

# south african Jewish Report


■ September 23 2016 / 20 Elul 5776  
■ Volume 20 - Number 36

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# South African Jewish Report

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# No end in sight for university student fee protests

**VANESSA VALKIN**

In reaction to Higher Education Minister Blade Nzimande's announcements that the universities will have to determine their own fee increases for 2017 (but any increase should not exceed 8 per cent), chaos erupted this week at campuses across the country. By Wednesday morning most of the larger universities had closed their doors and many had bolstered security in the expectation of further violence.

Dani Hovsha, national chairman of the South African Union of Jewish Students (SAUJS), said that she thinks the protests will follow a similar pattern to last year's and that there will be more shutdowns.

When asked how involved she thought Jewish students were in the demonstrations, she said: "I think there are a lot of students who are sympathetic to the concerns but there are very few who are involved. They are put off by the violence and the vandalism and would rather support from the side-lines."

Hovsha who is doing her honours in English and International Relations, says she is concerned about being able to finish her thesis which is due the first week of November. She is also a tutor to first years and there is great concern among them that they will not be prepared for their exams. Students are not allowed to meet off campus for tutorials either.

“There have been warnings not to have seminars off campus,” says Hovsha. “A shut-down is a shut-down and teachers cannot break that, they are saying.”

The University of the Witwatersrand in Johannesburg resembled a war zone on Tuesday as chaos erupted between protesting

‘The best method for this is always non-violent protest and those who insist on violence do damage to the cause as a whole...’

– *Dani Hovsha,*  
*SAUJS Chair*

students and private security officers. The clashes were marked by stone throwing and clouds of smoke from fire extinguishers.

The historic Wits Great Hall was left battered and damaged. On the Library Lawns, many injured protesters received assistance from what appeared to be medical students.

In Cape Town, several hundred protesting University of Cape Town students shut down the campus on Tuesday, calling for their demands to be met.

Hillel Tradonsky, a fifth year accountancy student, said that he has had no classes this week and is just hoping he will be able to write his accounting exams which are scheduled three weeks from now.

“We are seeing a lot of frustration boiling over,” says Tradonsky. “Last year the students had calmed down and thought they were going to sort out the issues. Students were happy with the temporary suspension of fee increases.

"A lot of frustration is aimed at the government but the university seems to be the outlet," says Tradonsky. "It was a complete abdication of responsibility by the Minister of Education."

Hovsha, speaking on behalf of SAUJS, said the Jewish student organisation is opposed to the

violence that has sprung up, but said “government did not take the needs and demands of students seriously and this was the inevitable outcome.

"The best method for this is always non-violent protest and those who insist on violence do damage to the cause as a whole; I hope it will continue in a reasonable spirit, which is safe and inclusive for all," she said.

Jewish students at the University of Johannesburg were not affected because it was a holiday week for them. University of Pretoria, which also has a small Jewish student population, said that classes would continue but according to reports given to SAUJS, it would be very difficult to keep classes going.

## Students clash with security outside Wits Great Hall.



# Heritage Day falls on Shabbat this year

**SUZANNE BELLING**

Heritage Day, which celebrates South African cultural diversity, falls this year on Saturday, September 24. Unfortunately - for observant Jews - it precludes the traditional braais held across the country.

Usually on this day, South Africans across the spectrum are encouraged to display their culture and traditions. This is in the wider context of a nation that belongs to all its people.

Wendy Kahn, national director of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies told Jewish Report: "Unfortunately Heritage Day is on Shabbat so we can't participate in the Heritage Day carnival as we did last year."

However, she said: "We are concentrating more on Heritage month with the 175-year exhibition [of SA Jewry] that was opened in Cape Town."

Dr Dave Kaplan, who has rooms in

Lyndhurst, says the schools in the neighbourhood usually mark Heritage Day on the Friday before the weekend.

"I just love that my little patients go to school in their traditional dress - Pedi, Zulu, North Sotho and Xhosa. That is what we need in this country – a little bit of good stuff."

Kaplan said he would like to see Jewish children, too, in appropriate dress. They could wear yarmies, tzitzit, or even a tallit or tefillin. That is celebrating our Jewishness."

Heritage Day is also known in certain circles as National Braai Day – not originally intended as such but the braaing came about from a 2005 media campaign.

Also, it was not originally intended to be an official South African public holiday. However, the Inkatha Freedom Party, with a predominantly Zulu membership,

refused to sign the Public Holiday's Bill that was being presented to Parliament because it omitted Shaka Day. A concession was later made to commemorate that day devoted to the famed Zulu king.

As Shaka was responsible for uniting the various Zulu factions into a nation, Heritage Day (appointed in place of the day commemorating the king) calls on South Africans to unite and also celebrate the diversity of culture of the "Rainbow Nation".

As Nelson Mandela the iconic president of the first democratically-elected government of South Africa said in a Heritage Day speech: “When our first democratically-elected government decided to make Heritage Day one of our national days, we did so because we knew that our rich and varied cultural heritage has a profound power to help build our new nation.”



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# First fruits and learning to say ‘thank you’



Parshat Ki Tavo  
**Rabbi Chaim Willis**  
**Aish Hatorah**

When I was younger, I did a lot of travelling in Asia. Every country had its fruit - durians, papayas, mangoes, litchis. They were all delicious, different, and interesting (in the US of those days, tropical fruit wasn’t as available as it is now). And you could find apples, oranges, and bananas anywhere.

In this week’s parsha, the Torah introduces a mitzvah called “bringing the first fruits”. When the farmer saw the first buds of the “seven species” for which Israel was known - wheat, barley, grapes, dates, olives, figs and pomegranates - he would tie a string around it. When it was fully grown, he would bring it to the Temple in

Jerusalem and give it to the Kohanim.

As part of the ceremony of bringing, he would read a statement of thanks to the A-mighty for taking the Jewish people out of Egypt and giving them the Land of Israel. The Torah teaches, through this mitzvah, the importance of saying “thank you”. Gratitude is a primary Jewish value.

We can understand why fruit would be chosen for this ceremony of saying “thank you”. Fruit is a pleasant, tasty addition to life. G-d could have created a world where we ate grass like animals (even that is a great thing, that G-d “opens up His hand, and satisfies every living thing”). But fruit gives us a whole world of different and pleasurable taste sensations. The world is made, not just for our use, but for our enjoyment.

But why does this statement of thanks have to be limited to the bringing of the “seven species” alone? Not every fruit was available in Is-

rael, but there were certainly other fruits than those seven. What is so special about them?

When we examine the seven species, we find that each one had a special quality. Each one could be turned by human beings into something much more valuable than the fruit itself.

Wheat can be made by human beings into bread, the foundation of life. Barley, which is cheaper than wheat, can be made into bread for poor people and food for animals. Grapes can be made into wine, to raise our level of awareness. Dates can be made into date honey, the main sweetener of those sugarless times.

Oil can be extracted from olives for cooking and anointing. Figs can be made into fig cakes, a staple food of the time. And the skins of pomegranates could be made into dyes.

Other fruits are beautiful packages of sweetened water and some nutrients. The A-mighty packed extra added potential into the seven species, potential that could be developed by

man.

This is really a deeper teaching about the world itself. G-d filled the world with potentials that could be discovered by man. Herbs from which medicine could be extracted, oil and coal which could be used to power machines that would be developed much later in the future, the capacity for electricity, the power of flight, the materials to build ships and cars. And all that is even less important than the spiritual potential that G-d placed in every human being, a treasure waiting to be used.

Learning to say “thank you” on the “first fruits” can be the start of learning to thank G-d for the incredible potential He packed into the world for us to discover.

Shabbat Times		
<b>Parshat Ki Tavo</b> <b>September 23/20 Elul</b> <b>September 24/21 Elul</b>		
Starts	Ends	
17:46	18:36	Johannesburg
18:15	19:18	Cape Town
17:35	18:26	Durban
17:54	18:44	Bloemfontein
17:57	18:49	Port Elizabeth
17:48	18:39	East London

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## Community

# Makings of a great Jewish home

*Rosh Hashanah message from Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein*

We live in a world of flux, here in South Africa, in Israel and around the world. Our response should be to strengthen and nurture our families and to create vibrant Jewish homes. But how do we make a great Jewish home?

Obviously, a Jewish home is full of Torah values and actions, like kosher, Shabbos and tzedakah. But here are two specific ideas to focus on. “Let your home be wide open”, says Pirkei Avot (1:5). Rav Ovadia of Bartenura (Italy, 1445-1515) understands this literally.

The Mishna is advising us to open our homes to visitors who need a place to go. He cites the example of Avraham, whose tent was open on all sides to welcome wayfarers who arrived from all directions.

There is the famous episode which recounts how Abraham - recovering under the hot desert sun from extremely painful late life brith milah - sits restlessly at the opening of his tent waiting for guests.

G-d sends him three angels, masquerading as weary travellers, whom with the help of his wife, Sarah, he proceeded to lavish with choice delicacies.

This is the classic example of Avraham’s kindness, and in particular his zeal for hospitality. It encourages us to emulate him and ensure that our homes are spaces where everyone feels welcome.

Rabbeinu Yonah (Spain, 1200-1263) offers a slightly different angle on the Mishna, and explains that it is encouraging us to nurture homes where people can find relief.

What does this mean? Rabbi Israel Lifshcitz (Germany, 1782-1860), another



commentator on Pirkei Avot, expands the definition of relief. He explains that people confront many challenges - rich and poor alike. Some seek physical help, others financial assistance. Still others are in need of emotional support or words of advice or comfort.

Whatever manner of relief people are looking for, our Mishna implores us, they should be able to find it in our homes. The ideal Jewish home is a haven of kindness and comfort, a place so welcoming that when people walk inside they feel in some way that the weight of their troubles are lessened .

Here is a second idea for creating a great Jewish home: “Let your home be a meeting place for the sages”, Pirkei Avot (1:4) also teaches. Rashi’s (France, 1040-1105) understanding is that the Mishna is talking about making the home a place for learning and teaching Torah. We don’t have to limit

our Torah learning to shuls or schools, or any other “official” institution.

Of course those institutions are geared towards learning and they are important places to express our Jewish identity. But we cannot forget about the home. Torah learning begins at home. Torah learning is essential to creating a genuine atmosphere in a home.

When we share Torah ideas - whether around the Shabbos table or during the week - it’s a platform for our families to engage with each other on an emotional, intellectual and spiritual level that nothing else provides.

It’s an opportunity to come closer to one another and to connect with each other across the generation divide around our Torah legacy.

Of course, it’s also an opportunity to bring friends and great Torah teachers and thinkers into our homes. The most important thing is that our homes be “a meeting place” because that’s what real Torah learning is about.

It’s not only about sitting with a book and learning alone. It’s about discussion and debate. It is a real conversation that takes place between real people. By establishing our homes as Torah meeting places we invite light and energy and warmth into them as we share the magnificent ideas of G-d’s Torah with each other and bring meaning into our lives. And through these conversations we will build truly great Jewish homes.

May Hashem bless us all with a good and sweet year!

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# Damon Kalvari’s brew too rich for ChaiFM listeners



PETER FELDMAN

Radio presenter Damon Kalvari (pictured), who was fired by ChaiFM from its Afternoon Drive Show after only seven appearances, gave his side of the story at a debate in Johannesburg last Sunday, organised by the group Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (JVJP).

The hour-long debate, attended by about 30 people and moderated by comedian Daniel Friedman (Deep Fried Man), was a lively and illuminating affair in which Kalvari revealed why he was fired by station CEO Kathy Kaler. It was not because of anti-Israel or anti-Zionist sentiments on air, he said, but because they were receiving complaints from listeners. He also claims his dismissal came without warning.

Kalvari, who has been in the radio business for 21 years, told the gathering: “I started doing the show and kept it very light-hearted and frivolous, and also did some South African politics. It was all slightly tongue-in-cheek. I never said much about Israel, but because of my reputation people were very upset that I was on air.”

He emphasised that he did not hold views on Israel and is not a political activist, though he admits he signed a few petitions here and there. “Back in 2014 when Israel was attacking Gaza I signed a petition which basically said will Israel please stop their attacks on Gaza. At the time my position was that Israel had the right to defend themselves but the situation was like them killing a fly with a shotgun. It was enough already and that was why I signed the petition at the time. I was naive, I suppose.”

Kalvari admitted he wrote several letters to the Jewish Report on the occupation but maintains none of these were anti-Semitic or anti-Zionist. In spite of this, he maintains, there is a perception that because he is critical of Israel or the Israeli government, he is perceived as being anti-Zionist and anti-Semitic.

Kalvari argued that Israel was created as a direct result of the Holocaust which is a sensitive topic, and so any criticism of Israel is understood as support for the Holocaust. “If you criticise Israel for sending missiles into Gaza then you’re anti-Israel and anti-Zionist and that, unfortunately, is their interpretation.” Before Sunday’s event, Kalvari had sent an apology to the SAZF for some recent postings that stated that the SAZF and its leadership, particularly its

chairman Ben Swartz, were pushing for Kalvari’s resignation. However, according to Kaler, “This decision was solely mine, based on listener feedback through hundreds of text messages and emails and was not in any manner influenced by the SAZE.” ChaiFM was reportedly very unhappy that since his dismissal, Kalvari had, they believed, utilised social media to paint the Jewish community, and the SA Zionist Federation (SAZF) as intolerant of views that digress from a pro-Israel narrative.

The theme of the event took the form of a discussion on freedom of expression in the Jewish community. Some attendees expressed the view that the South African Jewish community only accepts Jews who adopt a pro-Israel position and to level any form of criticism of Israel is considered wrong.

The point was also made about the need for opening up the Jewish print media to diversity and that discrimination between the Orthodox and Progressive Jewry still continues and needs to be addressed.

One speaker said Zionism is many things to many people and more tolerance is needed when people disagree. Another speaker feels the majority of Jews are so sensitive and emotional that instead of discussing the subject intellectually they level personal attacks. There is a taboo around criticising Israel among SA Jewry, the speaker said.

As the debate heated up, another speaker voiced the opinion that the real problem about freedom of speech is one of ignorance. People who attack Israel, he contended, have a licence to denigrate or demonise the country without having knowledge and background and think they are “whiter than white”.

The debate ended with people recounting personal anecdotes of how they’ve been affected by taking a stance against the occupation. Asked for comment after the debate, ChaiFM’s Kaler (who did not attend) said: “This is an internal matter between ChaiFM and Damon Kalvari and if he wishes to carry it further, he must take it through the proper channels. ChaiFM will continue to be an independent voice of the community which reports truthfully and reflects a diverse range of views on many topics.”

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To the very special South African Jewish Community

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# LaunchPad lands in SA - and is here to stay

KIM FELDMAN

I first heard about “*this LaunchPad thing*” via a phone call from Aron Turest-Swartz, the deputy director of the United Jewish Campaign, Cape Town. LaunchPad is an Australian initiative whereby a group of young, dynamic changemakers - the buzzword de jour - come together to look at issues surrounding the Jewish community and try to come up with innovative new approaches and solutions.

It had been running in Australia for the past four years and Aron and his wife Kris decided it had to come to South Africa.

I’m always a little sceptical when someone extols the virtues of something from Australia on such a grandiose scale. But this idea of taking an assortment of Jews, throwing them into a room and seeing what happens, intrigued me. Was it really that simple? Surely there was more to it.

I and the 29 other Jews, selected from Cape Town and Johannesburg, were simply told to meet at Old Mac Daddy’s in Elgin on September 4 for a three-day “retreat”. Details were scant and it quickly became apparent that none of us had anything more than the vaguest inkling of what was to come.

