eat until you are numb. While you eat you don’t feel a thing; it’s like heroin; you eat... there is a complete emotional shutdown.”

However, the emotions leading up to a binge are intense. “These include being overwhelmed, anxious, full of fear, a kind of paralysis... stress and obsessive thinking. It is like your mind is on the spin cycle of a washing machine. Sometimes it’s just intense sadness.”

In her experience, a binge could last up to two hours. It would stop when her stomach literally felt as though it would explode.

“After a purge you feel opposing emotions. There is self-loathing, exhaustion and punishment, but in an obscure way bringing up is a release of pain.”

At the height of her eating disorder, Mandy-Lee could binge and purge as many as four times in a day, taking hours.

“Your throat gets so raw it feels like it is bleeding. Eventually you feel faint, emotionally and physically depleted, an empty shell where your only friend is food. It’s your best friend and your worst enemy.”

Her lowest moment was several years ago when she was living with a housemate. She would lock herself in her room and binge for hours, then purge in a bucket in her room and wake at 04:00 and flush it all down the toilet. Her fear being that the toilet would block.

Almost two years ago, there was a shift and she said: “Through this darkness I found myself. I found self-love, I didn’t have a choice or I would have died.”

She says she still has an instinct to eat when she is emotionally challenged, but she’s learnt how to be “more mindful”.

Her dream now is to open her own eating disorder centre to help change people’s lives for the better. “I went through this, so that I could one day share my journey and help others,” she said.

Mandy-Lee will be giving her first public talk entitled “Bringing it Up” on Wednesday November 1, at Ohr Somayach Savoy, 5 Aintree Avenue at 19:00. Booking through WIZO office essential (011) 645-2515.

Steven Cohen ‘putting his heart under his feet ... and walking’

ROBYN SASSEN

You may read the name Steven Cohen, and think of an artist who had the courage or the folly to do almost anything dressed in almost nothing, anywhere in the world. You last read of him in this paper regarding a gesture he made at the Eiffel Tower involving a rooster and his own genitals. The French law was not amused.

Cohen has been an interesting thorn in the side of the Jewish community since the 1990s. He’s never been afraid to explore all the tender issues he confronts in being Jewish, gay, white, South African and middle aged.

In 1998, he hosted his first fine art exhibition at the Goodman Gallery in Johannesburg. He has since developed himself as a highly respected performance artist internationally. This month he hosts another Johannesburg exhibition. And it will lead you to realise his evolution.

In 2016, Cohen lost his life partner, the dancer/choreographer Elu, to sudden illness. This exhibition is a gesture of mourning. It doesn’t lack Cohen’s typical wryness, but it resonates unapologetically with the aesthetics he’s developed over 20 years.

Comprising three videos and a myriad of ballet shoes, the exhibition is a taxonomy of Cohen and Elu’s collaborative career. As you look at each tableau of used and bruised pink pointe shoes, you recognise talismans from the ethos of South African performance history – of which Cohen and Elu were the centrifugal force from the late 1990s – pushing possibility in an art form with no history yet, in this country.

The combinations of shoes with other things are dizzying. Monkey skulls and a mummified cat vie with medical instruments and domestic tools. Hitler puppets and anti-Semitic propaganda neighbour ceramic roosters and Victorian ashtrays. Ostrich feet lie

in the shape of a swastika; a pair of tefillin is strapped around a toy Torah Scroll.

As you walk between each, you see snippets of a career that outraged a frightened public, but a career that developed nevertheless.



Dancing with Elulessness: Steven Cohen in his butterfly makeup as he appears in the work “fat”.

The phrase used as the title of this exhibition was said to Cohen after Elu died. When Nomsa Dhlamini – the woman who raised Cohen and became a significant

collaborator in his later work – heard that Elu died, she told Cohen to “put your heart under your feet... and walk!” She was 96 at the time.

The first video in this exhibition is one of Cohen having the sole

of his left foot tattooed with this phrase. The others manifest how he makes this phrase true.

And effectively, that’s where the aesthetic, moral and emotional

pinnacle of this exhibition lies. The video, screened in the second half of the gallery, are named simply fat and blood. They last just over six minutes each and yet, they will touch you in a place you might not have known you had, until this experience.

In them, Cohen brings his grief to a South African abattoir; dressed in a white tutu, with his characteristic head of makeup and butterfly wings, he is filmed dancing his heart out, in wrenching tribute to the loss of life in that sanitised dirty space.

