



Chinese Famille Noire,
twenty hand-painted plates
SOLD R5,500



Hannatjie van der Wat,
Modular series, silkscreen
SOLD R5,000

A set of 12 ivory-lined
upholstered wooden
dining chairs
SOLD R75,000



**Art, antiques, objets d'art,
furniture, and jewellery wanted
for forthcoming auctions**

For more information 083 675 8468 • rka@global.co.za
www.rkauctioneers.co.za • 12 Allan Road, Bordeaux, Johannesburg

South African Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

■ Volume 24 – Number 19 ■ 5 June 2020 ■ 13 Sivan 5780

www.sajr.co.za

Opening shuls in two weeks way too early, expert warns

TALI FEINBERG

Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein announced on Tuesday, 2 June, that he would wait another two weeks before deciding whether to reopen shuls in South Africa. However, medical expert Professor Barry Schoub, says that “to countenance opening shuls at this stage of the epidemic in South Africa is unequivocally highly dangerous and a life-threatening risk to the community at large”.

The chief rabbi has held off opening shuls after President Cyril Ramaphosa gave the green light for places of worship in South Africa to reopen on 1 June, allowing only 50 people to attend services at a time. “After a series of meetings and consultation with a wide range of stakeholders involved at all levels of shul leadership as well as medical experts, widespread support has now emerged for a two-week moratorium on our shuls reopening,” said Goldstein.

“The plan is that until Tuesday 16 June, our shuls will hold off on reopening, and that we use this period to assess the unfolding health situation in the country at large and the readiness and capability of shuls to implement the very strict health and safety protocols that need to be in place. I will be in contact with you over this time as we plot the way forward post-June 16.”

However, Schoub, the founding and former director of the National Institute for Communicable

Diseases of South Africa and professor emeritus of virology at the University of the Witwatersrand, said considering opening shuls in two weeks was way too early.

“The proposal to consider opening shuls after a two-week moratorium can only be condemned in the strongest terms, in my opinion. It comes from more than four decades of experience and background in virology and public health, consulting in South Africa and for the World Health Organization. Against this background, I have volunteered my expertise to the Jewish community.

“The worst phase of the outbreak is still to come. Houses of worship have been shown in numerous studies overseas to be amongst the most dangerous environments to spread the epidemic. The very ill-conceived decision by the government, in response to lobbying by faith leaders, has been widely criticised, including by the College of Public Health Medicine of South Africa.

“Over and above this, the additional ravages of the pandemic in the Jewish populations of New York, the United Kingdom, France, and elsewhere is testimony to the even greater risk of opening Jewish houses of worship,” says Schoub. “The reassurance of strict adherence to government regulations provides little comfort and will be unable to stem the spread of the epidemic. The two-week moratorium makes absolutely no sense to me.”

Professor Valerie Mizrahi, a molecular biologist and the director

of the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, says, “I was pleased to hear that there is a two-week moratorium on shuls re-opening. I strongly support this decision, which is consistent with that made by other religious leaders on behalf of their communities.

“The epidemic in South Africa is growing, and epidemiologists have warned that the situation will worsen before it improves,” she says. “The epidemic in the Western Cape is expected to peak in early July, and even later in other provinces, where it is at an earlier stage. Health services in the Cape Town metro are already under great pressure. This will intensify in the next few weeks as we approach the peak.

“Given that congregant settings such as shuls are particularly high-

risk areas for transmission, it’s entirely appropriate to hold off on re-opening shuls at this time. I understand, only too well, how challenging this is for members of our community who are yearning to return to shul. I lost my own father a month ago. Keeping shuls closed is a sacrifice which we must continue to make, not only for the sake of our fellow congregants, but for the country, at large.”

Shaun Zagnoev, the national chairperson of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, said, “At the outset of the crisis, the Jewish communal leadership asked medical experts Professor Barry Schoub and Dr Richard Friedland to guide our community on all decisions relating to the community. Both of these experts have opposed the reopening

of shuls, and we believe that their opinion should be the basis for decision-making on all aspects of communal life at this time.”

Rabbis across the country have supported the chief rabbi’s announcement. One rabbi, speaking on condition of anonymity said, “All the *minyanim* in South Africa aren’t worth the life of one Jew. Hashem allows us to pray at home, and when the *minyan* can pose a risk to one Jewish soul, then all the *minyanim* have to stop.

“The chief rabbi has consulted everyone – the rabbis, the Beth Din, the Rabbinic Association. He has the full support of all the senior rabbis and some of the junior rabbis who may be at less risk but understand that congregants’ lives come first.”

Rabbi Asher Deren of The Shul on the West Coast in Cape Town says, “I’m encouraged by the chief rabbi’s decisive leadership, starting with closing the shuls even before the virus began to spread locally at perhaps the earliest relative point of any Jewish community in the world. That step has undoubtedly saved lives. I’m further inspired by his current decision, taken in thorough consultation with stakeholders across the board. This underscores the gravity with which he is approaching the matter.”

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan of the Great Park Shul says, “South Africa is blessed with a united, collaborative rabbinate. The chief rabbi invited all rabbis to share views and diverse perspectives. He did the same

Continued on page 6>>

Unlocking schools



Back to school at King David Linksfield this week

See page 14

JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

INVEST IN PROPERTY IN ISRAEL FROM R5 MILLION

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

**REAL
LIFE**

Real Estate.



GLENHAZEL | R 1 299 999
Asking More. 3 Bedroom apartment has a well fitted kitchen with granite tops and a double oven, 2 bathrooms (Mes), open plan lounge and dining room, a laundry and storage, Staff accommodation, 2 underground parking's a beautiful communal pool and gardens plus 24/7 Security.

3 2 Web Ref: RL56995
Joel Harris 082 926 0287 National Sales Consultant of the Year
Laureen Shalpid 083 789 0229



GLENHAZEL | R 2.699 MILLION
4 bedrooms. Built in cupboards throughout. 4 bathrooms (3 en suite), guest suite with private bathroom. Private study area with beautifully crafted wall to wall bookcases opening onto patio with sliders. Supersized modern eat-in kosher kitchen. Granite tops. Gas Hob. 3 ovens. Patio off kitchen with pre built Sukkah area. Genuine Sellers.

4 4 Web Ref: RL63116
Joel Harris 082 926 0287 National Sales Consultant of the Year
Laureen Shalpid 083 789 0229



OAKLANDS | R 4 950 000
A special family home offering comfortable and tranquil living! Featuring 3/4 receptions, eat-in, country-style kitchen, 4 beds (mes), 2nd bathroom, guest cloak, cottage, staff, pool, double garage, layered security measures & energy efficient attributes.

4 2 Web Ref: RL61481
Chrissie Hammer: 082 568 0440



MORNINGSIDE | R 1 200 000
New Release! Further Repo Rate Cut! Opportunity Knocks! Calling All Investors and Young Professionals! It's a Winner! Why Rent when you can own? 2 Bedroom (both with laminate flooring), 2 Bathrooms. Garden Apartment. Renovated kitchen with space for 3 appliances. Superbly positioned with easy access to Sandton CBD, Gautrain and all amenities. Safe and secure. 24/7 security. 1 covered parking/plenty visitors parking. Pool in complex. Lock up and Go! A must to view!

2 2 Web Ref: RL64745
Sandra Luntz: 083 679 1247

Board lays criminal charges against antisemitic Instagrammer

TALI FEINBERG

The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) has laid criminal charges against Simone Abigail Kriel for posting antisemitic and inflammatory messages on her Instagram profile on 16 May 2020.

The SAJBD laid the charges on Monday, 1 June, through its legal representative, Ian Levitt Attorneys. “The charges are *crimen injuria*, which is criminal defamation,” said SAJBD Associate Director David Saks.

Kriel is a 28-year-old athlete and bodybuilder from Pretoria who identifies as Christian. Amidst a torrent of classic antisemitic accusations posted on 16 May, she said, “The f**n Jews are greedy as f**k and they will wage war against countries and races based on lies and deception to get what they want. There is a special place in hell for them, and not even that is good enough for what they are doing to

this world! It was the Jews that bombed, raped, sodomised, and burned all people in Germany alive. Hitler is innocent. Our history has been twisted to favour the Jews without question.”

SAJBD National Vice-Chairperson Professor Karen Milner, in whose name the charge was laid, said that racist and inflammatory rhetoric of this nature is not only criminal but dangerous, and needs to be confronted as strongly as possible. This is particularly true in the climate of the coronavirus pandemic, when many are feeling anxious, frustrated, and confused.

“It’s at such times that conspiracy theories tend to flourish, and all too often, Jews end up becoming the scapegoats” said Milner, a professor of psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand. “The posts in this case portray, inter alia, Jews as being intrinsically evil, morally and spiritually corrupt, and enemies of humanity at large. As such, they constitute classic antisemitism.”

Milton Shain, South Africa’s pre-eminent antisemitism expert and emeritus professor of history at the University of Cape Town, weighed in: “If one thinks about the *crimen injuria* cases dealing with racial insults over the past couple of years – like the Penny Sparrow matter for example – one would imagine there is a case to pursue. To me, there seem to be no shades of grey. This isn’t anti-Zionism as a ‘fig leaf’ for Jew-hatred. This is old-style antisemitism, building on every trope

in a long history of hatred. A whole people have been vilified by Simone Abigail Kriel.”

The SAJBD gave Kriel until the close of business on 19 May to remove the offending material and post an unequivocal apology to the Jewish community, failing which, legal and/or other appropriate action would be taken against her.

Since then, there has been no further interaction between her and the SAJBD. “She didn’t respond to our email beyond acknowledging receipt, obviously posted no apology, and instead posted further offensive material on her Facebook page while insisting on her Instagram profile that she had done nothing wrong and wouldn’t be silenced.”

Saks said that the SAJBD and its lawyers decided that *crimen injuria* was the best option to pursue. “As this is clearly a criminal case, we proceeded to lay criminal charges.”

Furthermore, “At this stage, the definition of what constitutes prohibited hate speech is a bit up in the air. This is because of a pending challenge to the relevant section of the Promotion of Equality and Prevention of Unfair Discrimination Act in the Constitutional Court. Because of this, it was felt that going the civil route – such as through the Equality Court or the South African Human Rights Commission – wasn’t the right option right now and instead, criminal proceedings would be more effective.

“The matter is now with the police, and it’s for

it to decide if and when to prosecute,” said Saks. “Once the investigation has been concluded, the prosecuting authorities will make a decision on the procedure for the prosecution of Kriel. This can take some time. If it goes ahead, it will still most likely be a long process, in part because of the inevitable backlog of cases resulting from current circumstances. The Board, through our attorneys, will follow up regularly.

“It’s premature at this stage to speculate about what the court might decide regarding the lawfulness or otherwise of her conduct and what penalty, if any, should be imposed,” Saks said. “There is precedent for direct imprisonment, as in the Vicki Momberg case, where she was sentenced to two years in prison. From our point of view, the most important aspect of the matter is that Kriel is made to answer for what she has published in a properly constituted judicial forum.”

He said the community could support the SAJBD in this process by “letting us know about any further antisemitic behaviour by the perpetrator, whether on her social-media platforms or in other forums in case we miss it. In general, we rely on the community to be our eyes and ears and report to us any instances of antisemitism that come to its attention, always providing as much chapter-and-verse detail as it can. This includes taking screenshots in cases where the abusive behaviour takes place online.

“There is a growing body of case history to assist the courts in this area, a fair number of which originates with actions brought by the SAJBD over the years,” Saks said, “but legally speaking, it very much remains a work in progress.”

At the same time, “the law on *crimen injuria* has been developed over many years in South Africa, and we can say that in certain instances, particularly when racism is involved, the courts are taking a much harder line on the perpetration of these crimes. This is one such incident that we trust will be given the seriousness it deserves by the prosecuting authorities.”