It was new, it was unprecedented and in the words of participant Nissen Goldman, “[it] was the single most important step taken by the Jewish community [in recent years]”.

Looking around the room on that first day, I recognised some familiar faces. But far larger was the percentage of people I’d never seen of, or heard of, before in my life. As a Capetonian, having been through the full Herzlia gauntlet, along with some communal involvement thereafter, you definitely get the sense that you know everyone.

But LaunchPad SA proved yet again, this simple assumption is so false. The group ranged from 22-year-old rabbis and NGO-founders to 40-year-old MDs and COOs. Educators, entrepreneurs, accountants and creatives were all there. Religious and secular alike. The only thing

connecting us seemed to be a shared interest in the Jewish community and a concern about the shape of its future.

Throwing preconceived notions aside and opening ourselves up to the process, we went on a highly crafted journey. We explored our own identities and our place within the community. We spent our time breaking through the clutter to distil down the key drivers and potential pitfalls of communal success.

We spoke in small groups. We spoke in large open spaces. We laughed. We cried. Then we laughed some more. We passionately debated and enthusiastically brainstormed. In the end, we pitched new projects and ideas to key community stalwarts - the likes of Marco van Embden, Mike Abel, Avin Lieberman and Tracie Olcha (the founder of LaunchPad); initiatives both large and small that addressed education and environmental causes to structural hierarchies and social platforms. They ran the gamut of needs and reflected the multitude of personalities present.

Two initiatives have already started the process of moving from idea to reality: an app that connects hosts and the willing-to-be-hosted for Shabbos dinner, and a fundraising education project for teens to start contributing to the community in a real and impactful way.

Whether all the initiatives turn into global successes or some peter out, the impact of LaunchPad SA will be felt in the community it created and the inspiration they returned with.

It’s the small changes, harder to measure, but oft-times with greater results, that will propel LaunchPad SA onwards.

We were thrown together to see what would happen, and I found my community again.

A huge thank you must go to the Schusterman Foundation, the UJC Cape Town and the SA Cape Jewish Board of Deputies in association with Mensch and Old Mac Daddy’s without whose support and financial backing, LaunchPad SA would not have happened.

• Feldman, 27, is a copywriter at Crio, a digital agency. She lives in Cape Town.



The group photographed in Elgin.

## Five SA youngsters settle in nicely in Israel school system

ANT KATZ

Five South African teenagers have set out to get the education of their lives - completing their last three or four years of high school in Israel and in English, at first. And, say the pupils and their parents, they are loving it!

Sivan Kark, one of the girls who is at The Mosenson Boarding School, says she enjoyed her first real taste of Israel over the weekend when she went on a day of exploration with some new friends and discovered at their local makolet (cafe) the most traditional of Israeli morning treats: shoko! She had heard of the ubiquitous shoko (a chocolate milk drink in a sachet) in South Africa.

The five South Africans were part of over 200 children from around the world who started their studies through a programme of the Jewish Agency for Israel (JA), which operates the Na’ale Elite Academy in partnership with its flagship South African office, the Israel Centre Johannesburg.

Kark, together with Joshua Bernitz, Bryce Livingston, Gabriel Mervis and Liel Egdes, were chaperoned to Israel by the Israel Centre’s Livnat Katz and now form part of an alumni of over 10 000 Jewish children worldwide who have studied through Na’ale, many of whom completed their matric (bagrut in

Hebrew) under the JA-sponsored programme.

Lisa Mervis, mother of another of the five, says her 15-year-old son, Gabriel, “feels like he has landed in the butter”. Na’ale learners mostly attend Mosenson and other facilities, but Gabriel had been assessed in July by visiting Israeli clinical psychologists to have the ability to excel at engineering. He has been sent to Nahalal (Anières). The school is part of WIZO Nahalal youth agricultural village.

Gabriel is enjoying taking photography as part of his art studies - the old-fashioned way, from the technical side of film cameras to developing photographs in a darkroom.

Back at Mosenson, Sivan Kark says she calls home twice a day, is very happy and fitting in. She is among the 50 per cent of Na’ale learners who are from English-speaking countries and her dormitory mate is British. They get on well.

“Sivan is glad she went,” says Wendy, mother of Sivan. “She has connected with so many friends: Italian, American, even a Columbian girl.”

The boarding school is planning a Succot trip to the desert for two or three nights with a visit to a waterpark on the way back.

Wendy says Sivan “loves the independence of the school

Continued on page 5>>



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# SA blacks have unfavourable response on Jews, say initial results of study

TALI FEINBERG

In a historic move, the Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies & Research at the University of Cape Town has initiated a national research study aimed at measuring the attitudes and perceptions of black South Africans towards Jews and the Jewish community.

Although the survey will only be completed by October, the initial data shows some fascinating and shocking insights.



“One, unfortunately, seems to be a broadly held unfavourable initial response when asked about whether they think favourably or unfavourably about Jews,” explains Associate Professor Adam Mendelsohn, director of the Kaplan Centre. “But this is tempered when we ask follow-up questions; respondents also appear to harbour a variety of positive stereotypes about Jews and several classic anti-Semitic ideas about Jews do not seem to register.

“Another curious insight - which may or may not be confirmed in the larger study - relates to Israel. Not only does there appear to be broad ignorance about Israel, but there is little apparent evidence that attitudes toward Israel and Zionism have been dramatically shifted by BDS or the media.

Mendelsohn says, however, that these are just the initial findings, which may not be present in the final results.

A noticeable increase in reported anti-Semitic episodes, have raised legitimate concerns about whether South African Jews should anticipate a surge in prejudice over the next decades, says Mendelsohn - one of the motivating factors for the study.

“While some of the sources of prejudice are familiar and well-understood, other incidents suggest the potential emergence of new trends. Few are more worrying than the expression of classical anti-Semitic ideas by a handful of young black opinion leaders, reflected most potently by the disgraced former Wits SRC president, Mcebo Dlamini,” he says.

In reality little is known about the perceptions of the majority of black South Africans toward Jews. “Are Dlamini and others channelling broader sentiment, or are such attitudes isolated? Is this form of prejudice likely to gain traction? And how powerful are countervailing views among black South Africans?” asks Mendelsohn.

Mendelsohn also wants to know more about the impact of external forces like the Boycott, Divestment and



Associate Professor Adam Mendelsohn

Photo: College of Charleston

“One, unfortunately, seems to be a broadly held unfavourable initial response when asked about whether they think favourably or unfavourably about Jews,” explains Associate Professor Adam Mendelsohn, director of the Kaplan Centre...

Sanctions (BDS) movement on public sentiment as well as the effects of religious ideas, particularly religious Zionism, in generating philo-Semitism.

The study also explores participants’ familiarity with the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, views of the various parties involved in the conflict, attitudes toward Israeli and Palestinian rights to a homeland, awareness of activism in South Africa (both BDS and pro-Israel), and familiarity with Zionism.

“We don’t adequately understand whether views of Jews vary by ethnicity, nor whether perceptions of Jews reflect regional and socioeconomic factors,” says Mendelsohn. “This study will identify the diversity of perceptions about Jews, as well as the correlation between these attitudes and a range of variables.”

The survey is randomly selecting 800 black South Africans across Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg.

## >> Continued from page 4

uniform” - the children are provided with school-branded white T-shirts (and hoodies to wear over them in winter) and can wear anything from jeans to skirts, earrings and jewellery. They can express themselves, within the rules, says Wendy.

The Na’ale programme accommodates all streams of Judaism. So, while Mosenson is a secular school, there are also observant schools for boys and girls to enjoy kosher campus life. Liel Egdes’ mother wanted to take her “baby” over herself. They couldn’t fly with the group and so the programme paid for Liel’s ticket. The programme offers free travel to Israel the first time, covers all school and boarding fees and even provides learners with pocket money, toiletries and second-hand clothing if they need.

But, switching from South African schooling to Israeli schooling is not as simple as it sounds. Back at Nahalal, Gabriel Mervis is working hard. His lack of Hebrew knowledge was no problem as he is studying in English at the moment and all Na’ale learners spend about 60 per cent of their

week on ulpan studies at first. But the standard of education is high and he needs to catch up as quickly as possible. The programme provides as much additional tutoring as he requires. He also made friends from all over in his first two weeks, “like Brazil, Turkey and a very close English friend”, he told his mother.

• See more about Na’ale on our website: [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)



Joshua Bernitz; Gabriel Mervis; Livnat Katz; Bryce Livingston; and Sivan Kark.

Photo: Chaim Meyers



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

The Editor, PO Box 84650, Greenside, 2034 email: sharon@sajewishreport.co.za

Guidelines for letters

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

TRUTH ABOUT THE VILLAGE OF LUBYA AND THE FOREST PLANTED THERE

The anti-Israel campaign being run by SAJFP in the media is premised on a variety of simplistic falsehoods. In a full history of the area (in question, the deserted Palestinian village of Lubyā) written up by researcher/historian Brian Shapiro, a full objective overview of the area is given.

Lubyā as a Jewish settlement goes back 2 000 years to Talmudic times when it was called Luvya (the hard B took over from the soft V). Many mikva’ot exist in the area dating the period accurately.

In the modern period of Jewish return, in 1913, two Arab residents from Lubyā killed a Jewish watchman from the new agricultural area of Sejera. In September 1936, the British arrested some 26 men from the village as being active members in the Arab revolt and engaged in terrorist activities.

In the years leading up to the establishment of Israel, there were other instances of attacks and counter-attacks between the villagers and Jewish inhabitants of the area.

With the outbreak of the War of Independence, the villagers attacked Jewish traffic on the main road leading to and from the town of Tiberias. In fact, Jewish civilians could only travel in armed convoys.

On February 24, 1948, the road was totally blocked by the Arabs in an attempt to starve the town of Tiberias into submission. A large Jewish convoy tried to breach the blockade but failed and the battle turned into a frantic attempt to save the vehicles and passengers.

The road remained blocked till July of that year and a very long alternative route via Yavniel was used to maintain contact with the town.

Even after the proclamation of the State of Israel on May 14, 1948, this road remained blocked to Jewish traffic by the militant residents of the village of Lubyā. On July 9, an attempt was made to capture the village but after a 24-hour battle, the Israeli forces withdrew with some 21 soldiers dead.

However, on July 19, after a failed attack by the Arab forces on the nearby Jewish settlement of Sejera, the Arab front began to collapse and the villagers began fleeing (much in fear of possible punishment for atrocities they had committed).

Jewish forces entered and captured the village on July 19, some two and a half months after the establishment of Israel. It was only then that the siege was lifted and the main road from Haifa to Tiberias was finally opened.

The village remains abandoned till today. In 1964 general forestry efforts were undertaken in the area of the village by the Jewish National Fund, including the creation of the Lavi Forest. This is after the land lay fallow for approximately 15 years since the time of the war.

Today the forest includes a trail where the village can still be seen, a monument to South Africans who died defending Israel, and a trail that shows the sites of Christian importance in the area.

Amber Cummins  
National Director, Jewish National Fund of SA

PRESENTER DAMON KALVARI, NOT ANTI-ISRAEL BUT SIMPLY PRO-PEACE

I really enjoyed being part of Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (JVJP) event this past Sunday which looked at spaces for questioning and dissent within the Jewish community.

Popular comedian Daniel Friedman (Deep Fried Man) interviewed seasoned radio personality Damon Kalvari about his experiences of being removed as a presenter from ChaiFM, NOT for expressing an anti-Israel opinion, but for in the past, voicing a pro-peace position.

The event attracted a wide range of beliefs, from right-wing Zionist to liberal Zionist to people who are further on the left. Is was wonderful to see the tolerance of different opinions in this space, despite disagreement over political views.

A number of people stood up and shared how their stance on Israel has created discord between them and family and friends.

What emerged very strongly from Damon is that the mainstream Jewish community in South Africa doesn’t allow any questioning attitude on Israel/Palestine. Even if this is criticism that a democratic government - which Israel labels itself as - should be expected to receive. Some audience members felt this intolerant stance had similarities with the attitudes toward “non-Orthodox Jewish practices”.

There was also an excellent point made by an audience member that it would be wonderful if the Jewish community could condemn homophobia and racism as quickly as it condemns any form of questioning of Israel’s policies.

Unfortunately, two men who attended the event, who were right-wing Zionists, appeared to be unable to listen to others. They interrupted, raised their voices and ordered the audience and Daniel Friedman around.

However, they too were given ample opportunity to express their views. I can’t help but contrast this to the South African Jewish Board of Deputies event with President Jacob Zuma last year, where JVJP members who had booked, and planned to listen quietly, as part of this Jewish community, were manhandled by members of the Community Security Organisation (CSO) and were about to be evicted before a member of the community intervened.

We will continue to give space to everyone who wants to attend JVJP events (as long as they have some form of basic manners) and they will continue to be open spaces where discussion and debate can ensue.

Kathy Barolsky  
Jewish Voices for a Just Peace

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YOUNG CHIGWEDERE MAKING HISTORY AT A TRADITIONAL AFRIKAANS SCHOOL

My name is Valentino Chigwedere (Hebrew name Yehudah). I am 17 years old, living in Johannesburg and attending Hoërskool Vorentoe in Auckland Park.

I attend Beit Emanuel in Oxford Road. I'm not yet fully Jewish as my conversion is commencing in January next year, but have been a fully dedicated goy who is regarded as Jewish.

I wear my kippah every day and tzizit most of the time to school. I've been attending and practising Hashem's mitzvot for two years now and also attending shul for two years. At school I am regarded as the only Jew to have ever attend

my school.

Recently in early August I was elected deputy head boy. I'm the only Jew in the school and the first Jew since the establishment of the school in the 1930s; there has never been a Jewish leader in a position of high authority before.

I hope you find this story encouraging, especially to the youth. I hope it will inspire the youths in the Jewish community to reach unimaginable heights.

**Valentino Chigwedere**  
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BDS' BARK IS FAR WORSE THAN ITS BITE

Ira Stup, a senior consultant to J Street Education, wrote in June 2015 that “as long as being pro-Israel, is synonymous with supporting the occupation and offering empty platitudes about peace, the traditional pro-Israel community will continue to lose”.

Ali Abunimah, a pro-Palestinian BDS blogger, writes: “Israel knows it is losing the argument and is throwing everything it has at sabotaging the (BDS) movement.”

Adam Levick, who writes a continuing series titled “BDS is Failing”, reveals some hard facts economically, socially and politically about BDS and its effects on Israel.

Economically, VW Germany has recently invested \$300 million in Israeli rideshare start-up Gett which has a presence in more than 60 countries around the world.

Additionally, UK healthcare company BTG has invested \$110 million in acquiring cancer treatment company, Galil Medical.

On the political front, universities in Italy, Scotland, Canada and the US are pushing back against BDS, by either outlawing anti-Israel funding or as the Swiss government has done, launched an inquiry into anti-Israel NGO funding.

Italy, in fact, has announced that it will bring its largest ever delegation of academics to Israel, in what is seen as a move to counter BDS.

In London recently Israeli supporters shut down a BDS flash mob who hoped to close down an Israeli owned shop in honour of “Nakba Day” (the day dedicated to the failure

of Arab armies to destroy the State of Israel at its birth).

The Israeli activists mobilised far more supporters and outnumbered the bewildered group of Islamist extremists, and drowned out their calls for a boycott.

The United Methodist Church (UMC) has successfully voted down several BDS resolutions this year.

