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■ Volume 23 – Number 17 ■ 17 May 2019 ■ 12 Iyar 5779

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Sisulu is SA Jewry's threat in government

NICOLA MILTZ

International Relations and Cooperation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu is “the single biggest enemy” in government to South African Jewry. So says the national vice-president of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD), Zev Krengel, this week.

His remark comes in the wake of the rainbow-nation-like post-election celebrations held last Saturday night at the IEC (Independent Electoral Commission's) Results Gala at the Results Operations Centre in Tshwane.

It was there that politicians from all walks of life and representing every political party celebrated the country's democracy, and free and fair elections.

Krengel and SAJBD National Director Wendy Kahn rubbed shoulders with the likes of President Cyril Ramaphosa and other political elites in a spirit of unity and camaraderie.

“There was a palpable optimism in the hall,” said Krengel. One could sense the newfound commitment from those present to rebuild the country under the leadership of the president.

It contrasted sharply with the sentiments expressed by communal leaders just weeks before the election, when Sisulu dropped a bombshell on the local community by declaring that all relations with Israel were being severed. She also said that the downgrade of the South African Embassy in Israel was already in process.

Sisulu's statements thrust the local community into a panic, prompting communal leaders to plead with Israel not to overreact.

“Israel has listened to our plea,” said Krengel, “We begged Israel not to recall its ambassador to South Africa. We pleaded with the Israeli prime minister's office, saying that course of action would be playing directly into radicals' hands and doing exactly what the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions SA (BDS-SA) would want. So far, Israel has been incredible to the local Jewish community.”

Krengel criticised Sisulu for trying to garner votes prior to the election.

There was a sense of relief this week, however, as jovial photographs emerged of communal leaders fraternising with Ramaphosa and other African National Congress (ANC) stalwarts

including ANC Secretary General Gwede Mantashe and Nkosazana-Dlamini Zuma following the country's tightly contested sixth national and provincial elections last week.

Said Krengel, “On Saturday night, and throughout the election process, we felt warm encouragement for the inclusion of our community. Despite certain concerns we have at present with the government and the issues we need to address, we need to remain engaged and

unpleasant period before the elections for South African Jewry. The minister made outrageous, inflammatory, and incorrect statements. She said the embassy downgrade had been implemented, but this has not been adopted as government policy.”

He said he had two theories. “Either the minister was electioneering and trying to cosy up to the BDS-SA movement and other radical elements within the Muslim community, or

of downgrading the South African embassy in Israel, and this matter has not been finalised,” Ramaphosa said.

The president also said that South Africa continued to play a constructive role in the Middle East, and was using “every opportunity” to engage “with all states in the region, including the Palestinians and the Israelis”.

“We continue to host high-level talks and receive numerous delegations from Israel and Palestine. We hope to intensify this in the future,” he said.

This contradicts Sisulu's statements that the downgrade has already been implemented, and that relations between the countries are being severed.

Independent political analyst Daniel Silke said the Israel issue was clearly raised during the election campaign.

“Bashing Israel is a vote catcher. The issue came back into the public discourse because it was seen as an issue that might resonate with voters in places like the Western Cape which could be of assistance to the ANC. It's not a new thing for Israel to be used as a potential vote catcher.

“It has never helped the ANC. It is a non-issue when it comes to domestic voting, but it was raised in an attempt to make the ANC attractive. It clearly doesn't work.”

Silke said there were differences of opinion within the ANC over the role South Africa should or shouldn't play in the Middle East, and it was causing a certain amount of friction within certain elements in the ANC.

He said South Africa might return to a more pragmatic and balanced approach regarding Israel now that the elections were over.

“South Africa has bucked the African trend when it comes to trade and diplomatic relations with Israel. BDS-SA can chalk up some successes in its global campaign specifically in South Africa. It has been less successful in other African states which have expanded relations with Israel in recent months.”



**Selfie of national director of SAJBD
Wendy Kahn, SAZF vice-president
Zev Krengel and SA President Cyril
Ramaphosa at the IEC Results Gala**

involved in all facets of governance.”

He said the community would continue to engage with Sisulu on Middle-East issues “if she wanted to do so”, and despite her recent declarations.

Sisulu made further inflammatory statements shortly after her embassy comments, saying that the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) was heavily funded by Israel. These statements were rubbished by Wits Vice-Chancellor Adam Habib, who said it was “absolute nonsense”.

“She has an agenda,” said Krengel. “The downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel has not been implemented. She is obsessed with criticising the Jewish state.

“Her announcements marked a very

she was adding to internal ANC struggles, and trying to embarrass the president.”

He said Ramaphosa had on a number of occasions assured the Jewish community that the country was eager to play a constructive and meaningful role in peace negotiations in the Middle East.

A week before the 8 May elections, he confirmed to the *SA Jewish Report* that the decision to downgrade South Africa's embassy in Tel Aviv had “not been considered yet by cabinet”.

“Once the cabinet has fully engaged and come out with a view on this matter, it will be communicated to the public. In other words, we remain seized with the modalities

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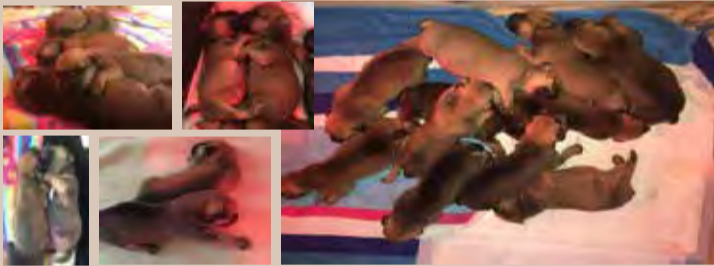
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Madonna

A close-up photograph of Madonna performing on stage. She has long, wavy blonde hair and is wearing a black and red outfit. She is holding a microphone to her mouth and singing. The background is dark and out of focus.

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16:52	17:44	Durban
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17:06	17:59	Port Elizabeth
16:58	17:51	East London



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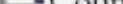
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Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860 525 200 • **Board of Directors** Howard Sackstein (Chairperson), Herby Rosenberg, Dina

Shaun Matisonn, Benjy Porter. Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff and board of directors. Tel: 011 430 1980

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Slain surfer had Jewish background

TALI FEINBERG

On Election Day, while millions of South Africans went to the polls in the hope of a better South Africa, one man met his death in one of the worst crimes that this country has seen. He was hijacked, shot, and trapped in the back of his own car, which was then set alight. Post-mortem results show that he was burned alive.

The victim, David Wolffromm, had been surfing just before he was hijacked in his Nissan X-Trail. The murder has rocked his small village of Scarborough, the city of Cape Town, and the country as a whole. Some South Africans have called for the death penalty to be reinstated after hearing about the cold-blooded crime. But what many didn't know is that the 38-year-old had a Jewish background.

"His father is Jewish, and his mother *magai'ed* (converted), and now lives in Israel," said Ofer Lemel, an Israeli who has lived in South Africa for 40 years. He has also made his home in the "deep south" of the peninsula. "It is a tiny community, and we all support each other, so I got to know David's mother when she visited from Israel," Lemel said.

He said Wolffromm's mother asked him to organise a *minyan* (prayer quorum) to say kaddish for her son at the Muizenberg Shul. "She is originally from Muizenberg, so it would be like closing the circle for her. Although her son wasn't raised with a Jewish identity, he was a very spiritual person."

Speaking to the *SA Jewish Report*, the victim's father, who asked not to be named, said, "I wouldn't wish this on anyone, ever. It has been a heart-shattering shock." He said his son was a peaceful person, a father to three children, and a successful businessman, working in the wind-farming industry.

"He took on the children of his girlfriend as his own, and the one child is about to turn four. He was doing very well in his business, which was supported by a company in Germany, and had a master's degree in renewable energy. What I want to know is why the two suspects, who

had been released on bail for a previous hijacking, were allowed to get out and do it again, this time murdering my son?"

Said Harold Kolnick, who also lives in the area, "From observing David when he visited our restaurant, the Whole Earth Café, my daughter said he was a patient and wonderful father to his young children. I have some relatives of his coming to stay at our guest house, Indigo View Cottage, to try and console and spend time with his family."

Police spokesperson Leon Fortuin told reporters that after hijacking the car and putting Wolffromm in the boot, the suspects picked up two female hitchhikers. Some reports say they knew the women, and were "showing off" the car to them.

The two hitchhikers told officers that they asked to get out of the car when they heard the victim in the boot of the vehicle. A fight broke out in the car, and they hit another motorist.



David Wolffromm

The driver of the other car told investigators that after the hijacked car had crashed into his, he gave chase until the suspects stopped and got out, pointing guns at him. The hitchhikers escaped but Wolffromm was still trapped in the car. The other driver also left the scene and as he did so, the two suspects allegedly set the car alight.

Investigators have tracked down a 30-year-old suspect, who was found in possession of an illegal firearm, ammunition, and the car keys for the victim's car. Another suspect remains at large.

Court proceedings regarding the murder began on Tuesday, with the matter being postponed for a bail hearing on 21 May.

Meanwhile, Wolffromm's family, friends, and community are supporting each other, and holding a number of events to commemorate and celebrate his life, including a surfing gathering at Scarborough beach, and a walk at Cape Point Nature Reserve.

Tamimi leads pro-Palestinian march in London

MARCY OSTER – JTA

Thousands of pro-Palestinian demonstrators marched through central London for the National Demonstration for Palestine on 12 May.

The marchers called for a "free Palestine" for a "right of return" for Palestinians, and for the end to "unprecedented attacks on Palestinians by Israel".

The event, which marks the 71st anniversary of the Nakba, or catastrophe, referring to the formation of the state of Israel, was organised by the Palestine Campaign with the support of Stop the War Coalition, Palestinian Forum in Britain, Friends of Al-Aqsa, and the Muslim Association of Britain, as well as several trade unions and the Momentum faction of the British Labour Party.

The march was led by Ahed Tamimi, the activist teen who became a Palestinian national symbol after being jailed in Israel for aggravated assault, hindering a soldier in the line of duty, incitement, threatening a soldier's life and rock throwing, including one incident caught on video in which she slapped a soldier. She was in South Africa in 2017 on a speaking tour.

At the protest, Tamimi called herself a freedom fighter and stated, "From the river, to the sea, Palestine will be free."

A small counter-protest was held by pro-Israel activists, according to the United Kingdom Campaign Against Anti-Semitism.

Labour Party leader Jeremy Corbyn, a far-left and anti-Israel politician who has faced allegations that he himself is promoting anti-Semitism in

human-rights abuses by Israeli forces, including the shooting of hundreds of unarmed Palestinian demonstrators in Gaza – most of them refugees or families of refugees – demanding their rights."

"Last week's escalation of violence, during raids on Gaza, killing 25 Palestinians, and four Israelis, is both distressing and dangerous, and a reminder of the risk that full-scale conflict can return at any time," Corbyn also said. He pointed out that a Labour government would recognise a Palestinian state, and return to "meaningful negotiations".

During the march, Glyn Secker, the secretary of the Jewish Voice for Labour, made a speech, which was met with loud applause and cheers, claiming that Jews were "in the gutter" and "part of the problem".

He also accused "American rabbis" of fuelling the neo-Nazis behind anti-Semitic terrorism, including the fatal terrorist attack on Poway synagogue in the United States, and claimed that they were "unleashing the extreme-right to win key votes in marginal states which determine the presidency", according to the Campaign Against Anti-Semitism.

He called the 119 Labour legislators who are "friends of Israel" a "fifth column in the Labour Party".



Labour, offered his support to the demonstrators in a statement that he also posted on Facebook.

"We cannot stand by or stay silent at the continuing denial of rights and justice to the Palestinian people," Corbyn said. "The Labour Party is united in condemning the ongoing



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Jewish MPs have work cut out for them in parliament

TALI FEINBERG

“There are now four Jewish MPs, and you can be sure that we will be a voice for the whole community,” says Glynnis Breytenbach, who will have a seat in South Africa’s new parliament. Madeleine Hicklin, Michael Bagraim, and Darren Bergman will join her, all as representatives of the Democratic Alliance (DA).

“South Africa has always been a home for the Jewish community. Nothing has changed, nor will it. South Africa belongs to all who live in it, without exception,” continues Breytenbach. “The Jewish community is integral to life in South Africa, and we will continue to fight against anti-Semitism wherever we find it, here and elsewhere. We will work hard to ensure that South Africa continues to make space for religious freedom as guaranteed in our Constitution. South Africa has a great future ahead for all of us,” she says.