Simone Kriel

Appliance Repairs on Site

Fridges, Dishwashers,
Washing Machines, Stoves
Tumble Dryers & more

Call Jason
082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532
FREE QUOTATIONS

Special

R799 for a trendy pair of prescription glasses (t&c apply)

All contact lenses delivered to your door at lockdown prices

Midways Mall • 280 Corlett Drive
eyecare@theopticalstudio.co.za • T: 011 440 9001

| Shabbat times this week | | |
|-------------------------|-------|----------------|
| Starts | Ends | |
| 17:05 | 17:57 | Johannesburg |
| 17:26 | 18:21 | Cape Town |
| 16:45 | 17:38 | Durban |
| 17:06 | 17:59 | Bloemfontein |
| 16:57 | 17:52 | Port Elizabeth |
| 16:51 | 17:45 | East London |

SUNDRYCHEM (PTY) LTD

MEDICAL SUPPLIES & EVERYTHING FIRST AID

INFRARED THERMOMETER

R995

SUBJECT TO PRESENTATION OF THIS ADVERT • INCL.VAT

Tel: 011 440 4674 / 5063 • www.sundrychem.co.za

UNIT 18 Kingswood Centre | 9 Northfield Avenue | Glenhazel | Johannesburg | 2192
P.O. Box 89149 | Lyndhurst | 2106 • Reg No. K2011/108672/07 • VAT No. 4940259759

- Aprons
- Mop Caps
- Over Shoes
- Sleeve Protectors
- Coveralls
- Face Masks
- Face Shields
- Hand Sanitizers
- Gloves
- Tissues

VEHICLES WANTED

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

Arnold Orkin 082 823 7826
AUTO AFRICA

Torah Thought

Gathering physically isn’t essential, preserving life is

Like the United States president, President Cyril Ramaphosa has declared that places of worship are “essential places that provide essential services”, and must therefore reopen.

On one count, I agree. Churches, synagogues, and mosques do provide essential services to our communities. We provide meaningful ways for people of faith to gather in joy and sorrow, to learn and pray, to express our beliefs, and celebrate our traditions. We work to feed the hungry and protect the vulnerable, and we encourage our members to bring our Jewish values to bear in the world to create a more just and compassionate society. In these frightening and uncertain times, our mission to be a caring community has never been clearer.

But on another count, our congregations never closed during this pandemic. While our buildings have been closed, we have continued to learn and pray via Zoom, Facebook, YouTube, and “virtual classrooms”, and many of us have been busier than usual.

Progressive communities have

created meaningful online services on Shabbat and festivals, and attendance at these “virtual” services, adult and religious school classes, and shiurim is consistently high. Perhaps it’s because it’s easy to attend services when you don’t even need to leave your house. But it’s also because we realise how essential it is to connect meaningfully to community during this time of social distancing and isolation.

It’s true that we dearly miss being in our beautiful buildings. We miss holding our sacred Torah scrolls in our arms, and hearing the words of prayers by fellow members and our rabbis. We miss hugging and greeting one another in the building. However, we all know that the most important *mitzvah* we can observe during this pandemic is that of *piku’ach nefesh* – saving a life. While many communities are implementing procedures to resume services in our sanctuaries during alert level 3, we will do so very carefully.

For no matter how beautiful and precious our shuls are to us, our physical space isn’t “essential”. What is essential is life. Our congregations are

Rabbi Adrian M Schell,
Congregation Bet
David Morningside,
Sandton



our people, not our buildings, and each person is unique and irreplaceable, created in the image of G-d. When we can safely hold in-person services, we know that we will cherish each other’s presence more than ever.

These days, we are mourning nearly 400 000 people worldwide – including 700 plus fellow South Africans – lost to COVID-19. This is an enormous and unfathomable loss for their loved ones, for our country, and for humanity.

If we genuinely want to honour their lives along with the lives of all who are caring for the sick, we must do everything we can to preserve life. Going forward, our new “normal” must be an even greater sense of care for our most vulnerable, and a renewed commitment to gather responsibly in a manner that’s inclusive of everyone – young and old – in our communities.

South African

Jewish Report

The source of quality content: news and insights

ceo@sajewishreport.co.za • Advertising Britt Landsman: 082 292 9520 – britt@sajewishreport.co.za

Design and layout Bryan Maron/Design Bandits – bryan@designbandits.co.za • Distribution Sandy Furman • Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd.
Tel: 0860 525 200 • Board of Directors Howard Sackstein (Chairperson), Dina Diamond, Herschel Jawitz, Shaun Matisonn, Benji Porter.
Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff and board of directors. Tel: 011 430 1980.

Editor Peta Krost Maunders – editor@sajewishreport.co.za • Sub-editor Julie Leibowitz
Journalists Nicola Miltz • Tali Feinberg • Jordan Moshe • Editorial co-ordinator Martine Bass
editorial@sajewishreport.co.za • Proofreader Kim Hatchuel CEO Dani Kedar

The SA Jewish Report subscribes to the Code of Ethics and Conduct for South African Print and Online Media that prescribes news that is truthful, accurate, fair and balanced. If we don’t live up to the Code, within 20 days of the date of publication of the material, please contact the Public Advocate at 011 484 3612, fax: 011 484 3619. You can also contact our Case Officer on khanyim@ombudsman.org.za or lodge a complaint on their website: www.presscouncil.org.za

**The South African Jewish Report
proudly presents**

SIMON SINEK SPEAKS TO SOUTH AFRICA



Proceeds to



Afrika Tikkun

**Visionary thinker, NY Times
best-selling author, watched
hundreds of millions of times
on TED & YouTube**

THURSDAY 11 JUNE – 20:00 SAST

REGISTER NOW!

excelacademyinc.com/sajr26

In Partnership With

EXCEL
ACADEMY

south african
Jewish Report
The source of quality content news and insights

www.sajr.co.za

Jewish groups express outrage over racist police brutality

PHILISSA CRAMER – JTA

Jewish groups are expressing outrage over the death of George Floyd, a black man killed last week by a Minneapolis police officer who has subsequently been charged with second-degree murder, and solidarity with the sweeping national protests that have followed.

T’ruah, a social-justice organisation of rabbis, issued a statement on 27 May after the first night of protests in Minneapolis:

“This week, the divine image is diminished as we mourn the murder of George Floyd at the hands of the Minneapolis police. This is yet one more tragic example of the racist violence too often perpetuated by police officers who are charged with protecting all of us, not only some of us. We again face the reality that people of colour in our country live in fear that encounters with law enforcement will result in serious injury or death.

“We say once again: black lives matter. And we commit to creating a country that lives by this statement.”

The Jewish Council for Public Affairs, an organisation working with 130 local groups across the United States (US), tweeted an image of two dozen black men, women and in one case, a child, who have been killed by police officers.

The chief executive of the Anti-Defamation League, Jonathan Greenblatt, connected George Floyd’s death to “an explosion of racist murders and hate crimes” across the US.

“We stand in solidarity with the black community as it yet again is subject to pain and suffering at the hands of a racist and unjust system. While it’s a necessary first step in the pathway towards justice that former officer Derek Chauvin was taken into custody yesterday, it’s simply not enough. Based on the horrifying

cell phone footage that has rightfully outraged Americans across the country, it’s clear that the three other former officers who participated in Mr Floyd’s death need to be held responsible for their actions to the fullest extent of our legal system. The Hennepin County district attorney and local investigators must do everything in their power to ensure that the wheels of justice turn swiftly. As an organisation committed to fighting all forms of hate, we know that this brutal death follows an explosion of racist murders and hate crimes across the US. As an agency that has stood for justice and fair treatment to all since our founding in 1913, we know that this has occurred at a time when communities of colour have been reeling from the disproportionate health impacts and economic consequences of the coronavirus pandemic. In short, systemic injustice and inequality calls for systemic change. Now.”

Rabbi Jonah Dov Pesner, the director of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, reiterated his group’s commitment to ongoing action:

“The national rage expressed about the murder of Mr Floyd reflects the depth of pain over the injustice that people of colour – and particularly black men – have been subjected to throughout the generations. In recent months, we have seen, yet again, too many devastating examples of persistent systemic racism leading to the deaths not only of Mr Floyd, but other precious souls, including Breonna Taylor and Ahmaud Arbery.

“We remember others before them: Eric Garner. Tamir Rice. Trayvon Martin. Sandra Bland. Oscar Grant. Philando Castile. Walter Scott. Terrence Crutcher. Samuel Dubose. Michael Brown. The list feels endless, and so too is our despair. But as we recite the mourner’s kaddish for them all, we say now, again, we will

not sit idly by.

“Our country simply cannot achieve the values of “justice for all” to which it aspires until we address ongoing racism in all sectors and at all levels of society. We remain in solidarity and action with the NAACP’s [National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People’s] urgent #WeAreDoneDying campaign, whose policy demands address areas of criminal justice, economic justice, healthcare, and voting, especially as the COVID-19 pandemic continues to have a disproportionate impact on black Americans.”

Keshet, a group that advocates for LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer) Jews, expressed solidarity with black leaders.

“For the past two days, the Jewish community observed Shavuot, a holiday rooted in learning and action that commemorates when the Jewish people were given the Torah. The Talmud teaches that anyone who destroys one life has destroyed an entire universe. The systemic racism that allows black people to be murdered with impunity is destroying our world.

“As we work to advance equality and justice for LGBTQ Jews, we take seriously the need to build a world in which people of all races and ethnicities can live in safety; a world in which the bodies of black, brown, trans, and queer people are treated with dignity and respect. Keshet stands in solidarity with black leaders in the Keshet community and beyond whose wisdom and insights are instrumental in building a just and equitable future. We vow to voice our outrage and demand justice. #BlackLivesMatter.”

Sheila Katz, the executive director of the National Council of Jewish Women (NCJW), said, “We will not remain silent. As a national organisation made up of more than 100 000 advocates in communities around the country, including Minnesota, we are outraged and devastated by the murder of George Floyd. Mr Floyd was murdered by multiple police officers who held him down with their knees, however the underlying cause of his death is

systemic racism. It’s both unacceptable and exhausting that in 2020, we still need to insist over and over again: black lives matter.

Through legislative reform, local activism, and by educating NCJW advocates, we will make sure each individual we engage helps to end the toxic culture of racism that permeates our country. For now, it’s important to support black and brown communities and the leaders spearheading the peaceful, anti-racist responses



Photo: Stephen Maturin/Getty Images

unfolding. Together, we will make sure the memory of George Floyd will be for a blessing.

The Rabbinical Assembly, the international association of Conservative and Masorti rabbis, called for sweeping changes to policing in America.

“We join in the collective call for peace and reflection during civil unrest, but understand that to achieve this end, we must act. For these reasons, the Rabbinical Assembly calls on legislators at the national, state, and local levels to fundamentally change their approach to law enforcement and the justice system so that they serve and protect all Americans, regardless of race nor ethnicity. We encourage our own members to reach out to other communities, to Jews of colour, as well as to local law enforcement to help lead and shape these endeavours within the community.

“United in purpose, we will dismantle the systemic racism all too embedded still within American law enforcement and its justice system. The firing – and we hope prosecution – of the four Minneapolis police officers involved in this one egregious murder is a necessary step, but it cannot be the only action against structural injustices that have plagued generations and continue to this day. We must forever strive for a free and just society for all people.

Stamping out police brutality

Against the backdrop of the civil unrest that followed the brutal killing of George Floyd at the hands of a policeman in the United States, South Africans are recognising an increase in violence by our own law enforcement agencies. There are alleged to have been 10 deaths at their hands since the start of lockdown, and many people have complained about the security force’s excessive actions and abuse of power during the lockdown. A few communal leaders have added their voice to this outcry:

Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein

Police brutality, whether here, in the US, or anywhere, is obviously beyond the pale, and is a form of gross criminality. But there is a broader issue here, one that is particularly relevant to all of us in South Africa as we emerge from a period of lockdown that has resulted in a significant erosion of civil liberty in the name of safeguarding our vital interests of health and safety.

At this time, we must rededicate ourselves as a society – and as a government – to the principle that a democracy serves its citizens, not the other way round. We are free citizens, not subjects. This is especially true for state security services, which exist to serve and protect law-abiding citizens, and should treat each person with dignity and equality, respect all our human rights, and maintain the highest levels of professionalism, transparency, and accountability.

South African Union for Progressive Judaism,

South African Association of Progressive Rabbis, and South African Centre for Religious Equality and Diversity

The rabbinic leadership of the South African Union for Progressive Judaism calls out to our leaders to bring swift justice to bear in the tragic death of Collins Khosa, as well Petrus Miggels, Sibusiso Amos, Adane Emmanuel, and other citizens who have suffered brutality at the hands of South African police officers. Especially now as our country reels from the COVID-19 pandemic, we rely on our government to bring calm and security to all its people. The police and armed forces are responsible for keeping us all safe, irrespective of our privilege, and we are alarmed by the increasing number of incidents occurring in the poorest and most vulnerable communities of this country. We note that sadly, South Africa isn’t alone in the world, and we are deeply disturbed by the tragic case of George Floyd and the lack of swift and just response by the American authorities.