Socially, Bruce Springsteen will perform in Tel Aviv with his E Street band. Elton John has performed in Israel very recently and so has Brian May (Queen).

Performers who were scheduled to perform in June this year (and indeed did so) are Brian Wilson (Beach Boys); Die Antwoord (SA band); Foreigner; Alice Cooper; Sergio Mendes; Nick Mason (Pink Floyd); and Barry Manilow.

Another compelling attribute of Israel, is that the country is also known as a “start-up” nation, where companies start, grow and then list on the various international bourses. Israeli hi-tech and artificial intelligence are not only highly regarded but globally sought after. So too, are their drug and pharmaceutical companies.

A casual forage on the Internet will reveal thousands of multi-million dollar enterprises situated in Israel and trading on one or more of the global stock exchanges.

The conclusion: BDS is a non-event.

**Nathan Cheiman**  
**Northcliff, Johannesburg**

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LET GO OF YOUR ANGER AND LIVE A HAPPY, CONTENTED LIFE

When Nelson Mandela was released from prison, American President Bill Clinton phoned him and asked if he hated the people who kept him in detention for so long. Mandela said no, if he hated them they would still be controlling him.

Faribels (grudges) are more prevalent among South African Jews than they are elsewhere, even though holding onto them makes no sense and makes us miserable.

As we approach the period between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, when we seek and grant forgiveness, it is worth looking at why we tend to hold onto resentments and not want to forgive others.

The “More to Life Weekend” (a life skills course) teaches that there are payoffs for

holding onto resentments but there are also costs which make these payoffs costlier than they are worth.

Some of the payoffs are as follows: We get to feel superior over the wrongdoer; we can speak about or even harm them in return and almost feel that we are right; we get sympathy and empathy from others.

We can blame them for our problems and underperform while trying to make it the other person's fault. We don't need to be nice, etc.

The costs include stress, bitterness, people avoiding us, loneliness, underperforming and whining.

They rob us of joy and happiness. They create health problems. (Doctors are learning more and more how stress causes disease). Resentments also harm us spiritually; most religions encourage people to love each other. In extreme cases these negative thoughts could break up families and even lead to wars.

It is thus easier to let go of these burdens and to forgive. After all the perpetrator has moved on leaving us to carry the baby or pay the rent. Thus to forgive is almost selfish - it means that we are no longer willing to be weighed down with this hatred. The oldest living person is a Holocaust survivor who decided to let go of his anger.

Forgiveness does not mean that the wrongdoer was right or that we have to remain friends with him. It does mean that we are willing to move on with our lives.

**Martin Zagnoev**  
**Sunningdale, Johannesburg**

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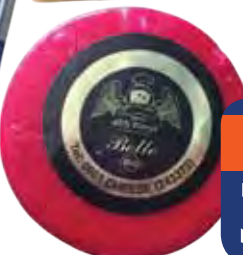
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# Five feel-good stories that will echo into the Jewish New Year

ANDREW TOBIN  
TEL AVIV

The Jewish state has nearly made it through another Jewish year and, as always, there was plenty to kvetch about in 5776. But Rosh Hashanah is a time to take stock and celebrate.

Before the shofar blowing begins, here are five Israeli stories from the past year worth trumpeting. Expect them to echo into 5777 and beyond.

**The Olympics gave Israelis reason to hope**

For Israel, the margin between Olympic disappointment and glory can be a single medal. The country came up empty-handed in 2012, but two Israeli judokas grappled their way to bronze in Rio.

Their fellow citizens rejoiced: Waving flags and singing patriotic songs, hundreds thronged Ben-Gurion Airport to give Yarden Gerbi and Or Sasson a hero’s welcome.

The Olympics have special meaning in Israel, where everyone remembers the 1972 Munich massacre of 11 athletes and coaches by Palestinian terrorists.

Israel’s new medals brought the country’s total to nine since 1952. Seven Israelis made it to the finals in Rio and the country competed in 17 sports, up from 10 in London, including golf, triathlon and mountain biking.

**Israel made new friends in a hostile world**

As the Olympics reminded Israelis, their country is unlikely to win any international popularity contests. But in the past year, Netanyahu’s government managed to find some new friends and potential allies.

Israel and Turkey officially reconciled recently following a six-year falling-out over the Mavi Marmara affair. The deal signed in June should help them co-operate amid the chaos of the Middle East. Meanwhile, the shared threats of Islamic extremism and Iran have brought Israel closer to the region’s Sunni Muslim states.

Weeks after a telling handshake with Israel’s Foreign Ministry director-general, Dore Gold, Saudi government adviser Anwar Eshki publicly led a Saudi delegation to Jerusalem. And Gold flew to Cairo to reopen the Israeli Embassy there - four years after protesters stormed the building and forced its closure.

Netanyahu toured Africa for four days in July. Offering Israeli hi-tech and security know-how and seeking diplomatic support, he was received in country after country like the leader of a world power.

Looking east, Gold has said Israel is building new relations with Asia, and Chinese investment in Israeli companies and venture capital funds has reached record highs. Netanyahu and Vladimir Putin are in regular contact, and the Russian president may be plotting an Israeli-Palestinian peace push of his own.

**Charedi Orthodox men in Israel rolled up their sleeves**

A majority of charedi Orthodox men in Israel have jobs. That may not seem worth blowing the shofar about, but it’s a first. Since officials started keeping track, most of the demographic has been out of work.

In 2015, the workforce participation rate for charedi men was 52 per cent, part of a 12-year rise since the figure was 36 per cent in 2003.

Charedi men in Israel have long preferred Torah study to work or army service, living off yeshiva stipends, state benefits and perhaps their wives’ salaries.

Charedi women are even better represented in the workforce at a rate of 73 per cent, according to the government. Israel’s overall workforce participation rate is 80 per cent.

Charedi birth rates have fallen. A surge in the relative size of charedi preschool enrolment during the first decade of the millennium provoked much handwringing about the growing economic and social burden. But the trend has quietly reversed, with charedi schools accounting for less than 23 per cent of preschoolers in 2015.

**More women than ever were making Israel’s laws**

The 28 women elected to Israel’s parliament in 2015 set a record. Since then, political reshuffling has seen the number move a little higher.

When Avigdor Lieberman became defence minister in June, his Knesset seat went to Yulia Malinovsky, a member of his hawkish Yisrael Beiteinu party - sending the number of female lawmakers to 33. More than a quarter of the 120 legislative seats are now occupied by women.

These lawmakers span the political spectrum. Notably absent are any charedi Orthodox women, whose parties prohibit them from running.

Four of the 21 government ministers are also women: Justice Minister Ayelet Shaked of Jewish Home; Culture and Sport Minister Miri Regev and Minister for Social Equality Gila Gamliel, both of Likud and Immigrant Absorption Minister Sofa Landver of Yisrael Beiteinu.

**The government backed adding Sunday to the Israeli weekend**

It’s not often that something happens with the potential to redefine how an entire country understands the relationship between time and space.

That something happened in Israel in June, when ministers approved a bill that would give Israelis six three-day weekends a year starting in 2017 as a step toward making Sunday a day off. The legislation is to be reworked in committee before going to the full Knesset for voting.

Israeli weekends now run from Friday afternoon through Saturday to accommodate the Jewish Sabbath and Muslim Friday prayers. Many Israelis don’t work on Friday. But for religiously observant Jews, Shabbat rules prevent them from driving or visiting most entertainment venues from Friday night until Saturday night, allowing precious little time for fun.

Economists are divided on the merits of adding Sunday to the weekend. Supporters argue it would boost the economy by syncing Israel with the rest of the world.

Opponents worry it would reduce productivity, with observant Jews and Muslims getting less done on Fridays. (JTA)

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Photos: Shannon Sarna

Some people take great pride and pleasure in planning their Rosh Hashanah menus for weeks or months in advance, chugging away at kugels and cakes and soup to put in the freezer.

But not everyone cooks for 20 people or enjoys the toil and preparation of holiday cooking for weeks on end. And for those people, this simple menu is for you.

Traditional Jewish New Year flavours of apple and pomegranate can show up in unexpected places - like sangria, which is a perfect, easy choice for entertaining, since you can make a large batch and chill until ready to serve. And even a simple roast chicken becomes special with an apricot mustard makeover and crispy roast potatoes.

Sangria is the perfect drink to serve for Rosh Hashanah - it's supposed to be sweet and is perfect paired with two traditional flavours of the holiday. You can use whatever wine you have lying around, or change things up with red wine if you prefer.

- 1 bottle white wine such as sauvignon blanc or pinot grigio (or moscato if you like very sweet wine)
- 1 cup pomegranate juice
- 4 ounces vodka (optional)
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 1 apple, cored and sliced
- 1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups ginger ale or club soda
- Pomegranate seeds (optional)

- Place sliced apple and lemons in a sealable container. Add  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pomegranate juice,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup wine and vodka (optional). Allow to sit overnight in the fridge.
- When ready to serve, place fruit and liquid in a large carafe. Add remaining wine and pomegranate juice. Top with ginger ale or club soda to your liking.

Serve chilled or with ice.

**Optional:** For an extra-special presentation, make pomegranate seed ice cubes by adding a few seeds into each section of an ice cube tray. Fill with water or pomegranate juice and freeze overnight. When ready to serve, add 1 or 2 ice cubes in each guest's glass, or all the ice cubes to the carafe of sangria.

Sheet pan dinners are all the rage this year and with good reason: Throw all your ingredients on one large sheet pan and then pop it in the oven. Your clean-up is reduced without sacrificing any deliciousness. This recipe can easily be doubled to feed a larger crowd.

- 1 whole chicken
- 1 pound small red or Yukon gold potatoes, halved
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup apricot jam
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons orange juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon black pepper
- 6 garlic cloves

- Preheat oven to 400 F.
- Cut chicken along the backside, removing spine. Flatten and lay on top of sheet pan.
- In a small bowl, mix together apricot jam, mustard, brown sugar, olive oil, orange juice, salt and pepper.
- Spread around three-quarters of the seasoning mixture on top of and under the skin of the chicken; reserve one quarter.
- Spread potatoes on one side of the pan. Drizzle potatoes with olive oil, salt and pepper. Add whole, unpeeled garlic cloves to the tray, alongside the potatoes. Toss potatoes to ensure even cooking and place back into oven for another 25-30 minutes.

- Remove from oven and spread remaining seasoning on top of chicken. Cut chicken into quarters and serve immediately.

Growing up, baked apples were a tradition in my house. This dessert looks impressive but is actually easy to execute. Serve with sorbet, vanilla ice cream or whipped cream for an extra-sweet start to the new year.

- 2 sheets puff pastry
- 4 Gala apples
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup margarine or butter
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon ginger
- Pinch fresh nutmeg
- Pinch fresh ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$  teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup raisins
- 1 egg, beaten
- Sanding sugar (optional)

- Take puff pastry out of freezer and allow to sit at room temperature 30 minutes.
- Preheat oven to 375 F.
- In a medium bowl, mix together margarine (or butter), brown sugar, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg, clove and salt. Add in raisins and mix.
- Peel and core each apple, leaving apple intact but with a cavity for stuffing. Stuff sugar-margarine mixture inside each apple.
- Cut each sheet of puff pastry in 2 pieces (there should be 4 pieces in total). With a rolling pin, roll each rectangle piece gently, stretching puff pastry so it is slightly larger.
- Sit each stuffed apple in middle of puff pastry. Fold puff pastry up and over apple until completely covered, trimming excess pieces. (Optional: Using extra puff pastry, carve decorative small leaves to place on top.) (JTA)



May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

The logo for Cash Converters, featuring the word "cash" in a dark blue script font and "converters" in a bold, dark blue sans-serif font, with a stylized blue swoosh underline.



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We achieve this through purpose built ‘Centres of Excellence’ within the townships, providing holistic youth development services from cradle to career.

The accomplishments of Afrika Tikkun from early on, were of great inspiration. Mandela described it as a “miracle” in Mandela’s words: “Tikkun demonstrates in a practical and sustainable manner what can be done with limited resources, great commitment and passion. It is my belief that Tikkun represents the best of what civil society can offer in partnership with Government’s considerable efforts.” The company continues to be inspired and influenced by the founders of the organization - the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, the late Bertie Lubner (of blessed memory), Herby Rosenberg, Ann Harris and Arnold Forman, and at the helm is one of Bertie’s sons Marc Lubner | CEO of Afrika Tikkun. With the passing of Bertie, Afrika Tikkun has recently appointed Arnold Basserabie as its new Chairman.



Lubners philosophy on life was:

*“What can I do to make a real difference?” but the second part of that thinking was: “Nobody can make a success of life without the help of others. You measure true success in two ways - in your own life, yourself and your family and when you add value to the lives of others.”*

At the core of Afrika Tikkuns philosophy and value system is the principal of Tikkun Olam & Ubuntu. Tikkun olam embodies the spirit of philanthropy. Increasing the well-being of humankind is one of the key elements of repairing the world. Helping those who are in need, no matter in what capacity, is crucial and “holy” work and applies to working in all communities, not just Jewish communities.

Humanity’s responsibility to change, improve, and fix its earthly surroundings is powerful. It implies that each person has a hand in working towards the betterment of his or her own existence as well as the lives of future generations.

Afrika Tikkun believes that South Africa is a work in progress. We strive to work with previously disadvantaged people of all ages to overcome poverty and move beyond the inequality created by decades of injustice.

Over the last 22 years, Afrika Tikkun has been taking action by building development programs to enable disadvantaged young people to realise their potential. We are dedicated to supporting our youth at each stage of their development, from cradle to career. Through our proven and unique cradle to career model, we support children from infancy into adulthood and employment to ensure that they become the next generation of productive South African citizens. In 2015 we reached over 17 000 beneficiaries and their families.



# Rosh Hashanah at a Sephardic table from Rhodes

STELLA HANAN COHEN

Spain was where my ancestors lived and flourished for centuries. The Jews of Spain, the Sephardim, who were expelled by Queen Isabella in 1492 from the Iberian Peninsula and sought refuge in the Ottoman Empire at Sultan Bayezid II’s welcoming invitation. Our rich and diverse Moorish-Spanish cuisine evolved and was enriched by my forebears who settled in the Mediterranean Island of Rhodes. For the festive dinner on the Jewish New Year, Sephardim from Rhodes celebrate with an ancient tradition of showcasing particular foods. Each has its specific symbolism to augur sweetness, abundance, protection and prosperity. These include sugar, honey, apples, pomegranate, leeks, Swiss chard, black-eyed beans, beets, whole fish and pumpkin. On Rosh Hashanah we bake a round challah, roska, stuffed with homemade marzipan. Several popular foods are scrumptious leek, potato and fresh herb fritters, stuffed Mediterranean vegetables, and savoury pastries with a sweet pumpkin filling. The finale for the feast displays a spectacular spread of honey-flavoured sweets and varieties of grapes and melons. Along with handcrafted marzipan, masapan, and lemon fondant, sharope, almond semolina cake, shamali, is offered with baklava, honey-drenched pastries filled with almond and fragrant with cinnamon and cloves, travados, almond and sesame seed brittle, boulukunio, and candied pumpkin, dulce de kalavasa, to usher a sweet and happy New Year.

## LEEK, POTATO AND FRESH HERB FRITTERS

### Keftes de prasa i patata

These fritters are often served on the New Year using matzah meal. They also make a tasty meze or can be served as a side dish with an entrée. My mother would usually make a large quantity and serve some hot at the table, keeping leftovers as a snack.