Breytenbach is not sure yet where she will focus her energies, as there are no guarantees and this is an entirely new Parliament. “It is the prerogative of the leader of the DA as to who his shadow cabinet will be, but I would be very happy to serve again as shadow justice minister. It is my area of expertise, and there is a lot of unfinished work to be done.”



She is disappointed that many South Africans voted nationally for the African National Congress (ANC) in recent elections, while voting for the DA provincially. “It remains to be seen whether the ANC is capable of self-regulation and correction, but the innumerable misdeeds committed by the ANC and its senior members or enabled by them beggars the imagination. It is therefore

disappointing that it has been granted yet another opportunity, while the DA, where it governs, governs demonstrably well.”

At the same time, she knows that the DA has a number of challenges to tackle. “We need to consolidate after a disappointing and long election campaign. We have a big responsibility as the official opposition to hold the government to account, and to ensure that we work together with all parties where possible in the interests of all South Africans. Time is a luxury that we do not have. We must start rebuilding after the devastation of state capture immediately. Our biggest challenge will be to pick up the pieces, and start working hard towards the next elections in 2021, in the best interests of all South Africans.”

Bergman says he is honoured once again to serve the DA and the constituencies he represents. “The slate starts clean, and it is the leader’s prerogative as to which portfolio I will serve. However, I have really enjoyed and felt productive in international relations. I have made great inroads into meeting the ambassadors and governments of other countries, and representing the DA and parliament on SADC (the South African Development Community), IPU (Inter-Parliamentary Union), Liberal



International, and the Africa Liberal Network.”

He says the DA’s biggest challenge is that, “We grew too big too quickly, and have been under immense pressure to deliver in the metros that we now govern. It is important for us to communicate more of our successes here, and to continue the mission of building a united South Africa.”

To the Jewish community,

especially to those who are not feeling hopeful about South Africa’s future, he says, “This country has been here before, in the 1980s, in terms of looming junk status, high interest rates, and near bankruptcy. We are a resilient country, and have been mentioned by world leaders as well as the rebbe [Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson] as the most prosperous place to live in the future.”

Regarding the election results, Bergman said he “called it” beforehand, so he was not shocked, but he was disappointed. “I believe racial polarisation had a lot to do with the right and left growing in popularity, which means that parties in the centre need to introspect a lot more on how to make minority groups feel at ease.

“However, the real disappointment was not what people voted for, but rather that people did not vote or spoil their ballot. This reflected a growing trend of disgruntled voters that have lost faith in any party delivering to them.”

Ultimately, Bergman feels that, residents are not getting “bang for their buck” when it comes to services. However, he says we need to appreciate that the DA in a working coalition has been at the helm for just more than two years. Places like Tshwane and Johannesburg were sinking ships in terms of debt, infrastructure decay, and corruption. The party has stabilised the finances in both, and made unprecedented investment in infrastructure in areas that never enjoyed capital expenditure.

“We have also begun the long, tedious process of trying to weed out some corrupt and inefficient officials that occupy positions that are material to visible service delivery. We ask our residents to please be patient with us as we make sure that by 2021, we are seen as the clearest party to deliver services that residents in Cape Town and Midvaal are accustomed to.”

Bagraim is excited about being elected to Parliament once again, “as I want to continue focusing on the labour portfolio. At this point, I haven’t been assured that I will take the portfolio, but it makes sense as much of the legislation is still in the process of being formulated and tackled.”

Bagraim is particularly worried about the future of South Africa “as it does look like the ANC and the EFF [Economic Freedom Fighters] do have 67%, enabling them to change the Constitution as per the last debate on property. I know that there was a strong move for everyone to vote for Cyril



[Ramaphosa] in the elections, enabling him to have enough power so that he could protect his position. This, of course, has backfired in that we have now given the party enough support with the EFF to be able to change the Constitution.”

New MP Hicklin says it feels “daunting” to be joining Parliament, and “I will be forever humbled by the faith the DA has placed in me to represent it in the national assembly.”

She hopes she will be able to work in the health portfolio, which has been her passion since she wrote the first HIV/AIDS awareness brochures in the 1980s.

She agrees with her Jewish compatriots that the DA needs to do some introspection and soul searching on how its expectations missed the mark, and why. “While other parties played on racial and nationalist polarisation, the DA was calling for a stable middle ground. This might not have been the outcome that the majority of South Africans were looking for.”

However, she feels that Jews have a future in South Africa “without a question of a doubt. But, we need active citizenry and participation from every person – in particular the Jewish community. Diaspora Jews understand all too well that the legacy of oppression takes generations to unravel. This country is still reeling from our apartheid past, and as Jews, we need to fight for everybody who faces any form of oppression. Most importantly, Jews have a particularly responsibility for *tikkun olam* – repairing the imperfections of our world.”



Israel back to moon in two years, Kahn says

JORDAN MOSHE

Morris Kahn, the chairman of SpaceIL and the funder of the spacecraft Beresheet, announced his support for a second attempt to take Israel to the moon.

The South African-born Kahn made the declaration on stage at Israel’s 71st Independence Day ceremony on Mount Herzl in Jerusalem last week. He and one of the company’s co-founders, Kfir Damari, were invited to light the first of the ceremony’s 12 symbolic torches.

Before kindling the torch, the 89-year-old mogul put his glasses on to read prepared lines, but then looked up and launched into an entirely unprepared speech.

Veering entirely from the script in his hand, he announced that he was prepared to fund the second Israeli mission to the moon – in two years’ time – much to the apparent confusion of Damari.

After paying tribute to those who had made the first attempt possible, which nearly reached the moon in April, Kahn recounted a conversation he had had with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. “We were two moments away [from the moon], but we didn’t get there,” he said. “The

prime minister turned to me and asked, ‘How much will it cost?’ and I gave him my estimate.”

In spite of Damari’s attempts to interrupt him, Kahn forged ahead. “He asked, ‘How long will it take?’ and I said, ‘Two years’. He asked if I was willing to contribute again, and I said I would consider it. Tonight, I am



responding, and the answer is yes.”

Kahn’s evidently unscheduled announcement was met with amusement and excitement by the crowd, with a grinning Netanyahu thanking him from his seat, and audience members standing to applaud him.

Although Kahn pledged his support for the second attempt last month, it was clear that neither the event organisers nor Damari wanted him to continue with his address.

Reaching out to put a hand on his shoulder, Damari attempted to guide Kahn back to the script. However, even with Damari handing him the torch, Kahn was determined to continue.

“Morris wants to speak,” the news

Continued on page 5>>

UCT senate kicks Israel boycott back into consultation

TALI FEINBERG

The University of Cape Town (UCT) has been involved in a push-pull process since November last year in trying to decide if it should boycott Israeli universities.

In November, the university’s senate voted against a boycott, but it was never ratified by the university. In March 2019, it voted in support of a boycott, and the motion was sent on to the university’s highest governing body, its council.

The council sent the motion back to the senate for further discussion and clarification. On 10 May, the senate decided that the university would embark on a consultative process over the next few months on this issue.

Sara Gon of the Institute for Race Relations wrote on Politicsweb that the council’s actions were “a case of kicking the can down the road”, but interesting nevertheless. “It’s still very possible that UCT will ultimately resolve to impose a boycott, but, implicitly, the council has rebuked the senate,” she said. “The ‘clarification’, an ‘assessment’, and particularly a ‘more

consultative process’ suggests that a body as large and august as the senate messed up the process in its – or at least some of its members’ – zeal to impose a boycott.”

Now, as the consultative process begins, “The can keeps being kicked down the road – which may not be a bad thing at the moment,” Gon says.

Wendy Kahn, the national director of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, said, “We are encouraged that UCT is embarking on a process to understand the extensive and far reaching implications and consequences of such an action. [The university] needs to understand that it would damage its reputation and undermine its credibility as a globally recognised academic institution.

“While the boycott would have absolutely no impact on the Israeli-Palestinian situation, and the instigators are putting their own narrow political agendas ahead of the well-being and reputation of UCT, this misguided resolution would cause significant damage to one of the gems of South African academia,” she said.

The fairytale’s not over, says Bachelor winner Gina Myers

TALI FEINBERG

“It was completely surreal and magical. It took my breath away. Every heartbreak and hard relationship happened for this moment,” says Gina Myers, who Lee Thompson chose as the girl for him in *The Bachelor SA* finale last week.

However, it wasn’t all sunshine and roses for the pair, as their relationship ended just a few weeks after it started. In the programme finale, the two stood together on a beach in Mauritius, she in a flowing yellow dress and he in a suit and tie, as he professed his love for her. “You have the most beautiful heart I have ever come across in anyone, ever. And I would like to take your heart and look after it, and give you mine in return,” he said. “Gina, my Gina, when I’m with you, I feel like I am home. And I don’t want this fairytale to end.”

Thompson then presented her with a Jack Friedman custom-designed diamond engagement ring. Jack Friedman Chief Executive Howard Friedman, says that Thompson is “any father-in-law’s dream; somebody who will love, cherish and respect his wife, and treat her like a queen”.

Thompson also impressed Friedman with the effort and passion he put into the design of the ring. “He knew exactly what he wanted, and it was all about the emotion he wished to express, or, as I prefer to call it, soul,” says the jeweller.

After Thompson presented the ring to Myers, he swept her onto a waiting boat as they enjoyed their first moments together as a couple. It came after a long journey of dates, private conversations, challenges, and adventures, which began with 24 women and 560 roses, and ended with one. The show started filming in late 2018, so it has been a few months since Thompson chose Myers.

Since then, life for her has been a complete whirlwind. “I think the days after were quite overwhelming, just because we had to keep this happiness to ourselves. No one knew what was going on. And all I wanted to do was shout out to the world that I had this new love!”

When did their relationship officially start? “It started as soon as he chose me. Visits had to be carefully arranged, so that no one saw us together,” she says. The highlight of their time as a couple was the fact that, “I thought I had my person. It was actually amazing for the first few days. I was absolutely taken aback by how happy I thought I was.”

On their subsequent breakup, she says, “Lee was facing a challenging time, and I don’t think he was ready to be in this position. I was struggling to communicate this with him. It turned out he couldn’t be there for me the way I needed him to be. He was inconsistent, and that’s a key quality I need from someone.”

But because no one knew they had been a couple and had broken up, she had to experience heartbreak with a smile on her face. “He [Thompson] was not in a good place, and I was facing the brunt of it. I had to pretend that I was in an okay space as no one knew that I was on the show or that we had landed up together. I think in the future, we can work on being friends. I wish him all the happiness, love, and strength in the world.”

Even though things have ended with Thompson, she still believes people can find love



on *The Bachelor*. “If you can be yourself throughout and know who you are as a person, the right connection will come. And what a beautiful

thing to say to your kids, ‘We met on *The Bachelor SA*. Your dad chose me, and I chose him. Out of all the people in the world, we landed up together.’”

Since the final episode, when it was revealed that Myers was “the one”, but that the couple had broken up, she says she has been wholeheartedly supported by friends and family members.

“It’s heart-warming – I have such good people in my life. The public, I think, have been disappointed. However, they are still sending messages of love and support. I am staying true to this: you cannot stay in a relationship for the sake of it, and because of other people’s expectations. You have to look after your heart. This was for my heart, not a TV show.”

So, where to from here for Myers? “I have a louder voice now. I hope the right people will hear it. I am going to work on helping other women to have a voice, and take it from there.”

She wants to thank the community for its support. “It meant so much to me. I feel all the love. And it really helped me along this journey. My fairytale isn’t over.”

Israel back to moon in two years, Kahn says

>>>Continued from page 4

commentator can be heard saying. “And the audience wants to hear him.” Kahn attempted to continue speaking, cheered by the audience, but his oration was evidently cut short by turning off the microphone, and the announcement of the next torch lighter.

Kahn’s determination to see Israel take another crack at the moon landing is certainly no surprise. He provided a sizeable percentage of

the \$100 million (R1.4 billion) required to build and launch the first spacecraft, stating days after the crash that he would ensure the creation Beresheet 2. “We started something, and we need to finish it. We’ll put our flag on the moon,” he said.

Although his office would not comment on his plans for the second spacecraft, it is clear that the business boffin from Benoni remains committed to Israel’s moon landing.



State of Israel
Ministry of Strategic Affairs
and Public Diplomacy

Notice for Open Tender:

APPLICATIONS FOR SUPPORT FOR PRO-ISRAELI ACTIVITY FOR 2019 – THE MINISTRY OF STRATEGIC AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The Ministry of Strategic Affairs and Public Diplomacy has announced the opening of the submission process for applications for grants in 2019 in relation to the topics listed below.

