

Art & antiques auction 9 December 2017 9:30 am
Items wanted for future auctions

View upcoming auction highlights at www.rkauctioneers.co.za
011 789 7422 • 083 675 8468 • 12 Allan Road, Bordeaux, Johannesburg



Joan Miró,
Les Voyants,
lithograph
R70 000 - R100 000



Dylan Lewis,
Standing Leopard II,
bronze
R200 000 - 300 000

south african
Jewish Report

■ Volume 21 – Number 40 ■ November 24 2017 ■ 6 Kislev 5778

www.sajr.co.za

Euphoria at end of Mugabe era

Photo: Jason Crouse



Ilan Wiesenbacher and Mduduzi Mdlongwa celebrating in the streets of Bulawayo. See page 3.



EVITA
Booked by
TIM RICE
Music by
ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER
Directed by
HAROLD PRINCE

**TIM RICE & ANDREW LLOYD WEBBER'S
GREATEST MUSICAL**

MONTECASINO JO'BURG • 14 OCTOBER - 26 NOVEMBER
Book at computicket.com
or montecasino.co.za
Box Office: 011 511 1818

ARTSCAPE CAPE TOWN • 1 DECEMBER - 7 JANUARY
Bookings at Artscape Dial-A-Seat 021 421 7695,
or Computicket on 011 340 8000 or computicket.com

**Fridges, Dishwashers,
Washing Machines, Stoves
Tumble Dryers & more**
Call Jason
082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532
FREE QUOTATIONS

HAROLD'S REMOTES
Est. 1977

Keys & Key Cutting

Remote Control Transmitters for

★ **Alarms** ★ **Gates** ★

★ **Garage Doors** ★

81 Hathorn Avenue Cnr Durham St,
Raedene Estate (free parking)
Tel: 082-881-3720

**YESHIVA
COLLEGE**
The Torah School of Excellence



Playschool | Pre-Primary | Primary | Girls High | Boys High

Yeshiva College
Kodesh department
invites all applicants for the
post of a full time and part time
Limudai Kodesh teacher
starting January 2018.

Applicants must identify with the
Ethos of Yeshiva College.

Relevant teaching diploma is essential.

Only successful candidates will be contacted.

**Please email a short CV to
t.spangenberg@yeshivacollege.co.za**

**Show your love, gratitude &
appreciation with our beautiful
presentations, filled with
fruit, nuts and chocolates**

Kingswood Centre,
9 Northfield Ave, Glenhazel

☎ (011) 440-4924



VEHICLES WANTED



**Any make, any model, any condition
Accident damaged vehicles and non-runners also wanted**

☎ **Arnold Orkin 082-823-7826**
AUTO AFRICA

The Star dishes up three-year-old story as news

ELIANA CLINE

A bizarre article about a German astronaut working at the International Space Station having photographed rocket fire over Gaza last week, was featured in The Star and other Independent Media Group (IMG) publications.

The story claimed that the current Israeli air and ground offensive had killed at least 700 Palestinians and injured over 4 200.

It might have been an interesting story, had it not been written three years ago and set during the battle over Gaza. Despite there being no offensive between Israel and Gaza at the moment and no deaths reported, this article made it into the newspapers without question.

This infuriated the South African Zionist Federation and others in the community.

Ben Swartz, SAZF national chairperson, says this article is a perpetuation of biased anti-Israel media reporting by the IMG.

"This is an ongoing problem, where the Group continues to publish blatant misinformation against Israel – old news' deliberately printed in an attempt to discredit Israel once again in order to whip up popular rhetoric against the country.

"After years of monitoring Israel-related media in South Africa, we are appalled at the latest ploy they have adopted. It's no secret that they have continuously shown their deliberate intent, by printing highly prejudicial and

damaging stories.

"Their consistent half-truths and misleading journalism, is a deliberate tactic to sway their audience to suit their anti-Israel agenda. This is certainly not the first time, and it won't be the last time in which they knowingly misrepresent the facts."

When their attention was drawn to the story, IMG apologised for the error that they say was "an honest mistake" based on an inaccurate media source with no intention to mislead or misinform on their part.

Shannon Ebrahim, foreign editor of the IMG, says that she "deeply regrets" the unfortunate occurrence that was the result of a genuine mistake. "I would like to profoundly apologise to you and our readers about the fact that the article regarding the astronaut Gerst appears on the world page today."

She explained: "The person who put the world page together yesterday, pulled the story from the front page of Telesur, as supposedly "breaking news". This was a story that came out on July 23, 2014 and should never have been used."

She gave her assurance that there would be a retraction the following day on the same World News page. There was, but it was a tiny innocuous "for the record" statement in the corner that did not vaguely appease the SAZF.

Says Ebrahim: "We usually only use Telesur as a Latin American news site, and I have instructed that from now on it should never be

used for stories on the Middle East, and we will also have to look at the veracity of their stories in general from now on. I have also asked for an explanation from Telesur's management for how they could position such an article as current news.

"We do strive to maintain balance on the world page in terms of Israeli-Palestinian issues, and as foreign editor I welcome further engagement with you on this matter. Please accept our humble apology, and we will strive to ensure that such a mistake never happens again."

Ebrahim maintains she wants open communication to exist between her and the Jewish community.

"I feel truly sad about the article because I really wanted to build bridges with the Zionist community. I wish it hadn't happened. It is truly a regrettable mistake. I want there to be an open dialogue between us, and if there is an article that we run which there are objections to, I wish those involved would communicate with me directly with suggestions and constructive criticism."

Shabbat times this week

Starts	Ends	
18:23	19:16	Johannesburg
19:18	20:15	Cape Town
18:19	19:13	Durban
18:36	19:31	Bloemfontein
18:49	19:46	Port Elizabeth
18:38	19:34	East London

Parshat Vayeitzei

The pressure principle

Do we need security and comfort to do well in life? Do we achieve more when we are relaxed and comfortable, or when we are challenged and provoked?

And Jacob left Beer-Sheba and went to Haran. Beer-Sheba represented peace and tranquility. Haran stood for violence and immorality. It was the hub of tumult and turmoil, home of Laban the swindler and sheep-thief of note.

Yet, ironically, it was there in Haran where Jacob raised his family. There in Haran were the twelve tribes of Israel born and bred.

Abraham had a wonderful son named Isaac, but he also fathered Ishmael. Isaac bore the pious Jacob but also had a ruffian named Esau. Only Jacob is described as "select of the forefathers" because his children were all righteous, his "progeny was perfect".

Asks the Lubavitcher Rebbe, would not Beer-Sheba have made a better place for Jacob to have raised his children? Would not Beer-Sheba have been the ideal hothouse for the future Jewish people to be conceived and nurtured? Why, of all places, in Haran?

Says the Rebbe: The olive yields its best oil when pulverised. To produce gold, we need a fiery furnace where the intense heat

on the raw metal leaves it purified and precious.

Jacob did not have an easy life, but it made him a better man and it made his children better children.

Life isn't always smooth sailing. But it appears that the Creator in His vast eternal plan, intended for us to experience difficulties in life. Evidently, we grow from our discomfort and challenges to emerge better, stronger, wiser and more productive people.

There is always a purpose to pain. As the physiotherapists tell us (with such compassion that I want to hit them!): No pain, no gain. It would seem that, like the olive, we too yield our very best when we are under pressure.

I don't know about you, but I need to see a deadline staring me in the face to really get myself motivated. The simple fact is that we produce best under pressure.

In fact, one of the reasons we use a hard-boiled egg on the seder plate over Pesach, is to remind us of the festival offering brought on Yomtov. But, the truth is that any cooked food would do, so why an egg?

One of my favourite answers is that Jews are like eggs. The more they boil us, the harder we get. We have been punished and persecuted enough, but it has only strengthened us, given us courage, faith and hope. And no matter where in history it has happened, we have always emerged from the tzorres of the time more tenacious, determined, and stronger than ever.

Jacob raised a beautiful family in less than ideal conditions. Please G-d, we should emulate his example.

Wherever we may be living and in whatever circumstances, may we rise to the challenge and live successful lives and raise happy, healthy Jewish children who will build the future tribes of Israel.



**Rabbi Yossy
Goldman,
Sydenham Shul**

South African
Jewish Report



Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860-525-200
Board of Directors Howard Sackstein (Chairman), Herby Rosenberg, Dina Diamond, Herschel Jawitz, Shaun Matisonn, Benjy Porter.
Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editors and staff. Tel: (011) 430-1980.

Editor Peta Krost Maunders – editor@sajewishreport.co.za • Sub-editor Paul Maree • Senior writer Nicola Miltz
Editorial Co-ordinator Martine Bass – editorial@sajewishreport.co.za • Proofreader Kim Hatchuel
Advertising and distribution Britt Landsman: 082-292-9520 – britt@sajewishreport.co.za
Design and layout Bryan Maron/Design Bandits – bryan@designbandits.co.za

We buy and sell cars

www.samotorcorporation.co.za

11 Republic Road, Bordeaux, Randburg Tel: (011) 326-1954



**SA MOTOR
CORPORATION**

Feeling their way around a Zimbabwe without Mugabe as president

TALI FEINBERG

Zimbabwean Jews are “cautiously optimistic” about their future and the future of their country. While they may not have been out on the streets revelling in former President Robert Gabriel Mugabe’s resignation on Tuesday evening, they definitely “share in the joy of the nation”, says Harare Hebrew Congregation President Arnold Joffe.

“We are very relieved that it is a new beginning for our economy and people’s freedom,” he says.

Brian Brom is a Zimbabwean who lives in South Africa, but travels there regularly, and has worked closely with the government. He says that soon-to-be interim President Emmerson Mnangagwa – who is believed to have instigated the military takeover after being fired by Mugabe – wants the country to change and to be welcomed into the international fold.

Brom knows him well and says that despite his violent past as Mugabe’s second in command, he thinks he is good for the country.

Brom also believes Mnangagwa is a deeply religious man and may be more supportive of Israel and open to Israelis coming to assist Zimbabwe, particularly in agriculture.

Alana Baranov grew up in Zimbabwe and moved to South Africa as a young child. She works in human rights education, and has been extensively involved in her country of birth, advocating for human rights.

Although she is sceptical of the way change occurred, she couldn’t help being swept up in the joy of the moment. “To think that Mugabe was president when I was born there, and now he is gone, is truly incredible.”

As one of the many Zimbabweans living in the Diaspora, she hopes to play a role in advocating for change, and feels that many Zimbabweans around the world can do the same to help rebuild society.

“Remember, the tyrant has been removed but the system hasn’t been changed, and what happened is due to more than just one man,” she cautions. “The power is in the hands of the army generals, who were by Mugabe’s side for decades. Mnangagwa had a role to play in the genocide of the Ndebele (figures fluctuate between 20 000 and 100 000 killed), and the oppression of democratic activists.”

Baranov has friends and family who were jailed and tortured on orders from Mnangagwa and his men. “The past is still present,” she emphasises, “We need to be vigilant and ensure democracy is placed in the hands of the people.”

She adds that there is a rich Jewish history in Zimbabwe and that the many young Jewish Zimbabweans living around the world now have the opportunity to strengthen that connection. There is also archival material and historical records that need to be documented. “This can be an exciting

period for growth and development, and young people can play a part,” she concludes.

Joffe agrees that Mugabe’s resignation does not mean that the challenges of the past and present are all over, and hopes that rational policy and the implementation of a full democracy under the new regime will be implemented as soon as possible.

African Jewish Congress Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft concurred that he is delighted it wasn’t a hostile takeover. “The question is how it will pan out – only time will tell.” He feels that the Jewish community can be “cautiously optimistic”, and hopes that those who left, may go back to reopen factories (which have been left as they were) and invest in the country.

He recalls the Zimbabwean Jewish community in its heyday as being a vibrant and actively Zionist community, enjoying the privileges of living in the breadbasket of Africa. However, despite its small numbers of about 100 souls today, it still maintains a rich Jewish life and communal spirit.

“When you are a small community, your best strategy is to lie low, otherwise you will be the target when things go wrong,” explains the rabbi.

From his perspective, it was when Mugabe married his second wife Grace that things went downhill for the country. He has met Mugabe in the past and describes him as “no fool, highly educated and deeply religious”. As the African Jewish Congress rabbi, he will meet the incoming leadership in due course.

Raymond Roth in Bulawayo is proud that Zimbabweans have dealt with this sweeping change so calmly, and that there is no indication of tension.

He says that they have not been fearful – in fact, on Friday night they had a full shul service and brocha, and no one mentioned any concerns. He thanked Jews around the world for the ongoing messages of concern, support and well-wishes.

A Jewish woman who lives in Johannesburg and was born in Zimbabwe, grew up there and is still a citizen, says that the news has made her want to go home. “I would love to go back and I’m sure I’m not the only one. South Africa has been good, but it is not home.”

The woman recalls a glorious and safe childhood spent outdoors. She would love the same idyllic life for her daughter.

She feels it is possible and that because Zimbabweans are so peaceful, it is actually safer than South Africa. “I’ve never heard of a hijacking in Zimbabwe. There is no real crime and people won’t hurt you.”

Her parents and brother still live there and she says they are all thrilled, especially because there was no bloodshed. “There is a long way to go, but the first step has happened.”



Robert Mugabe and Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft

SAVOY PHARMACY

MONDAY – FRIDAY
8:30am – 7:00pm

SATURDAY
9:00am – 2:00pm

SUNDAY & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS
9:00am – 1:00pm

(011) 885-1200/1

savoy@medicarepharmacies.co.za

PERCELIA PHARMACY

MONDAY – THURSDAY
8:30am – 6:00pm

FRIDAY
8:30am – 4:30pm

SATURDAY: Closed

SUNDAY
9:00am – 1:00pm

(011) 640-4321/31

percelia@medicarepharmacies.co.za

SANDTON / WYNBERG

THE BATTERY SPECIALISTS

Sandton/Wynberg

Tel: 011 887 7336

Cell: 082 823 0655

Motor City

Cnr Rautenbach

& 6th Street

Jorge & Jean

Balfour/Highlands North

Tel: 011 440 8980

Cell: 073 559 1053

Cnr 11th Ave

& Louis Botha

Also from Athol Street

Tony

Imageworld
Glenhazel

Do you need?

- * Digital Prints on any media
- * Large & Small Formats
- * Customised Vinyl stickers & labels
- * Customised Benching Cards
- * Banners & Canvas Prints
- * Customised T Shirts & Mugs
- * Rubber Stamps
- * Plan Prints & Colour Posters
- * Copying, Laminating & Binding
- * Customised Signage
- * Flyers, Calendars, etc.

We are here for you

Your ONE stop digital Shop

Shop 19 Kingswood Centre
9 Northfield Avenue
Glenhazel

email: imageworld@telkomsa.net

Find us on facebook.

Tel: 011 440 5598

JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

INVEST IN PROPERTY IN ISRAEL FROM R5 MILLION

Contact Herschel Jawitz in strict confidence: 082 571 1829 | herschel@jawitz.co.za

ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Waverley - R3.399 Million
A sophisticated, upmarket, urban cluster. Duplex unit with stylish open plan living/dining, new kitchen, guest cloak, enclosed patio, compact garden, 3 beds, 2 baths. Single garage, staff, pet friendly, great security & 24 hr guard. Directions: North along Scott St from Stirling, right into complex. Web Ref: 125853

Chrissie Hammer 082 568 0440 | 011 880 3550

ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Bedford Park - R2.2 Million
Oakham, John Ave. A rare find in a secure and well maintained complex. Open plan lounge and dining room. Inter leading TV room or study. Covered patio with roller blinds. Spacious well maintained private garden. 2 Bedrooms, 2 Bathrooms (MES) with dressing room in main bedroom. Kitchen with enclosed courtyard. 1 maids room with private bathroom. Serene pool area with lapa in the complex. Directions: Follow pointers from Club Str into John Ave. Web Ref: 125071

Lauren Shalpid 083 789 0229

ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Glenhazel - Inviting Buyers from R3.499 Million
29 Northfield Avenue, Glenhazel. Offers from R3.499 Million. This home has it all..... Space....Light and bright gourmet eat in kitchen with pesach kitchen, stunning covered entertainment patio onto super pool and glorious garden, separate study, 3 modern bathrooms. Lots of off street parking. Hurry to view. Asking more. Directions: Along Northfield Avenue. Web Ref: 115474

Joel Harris 082 926 0287 | Marco 082 048 2644

ON SHOW THIS SUNDAY

Morningside - R3.999 Million
It's all about lifestyle. The peace to rest your soul and calm your life. This cluster, redone to perfection, is a family home filled with warmth and sophistication. 3 en-suite bedrooms, a pyjama lounge and sun-filled open-plan living areas that spill onto a comfortable patio and kiddy-sized garden and pool. Add a staff suite, double garage, 24-hour security and guest parking and you have a haven for the weary. Truly enchanting. Directions: Rivonia Rd into North Rd, follow pointers. Web Ref: 124842

Norma Robinson 082 554 7260 | Romaine Buchalter 082 685 5177

Rabbi leads ANC stalwarts in song

NICOLA MILTZ

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan broke into a popular Sotho prayer song at the end of a moving address in front of a crowd of hundreds, who enthusiastically joined in.

This wasn’t a festive event at Great Park Shul, it was one of the most memorable moments at last week’s ANC stalwarts and veterans national consultative conference.

And the audience at Constitution Hill was filled with die-hard ANC veterans and stalwarts. These included: Thabo Mbeki, Ben Turok, Trevor Manuel, Lindiwe Sisulu, Denis Goldberg, Sheila Sisulu, Andrew Mlangeni, Kgalema Motlanthe, Gertude Shope and Pravin Gordhan. Hazdan led them all with a well-known refrain from *Modimo re boka wena*, an African gospel lyric which thanks The Creator of all Things.

In that short, powerful moment during the three-day long conference, entitled Reclaiming our History for the Sake of our Future, there was a glimmer of hope and unity as the elders reminisced with nostalgia about the glory days of the party they once fought for.

“The rabbi’s speech was enormously successful,” said long-serving ANC veteran and Johannesburg city councillor, Joy Coplan who arranged for him to form part of the religious panel of speakers during the conference.

