



Goldstuck
& Bush on
raising tech-
savvy kids
(page 11).

South African Jewish Report

www.sajr.co.za



The Shabbos Project: Now on Broadway!

Manhattan's bustling neon-lit Times Square is a far cry from the restful oasis that is Shabbat, but that didn't stop Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and his New York partners from spreading the word there about the global initiative that will see over a million Jews worldwide keeping Shabbat together in 64 countries and some 460 cities, according to the organisers. The massive electronic billboard on Broadway and 47th Avenue screens Shabbos Project messaging every hour, encouraging tourists and frazzled New Yorkers yearning for an escape to #keepittogether this Shabbat. <http://www.theshabbosproject.org/> See more on www.sajr.co.za

Cosatu wants Israel expelled from WMA

"The Palestinian-led and internationally-backed BDS is a non-violent strategic campaign to hold the State of Israel accountable to international law and human rights."

3

Israel's emerging Muslim-majority ally

But now, along comes Azerbaijan - the world's first Muslim-majority democracy - which is fast taking the place of Turkey in becoming a crucial ally of Israel in the Muslim world.

6

A tribute to Rabbi Norman (Nachman) Meir Bernhard

"I warned our community that revolutionaries have long memories, so we must do things that are publicly Jewish to encourage change and to do something real for upliftment."



8,9

Israel has good friends in Africa

They said they received a mandate from G-d to get the church in Africa to understand the importance of the Nation of Israel in His plan and for the church to stand and bless Israel.

4

SAKS: Common hatred, ideological differences

Most Jews remain proud of Israel, but it is now an angry, defensive pride as opposed to the "stand tall with heads held up high" pride of our grandparents' generation.

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The infirm or elderly may now pedal halachically

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Shiur-On-Sally’s Alley last Sunday launched a pedal-operated mechanical vehicle at Pembury Retirement Lodge in Melrose, to be used on the Shabbos Project to provide halachically permitted transport to the nearby Chabad of Melrose Shul, for the over 70 Jewish residents living in the lodge, and to allow them to keep a complete Shabbos.

The launch was enthusiastically supported and enjoyed, by residents and their family and friends. Rabbi Shaun Wingrin of Shiur-On-Sally’s Alley addressed the gathering and described the clear hand of Hashem being involved, in obtaining this unusual and costly vehicle, and in getting it launched.

Authoritative rabbinic permission for its use on

Shabbos, was sought, and permission was granted, to prevent Shabbos desecration, for infirm individuals or senior citizens, when a non-Jewish person pedals it.

Rabbi Wingrin, believes that such a vehicle may be manufactured locally and modified to comply with halachah to allow general Shabbos use, where a clear need exists, and could conceivably then even be operated by a Jew, as it is an entirely mechanically-operated vehicle.

This would no doubt benefit many, who have difficulty walking, to travel within the eiruv on Shabbos, in a permitted and relaxed way.

The plan is to establish a Shabbos Institute to accomplish this, and interested parties are requested to contact him. More information may be obtained from shiuronsallys@gmail.com or call 081-391-3193.



Stella Beder and Ashnah Ephron with operators Onel Kumalo and Charles Mahlangu, preparing for Rabbi Shaun Wingrin to take them on the launch ride of the mobility vehicle for the Shabbos Project.

Ebola protocols in place at Israel’s Ben-Gurion Airport, hospitals



JERUSALEM - Israel’s Ben-Gurion Airport on Sunday began implementing protocols put in place to prevent an outbreak of the Ebola virus in the Jewish state.


Passengers arriving in Israel from West African countries plagued by the deadly virus are being tested for fever or any other symptoms related to Ebola. Air Sinai passengers were escorted to a hall in Terminal 1, where their temperatures were taken using infrared thermometers.

All passengers were examined within 10 minutes and found to be in good health. They were then shuttled back to Terminal 3 to complete their entrance procedures into Israel.

Also on Sunday, the Israeli Health Ministry ordered the formation of two emergency treatment centres for potential Ebola patients, at the Chaim Sheba Medical Centre outside Tel Aviv and the Rambam Medical Centre in Haifa. The centres are equipped with isolation tents.

“The special isolation tents were set up at the lower level of the hospital’s underground emergency compound,” Professor Rafi Beyar, Rambam hospital’s director, told Israel Hayom. “This will allow us to ensure [Ebola] patients are indeed isolated from the other wards, and since the facility is equipped for emergencies, it has the same infrastructure as the regular hospital.” (JNS.org)

Support, survive, secure



Rav Ilan Herrmann
Doornfontein Hebrew Congregation

The event of the great deluge that convulsed the world in the story of Noah is replete with powerful messages that are core to life. It is a story of one man’s defiance against a corrupt world; a longsuffering G-d who patiently awaits a reversal of man’s conduct. Noah is ascribed the title of righteousness and is rewarded with a salvation for his devotion.

But one area that Noah fell short on was his reaching out to mankind. He was promised an exit ticket to safety from the flood but he didn’t do enough to help others to find a way out. So the story of Noah also conveys a vital lesson in our duty to extend a helping hand to our fellow man.

The flood represents on a deeper level the torrential hardships of making a living. In this context while one may have by G-d’s grace been

afforded the opportunity of being “above water” being “comfortable”, safely in the floating ark, the responsibility to assist another in finding his or her safety in the ark above the drowning currents of life, is prescribed and mandated by the Torah, by G-d!

For so many the extraordinary umbrella group of the Chevrah Kaddisha is an ark of safety.

But to turn our attention to a sometimes overlooked injunction that should be upheld and emphasised during these difficult times: That is - it is a mitzvah to prioritise by giving one’s business to a fellow Jew and thus help support a member of the community.

Of course there are clauses to this such as that the service has to match the alternative; the cost and quality must compete and some others. But all things equal, the business opportunity must be afforded to one’s fellow Jew.