It’s a tribute to the stuff that constitutes what a living being is. It’s like watching a crime, a snuff movie, a manifestation of great religious sacrifice all rolled together. It is art, but it also transcends art, pushing it into the realm of shamanic gesture.

It isn’t easy to see. It’s not meant to be. But it will not let you go. • *This exhibition is at the Stevenson Gallery, Braamfontein until November 17.*

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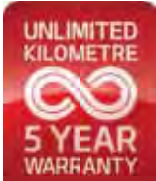


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Could Israel-Palestine peace rest on personal stories?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Can individual Palestinians and Israelis get past their violent history and see each other as people? A documentary screened in the past two weeks in Johannesburg and Cape Town, shows attempts at this by a group calling itself Combatants for Peace.

It has tiny echoes of South Africa’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in which Israelis and Palestinians tell their personal stories to each other face to face, not sparing the pain.

Called “Disturbing the Peace”, the film, feted by international film critics, portrays real people and events, using archival and recreated material, describing the group’s genesis and formal establishment in 2005.

In the film, an Israeli soldier in an elite commando unit, Chen Alon, is ordered to deny passage at a checkpoint to a Palestinian

father desperate to take sick children to hospital. Alon, a father himself, is appalled. Other Israelis are as well.

Another protagonist, Palestinian woman Shifa al-Qudsi, decides to become a suicide bomber to kill Israelis, but is arrested before carrying out the mission. She spends six years in an Israeli jail, where she encounters a guard whose brother was killed in a Palestinian suicide attack. She is horrified.

The film is peppered with grisly scenes of Israeli buses blown up by suicide bombers and Palestinian families grieving as they watch their homes being demolished by Israeli bulldozers.

In one of the most potent scenes, a Palestinian man and woman watch on television the bodies of dead Israelis strewn on the ground after a Jerusalem bus bombing. The woman expresses sadness. The man is perplexed: “They are the oppressors! This is our struggle.” She retorts that Israeli mothers losing children suffer like Palestinian mothers.

Through a hush-hush message, the small Israeli group is invited to meet similar-minded

Palestinians in the territories, secretly. They enter a room and are seated on a row of chairs facing several Palestinians. Both sides begin, tensely, telling their personal stories. The Israelis had friends and relatives killed in terrorist attacks; the Palestinians have lost friends and relatives, been held in Israeli prisons, and had homes demolished. It is an incredibly moving moment.

Through the formation of Combatants for Peace, the Israelis declare they will continue serving in the army defending Israel, but will refuse service in the occupied territories; the Palestinians renounce violence. Both sides call for a two-state solution to the conflict.

The Israelis in the group are despised by some other Israelis as leftist radicals. At a Tel Aviv rally, a man swears at a demonstrator: “You piece of sh-t! You are traitors! Go and live with them!”

The film’s weakness, yet paradoxically also its strength, is its focus solely on Israelis’ and Palestinians’ human side, not the macro-reality. Can a solution emerge from this level? Or are they naïve? Does a tiny group like this have relevance amidst the harsh reality of

a century-old conflict in a region engulfed in turmoil, with terrorist group Hamas still vowing to eliminate Israel, and Iran, Russia and the United States embroiled with their own interests? And with the most right-wing government in Israel’s history, still building settlements.

One vignette shows the group addressed by Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu through a specially recorded video, encouraging them to pursue their dream, as South Africans did.

In the last decade, the political centre supporting the two-state solution and opposing the occupation, has withered in South Africa, leaving moderate Israeli-oriented Jews without a political home.

Extremes such as BDS and the Jewish right-wing are dominant. This film contributes to a more hopeful approach which says people on the other side are human beings, not just killers. Cynics may roll their eyes and call it naïve, yet everything else has failed to solve the conflict.

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

New Progressive shul was ready to meet the new year

The brand-new Bet David shul in Morningside, was opened on erev Rosh Hashanah with a service led by Rabbi Adrian Michael Schell.

After nearly 12 months of construction, the shul is the third built on the property over a period of 45 years and reflects the current needs of the congregation. The modern design incorporates elements of the two previous synagogues that stood on the property. The new floor-to-ceiling windows, which constitute nearly 50 per cent of the outside walls of the shul, are to give worshippers a feeling of being part of the surrounding environment.