Continued on page 8>>

Keeping you safe at home and at work 24/7

24/7 CALL CENTRE
0861 101 000

2 Elm Street
(Cnr Elm & Louis Botha Ave)
Houghton Estate 2198
Phone: +27 11 487 1000
Email: info@mantissecurity.co.za
www.mantissecurity.co.za

Securing Safety and Peace of Mind

NICOLA MILTZ

She says the insurgency became more

It “has raised concerns about an IS presence in new territories where it has drawn allegiance from local militant groups,” she said. “We should be worried, given that the attacks on Mozambique point to the presence of IS in the [SADC] region.”



iLearn®

Unlock Your Potential, Unlock Your Future

Instant access to 700+ online courses in
Finance, Marketing, Communications,
Leadership, Microsoft Office & more.

SIGN UP TODAY

Visit www.ilearn.courses

 iLearn | South Africa

 @iLearnSA

 iLearn

 @iLearnOnline

**Instant online access**
Start learning straight away

**New courses monthly**
Access all new courses for free

**We're here to help**
Any questions? We are ready to assist

Make sure our new reality is better than the old

The images of schools opening this week looked more like something from science fiction movies than reality. They brought home the fact that no matter how much we long for our old normal, this new reality is as far from normal as we can get.

More than that, our old normal is gone and isn’t coming back in a long, long time – if ever.

Who would have imagined our children, donning masks over their mouths and noses and lining up two metres apart to have their temperature checked before being allowed into school? It always used to be that you had to have a doctor’s note not to go to school, now you have to prove you are 100% well to be allowed in.

I can’t imagine what it must be like trying to teach while wearing a mask, let alone learn from a masked educator. Just how will younger kids manage to avoid running around, kicking a ball to one another, and getting into some roughhousing? That’s what kids – particularly boys – do. But educators say that the children who have gone back to school this week have adapted very quickly to this “new normal”.

This isn’t just about a pandemic and how we have to behave to ensure it kills as few of us as possible. The lockdown – which most countries have implemented – has had a massive impact on every one of us.

It has pushed us into our homes and somehow into our own minds, stimulating intense reactions. For some, it’s resistance to obeying the laws that curtail our freedom, and finding fault in what the government or our president says.

Who would have thought that the sale of cigarettes and alcohol, and opening houses of prayer could become such huge points of argument?

For some, it has been a time of realising that we need change – our lives as we know it aren’t how we want to live from now on. This refers to marriages, careers, where we live, among a myriad of other life decisions.

We went into lockdown quite content with our situation, and will come out the other end needing something quite different. Some people have started running when they didn’t do so before. They have given up alcohol or cigarettes because it makes sense. I could go on.

However, this is on a totally personal, individual level.

On a national and international level, there is deep discord in the United States, where racism and police brutality has escalated into national riots. The situation has effectively become bigger than COVID-19 in that country.

I watched the video of George Floyd being murdered by a police officer with his knee on his throat while other officers watched. The officer ignored the man begging to breathe. It was horrific and inhumane. I’m not surprised at the reaction it has received around the country by all those who abhor racism and police brutality.

The worst part about that cold-blooded murder was that the perpetrator and his cronies are meant to protect people, not kill them. These are the people to whom the government gives a badge, allowing them to protect, serve, and ensure the security of citizens. But these policemen thought they were above the law and could do whatever they felt was necessary to a man who – at most – may have used a single fake note. He didn’t even get his day in court to prove otherwise.

Now, all this isn’t unfamiliar to us on the southern tip of Africa. We understand racism. It permeated every part of this country, and was law until 1994. It wasn’t that long ago when such incidents may have gone unreported in South Africa because black lives weren’t considered by the government as important as white lives.

Can I say while that isn’t the reality in South Africa today, the behaviour of our police is far from exemplary. I’m not going to tar every police officer with the same brush. I know there are exceptional policemen and women.

However, far too many people have died at the hands of the police since the start of the lockdown, and others, brutalised by the police, have escape with little more than their lives.

Collins Khosa, Petrus Miggels, Sibusiso Amos, and Adane Emmanuel may just be names to you, but each one of them died after being harmed by people who should have been protecting them.

Khosa died after allegedly being assaulted by soldiers in Alexandra. He was beaten for supposedly breaking lockdown regulations. Some people are calling him our George Floyd.

Miggels, too, died after allegedly being beaten by police who picked him up after he bought alcohol during level four. Amos was gunned down at his home in Vosloorus at the end of March during a lockdown operation that involved members of the Ekurhuleni Metro Police Department.

While none of these cases are apparently clear cut, and most are still under investigation by the Independent Police Investigative Directorate, it’s an indication of way too much violence by security forces.

The question is, where does one turn if the very people who are meant to protect us are the aggressors? What does this say about a country?

I know that for many of us, this is far from our realm of understanding as we live in the suburbs and it isn’t our everyday reality. But we have to be careful that our new COVID-19 reality, and what we will get used to after the virus has left us, is better than what we had before, not worse.

We can’t accept security force brutality against civilians. It wasn’t acceptable during apartheid, and it certainly isn’t in 2020.

While we all do some soul searching and contemplate better lives for ourselves individually and as a group, let’s make sure that our reality doesn’t include violence on any level.

It’s incumbent on us to make sure our government and security forces know this isn’t acceptable – ever!



Move to level three sparks dangerous complacency



OPINION

PROFESSOR BARRY SCHOUB

The pandemic of COVID-19 is a public-health emergency not seen since the devastating Spanish influenza pandemic of 1918/1919, which was responsible for more than 50 million deaths. It has challenged the resources and commitment of governments and citizens to an extent unprecedented in our lifetime.

The fine balance between the public health imperative to address and control the pandemic on the one hand, and the economic need to sustain human livelihood on the other, has demanded supremely wise decision-making by the authorities charged with making these vital decisions.

South Africa enjoyed the advantage of entering the pandemic somewhat later than countries in Europe and the United States. However, at the same time, it faced the spectre of the punishing costs of instituting a lockdown on a fragile economy and a frail public-health system.

The government earned well-justified accolades for its early introduction of a firm lockdown which effectively curtailed the spread of the virus. Not surprisingly, the cost of a strong lockdown on a weak economy, and the consequent severe hardships it caused to the point of threatening widespread food insecurity in the country, soon overcame its benefits.

With wide support, many of the restrictions were lifted in order to reopen the economy. Even some in the scientific community called for abandoning lockdown altogether while, importantly, still retaining the non-pharmaceutical interventions of social distancing and the other accompaniments of COVID-19 infection control.

The move to lockdown level three has spawned a dangerous misinterpretation that this is a signal that the epidemic is coming to an end. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Now, more than ever, as South Africa enters into the exponential phase of expansion of the epidemic, extraordinary vigilance and meticulous devotion to the COVID-19 infection-control measures are vitally important.


The number of cases is currently rising at well over 1 000 new cases a day, and the worst is still to come. From South Africa’s premier public hospital, Groote Schuur, comes the report that the province is fast running out of beds in intensive care, and soon they may not be available for all who need them.

Similarly, ventilators may need to be

rationed to the younger or “fitter” members of the population as was the case even in the well-resourced United Kingdom.

Regrettably, the government’s COVID-19 policy has degenerated into often incongruous and sometimes illogical regulations not supported by science. While level-three regulations warn against mass gatherings and forbid socialising, faith leaders have lobbied government to open houses of worship!

How could this have been approved during an unprecedentedly severe public health threat to life at a particularly vulnerable stage of the epidemic in this country? How could the faith leaders have lobbied for the opening of houses of worship, the very



paradigm of a super-spreading event as borne out by so many episodes and well publicised studies abroad?

For the Jewish community, which, in particular, has been so severely ravaged by this disease in New York, the United Kingdom, France, and elsewhere, with mortality figures grotesquely out of proportion to population numbers, to contemplate reopening synagogues at this stage of the epidemic in South Africa is even more bizarre.

The sop that control measures will be strictly enforced rings hollow indeed. Alarm bells ring when we look at how existing regulations were and are openly flouted by members of our community in the streets of Glenhazel and its environs.

• *This opinion piece is written solely in Barry Schoub's personal capacity, and doesn't necessarily reflect the opinions of any organisation or any other individual. Schoub is professor emeritus of virology, University of the Witwatersrand, and was the founder and executive director of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases.*

Opening shuls in two weeks way too early, expert warns

>>Continued from page 1

when he met the lay leadership of shuls across the country. In these challenging times, I’m grateful to have the camaraderie and support of our rabbinate and our exceptional Jewish community.”

Rabbi Sam Thurgood of Beit Midrash Morasha in Cape Town says, “We all share a deep concern for the health and safety of our community, as well as the need to provide a sacred space for *tefillah* [prayer]. Different communities have different needs, and for us, Shabbat services are likely to resume before the weekday ones, but we’re not rushing into anything and will continue to take advice.”

Rabbi Sa’ar Shaked of the Beit Emanuel Progressive Synagogue says, “The South African Union for Progressive Judaism (SAUPJ) is an alliance of shuls rather than a top-down body. The elected leaderships of the different shuls are

the ones responsible for ensuring that their campuses comply with all relevant regulations. We, the rabbis, and the SAUPJ national leadership, will naturally assist, but the authority to act belongs to the shuls rather than to the movement.

“For example, Bet David in Sandton will experiment with limited services from its campus earlier than others, starting with just the rabbi broadcasting from his *bimah*. At Beit Emanuel, we won’t re-open the campus for the time being. The Cape Town congregations share our approach.”

Rabbi Greg Alexander of Temple Israel Progressive Hebrew Congregation in Cape Town says, “The value of *pikuach nefesh* [saving a life] is one of our most sacred values as Jews, so our shul buildings will continue to remain closed for the time being.”

Third-time lucky for Cape couple stuck in New Zealand

TALI FEINBERG

A holiday trip to New Zealand turned into a three-month-long difficult but adventurous wait for Cape Town couple Wilfred and Marie Gruzd after their flight home was cancelled just before South Africa and New Zealand went into lockdown.

And, just when they thought they were to be repatriated, their plans fell through. This happened twice. On the third attempt, they finally managed to get on a long and winding flight home thanks to the efforts of the South African high commissioner in Australia, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, formerly a member of parliament and the minister of tourism.

Their trip began exactly three months ago, when they left Cape Town on 1 March, landing in Auckland on 3 March. “At that time, we weren’t worried as the coronavirus was still mainly in China and a bit in Europe,” says Wilfred, businessman and owner of The Stingray Group. They spent the next few weeks touring North and South Island until their coach tour company abruptly cancelled the last few days of their tour as lockdown loomed.

“We were supposed to fly out of New Zealand on the evening of 24 March. The coach tour stopped on 21 March. We were diverted back to Christchurch, and confirmed that our flight was going ahead on 24 March. However on the morning of 24 March, we heard it had been cancelled,” says Wilfred.

The couple realised they were stuck, and expected to stay in Christchurch for a few weeks. They had one day to get their affairs in order as New Zealand was going into lockdown at midnight on 26 March, and the shops would already be closed that day.

First they had to find a place to stay, and they moved into a new hotel that offered self-catering apartments. Then, they had to sort out their medication. “I knew Wilfred’s medication would run out, so we asked our South African pharmacist to write a script that we could fill in Christchurch. However, the pharmacy would accept a script only from a New Zealand doctor, so we had to rush to find one,” says Marie. “We had also brought no winter clothes with us so we had to buy those as the South Island gets very cold.

After sorting out accommodation, warm clothing, a doctor, and finding a pharmacy, the couple hunkered down with the rest of New Zealand. Both in their 70s, Wilfred began to worry about the ramifications of being stuck in a foreign country and contracting coronavirus. “It made me feel claustrophobic and agitated,” he says. Eventually that worry faded, and the couple developed a routine as they waited out the lockdown.

“The days went quickly. There was a window of time from about 18:30 to 23:00 where we could call our family and friends in South Africa, and when I would have a daily Zoom meeting with my office,” says Wilfred. They had appointments with their biokineticist from South Africa – at 22:00 his time – to do exercise classes with them. The couple also took regular walks. They connected with a bookstore, ordering books that they could collect from the door.