1. Support for pro-Israeli activities abroad – Support for pro-Israeli activities in the geographic regions listed, in order to strengthen ties between Israel and said countries. **The funds provided will be limited to 3million NIS.**
2. Support for pro-Israel activities on the internet aimed at target audiences abroad – Support for activities of pro-Israel organizations and pro-Israel initiatives in the geographic regions listed. This included positive campaigns regarding Israel, and promoting efforts to combat anti-Semitism, discrimination, incitement and the delegitimization of Israel. **The funds provided will be limited to 3 million NIS.**

Information on the criteria, accompanying forms and contact details can be found on the Ministry of Strategic Affairs website:

https://www.gov.il/he/Departments/General/strategy_support

The deadline for submission of applications for the **first** grant type via email, together with all the required information and documents, must be completed by July 1st 2019. The deadline for submission of applications for the **second** grant type via email, together with all the required information and documents, must be completed by July 1st 2019.

Applications should be submitted to the following email addresses:

For the submission of applications for grants for pro-Israeli events abroad pursuant to section 1 above, the applications are to be submitted to: grants.events@pmo.gov.il

For the submission of applications for grants for pro-Israeli activities on the Internet for target audiences abroad pursuant to section 2 above, applications should to be submitted to: grants.initiatives@pmo.gov.il

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Take-home truths from a hectic period

It's a relief to catch our breath after a hectic few weeks. We completed the elections, both in Israel and South Africa, had Pesach, Yom Hazikaron, Yom Ha'atzmaut, and Yom HaShoah.

We now have time to consider what this all means to us, how the elections resonate with the days of remembrance and Yom Ha'atzmaut and vice versa. We have a chance to read between the lines of what has been said and done during this period.

There are two important "take-home" lessons I have learnt over this period. One is a reminder of the price that has been and continues to be paid for a Jewish state, and what the people of Israel have achieved in spite of it.

The second is how, in the run-up to our elections, there was a constant flow of mixed messages about whether the South African government had or had not implemented the downgrade of the South African embassy in Israel.

There appeared to be a "carrot and stick" approach to the pro and anti-Israel lobby in the election campaign. It was dangled in front of those who wanted the government to downgrade the embassy, and those who didn't. Led by International Affairs and Cooperation Minister Lindiwe Sisulu, it was deeply unsettling for our community.

Her statements were cruel and ugly. She seems blinkered about the reality of Israel, and incapable of seeing the country as anything but abominable.

In terms of the first message, I don't need to tell you about the loss of life, trauma, and distress that Jews experienced during the Shoah. Six million slaughtered just because they were Jews.

So, when the state of Israel was declared after more battles and bloodshed, it meant that the Jewish people would have a place where they could hold their heads high as Jews. It meant that they didn't need to fear being chased out or alienated from any country.

Having a Jewish state means that Jews around the world never have to cower or accept degradation or racism. It certainly doesn't mean we are any less South African or passionate about this country, but it does mean our connection to Israel is not just deep, it is ingrained in us.

Israel is not my home, but when something bad happens there, it hurts me. When something great happens there, I'm proud.

It's like that even though these events don't have an impact on my day to day life, as it would if they had happened in South Africa.

And as the years go by and Israel is still having to defend itself against its neighbours, and more and more lives are lost, it continues to be distressing for us in South Africa. But, imagine how much more upsetting it is for those who live there. A total of 23 741 Israeli soldiers have died for the country and 3 150 people have been killed in terror attacks.

However, in spite of this loss and the constant threat of war, Israel is developing and growing into a superpower.

This week in the *SA Jewish Report*, I wrote about the phenomenon that is the "start-up nation" and how to sustain it. What I don't speak about are the kinds of phenomenal technological breakthroughs and creations coming out of this land. Truly, it is amazing! There is one start-up to every 1 500 people, and Start-Up Nation Central tracks just 6 000 innovative start-ups.

Then, we meet Yossi Abramowitz, an Israeli who introduced solar power to Israel, and has rolled it out in many countries on the African continent. This is one Israeli making an incredible difference to people's lives inside and outside Israel. Imagine what he could do to help in South Africa if our government let him. And, he is on his way here next week.

Now, we go into the second take-home message, that of the constant threat that South Africa will divorce itself and its people from Israel.

The astonishing thing is that Sisulu is so dead set on making this happen, she tells stories in public that aren't true. Take, for example, the issue of the University of the Witwatersrand supposedly being sponsored by the Israeli government that she mentioned a few weeks back. Anything to get at Israel, and possibly us.

She appears to be blinded by the truth, and cannot see that Israel is a country – with its fair share of faults, like any other – that is doing its best to survive. Yes, there are issues. Yes, there are so many disputes about all sorts of things playing out in Israel.

But Sisulu's version of Israel is nowhere near close to the truth. But then, she also claimed that the embassy downgrade was in progress. This was confirmed to be untrue by President Cyril Ramaphosa in answer to questions from the *SA Jewish Report*. The downgrade cannot be in progress because it has not gone through cabinet.

Now that the elections are over, we hope things settle down and this anti-Israel campaign is brought to a halt. I do hope that Sisulu and others in government do their homework, and find out the truth. I hope they realise how much a positive working relationship with Israel can benefit all of us in South Africa.



Potential for war between US and Iran

Statesmanship is a delicate craft. Some leaders prefer a subtle approach. American president Donald Trump is not one of them. He believes in grand displays of power, extreme threats, and punitive measures.

This week, he warned Tehran that it would "suffer greatly" if it "did anything" to provoke the United States.

His words are backed up with action. He's deployed an aircraft carrier strike group, B-52 bombers, and other military personnel and equipment to the Persian Gulf.

It comes amid growing fears that another war in the Middle East could be around the corner, this time between the US and Iran. That's not to say that Trump wants this war – both civilian and military American leaders insist he doesn't. However, the point is that he's prepared for war if necessary.

And each time he espouses another aggressive comment or sanctions another confrontational action, the odds escalate in favour of such a war breaking out.

So how did things suddenly get so heated?

The Americans reportedly received intelligence about two weeks ago that Tehran was planning to attack American targets in the region. This could mean attacks on the more than 5 000 American troops in Iraq or on US commercial ships, oil tankers, and military vessels in the Red Sea and Persian Gulf.

Israel's *Channel 13* recently reported that Jerusalem passed along intelligence warnings of Iranian plans also to strike installations linked to American ally Saudi Arabia's petroleum trade. Over the weekend, that intelligence proved correct as two Saudi oil tankers were damaged by alleged Iranian or Iranian-backed proxies. Tehran, though, denies involvement.

No surprise, then, that Trump is becoming more hostile. An updated military plan was presented at a meeting of his top national security aides last week. It envisions sending in as many as 120 000 troops to the Middle East should Iran attack American forces or increase work on its nuclear programme. Behind the proposal is Trump's national security adviser, John Bolton, a long-time supporter of confronting Tehran. While the plan does not necessarily mean a ground offensive, it's being seen as a possible way to achieve regime change in the country.

Not everyone in the US administration supports Bolton's plan, but the fact that it's on the table shows how dangerous the threat from Iran has become.

Or has it? The official word from Tehran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei is that "there is not going to be any war" with the US. In comments televised across the country, he said, "This face-off is not military. Neither we nor them [the US] seek war. They know it will not be in their interest."

But Khamenei stressed that he would also not

DATELINE: MIDDLE EAST

Paula Slier



renegotiate the nuclear deal, a deal that Trump has criticised for being the "worst, horrible, laughable". Trump wants the Iranians to return to the bargaining table in a bid to reach a new nuclear agreement more favourable to the US than the one signed by the Obama administration four years ago.

So what can the American president do? He can threaten, he can beat his fists, but will it work?

Critics warn that Trump's bullying will backfire, and point out that the country's leaders are hardliners for whom national pride is everything.

This means that the bellicose comments could have the reverse effect, as Iran's leaders try to save face. Or, as they have already indicated, Iran's leaders could be patient with Trump and try to wait him out.

But it's possible that the waiting period is running out, and that's why we are seeing intelligence suggestions that Tehran is starting to respond militarily. Maybe US sanctions are taking their toll? Or maybe the Iranians fear Trump might be re-elected?

In spite of Washington vowing that it will keep up the pressure until Tehran changes its behaviour, this has not yet happened. If anything, Iranian leaders seem to be as immutable as ever. There are even suggestions that far from returning to the negotiating table, they are simply halting on some of their commitments regarding the nuclear deal.

Trump cannot be keen to launch a war with Iran, especially when his foreign policy has been to disentangle the US from Afghanistan and Syria. The question is will he run out of patience? So far, he hasn't commented on his national security adviser's plan to send so many American troops back to the region. Instead, in typical Trump fashion, he says all options are on the table.

But even if war doesn't happen, Trump's pressure campaign is likely to result in oil prices climbing, and even greater suffering for ordinary Iranian people. The nuclear deal could collapse once and for all, but with nothing to replace it. It's not clear what that would mean – carte blanche for Tehran to resume its nuclear activity? Trump seems to have pushed himself into a corner.

For Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, Iran poses an existential threat. That threat, at least initially, is less about a direct war between Israel and Iran than about Iran activating its proxies in Lebanon, Syria, Gaza, and elsewhere to take aim at the Jewish state. Netanyahu has always argued that there is no way to find common ground with Iran, and the only solutions are regime change or total surrender.

It's unclear whether Trump will heed Bolton's advice and follow the path Netanyahu wants, pushing Iran to the brink, or whether he will pull back and pursue the "art of the deal". He's as unpredictable as ever.



Iran's leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and US president Donald Trump

Northern suburbs Jews have impact on vote



OPINION

Wayne Sussman

Before the elections, I said that I would love to see a heat map showing where major party personalities were campaigning in 2019 compared to 2014.

I live in Norwood. We had Finance Minister Tito Mboweni and Deputy Minister Pinky Kekana address a meeting at the Ascot Hotel. Trevor Manuel came to lend support.

We had Mmusi Maimane and Solly Msimanga address a town-hall meeting at Houghton Primary School. Tony Leon came in from the cold to address shoppers at Kosher World in Glenhazel to drive up support for the Democratic Alliance (DA).

It was clear that the polling of both the African National Congress (ANC) and the DA revealed that they could not ignore voters in the north-eastern suburbs of Johannesburg. For the ANC, votes in the suburb held the key to getting more than 50% or not making that threshold and having to form a coalition.

For the DA, it revealed that the reliable pool of suburban voters was not going to be as easy to convince as before. President Cyril Ramaphosa needed a mandate.

I'm reasonably confident that the ANC and DA would have found common cause in their polling, and that it would have shown the ANC in Gauteng below 50% in the week before the election.

The ANC ran a very impressive Gauteng campaign. Don't be surprised if Gauteng campaign manager Lebogang Maile gets a promotion. The ANC came over the line by driving turnout in Gauteng.

Turnout in Gauteng in 2014 was on the national par of 73%. This time, the provincial turnout was at 68%, higher than the national average of 66%.

So, what happened at voting stations with a high concentration of Jewish voters? I have looked at voting stations in Glenhazel, Fairmount, and Norwood in Johannesburg, and two voting stations in different parts of Sea Point.

In Glenhazel and Fairmount, the DA was able to show growth in both the national and provincial ballots. There was small growth for the ACDP in Glenhazel, but it fell slightly in Fairmount.

National ballot – brackets indicate 2014 support

	ANC	DA	EFF	ACDP	ZACP
Norwood	24% (18%)	66% (73%)	5% (4%)	1% (1%)	1%
Glenhazel	15% (18%)	74% (72%)	4% (3%)	4% (3%)	1%
Fairmount	12% (16%)	77% (72%)	4% (3%)	3% (5%)	1%
French School-Sea Point	11% (6%)	82% (91%)	1%	1%	1%
Sea Point Primary	8% (5%)	84% (91%)	2% (1%)	2%	1%

Provincial ballot – brackets indicate 2014 support

	ANC	DA	EFF	ACDP	GOOD
Norwood	19% (16%)	73% (74%)	4% (7%)	1% (1%)	–
Glenhazel	13% (14%)	81% (80%)	4% (3%)	1% (1%)	–
Fairmount	9% (16%)	84% (77%)	4% (3%)	1% (1%)	–
French School-Sea Point	5% (5%)	89% (93%)	1%	1%	1%
Sea Point Primary	4% (5%)	88% (91%)	1% (1%)	1%	2%

Both suburbs were not feeling the Ramaphoria, and broke for the DA. The ZACP (Capitalist Party aka Purple Cows) picked up 1% of the vote. The DA did better on the provincial ballot than the national

ballot, and that trend showed here.

Norwood had interesting results. The suburb does tend to be more diverse than the above mentioned suburbs, and the results showed a slip in support for the DA, with that support moving mainly to the ANC and a tiny slither to the ZACP.