“I felt very deeply in that moment for this group of remarkable people, these veterans and stalwarts, who

led the struggle to fight apartheid. They went underground, they went into exile, they put their lives at risk and they feel that the state of the ANC today does not reflect the values of what they fought for and what they sacrificed their lives for.”

In a no-holds-barred keynote address, author and former vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, Njabulo S Ndebele, the tone was set for the conference. “The scourge of corruption in South Africa today has gone beyond being a matter of law and order,” he lamented. “What has happened in South Africa today is that the government that was elected to act according to, support and promote law, order, and Constitutional rule, has abdicated that responsibility. It has itself become a thief that steals.

“Under this government, syndicated thieving has become the very purpose of government, because government has become an instrument that protects itself from the consequences of its own transgressions.”

Many of those present also expressed their dismay at the state of affairs within the fractured ANC and the country itself.

Former ANC councillor, Sol Cowan, said the atmosphere throughout the three days was “charged”.

“It was pretty refreshing to realise in the abyss of toxicity going on around us, there is a large group within the ANC that are venting their frustrations and giving voice to their discontent about the state of affairs in our country and within

the ANC itself.”

He said he left with a sense of hope.

“I think the tide is starting to turn against corruption. The conference has put pressure on the ANC leadership and has highlighted the problems to the outside world and the ANC itself.

The conference will serve to influence members going to the ANC elective conference in December, in that they must elect a new leadership. This leadership needs to revitalise the country and the organisation based on the principles of what the ANC used to stand for namely integrity and transparency.”

In his speech Rabbi Hazdan said that South Africans had so much to be grateful for to the ANC for delivering all of its citizens from the “tyranny and devastation of apartheid”.

He said the Freedom Charter and the Constitution made this country “a beacon of reconciliation and hope for the whole world.

“South Africa taught the world how to find our collective soul of humanity, how to kindle hope amidst apathy and despair and how to reconstruct a broken world.”

He added that Nelson Mandela had stirred the nation to unite and to build together.

“Sadly today, our New South Africa is burdened by the recurring pain of corruption, and a leadership that is distracted by a self-serving focus and the pursuit of

personal gain and enrichment.

“We have been embarrassed by state capture, the wanton spending of public funds, the loss of morality and the appointments of leaders for personal gain. We have lost the focus and the will to address poverty and deprivation.”

Hazdan added that the Jewish community had the same aspirations and hopes as all other religions and cultures. “We want to rekindle the flame and soul of South Africa to achieve a moral, just, caring and safe society for our rainbow nation.

“All South Africans deserve leaders who will once again make the future well-being of the children of South Africa the priority of our beautiful great nation of heroes.”

and veterans said they had come together “united by our love and concerns” for South Africa.

“We are deeply troubled by the abandonment of the ANC’s historic values and principles, which has undermined popular confidence in government, parliament, state-owned entities and other public institutions.” It said that this was an “unprecedented political crisis” and that the current leadership was “paralysed and unable” to deal with ill-discipline, incompetence and corruption that pointed directly at the President.

In the declaration, the stalwarts insisted that the ANC needed a thorough organisational renewal and called for the ANC to establish a committee to develop a renewal document. This should include a plan of action that would take urgent and practical steps to professionalise and modernise the party.

They also called for the electoral system to be reviewed and for an electoral review commission to be set up. They said that building a non-racial society, remained a fundamental principle of the ANC and that civil society was to be treated as a natural ally for the enhancement of nation-building and service delivery.

“We will not allow the ANC to die under our watch,” they declared, and they called for the immediate resignation of Jacob Zuma “for the sake of our future”.



Rabbi Dovid Hazdan

In the conference’s final adopted declaration, the ANC stalwarts

BLACK FRIDAY + WEEK

FREE WHEEL ALIGNMENT & BALANCING!!

WHEN YOU BUY 4 TYRES!

OUR TYRE PRICES ARE FANTASTIC!

MOTOMAGS & TYRE

WHERE THE BOSS DOES IT HIMSELF!

011 440-9540

Frank Solomon Hearing Centre

- Affordable Hearing Aids for Pensioners
- 2 Year Warranty
- No Follow-Up Charges
- Latest Technology
- Small and Discreet Hearing Aids
- Extensive Wireless Communication Portfolio Available
- Supplements for Tinnitus, treatment approved by the American ENT association

FREE hearing screen TEST

WORLD's FIRST Built-in Lithium-ion Rechargeable Hearing Aid

PHONAK
life is on

Fairmount:
George Ave, Sandringham
Johannesburg
Fax: 011 849-3027

CONTACT US: (011) 849-6256

Open on Sundays 09h30 to 13h00

Additional Branches:
Bedfordview • Benoni • Germiston • Mondéor

Pre-arranged or not prearranged

NICOLA MILTZ

A messy war of words has been ignited over what led to a meeting between a visiting Israeli minister and South Africa’s Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa.

Only those directly in the diplomatic loop know exactly how it came to be that Molewa, also the chairperson of the ANC National Executive Committee (NEC) Sub-committee on International Relations, met with Israel’s Minister of Regional Co-operation Tzachi Hanegbi. Was it planned, scheduled and pencilled in? Or was it simply by chance that they should meet in the corridors of the ANC head offices in Johannesburg on Monday, November 6?

Whatever the case may be, the interactions between the politicians and diplomats from both countries have ruffled feathers among South Africa’s anti-Israel lobbyists.

In July the ANC called for an investigation into whether to downgrade the South African Embassy in Israel to a liaison office, saying it was concerned by the “lack of commitment” from Israel to finding a resolution to the Palestinian question.

Molewa’s International Relations Sub-committee is the party’s forum that will discuss and make a recommendation on the proposed downgrade during the ANC’s elective conference next month.

Hanegbi told the Jerusalem Post that it was for this reason that he and the Israeli Embassy requested the meeting.

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD), said yesterday: “The meeting was constructive, with an open and honest discussion around peace building between the Israelis and Palestinians and a possible role that South Africa, with its successful transition could play. The SAJBD notes the misunderstandings that have ensued since the meeting and are engaging with the parties directly.”

This follows a diplomatic hullabaloo over statements and retractions from the ANC as to whether the meetings were planned or not.

Here is what we know:

On Monday November 6, Minister Hanegbi met with veteran politician and Minister in the Presidency, Jeff Radebe and with Minister Edna Molewa.

On Tuesday November 7, the ANC put out a statement saying that the meetings took place and that they were held at the request of Minister Hanegbi’s office and that the delegation was received by Minister Molewa, together with members of her sub-committee.

That same day Keinan posted on his Facebook page and on Twitter: “Great meeting with South African ministers”.

In a press release the Israeli Embassy said: “Israeli Minister

for Regional Co-operation, Tzachi Hanegbi, visited South Africa from the 3rd to the 6th of November. Meetings included Minister Jeff Radebe, Tokyo Sexwale, Minister of Water and Environmental Affairs Edna Molewa, and also engaged with the South African Jewish community.

And then it became sticky. So much so that Molewa claimed in an op-ed piece in the Mail and Guardian that “this was an unplanned, unscheduled, chance encounter”.

Hanegbi countered this by saying the meeting was prearranged it was not “coincidental”.

Minister Molewa added in the op-ed that it was “regrettable” that the Israeli Embassy in South Africa had described the “last minute meeting” as “inter-ministerial” in its media releases and on its social media. She reiterated the ANC’s support for a free Palestine.

In the opinion piece, Molewa said it was “mischievous to infer that this engagement implies that the ANC’s support for the Palestinian cause is wavering.”

With regards to the possible downgrade, Molewa said: “It was put to the delegation that only the ANC’s national conference in December could take a final resolution on the matter. The delegation was advised that they could submit written inputs to the task team for the ANC national conference on this issue as well as on other matters.”

Memories of loved ones lost on the Helderberg are crystal clear 30 years later

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

“We were waiting for my dad to come home and watching the news, when we realised that the plane had gone missing.” Carin Berman (née Marcus) has a crystal clear memory of the moments that led up to the realisation that her father was not coming home when the Helderberg plane crashed.

She was just 11 at the time. It will be 30 years ago on Tuesday that South African Airways Flight 295, from Taipei to Johannesburg, crashed into the Indian Ocean east of Mauritius. It took with it the 159 people onboard, including Jossie Marcus and Ruth Machlup.

The Boeing 747 suffered an inflight fire in the cargo hold – the cause of which was never conclusively proven. This led to a number of conspiracy theories, the most popular of which holds that the apartheid government concealed the fact that it was using commercial planes, including the Helderberg, to illegally transport arms, as it was under an arms embargo at the time. Whatever your theory, the fact remains that hundreds of families were left to mourn the loss of loved ones.

November 28, 1987 is indelibly marked in many people’s memories, but none so much as the children and family of the victims.

Jossie Marcus wasn’t meant to be on South African Airways Flight 295. He had gone on a business trip to Taipei and his homecoming was delayed, so he booked to return on the Helderberg. Berman recalls the shock and confusion of finding out about the crash on the news. “It was then just an ongoing barrage of news.”

Leaving behind Carin, as well as her two brothers, who were three and 14 at the time, Jossie’s 37-year-old wife had to raise their family alone.

“We were so young, but he left such a positive legacy, there are so many people who speak so highly of him. He was an absolute



Jossie Marcus

mensh in so many senses of the word. We were lucky that he left an amazing legacy in the 41 years that he was in the world, but he wasn’t here long enough for us.”

The family got through their loss by bandying together. “The closeness and support of family, being in an amazing supportive school environment and my mom who was amazing and kept things going, got us through,” says Carin.

“She became our axis and support. We



The SAA Helderberg memorial in Mauritius

Jossie Marcus wasn’t meant to be on South African Airways Flight 295. He had gone on a business trip to Taipei and his homecoming was delayed, so he booked to return on the Helderberg.

always had permission to grieve and to cry.” Asked about all the questions that still surround the crash, Carin says one needs to come to peace with it. “One learns to live in a world where there are no answers, you have to on some level make sense of the fact that sometimes there aren’t answers.

“Today, I’m a grief therapist and everything I do is around grief and loss. One can’t live in an unresolved space or with anger forever – you have to find a space for those emotions and create a meaningful life around that. I always live my life by freedom and faith – realising what’s in our hands and what isn’t.”

Now a bereavement counsellor, Carin says every element of her life was impacted by her dad’s passing. “I always feel very blessed that although he hasn’t been part of my life for all of these years, so much of what I do is because of him in my life and him out of my life.”

Reflecting on the anniversary of the crash, she says: “Thirty years is a crazy length of time. My dad is still such a fundamental part of my life, though, and I keep his legacy alive, for myself and for my children, I want them to have a sense of who their grandfather was. He’s not forgotten, he’s present. You create a life around your loss and you hope it enhances the life that you choose to live thereafter.”

For Peter Machlup, losing his mother Ruth Machlup on the crash, was completely devastating. “My mom was a travel person, she was big, exhuberant and loud. When she spoke, people listened. She had a very commanding and engaging way about her. People who met Ruth Machlup never forgot her,” he says.

“She was worldly and gentle and kind and she was my favourite person in the whole world.”

A nursery school teacher by profession, Ruth studied travel and tour guiding and she consulted for a travel business. On an educational trip through her travel

company, Ruth, 57, had been in China learning about Hong Kong and Taiwan. As he was about to get ready to fetch his mother at the airport, Peter saw the news on the TV at the foot of his bed. “I freaked out. I called SAA technical hoping they could help, asking how long a plane could float. I still get goose-bumps. It was chaos.”

The only small comfort Peter and his family could take, was that Ruth’s was one of the eight bodies recovered from the crash. “We did have a funeral at West Park, which over the years I came to appreciate was a good form of closure, especially since so many families didn’t have that.

“The body of her travel companion, Lauren Pillemer, a Jewish girl in her 20s who was studying travel, was also recovered.”

Amidst their grief, Peter and his sister laughed out loud one night, saying: “Our Ruth was never one who would go quietly, she went out on the front page of The Sunday Times!”

Peter was about to turn 30 when Ruth passed away and says even though he was an adult, one is never ready to lose a parent. “I’d been so close to her all my life. She always wanted lots of grandsons, she joked. Within five years of her death, the first grandson was born and today she would have had six grandsons. She would’ve been one hell of a grandmother!”

Certain that this was the fault of the apartheid government carrying contraband, Peter had a lot of anger and bitterness towards the government. While he toyed with getting the authorities to reopen the case over a decade later, he and other victim families decided against it.

“We realised we needed to focus on the living rather than the dead. I take comfort knowing she died travelling – doing what she loved doing – just about 30 years too early.”

BLACK FRIDAY HISENSE SPECIALS From Thurs 23 – Sun 26



220L
Hisense
Fridge

R21 99
WAS R2699



7kg Hisense
Silver
Washing
Machine

R3699
WAS R4099



32inch
Hisense TV

R2499
WAS R2899



Hisense
Bar
Fridge

R1 499
WAS R1899

MIDWAYS MALL
280 Corlett Drive, Bramley Gardens
Tel: 011 887 5456 / 011 440 9571
Monday to Friday 8am - 5pm
Saturday 8am - 1pm / Sunday 10am - 1pm
www.idealfurn.co.za



Prices never to be repeated • Limited stock

South African Jewish Report

Downgrading the SA embassy in Israel would punish us

As the Zimbabweans celebrate the resignation of Mugabe, we here in South Africa are looking forward to the upcoming ANC elective conference. We are desperately hoping it will herald a new and uncorrupted leader – one who will put the lives and future of the people of this country first.

Other than that, our particular community is very concerned about another issue that is due to be raised at the conference. That is the proposed downgrading of the South African embassy in Israel.

What is the big deal, you may ask (and many have)? Why is the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) making such a big song and dance about this?

Suffice to say, it is a very big deal for us.

This move – if made – would be a punitive step on the part of the South African government. The aim would be to punish Israel for being the “occupier” of the land on which the Palestinians live. The belief is that Israel is not doing enough, fast enough, to sort out this problem.

But is it actually Israel that is going to suffer if they do this or just us, the South African Jews, who have an allegiance – by virtue of being Jewish – to the Jewish State?

Frankly, it is obvious to me that the latter is true. I am not sure it will have any real impact on Israel, a country that doesn’t rely on South Africa for much, if anything.

As much as Israel has said that it would like the South African government to help the Middle East with negotiating peace, I don’t believe they are holding their breath. They would also love to have more trade and improved economic ties with this country. But, again, I don’t think they are desperate for this either.

However, by cutting or “downgrading” diplomatic ties with Israel, it will hurt us a lot.

What the South African government may not understand is that our connections to Israel are not ties we willingly created in 1948 when the United Nations established a Jewish State. Our ties are religious, biblical, historical and familial and go back to Abraham and Isaac.

However, we are 100 per cent South Africans and, like all other citizens, we deserve to have our right to our cultural, religious and other ties with Israel respected.

Downgrading the embassy will alienate us and, as SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn so aptly put it, it would be undermining one of the pillars of our beliefs, practices and collective identity.

By downgrading the Israeli embassy, the South African government is punishing us – a people who are proud to be South African. We have a deep love of this beautiful, crazy, wonderful, diverse country we have chosen to call our home.

We may be a minority, but are deeply involved in the economy, law, social upliftment, politics and various other aspects of South Africa.

I do understand that a great deal of pressure has been put to bear on the government by the anti-Israel lobby. I also understand that there is a kinship between the ANC and the Palestinian people because the Palestinians supported the ANC when they were banned freedom fighters. There is a strong sense of loyalty to the Palestinians. I also understand that they believe Israel is the oppressor of the Palestinians.

What they don’t understand is that the Israeli-Palestinian situation is not that simple. It is not about one side being good and the other being bad. There is a much bigger and more detailed picture.

However, whatever your belief, the South African government needs to know that downgrading our embassy in Israel is going to harm us – loyal and dedicated South Africans – far more than anyone else.

And if they go ahead and downgrade, it won’t be so easy to upgrade again and we will be left with a long-term difficult and painful situation.

I can tell you that I may not always agree with everything that the Israeli government does, but that does nothing to sever my ties with Israel.

Most of the Jews in South Africa have relatives or friends who live in Israel. Most of us have visited a number of times and, like me, have spent a few years living there.

Before our government goes out to punish Israel by downgrading the embassy, please consider that it is us you will be harming and our rights to freedom of culture and religion that you will be infringing.

Thoko Mkhwanazi-Xaluva, the chairperson of the Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Commission, made a point that hit home for me in a panel discussion on the proposed downgrading.

She was adamant that by downgrading the embassy, the government would be violating the constitution (see pages 8 and 9). She made it clear that the human dignity of a South African cannot be forsaken in the name of politics, otherwise the Constitution is meaningless. She reiterated that in this case, it is not just one person, but the dignity and rights of an entire community, that would be forsaken by downgrading the South African embassy in Israel. Please don’t let this happen!

Shabbat Shalom!

Peta Krost Maunder
Editor



PAULA SLIER

The future of Syria is anyone’s guess, but increasingly the odds are that Israel’s northern neighbour will evolve into either a Russian- or Iranian-controlled country. That is, with Syrian President Bashar Assad now controlling nearly two-thirds of his country, thanks to Russian and Iranian assistance.

The irony is that as the war there (seemingly) winds down, so does the partnership between the two, start to unravel. While this might at first glance seem good news for Jerusalem, neither is a particularly ideal option. However, an Iranian-controlled Syria would certainly be worse for the Jewish State.

The Iran-Russia partnership was never a match made in heaven. Rather, Syria merely provided the perfect battleground for both countries’ interests. Tehran sent disciplined ground troops to complement Moscow’s first-rate air power and together they saved the Syrian state from almost certain collapse.

Tehran and Moscow are both intent on blocking American influence and have found themselves at different times isolated. Tehran was isolated in light of sanctions imposed on her because of her nuclear programme, while Russia because of her actions in Crimea and Ukraine. This inevitably brought them closer together, especially militarily.

At the same time, Russia is helping Iran build her nuclear facilities – two new units will be built at the Bushehr nuclear plant over the next 10 years, totalling some 10 billion dollars.

In an unprecedented move, last year Russian planes used an Iranian airbase to conduct operations in Syria. And if this is not enough to convince of the growing ties, the countries have signed multi-billion dollar arms deals, although Tehran has accused Moscow of stalling in providing weapons.