“Meanwhile, Pesach was coming. We tried to find a rabbi which was very difficult, and there were no matzah or Pesachdik products in the shops,” says Wilfred. “The day before Pesach, we went out and when we returned, there was a parcel of matzah and a bottle of kosher wine for us at reception. It had been delivered by Chabad in Christchurch.” They had a seder on Zoom with family in Australia.

During this time, the South African embassy in New

Zealand wasn’t helping them find a way home. Joining the Home Away from Home social-media platforms, they saw how other South Africans stuck in New Zealand were struggling. “Our situation wasn’t a burden,” says Wilfred. However, they did need to get back.

Their first opportunity to do so was on a private charter plane that was supposed to fly Brisbane-Auckland-Sydney-Denpasar[Bali]-Jakarta-Johannesburg. However, it wasn’t filled, and was therefore cancelled.

Then, at the beginning of May, they heard of an independent commercial repatriation Qatar Airways flight, flying Auckland-Sydney-Doha-Johannesburg. They booked their tickets, but two days before departure, they were told that Marie couldn’t fly as she holds a British passport and the flight was only allowing South African passport holders.

It wouldn’t accept any authentication of her identity or permanent residency. The couple missed the flight. “Each missed opportunity was hard to deal with,” says Wilfred. But they didn’t lose hope. The person who notified them that Marie couldn’t fly was Van Schalkwyk. He began to work day and night to get the Gruzds on the next flight home. “He would call us early in the morning or in the evening – he never stopped working. He negotiated with Qatar Airways on our behalf. If it wasn’t for him, I believe we would still be stuck in New Zealand,” says

Wilfred.

Finally, on 22 May, they flew out of Auckland. They landed at Sydney Airport at 10:00 and had to wait for their next flight at 22:00. Every shop was closed, so they spent 12 long hours in the departure lounge. When they eventually landed in Johannesburg, they had to collect their luggage on the tarmac. They were allocated a minibus, and their luggage was loaded into its trailer.

They then had to wait for a few hours for the minibus to move. Police vehicles with flashing lights eventually escorted them to the Capital on the Park Hotel in Sandton. They had no idea where they would be quarantined, and were grateful to find out it was this hotel.

“After 59 days of lockdown, we were finally back in South Africa,” says Wilfred. They are now waiting out their quarantine, and plan to drive back to Cape Town this week. While at the hotel, they are given three meals a day and their temperatures are taken twice a day. They were also tested for coronavirus, which came back negative.

Looking back at their ordeal, they see many positive aspects: “It was good for us to have quality time together,” says Marie. “There were many good Samaritans along the way. We were put in touch with friends of friends who offered to help us with everything from carrying our groceries to giving us their winter coats to offering us a place to stay. It could have been a “make or break” situation, but in the end, it’s what you make of it!”



Marie and Wilfred Gruzd on a previous trip to Japan



| SAVOY PHARMACY | PERCELIA PHARMACY |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| MONDAY – FRIDAY 8:30am – 7:00pm | MONDAY – THURSDAY 8:30am – 6:00pm |
| SATURDAY 9:00am – 2:00pm | FRIDAY 8:30am – 4:30pm |
| SUNDAY & PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 9:00am – 1:00pm | SATURDAY: CLOSED SUNDAY 9:00am – 1:00pm |
| ☎ (011) 885-1200/1 savoy@medicarehealth.co.za | ☎ (011) 640-4321/31 percelia@medicarehealth.co.za |

FRANK SOLOMON HEARING CENTRE
Have a love at first sound experience.
Phonak Audéo™ Marvel
A new all-in-one solution that improves your hearing in everyday life and even in the noisiest environments.



- Experience exceptional sound performance
- Connect seamlessly to Bluetooth® devices
- Rechargeable so you'll always stay connected
- Remote Support for the ultimate in convenience

SPECIAL PRICE FOR PENSIONERS

CONTACT US TODAY:
(011) 849-6256
082 953 4628
Fairmount
6 George Ave,
Sandringham
Additional branches in Benoni and Germiston

- Affordable for Pensioners
- 2-Year Warranty
- No Follow-Up Charges
- Latest Technology
- Small and Discreet
- Extensive Wireless Communication Portfolio Available
- Supplements for Tinnitus

Treatment approved by the American ENT Association

We are COVID-19 compliant

Interest free loans.

Contact Debbie on (011) 485 5401
Mon – Fri: 08h30 – 12h30
Email: rambam@mweb.co.za
www.rambam.co.za

CONFIDENTIALITY GUARANTEED

Terms & Conditions apply.


RAMBAM
CHARITABLE TRUST
Unity Community Responsibility

MEDICAL • HOME • EDUCATION • SIMCHA • CAR

Jewish daughter of Hamas sheikh tells tale of rescue

STEVEN GRUZD

Introduced simply as “Maya”, this daughter of a Jewish mother and devout Muslim father was married at 15. She endured unspeakable horrors at the hands of her husband. Today, she works to help rescue thousands of young Jewish women – like her – trapped in Arab villages across Israel.

Maya spoke to a packed online Zoom event hosted by Sydenham Shul and Yad L’Achim (A hand to the brothers), founded in 1950 to bring lost Jews back into the fold.

At 14, Maya’s Jewish mother fell in love with an Arab man and went to live in his village. She had a son with this man, then ran away to Jerusalem, but her family rejected her.

“She lived on the streets. She became a drug addict. My brother was taken away by social workers. Then she fell in love with another Arab man, my father. I can’t explain why. He was a very wealthy and religious Muslim, a sheikh.” When Maya was born, her father chased her mother away. At the age of three, she was

placed with a non-religious Jewish foster family.

“I spoke only Arabic,” Maya said. “My foster parents hated me. Again, I can’t explain why then they took me.” They wouldn’t let

felt that I belonged,” Maya recalled. She learned the Qur’an with a private teacher daily. “My father gathered all the men and told them to be patient with my mistakes – I made many

a 22-year-old when she was just 15. “The women told me how thankful I should be as the first wife to a young man. I could have been the fourth wife to an old man.”

Things soon turned sour. Her husband beat her mercilessly for every mistake, which included dinner being late, the

house not being clean enough, or spending too long at the supermarket. “The Qur’an teaches that women should accept punishment as something for their own good,” Maya said. “I truly believed it was OK, that he was teaching me, and I should thank him.”

At 16, she was six months pregnant. One night she was

worried as it was late and her husband hadn’t returned from work. With no phone, she quickly ran to her grandparents’ house to use theirs. She had committed an unforgiveable transgression – leaving her house at night without her husband’s permission.

“My husband dragged me into the street by my hair, and beat me in public. He broke bones, and I started bleeding,” Maya said. She begged to be taken to hospital, but her husband said he wanted to teach her the lesson of patience. It wasn’t until the next morning that she was hospitalised. He threatened to kill her unless she told doctors she’d fallen down the stairs. She lost the baby.

A kind uncle reluctantly agreed to help her escape when she turned 17. On the way to a shopping expedition in Jerusalem, Maya jumped off the bus, and ran to some Israeli soldiers. The uncle feigned anger and chased her.

She started living rough, sleeping in the streets, and in gardens. She stole food and clothes from washing lines. She eventually found her mother, who closed the door

in her face, saying that she had suffered enough without her daughter adding to it.

At age 18, a social worker managed to get her into an establishment for the homeless. A boy in the next room convinced her to come to the Kotel on Yom Kippur. She sat there for hours, thinking how her father had made her pray in a mosque five minutes away on Har HaBayit (the Temple Mount). She had an epiphany, thanking G-d for her second chance at life.

She began to learn Torah, became more religious, and got back on her feet.

By chance, she met a friend from the streets, with an Arab boyfriend. Maya had told no-one about her background. “When they asked, I said, ‘I have no parents and no questions. That’s it.’” But she told her story to her friend, who was shocked and broke off her relationship. “I was happy that I had saved her and possibly her children. But I was sad too, because I thought what would have happened if someone had convinced my mother at 14, how different my life could have been.”

Maya realised that helping trapped women was her life’s mission. She found Yad L’Achim, and has since helped to contact and rescue scores of Jewish women and children from Arab

villages. “I know I’m taking a risk, but I’m also saving lives,” Maya said. She was able to rescue her 10-year-old sister, and raised her as her own daughter. Today, Maya is married with three children. A few years ago, she

bumped into her father unexpectedly. He was pleased she was dressed modestly. He also said her Arab husband would seek revenge for being dishonoured.

“Not all Arabs are abusers, but all of them control their women,” Maya said.

Yossi Eilav from Yad L’Achim said they have more than 10 000 cases on file, and have rescued more than 550 Jewish women and children from all Jewish backgrounds in Israel in the past year.



Yossi Eilav from Yad L’Achim



JOB OPPORTUNITY Business Development Manager

The appropriate candidate will be outgoing, creative and resourceful. Connecting local companies with a plethora of Israeli companies. Opportune and exciting for a young professional.

DESCRIPTION:

- Analyzing the needs of Israeli and South African companies and assisting them in finding strategic partners, investors, agents, distributors and other contacts that will suit their needs.
- Planning, promotion and marketing of both large and small scale trade events.
- Coordinating high-level meetings.
- Social Media literate

REQUIREMENTS:

- Bachelor’s degree
- Strong communication and interpersonal skills
- Good admin skills
- The ability to establish personal-business contacts (outgoing personality)
- Ability to research and learn new topics speedily
- Tech savvy - an advantage
- 2-3 years business development work experience
- Computing - Strong Command of Windows and Office (mainly Word, Power point, Excel and Outlook), Internet and e-mail software strong skills
- Israeli passport holders exempt from applying

Location: Sandton
Please send CV to Johannesburg@israeltrade.gov.il

Stamping out police brutality

>>>Continued from page 4

Our Torah is clear. It teaches that every human being, created in the divine image, has infinite worth and is fundamentally equal to every other (Genesis 1:26, Mishna Sanhedrin 4:5). It teaches that, indeed, we are our brothers’ keepers (Genesis 4:9). It teaches that the Holy One hears the cry of the oppressed (Exodus 22:22). And it commands us, “Do not stand by while your neighbour’s blood is shed.” (Leviticus 19:16).

We stand with our international movement, the World Union for Progressive Judaism, whose president, Rabbi Sergio Bergman, has called for us “to tackle racism in our communities and commit ourselves to stand with those challenging hate and ignorance wherever it appears and to whomever it’s directed”.

Alana Baranov, founding and current steering committee member of the Hate Crimes Working Group (a South African Jewish Board of Deputies representative) Basic human rights don’t go into lockdown. However, during this challenging period, we have seen horrific acts of violence against

innocent civilians by members of the military and police, with the perpetrators not brought to book and held accountable for their crimes.

Tragically, as we are seeing in the US and elsewhere in the world, law-enforcement brutality is most often targeted at poor and black bodies. Two decades into our democracy, these heartbreaking events point to the legacy of apartheid’s structural inequalities and systemic racism that still exists in South Africa today, and must be urgently addressed.

As with the victims of police brutality in the US, we must “say their names” and use the memory of Collins Khosa and others to spur not just awareness and solidarity, but also concrete action to change the policing and law-enforcement systems in our country.

Shaun Zagnoev, South African Jewish Board of Deputies national chairperson Whether or not we are in lockdown, all organs of state including law enforcement must adhere to the rule of law. All who infringe these laws must be held accountable for their actions.

An endless road home from Argentina

TALI FEINBERG

Tyron Brivik couldn’t wait to head to Argentina for a holiday and reunion with his Mexican girlfriend. But what started out as a dream come true turned into a three-month nightmare as he battled to get home after South Africa went into lockdown. He finally landed at OR Tambo International Airport on Thursday, 28 May.

Speaking from a quarantine hotel in Johannesburg, Brivik told the *SA Jewish Report* that it took a leap of faith to get himself on a flight home.



“I watched as a fellow South African citizen maxed out his credit card on a ticket for a flight home from Argentina, only for it to be cancelled literally while they were boarding on the tarmac.”

“When we last spoke at the beginning of April, I was low and frustrated. I watched as a fellow South African citizen maxed out his credit card on a ticket for a flight home from Argentina, only for it to be cancelled literally while they were boarding on the tarmac. That man was stuck at the Sao Paulo airport for 12 days! He alternated sleeping one night in the airport and one night at a hotel.”