In two recent conversations with businessmen, the lament went something like this: “I contribute and support community in many ways but I find the business seems to go else-

where.”

Often an investment into Jewish business translates into an internal cycle of financial circulation benefiting others within the community.

We are all aware that the wheel of fortune can sometimes be kind while at other times...

The story is told that a miser was decreed from Heaven to lose his fortune after he had summarily ejected a beggar from his extravagant party. Now a beggar himself, he was informed by a seer that his fortune had been bequeathed to the very beggar he had insulted those years back.

He was also told that the only way to regain his fortune was to have that now affluent person eject him from his abode and a repeat reversal of fortune would again take place.

Dressed in rags, bathed in dirt and with a stench that reeked of impurities, the beggar gatecrashed a party of the now wealthy man. His uncouth behaviour and attempts to get himself thrown out by the host failed, for the host remembered how he himself had been at

the bottom of the barrel not that long ago.

When the beggar confessed his guile and told him the story, the wealthy host empathised and decided to support the man to his last day.

Every act helping an individual or family from the furious flood of life and offered room in the ark, is surely of the greatest of the mitzvot in the Torah. It is also a sure-fire way to encourage G-d to preserve and increase one’s material blessing.

A simple start can be by giving that Jewish business the opportunity to quote you the next time you make a call.

Shabbat Times		
October 24 / 30 Tishrei		
October 25 / 1 Cheshvan		
Parshat Noach		
18:01	18:52	Johannesburg
18:15	19:43	Cape Town
17:54	18:46	Durban
18:12	19:04	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:14	Port Elizabeth
18:10	19:03	East London

South African

Jewish Report

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Cosatu wants Israel to be expelled from WMA

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Cosatu (Congress of SA Trade Unions) and its health sector affiliates Nehawu (National Education Health and Allied Workers Union), Denosa (Democratic Nursing Association of SA) and the SA Medical Association (SAMA), have in a joint statement called for the expulsion of the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) from the World Medical Association (WMA).

Cosatu is an alliance partner in SA’s ANC-led government.

In a media release dated October 7, Cosatu pointed out that it was “one of the first trade unions in the world that endorsed the international boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel campaign.

“In 2005, with Israel’s occupation, human rights abuses, violations of international law and illegal Israeli settlement activity increasing, Palestinians (inspired by the successful boycott and isolation of apartheid South Africa) called on the international community to support a non-violent campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel and its companies until Israel complies with international law and respects human rights.

“The Palestinian-led and internationally-backed BDS campaign is a practical, non-violent, goal-orientated, focused and strategic campaign to hold the State of Israel accountable to international law and human rights.

“The BDS campaign is also increasingly supported by (progressive) Israelis. The international isolation of Israel, it is hoped, will lead to the necessary conditions for a just peace to be negotiated - similar to what occurred in South Africa and brought about a democratic country for all our people.”

Nehawu and Denosa, together with other organisations, held a protest outside the World Medical Association (WMA) on Friday October 10, at Durban’s International Convention Centre. The protest was supported by the Islamic Medical Association, KZN Palestine Solidarity Forum, BDS South Africa and Cosatu affiliates.

Giving some background, Cosatu says: “Steve Biko was an anti-apartheid activist who died in police custody as a result of torture. The failures of the (white) medical community in South Africa at that time finally led to a split in the World Medical Association.

“The failure of the Medical Association of

South Africa and the WMA to clearly stand up for human rights at that time, was certainly one of the serious mistakes of these organisations. Steve Biko’s death was one of the critical events that finally led to the isolation of the apartheid regime.

“Whereas the IMA’s medical ethics record on torture has been well documented, the institution has never denounced or seriously confronted the Israeli government on its shameless use of torture. The IMA has shown blatant disregard for the ethical issue of medical neutrality, with the IMA unconditionally defending the violations of medical neutrality by the Israeli army in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (OPT). The IMA has either contributed directly to maintaining, defending, or justifying oppression and wars, or has stood silently in the face of civilian deaths in the OPT, the killing, harassment and wounding of Palestinian health professionals on duty, and the destruction of the Palestinian health systems...”

Cosatu says all forms of international intervention have failed to force Israel to comply with international law or to end its repression of Palestinians. Direct appeals to the IMA have been unavailing, including those from both local and international health and human rights organisations over many years, “despite a mass of incriminating documentation”.

“In the spirit of international solidarity, moral consistency and resistance to injustice and oppression, we call on the World Medical Association to immediately expel the Israeli Medical Association from the WMA unless the IMA unequivocally condemns, distances and actively counter’s Israel’s torture, occupation and apartheid policies.

“In the 1980s, following the torture and death of Steve Biko, the WMA ignored appeals by the United Nations Special Committee against Apartheid and others to expel the Medical Association of South Africa (MASA) from the WMA. The WMA now has the chance to be on the right side of history by expelling the IMA from the WMA.

“Given the above there is a call for the expulsion of the Israeli Medical Association (IMA) from the World Medical Association (WMA) until the IMA unequivocally condemns, distances and actively counter’s Israel’s torture, occupation and apartheid policies.”



SAHRC upholds hate speech complaint

DAVID SAKS

The SA Human Rights Commission has upheld the SAJBD’s complaint of threatening hate speech by Ziyaad Kayat and ruled that the latter had to furnish an appropriately worded written apology and retraction.

In July, shortly after the eruption of the Israel-Gaza conflict, Kayat sent a message to the SAJBD via a Facebook page which read: “All Jews are pigs and I think we should kill you SA Jews and kill your kids and let you feel what the Palestinians are feeling.”