But beyond the headlines, the relationship between them is tense and dogged by complexity and mutual distrust. For decades, they have been wary of each other’s intentions and despite growing closer together, leaders on both sides are cautious.

Historically, Moscow and Tehran have fought over land with Russia controlling former Iranian territories like Armenia. They also compete against each other in global energy markets.

What’s more, Moscow is trying to build relations with Iran’s enemies, the Gulf’s Arab monarchies, as she takes advantage of the US administration’s withdrawal from the region. Hence, Moscow is left weighing the financial and diplomatic benefits of arms sales to Tehran.

Voices inside Iran are also cautioning against closer relations with Russia. Iranian President Hassan Rouhani’s moderate government has campaigned for a more balanced foreign policy – and it was this that eventually secured the UN-sanctioned nuclear deal.

And yet, although they were not natural



Syrian President Bashar Assad and Russian President Vladimir Putin

Dateline: Middle East

Russia and Iran – uncomfortable bedfellows in Syria

bedfellows, the Russian-Iranian partnership served its purpose in Syria.

Now as both countries negotiate the future of that country, they are vying for dominance and Russia has taken several steps toward decreasing Iran’s influence: deploying military police, establishing the de-escalation zone, supplying weapons and equipment to prop up those forces under Russian control.

Moscow is aware that Iran uses Hezbollah, the Shia Islamist political party and militant group based in Lebanon, as part of its plan to establish a ground corridor from Iran to the Mediterranean Sea. This is not something that sits well with the Russians, who are keen on limiting Iran from becoming too powerful.

But although the rivalry exists, Jerusalem shouldn’t get too excited over it. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov last week called the Iranian presence in Syria “legitimate” and said Russia had not committed itself to the withdrawal of pro-Iranian forces from the country.

Iranian forces now maintain a presence close to, or adjoining, the Israeli-controlled portion of the Golan Heights and the Quneitra Crossing that separates it from the Syrian-controlled portion of the territory.

A trilateral ceasefire agreement that was recently signed between Russia, the United States and Jordan, stated that all foreign forces in southern Syria, which include the Iranian Revolutionary Guards and Shi’ite militias operating at the direction of Tehran, will be required to leave the country, but it did not provide a timetable.

The agreement also required that the Iranians and the militias remain only a relatively short distance away from Israel’s Golan Heights border. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said this week that Israel is not bound by this agreement and Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman warned that Israel would not sit back and allow Iran to entrench itself in Syria.

But aside from involving herself in another war, what can Jerusalem really do? She may demand that Iran leaves Syria but Russia gets to set the rules in this game and it’s clear that that’s not the card they’re playing.

Moscow has already allowed the Israeli air force considerable latitude in conducting airstrikes in Syria that target Hezbollah. This no doubt infuriates the Iranians, which the Russians are all too aware of.

It’s doubtful Moscow would ever go so far as to marginalise Tehran in Syria and for this reason the Israelis must be careful not to overstep their mark because ultimately Moscow could severely limit her freedom to act inside Syria.

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

Honouring Jews kicked out of Vilnius University

STAFF REPORTER

South Africans – whose family may have been among the Vilnius University students or academics who were kicked out in 1941 because they were Jewish – may be eligible for a Recovering Memory Diploma from the university.

This would be to honour them for the degree they would have got or the position they would have held at the university, had they not been forced out because they were Jewish.

President of the international Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture, South African Marlene Bethlehem, alerted the SA Jewish Report to this, saying that Vilnius University had approached the foundation about this project.

She felt sure there may be South Africans who would be eligible for Recovering Memory Diplomas because of the many Lithuanian Jews here.

“Although these diplomas won’t give those who were not able to complete their degrees what they were striving for, it does give some comfort that the university is acknowledging what happened and honouring these people,” Bethlehem says.

The university has invited people to apply for this on their own behalf or on behalf of their deceased relatives. There will be a special award ceremony in Vilnius in 2018 to pay tribute to and honour these people.

The impetus for acknowledging the many people whose academic careers and degrees were halted at the time, was an e-mail to the university from Israeli Professor of Medicine Moshe Lapidoth, last year.

He asked that the university “symbolically honour the memory of his uncle, Chlaunė Meištovskis, who was “a student in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences at Vilnius University”.

Meištovskis had completed eight semesters of physics and chemistry when his scholarship was terminated and he was expelled on July 1, 1941, specifically because he was Jewish.



Vilnius University

During the National-Socialist occupation of Lithuania, on June 27, 1941, the order of the then head of Higher Education Department for Vilnius, was implemented. Following that order, the then rector of the university began dismissing staff members of Jewish origin, as well as those who took an active part in the university’s Sovietisation, according to the

university.

Lapidoth’s letter led to the university taking this project on in order to “remember and evaluate the past, especially the tragic events that took place in the pre-war and post-war Lithuania, particularly at Vilnius University”.

Their idea is to “commemorate and pay respect to members of Vilnius University community, both staff and students, who were

of the Nazi occupation, there were about 650 Jews, 80 Poles and one German professor – whose wife was Jewish – expelled from Vilnius University.

The university sees this as a long-term project and a great incentive to learn more about its history, to fill in some of its blank pages or rewrite others.

“It is also an opportunity for the academic community to look back at very painful periods that affected so many lives. Understanding and recognising unretouched history in a responsible way, creates a foundation for a strong, open academic community.”

In September 2016, a commission was established to do research, to formulate evaluation criteria for nominations, to identify the names of those expelled from the university, assess their biographical facts, and to return them symbolically to the field of historical memory of Vilnius University.

Bethlehem showed the SA Jewish Report a letter from Vilnius University Rector Professor Arturas Zukauskas, to the Memorial Foundation for Jewish Culture. In it he spoke about promoting Jewish studies at his university and hoping the foundation would help him do this.

“It is also so exciting that after all these years, people will be able to take Jewish studies at that university,” Bethlehem says.

If people believe they or a family member are eligible for a Recovering Memory Diploma, they can find all the details on <https://www.vu.lt/en/about-vu/history/recovering-memory/procedure-of-granting-memory-diploma>

FOR SALE 20 NOVEMBER 2017 – 30 NOVEMBER 2017

FROM ZAR 7 500

Depart Johannesburg any date between 08 January 2018 – 05 March 2018

Last return date on/before 09 March 2018

Minimum stay of 4 days. Maximum stay of 3 months

Contact your nearest travel agent, ELAL direct on (011) 620-2525, or visit our website www.elal.co.il to Book Now!

Subject to change due to rate of exchange and/or withdrawal without prior notice. Limited availability. Terms and Conditions Apply. E&OE

www.elal.com

BLACK FRIDAY SPECIALS

From Thurs 23 – Sun 26

discounts on lounge suites and base and mattress sets

Lounge Suite

Was R10999 **Now R7499**

Double Bed and Mattress

Was R5998 **Now R2999**

Specials on Simmons, Sealy, Rest Assured, Cloud 9 and Support-a-Paedic

MIDWAYS MALL
280 Corlett Drive, Bramley Gardens
Tel: 011 887 5456 / 011 440 9571
Monday to Friday 8am - 5pm
Saturday 8am - 1pm / Sunday 10am - 1pm
www.idealfurn.co.za

Other specials in store

Downgrading the SA embassy is unconstitutional

MICHAEL BELLING

The proposed downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel – a motion before the ANC national conference next month – met solid opposition on constitutional, religious and communal grounds last week.

In fact, according to Thoko Mkhwanazi-Xaluva, chairperson of the Commission for the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Cultural, Religious and Linguistic Communities, downgrading the embassy would “violate the Constitution” of South Africa.

She was one of five speakers in a panel discussion on the social implications of a downgrade, at the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre, in partnership with the SA Jewish Board of Deputies.

Mkhwanazi-Xaluva explained the CRL looked at everything from the perspective of the Constitution and she suggested it was time to have “a critical discussion with the ANC about the constitutionality of this decision”.

This would be in terms of the cultural, religious, linguistic rights of the Jewish community, she says. “What are the religious rights when the access to Israel is diminished one way or another?” she asked.

“You also don’t want to be in a situation when 10 to 15 years down the line, all your cultural and religious resources that you have been drawing from Israel, have been diminished,” Mkhwanazi-Xaluva said. Then you have to go through a process of resuscitating what has been diminished.”

She says the CRL has volunteered to talk to the Deputy President’s Office around this issue. Part of his mandate is to look at social cohesion in this country and that means to make everyone feel as if they belong and not to alienate any community.

“We have met with his Office and told them the Deputy President needs to rise to the occasion as it is better



Thoko Mkhwanazi-Xaluva, chairperson of the CRL commission speaking on the panel on the possible downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel. She is flanked on the left by Apostle Linda Gobodo and on the right by Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, spiritual leader of the Great Park Synagogue.

to deal with this before it becomes an explosion and lands up in the Constitutional Court.

“They need to listen to this from our perspective as a Chapter Nine institution designed to protect these rights and why we feel they would be violated.

Mkhwanazi-Xaluva said they have also engaged “vigorously” with the Portfolio Committee on International Affairs, among others, to make sure their warnings are heard before the decision is made.

She insisted the CRL would be engaging with all the relevant people to ensure they know what they would be violating, and what they are up against, before they make their decision.

“The rights of the Jewish community should be protected on this issue. The dignity of the Jewish community must not be violated,” she said.

“Our role is to make sure that the rights of any CRL community are not affected negatively, but promoted and protected.”

Wendy Kahn, national director of the Board, said a downgrade could

result in a “tit-for-tat dance”, with visas being required for travel and no senior diplomat being available in Israel in the event of a crisis there.

The proposal to downgrade came from the ANC’s July policy conference. However, Kahn said that Edna Molewa – the minister of environmental affairs and chairperson of the ANC’s international relations committee – had assured Board President Mary Kluk that there were divergent opinions on the issue.

Molewa also told Kluk the ANC would conduct a risk analysis before the national conference and that Kluk would be involved in that process. The SAJBD has engaged with the minister and her committee in this for four months and in that time, says Kahn, it became apparent that there is very little difference between the proposed downgrade and a total shutdown of the embassy.

If the embassy in Tel Aviv closed, the South African embassy in Ramallah would also probably close, so such a decision would affect the Palestinians as much as the Israelis, Kahn said.

“The SA mission in Ramallah is reliant on our embassy in Tel Aviv for diplomatic support.” This will affect the Palestinians as much as the Israelis it targets.

“South Africa, who could play such a meaningful role in bringing peace to the region, would preclude itself from making any meaningful contribution,” she said.

“Downgrading or, in effect, shutting down the embassy, shuts down South Africa’s ability to influence the process,” she said.

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, spiritual leader of the Great Park Synagogue and dean of Torah Academy, said that “leaving politics aside, Israel is the religious and cultural epicentre of Jewish life.

“There is no contradiction whatever between being a committed, involved South African, on the one hand, and supporting and identifying with the State of Israel on the other.

“Downgrading the South African embassy in Israel would be a very damaging step, not just for those of the Jewish faith, but for the country as a whole.

“There would be very little to gain and a great deal to lose. I urge the African National Congress to decide against adopting such a policy.”

Apostle Linda Gobodo, founder of the Vuka Africa (Arise Africa) Foundation, said that “to be blessed, South Africa, and indeed all the African nations, should stand by Israel, not work against it”.

Downgrading the embassy would be a negative step.

Christian Zionists, no less than the ruling party, desired a peaceful solution to the conflict between Israel and its neighbours and prayed for this continuously.

“However, South Africa cannot contribute to bringing this about if it chooses to take up a hostile position vis-à-vis Israel and refuses to engage with it.”

An embassy downgrade would potentially have very harmful consequences, for example, visas might then be required, making visits and pilgrimages more difficult.

Maintaining a close and harmonious relationship with Israel, could bring many practical advantages to South Africa, with Israel being willing to share its skills in many fields.

“Already, politically motivated hostility has prevented and is preventing South Africa from properly benefiting from these resources.

“I am against this downgrade. It will not benefit South Africa. It is useless. It is shooting ourselves in the foot.”

Psychologist Leonard Carr, in a video presentation, said the Jewish community was part of the fabric of this country. Its religious and spiritual identity and links with Israel should not be confused with its national identity.

A downgrade would mean telling the Jewish community it was no longer welcome here.

• Additional reporting by SAJR staff

Downgrading SA Embassy in Israel has costs, say trade experts

STEVEN GRUZD

The ANC’s proposal to downgrade the South African Embassy in Israel – raised in July and to be debated again at the party’s December conference – would have adverse economic effects on trade and investment for both countries.

South Africa would also be out of step with its BRICS partners, as Russia, India and China all pragmatically expand their economic, technological and security links with the Jewish State.

These were the major findings of a report by Tutwa Consulting Group entitled “Economic implications of the potential South African embassy downgrade in Tel Aviv”, discussed at a seminar hosted at Investec in Sandton by the South African Jewish Board of Deputies last Wednesday.

Panel chairperson Professor Mzukisi Qobo, said South Africa was missing an opportunity to benefit from greater trade with Israel “due to an emphasis on ideology”. He urged new paths for dialogue and win-win partnerships, emphasising how Israeli technology could ameliorate the Western Cape’s water crisis.

Tutwa’s study considered dynamic first round and second round economic effects of a downgrade on trade, investment, technology and tourism. The psychological impact on the Jewish community in South Africa could in turn have profound economic impacts.

In terms of total trade, bilateral trade is relatively small. “Since 2000 Israel’s share of South Africa’s total exports has never gone higher than 2,21 per cent,” said Tutwa.

Certain value-added export lines could be affected by severed ties, and absolute levels of trade matter in terms of revenue, employment and livelihoods, disproportionately in hi-tech (both software and hardware), telecoms, agroprocessing and water management, according to Tutwa’s managing director, Peter Draper.

The countries share similarly small bilateral foreign direct investment footprints. In 2015, at R2,93 billion, Israeli FDI stock in South Africa was not insignificant, but was just 0,15 per cent of total inward FDI. Yet Israeli investment in South Africa has increased six-fold from 2001 to 2015.

Tutwa wrote: “While Israel’s share of South Africa’s FDI stock is minor, the fact that it is increasing amidst a generalised decline, should



Tutwa’s managing director, Peter Draper speaking at Investec, Sandton

not be dismissed.” In the same period, South Africa invested R407 million in Israel, out of a total stock abroad of R2,4 trillion.

Again, in tourism, the relative numbers are insignificant, but over 25 000 tourists travel both ways annually, and Israeli tourists spend R500 million each year here. A rupture of relations could

thus threaten thousands of jobs.

If visas were reintroduced, this could adversely affect travel and investment. In the worst case of tit-for-tat embassy closures, visas would have to be procured in a third country.

The possibility that Washington would revoke

Continued on page 9>>

Downgrading SA Embassy in Israel has costs...

>> Continued from page 8

South Africa's trade privileges under the African Growth and Opportunities Act in retaliation for a downgrade, was considered unlikely, and would certainly provoke an incensed response from Pretoria.

Tutwa concluded: "Given the potential economic benefits of closer relations with Israel, it is our considered opinion that the downgrade would not serve South Africa's national interests."

Marc Lubner, chairman of the SA-Israel Chamber of Commerce, said this sabre-rattling would have no huge effect on Israel, but South Africa needed to fund its growing budget deficit, "and cannot afford to cut off its nose to spite its face".

He said South Africa could have obtained Israel's desalination technology, but chose instead to deal with Germany and Iran (who use Israeli technology anyway), raising the costs. He called South Africa "increasingly myopic", in contrast with its BRICS' partners growing economic ties with Israel, and said trade would continue "under the radar" with a downgrade.

The proposal to alter the status of the embassy surfaced at the ANC Policy Conference on July 4, to "send a strong message" to Israel for perceived intransigence in negotiations with the Palestinians, settlement expansion considered illegal and alleged human rights abuses.

Delegates debated a downgrade, closing the embassy entirely, conducting a risk analysis before either step, while some felt such analysis was unnecessary. With no decision, the can was kicked down the road to December's conference.

One speaker said that a win for Cyril Ramaphosa's faction in December would likely mean slower implementation (if the decision is taken at all).

This looming decision, of course, is about ideology, not economics. If it was a moral argument, then why are similar downgrades not on the cards for Sudan or Myanmar, asked Tutwa?

The anti-Israel lobby hopes it would spur a full boycott of Israel. It certainly would make Jews worldwide and at home lose further confidence in the South African state.

Several speakers confirmed that a downgrade would torpedo any peace-brokering role for South Africa in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This event was held under the Chatham House Rule, meaning that speakers are only identified with their express permission.

Downgrading the SA embassy is akin to a boycott

MILTON SHAIN

After decades of oppression, resistance and stalled attempts to break the apartheid status quo (justifiably defined as a crime against humanity), South Africans finally negotiated an inclusive and constitutional state.

It was dialogue that finally brought about the South African "miracle". Dozens of clandestine meetings and exchanges through the 1980s had prepared the ground for negotiations. On the brink of a racial conflagration, South Africans discussed their differences and negotiated honestly their visions of a new society. Led by Nelson Mandela, a dialogue and compromise created a non-racial and non-sexist society, with South Africa emerging victorious to the plaudits of a global audience.

South African Jews wish to see a similar dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians as a means of facilitating a resolution of the conflict.

The Jewish community encourages negotiations and believes the South African government can play a constructive role in forging an outcome agreeable to all. Downgrading our contact with Israel, would signal a turn away from dialogue. It would deny any possibility of South Africa playing a role in resolving conflict. Doors should rather be kept open at the widest level.

We believe that intellectual exchange can settle conflict and on the importance of ties between South Africa and Israel. Downgrading these ties will limit communication between the two countries and stifle possibilities for engagement. It will challenge fundamentally the attachment of South African

Jews to the Land of Israel, the historic home of the Jewish people.

Jewish cultural, religious and linguistic rights, will thereby be violated, and the interests of tens of thousands of Christians who support Israel, will be overlooked or discounted.

Downgrading the South African embassy in Tel Aviv is akin to a boycott. It erodes practical advantages and measurable benefits for both South Africa and Israel, including trade and technological services. Effective representation is too compromised. A downgrade lays the foundations for conflict rather than helping towards accommodation.