Brivik and other South Africans stuck in Argentina decided they couldn’t go through that, and should stay put and wait it out. He formed a close connection with two older South African citizens stranded in Buenos Aires, and they joined forces to find an alternate solution.

They tried to raise funds for flights, and were given endless promises from embassies that always fell through. They even considered contacting a cruise-ship captain they had heard about who was collecting stranded people and dropping them off at ports where they could catch flights home, or hiring a bus to take them to another location. However, none of these plans came to fruition.

“You stare at the same four walls for days on end, and you start to go nuts,” says Brivik. He left home only every 10 days to stock up on food and supplies, and said Argentines treated him like an alien, suspecting he was a foreigner who had coronavirus.

Brivik eventually heard about a possible flight from Qatar to Sao Paulo to Doha to Johannesburg. He and his South African comrades decided they had waited long enough and should try to get on this flight. It looked like it would be the last flight to South Africa for a long time.

Brivik finally took off from Buenos Aires on 24 May. He spent a small fortune on the flight, but realised the longer he stayed, the more expensive everything would become. He and his South African friends shared a room in the Sao Paulo Airport hotel for two nights where everything was exorbitantly expensive. “A bottle of water cost R100!” he says.

On 27 May, they boarded their flight for Doha, where one of his South African comrades was turned away because she didn’t have a South African passport even though she had been a permanent resident since 1989. She was only able to fly a few days afterwards.

“The flight was about half full, and took about 15 hours. In Doha, we had to wait another 10 hours at the airport, where everything was even more expensive.”

The flight to South Africa had about 280


passengers crammed into economy class, and took another 10 hours. “I think we travelled for about 40 hours, excluding the two-night stay in Sao Paulo,” says Brivik.


Now under quarantine in Johannesburg, he plans to drive back to Cape Town when he is released. Looking back on his ordeal, he estimates he spent about R220 000 on accommodation, his rent back home, food, four flight tickets that fell through, and the final flight ticket that got him home.

“I’m definitely not travelling again anytime soon!” he says. And even though he is thrilled to be on South African soil, he doesn’t know when he will see his girlfriend again, as she lives in Mexico. In a new world order with air travel off the cards, this is the next challenge he will have to face.



Tyron with his girlfriend Myrnia enjoying a meal in Buenos Aires before Argentina went into lockdown





Rescuing food • Fighting hunger

TIKVAH

A TIME FOR HOPE

Last week we celebrated the giving of the Torah, symbolising the emancipation of the Jewish people.

We also celebrated the first harvest of the wheat and the picking of the first fruits, symbolising abundance.


And we asked you to share some of your own abundance to help us deliver food, that would have gone to waste, to hungry people - now numbering more than 18 million in South Africa.

And you responded magnificently. Thank you all so very much.

Your contribution helps S.A. Harvest to continue working on the issues that will provide millions of South Africans the hope for emancipation from poverty and hunger and a more abundant life.

PLEASE USE ONE OF THESE OPTIONS TO HELP US FEED THE HUNGRY. USE SHAVUOT AS REFERENCE.

1 SNAPSCAN



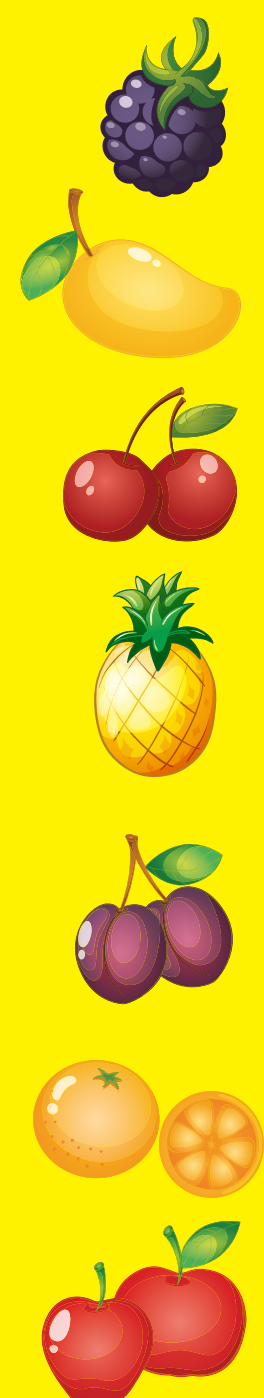
Snap here to donate

SnapScan

2 EFT

S.A. Harvest
FNB
Account Number
62693490478
Branch Number
250655

S.A. Harvest (NPC)
71 Edward Avenue Sandringham, JHB
Company Registration **2016/326676/08**
NPO Number **175-399**
PBO Reference Number **930067670**
WWW.SAHARVEST.ORG
Chairman **Gidon Novick** CEO **Alan Browde**



Doctors debate surgery during COVID-19

TALI FEINBERG

Doctors are experiencing a dramatic drop in appointments, follow-ups, and surgery during the lockdown, and some are urging patients not to avoid getting treatment if circumstances allow it.

In a letter to his patients two weeks ago, gynaecologist and obstetrician Dr Theo Kopenhagen wrote, “Extremely worrying reports from Europe, the United States, and recently South Africa indicate increasing rates of morbidity and mortality not related to COVID-19.

“This phenomenon results from the frantic efforts of doctors involved in managing the pandemic on the one hand, and patients staying away from doctors, clinics, and hospitals for fear of the virus on the other. Consequently, there’s a deterioration in – or increased mortality from – cardiovascular disease [heart attacks], strokes, metabolic disease [diabetes, etc], and missed diagnoses of early cancer and other diseases.”

In his practice, fewer women are coming for appointments. These include women who have chronic conditions, women requiring assessment for suspicious lesions, masses, or malignancies, and those whose complaints can’t be accurately or safely diagnosed over the phone.

“Doctors have special guidelines and arrangements to ensure the maximum mitigation of viral risk and as little chance as possible of transmission from them or their staff to you or from you to them. If you feel you should be medically checked, there’s no need to be fearful,” he wrote. “A visit to your doctor should be safer than a visit to the supermarket.”

Cape Town orthopaedic surgeon Dr Jason Crane says that in his practice, “Patients should be seen initially, then two weeks later, and then usually every six weeks for six months, to ensure that nothing is

missed and that they are healing according to plan. I want to pick up any complications early.

“Unfortunately 50% of patients – especially the elderly – are terrified to come to the hospital or go for X-rays as they are concerned about coronavirus. I’ve also noticed that a further 10% cancel the day before the follow-up appointment out of fear of COVID-19.”

He usually sees between 10 to 15 new patients a week, “but I’m now seeing only five new patients a week. If injuries or deformities are seen early enough, they can be treated with the correct conservative therapy or occasionally minor surgery. As patients start waiting longer, the injury or deformity worsens, it’s no longer amenable to conservative therapy, can start affecting other body parts, and can lead to permanent pain and suffering.”

In terms of surgery, “There is definitely a 50% drop in new patients that have booked surgery. These patients need surgery, but have elected to wait until the coronavirus settles down rather than have surgery now. This could take as long as 18 months according to some scientists’ estimations.”

“A hospital is probably one of the safest places to be. Infrastructure and infection control protocols have always been in place,” Crane says. “However, high-risk patients with non-urgent problems should consider a telephonic consultation. If it’s an urgent problem such as a fracture or a cardiac issue, then they should still attend the doctor and adhere strictly to all COVID-19 protocols.

“If the patient needs surgery, and waiting will make the condition worse or permanent, then I would advise the patient to go ahead with surgery. If I suddenly needed surgery now, I would go ahead with it.”

Even after 26 people tested positive for

coronavirus at the hospital where he practices, he wouldn’t change this advice. “The fact that the hospital shut down for a week shows that it has the staff and public’s best interests at heart, and re-opened when it was safe for all concerned.”

with minor surgery for grommets (ear tubes) for her 17-month-old son. “The procedure was necessary. We didn’t want him to have further complications with his ears or hearing loss, and the hospital managed everything perfectly. I felt safe and secure.

I’m happy we’ve done it, our child is perfectly fine, and we’ve done all that we can for his health.”

A 61-year-old Jewish woman chose to go ahead with minor laparoscopic surgery during lockdown. She could have waited a few weeks, but she would have had to be on antibiotics and strong painkillers until then. Her doctor advised her to go ahead as soon as possible as hospitals could fill up as the virus reaches its peak and at the time, the hospital was still quiet.

She had a coronavirus test two days before surgery, and was assured all staff were similarly



However, a doctor in the Cape, speaking on condition of anonymity, says he has chosen not to do non-emergency surgeries because of the high incidence of COVID-19 in the province. He says he is seeing only about 10% of patients, but feels the loss of income is less important than patients possibly putting themselves at risk. At the same time, he urges people to make appointments if they feel it’s urgent. He has already seen one patient during lockdown that had a minor complaint that turned out to be cancer and should have been seen sooner.

A Jewish mother says she chose to go ahead

being tested. “Being admitted was quite a surreal experience. There was a huge amount of paperwork, the test, taking temperatures, and providing lists of contacts,” she says.

In theatre, the doctors and staff were in full personal protective equipment. “My anaesthetist looked like an astronaut,” she says. She was in her own ward with no other patients in that corridor. “It was incredibly quiet, everything was sanitised. It’s difficult not to have visitors, but I felt reassured and grateful that I chose to have the surgery when I did.”

Habonim gets 90th anniversary started online

TALI FEINBERG

More than a year ago, former members of the Habonim Dror Southern Africa youth movement began to plan for the organisation’s 90th birthday event. Titled HABO2020, the celebrations were to be held in Israel in October. Hundreds of former movement members from around the globe and across different generations were planning to gather for the reunion.

The celebrations were meant to begin with Kaleidoscope, a five-day multi-dimensional exploration of Israel, engaging with the brightest minds and most important personalities in the Jewish state. This was to be followed by a two-day Habonim Ultimate Gathering (HUG), “celebrating yesterday, today, and tomorrow. A combination of fun, debate, and meeting old friends in the true spirit of the movement,” says Stephen Pincus, who heads the HABO2020 committee and created Kaleidoscope, which has run several successful programmes over the past five years.

But then, the coronavirus hit, and everything changed. “The 90th birthday celebrations are under review. We hope to announce what will happen by 15 July,” says Dave Bloom, one of the event organisers.

South Africa’s Habonim *manhig* (senior advisor) Errol Anstey says that Norman Lourie started Habonim in Southern Africa in 1930 on his return from the

United Kingdom, where Habonim had started the previous year. “But the first formal meeting of 12 boys was actually held in Doornfontein in March 1931, so the 90th anniversary starts in 2020, and continues through to 2021.”

So what’s a movement to do when its reunion is uncertain? It goes online. Soon after the coronavirus crisis broke, the HABO2020 committee formulated a new plan: a weekly, free, virtual gathering of former and current Habonim *chaverim* (members) from around the world. A presenter would be chosen from the plethora of former Habonim members that are leaders in their field, and anyone could share photos, reminisces, even jokes and skits that they might have performed aside a campfire many years ago. Along with Pincus, Anstey and Bloom, Mark Kedem and Felicity Swerdlow have played a vital role.

Titled *Habonim Engaging in Dialogue* (HED), 188 people registered for the first webinar on 29 March. There are currently over 700 people registered, with an average of 350 people attending each session. A recent panel, with expert doctors who are former Habonim members, had 403 registrations.

Dr Alan Rabinowitz (Vancouver),

Dr Leon Fine (Los Angeles), Dr Jonny Broomberg (Johannesburg), Dr Brian Fredman (Israel), Dr Sean Wasserman (Cape Town), Dr Val Mizrahi (Cape Town), and Dr John Abeles (United States) shared their experiences of the coronavirus crisis. Many have played a key role in their country’s response to the pandemic.

“We looked at ways to maintain the momentum and interest of



A HED (Habonim Engaging in Dialogue) gathering

HABO2020 and at the same time, to build towards the event in the future. These weekly events are proving a great success, and those who were ‘borderline’ participants in the reunion are now more than likely to attend having tasted the kind of *tochniet* [programmes] we would be running on Kaleidoscope,” says Anstey.

“It’s been quite serendipitous, allowing us to extend the 90th anniversary celebrations,” says Bloom. “Even though it’s virtual, it allows people to come together as a community with a common

background. We will build on that when we do have our reunion. There are so many interesting stories to tell, and some people have said it reminds them of the Sunday evening Habonim meetings that they attended long ago.”