On learning that the Board had instituted criminal proceedings against him, as well as approaching the SAHRC, he posted a putative apology and retraction on the Board’s Facebook page. This was rejected by the Board, since while Kayat conceded that it was wrong to make

offensive and threatening remarks against Jews, he intimated that it was in order to do so against “Zionists”, which was also unacceptable.

The SAHRC concurred with the Board’s view, and worked with Kayat in drafting a sufficiently unambiguous and unequivocal apology that it considered acceptable. The Board accepted the reworked apology letter, which it published on its Facebook.

It further commended the SAHRC for the “very professional and conscientious manner” in which it had dealt with the matter and for bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion in good time.

It had been particularly encouraging to see how it had been able to engage with both parties in ensuring this outcome. In its media statement announcing the ruling, the SAHRC urged members of the public to “engage with the public in a responsible manner”.



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Israel has good friends in Africa



Deputy Director United Jewish Campaign (UJC) Cape Town

The UJC is the centralised fundraising body of the Cape Town Jewish community, and has as its main objective the wellbeing, development and sustainability of the local community as well as supporting projects in Israel through TELFED and Keren Hayesod. The successful candidate will be a positive and high-energy person, who will provide strategic leadership and operational support to the Executive Director.

ABOUT THE ROLE:

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of Sales-Force is an advantage. The ability to exploit the potential of Social Media is also important.

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Reeva Forman; Ambassador Arthur Lenk; Pastor Linda Gobodo; and Dr Betta Mengistu.

TSHEGO MOTAUNG

A dinner, as a first step to mobilise people, churches and other organisations to not only pray for Israel, but to take a stand with that country, was last month hosted in Sandton. The “Africa Stands with Israel” dinner also sets out to include political and civil platforms.

Vuka Africa Foundation and House of Prayer for all Nations, in partnership with Beza International Ministries, Ethiopia and the Institute of Christian Leadership Development, on September 21 hosted the inaugural dinner.

The evening brought together a diverse group of South Africans, ranging from high profile business people to villagers, young and old from all racial groups, as well as delegates from different Africans nations, all united by their love and support for Israel.

In 2010, some 18 African nations celebrated their jubilee: 50 years of liberation from colonialism. In 2011, the African spiritual leaders declared that this jubilee was not only for the celebratory nations, but that it was a time of jubilee for the whole continent.

bless Israel. The leaders were able to understand that Africa’s blessing is linked to Africa standing and blessing Israel.

Israel’s Ambassador to South Africa Arthur Lenk, was the guest of honour and Dr Betta Mengistu, founder of Beza International Ministries in Ethiopia and visionary of the Africa Arise Conference, was the keynote speaker.

Jewish leadership from the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, SA Zionist Federation, SA Friends of Israel, Magen Dovid Adom and the Israel Centre, also attended.

In addition to Ambassador Lenk and Dr Megustu, speakers included Rabbi David Masinter of Chabad House, Pastor Olusegun Olanipekua of the Institute for Christian Leadership Development, and Apostle Linda Gobodo. Wendy Lehabe well-known businesswoman, was programme director.

Apostle Gobodo, founder of Vuka Africa Foundation, together with Reeva Forman vice chairman of the SAZF, spearheaded the event, marking the beginning of a movement in Africa to ensure that the continent will receive the full portion of her blessing as she stands to bless Israel.

Apostle Gobodo has been taking this message to the continent, calling on Africans to recognise that this is their season to rise, to lead the restoration and to rebuild Africa’s ancient ruins and desolations. She believes that standing with Israel will truly usher Africa into her jubilee, a season of true liberty both politically and economically.

They said they received a mandate from G-d to pray and get the church in Africa to understand the importance of the Nation of Israel in His plan and for the church to stand and



Shofar blowers Elliot Klass and Bulelani Mkhohliswa.

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Shabbos Project gets wings - and flies internationally

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Johannesburg remains the hub for this year’s Shabbos Project - which has now also acquired an international flavour - with Great Park Shul planning a massive street dinner, with Chabad of Savoy and Ohr Somayach joining in this momentous occasion.

Shabbos Project events were taking place in Jewish communities across South Africa this week, starting with an outdoor “Challah Bake” in Cape Town on Wednesday, and culminating in a large-scale concert in Gauteng this Saturday night.

Just about every synagogue in South Africa will be running Shabbos Project programmes and events, and it is expected that at least 75 per cent of South Africa’s 75 000 Jews will participate in one way or another.

The Shabbos Project is a social movement developed by Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein. It was first introduced in South Africa in October last year. On the Shabbat over which it ran, around 75 per cent of South African Jews kept Shabbat in full, many for the first time in their lives. The Shabbos Project drew people together in ways never seen before and news of its success spread rapidly, inspiring thousands of people around the world to bring the movement to their own communities. And so, the idea of an international Shabbat Project - “One Shabbat celebrated and kept in full across the Jewish world, by the entire Jewish people, at the same time” - was born.

“The international Shabbos Project is an opportunity for the entire Jewish world to keep one complete Shabbat together - from Friday evening just before sunset on October 24, until Saturday night after the stars have come out, on October 25,” explains Chief Rabbi Goldstein. The international Shabbos Project is being described as “an experiment that has no precedent in modern Jewish history”. Final preparations saw the co-ordination by over 1 500 partners in over 320 cities and 35 countries.

West Street Shul in Johannesburg will be having a truly unique Shabbat and have themed the whole Shabbat around a wedding as Shabbat is compared to a bride.

There will be a cocktail reception in the garden 45 minutes before Shabbat with drinks and cocktails. For the bedecking, the shul has then committed to #SpreadingLight as part of the WIZO-initiated global communal candle-lighting. There will then be a chuppah in the garden for Kabbalat Shabbat where the chazzan will sing under the stars.

After shul on Shabbat morning there will

be sheva brachot with shiurim and good food, making it a fantastic festive celebration.