Once completed, the congregation’s new campus will encompass a shul, nursery school, the Mitzvah School, the Middleton function hall, and offices of the congregation and the Progressive Movement of South Africa.

Rabbi Schell said: “From the time we entered into a covenant with G-d, there was always the vision of a sanctuary, a mishkan, in which our relationship with G-d and our fellow humans can grow.

“The Greek word, synagogue, meaning, gathering or assembly, reflects that which we have built. Our synagogue echoes that covenant— to create a gathering place for Jews, the community, and G-d.”

Rabbi Schell’s wish for the new shul is that “this shul becomes a shelter for all who seek it, a place of worship of G-d and a place to encounter one another”.



Community Column

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

WJC National Directors’ forum a huge success

The World Jewish Congress National Directors’ Forum, which concluded in Cape Town earlier this week, successfully combined focused formal discussions and presentations on core issues facing global Jewry with the equally important informal interaction that took place between individual delegates outside of the formal sessions. It is in the latter context that experiences can be shared, potential partnerships discussed and in general contacts made that could be mutually beneficial in the future. Representatives of Jewish communities numbering in the millions, as in the case of Israel, through to those numbering just a few thousand, took part in what was truly a memorable experience for all concerned.

The conference was also an opportunity for us to introduce our own community – its history, structure and current activities – to our international colleagues. Visits were paid to Afrika Tikkun’s upliftment projects in Mfuleni, Herzlia School and the Astra sheltered employment centre. Each showcased three key aspects of what our community is committed to: providing opportunities for disadvantaged South Africans in the wider society to uplift themselves, imbuing the next generation with a knowledge of and attachment to their Jewish heritage and assisting those within our own community who are in need of a helping hand. Guided tours of the SA Jewish Museum, Great Synagogue (SA Jewry’s Mother Congregation) and the Cape Town Holocaust Centre were also part of the programme. Delegates had many opportunities of engaging with communal leaders, both lay and professional, and the Jewish youth. They were profoundly impressed by everything that we are achieving, both from a Jewish point of view and in making a meaningful contribution to South Africa itself, and hopefully will have taken back with them new insights and inspiration for furthering the well-being of their own communities.

Finally, we saw it as an opportunity simply to allow Jewish

professionals from around the world to experience something of South African warmth and hospitality, in the famously beautiful setting of the Mother City. No effort was spared in making them feel welcome and comfortable (including enjoying the best fare that our outstanding kashrut facilities can provide) and in getting a taste of the vibrancy and diversity of South African culture.

Another highlight of the conference was a panel discussion in which three community members who were involved in the transition from apartheid to multiracial democracy, Ann Harris, Judge Albie Sachs and Johnny Copelyn, shared their memories and insights. The subsequent gala dinner, which was attended by parliamentarians from across the political spectrum, academics, members of the diplomatic corps and other distinguished personalities, took place within easy view of Robben Island – once a maximum security prison for political dissidents and today a place of memory in honour of those who fought for justice and democracy. It was a timely reminder of how much South Africans were able to achieve back then in the face of such formidable challenges. There is no reason not to believe that the same resilience and resolve will be forthcoming in dealing with the current difficulties facing our country.

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

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



Above Board Shaun Zagnoev

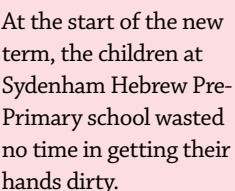
Chabad Illovo ‘extends’ their Shabbos table

Chabad Illovo is celebrating the Shabbos Project by thinking of others through the innovative “Unbox Shabbos” initiative. This project will ensure that 1000 less fortunate Jews across Johannesburg will anonymously receive a packaged Shabbos delivery from various members of Chabad of Illovo. This way they can share in the joy of the Shabbos Project.

The shul is providing the boxes which contain a basic Shabbos kit of grape juice/wine, candles, matches, a custom-made challah cover, Kiddush cup and Shabbos instruction pamphlet. Community members and their families will then each fill the remainder of one of the boxes with food and anything else that would help make Shabbos special for the recipient families.

Even though it’s not possible to invite everyone’s families into the homes of the Chabad Illovo community, they want to include as many as possible to their “extended” Shabbos tables so they can celebrate a special Shabbos in their own homes, with dignity, pride, and good food.