### Ingredients

- 500g (1lb 2oz) young leeks, ends trimmed and dark green tops discarded
- 1 medium onion, peeled
- 300g (10½oz) potatoes, peeled and quartered



- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 3 tbsp finely chopped flat-leaf parsley (use leaves and tender stems)
- 1 tbsp finely chopped tender celery leaves
- 1 tbsp finely chopped fresh dill
- Sea salt and finely ground white pepper
- 2 tbsp dried breadcrumbs or matzah cake meal

For shallow frying: vegetable or grape-seed oil

### Method:

- Remove the outer layer of the leeks, cut in half lengthways and across in chunks. Wash thoroughly.
- Put the leeks, whole onion and potatoes in a pan of generously salted cold water. Bring to a boil. Cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes or until tender.
- Drain in a colander and let the vegetables to cool. Place in a tea towel and twist the towel tightly, squeezing out excess liquid.
- Blitz the leeks, onion and potatoes in a food processor, pulsing a few times until combined, while still retaining some texture. Do not purée.
- In a large bowl, combine the leek-potato

- mixture with the eggs, parsley, celery leaves and dill. Season with salt and pepper.
- Stir in as much breadcrumbs or matza meal as necessary to make a mixture that holds its shape. Cover with plastic wrap and chill in the fridge for 30 minutes.
- With a small bowl of water nearby, dampen your hands and shape the mixture into round patties, about 5cm (2in) wide and 1,25 cm (½in) thick. Place on a tray lined with plastic wrap.
- Heat 1,25 cm (½in) oil in a large frying pan over a medium-high heat.
- When the oil is hot, but not smoking, gently drop 4-5 fritters in the oil and fry for 3-4 minutes on each side.
- Lower the heat if they are browning too quickly so that they cook through but do not burn. Add more oil as necessary.
- Scoop out with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels.
- Serve hot or at room temperature with a fresh tomato sauce or garlic dip.

Stella’s hint: The fritters can be fried ahead of time and kept warm in a 120°C (250°F) oven for about 20 minutes.

## MEDITERRANEAN VEGETABLES STUFFED WITH MEAT AND RICE

### Verduras reynados

Mediterranean vegetables, such as aubergines, tomatoes, courgettes and bell peppers, are hollowed out and stuffed with a fragrant rice and meat filling and then simmered on a bed of vegetables. Also known as “Tomat a la Turka” by the Sephardim from Rhodes, it is one of the dishes traditionally prepared for Rosh Hashanah. This colourful entrée looks spectacular as part of a buffet and, like other stuffed vegetables, is best prepared a day ahead for the flavours to deepen. I like to cook and serve in the same oven-to-table casserole, which besides making cleaning up easier gives a casual feel to the meal.

### For the vegetables:

- 4 plump baby aubergines (eggplants) - about 7,5 cm (3in) long and 5 cm (2in) wide
- 6 small, ripe red tomatoes
- 4 firm, thick courgettes (zucchini), about 7,5cm (3in) long; 4 small yellow or orange bell peppers
- Sea salt
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice; olive oil (enough for shallow frying)

### For the filling:

- 450 g (1lb) minced (ground) beef
- 2 garlic cloves, finely grated
- ½ cup medium-grain rice, soaked in hot water for 10 minutes, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
- 1 cup roughly chopped flat-leaf parsley (use leaves and tender stems)
- ¼ cup pine nuts, toasted
- ¼ tsp ground cumin
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp sea salt
- ½ tsp finely ground white pepper

### For the vegetable base:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 large onion, roughly chopped
- 1 large potato, peeled and diced
- Reserved pulp of aubergines, tomatoes and courgettes, roughly chopped
- 1 cup canned chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp tomato paste
- ½ tsp sugar
- 1 cup hot chicken stock
- Sea salt and finely ground white pepper

### Prepare the aubergines:

Cut the stems off the aubergines and remove

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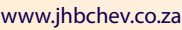
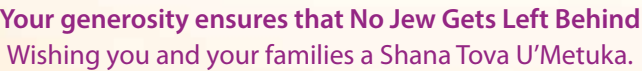


Blanch in boiling water for 5 minutes, refresh in cold water and drain. When cool, slice off the stem end.

With a long, narrow vegetable corer, push the corer into the courgette at the cut end and hollow out, scooping out the pulp and leaving a thin even shell. Be careful not to pierce the shell. Reserve the pulp for the base.

Put a pinch of salt in each cored courgette and let them drain in a colander until needed.

- Pack the stuffed vegetables upright, close together, in a single layer over the vegetable base.
- Arrange the tomatoes on the outer edge of the casserole as they cook the quickest. Add enough hot water to reach about 2,5 cm (1in) below the top of the vegetables. Bring to a boil.
- Cover, reduce the heat and simmer for 45 minutes or until the filled vegetables are cooked.





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• Shake the pan from time to time to prevent the vegetables from catching. Add hot water as necessary.

**To serve:**

- Preheat the oven to 190°C (375°F). Place the rack in the top third of the oven. Put the casserole uncovered in the oven for the tops of the vegetables to brown lightly. Usually 15 minutes is enough, but keep watching.
- Serve hot in the casserole with a vermicelli rice pilaf and a green spring salad.

*Stella's Hint:* Corer: For best results use a vegetable reamer or a long, thin ma'anara corer (found at Middle Eastern stores) for scooping the pulp from the courgettes.

ALMOND-FILLED, HONEY-DRENCHED CRESCENTS

**Travados**

Travados are crescent-shaped almond and spice-filled biscuits, soaked in a hot honey syrup and sprinkled with toasted sesame seeds. The honey-drenched travados keep well in an

airtight container for a week and are delicious with coffee or tea or as that sweet something after a meal They are particularly popular at all celebrations, especially at the religious festivals of Purim and at the meal to break the Fast of Yom Kippur.

- For the filling:**
- 250g (9oz) unblanched almonds, lightly toasted
  - 1 tbsp fresh orange juice or water
  - ¾ cup clear honey
  - 1½ tbsp brandy, preferably Greek Metaxa
  - 1 tsp ground cinnamon
  - ½ tsp ground cloves
  - 1 heaped tbsp sesame seeds, lightly toasted
- For the dough:**
- 1 cup vegetable oil
  - ½ cup castor (superfine) sugar
  - ¾ cup water
  - 3¼ cups cake flour, plus extra for dusting
  - 1 level tsp baking powder

- For the syrup:**
- ½ cup sugar

- 1 cup clear honey
- ½ cup water
- A 2,5 cm (1in) strip orange zest
- 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp orange blossom water

**For the topping:**

½ cup toasted sesame seeds or finely ground unblanched almonds

**Prepare the filling:**

Pulse the almonds in a food processor until they are coarsely ground. In a bowl combine the rest of the filling ingredients, add the almonds and mix to a paste that is quite soft to the touch.

- Prepare the dough:**
- Combine the oil, sugar and water in a bowl. Add the flour and baking powder a little at a time.
  - Mix, without kneading, to form a soft, pliable dough. If it seems too oily add a little more flour. Do not overwork the dough.
  - Let rest for 5 minutes at room temperature.
  - Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Line 2



baking trays with baking paper.

- Make the biscuits:**
- Pinch off 40 walnut-sized pieces of dough and roll into smooth balls.
  - Flatten each ball between your palms and make discs about 3 mm thick. Place each disc on a lightly floured work surface and create a ridged pattern by gently pressing the tines of a fork on one side of the pastry.
  - Turn the discs over and place 1 heaped teaspoon of the prepared paste in the centre. Fold over and press the edges with your fingers to seal, and curve the pastries slightly into half-moon crescent shapes.
  - Repeat the rolling, filling and shaping of the pastry until all the filling has been used. Place the biscuits on the prepared baking trays and bake for 30 minutes or until lightly golden. Cool on wire racks.

- Make the syrup:**
- Combine the sugar, honey, water and orange zest strip in a small pan and bring to a boil, stirring constantly.
  - Reduce the heat and simmer, uncovered, without stirring, for 5 minutes.
  - Add the lemon juice and orange blossom water and simmer until the syrup has thickened slightly and the short-thread stage is reached. Discard the strip of orange zest.
  - Turn the heat down to the lowest setting. Gently drop a few biscuits at a time into the hot syrup and use a spoon to submerge them for 2 minutes to absorb the syrup.
  - Scoop them out with a slotted spoon and place the syrup-drenched travados in a large, deep, heatproof dish, in a single layer.
  - Ladle the remaining syrup over the biscuits and sprinkle with sesame seeds or coat with finely ground unblanched almonds. Makes about 40.

**Stella's hints:** To freeze baked travados: Place the travados between layers of baking paper in an airtight container and freeze for up to 2 months. To serve, defrost and crisp in a 180°C (350°F) preheated oven for 5 minutes. Then proceed with the honey syrup.

**Short-thread stage:**

At this stage, the hot syrup is thick and sticky. You test it by placing a small amount onto a teaspoon. Dip wetted thumb and index finger in the syrup and pull them apart a couple of times to see if threads of about 1,5 cm (½in) in length form.

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# A sweet New Year pie selection, as easy as...pie



Alan Bender (back) with Patsy Dakes and Jos Zaslansky of Feigels.

## ALAN BENDER OF FEIGELS

We are approaching the High Holy Days – the Yamim Noraim - a time of introspection and self-examination. But, while spiritually engaging in food for thought, let us not forget the food for the festive table over this period!

Traditionally this is the season for feasting, with the accent on “sweet” as we usher in the New Year 5777.

Alan Bender, executive chef at Feigels, chose some of his sweet delights especially for Jewish Report. He calls these his “New Year Sweet Pie Selection”.

## SPICED APPLE COBBLER

- Crumb topping**
- ½ cup treacle sugar
  - ½ cup white sugar
  - ¾ cup flour
  - ¾ cup oats
  - ¼ cup flaked almonds

- ½ tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp salt
- 100 gr margarine or butter

## Fruit filling

- ¼ cup treacle sugar
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ½ cup flour
- 2 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup cranberries or raisins
- 1,25 kg apples peeled and sliced
- 1 heaped tablespoon maizena
- 50 gr butter or margarine for dotting around

## Method

- Preheat the oven to 180C
- Combine all the crumb toppings
- Combine all the fruit toppings
- Place fruit in an oven in a suitable dish and top with half the crumble. Bake uncovered for 25 min.
- Remove from the oven and scat-

ter over the balance of the crumb. Turn the oven to 160C and bake for another 30 mins.

## Cook’s tips:

- You can use any firm flesh fruit for the filling, such as tinned peaches or tinned apples.
- You can make individual cobblers by using fancy glasses or tea cups
- Bake the crumble on a baking sheet until crumbly and set aside. Cook the fruit separately in a pot - this can be done in advance and kept chilled. When needed, assemble and warm in the oven.

## FREE FORM SLAB PIE

### Ingredients

- 1 batch sweet pie dough
- 750 gr depitted stone fruit
- ¾ cup light brown sugar
- 1 lemon zest and juice
- 2 tbls maizena
- 1 tbs vanilla essence
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tray blueberries
- 2 tbs butter or margarine
- 1 large egg

## Method

- Preheat the oven to 180C.
- Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray.
- Divide the dough into 2 sausages and roll into equal size rectangles. Place 1 pastry sheet on the baking tray and keep the other covered.
- Combine the fruits, sugar, lemon juice and zest, maizena, essence and salt. Place this mixture on first pastry sheet leaving a 3cm border all round. Brush this border with egg. Place the 2nd pastry sheet on top and pinch the edges closed.
- Cut a few gashes in the top pastry sheet, drop in little pieces of the butter or margarine and brush with egg.

Continued on page 20 >>

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>> Continued from page 17

• Bake for 20 mins and then gently and loosely take a sheet of foil and cover the pie. This will stop it from over-browning.

**Cook’s tip:**  
To make this slab pie really interesting, cut the second piece of pastry into strips and plat a lattice on top.

KEY LIME PIE

**Base**  
• 1 batch sweet pie dough  
• Roll the pastry out to about 3 – 5 mm thick and place it into an oven in a suitable pie dish.  
• Prick the pastry well all over with a fork, line with baking paper, pour in some rice or beans and bake it blind for 30 mins at 180C.

Remove from the oven and when cool, remove the rice and baking paper. Set aside.

**Filling**  
• 3 jumbo egg yolks  
• 1 tin condensed milk  
• 120 ml lime juice

**Method:**  
• Whisk the filling ingredients together and pour into the now cooked pie crust and bake at 180C for 15 mins or until set with a slight wobble. Remove from the oven and allow to cool.

**Topping**  
• 1 cup cream  
• 3 tablespoons sugar

• 1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
• ¼ cup flaked almonds

**Method:**  
• Beat the cream, sugar and vanilla until firm and spoon over the pie and garnish with flaked almonds.

STRAWBERRY AND RHUBARB PIE

1 batch sweet pie pastry rolled into 2 by 30 cm discs and covered.

**Filling**  
500 gr rhubarb cut into 1,5 cm thick pieces  
500 gr strawberries cut into half  
3 tbs maizena  
½ cup sugar  
½ tsp cinnamon

1 lemon zest and juice  
60 gr margarine or butter (for dotting)

**Method**  
• Preheat the oven to 180C. Spray the pie dish with non-stick spray.  
• Line the pie dish with the first pastry dish, leaving an overhang.  
• Fill the dish with the fruit filling and place the second pastry sheet over the pie, either whole with gashes cut in, or cut circles, stars or a lattice pattern to make the top interesting. In the gaps in the pie crust dot in the small pieces of margarine. Pinch the sides closed, brush with egg and bake for 30 mins watching that it does not over-brown.

**Cook’s tip:**  
Try this filling as a cobbler with the crumb topping. Cook the filling in a pot and when cool set in a jelly.

SWEET PIE PASTRY

• 1,5 cups flour  
• ¼ tsp salt  
• 110 gr soft butter or margarine  
• ¼ cup white flour  
• 1 large egg

**Method**  
• Cream the margarine and sugar and when light add the egg. Then add the flour and salt until just combined. (Don’t overwork the dough.) If it’s a little hard, add a tablespoon water at a time until it’s just combined.

**Cook’s tip:**  
• Add a few drops of apple cider vinegar and vanilla essence, or also a pinch of white pepper.

STONE FRUIT AND FRANGIPANE GALETTE

**Ingredients**  
• 250 gr puff pastry  
• 65 gr castor sugar  
• 65 gr butter or margarine  
• 1 teaspoon vanilla essence  
• 2 tots nice liqueur  
• 100 gr almond flour  
• 40 gr flour  
• 250 gr sliced stone fruit  
• 1 egg for egg wash  
• Icing sugar to dust

**Method**  
• Heat the oven to 180C. Spray a baking sheet with non-stick spray for that rustic freeform look or bake in a pie dish.  
• Cream the sugar and margarine until light, then add the vanilla and liqueur. Then add the flour and almond flour until a paste forms.  
• Roll out the puff pastry to form a rectangle, spread the egg filling over the pastry, leaving a 3 cm border. Scatter three quarters of the fruit filling over the egg mixture and then roll up the sides. You should have a 15 cm diameter tart with a hole in the top. Into that hole drop in the balance of the fruit.  
• Brush the pastry with egg wash and bake for 20 mins. Take a sheet of foil and gently lay it over the top to prevent over-browning and bake for another 20 mins or until firm.  
• Remove and dust with icing sugar.