The DA's losses on the provincial ballot were more subdued than the national ballot. However, the DA shedding votes on the provincial ballot in

areas like Norwood are indicative of why the ANC eked out a majority in the provincial elections in Gauteng.

In Sea Point, at the French School, support for the ANC more than doubled in the national ballot. More voters around this station wanted to give President Ramaphosa a mandate to govern. The DA lost votes to the ANC, ACDP, and ZACP at Sea Point Primary. While the party did lose ground, it still won the districts with more than 80%.

There was less faith in the ANC on the provincial ballot in Sea Point, with the party either losing some ground, or holding steady. The DA did not replicate its showing in 2014, when it won more than 90% of the vote, but did get in the high 80s. Patricia De Lille's GOOD received some support in

Bet David voting station – brackets indicate previous support

	ANC	DA	EFF
National	27% (17%)	62% (73%)	6% (4%)
Provincial	20% (17%)	71% (77%)	6% (3%)

Sea Point.

A better indicator of what went right for the ANC on election day – and what went wrong for the DA – might be found at the only Jewish institution in South Africa which has a voting station – Bet David- in Morningside, Sandton. This is a relatively more diverse district.

On the provincial ballot, The ANC got 20% of the vote, up from 17% in 2014, while the DA's vote share fell from 77% to 71%. This was more pronounced on the national ballot, where the ANC's vote share rose from 17% to 27%, while the DA's fell from 73% to 62%.

In a general election, turnout is everything. It is interesting to note that while turnout in Glenhazel, especially Fairmount, was high, even though it was lower than it was in 2014, it was still way above the provincial average. However, when one looks at Norwood, and at Bet David in Morningside, you see that turnout was way lower. Turnout in 2014 was 73% at Norwood, it fell to 62%. At Bet David, turnout fell to 66% from 76%. This was the DA's chief Achilles heel on Wednesday. It will hope that the suburban stay away will be arrested by the time the 2021 elections come around.

Three new parties will be in the next parliament. These include Patricia De Lille's GOOD party; the African Transformation Movement, a party guided by Mzwanele Manyi and linked to one of the factions of the Shembe church; and Ganief Hendriks' Al-Jama-ah. Agang and Themba Godi's African People's Convention will not return.

• Wayne Sussman writes about by-elections for Daily Maverick.

Most Jews of Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African Jews do qualify for European

European citizenship which will result in them obtaining a EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three empires: Russia, Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania and Latvia existed until 1918.

changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

Sephardi: the descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are most likely eligible for a Portuguese passport. If applicable, Horesh is able to obtain an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which an application for European citizenship can be made and will most likely be successful. Portuguese citizenship enables one to enter the Unites States without the need to apply for a visa.

In addition, Horesh is filing many applications for descendants of Sephardi origin who arrived in South Africa from Greece, Turkey, and North Africa. Descendents from other countries in the Middle East – even Holland – are also potentially eligible.

Horesh resides in Israel, but has spent seven



years in Poland, and is recognised as a leading lawyer in the field of European citizenship, with a full understanding of local immigration laws.

Living in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – offers him quick and easy access to Poland, Latvian and Lithuania, Accordingly, he is able to work closely with local professionals who assist him in tracing the documentation required for successful applications for European citizenship.

In addition, and as a result of his close ties with Portuguese authorities, to date he has had a 100% success rate with applications for Portuguese citizenship.

Horesh is available to discuss your specific details. He is often in South Africa, and can meet you in person to discuss your specific needs.



Destroyed Warsaw, January 1945

citizenship, whether they can prove their Polish, Lithuanian & Latvian lineage or not, and most South African Jews of Sephardic heritage are also eligible for European passports.

Adv. Avi Horesh has in-depth knowledge of the applicable legislation and in his experience, the majority of South African Jews have ancestors who were illegally deprived of citizenship. As their descendants, these Jews are eligible for

At the end of the WWI, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/ reborn. Only then did residents became citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Polish, Lithuanian or Latvian.

Horesh advises that eligibility for a Lithuanian Latvian or Polish passport depends on the city from which your grandparents (or their parents) hailed.

Horesh says many South African Ashkenazi Jews of Lithuanian origin have been refused Lithuanian citizenship because their heritage is actually Polish. They would, accordingly, be entitled to Polish citizenship and a EU passport.

After World War II, the borders in Europe

I will be in Johannesburg from June 13th till June 19th, and then in Cape Town till June 24th
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Pastor’s birthday bash revels in Jewish song



JORDAN MOSHE

Musician and entertainer Jonathan Birin was astonished when the crowd he was playing for wore *tzitzit* (tassels) and *yarmulkes*, and knew all the words to the traditional Hebrew and Jewish songs he was singing.

This was not his usual Barmitzvah and Jewish wedding audience. Far from it. This was a room full of Christian Impact Church congregants who were there to celebrate their pastor, Philip Banda’s, birthday.

Clemance Tsomondo, a member of the congregation and a former employee at Gary Friedman Caterers, contacted Birin in February, asking if he would perform at his pastor’s upcoming birthday. Birin agreed, expecting to play “typical party music” for a small gathering.

Instead, he arrived to find a crowd of about 500 people waiting for him. That didn’t shock him – he is used to performing to large and small groups. He was totally thrown by the fact that every person present knew every word and every dance move to every Jewish song he played. And, not one of them was Jewish.

“I thought I’d find 40 people and a cake,” he said, chuckling. “What I actually found was a 12-piece band, a professional sound system of five speakers, an entire camera crew filming the event, and a crowd of 500 people. I couldn’t believe it.”

His surprise was compounded not only by the fact that he was asked to play Jewish and Israeli music, but that all the men present were wearing kippot (*yarmulkes*) and *tzitzit*. This when not a single attendee was Jewish.

“When the pastor walked into the hall, the men immediately got up to dance,” says Birin. “I started playing, and couldn’t believe it when I saw that they knew every song I played. They knew every word and every dance step. That I am used to seeing at Jewish events only.

“The master of ceremonies kept calling out ‘*am Yisrael chai* (the Jewish nation lives)!’. The men on the dance floor were singing along continuously.”

Birin’s experience has gone viral in the past few weeks, with a video of the celebration doing the rounds on social media. As of Monday this week, the video had more than 30 000 views. He now knows that the congregants attach particular significance to Jews and Israel as part of their worship, directing much of their prayer and service to Jerusalem.

“Many of them actually travel to

Israel every year with the church,” says Birin. “They are extremely Zionist, centring their beliefs on the importance of Israel. Tears flowed when I played Im *Eshkachech Yerushalayim* (If I forget thee Jerusalem).”

Since the video’s circulation, Birin has received numerous calls and enquiries from people around the world. “I uploaded the video just before Pesach,” he says. “Since then, 30 000 people have watched it, and plenty have commented. I’ve had calls from rabbis who want to attend the next party, and even from members of the Lemba tribe who want to arrange something like this.”

Birin says he remains amazed by the fact that songs which we believe are played only at Jewish events can resonate so deeply with others outside our community. “We believe that we have something of an exclusivity over songs like this because they are about Israel or written in Hebrew.

“I doubt that those who wrote them would ever have imagined that these songs could cross the divide and be performed anywhere but at a Jewish event, [and that] other people can identify with them. It really is mind-blowing.”

Five on UK’s richest list are Jewish and South African

JORDAN MOSHE

Nine on the British *Sunday Times* Rich List of 2019 are South African – and of those, five are Jewish.

They are: Nathan Kirsh; Manfred Gorvy and family; Sir Donald Gordon and family; Tony Tabatznik and family; and Vivian Imerman.

The list is based on identifiable wealth including land, property, assets such as art, and company shares. It does not, however, take into account any funds contained in people’s bank accounts.

The 1 000 entrants collectively possess a combined wealth of £771.13 billion (R14.2 trillion) which is in fact an increase on last year’s total of £724 billion (R13.3 trillion), according to *BusinessTech*.

Coming in the top 5% is South African-born Swazi businessman Nathan Kirsh. Born in Potchefstroom in 1932, Kirsh earned a Bachelor of Commerce at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits). After assisting with the operation of his father’s malt factory, in 1958 he launched his own venture in Swaziland by founding a corn milling and malt business.

Moving into wholesale supermarkets and commercial property, Kirsh founded cash and carry store Jetro in Brooklyn, New York, in 1976. He owns 75% of Jetro Holdings, which operates more than 100 stores and restaurant depots in America. He resides in Swaziland, and holds citizenship of the United States, South Africa, and Swaziland.



Sir Donald Gordon

Manfred Gorvy and his family rank 155th on the list. Gorvy was born in South Africa in 1938, where he attended Parktown Boys High School and later received a Bachelor of Commerce from Wits.

After qualifying as an accountant in 1961, he served as secretary of property management company Townsvlew Estates for a time, where he crossed paths with late community doyen Gerald Leissner, who started his career at the company. In 1974, Gorvy founded Hanover Acceptances, a property and financial investment company and remains its chairperson today.

His philanthropic acumen is equally impressive. His refurbishment of a lecture theatre at the Victoria and Albert Museum in London resulted in it being renamed the Lydia and Manfred Gorvy Lecture Theatre. Gorvy divides his time between London, where many of his businesses are based, and South Africa.

Coming in at number 230 is Sir Donald Gordon and family. An accountant by training, he was born in 1930,

and founded life insurance company Liberty Life at 27. His savvy for numbers led him to build up two business empires, Liberty Life in South Africa, and United Kingdom property company Liberty International. The latter is one of the largest regional shopping centre companies in Europe.

In June 2005, he was awarded a knighthood in recognition of his services to the arts and business. He has also supported South Africa, helping to establish the Gordon Institute of Business Science (GIBS) in 2000, as well as the Donald Gordon Medical Centre. He resides in London.

Toby Tabatznik made his mark on the pharmaceutical industry. His fortune was made by founding Arrow Generics in 2000, the successor to his family’s original pharmaceutical operation. Tabatznik sold the initial business to German giant Merck in the 1990s, and its successor to American-based Watson Pharmaceuticals in 2009.

He is passionate about social justice and is a philanthropist in causes to do with media, human rights law, and activism. In 2009, he founded the Bertha Foundation, which is geared towards creating more progressive and just societies and the battle for social change.

Vivian Imerman is the last South African on the list. He is considered the saviour of the American-based tinned-fruit company, Del Monte. He made a fortune when he sold his share of the business. He repeated this success with Scottish whisky group Whyte & Mackay in 2007.

Born in Johannesburg in 1955, Imerman’s grandfather was a Russian Jew who emigrated to South Africa after the Russian revolution. Although he did not complete his degree in business law, Imerman worked for his father’s chemical brokering business. He went on to found his own company by purchasing and reselling surplus chemicals.

He expanded the business into the distribution of branded pharmaceuticals, which was later listed on the Johannesburg Stock Exchange in 1987. He then expanded into food distribution.

His business successes enabled him to purchase Del Monte International in 1993, the value of which he tripled. He sold his stake in the fruit company in 1999, and moved to London. After his success in the whisky trade, he continues as chairman and chief executive of Del Monte.

• *The information in this article was taken from the Sunday Times, Bloomberg, SAentrepreneurs, BusinessTech, IMDB, and the Telegraph.*

Moses Moyo Award disputed by community media

NICOLA MILTZ

The recently introduced “Moses Moyo Award” for courageous journalism in community media has upset industry players who have criticised the South African National Editors’ Forum (Sanef) for lack of consultation in its naming.

The late community journalist, Moses Moyo, 39, was a dear friend of the Jewish community. He died suddenly in October last year after a short illness, sending shock waves through communal leadership who considered him like an adoptive son.

The Zimbabwean-born Moyo, who wore *tzitzit* (prayer tassels) and a *kippa* (yarmulke), and practiced many Jewish traditions, was the founder of the popular *Inner City Gazette*, and was a longstanding Sanef council member. Moyo was also a member of the inner city Impact for Christ Ministries Church, and was passionate about Israel, supporting many pro-Israel causes.

At the time of his passing, Sanef said of Moyo that he was “deeply passionate and committed to strengthening media freedom, promoting ethical journalism, and defending the public’s right to know. With his charming smile and quiet demeanour, Moses had an unparalleled passion for covering community news and putting issues that directly affect communities at the forefront.”



Moses Moyo

In his memory, Sanef introduced the Moses Moyo Award for courageous journalism specifically for community media, and announced that nominations were open. This award would be given at the annual Nat Nakasa Award gala dinner in late June, along with the highly regarded Nat Nakasa Award for courageous and brave journalism.