Diane Wolfson writes from Pretoria that Monday evening saw WIZO Pretoria kick-start the Shabbos Project with a “Dessert Demo”, taste and tea, under the topic “Sharing the sweetness of Shabbat” and #SpreadingLight.

WIZO Pretoria Chairman Elayne Ossip, welcomed everyone and spoke about Shabbat, followed by a short message from Pretoria’s Rabbi Gidon Fox.

WIZO #SpreadingLight is in countries around the world, such as Greece, Paraguay, Italy, Ecuador and Brazil. WIZO Frankfurt is holding a communal Shabbat dinner while WIZO India is holding a “Challah Bake” class, says Tamar Lazarus, president of WIZO South Africa. WIZO will also be donating candles and matches with brachot in Johannesburg and

Cape Town.

In aid of his brainchild, the Shabbos Project, Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein sent an e-mail to world-famous American singer Paula Abdul in the US, who is Jewish. Abdul had no hesitation pledging her support for this worthy project.

Actress Mayim Bialik and fashion designer Joyce Azria have also joined the list of high-profile Nobel Prizewinners, international sports stars, a US vice-presidential candidate and Jews of every nationality, ethnicity and level of observance who will be participating in the Shabbos Project.

Fifteen million people have visited the Shabbos Project website since January and today (October 24) an estimated one million people will be participating in the initiative.

Yesterday Thursday October 23, “The Great Johannesburg Challah Bake” took place from 18:30 to 20:30 at the War Memorial. Entertainment was provided by The Moshav Band/Alex Clare. On Saturday evening, at 19:30, a Havdalah Concert will take place at Yeshiva College Campus in Glenhazel. The Moshav Band/Alex Clare will see to the entertainment.

From LA to London, Melbourne to Moscow, Buenos Aires to Berlin, Jerusalem to Johannesburg, Toronto to Tokyo, in every corner of the globe, people are joining the biggest global Jewish unity event the world has ever seen.

Rabbi Goldstein sums up: “Together, in cities around the world, let us bask in the joy and serenity of Shabbat, and tap into the unique energies and opportunities that it affords us. By experiencing the magic of Shabbat just once, this is our chance to rejuvenate family and community life, restore Jewish pride and identity, and build Jewish unity across the globe!”



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JJMC presents Concert for Peace

The Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir presents a Concert for Peace on Monday, November 10, 17 Cheshvan, 5775 at 19:30 for 19:45, at the Sandton Shul.

The weekly Sandton Shul newsletter of September 27, 3 Tisrei, 5775, stated that a song is the pen of the heart. It expresses to us and others that that which cannot be expressed through the medium of finite syllables.

The Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir, through the medium of song will be presenting their annual concert in the magnificent edifice of the Sandton Synagogue. The concert has been titled “A Concert for Peace”. Just recently the State of Israel and its people were under threat; this threat permeated down to Jewish communities throughout the world. What better way is there to show our faith in Hashem, but in song?

The programme includes songs of peace... Sim Shalom, Shalom al Yisrael, and the overpowering Ose Shalom Bimromav. A first in the country will be an

acknowledgement in song of the men and women of the Israel Defence Forces, Mi Shebeirach composed by a young musician Dovi Zeltser; the powerfully arranged

composition will stir every fibre of one's being.

Complementing this composition are favourites Avinu Malkeinu, V'hi-sh'amda, V' Zakeini and Hamavdil by Rosenblatt, arranged by Evelyn Green. These compositions will have the audience swaying to the beautiful music. Even some of the traditional compositions have been modernised to give

them an upbeat flavour.

Leading the concert is our guest, Netanel Hershtik, Chief Cantor of the Hampton's Synagogue New York, ably assisted by Musical Director Evelyn Green.

The audience can look forward to a night of uplifting entertainment, as well as an opportunity to listen to the silk-like voice of Netanel. Let it be an enthusiastic anticipation as to what he will be singing. Attend the concert to experience a kaleidoscope of Jewish music from past to present.

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South African Jewish Report

Are BDS billboards on SA roads acceptable?

When BDS places a huge billboard “advert” along the busy highway between Johannesburg and Pretoria presenting an inaccurate or simplistic view of the complicated Israeli-Palestinian conflict, showing Israel to be the guilty party alone, is it an example of the free speech South Africans fought for in the Struggle, or the propagation of false and potentially defamatory information?

Can a three-second glimpse of the billboards over a highway by speeding motorists provide a proper depiction of the conflict? Most drivers passing by lack sufficient knowledge to judge for themselves, simply accepting the billboards’ message as accurate. Approaches have been made to the Advertising Standards Authority to have the billboards removed, so far to no avail.

A fight with similar resonances is going on in New York around the opera “The Death of Klinghoffer”, which some Jews have called anti-Semitic, an inaccurate and misleading portrayal of the conflict, and romanticising of terrorism.

The opera portrays the Palestine Liberation Organisation’s murder of a Jewish wheelchair-bound man in 1985. Leon Klinghoffer was a passenger on the Italian liner Achille Lauro. PLO terrorists, after hijacking the ship, shot him and then forced employees of the cruise ship to throw him overboard with his wheelchair.

Former New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani has said the Metropolitan Opera definitely has the right to produce the show, but called it “factually inaccurate”. He contended: “It romanticises terrorism. I think that the storyline makes it appear as if the Palestinian people had some kind of justification for murdering Leon Klinghoffer, which they didn’t have.”

Giuliani had been a regional prosecutor for the Justice Department, and investigated Yasser Arafat. “I can say with some certainty that this murder was a pure act of terrorism for which there was no justifiable reason,” he wrote in an article. Rather, it “was part of an overall campaign of numerous terrorist acts intended to make Arafat and his organisation bigger players on the world stage”. Klinghoffer’s murder was not done to help the Palestinian people but to further the PLO’s own aims, Giuliani said.