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# Family recipes that have delighted over many years

## OWN CORRESPONDENT

These recipes are all from members of one family. Sisters Hettie Barron, Bessie Cohen and Celia Smith, all three now deceased. The recipes were tried, tested and enjoyed, mainly on the festivals, for many years. But they were never written down.

It took Hettie’s late daughter-in-law, Shelagh Barron, who died at the age of 28, to sit painstakingly in each kitchen of her family members and accurately measure each “pinch”, “dash” and other obscure instruction, compiling the recipes into a family cookbook.

### STUFFED MONKEYS (BESSIE COHEN/ CELIA SMITH)

- Ingredients**
- 500g margarine, at room temperature
  - 1 cup sugar
  - Pinch of salt
  - 3 eggs
  - 3 tsp baking powder
  - Few drops vanilla essence
  - 3 cups plain flower

- Method:**
- Cream margarine, sugar and salt well.
  - Then add unbeaten eggs (1 at a time) and keep on creaming until it is fluffy.
  - Sift flour and baking powder and add to mixture to make a soft pliable dough.
  - Roll out to about 102 mm (4 inch) pieces.
  - Put smooth apricot jam on and then in the centre add raisins.
  - Fold over and cut.
  - Grease a baking tray with oil.
  - Paint with beaten egg.
  - Cook at 180 degrees until golden brown.

### CHINESE CHICKEN WITH PEACHES (HETTIE BARRON)

6 Servings

- Ingredients**
- 1,5 kg chicken pieces
  - 4 tablespoons flour
  - 1 tablespoon salt
  - ½ tsp paprika
  - Pinch of pepper
  - 2 tablespoons oil
  - 1 cup orange juice
  - 2 tablespoons honey
  - 2 tablespoons lemon juice
  - 2 tablespoons chopped parsley
  - 1 can peaches drained and sliced

- Method:**
- Toss chicken in flour seasoned with salt, paprika and pepper.
  - Brown in frying pan with oil.
  - Place in casserole dish, adding all the ingredients except the peaches.
  - Cover and bake at 180 degrees for 45 minutes, add peaches and bake for another 5 minutes.

- VEGETABLE SOUP (HETTIE BARRON)**
- Ingredients**
- 6 carrots - finely diced
  - 2 tops of leeks - finely diced
  - 2 turnips - finely diced
  - 1 butternut - finely diced
  - 2 sticks celery - finely diced
  - Small bunch of parsley - finely diced (about 5 strands)
  - ½ cup beans (not necessary to soak them)
  - ½ cup of 4 in 1 soup mix (barley optional if you don’t use 4 in 1)
  - Pepper and salt or herb salt (1 pepper corn optional)
  - ½ teaspoon Marmite

- Method:**
- Bring to boil and allow to cook for 3 hours.

- MYSTERY BALLS (HETTIE BARRON)**
- Ingredients**
- 3 kg dates cut up into small pieces
  - 1 dessertspoon butter (must be butter)
  - 1 ½ eggs (beat up 2 eggs in separate glasses and take 1 egg plus half egg from the other glass)
  - ¾ cup brown sugar
  - 1 tsp ginger

- Method:**
- Put all the ingredients in a pot and boil up for 5 minutes, beating the egg in quickly so that it does not form a pancake. Egg must mix in well.
  - Let it cool a little and then add 1 ½ cups coconut and 3 cups puffed rice cereal.
  - Wet palm of hands and roll this mixture into balls the size of walnuts.
  - Dip each ball into a dish of coconut, then shake and place on a platter and put in fridge to harden for a couple of hours.



Hettie Barron’s Mystery Balls.

Photo: Hani Smit

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# Fenugreek frybread for Rosh Hashanah

REBECCA FIRKSER  
NEW JERSEY

Ah, Rosh Hashanah! The holiday in which we’re not only allowed to eat leavened bread, but are encouraged to slather honey over fat slices of the stuff. A slightly quicker, crisper gluten-based treat than the traditional challah, has my heart this new year: fenugreek frybread.

Fenugreek is used as an herb (dried or fresh leaves), spice (seeds), and vegetable (fresh leaves, sprouts, and microgreens).

The seeds are frequently encountered in the cuisines of the Indian subcontinent, used both whole and powdered in the preparation of pickles, vegetable dishes, daals, and spice mixes.

Fresh fenugreek leaves are an ingredient in some Indian curries. Sprouted seeds and microgreens are used in salads.

While fenugreek is more commonly found in curries, chutneys and spice mixtures in Middle Eastern and South Asian dishes, the fragrant herb is also a symbolic (albeit now mostly forgotten) Rosh Hashanah food. Mentioned in the Talmud by another name - “rubia”, to multiply - fenugreek represents greater blessings in the new year.

A traditional Native American dish, frybread is quite literally what its name suggests. The simple ingredients (flour, water, baking soda, salt) are typically fried in oil and served with an assortment of schmears. Similar to the post-Passover mufleta of North African Jews, frybread’s mild flavour increases in complexity with the addition of dried fenugreek leaves.

In this recipe, the aromatic spice cuts



through each bite of the rich frybread, making each piece that much easier to devour. I fried in peanut oil (after several years of canola-frying latkes and smelling as such for the next week, I’ve changed my ways), though non-hydrogenated vegetable shortening yields a clean, crisp fry as well.

**Ingredients:**

- 2 cups all-purpose flour (or 1 3/4 cups plus 1/4 cup whole wheat flour)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 1/2 tablespoons dried fenugreek leaves
- 1/4 teaspoon allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon dried ground sumac, optional
- 3/4 cups lukewarm water

- Peanut, safflower or canola oil, for frying

**Method:**

- Whisk together flours, baking powder, salt, fenugreek leaves and sumac (if using) in a large bowl.
- Pour in the water and knead until just coming together. Don’t over-knead - this will make the finished breads tough.
- Pinch off golf ball-sized pieces of dough and roll into uniform spheres (see above). Use a rolling pin to flatten the balls to 1/4-inch thickness. Poke a small hole in the centre of each disc with a paring knife to ensure even frying.
- Line a baking sheet with paper towels and set near your stove. Heat 1/2 to 1 inch of oil

or shortening in a large, deep skillet. The oil heat should hover around 350 F - if you don’t have a thermometer you can test the heat by poking the end of a wooden spoon into the oil. If the wood starts to bubble, the oil is ready.

- Place the dough discs into the oil (1 or 2 at a time, depending on the size of the pan). Fry each side of the bread until golden, about 1 minute per side. Remove frybread from the hot oil with tongs and place on the paper towels to absorb excess oil.
- Serve immediately, drizzled with honey. (The Noshers via JTA)

• *Rebecca Firkser is a New Jersey-based food writer and blogger.*

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# We need to stop overcooking for the holidays

**KENDEN ALFOND**  
**NEW YORK**

As a young woman at Jewish holiday tables, I never felt comfortable with being the “woman in charge” of cooking. I associated that role with overcooking (too much food at the table) and pushing people to eat more, even after they were full.

Yet when I got older and started cooking for the Jewish holidays for my husband and daughter, I found myself replicating those same patterns I had witnessed as a young girl: obsessively reviewing food lists in my head and worrying about there being enough food on the table.

I would always make too much food, mainly because I was afraid there was not going to be enough. So there would be two salad dressings instead of one, cake and cookies, potatoes and rice, and then of course there was always bread.

I spent last Rosh Hashanah as a guest at the Chabad in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, so I skipped cooking altogether. While at their table munching on kosher pickles (shipped from Israel, no less!), I had a realisation, the kind that comes when you’re an adult and self-aware.

The realisation was that the way I had been cooking (and feeling, for that matter) was not really me. It was as if I had had a lapse of connection with myself and had unconsciously taken on the role of the overcooking Jewish woman that I had resisted for so long.

It could have been a compilation of



family heritage and plain poor judgement, but regardless, it was a role I had watched so many other women in my family do with sadness. At that moment, I decided I would make an effort to stop creating this type of food atmosphere for myself and others, and consciously move in a more modern, realistic direction.

As I started paying more attention to this phenomenon, I discovered that I’m not the only one who has experienced this pattern of overcooking for holidays. Before I started my business, Jewish Food Hero, I did an informal telephone interview with 15 Jewish women to learn more about their experience with cooking for the holidays.

The majority had the same answer to the question: “What keeps you up at night about the Jewish holidays?” It was: “The food, having enough

food.”

When I think about the generations of women worrying about food, it’s clear that at certain historical moments, this worry was warranted. If you asked any of our mothers and grandmothers, they would tell us that is it better to make too much food than too little. But this is simply not true anymore.

For our generation, most of us

I’ve also created certain strategies when I’m in the planning and preparation phase of cooking for a meal that support my intention not to overcook.

are fortunate not to experience food shortages, and so the worry should instead be about filling our bodies (and trash cans) with too much food. We now know the incredible damage that chronic overeating has on our bodies and society. Most importantly to me, making too much food is not something I want to teach my daughter and the next generation.

Even though I’m aware of the problem, I have to actively watch to make sure I don’t follow through on the impulse to overfeed as an expression of care and love - an impulse that is deeply ingrained in me (and many of you, I’m sure).

I remind myself there are many, many ways that I can express love and care. And adults and children know if they feel hunger in their own bodies, they can ask for more food using their own voice.

So now when I feel the familiar worry about having enough food on the holiday table, I pause and observe. I’ve also created certain strategies when I’m in the planning and preparation phase of cooking for a meal that support my intention not to overcook.

**They include:**

1. Planning my meal around a starch, so if there is extra I set it aside to use in the next day’s meal.
2. Making fewer dishes; three to five at any meal is plenty.
3. Keeping extra fruit on hand for those with a sweet tooth (as opposed to 10 different kinds of cake).
4. Serving water to everyone before the meal to hydrate them and allow them to start the meal without being hungry.

When I cook for people, I think about their wellbeing and how I want them to feel before, during and after the meal. I want my guests to feel relaxed and nourished by the food and atmosphere. I want them to feel peaceful in their bodies. I want to generate positive holiday memories for my daughter, not ones full of stomach aches.

Rather than using food as a way to express love and control, let’s relax and allow ourselves to express and generate our desired feelings in more positive ways. (Kveller via JTA)

• *Kenden Alfond is the founder of the website Jewish Food Hero.*

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# Community Voices

## Time now to look into our spiritual mirrors

*During the month of Elul and the days of Tishrei, preceding and including Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, we are supposed to engage in introspection and answer the call to repentance. We look into our own spiritual mirrors, and examine our actions over the past year in the act of cheshbon hanefesh. We atone for our sins through prayer, penitence and charity. The Jewish Report spoke to members of the community on what Rosh Hashanah means to them. Also what they would like to see in the year 5777.*

**SUZANNE BELLING**

**JOANNE BENJAMIN**, director of operations and human resources at the Cape Town Jewish Community Centre, says the new year provides an opportunity to reflect on the past. “It is also a chance for something new and exciting. “For me the coming year brings my 50th birthday and a whole new start to life. “There is a feeling of unity, with chances for further democracy - I am positive about the country. If you are determined, you will succeed,” she said.



**ELTON KRAWITZ**, cantor at Waverley Shul in Johannesburg and a legal adviser for Discovery, says: “For me the Yamim Noraim present an opportunity to refocus and reformulate my goals in all areas of my life. To the extent that the five predominant areas in my life - family, job, health, community and spiritual - may be unbalanced, I like to use Yomtov as a time for introspection and to make the necessary tweaks. “It goes without saying that my hopes and prayers for 5777 revolve around the good health of my family. Absent this factor, the five areas I referred to above become insignificant and impossible to manage.” As a community, he feels we have to be mindful of the many issues that affect us, as Jews, in our country. “Politics aside, I would hope that the community would make a conscious decision to re-engage in our own communal affairs and thereby strengthen ourselves. I would love to see the classic, traditional, Friday night Jew



reassert himself as a key player in the community. He/she is vital in my view for our success and growth. “As far as the country is concerned, I was encouraged by political developments in the past year. We just need a break and an indication that all stakeholders are working towards the common good and the country will, with Hashem’s help, fly again.”

**NATALIE LIKNAITZKY**, founder of art galleries, curator and lawyer, says spirituality is her most important concern during the High Holy Days. Reflecting on the past year, she says her main emotion is gratitude for all the blessings bestowed on her. “I feel we are living in Messianic times when we look forward to fulfilment of the prophecies.” Liknaitzky and her husband visited Jerusalem on Yom Yerushalayim and she visualised the rebuilding of the Temple, after seeing a model of the Second Temple next to the Shrine of the Book at the Israel Museum.



“I could picture it and hope I will be around when it happens.” Natalie, whose biography has been written recently by Lana Jacobson, is having it expanded in a second book. “I would like to have the health and the strength to live up to it.” Communally, she is impressed with the leaders “who step in every time to stop the glitches. Personally, I am focusing on family and health and, like everyone, taking steps to remember mistakes and rectify them.” **NADAV OSSENDRYVER**, founder of Latest Sightings, says for him the new year means a new, fresh start, as well as reflecting on the previous year. “My passion is wildlife and I hope more people in the community and country will become aware of wildlife and conservation. “My wish is for everyone to enjoy the

festive season Ossendryver, who is spending Rosh Hashanah with his family, leaves after Yom Kippur for Boston, US, where he will attend a summit for under-30s, networking and idea sharing with young people from other countries.



The focus of Linksfield resident **NOLA FOX** is on her hopes for world peace and “spirituality, love and harmony in abundance”. Fox recently returned from a trip to Mauritius and, in her party was a Jew (her), an Arab and a German “and we all got along famously without any tension or problems. I think the younger generation sees things differently [from the historical perceptions]. “If only the world can be this way in the new year.” Fox says, she is looking forward to sharing apples and honey with her children and grandchildren.



**DOV KLATZKIN**, of Highlands North, wanted to give his own greeting: “What can I say about the new year. It can only PG be an improvement on the present one. One thing’s for sure. This Elul is turning out to be one that we won’t forget in a hurry. “I am extremely optimistic about what 5777 will be. Things are coming right in South Africa, although it’s very hard to see. If they get their act together in Israel and



show a bit of unity, then the sky’s the limit. America is very interesting, Brexit will also be good. “This further goes to show that the Aibishter (G-d) runs the world. We should only know good things and have a good gebentchde yohr (a good and blessed year), be blessed begashmiyus ooberuchnios (blessed materially and spiritually). “PG the rain will come soon, both locally, in Israel and in California where they’ve had terrible drought.”

**BARRY LEVITT**, director of the Israel United Appeal-United Communal Fund campaign in Cape Town, feels Rosh Hashanah is an exciting time of the year. “It is a time when families get together and a time to reflect on past events and to plan and look forward to the year ahead. “We are fortunate to have a close-knit community in Cape Town which offers diverse activities across the Jewish spectrum as well as organisations which cater for the many needs and education of the community. There have been some trying times which have faced us, but, thankfully, due to our resilience as a people, we have overcome them and have emerged as a more united community. “I am optimistic that the future of South African Jewry will be bright and I hope and pray that Diaspora Jews will be safe and secure in whichever country they wish to live,” he said.



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# This Rosh Hashanah, I challenge you to focus on the positives

NINA BADZIN  
MINNEAPOLIS

Two essential parts of preparing for Rosh Hashanah, our clean slate for the year, is asking forgiveness from anyone we wronged and making a list (mental or written) of the ways we fell short since the last time we heard the shofar.

Ideally that hard work of going to friends, family and anyone else deserving of our forgiveness happens in the weeks leading up to Rosh Hashanah. By the time Yom Kippur rolls around 10 days later, we should be ready to confess our mistakes as a community, having already considered our personal paths to “teshuvah”, repentance, and how we will do better this year.