When it comes to choosing presenters, “Many past *chaverim* have submitted proposals to present in their fields. We have drawn up a list of topics we would like to explore, and approached past *chaverim* who we think would be good at delivering a high-impact talk. We are also mixing young and old to maintain interest across a large age band,” says Anstey. The organisation is inviting any past Habonim members to take part as presenters or listeners.

“When you look at the 350-plus participants, you see the cream of South African Habonim graduates who have all reached the pinnacle of their career life paths,” says Anstey. “From the *chalutzik* [pioneering] Zionists who literally built Israel, to leaders in education, health, community, politics, and business, they are all using the unique skills they gained at Habonim as *madrichim* over the years.”

The HED gatherings have also been an opportunity for

introspection. Karla Green Dana’s recent presentation on ‘When Habonim realised it had a gender problem’ provided a chance for members to look at their time in the movement with a new lens, and review how much it has changed in recent years, as female leadership has been prioritised.

A discussion on Sunday 17 May saw a panel of *chaverim* speak about Israel’s new unity government and where the country is heading economically and politically.

When it comes to the 90th anniversary celebrations in South Africa, “fortunately, these were still in the planning stages, so we are waiting to see what the world looks like and whether we are continuing”, says Nina Reitenberg, the current *mazkira klali* (secretary general) of the movement. “Right now, we are focusing our efforts on campaigning and promoting our HED talks.”

Ten Habonim members are currently on the movement’s gap year in Israel. Reitenberg says they are still in lockdown at the Machon programme on Kiryat Moriah in Jerusalem. “They have busy days with online classes, *peulot* [activities] and virtual meetings. They are doing well, but are hoping to be able to continue their normal programme soon.”

• To register for free HED talks and keep up to date with Habonim’s 90th celebrations, join the Facebook group HABO2020.

From Sweden, with love

TALI FEINBERG

A small social-media campaign to assist the hungry in South Africa started by a woman living in Sweden has resulted in R54 000 being raised in six days. This will feed 114 families suffering as a result of the dire economy under the coronavirus lockdown.

Ex-Capetonian Aviva-Liora La Torre Ek (nee Moses) is 32 years old and lives in Stockholm, Sweden, with her husband and two children. She moved there from South Africa in 2015, and works as a language teacher. She used to work in media liaison at the South African Jewish Board of Deputies.

La Torre Ek says she was motivated to start a fundraiser, “As I had been having sleepless nights about the situation at home for weeks. The thought of children

starving on a daily basis was just too much for me as a mother and a human being. It was unbearable. So I finally sprang into action.

“On a Thursday afternoon [7 May], I posted a fundraiser on Facebook, explaining what was going on at home, and that I wanted to support organisations that are able to actually feed people. I set out with the goal of raising 1 000 Swedish Kroner (SEK), as I calculated that I would be able to feed five families of four for half a month. To be able to make a difference, even for just a few people, would be something.”

She chose to channel the donations to the Angel Network. “I had been looking for an organisation to donate to, and I saw the Angel Network’s posts on Facebook. I thought that the food-aid parcels it was offering together with All About Food was a fantastic idea.

It was a cause that I really wanted to support.”

Her single post on Facebook quickly became something much bigger. “Within the first 15 minutes, I had obtained that 1 000 SEK. By the next morning, I had more than R10 000. Seventy two hours later, I had R17 500. I was completely floored,” she says.

“I decided to post a video to see if I could get to a target of R30 000. That way, I would be able to feed about 65 families. I contacted friends in Sweden and all around the world who all shared my post on their Facebook pages, and the response was astounding. Within one hour of posting the

video, I had reached the target of R30 000. I just couldn’t believe it.

“By the time I closed the fundraiser the next day, six days after I started, I had raised R54 000. The gratitude I feel for all the incredible people around the world can’t be expressed adequately. They have saved lives and fed families for almost three weeks. Thanks to them, I’m able to send the Angel Network enough money to buy 20 blankets for the needy and feed 114 families. That’s 456 people! I couldn’t have imagined this would be possible. I’m profoundly humbled,” she says.

For a fundraiser first supported by friends and family, the reach has been phenomenal. “One of the most extraordinary things was that out of the 110 donors, half were people I don’t know,” says La Torre Ek. “They came from all around Sweden and as far as Argentina, Singapore, and Azerbaijan!”

A large portion of the donation came from Swedes. Asked why she thinks they donated so generously to people so far away, she says, “Swedes are extraordinarily giving, specifically when it comes to causes where children are concerned.”

Others helped spread the word. For example, “One of my friends had been growing seedlings, and she posted on Facebook that if anyone wanted one of her exotic seedlings, they could make a donation to my cause. One woman donated 1 000 SEK! The Swedish Union of Jewish Students donated almost R10 000 as it identified with my cause. I feel so humbled, as this wasn’t even a Swedish fundraiser. It really gives meaning to *tikkun olam* [healing the world].

“There aren’t enough words to describe how something like this makes you feel,” she says. “I want people to see that anybody can make

a difference, no matter where they are in the world. There is a bounty of compassion. This really shone through. People who had little still wanted to donate because they know that every little bit counts. I’m so thankful for every individual who contributed.”

La Torre Ek has a passion for fundraising, and is studying the subject through the University of California. “I have a real love of philanthropy. I want to dedicate my life to it,” she says.

Turning to Sweden’s unique management of the coronavirus crisis, La Torre Ek says: “It’s a very interesting set-up here. The Swedish health agency issued a set of recommendations for Swedish society to follow, including social distancing and minimal contact with the elderly, no congregating in big groups, and so on. There has never been a lockdown here, and primary and nursery schools have remained open. High schools and universities moved to distance learning.

“The government has made it a priority to keep the healthcare system stable and functioning, to keep the economy stable, and to keep schools open so that healthcare professionals and all essential workers can still do their jobs. So far, society is functioning, and people follow the rules. Will this strategy work compared to the lockdowns? Everything has its positives and negatives. We will be able to tell only with time.”

She concludes: “I’m only one of many doing their part to help those who can’t help themselves right now. I believe in the spirit of ‘ubuntu’, and it’s important for people to understand that you can make a difference, regardless of how old you are, where you are, or how much or little you have. Each individual contributes to raising hope in society.”



Aviva-Liora La Torre Ek

HASMONEAN MULTI-ACADEMY TRUST

Menahel(es) – Hasmonean High School for Girls

Salary: Attractive remuneration package | **Start date:** September 2020 / ASAP | **Contract term:** full-time, permanent

Summary:
For decades, Hasmonean High School for Girls, as part of Hasmonean High School, has been one of the leading Orthodox Jewish schools in Europe; it has also been consistently ranked amongst the top non-selective comprehensive schools in the UK. Excelling in both Kodesh and secular studies, it has been praised by a number of government bodies and cabinet members in recent years.

As a community school, Hasmonean aims to serve a broad range of Torah observant community members. The formal Kodesh provision at the school consists of a framework for 11-16 year olds as well as a sixth form framework for 16-18 year olds known as the Midrasha which aims to prepare the students for seminary. There is additional significant informal Kodesh provision throughout the school.

For the first time, a pivotal role of Menahel(es) has been created for the Girls’ school to help maintain and enhance the school’s position as an engine room for the Orthodox community in the UK.

As Menahel(es), the successful candidate will ensure the centrality of the principle of *Torah im Derech Eretz* throughout the school, and promote it throughout the wider community. S/he will be responsible for the spiritual and emotional well-being of girls at the school.

The Menahel(es) will have an overall responsibility for the Kodesh provision in the whole school, and will be ultimately responsible for the Midrasha being a flagship component of the school.

The successful candidate will inspire the girls toward a passion for living as Torah observant women, contributing to their broader communities, through their own passion and commitment to Torah values.

We are looking for an individual that will have extensive experience educating a wide range of students from different *hashkafic* backgrounds, and with differing academic abilities and interests. The candidate must have a strong background in analytic and textual skills in order

to significantly raise the standard of Kodesh provision in the Midrasha, creating an atmosphere of excellence, while understanding individual student’s requisites to succeed.

It is essential that the right candidate has a creative and innovative approach, which inspires and motivates students to achieve their spiritual, emotional, and interpersonal potential, as well as having excellent interpersonal skills to manage a significant team of teachers and staff.

The role is varied and demanding and, as such, requires an individual with wisdom, inner strength, commitment and above all, integrity.

This role provides an exceptional opportunity to a make a tremendous impact on the future of Girls’ Jewish education. Our graduates will become the leaders of the UK and wider global community, and your pioneering and innovative approach to Jewish education will ensure that they are given a solid foundation upon which to build this future.

Visit our website: www.hasmoneanmat.org.uk for more information about the school.

Hasmonean offers childcare facilities for all staff at our on-site facilities.

An application form and job description are available on our website, or from Ms J Grant | Email: j.grant@hasmonean.co.uk

Closing date for applications: Monday, 15th June 2020

The appointment is subject to an enhanced DBS clearance.
The school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people.

Is there still a left wing in Israeli politics?

JORDAN MOSHE

If the left wing in Israel wants to revive itself, it will need to decide what it stands for and include the groups it has hitherto marginalised.

So says Dahlia Scheindlin, a political consultant, who on 31 May explored the history of Israel’s Zionist left wing and labour parties in an attempt to explain why they fared so poorly in recent elections. Scheindlin was taking part in eLimmud, an online Zoom conference hosted by Limmud South Africa.

“In other countries, left and right refer to a liberal-conservative divide,” she said. “In Israel, like most things, it’s more complicated. It can mean socialist, agrarian, egalitarian, liberal, individualist, free market, and several other things.”

Scheindlin has applied her political savvy to Israeli campaigns, the last being in 1999 when the left won the election for the last time. This point marked a considerable decline, she said, but it wasn’t the beginning of the downturn.

“The total number of elections won by the left has been on the decline since the 1980s,” she said. “It didn’t start when Netanyahu won the election in 2009, it goes back about 27 years.”

In this year’s March elections, the Zionist left-wing party received only seven seats in the Knesset, a historic low. However, prior to 1977, Labour and its predecessors won all elections in Israel from the first election in 1949, though no one party achieved an outright majority. Still, Labour on its own had sufficient numbers to lead coalitions for some time.

The subsequent decline has, in part, to do with public opinion, Scheindlin said.

“After the disengagement from Gaza, the right wing climbed upwards. Considering the



Israeli-Arab population as well, just less than half of the population considers itself right wing.” This while centre and left identification together account for 44%, of which only 12% is strictly leftist.

Scheindlin stressed, however, that the long-term reason for the decline lies in the deeper contradictions of what the Zionist left stood for over a course of decades.

“It has to do with the tension in Israeli society in defining the country as both Jewish and democratic,” she said. “That overlaps with questions regarding borders and population inclusion.

“During the early years, being Jewish and democratic was basic to the ruling labour ideology. But the problem was that Jews were only about 30% of the population.”

Under the leftist government, large numbers of Arabs were marginalised in order to promote Jewish sovereignty, contradicting the left’s inclusivity. Systems were created to suppress those Arabs who remained and to forget their history in order to advance Jewish and democratic interests, Scheindlin said.

The same contradiction was true even amongst Jews.

“The social ethos adopted by the left went into the building of the Israeli economy. Arabs were already excluded [they were later integrated slowly], but early Zionist leaders treated Mizrahi Jews arriving from the East as underclass citizens, socially and economically.”

Although the socially and economically marginalised groups would eventually topple the left at the polls, the Labour government remained in power because of surrounding factors which no longer exist today. These included the control of the media by the left as well as the fact that the labour federation owned the health cooperatives.

Although it has shifted from socialist ethics to liberal ones, and embraced the idea of land for peace, the left must engage with those it marginalised previously if it’s to be revived, Scheindlin says.

The annoying red-headed man who revived Hebrew

JORDAN MOSHE

Eliezer Ben-Yehuda was the driving force behind the revival of the Hebrew language in the modern era. His great-great grandson, Gil Hovav, talked to South African eLimmudniks about this controversial genius lexicographer whose legacy still divides opinions among Israelis today.

“He was a short, annoying, red-headed person, lacking any sense of humour, who was very sensitive about his dignity,” said Hovav about Ben-Yehuda while addressing a Zoom audience at eLimmud on Sunday, 31 May.