We note that there was not a whisper of downgrading ties with many countries that deny human rights or occupy disputed territory. What about the record of human rights in Arab states or Russia's occupation of Crimea? Only Israel is targeted.

Identifying only the Jewish State as worthy of downgrading is anti-Semitic in effect if not intentional. Put simply, downgrading ties is a blunt instrument for a complex problem. It suggests all Jews deserve condemnation.

Instead of choosing to downgrade relations with Israel, given its history the ANC government should be in a unique position to further dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians and help, rather than hinder, the search for an equitable solution to a festering and so far intractable conflict.

• Milton Shain is an Emeritus Professor of Historical Studies at the University of Cape Town.

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za



FHW
Fidelity Health & Wellness

Are your loved ones in need of Home Care Nursing?

Home Based Health Care
24 Hour Care or any part thereof

- ✓ Palliative Care
- ✓ Disease Management
- ✓ Wound Care

For all enquiries and costings, please contact Michael Bacher at michael@fidelityhealth.co.za
0861 555 585

www.fidelityhealth.co.za



Convenient and affordable healthcare!

- All our care givers are nurses, registered with the South African Nursing Council
- Senior nurses oversee all daily care nurses and full assessments are done as per patient / family requests
- Our reach is country wide
- Call centre available for any patient issues that may arise
- Costs are based on hourly rates, with no long term contract required
- Both male and female nurses are available depending on the patients' preference

NICOLA MILTZ

01128/B



THE TIMES OF ISRAEL

40 years after historic visit, PM says he’s yet to meet the Palestinian Sadat

MARISSA NEWMAN

Marking 40 years since Anwar Sadat’s landmark visit to Israel, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said on Tuesday he had yet to meet the Palestinian equivalent of the Egyptian leader who went on to sign a peace deal with the Jewish State in 1979.

“It is with sadness that I say, I have not yet met the Palestinian Sadat, who will declare his desire to end the conflict, who will recognise the State of Israel in any borders and our right to security and peace,” said Netanyahu.

“Our Palestinian neighbours refuse to recognise Israel’s right to exist,” the prime minister added, speaking during a special plenary session held in honour of the anniversary of the historic visit.

Rebuking the prime minister, opposition leader Isaac Herzog said Israel lacks the equivalent of then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin, the Likud leader who clinched the accord with Cairo.

“We don’t only need a Palestinian Sadat, we also need an Israeli Begin,” said Herzog. “I already said two weeks ago in the plenum, if you were in the place

of Menachem Begin, I doubt you would show the same bravery Menachem Begin displayed at the time.”

On November 20, 1977, Sadat made history as the first Arab leader to visit Israel and address the Knesset with a call for peace. Sadat’s visit helped pave the way for Israeli-Egyptian talks at Camp David a year later, and a full peace agreement between the two former archenemies in 1979, just six years after the painful Yom Kippur War.

Netanyahu met with Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Hazem Khairat earlier on Tuesday.

Also on Tuesday, Khairat urged Israeli leaders to seize a “real opportunity” to normalise ties with neighbouring Arab states by pursuing a peace deal with the Palestinians based on the Arab Peace Initiative.

That framework, backed by Egyptian President Abdel-Fattah el-Sissi, is an extension of the peace initiative started by Sadat 40 years ago, Khairat said at a Knesset event attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely and Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein.



Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu addresses a Knesset plenary session marking 40 years since the visit of Egyptian president Anwar Sadat to Israel’s parliament

“I say to the Israeli side, there is a real opportunity to open a new page with the Arab neighbours, based on coexistence and mutual understanding for a better future leading to peace,” he added, speaking in Arabic.

Addressing the event ahead of Khairat, Hotovely hailed the “courageous” pact between then-Prime Minister Begin and Sadat.

But Hotovely argued that while there was always “an Israeli Menachem Begin” gunning for peace, having a “Palestinian Anwar Sadat” would not be sufficient to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which she maintained was not a territorial dispute but an “existential” one.

“There are more than 200 territorial disputes in the world,

but the conflict between us and the Palestinians is not one of them,” said Hotovely. Even when Israeli leaders presented offers to relinquish territory for peace, Palestinian leaders were unwilling to give up on a right of return for refugees and recognise Israeli rights to the country, she added.

Hotovely further argued that the peace deal with Egypt had not been imposed by the United States, signalling that a future deal with the Palestinians should similarly not be forced on Israel.

She spoke as the Trump administration was expected to announce a bid to kickstart peace talks. The White House has stressed that it will not impose a deal on either sides.

Turning back to the Sadat visit, which took place a year before she was born, Hotovely hailed the “brave choices” by the two leaders.

“I was born into peace,” she said. “This peace is proof, in my view, that the State of Israel desires peace.”

• Agencies and Dov Lieber contributed to this report.

FILMED CROSSING INTO ISRAEL WITH SICK KID, MOTHER SAYS ALL SYRIANS WANT TO COME

TOI STAFF

In unprecedented footage, the IDF allowed an Israeli TV crew to film it opening the border gates to Syria, and allowing in a group of mothers and their children, who were then transported to an Israeli hospital for medical treatment.

The footage, broadcast on Sunday night by Hadashot News (formerly Channel 2), also included interviews with several of the Syrian mothers, who expressed profound appreciation to Israel for the medical assistance.

Israel, which also maintains a field hospital on the border and has sent humanitarian aid to Syria, has treated 3 000 Syrians since it began offering medical assistance in the course of the civil war across the border, of whom almost 1 000 were children with chronic conditions.

“The rationale” behind the outreach “is clear”, the report noted: “A humanitarian imperative alongside a security need. Someone whose family or friend is given medical treatment in Israel will presumably change his attitude to the enemy.”

“It has become unremarkable” for Syrian civilians “to come to Israel for treatment,” one mother told the TV interviewer. “Everyone wants to come here.”

None of the faces of the Syrians were shown in the report, since the mothers and children will return to Syria when doing so is medically possible, and could face deadly repercussions if their treatment in Israel were to become known.



GIRL INJURED IN 2011 JERUSALEM BOMBING DIES OF HER WOUNDS

JACOB MAGID

A woman who was wounded as a girl in a March 2011 bombing in Jerusalem, succumbed to her wounds on Wednesday, after more than six years in a coma.

Hodaya Asulin had been heading home to the Mevo Horon settlement when a bomb hidden in a backpack exploded at a bus stop outside the Jerusalem International Convention Centre.

The blast killed British national Mary Jean Gardner and injured dozens of passersby.

In November 2013, a military court in the West Bank sentenced Palestinian Hussein Ali Qawasmeh to life in prison for orchestrating the terror bombing.

Asulin, who was 14 at the time of the attack, had been unconscious for the six and a half years since,



receiving round-the-clock care from family, friends and volunteers.

She succumbed to her wounds early Wednesday morning at the Hadassah Hospital Ein Kerem in Jerusalem.

“Her fight for her life inspired people to do so much good over these past six and a half years. It’s impossible to describe,” her uncle Rafi Asulin told The Times of Israel. Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu expressed sorrow over Asulin’s death.

“I send condolences from the bottom of my heart to the family of Hodaya Asulin,” he said in a statement. “The entire Israeli nation is embracing and supporting the family, which wrapped Hodaya in warmth and dedication since the terrible attack. May her memory forever remain blessed and ensconced in our hearts.”



SOUTH
AFRICAN
ZIONIST
FEDERATION



DOV LIEBER

The Palestinians have frozen all contact with the United States after it decided to close its representative office in Washington, officials said on Tuesday.

“In practice by closing the office they are freezing all meetings and we are making that official,” Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Malki told AFP.

A spokesman for the Palestine Liberation Organisation confirmed that it had received instructions from Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas “regarding closing down all communication lines with the Americans”.

The Palestinian move comes as the Trump administration seeks to broker the long-out-of-reach Israeli-Palestinian peace deal.

Speaking in the Spanish Parliament on Tuesday, PA President Mahmoud Abbas said the Palestinians were ‘committed to a historic peace deal [with Israel] under the auspices of President Trump’.

Over the weekend the US State Department informed Malki that the PLO office in DC would be closed because the Palestinians had violated a 2015 US Congressional mandate.

A US State Department official cited “certain statements made by Palestinian leaders” about the International Criminal Court as the violation.

In December 2015, Congress

Palestinians freeze all US contacts over threat to shutter PLO office in DC



PA President Mahmoud Abbas (centre), arrives with the Arab League’s Secretary-General Nabil Elaraby (left), and Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki (right) to attend a meeting of Arab foreign ministers at the Arab League headquarters in Cairo, on Sunday, September 7, 2014.

introduced a new provision into the annual State and Foreign Operations Bill, mandating that the PLO mission in Washington be shut if the Palestinians initiate or support an International Criminal Court investigation against Israelis.

In his 2017 address to the United Nations General Assembly, Abbas seemed to have violated that clause:

Earlier on Tuesday, Malki told the PA’s official radio station, the Voice of Palestine, that the US administration was reconsidering its decision to close down the PLO office due to the threat by the Palestinian leadership to freeze contacts.

Malki added that if the US wanted to review the decision to shut the office in DC, it would also have to review all the laws passed by Congress that treat the PLO as a terrorist organisation and “disrespect relations between the two countries”.

In 1987, Congress outlawed any PLO presence on US soil due to the group’s terror activities at the time. In 1993, due to the Oslo peace process, Congress allowed for the PLO to open a mission in DC, as long as it stayed faithful to its commitments in the peace talks.

In 1997, Congress made it easier for the president to waive sanctions against the PLO: The president would only have to say the waiver was in the

US’s national security interest without providing addition explanation.

That was the case until 2011, when the Palestinians joined Unesco and declared they wanted full membership status in the UN.

In response, Congress introduced a new provision into the annual State and Foreign Operations Bill, mandating that if the Palestinians obtained full membership status in the UN outside of an agreement with Israel, the president would be unable to waive sanctions against the PLO, unless “the Palestinians have entered into direct and meaningful negotiations with Israel”. The “national security interest” excuse would no longer suffice.

After the Palestinians joined the ICC in 2015, Congress passed a similar provision into the December 2015 foreign ops bill.

The provision calls for the waiver to be revoked should the Palestinians “initiate an International Criminal Court (ICC) judicially authorised investigation, or actively support such an investigation” against Israel.

US President Donald Trump now has a 90-day window to decide whether “the Palestinians have entered into direct, meaningful negotiations with Israel”, according to 2015 law – in which case he can waive the requirement to shut the office.

In Knesset, Egypt’s envoy urges Israel to seize ‘real opportunity’ for peace

MARISSA NEWMAN AND DOV LIEBER

Forty years after Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat made his historic visit to Israel, Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Hazem Khairat on Tuesday urged Israeli leaders to seize a “real opportunity” to normalise ties with neighbouring Arab states by pursuing a peace deal with the Palestinians based on the Arab Peace Initiative.

That peace framework, backed by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi, is an extension of the peace initiative started by Sadat 40 years ago, said Khairat at a Knesset event attended by Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely and Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein.

“I say to the Israeli side, there is a real opportunity to open a new page with the Arab neighbours, based on co-existence and mutual understanding for a better future leading to peace,” he added, speaking in Arabic.

On November 20, 1977, Sadat made history when he became the first Arab leader to visit Israel and address the Knesset with a call for peace with Israel. Sadat’s visit helped pave the way for Israeli-Egyptian talks at Camp David a year later, and a full peace agreement between the two former enemies in 1979, just six years after the painful Yom Kippur



Egyptian Ambassador to Israel Hazem Khairat (left) meets with Knesset Speaker Yuli Edelstein in the Knesset

War.

Speaking ahead of Khairat, Hotovely and Edelstein hailed the “courageous” pact between then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Sadat.

But Hotovely argued that while there was always “an Israeli Menachem Begin” gunning for peace, having a “Palestinian Anwar Sadat” would not be sufficient to resolve the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, which she maintained was not a territorial dispute but an “existential” one.



News and views from the Fed Israel: a mosaic, not a monolith

ROWAN POLOVIN SAZF (CAPE COUNCIL)

Israel is too often portrayed by her detractors as a faceless, impersonal and inhuman block of stone. It is painted as an ever-expanding monolith that heartlessly encroaches upon others’ land.

Then, it is made to look uniform, unidimensional and artificially created. As a result, goes the argument, it cannot be reformed or assimilated into the community of nations, and any integration of it must be wholly rejected. The only solution is to demolish it into a state of broken stones.

This depiction of Israel as a monolith is effective, because it is simple and understandable. In truth, it is a big lie and malicious slander against this beautifully complex and deeply dimensional country. Israel is an ancient mosaic still in progress, not a recently completed block.

Simply because it is the Jewish State, does not mean that all Jews in the state are the same. The Jewish population is far more racially and ethnically diverse than many realise, with an array of Sephardic, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi and Ethiopian Jews.

Even within these are diverse sects with differing customs and interpretations. Some Israeli Jews are ultra-orthodox, orthodox, reform or conservative religious. Some are secular, some believe it is enough to live in Israel with no need to practice their Judaism, and others are Jewish atheists.

All coexist with each other in complex ways to create an extraordinarily rich Jewish society never seen before in history. Almost 17 per cent of the country is Muslim, two per cent Christian and 1,7 percent Druze. The other four per cent could be Samaritanism, Baha’iism and other religions, or people with no religious affiliation at all. Within these groupings are further differences and diversities coinciding peacefully with each other.

The Israeli government is not a unified edifice. The Knesset is a reflection of a vibrant democracy in action, with loud and energetic debates and arguments from members across religious and ethnic divides.

It is probably the only democracy in the world where democratically elected members of minority parties can falsely claim there is no democracy and are given the freedom of speech to claim there is no freedom of speech.

Israel’s policies are neither coalesced nor etched in stone, but ebb and flow in a meandering river of politics. They are continuously checked against one of the most advanced judicial court systems in the world. Israel is not perfect, but certainly not wholly imperfect as its detractors like endlessly to claim.

The vast majority of Israeli life is not focused on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and besides her enemies, it is wrong for even her friends to spend a disproportionate amount of time talking about and focusing on purely political and conflictual terms.

It is a country rich with history and culture beyond politics and conflict: a start-up nation; a hi-tech superpower; a cultural forest among the deserted wilderness; an intellectual and academic powerhouse; an archaeological and historical dream; a place where its inhabitants are among the happiest in the world; an unforgettable tourist destination, and a phenomenal place to live, study, raise children and find meaning.

Israel is not a faceless block carved out in a modern era, but a modern assortment of ancient gems that have returned to her from all over the world, and re-established a heart and home for the Jewish people. For this, she demands and deserves respect, understanding and recognition among the nations and peoples of the world.



SOUTH
AFRICAN
ZIONIST
FEDERATION



Israeli Jew’s peace visit to Saudi mosque sparks Arabic Twitter storm

DOV LIEBER

A Russian-born Israeli Jew walks into a mosque in Medina carrying his tefillin. It could be the start of a joke, but for some Muslims, this real-life incident is anything but funny. Ben Tzion, who has recently been travelling to visit holy sites across the Muslim world – from Tehran to Qom; Beirut to Riyadh – on Tuesday told The Times of Israel that he has never been “approached with hostility”.

He said he does not hide the fact that he is Jewish, comes as “a friend”, shows respect for Islam and the Arab world, and has found the Muslim world of flesh-and-blood to be a welcoming place. He also stressed that he travels as a private individual, not representing any government or organisation.

But on the Internet, pictures he posted on Monday of his visit to the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina – the second holiest Islamic site – prompted many Muslims to lash out in anger. And the focus of much of the criticism exposed divisions within the Muslim world, with many of those



A tweeted composite picture that shows, at left, a picture of Israeli Jew Ben Tzion (wearing green) inside the Mosque of the Prophet in Medina, and at right, the Saudi royal family with the words, “the cursed Saudi tree”.

protesting seeing in Tzion’s travels ostensible evidence of warming ties between Israel and parts of the Arab world, notably Saudi Arabia.

The Arabic hashtag “A_Zionist_In_the_Prophet’s_Mosque”, which refers to Ben Tzion’s trip, was used over 90 000 times in the two days after he posted his pictures.

Many of the tweets that criticised Tzion’s visit, were by people who identified on the social media platform as Qataris or Palestinians.

One writer found it “shocking to learn” about the “Zionist” Ben Tzion’s visit to the Medina mosque, and asserted that it pointed to a deepening alliance between Israel and Saudi Arabia.

The “this appears to be a result of the growing Saudi-Israeli alliance” allegation expressed by that critic, was the engine of much of the anger over Tzion’s trip. Though Saudi Arabia does not have official diplomatic ties with Israel, the two countries seem to be growing closer due to their shared opposition to Iran.

Dr Saad al-Faqih, a Saudi dissident living in London, claimed on Twitter that the reason for Tzion’s visit was his “personal friendship” with the crown prince of Saudi Arabia, Mohammed bin Salman.

Tzion told The Times of Israel on Tuesday that he made his visit to Saudi Arabia by following official procedures to receive a visa. He said he enters all his destinations legally, using valid foreign passports and acquiring visas whenever required.

He also noted that he travels “as a private individual... I am not a political figure, and I don’t work for any Israeli organisation.

New lab at border detects truckload of ‘dangerous material’ headed to Gaza

STUART WINER

The Defence Ministry on Wednesday announced a new chemical testing laboratory installed at a border crossing into the Gaza Strip, and said the facility recently intercepted a truck carrying bomb-making material on its way to the Palestinian enclave.

Set up at the Kerem Shalom crossing, the lab focuses on detecting substances that are banned from import into Gaza for security concerns, the ministry said in a statement. It is operated by the ministry’s Border Crossing Authority along with the Shin Bet security service and the Israel Police.

Using advanced equipment, the lab can test a range of substances including gases, liquids, powders, solid metals and other materials before they are transferred to Gaza, the minister said. Banned substances are listed on a sign at the entrance to the crossing.

“One of the main goals of the lab is to locate problematic substances that it is prohibited to bring into Gaza, for fear they will reach terror entities,” the statement said. “The lab’s operational ability to identify the type of substance [being tested] within a short period

of time, from the moment of sampling, will enable an improvement of the service and reduce as much as possible delays in the transfer of goods to Gaza.”