Messy play at Sydenham Pre-Primary



Messy play featuring shaving cream, paint and cars, was the order of the day. Learning through play is fundamental to a child's growth – and what better way to start the term!

Enjoying their time in the sun are Yarin Ezerzer, Orli Crouse, Livia Gelbart, Ariel Akrish, and Sam Meisel.



Crawford Preparatory Sandton embraces the creative arts, using it as a tool for learning and integrating other subjects. The school holds an annual art exhibition off campus to give their pupils the thrill of seeing their art in a public space. This year the exhibition was held at the Morningside Shopping Centre.

Every pupil, from grade one to grade five, had an artwork on display and selected pieces from grades six and seven. The grade seven pupils visited the exhibition as a group, and took part in an interactive activity that referenced the art on display – a core skills learning experience.

The Crawford art teachers, Nina Bloom, Elona Shaff and Pam Kaplan, believe that visual art gives pupils an insight into the world around us – beyond the confines of the classroom.



Certificates for learning the Amidah in davening

Torah Academy Primary School encourages learners in every facet of secular and religious education. Seen here, grade 2 girls receive certificates on completion of learning the Amidah in davening. They are Alex Minkowitz, Rivka Zwick, Ayala Brand, Devorah Elkabir, and Zahara Lurie.

There are Jewish halachic laws of “yichud” that prescribe that a man and a woman (who are not closely related) should not be secluded in closed quarters together.

These laws are not irrelevant, archaic laws. They are as relevant now as they were two thousand years ago. They protect the potential “victim” from being violated and they protect the potentially accused “perpetrator” from being accused of something that he did not do.

If there are only two people secluded in a room together and they both emerge from the room telling different stories of what happened in that room, there is usually no way to verify the story. It is one person's word against another person's word. Therefore, avoiding these situations is what the halacha prescribes.

This law applies to a woman not being alone in closed quarters with a man (that she is not related to) whether that man is a rabbi, a doctor, a teacher, etc. (It is my understanding that for the last few years, Dr Levy did hire an additional employee specifically for this purpose of not being alone with patients.)

There may be situations where avoiding solitude with a person of the opposite gender (who is not closely related) is difficult or even unavoidable, but knowing the laws creates an extra level of sensitivity that certain conduct should be vigilantly observed. Boundaries become clearer.

Michele Engelberg
Johannesburg

Anyone who lived in, or is a descendant of, or knows of people from Shadova/Seduva in Lithuania and who came to South Africa, is asked to please contact Ada at (011) 646-9538.

The Jewish Genealogical Society of South Africa (JGSSA) is planning a talk during November by visitors from Lithuania, specialising in researching inhabitants of this area.

Any Jewish person who didn't attend last Sunday night's inspired DEISI's (Defend, Embrace, Invest, Support Israel) International function to honour Israel, missed the opportunity of being showered in waves of love.

At a time when constant reports of rising anti-Semitism internationally make us despair that everybody hates us, it restores our joy in having been born Jewish to hear soul-stirring, pro-Israel, pro-Jewish speeches by devout Christian Zionists such as Rev Kenneth Meshoe MP and his equally inspiring daughter, Olga.

To quote extracts from Sunday's Jerusalem 50th Jubilee programme, DEISI's messaging is:

* It's our history: the notion that Israel is an apartheid state is not only a lie, but an appropriation of a painful part of South Africa's history.

* It's our faith: the G-d of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Israel) is the G-d of the Christian. Judaism is the root of Christianity.

* Israel can help us: Israel is positioned to assist Africa with her various needs, including agriculture, technology, medicine, entrepreneurship and security.

Surely such unique and loving friends should be warmly supported and listened to at every possible moment with invitations to lecture at all our Jewish institutions and religious outlets. Recently when I was telling some Jewish friends about DEISI, they wept with joy and relief to learn that, in fact, there are thousands of Christian Zionists who recognise, love, and respect us for being a light unto the nations.

Edna Freinkel, Johannesburg



Using martial arts to help kids with cancer

ELIANA CLINE

It is hard to imagine how martial arts can help children with terminal illnesses, but it does. It enables children to transform their pain into purpose and to find their own inner power amidst their seemingly insurmountable challenges.

And in South Africa there is a serious need to help sick children deal with their fears and pain. American assistant professor of paediatrics, Rabbi Elimelech Goldberg (aka Rabbi G), founded Kids Kicking Cancer that assists terminally ill children using martial arts, meditation and breathing techniques. This programme differs from others as it is a therapeutic evidence-based approach.