Nakasa was a giant of a journalist who died in exile in 1965. He worked for *Drum Magazine*, the *Rand Daily Mail* and *Ilanga* newspapers among others, and was forced to leave South Africa on an exit visa when the apartheid government refused to grant him a passport after he was awarded a Nieman Fellowship at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The honouring of Moyo, however, has raised the ire of the Association of Independent Publishers (AIP) which represents more than 150 community newspapers of which 60% are black owned and 18% women owned.

The AIP expressed its “dissatisfaction” at the decision taken by Sanef to name the award

without consultation. It distanced itself from the awards, saying none of its members would participate.

In a statement, it said, “AIP feels this decision was unfairly reached. Our members were supposed to be given an opportunity to nominate people who they think should have been a proper representation of community media in naming this award.”

This week, Kate Skinner, the executive director of Sanef, and Chris Louw, the organisation’s community media chairperson, held talks with AIP to resolve the dispute. Skinner told the *SA Jewish Report* that the naming of the award was still under discussion, and that the meeting went well.

“There was an issue around consultation in the naming of the award. AIP felt there were a number of other powerful community media journalists, and it wanted to discuss the names and put names forward. We are in the midst of discussions. We want to go ahead with a community media award, and we haven’t finalised what we will be calling it. We need further consultation.”

Carol Mohlala, the executive director of AIP, told the *SA Jewish Report* that while Moyo was considered a fine community journalist, the organisation felt that there were other well-known and respected community journalists who might have been overlooked in the process, and that there had been no consultation with community media players.

It remains to be seen whether Moyo will be honoured with an award in his name.

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‘Captain Sunshine’ helps Africa go solar

STEVEN GRUZD

Nicknamed “Captain Sunshine” by the *New York Times*, American-born maverick Josef Abramowitz, (55), waged multiple battles to feed solar-generated electricity into Israel’s national grid. That tenacity, experience, and technology is already transforming power across Africa. He could help South Africa to solve its crippling electricity crisis if Pretoria would perhaps put aside the politics of the Palestinians.

Abramowitz, a student activist in Boston in the 1980s, fought to free Soviet Jewry and against the apartheid regime, and was threatened with expulsion by his university. As head of the World Union of Jewish Students, he called for sanctions and disinvestment on a trip to South Africa in 1987. He narrowly avoided deportation, earning a banning order (which he proudly framed and hung on his wall). He’s also been a journalist, an educator, and ran (unsuccessfully) for the Knesset for the Atid Echad party in 2006.

Abramowitz was shocked that Israel wasn’t running on solar energy when his family made aliyah in 2006 to Kibbutz Ketura, situated in the scorching southern Arava Desert.

He recalls, “With the sun setting over the Jordanian mountains and the tremendous heat in the desert in August, I said ‘this whole place works on solar power, right?’”

Wrong. At the time, Israel was 100% dependent on fossil fuels: coal, gas from Egypt, and over-used diesel generators. It was a heavy polluter, with electricity solely supplied through a state-owned company.

“It was nuts – this world leader in tech had no solar power!”

He resolved to take on the Israeli establishment to change this. “I was called crazy, and a naïve American kibbutznik,” he said. “I thought, ‘Hey, I helped get Hebrew teachers out of Siberia and helped to get sanctions imposed on apartheid South Africa. Can’t we change a few laws in our own country?’”

With trusted business partners, he had to overcome political, statutory, regulatory, and financial hurdles. “It took five years to win 100 out of 100 battles and raise capital in the midst of the global financial crisis... but I love beating up government for a good cause.”

In 2011, his company, Arava Power, brought online the Middle East’s first utility-scale solar field (the size of about nine rugby pitches), adding 4.9 megawatts to Israel’s electricity grid. Arava Power built another 12 fields in the south, costing \$400 million (R5.6 billion). “We could have said dayenu at that point (it would have sufficed),” he said.

But now, due to Abramowitz’s chutzpah, all of Israel is on course to be powered by the sun during daytime by 2020. He was named as one of CNN’s six global “green

pioneers” in 2012, and has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Witnessing this success, African



entrepreneurs and politicians clamoured for Israeli solar tech. Abramowitz launched a new company, Energiya Global, to replicate and adapt the Israeli model internationally.

Again, the naysayers said this would never work due to patronage and corruption in Africa. Nevertheless, after careful research, Rwanda was selected as the pilot country.

Abramowitz said Energiya Global adopted a “quadruple bottom line” approach to solar investments in Africa. It had to make double-digit returns for investors, protect the environment, alleviate hardship, and enhance the reputation of Israel and the Jewish people.

By 2014, an 8.5 megawatt solar field was supplying 8% of Rwanda’s total power needs, dropping diesel

jihadism, and help the United States compete with China in Africa.

Abramowitz despairs that “South Africa built two monster coal-fired plants, and the planet lost out. South Africa is blessed with sunlight, waves, wind, and bio-waste. A progressive carbon tax would allow the country to switch to a 21st-century grid... but corruption and bad leadership in government and Eskom have put South Africa behind the eight ball. It’s not a good global green citizen.”

The reluctance to embrace Israeli technology and innovation openly by the South African government in order to score political points in the Israel-Palestinian conflict, saddens Abramowitz.

He said South Africa was blocking Israel’s attempts to regain observer status at the African Union (lost when the institution reformed in 2002). “The ANC [African National Congress] is sometimes more radical than Israel’s Arab neighbours, and the Palestinians themselves.” Initial discussions with Pretoria and Eskom about building a giant solar field in Upington went nowhere.

Abramowitz believes that with the right policies, technology, and incentives, especially allowing more players to supply electricity, by 2030, South Africa could achieve 100% daytime solar energy usage. This would take massive investment in energy storage and transmission lines. If only it would let Israel in.



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Israel’s tech industry needs ultra-orthodox to grow

PETA KROST MAUNDER

While Israel is acclaimed for being the start-up nation, it now looks to Haredi women and Israeli Arabs to secure the future of its entrepreneurial technology industry.

“We have to tap into these talent pools to ensure that the tech industry doesn’t begin to contract,” says Amir Mizroch, the Tel Aviv-based director of communications for Israeli tech organisation Start-Up Nation Central.

Bringing in new talent “is a race against time” because “Israel’s economic strength and national resilience relies on a strong Israeli tech industry”, says this Israeli who grew up in South Africa and studied journalism at Rhodes University before returning to Israel.

“The number one problem in Israel’s innovation ecosystem is that only about 8% to 9% of the Israeli workforce work in it. The other 91% work in the traditional, low-tech economy, says Mizroch, whose organisation tracks about 6 000 innovation companies across a range of sectors and stages of growth.

“While 9% is probably the highest percentage in the world – and that’s great – that number hasn’t grown in a decade. In the meantime, the demand for Israeli tech is growing so fast, the demand isn’t being met by enough skilled workers. Not even close.”



Amir Mizroch

In a recent report, Start-Up Nation Central and The Israel Innovation Authority calculated that the tech industry is short of about 15 000 people. This means, Mizroch says, that there are about 15 000 jobs that aren’t being filled because the candidates just don’t exist.”

“While 9% and 15 000 jobs might not seem big numbers to you, consider that the tech industry accounts for about 12% of Israel’s GDP and about half of its exports. Tech is the driver of the Israeli economy as a whole.”

Mizroch says that “unless Israel gets more Israelis into the tech workforce, someday soon our tech industry will no longer be able to deliver on its potential, and it will begin to contract. That day isn’t here yet, but we are seeing the talent crunch starting to have a material effect.”

He believes the best way to address this is to tap into previously untapped talent pools in Israel – that of the haredim, Arabs, people from periphery regions, and many, many more women.

There are some good projects in place to make Israeli tech more inclusive, and these are unbelievably important now, Mizroch says.

The companies Start-Up Nation Central tracks exist across a range of sectors and growth phases. These include some well-established sectors in Israel like cyber and fintech (about 500 start-ups each), and some maturing sectors like digital health (500), agri-food tech (400), and smart manufacturing (200). There are also

emerging companies in artificial intelligence, robotics, blockchain, and quantum technology.

Israel’s start-up scene is diverse, says Mizroch, with people from one discipline doing things in many others. An example of this is military surveillance technologies being used to monitor crops in agriculture.

Mizroch explains how the hi-tech industry blossomed in Israel, and why it now stands at the precipice.

“In the 1990s, there was a wave of immigration from the former Soviet Union – about a million people. Many of them were engineers and scientists, and over time, they formed a very strategic human-capital pillar of Israel’s hi-tech industry. This was in every area, from semiconductors to materials science.

“Sadly, many of these people are now retiring, and we haven’t found a way for them to feed back into the ecosystem and mentor the younger generation. This will be a big loss for Israeli tech.”

Mizroch says these retiring engineers should be mentoring young up-and-coming engineers to ensure the continuity of skills.

As the start-ups mature and succeed, they move into global markets and often partner with or are bought out by global companies. This, says Mizroch, is fantastic for Israel as long as there is a balance in the ecosystem. This means there also needs to be an increase in the number of companies growing within Israel and staying independent.

Israeli companies in their growth stage – like WIX, Fiverr, OrCam, Moovit, Payoneer and many others – can attract good talent and hire non-technical employees in marketing, human resources and operations. “This is important so we can bring more Israelis into the tech workforce,” he says. “It also means they create more jobs here, more opportunities, and they pay more local taxes, which benefits all Israelis.

“If too many start-ups are sold to international companies, they become ‘just’ the local research and development centres of multinational corporations. In this case, the local teams tend to remain small, very few non-technical employees are hired, and much of the IP (intellectual property) moves abroad.

“This means less Israeli companies are growing and staying independent in Israel. The ecosystem depends on a balance between the ability to churn out new start ups, a good environment for those companies to grow in Israel, and the growing presence of multinational corporations in Israel’s innovation ecosystem.

“When too many start-ups are bought

up by multinationals at a very early stage, or when multinationals greatly expand their local talent pools independently, they usually end up driving up salaries to attract the best talent. Young start-ups and maturing Israeli tech companies can’t compete with the salaries of the likes of Amazon and Google. So, it becomes increasingly hard for ecosystems to grow.

“One in four Israeli tech companies at the growth stage are already off-shoring development work [to places like Kiev]. That’s good on the one hand [these companies continue growing], and not so good on the other [there’s a weaker connection to the Israeli ecosystem],” he says.

Mizroch believes in the country’s ability to change the downward movement to a upward swing. “There has been a turnaround in the amount of mathematics taught to school kids, and more people are graduating in computer science than ever before.

“The universities all have their tech-transfer offices going well, and there is exciting stuff coming down the pipeline in everything from robotics and materials science to fraud detection and artificial intelligence.”

He is adamant that ultra-Orthodox women and Arab Israelis need to come on board to improve the situation. “Israel’s tech industry leaders – the government, companies, and institutions – need to work together with the leadership of the ultra-Orthodox and Arab Israeli communities to strike a balance between observance and the modern workplace. This will make it all possible.”



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We need to talk about genocide, says Polish director

MIRAH LANGER

International-award-winning Polish film director Joanna Kos-Krauze is adamant that countries must face their genocidal pasts head-on, and that film can play a key role in starting this discussion.

“Film is some kind of catharsis. It helps with an exorcism,” she said, speaking to the *SA Jewish Report* while in Johannesburg last week for the screening of her film, *Birds are Singing in Kigali* It was screened as part of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre’s (JHGC’s) commemoration of the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide.

Too often, people believe that if they deny there are problems after genocide, the past will disappear, Kos-Krauze said, considering her own experience in creating this film. However, she insisted that, “It will come back, and it will be the next wave, and [affect] the next generation.”

Kos-Krauze said that the film focused on exploring the aftermath of the genocide, and how trauma is processed. “The movie is more about how to live after a genocide. How post-traumatic stress disorder can last for generations.”

Kos-Krauze, who was born in Poland, noted that both she and her late husband and fellow filmmaker, Krzysztof Krauze, had always wanted to make a film about the Holocaust. They had searched for a “key”.

They spent extensive time in Rwanda, including three years at the site of the exhumations of victims of the genocide. It was a piece of information about the vulture

population during the genocide that struck a chord for the couple. It detailed how at a time when the general population of vultures was decreasing in various parts of the world, in Rwanda, vultures thrived as they fed off the corpses of genocide victims. Afterwards, the vultures preyed on all the smaller singing birds in the area, leaving the landscape silent.

This snippet of information

manifests in the aftermath.

In the film, Kos-Krauze repeatedly draws links between the Polish Holocaust experience and the Rwandan genocide.

“We have a duty that in every generation we should ask about the roots of violence. There is something very, very dark in our nature, that is what I believe. Frequently, as humankind, we decide to commit the same act of genocide.”