During the lab’s pilot phase, a truck arrived at Kerem Shalom that was registered as carrying a load of motor oil, but that raised the suspicions of security staff at the site. A sample of the oil was sent to the lab, which identified that it was not motor oil but rather a “dangerous substance” that was intended to be used to make a large amount of explosives, the statement said.

IDF Brig Gen (res) Kamil Abu Rokon, current head of the Border Crossing Authority, welcomed the improved capabilities that the lab afforded his organisation.

“Establishing the chemical laboratory greatly broadens the ‘toolbox’ that is in the hands of security officials in the daily unrelenting campaign against smuggling into Gaza,” he said in the statement.

“The lab’s ability adds to an extensive detection system that includes various means, the most important of which is the human element – the security checkers at the crossings. With informed work, today we know how to identify every banned substance that is likely to strengthen the terror elements in the Strip.”

Police probe depiction of Pres Rivlin in a keffiyeh

TAMAR PILEGGI

Police said on Monday they were opening a probe into pictures of President Reuven Rivlin in an Arab keffiyeh, which have been circulating online in protest of his decision not to pardon an IDF soldier convicted of killing an incapacitated Palestinian attacker.

Rivlin’s decision to reject Elor Azaria’s pardon request, drew harsh criticism from senior government officials, including Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman and Culture Minister Miri Regev.

Rivlin, who is perceived to hold a moderate stance toward Arab Israelis and Palestinians, also came under fire for his decision on social media.

By Monday morning, Rivlin’s official Facebook page had accumulated hundreds of messages criticising the president and his policies. “You will be remembered forever as a president who acted against his own country,” one user wrote.

“You have used your position to create anarchy, go against the prime minister and defence minister in favour of the left,” another said. “You are a president of only 20 per cent of this country, a president without a people.”

The photo is resonant in Israel because it recalls an infamous doctored image of the late prime minister Yitzhak Rabin in the traditional Arab headscarf, which was disseminated as part of a vicious campaign against him following the signing of the Oslo Accords in 1994 and before his assassination.



A doctored image of President Reuven Rivlin wearing a keffiyeh

Public Security Minister Gilad Erdan tweeted on Monday that while he abhorred such “incitement” against the president, he opposed the opening of a police probe.

“I have no doubt that the State Prosecutor’s Office will determine that this is not a criminal offence. Repulsive but not criminal,” he wrote.

In 2014, police investigated similar images of a keffiyeh-clad Rivlin that were being circulating online after he condemned Jewish-on-Arab racism in a Knesset speech.

A year later, police opened an investigation after images of Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu dressed as Nazis were circulating on social media and right-wing sites.

Rivlin had told Azaria in a letter on Sunday that commuting his sentence would “harm the resilience of the Israel Defence Forces and the State of Israel”.

Uganda marks 100th outpost for far-flung Chabad

JEWISH TELEGRAPHIC AGENCY

Uganda has become the 100th country to have a Chabad-Lubavitch outpost.

Rabbi Moishe and Yocheved Raskin established the Chabad of Uganda in the capital city of Kampala in October, it was announced on Sunday at the annual International Conference of Chabad-Lubavitch Emissaries in New York. The couple moved from Israel with their young son, Menachem Mendel.

Chabad has been in contact with the Jewish community of Uganda since at least 1999, including sending the organisation’s Roving Rabbis there in summers and for Jewish holidays.

At the weekend conference, which Chabad calls the largest Jewish gathering in North America, some 5 600 Chabad emissaries and communal leaders gathered from around the world.

On Sunday morning, the emissaries, or shluchim, gathered for a group photo in Crown Heights, the Brooklyn neighbourhood that is home to the movement’s worldwide headquarters.

The dinner that night, where the new Chabad outposts and emissaries are announced, had to be moved from New York to a larger venue in New Jersey.

Other countries where Chabad established a permanent presence this year, include Montenegro, Nassau in the Bahamas, and the Caribbean island of Curacao. These countries followed the recent opening of Chabad Houses in Laos and the Pacific island of New Caledonia.



Hasidic rabbis prepare to pose for a group photo in New York



SOUTH
AFRICAN
ZIONIST
FEDERATION



Aussie rocker Nick Cave says he’s in Israel because of BDS

JESSICA STEINBERG

Australian rocker Nick Cave spoke about his love for Israel and his decision to stand up against BDS at a press conference ahead of his Sunday and Monday night sold-out performances in Tel Aviv.

Cave said his connection to Israel began years ago during an initial visit.

“People speak about loving a nation, but I felt a kind of connection that I couldn’t really describe,” he said.

Cave recalled that his 1997 album “The Boatman’s Call” didn’t do well in Israel and he didn’t include Israel in that tour – both because it was thought his music wasn’t popular here, and due to the logistical complications of bringing a tour to Israel.

“And if you do come here,” he added, “you have to go through public humiliation from Roger Waters and his partners and no one wants to embarrass themselves publicly,” he said.

The Australian rocker took heat from Israel boycott activists for last week’s concerts, with Artists for Palestine UK asking the Bad Seeds lead singer to cancel the shows in protest of Israel’s treatment of Palestinians in Gaza.

“For 20 years, I said, ‘let’s give it up,’” Cave said of

plans to come to Israel. “A few years ago, Brian Eno sent me a letter and asked me to sign it to shut out Israel, and I sent a letter back that said I wouldn’t sign. I understood that I wouldn’t sign but I also wouldn’t perform in Israel – and that seemed like I was acting scared. So, I called my people and asked that we perform in Israel.”

Said Cave: “It suddenly became very important to make a stand, to me, against those people who are trying to shut down musicians, to bully musicians, to censor musicians and to silence musicians.”

Cave elaborated that he was in Israel for two reasons: “I love Israel and I love Israeli people,” he said, and he wanted to take “a principled stand against anyone who tries to censor and silence musicians. So really, you could say, in a way, that the BDS made me play Israel.”

Cave also spoke about the family trauma his family experienced in the last year, when his 15-year-old son fell from a cliff and died while under the influence of LSD.

His son had never taken LSD before, and didn’t know



Aussie rocker Nick Cave addresses Israeli journalists during a press conference in Tel Aviv.

anything about it, said Cave.

“He was just a curious kid, and went out and had an accident and died, but it was an accident,” said Cave. “I don’t have a traditional stand against the use of drugs. Maybe I should. My wife and I are very involved parents, who love our kids very much.”

When his son died, said Cave, he felt a tremendous need to get everything out of his system and perform before as many people as possible, “to have something good come out of all this”.

Fans hope Ringo Starr gives some more love to Israel

JESSICA STEINBERG

There’s been a slew of concert announcements in recent days, and one very tantalising rumour – that Ringo Starr is in advanced negotiations to perform in Israel next year.

The news about a possible late spring performance by the former Beatles drummer, was reported by the Israel Hayom daily, and couldn’t be confirmed with any local promoters.

Since 1989, Starr has toured with different variations of Ringo Starr & His All-Starr Band.

He released a new single in July, on his 77th birthday, entitled, “Give More Love”, followed by his nineteenth studio album in September, also called “Give More Love,” featuring Paul McCartney and other collaborators.

Other than Starr, some of the confirmed, upcoming concerts include Britain’s Rag ‘N’ Bone Man, otherwise known as Rory Charles Graham, whose single, “Human”, was a major hit, and was followed by “Skin.. His performance will be on May 16 in Menora’s Mivtachim Arena.

On the more electronic, techno side, Norwegian DJ Kygo will appear on December 2, at the Tel Aviv Convention Centre, the same night as Canadian electronic band Holy F***, which will play Levontin 7 in Tel Aviv.



The cover of Ringo Starr’s new studio album, ‘Give More Love’.

Israeli designer stars at Serena Williams wedding



The wedding party of Serena Williams and Alexis Ohanian

TOI STAFF AND AGENCIES

The star-studded New Orleans wedding of tennis superstar Serena Williams and Reddit co-founder Alexis Ohanian, featured more than one couture design by one of Israel’s leading fashion houses.

Williams’ sister Venus, along with her seven bridesmaids, all wore custom-made cream-coloured gowns designed by Galia Lahav, and made in Tel Aviv, to the lavish ceremony.

Williams herself wore a strapless ball gown designed by Sarah Burton for Alexander McQueen, which she covered with a sheer sparkly cape.

Despite the media frenzy, the happy couple released few details of their ceremony. According to the Daily Mail, the 250 or so guests invited to the Williams-Ohanian wedding, were asked not to bring their cell phones, because an exclusive photo deal had been signed with Vogue.

Music royalty Beyoncé, legendary Vogue magazine editor-in-chief Anna Wintour, reality TV star Kim Kardashian, actress Eva Longoria and singer Ciara, attended the ceremony.

Security for the event was tight, an entire block in the Big Easy – a city known for its jazz music, good food and party atmosphere – was closed to traffic.

According to the entertainment website EOnline, the wedding had a “Beauty and the Beast” theme. Williams, 36, a 23-time Grand Slam champion, and Ohanian, 34, welcomed their first child, daughter Alexis Olympia, on September 1.

They announced their engagement in December after meeting in 2015 in Rome.

Crippling school fees spark interest in government schooling

ELIANA CLINE

A group of Jewish parents in the heart of Johannesburg's north-eastern suburbs, are considering schooling options because of the high price of private Jewish day school fees. They are looking at a government school situated on the heart of the "shtetl".

While they would ordinarily shy away from a government school, believing the quality of education was not acceptable, they have found a school which they feel might well suit them. It is apparently a “high quality, extremely affordable government option” that would certainly keep the wolf from the door.

This trailblazing group of mothers initiated a discussion on the feasibility of Jewish children going to Summerwood Primary School, which is in Percelia, right in their area.

Tanya Lowenstein, a mother of four, initiated the exploration into Summerwood Primary School (previously Fairmount Primary), which began when she realised that she lives next door to an entire school community that she knows nothing about.

“Summerwood School is one road away from my home. For months, a friend of mine who teaches there, invited me to come and see what a wonderful school it is. Finally, I went to visit and my mind opened to the possibilities.

“It was not what I expected from a public school – it was a complete eye-opener. The school is clean and well maintained, the staff were very friendly and willing and each child I greeted, greeted me with a smile and said good morning! I then realised that it could be a real option for parents who are under huge financial pressure to pay private school fees and were the right fit for the school.”

The nominal fees (when compared to private school fees) mean that many parents doubt the level of education their child will receive.

She initiated an invitation to join the meeting with Summerwood School leadership. It resulted in around 60 parents showing interest and strong support for the idea. The conversation highlighted the incredible pressure Jewish parents face to educate their children.

"My husband and I both work fulltime. We have well-paying jobs, and have good professions. But school fees are a huge burden and I don't always know where the money is going to," says a mother of three.

The group of seven parents who attended the recent meeting with the school, said while they would be happy for their children to learn Jewish studies after school, a big concern was class sizes. With class sizes averaging at 36, it is a significant increase for those used to the limited sizes of private school classes.

Pam Kantor, a seasoned educator who teaches Afrikaans and social science at Summerwood, says that her experience has been overwhelmingly positive despite the large class size. The CAPS curriculum offered is identical to that offered in private schools.

Kantor admits that the average class size of 36 learners demands that teachers apply themselves and demand disciplined behaviour.

"We make it work. Some teachers come



Children in a school environment

in at 07:00 and offer extra lessons. We do what we can, and we get the results. We are on top of things.

“Our learners want to learn, they want to be challenged, they want to be something”, she says. “We look at the child holistically – we offer drama, sports and many other activities. There are so many talented learners, they are amazing.”

The nominal fees (when compared to private school fees) mean that many parents doubt the level of education their child will receive.

Deputy Principal Mr David Govender emphasises that one must not equate low school fees with low quality education or a poorly maintained school grounds.

"Our biggest challenge is that English is a second language to the vast majority of our learners. Still, our learners excel and we push them. We ranked second in the entire district for grade 3 drama, and first prize in EMS.

“A few of our students received full academic scholarships to the most elite private schools – including the likes of St John’s and Maritz Brothers.”

Govender says that the staff is committed to running an exemplary educational

institution despite the school's meagre budget. While staff salaries are funded by the Department of Education, the school is responsible for funding everything else required. Monies required for maintenance, improvements, utility bills, equipment, activities and anything extra, is funded primarily by school fees.

"Our annual school fees are R4 500 per learner. We used to be a Model C school. We work very hard to keep the school fees low, so our students can afford our fees. We are very careful about how we spend the money we have; we save, we plan accordingly.

"A significant percentage of parents don't pay their school fees and we have to employ debt collectors. R10 000 unpaid school fees won't impact a private school, but for us that's a significant amount of money for our school."

If white learners would join the school, there would be a period of transition for both the learners and the parent body, according to the leadership of the school. The 100 per cent black student body would change, but with time, the learners would integrate and all would gain tremendously.

“Our learners come from a diverse range

"Our annual school fees are R4 500 per learner. We used to be a Model C school. We work very hard to keep the school fees low, so our students can afford our fees."

of backgrounds. Our parent body includes domestic workers, bankers, nurses and engineers. Our school has a huge waiting list because we have a reputation of excellence.

“The perception out there is that when your learners come from the townships, the township is coming from the school. That’s not the case – we are strict about manners and behaviour. We have all the regular challenges any school faces – bullying, not doing homework, but we know about it and deal with it.”

The intention of this initiative is not to attract learners from local Jewish day schools and Govender is adamant that the school does not actively recruit from any private schools. He does say, however, the school would be delighted to have a more socially inclusive and cohesive student body, representing all races and religions.

"We are not a private school, and we can't and don't want to compete with private schools. However, we do want people to know that we are a high-quality public school, should parents be interested. We will do our best to accommodate any learners and their needs, including Jewish students if they choose to attend."

While it is doubtful that the coming years will see masses of Jewish children entering public schools, the hope is that these schools will become an accepted alternative for those who choose.

Lowenstein says that engaging with the school reinforced her deep commitment to be an active social citizen and to raise children who gain the benefits of interacting with people of all backgrounds.

"A government school definitely can be a viable option for some Jewish parents, and those who are open to it can benefit on many levels. An affordable education is a possibility, and people should explore all options," she said.

SUMMER SPECIAL

THE ALL ORIGINAL
HONDA OIL & FILTER SERVICE

R699

INCL. VAT

**ADDITIONAL
25%**

DISCOUNT ON BRAKE PADS,
DISCS & WINDSCREEN WIPERS

GENUINE HONDA
OIL FILTER

GENUINE 20 POINT
HOLIDAY CHECK

Honda

HONDA BEDFORDVIEW

Tel: 010 593 2866 | www.hondabedfordview.co.za | Cnr Alton Road & York Road, Bedfordview

supergroup

Terms & Conditions:
This promotion is valid from 1st January 2017 to 31st December 2017. This promotion is only valid at Honda participating dealers. A new vehicle must be purchased or leased by the customer's account. Excludes vehicles currently under service/repairs. Excludes all accessories. Excludes all other services. All goods subject to stock availability. See dealer for full details. The full terms and conditions printed on the back of this poster apply. © 2017 Honda Motor Co., Ltd.

Being honoured in the highest house in the land

Advocate Michael Donen SC and Rolene Miller were this month honoured in parliament. They are believed to be the first Jewish individuals to be recognised in parliament since 1994, aside from Helen Suzman.

Donen: The freedom fighters’ lawyer

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

Advocate Michael Donen SC was honoured in Parliament this month when the House congratulated him on the “remarkable effort he put into representing freedom fighters for many years (during the period from 1983 to 1990)”.

On the day, the Speaker acknowledged that Donen was in the House, he stood in the gallery and was applauded across party lines by all MPs. “I feel very honoured and humbled,” says Donen, “because close to 30 years have gone by – at the time I did what I thought was my duty I did not expect any reward or recognition.”

It was DA MP Michael Bagraim, shadow minister of labour, who introduced a motion without notice proposing that the House congratulates Donen. It was accepted and passed in its entirety.

Donen’s work with freedom fighters was done at no small personal cost to himself. “The big Jewish legal firms blacklisted me and I got a message from the Afrikaans firms that they couldn’t support me because I was compromising them,” he recalls of those days.

“The work on which my practice had relied until then, was completely taken away.”

He started on this path while studying human rights in England in the early 1980s. “My tutor told me I should come back and fight the fight – do it, not just study it.

“And you mustn’t expect them to thank you for it or like you for it,” he had warned presciently.

Bagraim highlighted two individuals in Parliament who Donen had defended: Mxolisi Petane – in democratic South Africa he became the inspector-general of the South African National Defence Force – who had been charged with terrorism against the apartheid state and Michael Lucas.

With regard to Petane’s 1987 case, Donen explains that in this country, the law was used as an instrument of oppression, to stop resistance and to label people such as Petane as terrorists. However, international law held that he could be regarded as a prisoner of war.

“We used the court to further the aims of the liberation struggle politically,” he states.

“We drew to the attention of the court that there was another law to be applied. The difficulty the judge faced was that he was a judge of the apartheid regime and he had to apply apartheid law. So, he could never find in South African law that Petane was a prisoner of war.

“But he had to grapple with the question of whether he was a prisoner of war in terms of the Protocol to the Geneva Convention. This stated that people fighting in an armed conflict and exercising their right of self-determination against a racist regime, were entitled to be treated as prisoners of war.

“As soon as we raised that defence, the attention of the whole outside world was focused on this court. Diplomats came to court to observe and I was assisted by the acting prime minister of Australia, by Professor Kader Asmal of Trinity College, Dublin and international academics.

“The upshot was that when the judge tried to make out that the court, the government and the law of South Africa were legitimate, no one in the outside world believed him,” recalls Donen.

“As a result, it was a massive political victory for the ANC – showing that the government and the courts were illegitimate and the liberation movement was legitimate. In legal circles outside South Africa, it was accepted as a good defence and the case is still taught by the International Committee of the Red Cross in the Law of Armed Conflict.

Petane was able to avoid the death sentence and was sentenced to imprisonment on Robben Island. Lucas, however, was not as fortunate.

He was buried in a pauper’s grave and his remains were this year exhumed and brought to his home in Bongolethu, Oudtshoorn, for reburial, at which Donen spoke.

In other high profile cases, Donen defended Umkhonto we Sizwe members including Ashley Forbes and Tony Yengeni.