With his extraordinary vision and the local board, that is chaired by Dr Richard Friedland (Netcare’s CEO), children in South Africa will soon benefit from Kids Kicking Cancer (KKC).

Rabbi G lost his own daughter to cancer when she was just two years old, and working with other children years later, he realised the transformational power of martial arts to assist other kids facing terminal disease.

Last Sunday, 20 martial artists volunteered to be trained in going into hospitals to empower patients. They participated in a day-long training led by Rabbi G in Johannesburg at the Discovery Head Office, which will launch the KKC’s presence in South Africa.

“Up until now, Kids Kicking Cancer has operated in developed countries,” says Rabbi G. “Last week we spent two days demonstrating the programme to staff and patients at The Charlotte Maxeke Johannesburg Academic Hospital and Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital.



“It was extraordinary to see both the acute level of need and the immediate and overwhelming responsiveness to what we offered. The staff – especially at Bara – were so grateful that we had made the time and effort to come.”

The KKC exists in 46 hospitals on four different continents. “In the other hospitals we are in, there are multiple programmes, support and therapeutic structures available

to children and their families.

“In South Africa, there is nothing available for these children. It is an arena of immense possibility. The darkness here is profound. And the power of Kids Kicking Cancer is equally profound to transform their lives.

“These children are going through tremendous pain and challenges alone. It is natural to be afraid. We teach them how to breathe in the light and find their inner power. They become the teachers and teach their families and the world.

“I saw the change myself at the hospitals here,” Rabbi G says.

Friedland believes this programme is remarkable in the transformation it can offer to even the most impoverished children and envisions the eventual expansion into the entire African continent.

“The children that our volunteers will work with are some of the most disenfranchised and vulnerable in the country,” says Friedland. “There is a diverse patient base particularly at Baragwanath Hospital; parents and children travel from other provinces for treatment. They are so poor that they often cannot afford to stay with their children during treatment; they need to return home to eke out a living and care for their other family members. These children are bereft, alone and suffering. They are disempowered.

“The volunteers who come, make them feel important and valued and teach them how to rise from pain to purpose. They learn how to push out the darkness and breathe in the light.

“What is so amazing is that it does not need fancy IT or Internet connectivity. It does not even need electricity to operate. It simply requires one-on-one engagement with a volunteer who cares enough to be there.

“Instead of being a victim, they are now teachers – teaching their parents, families and caregivers how to overcome immense adversity,” says Friedland.

Craig Nossel, also a board member, says that providing kids with hope and purpose is a critical part of the treatment which is often ignored.

“I have been on the board of Reach-for-a-Dream for the past two years. When Richard asked me to get involved in setting up KKC, I saw the potential to further help kids sitting in hospital beds suffering from life-threatening illnesses.”

Shane Dorfman, a respected radiologist and internationally acclaimed karate champion, sees KKC’s mission as a perfect synergy of what martial arts mean. Dorfman

“Karate is a way of life that encompasses the evolution of mind, body and spirit. The opportunity to serve children with terminal diseases is the highest calling of the discipline.”

is on the KKC board and recruited the first group of volunteers trained by Rabbi G.

“I have studied karate virtually my entire life and meditate every day using predominantly breathing techniques. So, having experienced the benefits of this first hand, the methodology resonated with me. Of course, being a medical doctor myself, provides a different context in understanding the underlying pathology. Tying this all together is particularly meaningful to me.

“Karate is a way of life that encompasses the evolution of mind, body and spirit. The opportunity to serve children with terminal diseases is the highest calling of the discipline. It is a huge privilege to be able to give back in this way, and KKC is a perfect extension of what martial arts are about.”

KKC volunteer Adam, a trainee accountant, says: “Martial arts has been very therapeutic and meditative in my own life. I volunteered because I could see the value in sharing this with children with cancer.

“The training was hard hitting. I work in corporate. Dealing with sick children is completely unknown. It is out of my realm of comfort, but I believe I will rise to the challenge,” he said.

Brendan, another volunteer and student of Shane Dorfman, also sees this as a chance to give back. “I have trained for the past 10 years with Sensei Shane and, having assisted with teaching kids in the dojo, I have seen the benefit. It is incredibly rewarding to see their development and growth.”