Some 400 people, including politicians like Giuliani and Republican Peter King, demonstrated outside New York’s Metropolitan Opera on Monday over the show, which runs until November 15, chanting: “Shame on the Met!” and carrying signs saying “The Met glorifies terrorism”. Giuliani said: “If you listen, you will see that the emotional context of the opera truly romanticises the terrorism... and romanticising terrorism has only made it a greater threat.”

In the show, a baritone portraying “Leon Klinghoffer”, appears on the stage singing the “Aria of the Falling Body” as he falls into the sea. Different Jewish and Palestinian narratives of suffering and oppression are highlighted by separate choruses. Klinghoffer’s daughters have issued a statement saying: “The four terrorists responsible for his murder will be humanised by distinguished opera singers and given a back story, an ‘explanation’ for their brutal act of terror and violence. Opera-goers will see and hear a musical examination of terrorism, the Holocaust and Palestinian claims of dispossession - all in fewer than three hours.” Nobody, however, is claiming that the opera is outside the bounds of free speech.

The BDS billboards are not an opera, however. There is nothing wrong with people attacking Israel in a way in which they can be answered rationally and inaccuracies challenged. And there is nothing wrong with works of art portraying a one-sided perspective on the conflict, even if it is contested by others. When Israeli-born pianist Yossi Reshef’s concert at Wits University was disrupted by anti-Israel protesters in 2013, it illustrated how blurred the line is between art and politics.

If an artist is Israeli-born, does it mean his performance of a work by Beethoven is unacceptable, no matter how brilliant? These debates are legitimate parts of an open society which values freedom of speech.

But billboards over a highway are not works of art, which people can choose to look at or not - as people can choose whether to go to the Klinghoffer opera or Yossi Reshef’s piano recital. They should be taken down.

Geoff Sifrin, Editor

Israel’s emerging Muslim-majority ally



Photo: Ariel Hermoni/Ministry of Defence/F last90

Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya’alon (pictured at right) unveiled the Israeli stall at the Adex 2014 International Defence Industry Exhibition in Azerbaijan on September 11. Ya’alon’s trip marked the first official state visit to Azerbaijan by an Israeli defence minister.

DAVID BERNSTEIN/JNS.ORG

Beginning in the early 1990s, Turkey became the one Muslim-majority country that maintained a robust strategic relationship with Israel. The two countries developed strong trade ties. Israel helped update the Turkish air force and Turkey allowed the Israeli air force to train in its airspace. There were major plans underway to further upgrade strategic ties.

In an unfortunate turn of events, Turkey’s elected prime minister (and now president), Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, decided to take the once highly secular country in a very different direction and realigned Turkey’s foreign policy with other interests in the Middle East.

Not long into his tenure, Erdoğan became a public critic of Israel, driving a wedge between Turkey and Israel in the wake of the 2010 Gaza flotilla crisis. Relations between the two countries remain strained.

Israel and its supporters have never fully recovered from the loss of the country’s Muslim ally and the potential it had to transform Israel’s broader relationships in the region.

But now, along comes Azerbaijan - the world’s first Muslim-majority democracy, which is fast taking the place of Turkey in becoming a crucial ally of Israel in the Muslim world. It’s no surprise that of all Muslim-majority countries, Azerbaijan would fill the void. Like Turkey

before Erdoğan, Azerbaijan has proudly and sometimes aggressively reinforced its secular society, banning the hijab (veil) in schools.

In a gathering with the Jewish community held in the Washington DC area last month, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the United States, Elin Suleymanov, recoiled from the criticism his country received from the US and others for its tough line on maintaining its secularism. “We are criticised because our girls are not forced to wear the hijab, and this is the worst problem in the Middle East?” he said.

The US should keep in mind that while suppressing traditional religious practices violates American notions of religious freedom, it’s meant to keep radical religious forces in check and to prevent Azerbaijan from going down the same path as Turkey.

Unfortunately, in that culturally conservative part of the world, Jeffersonian democracy is not yet on the menu, and trying to impose our cultural ideals may make these countries less, not more free. Let us not forget that France, a well-established liberal democracy, has also banned the hijab.

To date, Israel’s relationship with Azerbaijan has taken an almost identical trajectory as its early ties to Turkey. As it had with Ankara, Israel has steadily ratcheted up defence ties with Baku. Last month, Israeli Defence Minister Moshe Ya’alon visited Azerbaijan, one of a number of

such recent defence-oriented visits.

As it had with Turkey, Israel has established a vital economic lifeline to Azerbaijan, which provides the Jewish state with 40 per cent of its imported oil.

As with Israeli-Turkish relations, bilateral ties between the two countries signal Azerbaijan’s desire to strengthen its connections to the US and the West. The country has become an invaluable Nato supply line to Afghanistan and has joined Nato war efforts.

When much of the rest of the world interrupted flights to Israel during the conflict with Hamas last summer, Azerbaijan continued flying.

According to one recent report, an Israeli spy drone shot down while doing reconnaissance over Iranian nuclear sites, originated from an air base in Azerbaijan’s Nakhchivan enclave

If this report is true, it suggests that Israel’s ties to Azerbaijan are much further along than originally understood.

Undoubtedly, Israel sees the tremendous potential in its relationship with Azerbaijan, as does Azerbaijan with Israel. American supporters of Israel must do their part to reinforce that relationship in Washington. As was discovered with Turkey, Muslim-majority allies don’t grow on trees.

• David Bernstein is the former executive director of The David Project and a former senior official at the American Jewish Committee.