He has served seven terms as an acting judge and was appointed by former President Thabo Mbeki in 2007 to head the Donen Commission of enquiry into irregularities that had been committed by eight South African companies and individuals in Iraq’s Oil for Food programme.

Donen is a former vice-chairman of the Cape Council of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies. He remains a member of the local board and serves on the national executive.



Advocate Michael Donen SC

Miller: Uplifting those whose lives are in pieces



DA MP Michael Bagraim and Rolene Miller, founder of Mosaic, in Parliament last week

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

“Please don’t make me out to be a hero,” says Rolene Miller as we begin this interview. This epitomises the low-profile woman who has for 25 years been working to improve the quality of life in underprivileged areas through Mosaic, the organisation that she founded.

When Miller was told by a colleague to present herself at Parliament last Tuesday, she had no idea what was in store for her. “When I got there and heard that Michael Bagraim was going to speak about me and Mosaic, I was shocked!” she recalls.

Democratic Alliance MP Bagraim, who is the shadow minister of labour, introduced a motion without notice which was passed unanimously. “I hereby move that this House... recognises the outstanding contribution made by Rolene Miller in the establishment (of Mosaic) and the enormous amount of work that she has done in ensuring that women from the disadvantaged communities have access to protection, advice and shelter from the situations they find themselves in,” it read in part.

The motion also called on Parliament to recognise “the outstanding contribution made by Rolene Miller to the development of advocacy for women and girls’ rights and health issues in South Africa”.

It all started in 1993 when Miller, a social worker, remedial teacher and Lifeline counsellor, founded Mosaic for the specific purpose of preventing and reducing abuse and domestic violence, particularly for women and youth living in disadvantaged communities. Mosaic’s main objectives include increased availability and accessibility to high quality, integrated services for survivors of the twin scourges.

The focus of the organisation has always been to educate people about abuse and gender-based violence, to run workshops, support groups and to counsel women who are abused. The name Mosaic is symbolic of women putting the broken pieces of their lives together to create beautiful lives for themselves, Miller explains.

“I realised that there were no services for abused women in the underprivileged areas,” she remembers of those early days. “Our motto was that we don’t work behind closed doors, we go out into the community to meet them where they are.

“So, we went to hospitals, to clinics, to schools, to churches, to community meetings and we educated people about abuse.” Miller and psychologist Tammy Shaffer compiled a course and in 1995 started training 28 women from targeted areas in social work skills, who then delivered services for abused women in 33 communities.

“These were grassroots women who could just about understand English and the technicalities and jargon had to be explained to them – it wasn’t easy for them or me, but they came out victorious,” she says. Most of them remain community workers, whether social auxiliary workers, court workers or counsellors – today there are 70 members of staff.

In the course of their duties, community workers brought their clients who needed protection orders (from domestic violence) to court. “There was nobody who could speak Xhosa (there) and the protection orders were written in

English and Afrikaans,” Miller relates.

“So, our community workers translated for them, wrote their affidavits for them and helped them to apply for the protection order.” But this was keeping them from their other duties, so Mosaic decided to train dedicated court workers in court procedure and rights – 42 have qualified over the years and they work in 14 courts in the Western Cape and two in Gauteng, including accompanying the often terrified women who have to testify against the accused.

The court support model is implemented in partnerships in the Eastern Cape, Northern Cape and KwaZulu-Natal.

Bagraim says that Miller has made it easier for women to come forward in rape cases. “In this country, approximately five per cent of rapes are reported because women can’t go through with it.

“What Mosaic does is firstly, boost their confidence. They speak to the prosecutors to let them know that the women will be kept outside the court room until they are needed.

“They ensure that the prosecutors go through with the court case. They also convince women to come forward if they are abused and not just to take it for the rest of their lives.”

Mosaic is unique in that it was the first organisation in the Western Cape to start working with domestic violence complaints directly at the courts in 1999; in this regard, thousands have been assisted over the years. In addition, Miller ran support groups for the clerks of the courts.

The organisation later increased its offering and began training men and male youths “because we wanted to stop abuse from the source, from men who abuse women”, Miller states. It presently provides services to abused women, men and youth.

Miller was executive director of Mosaic from its foundation in 1993 until 2005 and today remains an active member of its board. Mosaic Training Services and Healing Centre now has a donor-funded head office in Wynberg as well as satellite offices, a far cry from those early days when community workers counselled individuals in purple containers.

Miller funded the organisation personally until it received a grant from the Department of Social Development in mid-1997. “I remember I was ecstatic – they gave us R142 000 and to me this was an enormous amount because we had nothing before.

“When I did the training of the second group of community workers (1996) we were bankrupt – a lot of them had to leave and it was very hard for us. We were always two months away from bankruptcy,” she remembers, so the funding and some small donations came as a relief.

Trainees’ comments at the end of their abuse training sum it up best: “Lots of women are not aware of abuse. Sometimes they keep quiet... This workshop is empowering women to know what to do if they are abused. It is opening the eyes of women,” writes one participant.

Says another: “Keep it up Mosaic. All women must be aware and stand up for their rights. If you educate or make women aware, you educate a nation. I also thank you, you bring the light. I was in a dark place.”

ChaiFM – it all started with a dream

PETER FELDMAN

Kathy Kaler’s mother had a dream in 2005 that her daughter was talking on radio.

They were driving together at the time. Kaler – CEO of ChaiFM, the Jewish community radio station – recalled the “peculiar” sensation she had when her mother told her. “It was like I had a bird’s eye view of my life,” she said, “and I knew that this was what I was born to do for the community.

“This is honestly how it all played out. My mother said she had not had a dream for years and was now compelled to tell me about this one. She remembered it so clearly. “Starting the radio was what I was meant to do and that is how it happened.”

This Sunday, Kaler and her ChaiFM team celebrate the radio station’s ninth birthday.

Kaler launched ChaiFM in 2008 during one of the worst global financial crises ever and she had to secure funding. Looking back, she says, there were giant challenges ahead. One of these was to to ask her staff of 45 whether they would be prepared to work for six to eight months as volunteers. Only four of them refused.

In an interview with the SA Jewish Report, Kaler said she knew nothing about the radio business and the technicalities involved – but she persevered.

This Greenside High School alumnus had a background in marketing, having worked in the commercial sector. She had never been involved in community work before. However, that didn’t stop her.



Kathy Kaler

“I needed to find money to pay salaries that month and it was very difficult. The toughest time was when I had to retrench 13 people from a staff of 25.”

Asked how she got through the tough times, Kaler said help often came from unexpected quarters. “Sometimes people you think are going to help you, don’t. This is true about life. I have always remained loyal to those who have helped us and that is how we get through.”

Over the past nine years, ChaiFM has won numerous radio awards. These included a Liberty Best Daytime Radio Show Award and a Sanlam Best Business Show Award. The radiothons, where funds are raised for community organisations, are special, too.

“It is amazing how the community comes out in support of one another, and how philanthropic our community is. We count our blessings. It is a beautiful thing.”

Kaler recalls milestone events. The station had been on air for a mere three weeks when Operation Cast Lead, Israel’s 22 day offensive into Lebanon in 2008 exploded.

“We had to cover this war and I remember a moment when an IDF spokesperson being interviewed by our presenter, had 90 seconds to get into the bomb shelter, and was running fast. This was the drama of live radio.

“I also remember in 2014 when Israel launched Operation Protective Edge. As rockets were being fired into Israel, and they were sounding the red alert siren in real time, the impact of that was absolutely massive.

Listeners heard it all over the world and that was really a watershed moment for us. For the first time people heard about ChaiFM and they were listening to us 24-hours a day and most stayed with us. It was excellent radio.”

Kaler said that one of the huge moments she recalls”, was when they had a radiothon and a five-year-old mentally challenged child called in to pledge R5. It was R4 from him and R1 from his one-year-old baby brother. “It was a poignant moment. Children took pocket money, which they were saving for art supplies, and donated it to the cause.”

Kaler believes in the future of children. It is one of the reasons she conceived Chai Kids. “Nobody else does talk radio for children,” she said, “and I’m talking globally. We give these children a platform for an hour every day and different young presenters are utilised.”

When ChaiFM was launched, Kaler’s vision was to serve the community and to unite the various factions. “The community was quite fragmented at the time,” she remembers. “We didn’t really see eye to eye or understand one another and the divide was getting greater and greater.

“When you have a platform for conversation and you can share ideas, then it is not so threatening. It is very important to have that connection. It doesn’t matter whether you are traditional, secular,

Reform or Lubavich, the connection to one another, to Israel and to G-d is important. This is what ChaiFM is all about,” she proclaims.

It serves as a platform that connects to all. “I have no doubt that it has changed the demographics of Jewry in South Africa,” she contends.

But Kaler doesn’t rest on her laurels; she has conceived a bold plan for the future. It involves reaching more young people through ChaiFM platforms and getting them involved in community work.

Kaler praised those who over the years had become involved with ChaiFM and its ideals. “It’s been a humbling experience growing the station and reaching out to the community.”

As for her journey, she says, it has been “interesting”. Before ChaiFM, she recalls a time when she “wanted to find out what

the Buddhists were talking about. They were talking about things like meditation and spirituality. It’s something Judaism does talk about, but rabbis often did not at that time.”

However, Kaler’s ChaiFM journey has brought her to following the philosophy that you “find yourself by losing yourself in community service when you work for a greater good”.

And this has been to ChaiFM and the greater Jewish community’s benefit.

COLLECTORS INVESTMENTS

Dealers in coins, banknotes and medals since 1959.

Suite 15, 1st Floor, Illovo Muse,
198 Oxford Road, Illovo, Johannesburg.
PO Box 393, Parklands, Johannesburg, 2121
Email: collectables@telkomsa.net
www.collectorsinvestments.com
Telephone - 011 880 9116
Cell - 076 741 8801

<p>FIVE SHILLING 1947 to 1950 = R120 1951 to 1964 = R70 1959 = R1600</p>	<p>TWO & HALF SHILLING 1923 to 1950 = R60 1951 to 1964 = R35 1931 = R7000 Up to R10 000</p>	<p>TWO SHILLING 1923 to 1950 = R40 1951 to 1964 = R30 1925 = R300 Up to R2 000 1931 = R8000 Up to R10 000</p>
<p>ONE SHILLING 1923 to 1964 = R15 1931 = R500 Up to R3000 1939 = R500 Up to R30 000 1949 = R400 Up to R4000</p>	<p>60 1923 to 1964 = R8 1931 = R500 Up to R3000 1939 = R10 000 Up to R30 000</p>	<p>30 1923 to 1964 = R4 1931 = R10 000 Up to R50 000</p>

WE BUY COINS, BANKNOTES, MILITARY BADGES & MEDALS,
GOLD AND SILVER JEWELLERY, AND COLLECTABLES.

Confronting child abuse

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

“The more aware we are and the more educated we are, the better equipped we’ll be to get rid of the abuse that’s happening,” Tova Goldstein, social worker and community projects co-ordinator at the Chevrah Kadisha, explained in the run-up to the 16 Days of Activism for No Violence Against Women and Children, which starts on Saturday.

Speaking at the launch of the Chevrah Kadisha’s series of events tackling child abuse, Goldstein says: “While it’s not massive and widespread in our community, abuse is there.”

At this event author Jenny Braun shared her story of abuse, and therapist, abuse expert and author, Sue Hickey, provided tools for protecting your children.

Using her beautifully illustrated, poignant children’s book *Fresja’s Story* – which tells the story of a caterpillar who eats to hide from pain – as a starting point, Braun recounted the heart-breaking events that punctuated her initially happy, carefree childhood and haunted her into adulthood. Losing her younger brother to cancer when she was just four years old, Jenny remembers the impact that a hospital Christmas party had on her – getting a gift for her brother from Father Christmas shortly before his death.

“This is the only memory I have of my brother. I blocked everything else out,” she said.

“My parents knew something was wrong, but they didn’t know what. They sent me to therapy but I made a vow of silence, sitting there not saying a word.”

Tackling feelings of guilt for sometimes wishing her brother hadn’t stolen the limelight, four-year-old Jenny felt somewhat responsible for his death and started eating. “Already at four, I experienced a taste of how food can block out feelings,” she said.

“One summer afternoon swimming at family friends, at the age of 11, my world changed,” said Jenny. She was molested there by a 16-year-old boy. It continued for three years.

“It was a very frightening and confusing time, I felt dirty and so guilty and bad, there was no way I could say anything to anyone. I didn’t know what to do with these scary feelings. My behaviour was atrocious, I’d shoplift and act out, crying out for help, not knowing how to ask.

“My parents knew something was wrong, but they didn’t know what. They sent me to therapy but I made a vow of silence, sitting there not saying a word.”

Using food as a coping mechanism, Jenny’s eating went out of control and she already weighed 94 kilograms at the age of 11. “I was trying desperately to dull my senses, to hide. As the years progressed, so did my eating and I lost and gained a total of 450 kg through the years, trying over

28 different diets.” Jenny never told a soul, keeping quiet for 13 years, about the abuse she endured. “I later had a dear friend, Hadassah, who was integral to my transformation. She helped me muster up the strength to confront my abuser years later,” she said. “Sitting across the table from him having this conversation, took an enormous amount of courage and was a huge step in my recovery, even if I didn’t get the apology or outcome I was hoping for.”

Also with the encouragement of Hadassah, Jenny decided to have bariatric (weight-loss) surgery and kept her promise even after Hadassah passed away from cancer in 2010, before the surgery.

“In total, I lost about 95 kg after the surgery. I’d put on the weight to hide from the world and losing it made me more visible and vulnerable, which was difficult initially, but my confidence grew.

“It took a lot of self-worth and patience with myself to be able to be okay with things and stop blaming myself. I still have wobbles; we’re never completely cured, but with every layer of healing, we get better.”

Now excited to try new things, Jenny did a course about spreading love and joy to children in hospitals.

“This work took my healing to a whole new level – when you give, you’re receiving. I plan to continue healing and transforming on deeper levels.”

Therapist Sue Hickey discussed the impact of abuse and how to protect your children. “One of the reasons that sexual abuse remains a problem, is that we struggle to talk about it,” she said.

“Let’s start having the conversation now. To protect our children, we need to teach them that sex needs to be part of a meaningful, committed relationship. Yet, we live in a society where sex is becoming recreational, so the value system we give them is constantly challenged by their peers, the media and all they can stumble into on the Internet.”

Sue provided the following key tips for parents on dealing with sexual abuse:

- Understand that our children cannot protect themselves from sexual abuse. When you educate your children about what to do and what not to do, never imply that they are responsible should something happen. They are NEVER, EVER responsible for being abused. We need to tell them that.
- Children have to go to someone – it’s difficult for them to speak up. They know it will cause problems. They’re afraid they’ve done something wrong. Be the kind of person that a child would come to. They need to know they come to us without us freaking out or blaming them.
- When an adult that’s not related or very close to you, finds your kid amazing, start worrying. It’s for you to scrutinise and, if necessary, stop relationships that you think are suspicious. “Say, I don’t care if I was wrong, I care that I paid attention and I tried.” Trust your gut.
- When children are being groomed by sexual predators, they’re told to keep silent. “We don’t want to

bring up children that can’t keep confidences, so teach children to be discerning about what secrets you keep and what secrets you don’t. If your child’s unsure about the difference, tell them: “A secret is never a secret from me, just tell me and I’ll keep it for you.”

- Teach your children caution and good judgement. Hickey then interacted with the

audience, who spoke of the conflict that comes with lashon hara and situations of abuse and exposing abusers. They also discussed what they termed the “propensity to turn against the victims in religious community”.

The audience agreed that the community should be supportive of the “victim” and not of how it looks to others, and abusers need to be

exposed to protect future victims. Asked when and how to educate children about the dangers of abuse, Tova said: “From the minute your children can start talking, you can talk to them. ““Teach them about the beauty and sacredness of the body, give them boundaries about acceptable behaviour. Keep the conversation going.”

Israeli and SA youth on gap years bond and debate



ANTHONY ROSMARIN

Being Jewish and belonging to a youth moment does not mean sharing ideals, views and political affinities – especially if you grew up in either Israel or South Africa.

There are few better ways to bond, create unity and co-operation between young leaders than getting them together to debate and share ideas.

Last month (October) The Israel Centre – through the Jewish Agency’s Partnership2gether Peoplehood Platform – launched such an initiative to foster co-operation between South African and Israeli youth movements in Beit Shemesh Mate Yehuda.

Eighty-five participants from Habonim Dror and Bnei Akiva in South Africa and Bnei Akiva, Tzofim, Betar, Ezra and Diller in Israel, got together for the inaugural Inter-Youth Movement Gap Year Seminar.

They had a unique opportunity to discuss and debate their personal views on aspects of Judaism, Jewish peoplehood, Israel and Zionism. The aim was to learn from and about each other in a constructive forum, with a desired outcome to establish a platform of tolerance and understanding through religious and political differences, where common values form the basis of future co-operation in strengthening local communities and Am Yisrael.

“This seminar was the perfect platform to connect all of our up-and-coming leadership from various youth movements currently on gap year in Israel, promoted learning and growth together, both with the South Africans and the Israeli participants from the Beit Shemesh/Mate Yehuda region.” according to the South African Zionist Youth Council.

Avraham Infeld – who teaches that there are five components or legs to a strong and stable Jewish identity – addressed the seminar, giving insight into each aspect of his Five Legged Table; Family, Memory, Language (Hebrew), Covenant, and Israel.

The participants held interactive sessions before and after his presentation that stimulated conversation and explored different views.

The participants discussed family and how similar and different we are, how this shapes us as people.

They debated whether we are one family as a Jewish nation and what this means practically to Diaspora Jews and Israelis. It became quite clear that how Israeli youth relate to Diaspora Jewry differs immensely to Diaspora Jewry’s relationship with Israel.

Some of the most interesting and emotional debate topics, however, came out of exploring memory. Participants shared their greatest meaningful personal memories, argued over what constituted the most important events in their country’s history and sought to find common ground on what were the defining events in Jewish history.

Discussions focused on collective memory, how this is passed through generations and how this influences our personal and national identity. This was followed by a debate looking at the connection between language and culture and Hebrew as a unifying factor among Jews worldwide.