I find the exercise of writing down all my regrets before Rosh Hashanah rather easy. If, like me, you’re the kind of person with a high capacity for guilt, you probably find that task easy, too, since we already felt badly about it during the year.

I regret contributing to any gossip. I regret listening to any gossip. I regret not helping individuals or organisations more. I regret not calling more. I regret not answering the phone. I regret resorting to texts and e-mails. I regret the rudeness of looking at my phone in the middle of a conversation. I regret all the times I rolled my eyes. I regret any time I spoke more than I listened, both in person and online.

I find that my kids, perhaps through nature and nurture, also have no problem (okay, after some prodding) coming up with people deserving of apologies and ways they could have behaved better during the year. Surprisingly, the more challenging task for all of us is remembering the times we could have made the wrong choice but didn’t.

In Rabbi Joseph Telushkin’s book “A Code of Jewish Ethics Volume I: You Shall By Holy,” he suggests that in

addition to focusing on our transgressions before Rosh Hashanah, we also make a list of the good we did this year.

He provides a sample prayer modelled after the Al Chet (“For the sin I committed by...”) recited on Yom Kippur. Instead of “For the sin I committed”, he starts each line with “For the mitzvah we (or I) performed”.

He ends the prayer with these encouraging words: “All these things, G-d, please remember and inspire us to do more acts like these in the year ahead.”

I find the “For the mitzvah I performed” exercise difficult because it feels like a brag sheet and encouraging our kids to similarly “brag” can be confusing for them, too. But the power of focusing on both the mistakes and the positive actions we performed this year is about as powerful of a Rosh Hashanah preparation that you can get.

By considering all the good I did in a year, I am reminded of my capacity to make the right choices, and it provides hope that I can do even more good in the year ahead. Perhaps one day the “mitzvah list” will look longer than the regret list, but I don’t believe G-d expects perfection.

Think about the wisdom of the fact that the one major mitzvah (commandment, not “good deed”) for Rosh Hashanah is to hear the shofar. The shofar is our spiritual wake-up call. It would not be required every year if we were expected to have lived flawlessly.

I challenge everyone to make a list of all the good you did this year, even if it’s something you only did one time and fell short every other time the situation presented itself.

That is the point of this prayer, to remind us that if we were able to avoid, for example, contributing to gossip during one conversation, then we have the capacity to make that same good choice again. I’ll give you a few sample ideas. Remember, even if I only made



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# This Rosh Hashanah, I challenge you to focus on the positives *cont...*

- the right choice once, it counts!
- For the mitzvah I performed by happily donating money to a friend’s race.

• For the mitzvah I performed by consciously focusing on someone’s positive traits even when I was angry, or at least not exaggerating the incident that made me mad.

• For the mitzvah I performed by not passing on information that was not mine to share.

• For the mitzvah I performed by admitting to my spouse or my children that I was wrong.

• For the mitzvah I performed by graciously hosting friends for Shabbat.

• For the mitzvah I performed by introducing friends to each other and introducing professional contacts to each other rather than hoarding the people in my life.

• For the mitzvah I performed by remembering not to “reply all”, thereby

avoiding wasting everyone’s time.

• For the mitzvah I performed by donating my time even when I would rather be watching something on Netflix.

To repeat Rabbi Telushkin’s concluding line: “For all these things, G-d, please remember and inspire us to do more acts like these in the year ahead.” (Kveller via JTA)

• *Nina Badzin is a Minneapolis-based freelance writer. Her essays, short stories and book reviews have appeared on numerous sites and in literary magazines.*
- More news on our website [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)
- # On Yom Kippur, atoning for our online sins
- EDMON J RODMAN  
LOS ANGELES**
- If you’re like me, you blog, read and share a lot of political stuff. But who really reads these posts and articles all the way through? Especially with the longer stories, who has time to look up the sources, or check if that odd photo was first posted on some sketchy partisan website? Instead, we click and we skim; we copy and we paste.
- But then comes Yom Kippur. If we accept the accounting in the Talmud that says “Evil gossip kills three: the one who says it, the one who listens and the subject of the gossip”, we may need to up the ante for an awful lot of headstones come Atonement Day.
- The heart of the Yom Kippur liturgy is the Viddui, the two-part confessional composed of the shorter Ashamnu, an alphabetical acrostic of our wrongdoings, and the longer Al Chet, which explores, at length, the areas where we have fallen short.
- When the Day of Atonement arrives, we will confess to both “unwillingly and willingly” acting out of arrogance, speaking ill of others and rashly judging others and gossiping. And in this year of extreme partisanship, that has me thinking: Has the season of politics gerrymandered our personal boundaries, reshaping the areas of shortcomings for which we need to ask forgiveness?
- Have we wittingly or unwittingly e-mailed unchecked “truths” - and sometimes chequered - to family, friends and people we don’t even know?
- This summer, the problem hit home when a friend forwarded me an e-mail breathlessly purporting to show that by comparison to previous American first ladies, Michelle Obama and Hillary Clinton each had an unprecedented high number of paid White House staff.
- Not passing my sniff test, I looked it up on Snopes.com, a fact-checking website. I discovered the story was filled with false comparisons and easily researchable errors. Yet it was forwarded to me as if the truth.
- Nothing to beat our chests over, you say? Or is it? When we wittingly or otherwise pass along something that damages the reputation of another - not that you have done it, but, um, somebody like you - is this something that we should confess, or make amends for, on Yom Kippur?
- Many of us blindly (or with one eye open) resend or post links to all kinds of things. It seems harmless, makes us feel like we are with it, and our hearts (mine included) go all aflutter when our “friends” praise us even for the most outrageous stuff.
- Posting or forwarding unchecked or unread articles may seem innocuous, but it’s not.
- “The speed and ease with which utter personal destruction and irreparable social division - whether the result of malice, misinformation, or well-intentioned miscalculation - can be brought about through the transmission of words is staggering,” wrote Rabbi Daniel Z Feldman in his book “False Facts and True Rumours: Lashon Hara in Contemporary Culture”.
- Speaking ill of others is known in Judaism as “lashon hara” - evil speech or, simply, gossip. It represents the understanding that words can do real damage - quite unlike the “but words
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- Two bottles of Unorthodox wine are displayed against a background of a repeating blue and white pattern. The pattern features various Jewish cultural and historical motifs, including figures on horseback, people in traditional dress, and architectural elements. The bottle on the left is dark, labeled 'UNORTHODOX KOSHER MERLOT CABERNET SAUVIGNON 2014 PAARL'. The bottle on the right is lighter, labeled 'UNORTHODOX KOSHER SAUVIGNON BLANC 2016 PAARL'. Both bottles have gold-colored foil on their necks.



will never hurt me” maxim we learned as children.

And once that damage is done, how do you repair it? The classic example is of breaking open a feather pillow in the wind and then trying to recover all the feathers. Now imagine the wind as the Internet, spreading the “feathers” to an almost infinite number of unknown destinations. There is no way to get them all back.

Sometimes lashon hara is permitted - for instance, when it is necessary to give information to someone whom you feel will be harmed without it. However, people who are concerned about lashon hara are scrupulous with their speech about others. In places where traditional Jews do business, it’s not unusual to see a sign that says “No Lashon Hara”.

While I don’t expect to see campaign signs dotting lawns with a similar message, perhaps a computer graphic saying “Stick to the Facts” would be useful at this time of year. Being passive listeners or readers of gossip isn’t an excuse, either. According to Feldman, a person “who is on the receiving end of lashon hara must be careful not to act in a way that endorses or supports the offending speech.

“As such, we must evaluate to what degree clicking on websites, and all the more so linking to a website or distributing a link, acts as an extension and facilitation of the original message,” he wrote.

So how should we respond if we have fallen short online? Feldman observes that lashon hara “causes greater spiritual corruption to the offender than a standard transgression causes”, since it registers “a dual effect” - harming the subject and the speaker at once.

In addition, “to the appeal for forgiveness from the victim”, he offers that the three



“basic steps of general repentance are called for: confession, regret and commitment to better behaviour in the future”. In other words, Feldman contends that the traditional response to lashon hara is equally applicable in the digital world.

But how exactly are online amends accomplished? Once these digital “feathers” are released, how do we get them back?

When someone needs to make amends for something they have said, most experts suggest a face-to-face apology, where responsibility is taken with no excuses. For those who we know that we have hurt online, I believe a face-to-face “please forgive me” - or at least a phone call - is very much in order.

Though a similar apology to our online minions seems a physical impossibility, I am wondering if, taking apologies into the digital age, amends could be made by posting a correction. And not just an “oops”, but a link to an analysis of the offending post that reveals its factual flaws, along with several sites useful for fact checking.

As election frenzy reaches its peak during the High Holidays, chances are the shoddily sourced story you forwarded won’t cause personal damage to a candidate; some big-time politician is probably not going to be affected by your post. But what about your reputation, and your relationship with your community?

Attitudes, and possibly votes, may have changed as a result of your untrue post. An online apology won’t get all the feathers back, but it is a start in sewing up the pillow. And providing your list with the tools to fact-

check in the future would be a move toward a more aware online community.

For some, confessing our online mistakes to our friends may be the hardest part. For others, it is acknowledging our shortcomings as part of Yom Kippur’s acts of atonement. On the Day of Atonement, it is custom that with each word or phrase of the Ashamnu we strike our chests. And this year, in particular, I am also going to apply the words from my prayer book to my own keyboard behaviour: We transgress, we quarrel, we mock, we neglect, we gossip.

Indeed, in this new year, amid the heat of an election battle, we are probably all candidates for a keyboard confession.

• *Edmon J Rodman is a JTA columnist who writes on Jewish life from Los Angeles.*


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# Breast cancer - it's definitely not a death sentence

**DR SURESH NAIDOO; PROF BERNARD DONDE; DR KEO TABANE; DR DANIEL VOROBIOF; DR LOUELLA RITZ; DR ELGAR ROGALY; DR SARAH NIETZ; DR CHRIS SNIJMAN AND DR AUBREY MADLIWA – STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE SANDTON RADIATION ONCOLOGY UNIT.**

October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month, which is now an annual campaign. Although most people are aware of breast cancer, many forget to take the steps to screen for early stage disease.

Breast cancer is the most frequently diagnosed malignancy and is the leading cause of cancer death in women worldwide. However, it is important to note that the vast majority of women diagnosed with breast cancer will not die from the disease and are cured as a result of improved treatment and earlier detection.

Most groups advise screening for women over the age of 50. But breast cancer does occur in women younger. When it presents in women younger than 40, it is usually a sign of a genetic trait known as the BRCA mutation or gene.

This is a particular problem among Jewish women of Ashkenazi descent where the risk of this genetic mutation can be as high as 35 per cent of those diagnosed before the age of 40 years. In a comparable population of non-Jewish women, the presence of the mutation was less than 10 per cent.

Breast cancer is uncommon in men but in Ashkenazi Jewish men who present with breast cancer, the incidence of BRCA mutation is about 4,5 per cent. It is recommended that Ashkenazi Jews with any personal or family history of breast cancer should consider having testing for the BRCA gene.

Some suggest that even without a family history of breast cancer, it would be reasonable to screen Ashkenazi Jewish women over the age of 30 for the presence of this gene. Pre- and post-counselling is recommended prior to undergoing this test as the implications

of testing positive can be significant.

BRCA1 positive patients have been estimated by some studies to have a 50-65 per cent chance of developing breast cancer by age 70 and a 40 per cent chance of developing ovarian cancer.

Those carrying the BRCA2 gene have a 45-50 per cent chance of developing breast cancer by age 70 and a 15-20 per cent of developing ovarian cancer. The presence of the gene is associated with development of the disease at a younger age.

If you test positive for the gene, various strategies are available to decrease your chance of developing breast cancer in the future including offering early and more frequent mammographic screening, screening with MRI scans alternating with mammograms every six months, hormonal blocking agents to reduce the risk and risk reduction surgery such as bilateral mastectomies with reconstructions.

The diagnosis of breast cancer no longer means deforming and debilitating surgery such as a mastectomy. Reconstructive surgery has improved to such an extent that even if a mastectomy is needed, reconstruction is possible, leading to a good cosmetic result.

Breast cancer screening using mammography has led to earlier detection with associated improved outcomes. There remain a number of controversies as to when women should start and stop breast cancer screening, but most groups advise screening for women over the age of 50.

Earlier age screening is only recommended for those women who have a higher risk than average for development of the disease and your doctor should be able to advise you if earlier screening is advised.

Some groups recommend annual mammograms while others suggest that every second year is adequate. For women over the age of 75, in particular those in not good health, there is little evidence of a benefit to continue screening programmes.

In the past, self-examination of the breast was recommended but cur-

rently it is felt that this can often lead to increased anxiety and false alarms without any benefit in early detection.

If you would like to continue to examine your breasts yourself, it is advised that you receive instructions from your doctor on how best to do this and to realise that it is not a substitute for regular mammographic screening.

Modern techniques used for mammographic screening have minimised the risks of radiation exposure during the procedure. The main downside of screening is that not infrequently suspicious lesions are seen that require a biopsy.

This can cause unnecessary discomfort and anxiety for the patient. Mammograms sometimes pick up growths that may never have caused any problems but once detected need to be treated as we are unable to be sure that the growth will remain indolent.

But overall, regular mammographic screening for breast cancer has many advantages and few downsides.

Not everyone who gets diagnosed with breast cancer will need chemotherapy. An expert in oncology is required to make this decision and sometimes they may request a genomic profiling of your specific cancer to try determine the potential benefit of adding chemotherapy.

A “one size fits all” approach is no longer appropriate. The treatment will be individualised according to your specific cancer, and your unique situation.

Radiation therapy is required if you have had a lumpectomy or local excision of the cancer alone, if your oncologist feels that you are at risk for a local recurrence of the cancer after mastectomy and for palliation of symptoms such as pain or uncontrolled growth of the cancer.

Patients who have had a mastectomy will need radiation therapy if their growth was large (more than 5cm), incompletely cut out or there were nodes involved under the arm as these factors make the risk of a local recurrence on the chest wall higher.

The risk of recurrence can be significantly reduced by the addition of radiation therapy. The Morningside Breast Care Unit was established with the aim of providing optimal care for patients with breast cancer treated at the Morningside Clinic.

The Clinic believes in the holistic management of patients with cancers and attention to all details regarding each treatment are addressed in the forum thereby ensuring that you will receive the best available treatment.

Breast cancer can have a major psychological impact on the patient and our multidisciplinary team includes qualified counsellors who are experienced in assessing and helping with the problems such as the impact of a diagnosis of cancer, cosmetic deformities or the loss of a breast.

Physiotherapists play an important role in restoring full movement and power to your arm following surgery, preventing and treating severe side effects of surgery and radiation therapy such as swelling. Dieticians play a role in coping with some of side effects of treatment and to ensure a good nutritional status during and after treatment which has been shown to improve outcomes.

## COMMUNITY NOTICE: JHB JEWISH CEMETERIES

It is a time-honoured custom to visit the graves of parents and families before Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. At the time one visits the graves, it is appropriate to give some tzedakah in the name of the deceased. This mitzvah benefits the soul of the departed.