Michelle Rock, mother of a child with cancer, first encountered Rabbi G when her son was receiving treatment in New York several years ago. She is touched by the willingness and care of those involved in bringing KKC to South Africa.

Reason says:
look for more
diversity in senior
management.

Instinct says:
business growth
will follow.

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



Audit • Tax • Advisory www.gt.co.za

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M

MUIZENBERG

CPT

DINNER | MUIZENBERG HEBREW CONGREGATION | 27 OCT 2017 | 6:30PM

Israeli-themed dinner

Email: nselipsky@gmail.com

Contact: 0832651252

Cost: R100

MUSGRAVE

KZN

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | SILVERTON SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: WIZO Spreading Light - Unity candle lighting and welcome drinks 5:30pm

Night service: 6pm, meals at community homes

Shabbos day: Coffee and confectionery 8am, shacharit 8:30am, Shabbat community lunch 11am, mincha and Seudah Shlishit 5pm, Havdallah 6:55pm

Email: duhc@iafrica.com

Cost: Adults R80 | Kids R50 (under 10)

N

NORTHCLIFF

JHB

SHABBOS LUNCH | NORTHCLIFF SHUL | 28 OCT 2017

Contact: 082 851 6031

Email: sharon@northcliffshul.co.za

Cost: free

NORWOOD

JHB

DINNER & LUNCH | CHABAD OF NORWOOD | 27/28 OCT 2017 | 7:30PM & 12:00PM

Friday night: Mexican-themed dinner

Shabbos day: Brocha lunch followed by dessert in the park

Contact: www.tinyurl.com/shabbos5778

JHB

GREAT BIG CHALLAH BAKE | NORWOOD MALL 26 OCT 2017 | 6:30PM

Email: info@theshabbosproject.com

Address: Norwood Mall Rooftop

JHB

SHABBOS MEAL | OUR PARENTS HOME | 27/28 OCT 2017

Kabbalat Shabbat 5pm, Shacharit 8:30am, Shabbat Project Kiddush and meals

Contact: Denise 011 489 7195

JHB

CHALLAH BAKE | OUR PARENTS HOME 26 OCT 2017 | 2PM

Email: yalif@jhbchev.co.za

Cost: No charge

O

OAKLANDS

JHB

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | GREAT PARK SHUL 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Shabbat Dinner in the Park, catered by Stan and Pete

Shabbat day: Deluxe brocha

Email: zachi@greatpark.co.za

Cost: Adults R350 | Kids R210 (7-13 years)

O

ORCHARDS

JHB

ORCHARDS DARK TISCH

44 Oaklands Road

9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

JHB

SHABBOS DAY | JHB SEPHARDI SHUL 28 OCT 2017

Lunch, Seudat Shlishit, Havdallah

Email: secretary@jhbsephardi.co.za

JHB

LEARNING | KOLLEL YAD SHAUl

Learning programme, boys lunch: ages 11 and up, Shalosh Seudos

JHB

SHABBOS DAY | PINE STREET SHUL 28 OCT 2017

Shabbos day: All-day programme - lunch, shiurim, Seudat Shlishit, Havdallah

Contact: admin@pineshul.co.za

Cost: Family R650 | Person R350 | Single R175

P

PERCELIA ESTATE

JHB

SHABBOS DAY | HAMA'OR CENTRE

Special guest speaker on Shabbos day

S

SANDRINGHAM

JHB

3RD MEAL | AISH HATORAH | 28 OCT 2017

Communal third meal with Miriam Feinberg, kids programme, musical Havdallah with Shooby Doob Shloimy

Contact: 011 485 2985

Cost: R30 per adult

JHB

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | SANDRINGHAM GARDENS | 27/28 OCT 2017

Kabbalat Shabbat 6pm in the new Nosh Cafe, Shachrit at 8:30am, Kiddush and meals

Contact: Avril 011 483 7495

JHB

CHALLAH BAKE | SANDRINGHAM GARDENS | 26 OCT 2017 | 9:30AM

Contact: 087 809 4459

Email: yalif@jhbchev.co.za

Cost: No charge

SANDTON

JHB

THE SHABBOS RETREAT | SANDTON CENTRAL SHUL | 27 OCT 2017 | 6:15PM

Shabbos retreat and community dinner

Email: batya@chabad.org.za

Cost: R900

JHB

SANDTON DARK TISCH

Sandton Shul Campus

9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

S

SANDTON

JHB

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | SANDTON SHUL

Friday night: 5pm - Cocktails with Rabbi Moffson | 7pm - communal dinner

Shabbat morning: 10am - Teenage breakfast | 11am - Lunch | Shiurim | Seudat Shlishit and Havdallah Concert with Derech Achim