Heated debates arose about the importance of Hebrew in the Diaspora and whether English should be offered as a mainstream medium of education in Israel. Differing views were shared about prayer in Hebrew and English and if translating texts would result in a decline in the use of the Hebrew language.

Finally, groups explored their personal and family’s relationship with Israel and debated different Zionist texts to contextualise Zionist philosophy and thought throughout history.

Participants were challenged to identify the source of their Zionism and why Israel is so important to them, aside from being a safe haven. Stories of parents, siblings and grandparents fighting in wars, volunteering and making aliya, were shared.

First and second generation Israelis communicated their experiences about growing up in Israel and their feelings about life as a young Israeli.

Many shared their strong sense of cultural and religious connection to Israel. And even though religious practice and political opinion differed, all expressed the view that Israel plays an important part in both their Jewish identity and their connection to the entire Jewish Nation.

When asked who saw themselves making aliya, the majority of the South African group raised their hands.

Infeld’s closing message to the group, was that if we as Jews can find meaning in at least three of the legs, we will find that we all have at least one thing in common that we can share.

This was definitely experienced by participants by the end of the seminar and a commitment was made to work on inter-movement and South Africa-Israel relationships, moving forward.

12 great deals no matter how you slice it.



From only R4,999 a month, it's not which SUV to buy, but rather which Sportage.

Introducing 12 tailor-made KIA Sportages, all packed with a variety of surprising features. Proudly brought to you by the highest ranked car brand in the JD Power Initial Quality Study in US for 2 years running.



The Power to Surprise



Monthly Installment	Model	Selling Price	Interest Rate	Term	Deposit Amount	Balloon	Total Amount
From R4 999 per month	2.0 Ignite Manual	R369 995	10,75%	72 Months	0%	37%	R496 486.61 <small>(incl. Balloon, excl. Deposit)</small>

Terms and Conditions apply.

The visit ‘home’: Do SA émigrés ever wish they’d stayed?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Anyone who has attended a 40-year high school reunion, knows the uncomfortable feeling when you meet classmates from several decades ago, who immigrated to other countries and have had vastly different lives. After five minutes of warm greetings: “Wow, it’s so nice to see you again! Do you remember when we played Sunday league soccer together?”, an uncomfortable silence falls over the gathering, amidst awkward attempts to joke about the passing of time and how everyone is getting older.

The gap between their lives and yours is too great for easy conversation.

That often happens when people

who left South Africa decades ago, come visiting family here, to attend a funeral or wedding. The relative who has built a life in America – or the UK, Israel, or elsewhere – and has American kids, and who is full of praise for his new country, has little appetite for understanding the complicated, worrying politics of South Africa.

He might rage about how Americans could elect someone like Donald Trump as president, but the equally bizarre realities of South Africa are of little interest, serving mainly to validate his decision to leave long ago.

We are living in “exciting” times, for those with the insight to see it that way. No less than a new liberation struggle is required against the degenerate regime, the once-proud ANC has become – similar to liberation movements elsewhere after they gained victory over oppressors.

Journalist Jacques Pauw’s recent

book, *The President’s Keepers*, and other publications by struggle heroes such as Ronnie Kasrils, all confirm South Africans’ worst fears about how the corrupt ANC leadership has damaged this country.

Superficially, white South Africans’ lives, and the Jewish community, have changed little since the émigrés left. They drive the same kinds of cars, live in similar large houses, employ domestic maids at tiny salaries, run successful businesses, and send their kids to private schools.

Of course, they are surrounded by high security walls and electrified fences, but they say they have got used to it.

There was a brief historical moment after Mandela emerged from jail and became president, during which South Africans would gloat and say the émigrés who had left had erred, and had missed out on the inspiring country South Africa had become.

Showing a South African passport when travelling, was a proud action, then. Today, however, there is shame, with the decline to junk status financially and politically. It evokes gloating from those who had the wisdom to leave after Sharpeville or similar events.

Current happenings in Zimbabwe add fuel. Jews remember the once-proud Zimbabwe Jewish community which has all but vanished after 37 years of Mugabe’s despotic rule, the liberator-turned-dictator, who is finally being thrown out after destroying the country. Is that our destiny here?

Last weekend Professor Njabulo Ndebele, an academic and fiction writer, and former vice-chancellor of the University of Cape Town, addressed an ANC Struggle Veterans’ meeting, bemoaning the bunch of thieves the government

had become. The country’s spirit may “run dry”, he said, without a new “imaginative political project to give life and shape to it... [South Africans] require entirely fresh perspectives from which to view and understand themselves.”

What will it mean in 10, 20 years to be a Jewish South African? It is up to far-sighted leaders to articulate a new vision for a community half the size of what it was in the 1970s, and still shrinking. Sadly, such leaders are scarce.

Ten years from now, when émigrés come visiting for a reunion, will they find family and friends inspired again? It certainly could happen; the country’s spirit, today, has not yet been broken. We are again at a crossroads. But the jury is still out.

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

The makings of a meaningful simcha...



Aliya – the good, the bad and the meshuga

Benita Levin

A few months before we made aliya, I received a phone call from one of the fabulous organisers at our school in Johannesburg. Effervescent and full of joy as always, Cheryl’s smiley voice rang through the receiver: “Benita-la, I just want to confirm the date for Lirani’s barmitzvah.”

I started to laugh – not because of the affectionate way Cheryl always changed every person’s name into something diminutive and cute – but because our son was only 10 years old at the time!

Before I could articulate the fact that I hadn’t quite got down to dates, venues and seating arrangements yet, Cheryl continued in her inimitable maternal way: “And I know you’re making aliya, my love, but trust me, it’s better to have a date booked in South Africa anyway. You simply never know what can happen in three years, it might be difficult for older relatives to travel... you might want to all be together in South Africa, you just never know, Benit-sie”.

•

Fast forward to this week in Israel, 10 months into our aliya, and Cheryl’s words are resonating through my mind. Where do new olim have their simchas? The options are many:

- The shul your family has been going to for the last 10 months, since you made aliya, with an active, warm community, filled with friends who have welcomed you into their homes like family?
- The Kotel in Jerusalem? No explanations needed.
- Masada – including a breath-taking sunrise or sunset.
- Near the beach in Tel Aviv or Herzliya.
- In Durban, where all grandparents still live, and the childhood home city to the barmitzvah boy’s parents?
- Or Johannesburg, the same shul where the barmitzvah boy had his bris and where he often sang from the bimah – and sometime with the choir – since he was a pint-sized eight-year old?

So, an exciting range of meaningful choices lie ahead. Northern or southern hemisphere? When our family and close friends are spread out across the globe, where do we choose to celebrate?

The decision has been made that much easier, by our son’s wish that he could mark this momentous milestone in his life with as many relatives as possible. He feels that as his grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, many cousins and close friends are around, he is ready to celebrate this special simcha, anywhere in the world.

Then there’s the chesed programme, in which many barmitzvah boys and batmitzvah girls around the globe choose a charity or campaign to help, in conjunction with their simchas. Our son’s fascination with the Hatzalah United medical rescue organisation, will definitely see part of his celebrations being marked at their headquarters in Jerusalem.

For his younger sister and her pending batmitzvah, it is slightly different. She wants her family and her closest friends from South Africa at her big day. With just a 16-month age difference between the two children, it would make perfect sense to celebrate the two simchas over the same period. Or is that just the thinking of a practical parent?

At this stage, the double celebration is not an enticing option for either our future barmitzvah boy or batmitzvah girl. Maybe we have enough time to change their minds?

Most important word for the next month:

Donuts – Sovganiyot. You need to know the word, with a few weeks to go until the festival of Chanukah. You need to leave the diet at home.

Smile of the week:

Our mensch of a teenage neighbour found a wallet near a pavement in Ra’anana. He didn’t recognise the name on the personal cards inside. But his mother tracked down a “mutual Facebook friend” of the owner. She was given a phone number... in South Africa! Several calls later, the owner and wallet have now been reunited. It’s a small, honest world.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Embassy downgrade pointless and self-defeating

In recent years, we have seen regular attempts by BDS sympathisers within the ruling party to push for South Africa to break its ties with Israel. The most recent initiative was the adoption for further discussion of a proposal, introduced at the ANC’s policy conference in July, that the SA embassy in Tel Aviv be downgraded.

A decision on whether or not to adopt the proposal as party policy, will be taken at the upcoming ANC elective conference in December. If the proposal is adopted, it would not automatically mean that it would become government policy, but it might well pave the way towards its becoming so in the future.

The chairperson of the ANC’s International Relations Portfolio Committee, Edna Molewa, stated her intention to involve the SAJBD in their risk analysis process and we have since had the opportunity of engaging with her and members of the committee.

We have devoted much effort to conveying to the ANC why such a move would not only be harmful to South Africa’s own interests, but would hinder rather than help the cause of achieving Palestinian statehood.

Last week, we hosted two high-profile public events to bring to wider attention the negative implications of a downgrade.

The first focused on the possible economic impact. Dr Peter Draper, MD of Tutwa Consulting, presented a report on the possible economic implications. Respondents were Fani Titi, chairman, Investec, and Marc Lubner, chairman, SA-Israel Chamber of Commerce and CEO Afrika Tikkun.

The second looked at the likely social-psychological consequences of a downgrade, for Christian supporters of Israel as well as the Jewish community. Speakers were Rabbi

Dovid Hazdan, Apostle Linda Goboda, Cultural Religious & Linguistic Commission Chairperson Thoko Mkhwanazi Xaluva and clinical psychologist Leonard Carr, while the Board’s national director, Wendy Kahn, gave the introduction and contextualisation.

In terms of insight and content, all the presentations were on a very high level. Opposition to a downgrade was expressed from a range of perspectives, including such potential problems as a negative impact on both Jewish and Christian rights in terms of the ability to travel to and from Israel, a detrimental effect on bilateral trade, restricted access to Israeli

technological services and know-how, discouragement of tourism and, from a diplomatic point of view, counter-productive to South Africa’s oft-stated wish to play a role in furthering peace efforts in the Middle East.

According to Ms Xaluva, such a move might even be unconstitutional, on the grounds that it would unfairly impact on the cultural and religious rights of the Jewish community. Members of the media were present, and reports have since appeared in various mainstream print and electronic publications.

The SAJBD has also provided the ANC International Relations Committee with various

submissions and documents outlining our concerns regarding the serious consequences that a step of this nature may result in.

At this stage, it is difficult to predict what the final outcome will be, but I can say that we are making progress in getting across the message that a downgrade would both run counter to South Africa’s practical interests and result in its effectively excluding itself from playing any meaningful part in Israeli-Palestinian peace efforts.

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

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

Letters

THE UNIQUENESS OF BEIT EMANUEL

Beit Emanuel is a gem of a congregation: it gives expression to the deepest and most profound Jewish and South African values of respect for the dignity of every individual. It celebrates the incredible diversity of its congregants, all united in being deeply connected to their sense of Jewishness.

From its superb choir to its weekly Friday night dinners, its weekly Talmud class to its soulful services, it stands tall among congregations worldwide in the depth and breadth of its activities (only a few of which could be mentioned here).

It is thus with sadness that I have read the recent articles in the SA Jewish Report which highlight unprecedented attacks on the congregation by nameless, disgruntled members and attempts at interference in the autonomy of the congregation by certain external bodies in the Jewish community.

I am currently on sabbatical in Berlin but have been kept informed about these developments by members of the community.

In celebration of Sukkot and the tremendous value of hospitality and openness it represents, once a year, Beit Emanuel opens up its doors to other faiths. The congregation has never (and I hope will never) stand at the gates and interview people about their political views on Israel, South Africa or anything else.

We invite people to pray with us from whatever background they may come and so we hope to build bridges of understanding and respect for one another.

Enabling members of other faiths to join us in prayer on Sukkot, in no way represents any agreement with their political views on Israel, South Africa or any other matter.

Our community has also always sought to reject an apartheid-era logic that seeks to create lists of banned persons.

Most of the Beit Emanuel congregants I know disagree with the BDS movement and some of the tactics it has used, but refuse to use similar methods in response.

Those of us who maintain faith in democracy, fundamental rights and in basic Jewish values, will refuse vilification as a mode of engagement: rather, we will continue always to support respectful dialogue. This is indeed the spirit of Beit Emanuel and its wise leadership and long may it continue.

Prof David Bilchitz
Member of Beit Emanuel
Berlin, Germany

45 BEIT EMANUEL CONGREGANTS DEFEND RABBI SA'AR SHAKED

We, the undersigned 45 individuals, value the open and welcoming atmosphere of our Beit Emanuel Synagogue, and the personal warmth and generosity of Rabbi Sa'ar Shaked.

Our shul provides a safe and non-judgemental space in which people may express a wide range of opinions, and we encourage mature and open debate. We take pride in the unmatched breadth of our membership, which is ethnically diverse, politically diverse, and includes people with different sexual orientations and different ways of expressing their spirituality.

We stand by our rabbi and our leadership and salute their courage in standing up to relentless public attacks and misrepresentation by people who, unlike ourselves, refuse to be identified.

Irwin Manoim, Paul Davis, Clive Chipkin, Karen Lazar, Max Green, Harriet Perlman, Robyn Aronstam, Barbara Ludman, Diane Fine, Lily Manoim, Mark Lephoto, Belle Goncalve, Sukoluhle Sibanda, Margaret Auerbach, Jessica Sherman, David Fine, Keturah Dhlamini, Merle Favis, Allistair Balluto, Thabani Sibanda, Tessa Abramovitz, Harriet Gavshon, Ishvara Dhyan, Terry Shakinovsky, Gail Behrmann, Orenna Krut, Cole Meintjies, Scott Hazelhurst, Joni Brenner, David Bilchitz, Luz-Helena Hanuer, Merle Williams, Lesley Hudson, Melinda Silverman, Daniel Hudson, Ruth Morgan, Josh Sehoole, Matthew Nel, Jill Adler, Yda Walt, Rosa Manoim, Mirna Lawrence, Simonne Horwitz, Jesse Harber and Jane Lipman

TRIBUTE TO SAJBD PARLIAMENTARY LOBBYIST CHAYA SINGER

As we come to the end of the Parliamentary year next week, I want to take a small space of your letters column to praise the South African Jewish Board of Deputies’ lobbyist at Parliament, Chaya Singer.

The ultimate task of the SAJBD is to act as lobbyist and spokesman for and on behalf of the South African Jewish community vis-à-vis the South African community at large.

Initially the South African Board of Deputies was formed when the Jewish community was requested to deputise leaders on behalf of the South African Jewish community to make representations to government those many years ago.

The Board of Deputies is in fact the spokesperson for the Jewish community whenever issues arise that require a communal voice. Much work is done behind the scenes with civil society and South African leadership at large.

What was lacking in the past was a direct voice on behalf of the South African Jewish community in the South African parliament. Approximately two years ago the small and effective Jewish community made a decision to place an individual at the parliament in order to represent our Jewish community at that very vital institution.

Chaya Singer has taken up this new post with both vigour and effectiveness. Chaya has endeared herself to all the political parties and has made it her business to ensure that what happens in parliament is reported back to our community and she has effectively opened doors for our Jewish communal leaders.

The position is not an easy one and is not suited to most people, but I must praise Chaya for fashioning the position to make it her own. She has done well and has already been able to show fantastic results.



Chaya Singer

WE’LL MISS MICHAEL FOR HIS LEADERSHIP AND BEING A MENSCH

Space prevents us from expressing enough words of appreciation for the wonderful leadership of Michael Sieff, as he sadly leaves the Chev. We are sure that we speak for the hundreds of residents, staff, volunteers and donors, who have benefited from his dedicated and professional service. May he and his family enjoy Hashem’s richest blessings for a happy and healthy future.

Michael, we will all miss you and never forget you. A true mensch.

Choni and Miriam Davidowitz
Golden Acres

Michael Bagraim - MP

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

Guidelines for letters: Letters of up to 400 words get preference. Provide your full name, place of residence, and daytime phone number. We do not publish letters under noms de plume. Letters should preferably be e-mailed. Letters may be edited or shortened.

More news on our website www.sajr.co.za

Friday (November 24)

• UZLC hosts Reeva Forman on “For Israel and the World – a New Reality”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (November 26)

• WIZO Women Inspired is hosting a “Trial” - an exciting evening with a difference, starring James Cairn. A light supper will be served. Venue: Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre. Time: 18:30. Info: Joceline 082-441-4375, Lorraine 083-268-8016, Lesley 083-456-3911 or Merlene 082-410-4976.