Joanna Kos-Krauze and late husband Krzysztof Krauze

became the springboard for the script they then wrote together for *Birds are Singing in Kigali*. The film tells the fictional story of a Polish ornithologist who is working in Rwanda at the time the genocide breaks out. The ornithologist saves the daughter of a Rwandan colleague who is killed, bringing her back to Poland. Later, both travel back to Rwanda as the daughter tries to find fragments of closure after the massacre. The film explores how individual and collective trauma

Even the South African past of apartheid resonates with its violence and the trauma it has left behind.

“If you ask me: do I believe in the process of reconciliation? I am very sceptical... you cannot vanish by one act of saying sorry, and then it’s done – no trauma.”

Instead, trauma is intergenerational.

Kos-Krauze worked with her husband making films for 17 years. He died from cancer in 2014, just six days into the shoot for *Birds are*

Singing in Kigali.

She said that it was always the pair’s aim to tell the story of the oppressed, and to “strike debate and discussion”.

“The most important aspect was to make movies on the side of weaker people, be the voice of the speechless, of those who have died, who do not have the power to fight.

Kos-Krauze, although not halachically Jewish, has long been interested and involved in the Jewish community in Poland. During the 1990s, she worked for the Lauder Foundation in helping to rebuild the Jewish community in the country. She remembers helping to organise the first Jewish summer camps and schools. *Minyans* (prayer quorums) were set up, Yiddish books began to be republished, and cultural festivals were held.

In terms of future plans, Kos-Krauze has a script ready and is waiting for funding for a film about the Jedwabne massacre in Poland that took place in July 1941. This was when hundreds of Jews from this Polish town were murdered in one night, mostly after being locked in a barn that was set on fire. Non-Jewish Polish citizens collaborated in this mass killing.

Kos-Krauze said she decided to write the script after reading the testimony of one of the women whose male relative had been involved in the killings.

“She told that for many years, there was one small house where the wives, lovers, sisters, and daughters of the

killers were meeting; crying out, and sitting together in silence because they had to live with the killers.”

Some of the men involved had wanted to kill, others had been forced into it, but either way “the women were conscious that they were killers and rapists, and that they had to live with them”.

“The women had to rewire something deep inside them to live with a man that they knew had killed.” Often, they had to lie to others, even to their own children in order to be able to cope, said Kos-Krauze. The complicated nature of this reality fascinated her.

Kos-Krauze said that when it came to facing its past, it was clear that Polish society remained traumatised. However, it did seem to be becoming aware that it had no choice but to interrogate its history.

“[Poland] is dealing [with it]. It’s a shocking process. So many years have passed, and people are not able to speak properly about it, and face things like [the fact that] some Polish people were involved in murder during the World War II.”

The younger generation seemed more able to start these conversations, she said. Yet, she said Europe’s current reaction to refugees itself revealed a blind spot.

People were unable to see how the refugee situation was linked to slavery and colonialism, for which Europe was responsible.

“Europe is changing. It will be a completely different Europe in the next 15 years. We have to prepare for the meeting with the other, and that depends on us. Are we going to make them strangers [or make a different choice]?”

Dancer relates journey from Congo to Covent Garden

MOIRA SCHNEIDER

How could a little Jewish boy born in the Congo end up having an international career as a dancer and choreographer, and teach some of the future stars of the Royal Ballet?

With this question, Richard Glasstone introduced his talk on his memoir, *Congo to Covent Garden: A life linked by languages*, hosted by the Jacob Gitlin Library and the SA Jewish Museum.

Glasstone is an internationally recognised master ballet teacher, choreographer, and dancer, and was awarded an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) in 2013 for services to classical ballet.

He related how his grandfather escaped the pogroms in Lithuania, and found his way to Edinburgh, where his uncle Reuben and father, Harry, had been born. Reuben decided to seek his fortune in Africa, and borrowed 10 pounds (R186) for the trip to Cape Town, where he worked his way doing odd jobs.

Harry joined him at the age of 17, and the two ended up running a general store in Broken Hill, in then northern Rhodesia (Zambia). With the discovery of copper in the Congo (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo), Reuben made his way there, leaving his brother in charge of the shop.

On his arrival in 1910, he was confronted with what he described as the wild west. There, he pitched his tent in driving rain, and later sent for Harry. Reuben opened a general store there too.

While holidaying in the Cape, he met and

married a girl from Oudtshoorn. Tragically, they lost two sons: the eldest as a result of an infection from his circumcision, the first Jewish child to die in the Congo.

A second son died of rheumatic fever. After this double blow, the couple left the Congo for Cape Town with their remaining son, Victor. Reuben, in fact, built a shul in Elizabethville in memory of his second son, Reginald.

Glasstone’s father took over the business, La Maison Glasstone, which he said was “very famous” in the Congo.

Richard himself was born in the Congo. While holidaying in Muizenberg, he met a girl on the beach who said she wanted to go to the ballet. “I’d never been to the ballet,” he commented.

“The first one, *Swan Lake*, didn’t interest me,” he recalled. But “I was absolutely enchanted by the second one, *Giselle*, and the fact that you could tell a whole dramatic story by dancing and acting. I decided then and there that this was what I wanted to do.”

He came to Cape Town to complete his education, and approached Dulcie Howes about attending the ballet school attached to the University of Cape Town that she had founded. As a teenager, he found himself “the only tall, skinny boy in a class of eight-year-old girls”.

“When my father heard I was doing ballet in Cape Town, he thought I was *meshuggah* (crazy),” Glasstone recalled. But Howes had written to him and seemingly pacified him.

Showing improvement, he was promoted to the next class where there was another

boy, John Simons, who was to become a Capab (Cape Performing Arts Board) ballet star. “He helped me with my pirouettes,” Glasstone remembered.

At the end of his first year of a three-year teacher’s course at the school, Glasstone’s father passed away. My sister said, “Enough ballet, come home already!”

But his mother, Rosie, prevailed, saying, “Leave him.” Glasstone was later appointed a



Richard Glasstone

junior lecturer at the University of Cape Town ballet school.

Glasstone’s career took off internationally with his first job in Holland. He later moved to London with a letter of introduction from Dulcie Howes to Dame Ninette de Valois, who established the Royal Ballet and

is regarded as one of the most influential figures in the history of ballet.

“I’ve got nothing for you – would you go to Turkey?” she had said. As a result, he spent “three wonderful years” in Turkey, where he was the resident choreographer and principal teacher at the Turkish State Ballet Company, before being invited by De Valois to join the staff at the Royal Ballet School where he worked for 15 years.

Glasstone’s first three-act ballet, *Sylvia*, was in fact commissioned by De Valois. He went on to direct the Istanbul State Ballet Company, and then joined the staff at the Rambert School of Ballet and Contemporary Dance in the United Kingdom.

He has written several books on ballet, and has contributed articles to the *International Encyclopedia of Dance* and the *International Dictionary of Ballet*, the *Dancing Times* and *Dance Now*.

Glasstone paid tribute to his three mentors, Dulcie Howes, Ninette de Valois, and Hans Snoek, the Dutch dancer, choreographer, and ballet director who founded the Scapino Ballet as “three practical women who guided me in my career”.

Glasstone, now 84, has been married for 55 years to Heather Magoon, an art student whom he met when she designed the poster for his first production in Cape Town. She later designed costumes for him.

They were married at the Gardens Synagogue by Chief Rabbi Israel Abrahams.

“The secret is you have to have a row every day,” he told the audience.

Photo: Moira Schneider



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An Israeli Yom Ha'atzmaut in Joburg

JORDAN MOSHE

Gold Reef City was turned into a Yom Ha'atzmaut festival park last Thursday afternoon, and those who made the effort to be there celebrated as they would have done in Israel.

“Here, I feel the way I would on the streets of Tel Aviv, Haifa, or Beersheva, celebrating with Israelis. You have made a small Israel far away from Israel,” said Israeli Ambassador Lior Keinan, as he welcomed people to the festivities.

The amusement park hosted this year's community celebration, booked out by the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF) for a day of thrills to celebrate Israel turning 71.

“Many people from the embassy are here today, on perhaps the most difficult day to be outside of Israel,” said Keinan. “But here, you don't notice that you're not there. If you come here as an Israeli and close your eyes, you think you are in Israel.”

Keinan expressed gratitude to the South African Jewish community of behalf of Israel, thanking local Jewry for its support of the Jewish state. “In 71 years, Israel has done marvellous things, but I don't think we could have done it without you, the Jews of communities like South Africa. You are a

couldn't imagine what it would be like to have a sovereign Jewish state,” he said. “We live in a generation with an independent and thriving state of Israel. That is indeed a blessing. We give thanks to Hashem for this day.

“We give thanks to all those brave Israelis who



Decorations at Gold Reef City

Photos: Jason Crouse

have sacrificed so much, given their lives, and dedicated themselves to this cause. We remember our soldiers who have fallen and their bereaved families, as well as our brave brothers and sister in Israel for all that they do on a daily basis to make this dream a reality for us all.”

The fact that the event took place on a workday afternoon just after election day might have affected the turnout. However, those who were there made up for it with energy and enthusiasm.

The central plaza was full of guests enjoying kosher fare prepared on-site by one of several kosher restaurants who had set up for the day. To the tunes of DJ, Ronen Bar, the community enjoyed a hearty shawarma and other Israeli food.

Pupils from the three King David schools performed electric dance routines, quick-stepping to Israeli hits like Netta Barzilai's Eurovision-winning number, *Toy*. In addition, pupils gave lively marimba and jazz performances, along with a spirited flag waving demonstration which

would have been the envy of any street parade in Jerusalem itself.

Families enjoyed an afternoon of wild rides and delectable food, making it a Yom Ha'atzmaut celebration of which any Israeli would be proud.



The King David Sandton flag dancers

marvellous ally, no matter what Israel is facing”. Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein said that on a day like Yom Ha'atzmaut, our hearts are filled with joy and gratitude, be we Israeli or South African. “Generations of Jews that came before us

South African youth wish



Minnie Bersohn Nursery School



Eden College



King David Sandton Primary School



WIZO celebrating Yom Ha'atzmaut

Enjoying Israel's achievements in Cape Town

TALI FEINBERG

Just days after Israel endured hundreds of rockets fired on its civilians, Capetonians of all kinds came together to celebrate the Jewish state's 71st Independence Day.

It was a joyous celebration of family, unity, and fun, where for one evening, it was possible to forget Israel's difficulties and enjoy her achievements. In spite of traffic and long queues, hundreds of people waited patiently to enter the venue, the Zip Zap Circus on the Foreshore.

There, they enjoyed the flavours and foods of the Middle East, a funfair and carnival that had children of all ages enthralled, and a meaningful shul service. A glittering circus tent was packed with people of all ages who got to experience a real circus, adding to the old-school atmosphere of the evening. For many children, it was the first time they had seen clowns and acrobats under a “big top”, while for the older

generation, it brought back memories of a different time.

The concert also included rousing performances by the Khayelitsha United Mambazo Men's Choir, the Bein Hashmashot Children's Choir from Israel, and the Herzlia Vocal Ensemble. It was heart-warming to see South Africans of all backgrounds coming together to sing,



Louise Maranz and her granddaughters enjoying the show.



audience in waving South African and Israeli flags, celebrating the two countries that are so important to this community.

For years, Cape Town's Yom Ha'atzmaut has been held at the Ratanga Junction amusement park or the Weizmann school campus, and this was the first time it was hosted at the Zip Zap Circus.

“I prefer this venue. At Ratanga, people

were spread out, but here it feels like we are all together as a community,” commented one mother, as her children played happily nearby. Another said that the funfair, food stalls, circus, and atmosphere brought back memories of childhood.

Indeed, for one evening, families left behind the chaos of the week, the TV, the iPad, and the routine; and just spent time together, celebrating the miracle of a Jewish state.

Photos: Marc Berman

Israel a happy 71st birthday



Most South African Jews of Sephardi origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Lithuanian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Lithuanian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African Jews do qualify for European citizenship, whether they can prove their Lithuanian lineage or not, and most South African Jews of Sephardic heritage are also eligible for European passports.



Adv. Avi Horesh has in-depth knowledge of the applicable legislation and in his experience, the majority of South African Jews have ancestors who were illegally deprived of citizenship. As their descendants, these Jews are eligible for European citizenship which will result in them obtaining a EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three

empires: Russia, Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania existed until 1918.

At the end of the WWI, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/reborn. Only then did residents become citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Lithuanian or Polish.

Horesh advises that eligibility for a Lithuanian or Polish passport depends on the city from which your grandparents (or their parents) hailed.

Horesh says many South African Ashkenazi Jews of Lithuanian origin have been refused Lithuanian citizenship because their heritage is actually Polish. They would, accordingly, be entitled to Polish citizenship and a EU passport.