Email: sandtonshul@sandtonshul.co.za

JHB

HAVDALLAH CONCERT | SANDTON SHUL HALL | 28 OCT 2017 | 8PM

Havdallah Concert with the trending music of Derech Achim live in concert, a joint unity project of Sandton Shul, Ohr Somayach and Chabad, inviting the entire community to participate

Email: havdallahconcert@gmail.com

JHB

CHOLENT COOK-OFF | OHR SOMAYACH GALLO MANOR | 25 OCT 2017

Cholent cook-off for men and boys

SAVOY

JHB

WAVERLY/ SAVOY DARK TISCH

Ohr Somayach Savoy

9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

JHB

COMMUNAL SHABBOS LUNCH | OHR SOMAYACH SAVOY | 27 OCT 2017 | 1PM

Email: office@ohrsavoy.co.za

Cost: Adults R150 | Kids (under 12) R90

JHB

DINNER | KOSHER NANDO'S SAVOY | 27 OCT 2017

Nando's Friday night dinner

Email: marisa@nandos.com

SEA POINT

CPT

CAPE TOWN DARK TISCH

Marais Road Shul

9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

CPT

SHABBAT UNDER THE STARS | SEA POINT COMMUNITY | 27 OCT 2017 | 7:30PM

Email: kerry@maraisroadshul.com

Cost: Adults R180 | Kids R120

CPT

SHABBOS DAY | MORASHA | 28 OCT 2017

Picnic lunch and activities, Seudat Shlishit and Havdallah

Email: info@morasha.co.za

Contact: 021 434 8680

CPT

SHABBAT EXPERIENCE | OHR SOMAYACH | 27/28 OCT 2017

Luxury Bedouin Banquet, Shabbat morning - Parents-Kids learning, third meal and Havdallah Concert

Contact: 021 434 6772

Cost: Adults R260 | Students R185 | Kids: (4 - 12) R80

S

SELBORNE

EL

CHALLAH BAKE | JEWISH WOMEN'S CIRCLE | 25 OCT 2017 | 7PM

Email: cmanoch7@aol.com

Contact: 043-722-2071

STELLENBOSCH

CPT

CHALLAH BAKE | STELLENBOSCH SHUL HALL | 25 OCT 2017 | 6:30PM

Email: janene@pvprop.co.za

SYDENHAM

JHB

SHABBOS EXPERIENCE | SYDENHAM SHUL 27/28 OCT 2017

Friday night: Street brocha with sausages, stix and Smirnoff

Shabbos day: Brocha, family lunch, Shalosh Seudos and musical Havdallah

Email: sydshul@sydshul.co.za

Cost: Family lunch cost R150 Per adult | R70 for kids under 12

U

UMHLANGA

KZN

CHALLAH BAKE | UJC | 25 OCT 2017

Challah Bake. Ladies shiur

Contact: UJC 031 566 3227

Email: jcfdbn@gmail.com

Cost: No charge - donations appreciated

V

VICTORY PARK

JHB

VICTORY PARK DARK TISCH

King David Victory Park

9:30PM | FRIDAY NIGHT | FREE

JHB

SHABBOS DINNER & LUNCH | VICTORY PARK SHUL | 27/28 OCT 2017

Contact: 082 881 3147

Email: vpshul@telkomsa.net

W

WAVERLEY

JHB

CHALLAH BAKE | DL LINK, BIKKUR CHOLIM, SOSA AND CHAZAK | WAVERLEY SHUL | 26 OCT 2017 | 3:15PM

Mini Challah Bake for those not strong enough to attend the main challah bake

Contact: Lorraine 011 882 8322 | 081 391 3193

Email: jcarejoburg@gmail.com

JHB

LUNCH | WAVERLEY SHUL | 28 OCT 2017

Lunch, plus shiurim happening all afternoon

Cost: Adults R135 | Kids R50 (3-5 years)

YOUR SHABBOS PROJECT 2017 EVENT GUIDE