• Second Innings hosts Councillor Heather Hart on “Your Country Still Needs You”. Time: Tea at 10:00. Meeting starts at 10:30. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments) Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

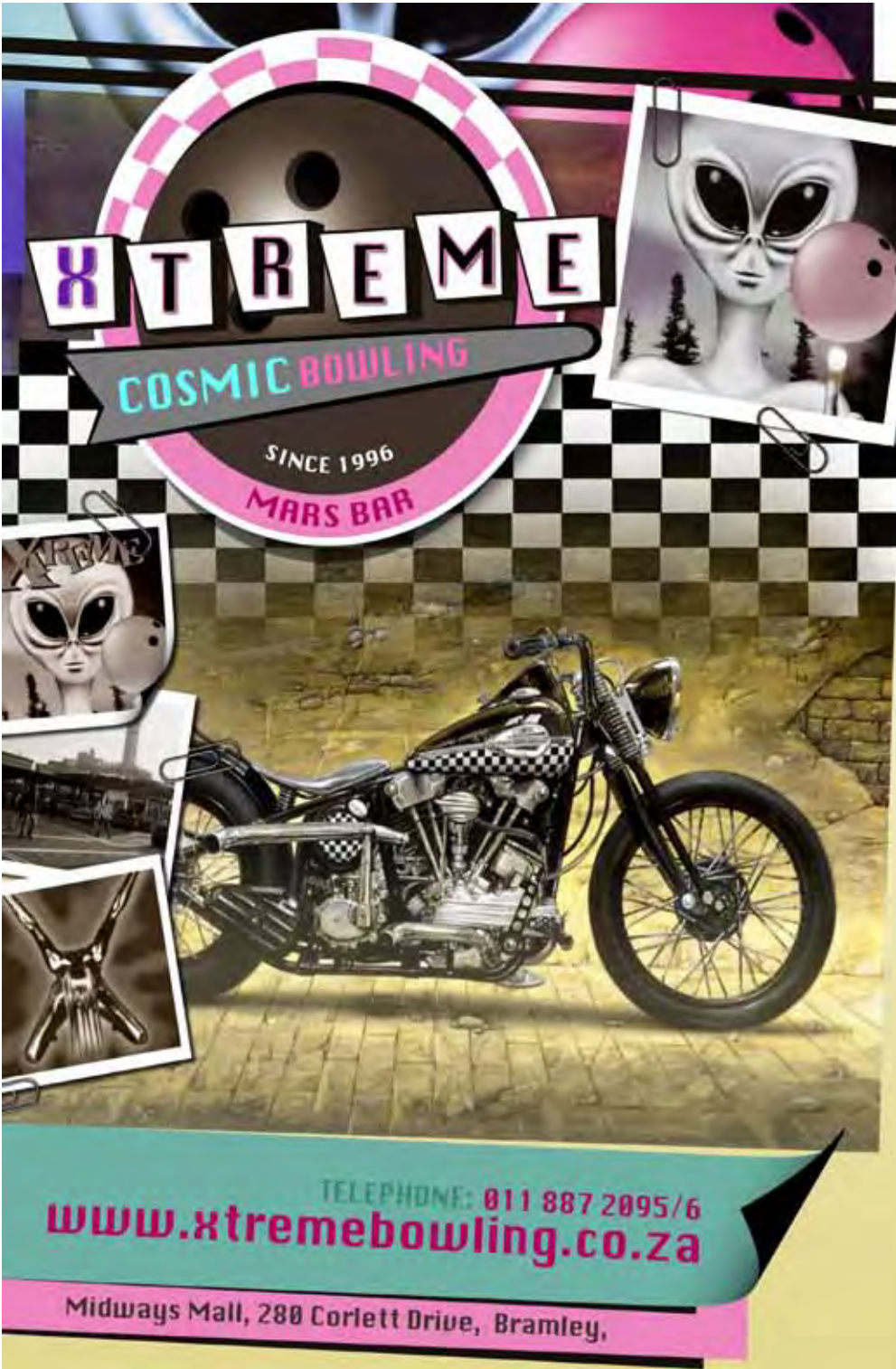
Monday (November 27)

• UJW hosts Nic Nicolaidis, singer and entertainer. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 10:00. Donation: R50. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

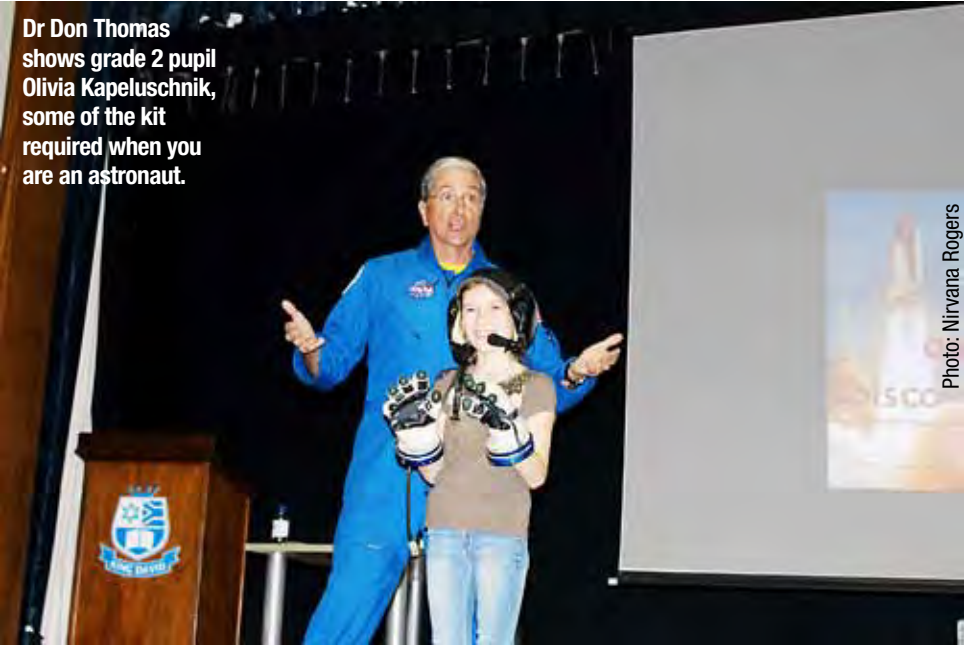
• Cape Town Holocaust Centre, Gardens, hosts “Labyrinth of Lies”, a film screening. Light refreshments. Time: 18:00. RSVP: Dianne (021) 462-5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

Wednesday (November 29)

• Second Innings hosts an outing To Emperors Palace. Time: Bus departs from parking area below Golden Acres at 09:30. Cost: R120 is for the bus only. Book with Betty Kowal 072-316-4394 and Maureen Rubenstein 072-298-0255.



NASA astronaut takes KDVP young into space



Dr Don Thomas shows grade 2 pupil Olivia Kapeluschnik, some of the kit required when you are an astronaut.

Photo: Nirvana Rogers

NIRVANA ROGERS

It is not often a school is visited by a NASA astronaut, but King David Victory Park Primary got lucky when Dr Don Thomas came to talk to them last Tuesday.

Thomas, a former NASA astronaut, related his journey to joining the Astronaut Programme with NASA. Three initial rejections were not enough to deter him from fulfilling his dream. He persisted by researching all the criteria that NASA took into account when recruiting contenders into the programme.

This gave him the advantage of developing the relevant skills needed. Finally, in January 1990 he was selected by NASA and became an astronaut in July 1991. He is a proud veteran of four space flights, logging over 1 040 hours in space.

He shared his experience of what it is like to live and work in space and urged pupils to persist with subjects like maths and science and never give up on their dreams. He said the next mission to Mars will “most probably” be undertaken by the generation his King David audience belongs to and, he said, could very likely be “one of the children sitting in this hall”.

A column of Bnei Akiva

Bnei Akiva Machaneh Nitzavim Hayom: ‘Rise to the challenge of life’

This year, Bnei Akiva has seen successes like never before, with soaring numbers in all our programmes and continuous connections with all our members through a variety of fun, inspiring, and educational interactions.



ROSH MACHANEH 2017
Martin Skudicky

Now we look forward in anticipation to what is proving to be one of our best camps to date! The build-up thus far has been one filled with excitement, energy, and most of all, tons of effort to really take Bnei Akiva to the next level.

This year’s camp name is “Machaneh Nitzavim Hayom”, and it is all about standing up, taking action and rising to the challenge called life.

It comes from Parshat Nitzavim and it begins with Moshe speaking to the entire nation of Am Israel. He starts off by saying: “You are all standing here today” and from this we see something truly incredible.

By Moshe referring to “all” of us and then going straight into describing the various types of people that make up Am Israel, he is saying that regardless of the differences we think we may have, the truth is that we are all together on this ongoing journey called life. Our strength however, lies in us unifying and standing together.

The next important point is the word “Nitzavim”. This refers to the act of getting up and standing up. It is all about taking a stand and facing whatever challenge may come your way. This is what we wanted camp to be all about, namely, combating apathy, together.

We often see enormous amounts

This column is paid for by the South African Zionist Federation

of potential go to waste because people are too easily disheartened and ready to give up or not even trying. In truth it is easier to look it up on YouTube and see someone else do it, than give it a try ourselves.

This year we are fully focused on empowering our channichim (student campers), giving them the sense of belief and willingness to try, while at the same time focusing on our core ideals.

Being a part of Bnei Akiva, means standing up for our belief in Am Yisrael, the Land of Israel, as well as the Torah of Israel. It means being an active and proud Jew and Zionist. It means engaging with the community and world around us, as well as fulfilling our G-d-given purpose on this earth.

To conclude, here’s a message from Yossi Bachrach a member who is currently in Israel serving our nation. It sums up what Bnei Akiva is all about.

“Wish I could be there, man. It’s gonna be power! This movement means so much to so many people, as you know. It does more than we want, see or comprehend. It sets ripples running through the generations of our people further than reason could explain.

“It’s an amplifier for tiny actions to make huge differences. It’s beautiful people creating beautiful experiences for a beautiful youth in our beautiful nation.”

This year, camp will be running from December 6 to 25. See you there! Contact us to find out more: www.bnei.co.za

Sydenham grade Rs have a Hebrew party

The grade R children of Sydenham Hebrew Pre-Primary School, had a Hebrew party with Morah Ita last Thursday. Each child chose and drew an object and had to tell the others the Hebrew letter their object began with.

There were stories, singing, dancing, quizzes and delicious treats!

Proudly showing off their drawings are Kayla Hanson, Rebecca Symanowitz, Matthew Kadish, and Kara Bass.



Yonatan Gischen and Refoel Denburg

Photo: Trevor Sachs

Yeshiva introduces a brand-new playschool

There was great excitement when Yeshiva College opened its brand-new playschool facilities for 2 - 3 year olds recently.

The new school features airy and spacious classrooms, modern resources and equipment and a jam-packed curriculum filled with learning and play.

TA tots start a worthy kindness campaign

Torah Academy Nursery School launched a “Kindness Campaign” on World Kindness Day (November 13) to bring positive energy into the community.

The kids brought pre-loved toys and snacks for those less fortunate. They also made a kindness chain with paper links that held onto the children’s drawings that were created to illustrate something related to kindness.

The school is endeavouring to start a chain reaction to bring kindness and positivity back into the environment. They uploaded a short video of the Torah Academy Nursery School kindness chain to Facebook and nominated Chabad of Fourways to continue the chain.

In this photograph, the little ones hold up the “chain”.





Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and Rav Aaron Pam (son of Shuvu's founder Harav Avrohom Pam zt"l) at a Shuvu Bar Mitzvah a while back.

Shuvu network of schools being introduced to South Africa

The Shuvu network of schools in Israel was founded 27 years ago by the rosh yeshiva of Torah V'Daas in New York, Hagaon Harav Avrohom Yaakov Pam, to provide a frum framework for the thousands of Russian underprivileged children arriving in Israel at the time, lacking any knowledge of sense of their Yiddishkeit. Since its inception, the Shuvu network has grown to an educational empire with 74 Mosdos and

Kiruv programmes spanning every major city in Israel, from Be'er Sheva down south, to Akko in the north, including kindergartens, elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, and even a Kollel Avreichim. The Johannesburg community will be able to hear more about Shuvu and its current campaign, as Shuvu-Israel staff member Rabbi Ephraim Lavon is in town until November 29.

M stands for mitzvah, in UJW's book



CINDY KREE

The Union of Jewish Women Johannesburg (UJW), together with volunteers, took Mitzvah Day to heart and made a difference within the wider South African community. They accomplished three successful projects. Last Thursday, together with SANBS, UJW ran a blood drive at Melrose Arch and collected 55 pints of blood from very generous donors. The following day they initiated and organised a project that included Hirsch Lyons Primary School and Paterson Park Primary School pupils. Together, they packed baby bags for impoverished moms. This project included the girls from two schools that are right next door each other, encouraging children who were once strangers to become friends. UJW will distribute these practical and useful bags to new mothers at various hospitals. On Sunday, more volunteers came together and packed 62 bags of non-perishable food for granny and chil-headed households in Pimville, Soweto. The non-perishables came from donations from the community, as well as the generous ongoing support of the Lions Club, who collect at Pick 'n Pay Gallo Manor. UK Mitzvah Day founder and chair, Laura Marks, applauded the Union of Jewish Women for its achievements, "(Your) projects touched the lives of many, and as a result, will have a real, lasting impact throughout the year." UJW Johannesburg's executive director, Cindy Kree, spoke passionately of how heartwarming and exciting it was to see so many members of various communities and faiths, joining together to make a real difference to those less fortunate than themselves.

SAUPJ doing mitzvahs

The Johannesburg South African Union of Progressive Jews (SAUPJ) – which includes members of Bet David, Temple Israel Hillbrow and Beit Emanuel – chose to thoroughly clean the Wall of Remembrance at West Park Cemetery for their Mitzvah Day project.



Once that was done, around about 20 of them went over to the Small/Stillborn Baby Section where they continued cleaning for another hour. This section is regularly maintained by Bet David who were delighted to be joined by members of their sister congregations. A record 44 big black bags were filled in just under an hour. David Weber, general manager Burial Services at WPC, expressed his appreciation, on behalf of the Chevrah Kadisha, to the SAUPJ for assisting with the maintenance of the West Park Jewish Cemetery.

17th annual Jaffa Golf Day

DIANE WOLFSON

The 17th annual Allen Joss Auto Jaffa Golf Day was held at Wingate Park Country Club on October 28 and was filled with lots of fun and enjoyed by all who participated. On arrival players were greeted with platters of bagels and drinks served under the oak trees. As has become tradition, Ocean Basket sponsored the halfway lunch and drinks. On completion of their game, each player received a vacuum flask and a bottle of Glenfiddich 12-year-old whiskey. Drinks were then served in the bar with snacks followed by a sponsored prize-giving dinner. Every player won a fabulous prize. A very successful auction was done and, all in all, a large sum of money once again raised



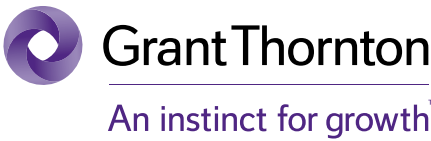
Winners 2017 Ross Smilkstein, Farrel Sternberg (organiser), Howard Shankman, Ronnie Kaplan, and Hymie Machet

for Jaffa, Pretoria's Jewish home for the aged. Farrel Sternberg, who has organised this prestigious golf day for the past 17 years, was praised for his dedication and incredible efforts in raising the high standard every year.

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
2017 Grant Thornton South Africa. All rights reserved. Grant Thornton South Africa is a member firm of Grant Thornton International Ltd (GTIL). GTIL and the member firms are not a worldwide partnership. Services are delivered by the member firms. GTIL and its member firms are not agents of, and do not obligate, one another and are not liable for one another's acts or omissions. Please see www.gt.co.za for further details.

Giro d'Italia cycle race to skirt politically-sensitive areas



The matching of cycle race and an overseas host, goes back to 1954 when the Tour de France began in Amsterdam. The Giro followed in 1965 with a visit to San Marino and has since been as far afield as Greece, Denmark and Northern Ireland.

Today hosts pay tens of millions of euros for television cameras to focus in on cherry-picked landscapes and historic monuments. Race organisers revel in the razzmatazz of a novel location that is prepared to pay the hefty fee. Just how much their Israeli partners paid to bring the race to the Holy Land, Giro organisers would not say.

Foreign dignitaries rarely enter east Jerusalem, and when they do visit, such as President Donald Trump's trip to the Old City last May, it is usually done privately.

However, Palestinian officials are angered by the race's promotional material that shows the Old City. A photo on the Giro's Twitter account shows the Spanish cycling great Alberto Contador with Jerusalem Mayor Nir Barkat in front of the Old City, and a video on Facebook shows footage of the Western Wall and other sites inside the Old City.

Palestinian Ambassador in Rome May Kaileh, said her embassy is putting pressure on the race to remove the photos. Palestinian Sports Minister Jibril Rajoub, called the photographs an “issue of misunderstanding” and said he hopes they will be removed.

"The most important thing for us, the race is not entering the 1967 boundaries, including east Jerusalem," he said.

However, Omar Barghouti, Palestinian co-founder of the anti-Israel boycott movement, called on the Giro to cancel the Israel stages altogether and move the race elsewhere.

Promotional material that “deceptively” portrays east Jerusalem as part of Israel, and working with an Israeli partner that does business in settlements in “illegally occupied territory” amount to “shameful complicity” in Israeli rights violations, he said.

Barghouti also promised pro-Palestinian demonstrations if the race takes place in Israel.

“Civil society organisations in Palestine, Italy and throughout Europe, are mobilising to convince participating teams, sponsors and cycling federations to pressure Giro d’Italia to relocate the race,” he said. “Giro d’Italia can expect nonviolent, lively protests if it insists on whitewashing Israel’s occupation and apartheid.”

Vegni, the Giro director, rejected the criticism. "I hope that it's treated as a sports event. And I hope it's treated as a sports event by the Palestinians also," he said.

KosherWorld

TRULY KOSHER

Black Friday

crazy specials

FIVE ROSES TAGLESS TEABAGS
37⁹⁹
100's

KEEP IT HEALTHY MONTAGU DRIED FRUIT & NUTS

BAKERS SALTICRAX ASSORTED
17⁴⁹
200g

CARMEL SWEET n' TANGY GHERKINS
26⁹⁹
400g

BUFFET OLIVES
180g

EAT REAL QUINOA CHIPS ASSTD FLAV
19⁴⁹
each

OSEM CREAM CRACKERS
23⁴⁹
250g

WILLI FOOD NOODLES ASSTD FLAV
21⁹⁹
70g each

CADBURY ASTROS
7⁴⁹
40g

C&B MAYONNAISE
22⁹⁹
750g

TENTA ASSTD GUMMY SWEETS
89⁹⁹
1kg each

SNOWSOFT FACIAL TISSUES
15⁴⁹
200's

PEACEFUL SLEEP AEROSOL
150g
45⁹⁹

YARDLEY LADIES & MENS DEO. ASSTD
23⁹⁹
125g

EVERYSUN AEROSOL SPORT SPF50
123⁹⁹
250ml

ORAL B 3D WHITE 35 SOFT WHITE 40 MED
35⁹⁹
each

ORAL B 1-2-3 MED
23⁹⁹

MENTADENT P MICRO GRANULES TOOTH PASTE
14⁴⁹
100ml each

PROTEX ASSORTED SOAPS 100g each
6⁴⁹

LUX ASSORTED SOAPS 100g each
5⁴⁹

OMO HANDWASHING POWDER
29⁹⁹
1kg

OK REFUSE BAGS ON ROLL 20'S
23⁹⁹

Offers valid till 26 November or while stocks last

1 Long Avenue, Glenhazel | 011 440 9517 | info@kosherworld.co.za | www.kosherworld.co.za
 Hours: Mon-Thurs 7am-10pm | Fri: 7am-4pm | Sat: 1/2 Hour After Shabbos -10pm | Sun: 8am - 10pm