### Visiting Times:

**West Park:** Sunday - Friday from 07:00 - 16:00.  
Please note: West Park will be closed to drive-in traffic to graves on Sunday 2nd & 9th of October. Unfortunately we are not in the position to make any exceptions.  
The cemetery will, however, provide transport during these times.  
**Brixton:** This cemetery has 24 hour security and may be visited on any day except Shabbat and Yomtov.  
**Braamfontein:** No security is available. Should you wish to visit please contact West Park Cemetery to make the necessary arrangements. The community is encouraged to visit this cemetery in groups of at least two.

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Last week, the Board issued statements condemning the appearance of anti-Muslim graffiti and through the Hate Crimes Working Group welcomed the government’s decision to prohibit the radical anti-gay, and anti-Semitic, pastor Steven Anderson from visiting South Africa.

Both statements were covered by the mainstream media, with the Board’s Alana Baranov also being interviewed by several radio stations.

**WJC: Keeping us connected in challenging times**

Last week, SAJBD National President Mary Kluk attended the annual meeting of the World Jewish Congress executive committee, on which she sits as the representative for South African Jewry.

A key focus of the discussions was on ensuring the security of Jewish communities throughout the world, particularly the smaller ones who lack the resources to maintain the requisite security

**Unveiling 16th-century Torah used by crypto-Jews in Portugal**

COVILHA Portugal - A small city in northeast Portugal recently unveiled a 400-year-old Torah scroll that a local contractor had found 10 years ago at a demolition site.

The ancient scroll, written on parchment, was put on display in Covilha City Hall last week and is believed to have been used in secret during the Portuguese Inquisition by crypto-Jews, or so-called New Christians.

In excellent condition even after centuries of storage in less than ideal conditions, the scroll will be taken for preservative storage at the end of the month, the paper reported.

It was discovered during a demolition carried out in 2006. The contractor was intrigued by the scroll and took it from the site. He kept it rolled up in a bed sheet at his home until earlier this year, when he mentioned it to archaeologists working on a different project, who offered to help him figure out what the object was.

Portugal once had a Jewish population of hundreds of thousands before 1536, when the country initiated its version of the Inquisition - a campaign of persecution led by the Catholic Church and local rulers against non-Christians, who fled the Iberian peninsula en masse or stayed after converting to Christianity under duress.

Whereas many of the Jews who fled tried to take certain religious artefacts with them, including Torah scrolls, others hid them before.

Carlos Madaleno, the co-ordinator of municipal museums in Covilha, told Diario de Noticias that the old Jewish quarters of the city was no longer in existence when the scroll was used. He said it was likely the possession of forced converts to Christianity who kept the scroll in secret. (JTA)

# An injury to one an injury to all

levels.  
The WJC has established a sophisticated security department which has, inter alia, established effective channels of communication with constituent countries and through which it works with the respective countries’ leaderships to identify how and where the WJC can assist.

One of the highpoints of the meeting was an address by Judge Neal Hendel describing how Israel goes about fulfilling its mission to be a Jewish state while at the same time striving to uphold the highest standards of democracy and equality for all its citizens.

It is a complex challenge in a complex

society, yet what Israel has achieved and is achieving in terms of these ideals, remains a measure against which all countries with diverse communities ought to be measured.

**Jews of South Africa Exhibition**

Last week Thursday, a series of cultural and educational events to mark 175 years of Jewish life in South Africa culminated in the opening of a superb new exhibition on what it has meant to be a Jewish South African over the generations.

The SAJBD Cape Council partnered with the SA Jewish Museum in putting together the exhibition, which has been a

remarkable success and which we hope to bring up to Johannesburg eventually.

I endorse our Cape Chairman Eric Marx’s remarks on the occasion, when he cited the famous injunction in Pirkei Avot not to separate oneself from the community and went on to stress how our strength as a Jewish community has always been on how unified and well-structured we have been, while at the same time playing our part in the wider society.

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# Small ‘non-event’ turns Malat march into a major event

MICHAEL BELLING

A modest commemoration of the 75th anniversary of a Nazi massacre in the small Lithuanian village of Malat at the end of August turned into a major event, attended by thousands from several countries and an unscheduled visit by the Lithuanian president and other dignitaries.

It began about 18 months ago, when Arnold Garber of Johannesburg (pictured), whose parents left Malat in the 1930s, received a call from another Malat descendant in Israel, Tzvi Kritzer, who suggested they get a few Malat descendants together from various countries to commemorate the August 29, 1941 massacre.

At the time, some 2 400 people lived in the village, 2 000 of them Jews. On August 29, 1941, the Nazis arrived and with the help of the locals, every single Jew was murdered in a single day, including members of Garber’s and Kritzer’s families.

Initially Garber was not optimistic that the event would take place. The two dozen Malat descendants in South Africa, other than Garber himself, were unable to make the trip; Garber told Kritzer he wondered whether there would even be a minyan to say Kaddish.

But after contacting people in Argentina, the US, Australia and South Africa, they managed to get a commitment from about 60 people, including several former South Africans from Australia.

Garber - whose parents’ name was Garberovich in Yiddish, or Garberovicius in Lithuanian - told Jewish Report that his parents left Lithuania in the 1930s, eventually settling in Argentina, where he was born. Garber came to South Africa in 1964, where he married another former Argentinian, Sarita.

“The Soviets eliminated the Holocaust as a Jewish issue,” he said. “The stone on the mass grave in Malat just said 2 000 Soviet citizens were killed.

“When Lithuania became independent [in 1990], they changed the school curriculum and started teaching about the Holocaust, so the youth today know about it.”

As the small multinational group of Jews was preparing for the modest ceremony, a prominent non-Jewish Lithuanian journalist, who is also a well-known local actor, picked up the story. The journalist had been born in Malat in the years after the War.

“He wrote an article that went viral,” Garber said.

“The gist of the article was that 75 years ago, non-Jewish Lithuanians watched how our fellow Malaters were walked to the



slaughter just because they were Jewish. Are we going to watch from the windows again, or this time are we going to walk with them?

“The article touched a nerve of non-Jewish Lithuanians and awoke in them a desire to be involved in the memorial ceremony, perhaps because of morality, perhaps because of guilt about what their grandparents and great-grandparents did.”

Eventually some 3 000 people attended the march, about 95 per cent of them not Jewish, including the mayor of Malat and other dignitaries, but the most prominent surprise participant was Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė, herself.

The Israeli ambassador to Lithuania, Amir Maimon, was among the speakers at the ceremony in the middle of Malat, before the marchers walked about 1,5 kilometres to the mass grave site, where a new gravestone was unveiled.

The night before the ceremony, Garber heard one of the visitors talking in Spanish with an Argentinian accent and they got into conversation. After a few minutes the visitor asked Garber whether he had heard of former Malaters by the name of Garberovich.

Garber was stunned, telling him they were his parents. The man then told Garber that his mother and Garber’s mother had been best friends in Lithuania and had continued their friendship in Argentina. He even reminded Garber that they used to play together as children in Buenos Aires, where he still lives.

Garber’s impression of the event was: “We have come a long way from being marched to death. Now we were escorted by Lithuanian police and listened to the ambassador of the independent State of Israel.”

## Lily was there when Glendale Home turned 50

NOLA GERDIS

“No one is more cherished in this world than someone who lightens the burden of another.” - Author Unknown”

Glendale Home in Cape Town was founded in 1966 when a group of concerned people from the Jewish community recognised the need for a home for the Jewish intellectually challenged.

Glendale has been home to over 100 residents through the years, providing not only a loving and caring environment, but residential care including nursing, social work, physiotherapy and a stimulation centre enables the residents to reach their full potential.

The staff play an active role in the residents’ day-to-day life and their commitment to the residents is evident in the mutual love and respect.

On September 4, Glendale Home hosted invited guests to celebrate 50 years of dedicated

and loyal service by Lily Cammerman. Cammerman was instrumental in the development of Glendale when, in 1966, she campaigned tirelessly to raise funds to help build a home for members of the Jewish community who were intellectually challenged.

Throughout the years Cammerman has been a volunteer, a committee member, a fundraiser and most importantly a dear friend to residents and staff at Glendale. She fondly refers to all the residents as her grandchildren and even at the age of 91, still ensures that their wellbeing and care is always at the highest level.

It was indeed a special occasion as Cammerman’s family, children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren travelled from around South Africa to share in this day of appreciation for her.

To mark the occasion, one of the newly-renovated wings in the home was dedicated to Cammerman.



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# Jewish routes in Cape Town and Western Cape



## STEVEN ALBERT

A few years ago, I had an idea to research the old synagogues around Cape Town and the Western Cape. I travelled through most of the small towns, writing about the shuls, their histories and the Jewish communities.



The Calvinia Synagogue was built in 1918 at a cost of £1 400 and opened in 1920. Used by the community for the last time in August 1968, the building was donated to the municipality for use as a museum in 1970.

It is an excellent museum, with a section devoted to the Jewish community including photographs of Jewish businesses, homes and local personalities, and local rugby and soccer teams with Jewish members.

Curator Maxie Hugo has extensive knowledge of the Jewish community. After I photographed and recorded her store of documents and photographs, she drove me around the streets, pointing out the Jewish houses, relating who lived where, what happened to them and other information. Many of the homes and



business premises are still standing.

The Uniondale Shul is something to behold. A small building, very understated, quaint, unassuming, as were just about all the shuls I had seen. But inside, the ceiling was painted, covered from end to end with puffy clouds, blue skies and beaming Stars of David.

Synagogues are traditionally unadorned - and certainly the old structures were austere, almost ascetic in their complete lack of decoration. The Uniondale Shul was beautiful, almost whimsical with its stars and shining magenei David blazing across the ceiling. I've never seen anything like it.

Built in approximately 1901, it was either sold or given to the municipality in 1976 and bought by the Lions Club in 1994.

Oudtshoorn had two shuls. The early immigrants came from Shavel (in Lithuania), a large, industrial, metropolitan city. Later immigrants came from Kelm, an older, deeply religious, strictly Orthodox community.

The first shul was built in 1888, in Queen Street. Its first rabbi (Rabbi Meyer Woolfson) was from Russia

but had spent many years in England.

The two groups had very different ideas about Judaism. The Kelm Jews felt the Shavel Jews were too anglicised, and not Orthodox enough, while the more established Shavel congregation regarded the Kelm Jews as new arrivals.

In light of these irreconcilable differences, the Kelm Jews decided to build their own shul, one in St John's Street, in 1892. The Queen Street followers called it "The Green Shul", referring to their "new" status in the community, while the St John's Street congregation, in turn, was called Queen Street "The Englische Shul", in reference to the anglicised nature of their services.

Ultimately the congregations united in Queen Street. The St John's Street Shul fell into disuse and was eventually demolished. The Queen Street Shul (now Baron von Reede Street) is a charming, almost mediaeval-looking structure, still in use today. If Robin Hood had been Jewish, he would have got married here.



Vredehoek's is a beautiful art deco building, and is the only one like it that I've seen. Built in 1939 and closed in 1993, it is a most unusual and original structure.

The Vredehoek congregation moved from Constitution Street in District Six (established in 1903) in 1940. When Vredehoek closed, the congregation moved further over the mountain, to Herzlia school. Much of the content of the shul went to the Schoonder Street Shul, itself later demolished.

The building itself was reasonably well-maintained. When I visited, it had been painted a rather gaudy red and blue, and housed an import/export, rugs and furniture dealer.

Many of the original fixtures were piled in odd corners around the building. It has now been quite beautifully restored to pretty much what it had looked like in the old photographs I found.

The Woodstock Shul (built 1910, refurbished 1950) lies in the heart of what would have been the centre of "old" Cape Town.

The shul was auctioned off in 1986 and, when I visited, was in use as a factory of sorts. At the time, it was that dirty grey that buildings go after years of weathering and neglect. The balcony had been sealed off, forming a separate second floor.

The only remaining sign of its spiritual heritage was the Star of



David design windows - one large window in the centre of the building and two smaller ones on either side. But even these were difficult to discern - the large window now lay in between the two floors.

When I went past again, the entire complex had been rather creatively painted, showing off the architecture in an interesting fashion. Since then, the shul and its hall have seen yet another change. Painted fresh white, the hall is now a gallery.

• Steven Albert is a writer and researcher.

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# An ode to the Germiston community

**BASIL KLETZ**

It has been said that Litvak immigrants were optimistic, courageous, adaptable, industrious and generous. These qualities were certainly discernible in the founders of the Germiston Jewish community. Above all they were devoted to their religion and Jewishness while contributing much to the progress of the (East Rand) town.

From 1900-1902 High Holiday services were held in the Masonic Hall. In 1903, the year in which the Germiston municipality was proclaimed, the Germiston and Georgetown Hebrew Congregation was founded.

A piece of ground was granted by the Germiston City Council for use as a Jewish cemetery in Primrose (consecrated on August 11, 1907). Additional ground was given to the community in 1947, with the present ohel built on that ground a few months later.

On July 19, 1960, two thirds of the ground allocated was taken by the council and passed on to other denominations.

By the mid-1960s, 600 families lived in Germiston but sadly the community dwindled and the shul doors finally closed in 2001.

A management committee was elected to ensure continuity of services at Primrose cemetery, that repair and maintenance be monitored and to eventually hand over everything to an organisation capable of caring for the assets and facility into perpetuity.

In the mid-1980s we were granted additional ground and again in 1996 which has been important for funeral and unveiling services when needed, at the cemetery.

On August 31 this year this ground was consecrated - exactly 109 years after the original land was consecrated. Rabbis who made the trip to Primrose to participate in the ceremony were Dayan Zadok Suchard, Dayan David Baddiel, Rabbi Anton Klein, director of the Beth Din, the Edenvale spiritual head Rabbi Ze'ev Gruzd who grew up in Germiston and Rabbi Jonathan Fox representing the Johannesburg Chevrah Kadisha.

At the consecration ceremony, Rabbi Suchard praised those who were looking after the cemetery and community

Tehillim were then recited. First was Psalm 102, followed by a walk around the area to be consecrated. At the north-western corner, Psalm 103 was recited. Hakafot around the new ground was done seven times while reciting Psalm 91 and Psalm 104 each Hakava. Recitation of Isaiah (42:10-21) followed the

## Jewish Women's Benevolent appeals to generosity of community

**JUDY WAINER  
CHAIRMAN, JWBS**

With Rosh Hashanah approaching and the many commitments we incur towards welfare, my grandmother's words keep ringing in my ears, "Mein kind... we look after our own."

Jewish values have been instilled in us from our rich Jewish heritage that was continually passed down in the community to which we are so privileged to belong.

The Jewish Women's Benevolent Society has made this its life's work, to heed this call, to take care of our brothers and sisters with shelter, education, food and clothing.

Anne Frank said: "How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world."

If you aren't already a member of the JWBS, please don't wait a moment longer to make a difference to those who desperately need your help NOW.

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Responsive prayers were then recited by Rabbi Klein and all present followed by a concluding prayer, before Rabbi Suchard recited Kaddish.

It is ironic that the history of the community which began at the birth of Germiston, should also end as the city ceased to exist as an independent municipality,

- Basil Kletz was president of the UHI (United Hebrew Institutions) of Germiston from 1983-1989 and 1992-2001 when the community closed. Since 2002 he has been chairman of the management committee looking after the facilities at Primrose cemetery.



Rabbi Zadok Suchard; Rabbi Jonathan Fox; and Rabbi David Baddiel.

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MAIN PHOTO : BRETT FLORENS



# King David Sandton Primary kids learning to connect



**SEAN KORB**

With the High Holy Days fast approaching, King David Primary School Sandton has embarked on a Mishnah programme which will last the month of Elul and the days leading to Yom Kippur.