After World War II, the borders in Europe changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

Sephardi: the descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago)



are most likely eligible for a Portuguese passport. If applicable, Horesh is able to obtain an official certificate confirming such eligibility, on the basis of which an application for European citizenship can be made and will most likely be successful. Portuguese citizenship enables one to enter the United States without the need to apply for a visa.

In addition, Horesh is filing many applications for descendants of Sephardi origin who arrived in South Africa from Greece, Turkey, and North Africa. Descendants from other countries in the Middle East – even Holland – are also potentially eligible.

Horesh resides in Israel, but has spent seven years in Poland, and is recognised as a leading lawyer in the

field of European citizenship, with a full understanding of local immigration laws.

Living in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – offers him quick and easy access to Poland and Lithuania. Accordingly, he is able to work closely with local professionals who assist him in tracing the documentation required for successful applications for European citizenship.

In addition, and as a result of his close ties with Portuguese authorities, to date he has had a 100% success rate with applications for Portuguese citizenship.

Horesh is available to discuss your specific details. He is often in South Africa, and can meet you in person to discuss your specific needs.

I will be in Johannesburg from June 13th till June 19th, and then in Cape Town till June 24th
My South African phone number is +27 64 745 5273 • Email me on adv.avi.n.horesh@gmail.com

Breindy and Matt nominated for a SAMA

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

Jewish band Breindy and Matt has been nominated for the 2019 South African Music Awards (SAMAs).

“To our knowledge, this is the first time Jewish music has been acknowledged at the SAMAs,” says Matt. “Our songs are sung in Hebrew, and the words are from *tehillim* [psalms]. I think that’s quite amazing on the part of the SAMAs as it’s celebrating the diversity of music that South Africa produces.”

The two band members describe their unique brand of hypnotic music as “ancient-Hebrew, indie-alternative” but whatever they call it, their latest album, *Ruth Ave*, is breaking boundaries. It has been nominated for Best Alternative Album at the SAMAs.

“Initially we thought that we didn’t stand a chance because we thought our music was irrelevant in the South African context,” says Matt. “But at the end of the day we live here, we’re South Africans, and this is the music we make. Our traditions, heritage, and lineage are as valid as anybody else’s in the country, and it’s nice to see that recognised.”

The husband and wife duo heard that they had been nominated only on 27 April, despite the news being announced on the second last night of Pesach, 25 April. “We switched our phones on to the news,” says Breindy. “I was very emotional and shocked because you don’t have your hopes up high.

“We always wanted to submit our album to the SAMAs, but we didn’t expect anything, especially because it’s in Hebrew. It’s all very surreal, and we’re very excited about the nomination and the category. We’re very grateful for the feedback we’ve been given. People have been so supportive, excited and proud of us. It really means a lot.”

Ruth Ave, named for the street on which the couple live and work, was truly a labour of love. “It was a very personal project, and it took us just more than four years,” says Breindy. The couple say that making an independent album, especially one that took such a long time to come together, was challenging at times. “It can be a very lonely road for any artist,” says Matt. “You’re investing so much of your soul into it. So, the encouragement this kind of nomination gives us is very uplifting, inspiring us to carry on.

“To us, the SAMA nomination means the album is finding more of a home,” says Breindy.

In spite of some loneliness on their musical journey, Breindy and Matt enjoy their independence. “Because we weren’t beholden to anybody, it enhanced the creative process,” they agree. “No one told us how long our songs had to be, or what kind of sound they should have. It’s all of our own making. The album became part of our lives. Two of the songs are dedicated to our children who were both born while making *Ruth Ave*,” says Breindy.

“While the album’s personal, I want it to be listened to by anyone,” she says. “Sharing it with the world and releasing it inspires me because then people can hear the songs the way they understand them. We’re excited for the album to move beyond what it means to us, and have it become about what it means for someone else.”

Matt agrees. “At some stage, no matter how deeply involved or attached you get to this thing you’re creating, you’ve got to let go of ownership. Then it becomes everybody else’s, however they interpret or experience it.”

Breindy also speaks about the fact that three of the songs on the album are *niggunim* – tunes or traditional melodies without words. “I love doing *niggunim* because I find that can make the music more universal,” she says. “It’s not focused on the language; it’s just focused on the music. I have a feeling that that added to our appeal for the SAMAs.”

The words of Breindy and Matt’s songs with lyrics come from the psalms of King David. “The fact that the words we use are in Hebrew is not



Breindy and Matt

a haphazard thing,” says Matt. “It’s what feels most natural to us. I can’t imagine composing songs that aren’t in Hebrew – the language is very close to our hearts. The most natural place for us to start and draw inspiration from lyrically is the words of King David. I can’t think of anything better to make music about than that.”

Yet, the music itself takes inspiration from diverse sources. The fusion of traditional lyrics and unique melodies is what makes their music so alternative. “What I’ve always been excited about with our sound is that it’s a real fusion of the music that we’re influenced by,” says Breindy. “That’s largely alternative, avant-garde music, the music produced by bands like Radiohead and Pink Floyd.”

The couple itself represents the beauty that comes from merging different influences. Breindy’s the daughter of a rabbi, while Matt grew up in a less religious setting. Yet both families were very musical. “The biggest influence in terms of the Jewish music is my upbringing,” says

Breindy. “I was brought up in a house where my father and my brothers would sing and harmonise. The girls would also all sing together at Beis Ya’akov where I went to school.”

Matt’s parents are both musical and encouraged their children to take up instruments. “Breindy and I loved exploring that and merging those two themes together,” he says.

Breindy and Matt are hoping the SAMA nomination helps spread their reach. “We’ve always dreamt of playing our music in other parts of South Africa and the world,” says Breindy. “When I introduce us, I always say our goal is to break boundaries and go outward and reach many women of different backgrounds. That excites me. For the SAMAs to be able to see music as beyond limitations is exciting.”

The SAMAs will take place on 1 June at Sun City.

• *Breindy and Matt adhere to the guidelines of Kol Isha and perform only for women.*

Dr Ruth delves into Holocaust past

CURT SCHLEIER – JTA

Judging by all the media attention, the world loves short Jewish women named Ruth.

One of them, Ruth Westheimer, better known as the renowned sex therapist Dr Ruth, is on the phone to talk about her life and a new documentary about it. But first she notes a similarity between her story and that of the other Ruth who recently had a documentary made about her – the one who sits on the United States Supreme Court.

“I saw the [documentary *RBG*], and in it, Ruth Bader Ginsburg said an interesting sentence: what happened to her could have happened only in the US,” Westheimer said. “What happened to me, starting with my radio show, could happen only in New York City, where the people are very generous with immigrants and people who have different accents.”

Westheimer, who turns 91 next month, is talking about *Sexually Speaking*, which launched in 1980 on the now defunct WYNY-FM. It broke broadcasting taboos about talking about sex, and helped make her the most famous sex therapist in the world – one also known for her diminutive stature, about 4-foot-7 (1.43m), motherly demeanour, and thick German accent.

But as the viewer learns in *Ask Dr. Ruth*, which is now playing in a few New York theatres and streams on 1 June on Hulu, there’s a lot more to Westheimer’s story than sex.

Westheimer was born Karola Ruth Siegel in Germany, the only daughter of Orthodox Jews. She was 10 years old the last time she saw her father – from her apartment window as he was arrested by Nazis. It was November 1938, the day after Kristallnacht, and his detention was a clear portent of what awaited the country’s Jews. Shortly thereafter, her mother arranged for her to leave Germany for Switzerland as a member of a 300-strong Kindertransport. She never saw her parents again, and believes they perished at Auschwitz.

In Switzerland, she was sent to an orphanage where, in the film, Westheimer says the Jewish children were treated like second-class citizens, forced to take care of the Swiss orphans, and do the housekeeping. Still, she says, the Swiss saved her life.

“I have wonderful memories of the Swiss,” she

said. “Otherwise I would not be alive. I have only one complaint: girls couldn’t go to high school. They made all the girls get household-helper diplomas, so I spent two years learning how to be a housemaid. Luckily for me I didn’t have to use it.”

At the war’s end, she immigrated to then-Palestine, lived on a kibbutz, and joined the Haganah, the precursor to the Israel Defense Forces. Westheimer trained as a scout and a sniper. She never shot anyone, but was severely wounded by an artillery shell during the War for Independence in 1948.

She moved to Paris with her first husband, to New York with her second. She has earned degrees in psychology (Sorbonne), a masters in sociology (from the New School in New York City) and a doctorate in education from Teacher’s



Dr Ruth

she became a star. From 1984 into the early 1990s, Westheimer hosted multiple cable TV shows on sex.

As the film documents, the woman once described in a newspaper article as “the happy munchkin of sex” is still very feisty. On several occasions, she interrupts director Ryan White to say he is asking “a stupid question”.

Westheimer suppresses a giggle when I mention that. “Yes, I often say to journalists, ‘next question’,” she says.

Is it possible that the career path she wandered into is, in a strange way, a culmination of all the bad things that happened to her as a youngster – losing her parents, the orphanage? That all that freed her to speak freely about taboo topics?

Westheimer doesn’t answer immediately, then says, “That’s a very interesting question. I would have to think about it.” She does, but not for very long.

“If I would have stayed in Frankfurt in the Orthodox Jewish milieu, I don’t think I would have talked about orgasms and erections,” she said. “It’s very interesting. Because I was an orphan at a very early age, I was determined to speak explicitly about the things I believe in.”

Through all the years of hardship, she says she has not cursed G-d. Westheimer points out that she belongs to two synagogues, one in the Washington Heights neighborhood of Manhattan where she lives, the other nearby in the Bronx. She also occasionally attends services at Central Synagogue, and at the Park East Synagogue, both in Manhattan.

As if that’s not enough, Westheimer is also actively involved with the Museum of Jewish Heritage-A Living Memorial to the Holocaust. She was heading there later that evening to help host a VIP opening of a new exhibit: *Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.*

“I want everyone to go to see it,” she said. “It’s like a grave for my family who don’t have [real] graves.”

Westheimer is active as a writer, too, most recently of *Roller Coaster Grandma*, a graphic-novel-style autobiography for eight to 12-year-olds that talks about her experiences during the Holocaust. In one section, she recalls taking two of her four grandchildren to an amusement park, where they all rode on the roller coaster. Well, not all: Dr Ruth was too short.

There seems only one more thing to ask: was her own sex life good? She is ready with the answer, “Next question.”

SA community connected to Israel in sadness and strength

JORDAN MOSHE

A siren wailed at exactly 10:00 last Thursday morning in Pretoria. This eerie sound – streamed live from *Israel Radio* – brought Jews in Israel and those at the Israeli embassy to a complete standstill.

It was the sound of Yom Hazikaron, a siren to remember the soldiers who have fallen in defence of the state of Israel. “This siren unites us in one purpose,” said Israeli Ambassador Lior Keinan at the embassy in Lynwood. “We remember the sacrifices and unbearable pain of the bereaved families who lost their loved ones.

“We owe all we have to our heroes, and are here on their merit and their families, who lost their whole world in an instant. We mark this day only once a year, but these families carry the pain with them every second since that dreaded phone call or knock on the door.”

The embassy programme included the lighting of a memorial torch, wreath laying by embassy staff and representatives of several community organisations, and prayers for the fallen.

Along with readings of poems

and texts, songs appropriate for the occasion such as *When the Heart Cries* and *Longing* were performed by brothers Shlomo and Shmuli Brill.

Keinan emphasised that the pain of the bereaved had also made its way to South Africa. “The 88 bereaved [South African] families whose children volunteered for Israel symbolise the unbreakable connection between Israel and the Jewish community here. Anyone who thinks about putting distance between Israel and this remarkable Jewish community should think again,” he said.

“Their love for Israel is eternally engraved in our hearts, and will always mark the covenant between us. In their deaths, they commanded us to live.”

It is for this reason, said Keinan, that we celebrate Israel’s independence the day after Yom Hazikaron. “This evening we act according to their commandment, and celebrate our independence. Think for a moment how proud they would be at what we have accomplished. If they could join us for a moment, they would stand next to us, give us a big hug, and ask, ‘Could this be possible? Did we create all

this in such a short amount of time?’

“In their deaths, they didn’t command us just to live, but how to live, and what path to follow. Israel is a miracle occurring right before our eyes, but it came at a terrible cost. It remains our duty to ensure that the last fallen will be the last fallen.”