“Even 100 years after he died, ultra-Orthodox people find the time to get up in the middle of the night, go up the Mount of Olives, break into my family’s burial plot, and desecrate his grave. On the other hand, UNESCO [the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation] declared him one of Western civilization’s greatest cultural figures,” Hovav said.

“What is it that keeps him alive almost a century since he passed away?”

Ben-Yehuda was born Lazer Perlman in Lithuania in 1858 to a poor traditional Jewish family. Raised with four other siblings by his mother after his father died, he was sent away to live with a distant uncle with better means to raise him. Perlman was enrolled in the local cheder, and it was here that the future lexicographer was first exposed to the beauty of Hebrew.

“This is the middle of the 19th century,” said Hovav. “Hebrew is totally dead. For 2 000 years, not a single person has spoken it as a mother tongue. Some scholars toy with it, and Jews pray in Hebrew but often don’t understand it. It was like Latin is today.”

Young Perlman clandestinely learned the language under the tutelage of a rabbi, his first Hebrew text being a loose translation of the classic, Robinson Crusoe. He falls quickly in love with language and tries to get hold of any other Hebrew books he can find. Unfortunately, his passion is discovered, and

he is booted from his adoptive home by an enraged uncle who finds the use of Hebrew for anything other than religious study abominable.

“It’s winter in Eastern Europe,” said Hovav. “This young boy has no family, no home. He walks east, hoping to get to Moscow. He depends on the hospitality of kind people as he goes, and here starts a chain of miracles that follow this 17-year-old on his journey.”

Discovered resting in a shul pew, Perlman is offered the job of tutor to the children of Shlomo Yonas, a wealthy vodka manufacturer for the tsar. A year later, the young tutor reveals to his employer that he has been having an affair with the man’s eldest daughter, Devora, and intends to marry her. Moreover, the couple intend to relocate to Palestine, then ruled by a failing Ottoman empire. Their goal? To teach the locals Hebrew.

“In today’s terms, it’s as if someone would come to you and say, ‘I’m having a forbidden romance with your daughter,’” he said. “‘I’m going to marry her; I’m going with her to Rwanda where we will teach everybody to speak Latin.’ Very logical, right?”

Yonas actually approves of the plan, but offers first to send Perlman (at his own expense) to Paris to study medicine. Perlman accepts the offer, but in spite of travelling to Paris, never sets a foot in medical school, ends up contracting tuberculosis, and is sent to recover in Alegria.

Here he meets a Sephardi Jew from Jerusalem, hearing Hebrew for the first time spoken in a Sephardi accent. “Perlman believes that this is what Hebrew should sound like, and determines to pursue the revival of the Hebrew language in its own country,” said Hovav.

In spite of letting his fiancé know that he has no expectation that she will follow him, she promptly joins him in Paris and the couple set off for Palestine, getting married along the way in Alexandria, Egypt. Immediately upon arrival in Jaffa in 1881, Perlman changes his name to Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, arranges

Why TV series *Fauda* is a hit with Jews and Arabs

JORDAN MOSHE

Hit Israeli television series *Fauda* has taken the world by storm, its depiction of the Palestinian-Israeli conflict gripping millions of viewers around the world. Beyond the drama, however, journalist Ittay Flescher believes it opens our eyes, and forces us to confront discomfoting truths.

“*Fauda* brings to the fore many things that we may know about but don’t really internalise,” said Flescher, a freelance journalist and educator based in Jerusalem, who spoke at the eLimmud conference on Sunday, 31 May.

“There are times when you see both Palestinians and Israelis as victims of horrible acts of violence.”

Now in its third season, *Fauda* (Arabic for chaos) has captured the minds of viewers everywhere.

“Israel is in a golden age of television, and *Fauda* is by far one of the most successful Israeli TV series ever made in terms of number of viewers,” Flescher said.

However, the series wasn’t too popular when it piloted five years ago. Two leading Israeli television stations showed little interest in the idea, rejecting it on the basis that it wasn’t fit for entertainment.

“They said no one in Israel would want to watch anything about this conflict – we live it every day,” Flescher said. “Why would anyone want to see it on TV for entertainment? However, it was eventually taken up by the Israeli station YES, and subsequently by Netflix when it went global.”

Even then, it wasn’t clear that it would prove successful. Flescher said that even before *Fauda* hit the screen, its marketing made the Israeli public feel uncomfortable. Black signs with Arabic writing and no Hebrew translation appeared across the country, and though they promoted the upcoming series, they were taken down after they upset many Israelis.

“The fact that Israelis got so uncomfortable about just seeing words in the street in Arabic shows you how revolutionary *Fauda* is,” said Flescher. “It’s an Israeli show



primarily in Arabic, in spite of both writers being Israelis.”

Nevertheless, the show proved popular for a variety of reasons. According to Flescher, the first question people discuss when watching *Fauda* is whether Israelis or Arabs suffer more.

“As an Israeli, I almost want Israel to win when I watch,” he said. “But there is also a sense of seeing things I know have happened in the news, but never realised the impact on Palestinian families. *Fauda* brings to your attention a lot of things you know, but perhaps don’t really internalise.”

Flescher unpacked various ethical questions raised by the series, including the issue of targeted assassinations (a key component of *Fauda*), and how it divides Israeli society. Those in favour argue that it reduces risk to Israeli soldiers and that the death toll on the Palestinian side is primarily

caused by the use of human shields. Those against it argue that the method breeds further terror, especially given the high civilian death toll which accompanies each assassination.

Another element raised by the series is how Israeli military units operate.

“A lot of people around the world are fascinated by how the undercover Israeli unit operates,” said Flescher. “When the new season came out about a month ago, it was the top trending show in Lebanon, third in the Arab Emirates, and sixth in Jordan.

“People don’t want to know about the unit because they’re Zionists or approve of the Israel Defense Forces. Some watch it because they think it can help them to understand the enemy, others because it’s gripping drama. To others, it’s hard to imagine it actually happens.”

they spoke in any language but Hebrew. He insisted his children speak only Hebrew, and his eldest son, Itamar, became the first child to speak Hebrew as a mother tongue in 2 000 years. He would go on to become Hovav’s grandfather.

“In some ways, Ben-Yehuda was a prophet,” Hovav said. “I never met Eliezer – he died forty years before I was born – but I met other kids of his. They all admired him, but told me that his wife always thanked G-d for the privilege she had to share her life with such a great man.

“We owe him.”

a carriage to convey him and his wife to Jerusalem, and the couple take a vow: from now on, they will never utter another foreign word again. Hovav said that if they lacked a word, they’d find a way to describe it, and if either of them used a foreign word, the other had the right to pinch them.

He promoted this vision across the country. To foster the use of Hebrew, Ben-Yehuda founded two rival newspapers; encouraged the inclusion of Hebrew instruction in playschools (creating all the material himself); and even urged children to prick their parents in the backside with needles if

Letters

RAMAPHOSA'S COUNCIL OF ADVISORS A DUBIOUS BUNCH

In your editorial, “Hasty decisions could endanger lives”, in the 29 May edition of the *SA Jewish Report*, you ask why President Cyril Ramaphosa ignored sensible advice from experts about reopening shuls, churches, and temples in spite of the real possibility of COVID-19 infections rocketing even higher.

Ramaphosa has appointed a dubious cast of characters to the National Command Council, many of them leftovers from the Gupta days: Police Minister Bheki Cele, who was investigated by former Public Protector Thuli Madonsela over leases with his pal Roux Shabangu; Trade and

Industry Minister Ebrahim Patel, a high ranking member of the South African Communist Party, which isn’t a crime. However, the restrictions he imposed starting from level five border on the criminal, and in level three, the regulations as laid down in the Government Gazette are still incomprehensible. Google CoGTA (Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs), to see how bizarre they really are.

Then there’s former President Jacob Zuma’s ex-wife, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma (NDZ), the minister of cooperative government and traditional affairs. When she was in Thabo Mbeki’s cabinet, her

Sarafina 2 debacle cost millions of rand; and she was the one who punted Virodene as the cure for HIV/AIDS – this from a medical doctor! Apparently she, like her ex-husband, doesn’t understand big figures. Which is why she thinks that 2 000 signatures upholding the cigarette ban is more than the 400 000 signatures on a petition asking for cigarette sales to be allowed.

To give her credit, the only decent thing she has done is to ban smoking in public places, along with her successor, Aaron Motsoaledi, under whose watch the Life Esidimeni tragedy occurred. Now he’s home

affairs minister. Basic Education Minister Angie Motshekga is still responsible for the many pit latrines at schools, and she can’t even deliver text books on time. So, how would she have ensured that every school was deep cleaned before the planned reopening on 1 June? These are the people giving Ramaphosa advice.

In spite of his grave demeanour, which you can practise in front of a mirror, like all political leaders worldwide, Ramaphosa is floundering in the dark when it comes to fighting the pandemic.

– Brian Josselowitz, Cape Town

IF ANTISEMITISM HARMS US, OUR PREJUDICE HARMS OTHERS

Two articles in your 22 May edition of the *SA Jewish Report* refer, the front-page article, “SA woman’s antisemitic outburst shocks SA Jewry”, and the editorial, “The dark underbelly of antisemitism”.

Your front-page story is shocking. I hope that this woman is found guilty of hate speech. Your editorial confirms how the majority of Jews, no doubt, feel about antisemitism.

The *SA Jewish Report* does a sterling job in keeping us updated regarding attacks against us.

Many of us have over decades attempted to stamp this out or at least point out to the ignorant how harmful it can be.

Sadly, my experience over many years of living in the major cities is that while we protect our Jewish identity at every possible opportunity – correctly so – the opposite doesn’t apply.

We are quick to attack anybody showing any antisemitic tendencies, but don’t practice the same principle when it comes to people of other faiths or races.

You articulately ended your column by urging all of us to make sure that we set an example as “we cannot point fingers at others if we don’t practise what we preach”.

Those derogatory terms we use to describe people of other faiths and races – we all know what these are – from where did they come? Did we learn them from our parents? Why do we use these ugly terms? Do we realise that we are hurting people by referring to them by these names?

Are we that insensitive, that it’s not okay to be referred to using the derogatory terms people use for Jews, but it doesn’t apply the other way around?

We need to teach our children that this isn’t okay, and just because their peers talk like this, it doesn’t make it right.

Our shuls need to tell the older generation that it’s not okay. After all, they are the ones from whom our kids learnt to talk like this. Our religious leaders have a responsibility to try to discourage this kind of language.

Thankfully, the younger generation born in the new South Africa are generally not guilty of this, so there’s still hope.

– Brian Sacks, Cape Town


BRING BACK PRINTED COPIES OF THE SA JEWISH REPORT

The online publication of the *SA Jewish Report* (29 May 2020) is a flop.

When I receive the *SA Jewish Report*, I use it to relax and read practically every article. As I spend most days on a computer, I prefer not to do so on Shabbos and holidays. In addition, as I’m able to pick the articles I intend to read, I missed many articles I would normally read.

So bring back our printed copy, the sooner the better!

– Meyer Blumenau, Johannesburg



Free advertising for small local businesses:

Are you a small local business with a turnover of less than R10 million per annum? Has your business been negatively impacted by COVID-19?

We are here to help!!

We are offering you **FREE** advertising space on our impactful digital billboards targeting some of our country’s busiest roads.




We want to help our small neighbourhood businesses (Sandton, Bryanston, Fourways and surrounding areas) get back on their feet as quickly as possible!!

Businesses with a turnover of between R10 million and R100 million will receive a discount of 60% on our normal rates

Available to Jewish Report readers until 7 June 2020

Contact us for more information: jr@yoohmedia.co.za

Terms and conditions apply



Schools unlock in the face of COVID-19

Most Jewish schools opened their doors this week to Grade 7s and 12s, but it appears to be a completely new chapter. Scholars, donned in masks and regularly sanitising their hands, arrived to have their temperature taken and remain two metres from anyone all day. And that's not all ... Ilan Ossendryver (and the schools' own photographers) capture history this week.



World ORT ‘more important than ever’ as it turns 140

“Celebrating 140 years of one of the largest global educational nongovernmental organisations is a significant milestone, especially in light of the COVID-19 crisis,” said Ariellah Rosenberg, the chief executive of ORT South Africa.

Rosenberg commented as World ORT marked its 140th anniversary with a general assembly and the election of lay leadership for the next four years.