This is the third year of this programme and this year the focus has been directed at understanding the origins of the oral Torah as well as a glimpse into some of the Mishnayot it holds.

Each learner who has joined this programme will be donating R5 to be given to the Chevrah Kadisha on their behalf.

The learners of King David Primary School Sandton are commended on being part of such an incredible learning experience.

Foundation Phase Learners of King David Primary School Sandton.

## CycAlive boys dish out stationery and footballs in Kliptown

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Grade 11 boys from Torah Academy, who recently participated in CycAlive, visited Soweto to hand out stationery and footballs to schools in the areas of Pace Commercial Secondary School. The funds for the schools were raised by the cyclists from Pace, Moletsane High School and Torah Academy through their annual relay ride to Durban.

Pictured with Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, principal of Torah Academy Boys’ High, the boys hand over the stationery to the Future Angels Nursery School in Kliptown.

“The people of Kliptown are so happy. Yet they have no running water, no electricity, sewerage or garbage collection. Yet their area is neat and clean,” Rabbi Chaikin remarked.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

## Few minutes a day help hone EQ skills

SHIRA FINKEL

The children of Sandton Sinai Pre-Primary spend a few minutes every morning developing their EQ (emotional intelligence) skills. This concept of mindfulness is used in each class to give the children time to relax and gather their thoughts for the day, while allowing them to go into their day feeling empowered and positive.

This form of relaxation gives them time to work on their emotions and thoughts, while focusing on their social-emotional skills, especially during the month of Elul. By harvesting self-acceptance in themselves, the school hopes it will in turn give them the skills to do the same for others.



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# Sydenham batmitzvah group celebrate in style

SHIRLEY STEIN

Sydenham Shul’s second batmitzvah ceremony of 2016 took place on Sunday September 11 and was a most beautiful and meaningful occasion. This time, Tenielle Israelsohn, Netanya Mindel, Tali Pimstein, Mikayla Plitt, Gabi Sassen and Noa Sidi entered Jewish womanhood in style.

The girls delivered an outstanding choral verse presentation entitled “A Matter of Hope”, written by Amanda Porter. In it, they shared the special and unique contributions of contemporary Jewish heroines including Rachel Fraenkel, Ally Reisman, and Sheryl Sandberg among others.

Each of these role models expressed their Jewish identity and called on their heritage to help them through their experiences, good or bad. The girls also lit a candle in memory of a girl who perished in the Holocaust and never had a batmitzvah.

Sydenham’s Rabbi Yossy Goldman delivered a powerful talk to the girls, sharing a very moving message from 9/11 and a story from the Holocaust depicting the power of hope. Yudi Cohen and the Sydenham Choir sang beautiful contemporary songs that were relevant for the occasion and the theme. The rabbi, chazzan and choir then shared a musical blessing..

Special thanks were given to Lee Unterslak for teaching the girls and Ingrid Seeff for all the arrangements.



Amanda Porter; Lee Unterslak; Tali Pimstein; Tenielle Israelsohn; Gabi Sassen; Noa Sidi; Netanya Mindel; Mikayla Plitt; Ingrid Seeff; and Rabbi Yossy Goldman.

# Interfaith soccer at Herzlia scores plenty goodwill



Tina Brenzel (director of sport, Herzlia); Ben Vogelmann (under-12 captain); Jordan Arelisky (under-14 captain); Liam Shirley; Jamie Sulcas (under-15 captain); Noam Mazor (under-19 captain); Geoff Cohen (director of education, Herzlia).

TRACY KLASS

Last week Sunday saw United Herzlia Schools host the fourth year of the Interfaith Football Tournament. The tournament was started in 2012 by Liam Shirley who at the time was coaching at both Herzlia and Islamia and felt there was a need to bring these two communities together through his passion for football.

This year, for the first time a Christian School, Bishops Diocesan College was added to make the tournament a truly interfaith affair.

Also this year, in honour of fellow Herzlia and Bishops learner Rohan Bloom, who passed away following a long battle with cancer, it was renamed The Rohan Bloom Interfaith Football Cup. The day was opened with prayers from a representative from each religion: Jewish (Rabbi Cannon and Shimpa Moch); Muslim (Sheik Sadullah Kahn) and Christian (Youth Pastor Justin Wools).

The Junior cup (under-12 and under-14) was won by Herzlia after beating their opponents Islamia in the final, 6-0 and 5-0

The Senior cup (under-15 and under-19) was a much tighter affair with Herzlia coming out on top with a narrow points margin over Islamia and Bishops.

# The power of compound interest

TZIVIA GRAUMAN

When eight-year-old Georgia Ross arrived at the building site of the new Arcadia Children’s Home with her mother, grandfather and twin sister, Amber, she presented the Chevrah Kadisha’s Michael Sieff with an envelope containing R1 893,50 and a huge bag of sweets and chocolates. It was all for the Arcadia children and had been collected by the grade 2 girls of Sandton Sinai.

Georgia’s maths project was all about compound interest and the importance of saving. She encouraged her 11 classmates to participate and gave out saving jars.

All the kids who wanted to get involved had to bring R5 a day for the whole month of August. Around her neck Georgia wore a blackboard with the words: “Money can buy you happiness if you give it to charity”.



Photo: Tzivya Grauman

Zeida Mervyn Shapiro with Michael Sieff and the Ross twins, Georgia (left) and Amber.





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We wish to express our sincere appreciation for all your love and support received during our time of loss. Thank you all for the acts of kindness shown to our family on the passing of our beloved mother Heather Berman z"l. Thank you for being there for us. Regards Bernard and Peter Berman, Riva Flax and Debbie Hirschowitz

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Friday (September 23)

• UZLC hosts Reeva Forman on “Glass Half Full - Half Empty - South Africa and Israel”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45-14:00.  
Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Sunday (September 25)

• RCHCC screens the Academy Award-winning documentary “20 Feet From Stardom” – unusual heroes behind the greatest music of our time. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R70 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378, e-mail: **rchcc@telkomsa.net** or **rene.s@telkomsa.net** or **www.greatpark.co.za**

• Second Innings hosts Darren Sevitz on “Hatzolah Medical Rescue - Eighteen Years Of Life”. Venue: Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

Monday (September 26)

• UJW adult education division hosts Prof Peter Delius, Wits University historian and author on “The Squandered Treasure of a Forsaken World - Bokoni 1500 – 1820”. Venue:

1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (September 27)

• RCHCC hosts a talk by former American diplomat J Brooks Spector’ on “Trump and Clinton - After the First Debate - Now What? (Who Won Who Lost, and What Does it Mean, Anyway?)”. Venue: Clive M Beck Auditorium. Time: 19:30. Donation: R80 (incl refreshments). Booking: Hazel or René (011) 728-8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378 or e-mail: **rchcc@telkomsa.net** or **rene.s@telkomsa.net**

Wednesday (September 28)

• Chabad House presents the “Waking up to Life Seminar”, a 90-minute seminar and multi-sensory experience that explores the crossroads of Torah and positive psychology, It is a workshop focused on developing the attitude of gratitude. Focusing on positive psychology and the Jewish concept of thankfulness. Venue: Sandton Central Shul. Time: 19:15. Contact: Rabbi Ari Kievman (011) 440-6600 or e-mail **rak@chabad.org.za**

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer Dept of English at Wits, on the eighth lecture on

“Enjoying Contemporary Poetry”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R40. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (September 29)

• JJAC invites Jewish singles aged 27 - 49 to a “Table Tennis and Games Evening”. Venue: Sandton Shul. Time: 19:00. E-mail **whatson@jjac.co.za** for details.

Friday (September 30)

• Shalom Masorti Seniors Club meets on the last Friday of every month. Come and meet new friends and have lighthearted fun. Tea will be served and there will be a selection of board and card games to play. Reeva Forman will speak about Temple Israel in Hillbrow. Information: Esther (011) 485-5619 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday mornings.

Sunday (October 9)

• Big Band Music Appreciation Society meets at St John’s College Auditorium St David Road Houghton. Compiled by Lionel Gordon, a short video will be screened a tribute to Ella Fitzgerald and after interval a DVD on Quincy Jones. Time: 14:15 sharp. Enquiries: Marilyn 072-243-7436 or Jack 082-450-7622.

Sport

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In last Sunday night's clash between Hapoel Ra'anana and Maccabi Tel Aviv in Israel's Premier Soccer League (Ligat Ha'Al), Zama Rambuwane, on loan to Ra'anana from Super Sport United in South Africa, played a full 45 minutes of the second half. Maccabi Tel Aviv beat the hosts Ra'anana 3-0.

Zama made an impressive start and is slowly but surely acclimatising to his new environment.

The city of Ra'anana is home to many South African Jewish expatriates and even the wife of the mayor hails from Johannesburg.



Photo: Dov Halickman

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# Daniel Mendoza - the Jew who changed the face of boxing

JACK MILNER

Jewish sports history is fascinating because physicality disappeared from the Jewish psyche after the defeat of Judea by the Romans. As Jews moved into the Diaspora and became segregated from others societies, life moved more towards religion.

The focus was on studying and probably led to every Jewish mother wanting her son to become a doctor, lawyer or accountant.

But from the time of Moses through to the likes of Bar Kochba, fighting was part of Jewish life. We fought our way into the Land of Israel and had to fight to defend it. So it comes as no surprise that so many Jews have been prominent boxers. In fact, it was a Jew - Daniel Mendoza - who forever changed the stereotype of Jewish “sissy”.

Daniel Abraham Aaron Mendoza was born on July 5, 1764 in Aldgate, London and died on September 3, 1836.

He is regarded as the father of scientific boxing. At a time when the sport of boxing consisted primarily of barehanded slugging, Mendoza introduced the concept of defence. He developed the guard, the straight left, and sidestepping.

This new strategy - the Mendoza School, also referred to as the Jewish School - was criticised in some circles as cowardly. But it permitted Mendoza to fully capitalise on his small stature, speed, and punching power.

His first fight was in 1780 when he was 16. He was working for a tea dealer in Aldgate and the fight was to settle a dispute with a porter over the latter’s remuneration for a consignment of tea. Mendoza stated that the porter, rather than charging his regular fee, “behaved in a manner unfit for a gentleman”, demanding twice the usual price.

After much arguing between the proprietor of the tea dealership and the porter, the porter suggested that they should settle the dispute with fists. Mendoza believing that the porter was bullying his employer accepted the challenge on his employer’s behalf. The fight took place in the street outside the tea dealership in a hastily constructed ring.

The fight lasted some 45 minutes, ending when the porter declared he was unable to continue. This victory brought a small measure of fame to Mendoza as stories of the fight



**A cartoon of the battle between Daniel Mendoza and Richard Humphries fought on Wednesday May 6, 1789 at Stilton in Huntingdonshire, by James Aitken, published in 1789.**

spread through the surrounding neighbourhoods.

His early boxing career was defined by three wins over his former mentor, Richard Humphries, between 1788 and 1790.

The third bout set history in another way. It was the first time spectators were charged an entry fee to a sporting event. The fights were hyped by a series of combative letters in the press between Humphries and Mendoza.

Mendoza’s memoirs report he got involved in three fights while on his way to watch a boxing match. The reasons were: someone’s cart cut in, he felt a shopkeeper was trying to cheat him, and thirdly, he did not like the way a man was looking at him...

According to the Ring Boxing Record Book, Mendoza was undefeated in 27 straight fights prior to 1788. Bare-knuckle fights ended when an opponent was knocked out or unable to continue or by foul or a draw. Mendoza defeated his first 27 opponents by knockout.

Though he was only five feet seven inches (170 cm) tall and weighed only 73 kg, Mendoza was England’s 16th heavyweight champion from 1792 to 1795, and is the first middleweight to ever win the heavyweight championship of the world.

In 1789 he opened his own boxing academy and published the book *The Art of Boxing* on modern, scientific-style boxing, from which every subsequent boxer learned.

Mendoza, a descendant of Spanish Marranos who had lived in London for nearly a century, became such a popular figure in England that songs were written about him, and his name appeared in scripts of numerous plays.

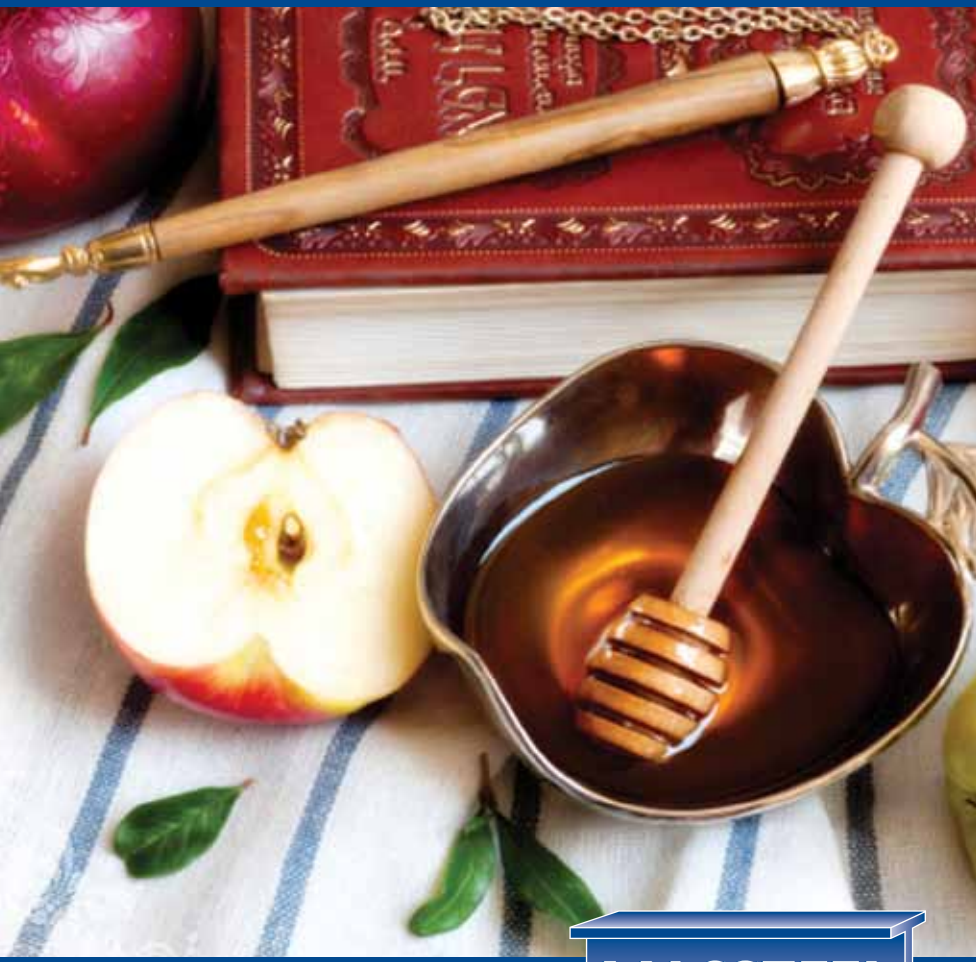
His personal appearances would fill theatres, portraits of him and his fights were popular subjects for artists, and commemorative medals were struck in his honour.

Mendoza was one of the inaugural group elected in 1954 to the Boxing Hall of Fame and of the inaugural class of the International Boxing Hall of Fame in 1990.

Mendoza helped transform the popular English stereotype of a Jew from a weak, defenceless person into someone deserving of respect. He is said to have been the first Jew to talk to King George III.

*L'Shanah Tovah*

Wishing you health, happiness and success in the New Year!



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# Shanah Tovah

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