A flotilla of three ships, led by the Mavi Marmara, left Istanbul for Gaza on June 13 2010, despite warnings by Israel. Close to Gaza the flotilla was intercepted. When Israeli soldiers descended on to the deck, they were attacked. Nine protesters died. Bulletproof vests, sawn-off rods, night vision goggles and rifle scopes clearly indicated that the flotilla’s intentions had been anything but peaceful.

Young SA entrepreneurs discover innovation in Israel

DAN BROTMAN

Recognising the need to foster a stronger culture of entrepreneurship in South Africa, Investec and the South Africa-Israel Forum partnered to bring a first-ever delegation of 20 young entrepreneurs to Israel from September 15 - 21.

The purpose of the pilot trip was to expose South African job creators under the age of 35 to best practices in business and entrepreneurship in arguably the world’s most entrepreneurial country, Israel.

Those selected were diverse both in terms of backgrounds and industries, and are directly responsible for the creation of over 300 jobs through their businesses. One such participant is Modjadji Ramphadi, 32, from Johannesburg, who grew up in rural Limpopo and was unable to finish her studies due to lack of funds. She eventually resigned from her job as a receptionist and became an entrepreneur, starting her own cleaning company and beauty care line, which together employ 132 rural women today.

Doug Hoernle, 24, from Cape Town, is the founder of Rethink Education, which has developed chat-style online platforms to aid in the teaching of core maths and science. To date, Rethink Education has distributed maths and science content to over 400 000 South African high school learners, and Hoernle’s company recently received the 2014 African Content Award for the Best Mobile Education Content in Africa.

One of the highlights of the trip was the opportunity to engage with two of Israel’s highest-profile former South African businesspeople, Morris Kahn and Maxine Fassberg.

Kahn, 84, made aliyah from Benoni in 1956 without a university degree or formal business training. He went on to found the Aurec Group, which produced the Yellow Pages directory that eventually paved the way for Israeli software giant Amdocs, which now has more than 20 000 employees worldwide and customers in over 50 countries.

The media-shy philanthropist volunteered to share his life story publicly for the first time, as he believed that young “born-free” South African entrepreneurs would benefit most from hearing about what he has learned about entrepreneurship during his lifetime.

Kahn became visibly emotional when he explained how moving it was to see South African entrepreneurs of all colours sitting around the dinner table and collaborating on new business ideas.

“A gathering like this would have been illegal when I last lived in South Africa,” he said.

Fassberg is arguably one of Israel’s highest ranking businesswomen, and was selected as

one of 14 women to light torches at this year’s Israel Independence Day ceremony.

The group also met with young Palestinian entrepreneurs and discussed the challenges of doing business in the West Bank.

They shared the South African experience of reconciliation with their Palestinian counterparts. Miles Kubheka, founder of Vuyo’s food chain, returned home with a very important message for his fellow entrepreneurs: “What I learned from the Israelis is resilience.

“Your circumstance does not define your outcome. I learned that you make the best of the cards you are dealt, then use it as a base to excel.”



Morris Kahn with participants Sipiwe Zikalala and Akash Maharaj.

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A tribute to Rabbi Norman (Nachman) Meir Bernhard

The rabbi who spoke out for SA justice and Jewish values

SUZANNE BELLING

South Africa’s beloved and popular rabbi, speaker, educationist, raconteur, anti-apartheid activist and counsellor, Rabbi Norman (Nachman) Meir Bernhard (zt”l), passed away on Wednesday evening, October 1, at the age of 81.

At the time of his passing he was rabbi emeritus of the Oxford Synagogue-Centre, where he served as rabbi for 35 years.

The founder of the first religious Jewish day school in Southern Africa - now Torah Academy, on whose education committee he served till the time of his passing - Rabbi Bernhard was known for the bold strides he took during, in his own words, “the dark, dark days of the pernicious apartheid regime”.

He founded the Oxford Synagogue Social Action Centre - later known as the Oxford

Synagogue Skills for Adults Centre (OSSAC) which empowered during apartheid - and still empowers - the disadvantaged with courses on living and earning skills, as well as legal and medical advice.

Before the new dispensation in South Africa he said: “I warned our community that revolutionaries have long memories, so we must do things that are publicly Jewish to encourage change and to do something real for upliftment.”

In the early 1980s he was one of the founders of Jews for Social Justice. Rabbi Bernhard was known to have said that JSJ and OSSAC had been “two things that saved the honour of South African Jewry”.

His original choice of career had been classical and Jewish folk music. He said he was “guilt-tripped into becoming a rabbi”.

Born in New York in 1933, he attended Yeshiva University, City College, Columbia,

and NYU. A prominent rabbi told him he was one of the few at that time who had received a good Jewish education and should devote himself to the Jewish community and Yiddishkeit. He also convinced the young man that the rabbinate probably gave an outlet for the greatest number of talents, abilities and interests.

After obtaining smicha in 1958, Rabbi Bernhard considered the US Army Chaplaincy, but with his wife, Joan, expecting their first child, he settled on a warm, active congregation in Wichita, Kansas.

“In 1963 we seemed on our way to fulfil a long-standing dream of making aliyah, but Hashem had other plans,” he told me in a recent interview. Later, Rabbi Bernhard became director of the new Metropolitan Council of Orthodox Synagogues in New York, before moving into education, teaching in a yeshiva high school.

South Africa, as a destination, was suggested to him by several rabbis. He could not make up his mind until he managed to obtain an appointment with the Lubavitcher Rebbe, Menachem Mendel Schneerson, OBM.

That meeting in 1964 was the first of many lengthy private meetings with the Rebbe, who said Rabbi Bernhard had to use his abilities as a rabbi and communal leader.

Shortly after arriving in South Africa he gave his first anti-apartheid sermon, which was enthusiastically received. Then, having heard that Helen Suzman would not be re-elected in March ’66 lest it finger the Jewish community as anti-government, he told his congregants that one of the last vestiges of democracy in SA was that they were allowed to vote once every five years. “Therefore, vote they must - but out of conscience, not out of fear,” he emphasised.