The organisation, which transforms lives through education, now reaches 300 000 people in more than 30 countries every year. ORT combines high-level science and technology education with strengthened Jewish identity, bridging the gap between ability and opportunity.

Rosenberg said ORT SA was proud to be part of an organisation that had evolved and endured for more than a century, and continued to have an impact on people's lives.

The organisation planned to hold a series of celebrations in Jerusalem this week to commemorate its special anniversary, but they were postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. More than 300 people from dozens of countries

including the United States, Israel, Mexico, Brazil, Argentina, Russia, South Africa, and across Europe joined the online session.

Keynote speaker, William Daroff, the chief executive of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations, told the assembly that COVID-19 had placed global Jewry in uncharted and unpredictable territory. But, “We are adapting,” Daroff said.

“The ORT network knows this well, as you successfully meet the challenge of providing outstanding education and supporting vulnerable young people, teachers, and families as they grapple with the devastating impact of the virus and beyond.

“You are incredibly well-situated to help lead our community as it grapples with providing new remote learning opportunities.”

Dr Conrad Giles, who was re-elected World ORT president for a second four-year term, said the years since 2016 had contained “many challenges – and we have met them”. Giles, a prominent paediatric ophthalmologist based in Michigan in the US, said, “Our mission has never changed. For 140 years ORT has been at the heart of education around the world.”

Dan Green, World ORT acting director general and chief executive, said, “Providing quality education for our students is great, but it means little if we aren't also moulding them into good people with strong collective values and enthusiasm to use their education for the greater good. The current crisis has only highlighted how important this is and therefore how crucial our role is.”

Participants watched a trailer for a film in production to celebrate ORT's 140th anniversary that will chronicle 140 years of the power of education across the globe.

Three new officers were elected to the top team. Robert Singer, who was World ORT director general and chief executive for 14 years prior to his most recent role as chief executive of the World Jewish Congress, returns to ORT as chairperson of the board of trustees.

“There are few Jewish organisations that have existed for so long, survived two world wars, and achieved so much,” Singer said. “We live in a world with a fast-changing job market, and this is why ORT is more relevant than ever, because we are a hub of new ideas, innovation, and adaptability, preparing young people for the world of work.”

Alon Schuster, who was appointed Israel's new agriculture minister last week, stepped down as a trustee.



Anniversary of a lockdown celebration



Maish and Lorraine Reznik celebrated their 60th anniversary on the first day of lockdown. Ironically, 60 years ago in March, following the Sharpeville Massacre, South Africa was similarly in turmoil, and the Rezniks had to get permission from a magistrate to get married. Three days after their 60th anniversary, they got the news that they had become great grandparents to a beautiful little girl in San Diego. The photo was taken two years ago at their grandson's San Diego wedding.

It’s not complicated – I can’t breathe

Every now and then we need to feel blind rage. Every now and then we need to set aside political affiliation, religious adherence, and historical context and just feel overwhelming uncomplicated horror, grief, and devastation.

Every now and then, we need simply to feel for a man we didn’t know, who lived halfway around the world, and who was murdered in the cruelest manner while he begged for his life.

“I can’t breathe.”

There is no nuance that surrounds the death of George Floyd. There is no claim that the police thought he was armed, that he was endangering anyone, or that he was about to escape from custody. There is no doubting the cause of death in the autopsy. And there is no doubting that the police officer who had him on the ground with his knee pressed into his neck heard him as he pleaded to live.

“I can’t breathe.”

The outrage that followed the death of George Floyd should be felt by all of us, even if the American police force isn’t our own, even if we have never been to the United States, and even if we have a multitude of problems to deal with in an imperfect country. The outrage should be ours even if we are white, while he is black, even if we are Jewish, and he isn’t. And even if we can think of examples of times when no one cared when “one of ours” was targeted.

The outrage should be ours even if we don’t like some of the behaviour of the protestors, and even if we are suspicious and distrustful of Antifa. It should be ours because we are human, and failing to feel

INNER VOICE

Howard Feldman



for another person is to lack humanity.

“I can’t breathe.”

The death of George Floyd ignited the reaction that it did because it was about so much more than one evil man and his victim. It sparked the rage that it did because finally, it presented an unambiguous example of what many have been feeling and claiming for so long: racism exists, and it’s deadly.

It might be true that Jews are targeted in antisemitic attacks and that the reaction is often subdued. It might be true that many turn a blind eye when acts of terror are carried out against Jews in Israel. And it might be true that very few seem to care that the same terrorists and their families receive financial reward for their actions. And the more they hurt, the greater the reward.

But it’s not relevant. Because when a man begs for his life while another stands above him and crushes him because he’s black, there’s no amount of rationalisation that should allow us to be able to “think” away the pain that we should feel.

And when the rage spills over, we don’t need to agree or like everything about it. So long as we don’t forget what ignited it in the first place.

“I can’t breathe.”

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Don’t relax your guard

As much as the country’s move to level-three lockdown is to be welcomed, it’s critical to understand that returning to work doesn’t mean going back to normal. It has to be accepted, unfortunately, that “normal” as we understood it pre-COVID-19 won’t be restored for a long while. For the foreseeable future, we must continually adapt our behaviour to minimise risk to ourselves and those around us. As always, our day-to-day behaviour should be governed by what the medical experts recommend, and I once again refer you to our COVID-19 Jewish Community Platform to obtain regular, up-to-date medical advice.

One very welcome return to relative normalcy that occurred earlier this week was the repatriation from Israel of 24 South African citizens. As recounted in last week’s column, the board was intrinsically involved in the lengthy and complex process to make this possible, and we were delighted finally to be able to welcome back Sunday’s repatriation flight.

We sincerely thank the department of international relations and cooperation, the National Joint Operational and Intelligence Structure, and the South African Embassy in Israel for all their assistance, and Ethiopian Airlines for bringing the group home. I’m further happy to report that the Cape Town couple who we assisted to travel to Israel on compassionate grounds have since arrived at their destination, and are together with their family at this time of great need.

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

ABOVE BOARD

Shaun Zagnoev



Beyond the COVID-19 threat, there is a need to remain vigilant against a possible backlash against our own community. As was all but inevitable, it wasn’t long before the pandemic began spawning all kinds of crass antisemitic conspiracy theories the world over. The Board has kept a careful eye on local developments, and can report that in South Africa at least, such ideas fortunately haven’t gained major traction.

That being said, we have been called upon to address a number of attacks motivated by antisemitism that have come to our attention over the past couple of weeks. One is the matter of a Pretoria woman who recently posted a series of blatantly antisemitic messages on her Instagram page. As reported elsewhere in this issue, the Board last week laid a criminal charge against the perpetrator, who far from expressing remorse for her actions, has insisted on her right to continue propagating “the truth” as she sees it. As our media release on the matter pointed out, racist and inflammatory rhetoric of this nature isn’t only criminal, but dangerous, and has to be confronted as strongly as possible, particularly at a time when so many people are already feeling anxious, angry, and frustrated.

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

Worried about your Property in Israel?

Free Property Check-Up

Creative Estates provides professional management services for Investment Properties and Holiday Homes all over Israel, including:

- Recruiting Tenants
- Property Maintenance
- Tax & Accounting
- Rent Collection
- Concierge Services
- Legal Contracts
- Payment of Bills
- Monthly Reporting

Contact us today without obligation
shaun@CEIsrael.com

www.CEIsrael.com



Creative Estates
Israel Property Management Services

AUDIT • ADVISORY • TAX



CLARITY. ORDER. DIRECTION.

Our team of over 1 400 professionals, operating from 7 offices in South Africa, offers a unique combination of local market knowledge coupled with an international network, personal service and a professional approach. We shine a unique lens on clients' businesses to see the people beyond the numbers and establish where they are going.

www.bdo.co.za



© 2019 BDO South Africa Services (Pty) Ltd.

Singing in the surgery

JORDAN MOSHE

It's not only medicine that doctors practise, apparently some also try their hand at singing. General practitioners from across South Africa raised their voices in a unique collaboration, singing for patients as the battle against COVID-19 continues to rage.

Titled *Voices That Care*, the project brought together 30 GPs, each of them contributing to a music video uploaded to YouTube and Facebook on Sunday, 31 May. To date, the video has had almost 40 000 views.

The concept was conceived by Dr Daniel Israel and sponsored by Dis-Chem after he'd seen similar videos online in recent weeks. "I sensed the stress amongst GPs, and wanted to create an outlet through which we could express our goodwill and encourage patients in a creative way," Israel told the *SA Jewish Report*.

"I wasn't sure how we'd surmount the technical obstacles of putting it all together or how we'd make individual recordings. I'd also never heard any of these doctors sing, and wasn't sure how we'd vet them."

Nonetheless, he posed the idea to fellow doctors and the response was resoundingly positive. About 30 practitioners were eager to

put their vocal talents to use. Israel enlisted the help of music production legend Bryan Schimmel, Waverley shul choirmaster Joel Sacher, and musician Johnny Birin to make the idea a reality.

Combining their skills, the production team wrote appropriate musical arrangements and collated the recordings made by participating practitioners.

The chosen song was written in 1991 for American soldiers serving in the war in Iraq, says Schimmel. "Joel auditioned the doctors, and sent me a list of their names and a description of their voices."

"Changing some of the original words, I created a new arrangement, and we sent the doctors their parts to practice."

Each GP then had to record themselves at their practice performing their part.

Schimmel says the project is unique in that it features the doctors in their space. "Many other videos acknowledge medical professionals for what they do," he says. "This one shows them expressing themselves in their own voice."

A project like this is important, Schimmel says. "At this time, people are evaluating what matters. Few of the 30 who participated really knew each other before this, and they said it



Doctors participate in *Voices That Care*
created a sense of unity and reduced stress at this difficult time. It was therapy for them, and they helped others."

The doctors displayed genuine sentiment throughout the project, says Sacher.

"These are 30 of the warmest, most caring people you could meet," he says. "During those interviews and after, each personality came across as a special soul that cares deeply for others and is constantly moved to devote him/herself to the well-being of the public."

He says thousands have expressed on social media how moved they were after viewing the video, even more so if they recognised the doctors they know. "For me, the video is simply overwhelming because I know that the sentiment of every single participant is 100% genuine," he says.

Participating GP, Dr Michael Setzer, says the project was an uplifting opportunity to reach out to doctors and patients alike.

"People are facing tremendous challenges at the moment," he says. "They're strained, they're down and deflated. Dr Israel saw an opportunity to uplift people in a format that reached as many as possible, bringing doctors from a variety of backgrounds together to do something unique."

This wasn't the sort of project Setzer thought he'd ever participate in. "I sing *zemiros* [hymns] at the Shabbos table," he laughs. "That's the extent of it. To film myself singing like this is another matter."

The team agrees that the project underscores the need for unity at a time like this.

"COVID-19 isn't a medical condition," says Setzer. "I see a spiritual disease with a medical outcome. The almighty has sent us a message: the human race is behaving badly, and we need to learn to treat one another with dignity, love, and respect. That's the message of this video."

"Because of this new reality, people are trying much harder to be nicer to each other. Projects like this bring about collaboration, something the world really needs."

1 Long Ave,
Glenhazel

KosherWorld Centre

TRULY KOSHER

NOW OPEN FOR BUSINESS

Start your day with a Jozi Blue coffee

061 747 6340

chabad bookshop

011 440 5224

Your party starts here...

CJS PARTY Shoppe

082 0847794

Feigels

Est. 1968

GRAB & GO

Grab a quick bite or ready-made meal for work or home

**SANDWICHES - SALADS
TRADITIONAL FOOD
BAKERY - COMBOS
& DRINKS**

061 433 0212

The Cleaning Brothers

Cleaning and sanitising of:

- Blankets
- Duvets
- Curtains
- Jackets
- Jerseys
- Childrens & Adults winter garments

011 786 1063

Sushi is happiness in every bite

KOSUSHI

GOURMET FUSION SUSHI

082 086 9631

Montagu

LARGE SELECTION OF DRIED FRUIT, NUTS, SEEDS & SNACKS – IT'S THE HEALTHY WAY

011 440 3239

TRULY KOSHER

KOSHER AT EVERYDAY PRICES

011 440 9517 | info@kosherworld.co.za | www.kosherworld.co.za
Hours: Mon-Thurs 7am-8pm | Fri: 7am-4pm | Sat: CLOSED | Sun: 8am - 8pm

ONLINE ORDERS:

orders@kosherworld.co.za