Ambassador Lior Keinan giving an opening address at the Yom Hazikaron ceremony at the Embassy of Israel



West Street Shul gets new Torah

West Street Shul in Johannesburg received a new Torah two weeks ago. The Torah was donated by the Genn and Mielke

families in honour of their father, the late Dave Genn. It was presented to the shul on Wednesday, 1 May. Dave was a regular member of the *minyan* (quorum) at the shul.

Guests gathered at the home of Ronnie and Yvonne Kaplan to watch Rabbi Ryan Goldstein complete the last letters of the Torah. The embroidered mantel was placed on the rolled Torah scroll, and it was carried under a purple velvet *chuppah* (canopy) in a procession of joyous, dancing celebrants, to meet the Torah scrolls already in the *Aaron Kodesh* (Holy Ark) of the shul. Participants then had a sumptuous lunch at West Street Shul.

It was a meaningful and uplifting way for the Genn and Mielke families to honour their beloved relative.



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With 22 affiliate member Shuls and 137 employees working in multiple locations across the Western Cape, the UOS plays a pivotal role in protecting Jewish continuity and Orthodoxy in Cape Town. From cradle to grave, the organisation promotes Torah and Jewish way of life taking care of all our Jewish needs through the 4 legal entities that falls under this umbrella organisation.

They are recruiting a Deputy Direcotr: Operations to offer operational leadership supporting the Director and Management Committee and to drive Operations, logistics and facilities management across 12 Divisions: Beth Din, Cape Council, Conversion, Education & Outreach, Eruv, Kashrut, Mikvah, Office of the Chief Rabbi, Rabbinical Association, Shechita, United Chevra Kadisha (UCK), Cemetery Maintenance Board (CMB).

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Democracy the real winner of 2019 elections

However one interprets the results, last week’s national and provincial elections undoubtedly ushered in a new era in the history of our democracy, one that hopefully will result in the country getting back on course after what has been a troubled decade.

While losing some support, the ruling party still received a clear popular mandate to press ahead with the agenda set by President Cyril Ramaphosa in his first 15 months in office. Now that the excitement has died down, the hard work begins. Just as our own community involved itself in various aspects of the election process, so should we now look to work with the new leadership, as well as opposition parties, who have played a vital role in holding elected leadership accountable. We must identify ways in which we can continue to contribute. This duty is incumbent on all citizens, regardless of where they might stand on the political spectrum.

The real winner of this year’s elections was democracy itself. In spite of being the most fiercely contested poll since the inaugural multi-racial elections in 1994, the process was once again conducted by and large in a spirit of goodwill and tolerance. Apart from some glitches at certain voting stations and occasional allegations of fraud, the elections were once again declared free and fair by local and international observers. In a world where only a minority of nation states can truly call themselves democratic, this itself is a noteworthy achievement.



ABOVE BOARD
Shaun Zagnoev

I had the pleasure of being an election observer, one of 230 volunteers who made up the South African Jewish Board of Deputies’ interfaith, multi-national observer team, and was most satisfied with the professional and respectful manner in which the officials and public conducted themselves. What impressed me particularly was the care shown by officials in assisting the elderly. The fact that special arrangements were made to allow a relatively small number of Jewish expatriates to vote after Shabbat is further indication of respect and protection of the right of every citizen to vote.

On Saturday night, the board’s National Vice-President Zev Krengel and National Director Wendy Kahn attended the Independent Electoral Commission’s Results Gala at the Results Operations Centre in Tshwane. They reported a palpable mood of optimism in the hall, a real sense of celebration, and commitment across-the-board to working together to rebuild our country.

In spite of the concerns we have with government, and the issues we will need to address in coming months, we are committed to remaining engaged and involved in all facets of governance. Through this, we will help ensure that the voice of our community will continue to be part of the chorus of this hopeful new era.

• *Listen to Charisse Zeifert on Jewish Board Talk, 101.9 ChaifM every Friday from 12:00 to 13:00.*

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

Did I vote right?



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

Amidst the complicated post-election analyses going on in South Africa and Israel, ordinary people are often confused. And, notwithstanding the intellectual analyses, most people actually voted on a “tribal” basis. By this, I mean that when they got into the voting booth, their emotions dominated their intellect – that’s where they placed their cross.

There was a time when politicians were easier to understand and categorise than today. To the ordinary person, they were either left or right, and their politics accorded with these labels. That’s not the case now: left and right can hardly be defined effectively.

Yet, still, the most common division in politics everywhere remains what analysts call “right” and “left”. It’s all relative – even during apartheid, when all South African political parties were essentially racist for participating in the white-controlled racist system. At the time, the more accommodating white parties were called the left wing, and the most unyielding, the *verkramptes* (extremists), the right wing.

In this system, renowned anti-apartheid politician Helen Suzman would be considered a leftist. However, today, many blacks regard her as a white racist for being willing to sit in a racist parliament with total control over blacks.

The terms left wing and right wing originated from the era of the French Revolution. The seating of the *ancien regime* (political system) of France from the 15th to the 18th centuries was arranged in such a way that commoners sat on the left, and aristocrats on the right. Thus, leftists became associated with working for the good of the ordinary folk, and rightists with dominance and power over ordinary folk.

The left-right battle is always complex, even if the terms aren’t easily definable. The contemporary era is characterised by the rise of what are called right wing, neo-fascist groups worldwide, who emphasise ethnic nationalism above egalitarian politics.

Even in Israel, this phenomenon is evident, as seen by the closeness developing between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to authoritarian rulers in Eastern Europe and elsewhere. An example of this is Prime Minister Viktor Orban of the ruling Fidesz Party of Hungary, who recently visited Israel. The nation-state bill passed recently by the Knesset defining Israel as the national home of the Jewish people emphasised this movement.

How dominant is this trend? A leftist visitor to South Africa, from the Meretz party in Israel, tried on Tuesday to unravel for a Johannesburg Jewish audience why the Israeli left, which advocates accommodation and compromise with Palestinians, performed so badly in elections. It has never spoken with one voice, and its percentage of the vote has progressively decreased from one election to the next. But the right, led by Netanyahu, which is determined not to yield to Palestinian demands, is better at marshalling diverse elements to form a formidable bloc to dominate the political landscape.

The South African far-left often labels Israel an apartheid state. On the contrary, Israeli democracy within the 1967 borders is nothing like apartheid. Instead, it is vibrant and strong, with a totally free press and full judicial authority in the Supreme Court that has traditionally been quite leftist in its rulings, including on women’s and LGBTI (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) rights. At times, the court has overturned government decisions. This is just one of the powerful democratic elements.

Whatever the context, things are so complicated today that care must be taken in labelling someone leftist or rightist. It’s just not that simple.

How long can you go without your cell phone?



INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman

Last week, I nervously proposed an idea to the family. I suggested that for one hour from when we sat down to dinner, we would all set aside our cell phones. I discussed it with my wife, who obviously endorsed the idea as phones have long been a bug-bear of hers. So much so that she can go for four days without remembering to check her WhatsApp messages and missed calls. It was our teenagers that I was worried about. And in all honesty, I wasn’t sure exactly how I would cope.

To my surprise, they readily accepted the challenge. I assume they were confident that I would cave in long before they would. The shared glances that they gave each other was illuminating. It meant that either they were not surprised by the initiative (my wife had worked behind the scenes to make sure that it was well received), they didn’t think I would last past 17 minutes, or that I had finally descended into complete madness, and that the next step would be to call in the professionals.

Either way, we began the one-hour-no-cell phone challenge from when we begin dinner.

It’s not easy. It’s not easy when an elderly parent calls, and you have to ignore the call. It’s not easy when it will take “literally one minute” to answer a message on WhatsApp or to forward an urgent email that someone might be waiting for. Last night, for example, we kicked off at 18:45, and by 19:41, I felt like it was four minutes until Shabbat ended. On Tuesday.

The interesting factor was that while we joked and laughed about how challenging this was, we

did so while sitting in the lounge and chatting to each other. We even made eye-contact. No one was looking down as they spoke, and no one was distracted.

One of the rules was that it didn’t matter how we spent the screen-free hour. Whether it was reading, showering, day-dreaming, speaking, or even sleeping, the choice was up to each of us. And yet, night after night, we seem to have chosen, rather, to spend it in the company of the family, talking about things that we would have been unlikely to discuss if it weren’t for this rule.

I feel like we are all more or less on the same page.

What also emerged was just how scary each of us (except my wife who hasn’t seen her cell phone since last Thursday) finds alone time. We have become so used to having something to distract us, that the absence of that distraction is not only difficult, but seriously daunting. So much so, that it is easier to spend it with company than alone with our thoughts.

For those of us who are Sabbath observant, a technology free period is not something new. Each week late on Friday afternoon, the house goes silent and our screens go dark. For 25 hours, we can hear each other think. Each week, I welcome the start of this time, as I look forward to it ending on Saturday evening in order to connect with the world. The difference is that our daily hour is self-imposed and that makes it much more difficult to adhere to.

It’s early days. I have no idea how this will evolve, and how it will look in six months. One thing that I am certain of is that I will not be the one to blink. Given the know-all attitude of my teenage children, who think that I am too weak to handle this, I will not be the one to look down first and to show any feebleness. I will out-hour them, and out-technology them.

It might be screens off. But it’s game on.

Letters

POOR SUPPORT FOR OUR PROTECTORS

The hall was full at the Yom Hazikaron ceremony at Yeshiva College last Tuesday (7 May), but attendance was poor in relation to the size of the Johannesburg Jewish population.

This is arguably the holiest day in the Jewish calendar. Is it not basic *derech erez* (the way of the world) to say thank you to someone who has done you a favour? How, then, does the community not see that the men and women who stand and serve in the searing heat, rain, and freezing cold, 24 hours every single day, 365 days a year, in Israel and around the world, in friendly and hostile communities, are deserving of recognition? And those are the living ones. Those who have died so that you can travel safely, send your children on gap years to *yeshivot* and *michlalot* (schools and colleges) or on other Israel programmes, can sit on the beach in Tel Aviv, or go and daven at the Kotel, is there no *hakarat hatov* (gratitude) for those who have made the ultimate sacrifice so you can do that?

Are we really only takers who cannot

“sacrifice” an hour or two of our time to recognise those who gave everything? Is it not more important to go to a funeral than a wedding? The chief rabbi emphasises that they are *kedoshim* and *tehorim* (holy and pure). Is a military cemetery less holy than the gravesite of any *tzaddik* (spiritual leader)?

While I am on the topic, I find it absurd and incomprehensible that on Shabbat in some communities, they do not say a prayer for the soldiers. My logic is as follows. I presume that you believe that prayer has power. I assume that you believe that *pikuach nefesh* (the saving of a life) is a mitzvah. Then surely it stands to reason that one has to pray for those in the security system whose lives are in constant danger.

I am not asking you to say a prayer for and recognise Israel. Just pray that they stay safe while keeping us safe. It is said *derech erez* precedes the Torah. Obviously that lesson has not been well taught. May these lessons be learned speedily in our days. – **Jonathan Egdes, Johannesburg**

Saturday (18 May)
• The Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre (JHGC) in partnership with the High Commission of Rwanda and the United Nations Information Centre hosts the 25th commemoration of the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. Time: 19:00. Venue: 1 Duncombe Road, Forest Town. RSVP to dawi@jhbholocaust.co.za or 011 640 3100. Free admission, donations welcome.
Tuesday (21 May)
• The Dr Herzl Lodge of the Hebrew Order of David hosts an evening with sporting legend Joel Stransky. Time: 19:30 for 20:00. Venue: HOD Centre, Orchards, Johannesburg. Cost: R80 per person, including refreshments. Goes towards charity. Contact: Jeff 076 686 8259.
Wednesday (22 May)
• JHGC in partnership with Shikaya hosts the 25th anniversary screening of the film <i>Schindler’s List</i> . Time: 19:00. Venue: 1 Duncombe Road, Forest Town. RSVP to dawi@jhbholocaust.co.za or 011 640 3100. Free admission, donations welcome.

Thursday (23 May)
• WIZO (the Women’s International Zionist Organisation) Johannesburg invites you to an evening with Heather Morris (the author of <i>The Tattooist of Auschwitz</i>) in conversation with Jenny Crwys-Williams. Time: 18:00 for 18:30. Venue: The Fitzgerald, 50 Kernick Avenue, Cnr Atholl Oaklands Road (opposite Melrose Arch). Parking available. Cost: R360 per person. Refreshments will be served. Bookings: Lauren 011 645 2515, lauren@beyachad.co.za
• Hebrew speakers meet at 10:45 at Beyachad building, 2 Elray Street, Raedene.
• Join WIZO every Thursday for a <i>Lunch & Learn</i> shiur with Rabbi Michael Katz. Time: 13:00 at Beyachad. For more information, contact: WIZO office: 011 645 2515.



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