Rabbi Avraham Tanzer (left, front); Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein (right, front); followed by (right) Rabbi Yossy Goldman and Rabbi Mendel Lipskar and other pallbearers.



Steven Adler (left), president of the Chevrah Kadisha and Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein (right), followed by Rabbi Yossy Goldman and other pallbearers.



Kivi Bernhard places the first shovel of earth in his father's grave.

SA Jewry’s debt of gratitude to Rabbi Bernhard

**RABBI YOSSY GOLDMAN
SENIOR RAV, SYDENHAM SHUL
PRESIDENT, SA RABBINICAL
ASSOCIATION**

Baruch Dayan Emet.

Not everyone knows or remembers the history of Rabbi Norman (Nachman) Meir Bernhard (zt”l). I believe our community owes Rabbi Bernhard a huge debt of gratitude.

The good rabbi did many very important things for our community and, indeed, all of SA Jewry. As rabbi of Oxford Synagogue-Centre for many years, I would describe him as South Africa’s very first “outreach rabbi”. He came from the US and introduced many fresh approaches to rabbinic attitudes in this country. Previously, most rabbis here hailed from England and were, traditionally, far more conservative in their profes-

sional style and outlook.

Rabbi Bernhard presided over Oxford in the years when it was the most prestigious shul in Johannesburg and he was a past chairman of the SA Rabbinical Association.

I myself learned much from him and am grateful for his example in many areas. He was famous for teaching brides and grooms the Jewish way of married life in an open and enlightened way. He was legendary in working overtime to help congregants in need and in all kinds of difficulty. He was also very successful in counselling.

His talks in shul were honest, direct, brave and bold. He never shied away from difficult subjects, whether personal or communal. He spoke out courageously against apartheid and even received stern warnings from the old and much feared SA Police.

Most significantly, he established the first Torah primary school in this country. It was called Menorah Oxford and our children went there in the early years. As the religious community grew, it eventually “morphed” into The Torah Academy and Shaarei Torah Primary Schools (Yeshiva College had initially started as a boys’ high school).

He was chairman of the board of The Torah Academy for many years and was instrumental in building its beautiful campus.

Rabbi Bernhard also sacrificed a big personal dream for the good of our community. Over the years he became a close disciple of the Lubavitcher Rebbe and had a number of long, personal meetings with him in New York.

When he told the Rebbe of his plan to go on aliyah, the Rebbe shared



his opinion that while aliyah was a desirable thing to do, his own view was that communal leaders, especially spiritual leaders, had as their first obligation and priority the good of their community.

It was the Rebbe’s belief that Rabbi Bernhard could do more for the Jewish people as a rabbi in South Africa, than as a private individual in Israel. As a result, Rabbi Bernhard

decided to shelve his aliyah plans and remained on in Johannesburg where, indeed, his contribution was most significant.

We wish Joan and the children long life and strength. May his memory be blessed and continue to be a blessing for his family and for this community which he loved and dedicated his life to.

Amen!

Rabbi Bernhard laid to rest at West Park Cemetery

SUZANNE BELLING

Some 3 000 people from all walks of life and practically every rabbi in Gauteng, including Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, attended the funeral of Rabbi Norman (Nachman) Meir Bernhard at West Park Jewish Cemetery.

Son-in-law Rabbi Isadore Rubenstein paid tribute to “Abba” in an inspirational message, describing him as a talmid of Rabbi Joseph B Soloveitchik and later as a chosid of the Lubavitcher Rebbe Menachem Mendel Schneerson.

Likening him to the greatest leaders, Moshe Rabbeinu and Moses’ brother Aaron, Rabbi Rubenstein said Rabbi Bernhard had possessed the combined qualities of both men - Aaron having been a people’s person and Moshe a visionary. “Aaron realised the vision of Moshe,” whereas the biblical brothers complemented each other.

This combination, said Rabbi Rubenstein,



Pallbearers en route to the gravesite.

was even present in his father-in-law’s names - Nachman (comforter) and Meir (source of light and truth).

He referred to Rabbi Bernhard’s sensitiv-

ity at funerals and other times and never castigating his shul leaders or congregants if they were not observant.

He termed Rabbi Bernhard a perfectionist

and described his special partnership with his wife, Joan, and paid tribute to the doctors, members of Hatzolah and the tefillin group, who had helped and cared for Rabbi Bernhard.

“He is finally completely connected (to Hashem) without the distractions of this world... we pray that every one of us will perpetuate his memory and that he will take his combined vision to the right side of the Aibishter.”

Rabbis who took part in the service at the graveside were Rabbi Mendel Lipskar, head of the Lubavitch Foundation; Rabbi Avraham Tanzer, rabbi of the Yeshiva College Hebrew Congregation and rosh yeshiva, Yeshiva College; and Rabbi Levi Wineberg, who delivered a personal message.

Rabbi Bernhard’s grandson, Levi Singer, recited the Hazkarah.

A memorial service was held at Oxford Synagogue on Monday, October 6.

Rabbi Nachman Bernhard - combination of Torah and love

MICHAEL BELLING

Over 500 people (on Monday night, October 6) attended a tribute at the Oxford Shul to Rabbi Nachman Bernhard, who died in Johannesburg the week before. He was the rabbi at the shul for 35 years from 1965 until his retirement.

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, paying tribute to Rabbi Bernhard’s “awesome work”, said he had made a major contribution both nationally and internationally. He was a friend to all. Rabbi Bernhard had characterised his work in his induction speech as focusing on care, concern and love.

He was a pioneer. He and Rebbetzen Joan Bernhard, Rabbi Goldstein said, had a hand in many of the things we take for granted today, from establishing a religious school at the shul (a precursor to Torah Academy and other schools), to setting up the Oxford Synagogue Skills

for Adults Centre (OSSAC) and his stance against the apartheid regime.

Several other speakers also mentioned the role of Joan Bernhard in Rabbi Bernard’s life and work.

Rabbi Mendel Lipskar, head of the Lubavitch Foundation, spoke of Rabbi Bernhard as a shaliach of the Rebbe. He was an exceptionally sincere human being, with a sense of clarity and dedication. Rabbi Bernhard, he said, was not a controversial rabbi, but was not afraid of controversy. Whatever he touched was exceptionally successful.

Adrian Gore, CEO of the Discovery Group and a member of the shul, said Rabbi Bernhard was a great leader, the quintessential community rabbi - positive, a patriot, never treating Judaism as just a bunch of rituals, and compassionate - he stood by people in need, the poor, the vulnerable.



The memorial service at Oxford Shul.

“His real special quality was authenticity.”

Several speakers mentioned Rabbi Bernard’s love of music, mentioning that early in his life he was considering making music his career. Yudi Cohen, cantor of the Sydenham-Highlands North Hebrew Congregation, sang one of Rabbi Bernhard’s favourite cantorial pieces, accompanied by Evelyn Green.

Rabbi Menachem Raff said Rabbi Bernhard played a major role in the establishment of Torah education in South Africa.

“He was a great builder of institutions and even more so a builder of people.”

Dr Graham Cassel said Rabbi Bernhard had for many years been his rabbi, friend and patient.

Levi Singer, a grandson of Rabbi Bernard, said the rabbi was a unique combination of Torah and love.

“He was always the perfect gentleman,” he said. “Every person was important to him. He was a lovable man, full of chein.”

Kivi Bernhard, the son of the rabbi, termed his father “a holy and saintly soul”.

Three fundamental points flowed from his pulpit: the relevance of the Jew, a light unto the nations; synthesis, with no space between heaven and earth;

and kindness, seeking out opportunities for acts of kindness and connection.

Looking at the rabbi’s coffin at the funeral, Kivi asked himself how such a giant of a man could be contained in such a small box. The answer was that he could not.

“He has dialled into the soul, not the body and touched into generations.”

Master of ceremonies Rabbi Michael Katz said that according to Rabbi Bernhard, the aim of Judaism was to take a man and make a mensch out of him.

Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, spiritual leader of the Oxford Shul, welcomed those present.



Kivi Bernhard (son)



Levi Singer (grandson)

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Rabbis Mendel Lipskar (right) and Rabbi Avraham Tanzer at the memorial service.

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

REMEMBERING PALESTINIAN AND JEWISH CIVILIANS KILLED

South African Jewish Voices for a Just Peace (JVJP) hosted an event with Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu this week Thursday in Tamboerskloof, Cape Town, to commemorate the civilian lives lost and destroyed during the Israel-Palestine conflict this July and August.

The Archbishop unveiled a plaque in memory of all the civilians killed - Israelis, Palestinians and foreign nationals.

Remembering the lives lost is particularly important as the situation in Israel-Palestine remains difficult. Israel announced a massive land-grab in the West Bank while Gaza still lives under a crippling land, air and sea blockade. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians are living in the ruins of Gaza with no electricity, water or sewerage

infrastructure, while life in Israel goes back to normal.

JVJP is a group of Jewish South Africans who recognise that the South African Jewish community is not homogenous in its thinking and that there are many different views on Israel.

Many Jews in our country are deeply troubled by the actions of Israel and the human rights abuses which are inflicted on Palestinians. Many Jews are afraid to speak about these abuses for fear of being ostracised. As such, JVJP aims to facilitate respectful dialogue and discussion among South African Jews.

Leonard Shapiro, Rina King, Jessica Sherman
Cape Town

REMEMBER THE SCOUT TROOP IN BLOEMFONTEIN

With reference to the article on the first Jewish scout troop in Gauteng, in the September 19 edition of Jewish Report, I would like to inform you that there existed a very large and powerful “Jewish Scout Troop” in Bloemfontein, which was founded in about 1928 by my late father, Hermann Rosendorff.

This troop flourished until about 1940, when it was disbanded. This was probably the largest troop in Bloemfontein and was very active. It even boasted a bugle and drum band!

Hermann, who at one time was the District Commissioner of Scouting in the Free State, was assisted by his brother, Karlie, who was well known in latter years as a sports organiser in the Free State

Should there be any survivors of this troop, I would love to hear from them.

Dr Gerald Rosendorff
Stellenbosch

THE WORLD DOES NOT CARE ONE IOTA ABOUT ISRAELIS

I wish to address this letter both to US President Barack Obama and William Hague, British Conservative politician and currently Leader of the House of Commons.

Hague was British Foreign Secretary. In November 2011 he urged Israel to both exercise restraint during that Gaza crisis and warned that country that if it sent troops into Gaza to confront Hamas, it risked losing the sympathy of the international community.

He also urged Israel to exercise a proportionate response to the daily rocket and other attacks on Israel at that time.

President Obama has made similar comments during his presidency in respect of Operation Protective Edge and Hague, in so far as I am aware, has not changed his viewpoint since his statement in 2011.

The question I wish to raise is: “If Israel must exercise restraint and act proportionally in response to the daily attacks against it, what moral right has the US - with British and other support - to attack ISIS 3000 km away when only two of its citizens were murdered?”

While I support the action taken by the US against ISIS, it shows that the world does not care one iota what happens to Israelis as long as their own citizens are not killed.

It reminds me of the Megillah of Esther when the decree against killing Jews was not withdrawn, but if attacked the Jews could defend themselves?

Myron Robinson
Randburg

WANTING AN AUDIT DONE OF JEWISH COMMUNAL ASSETS

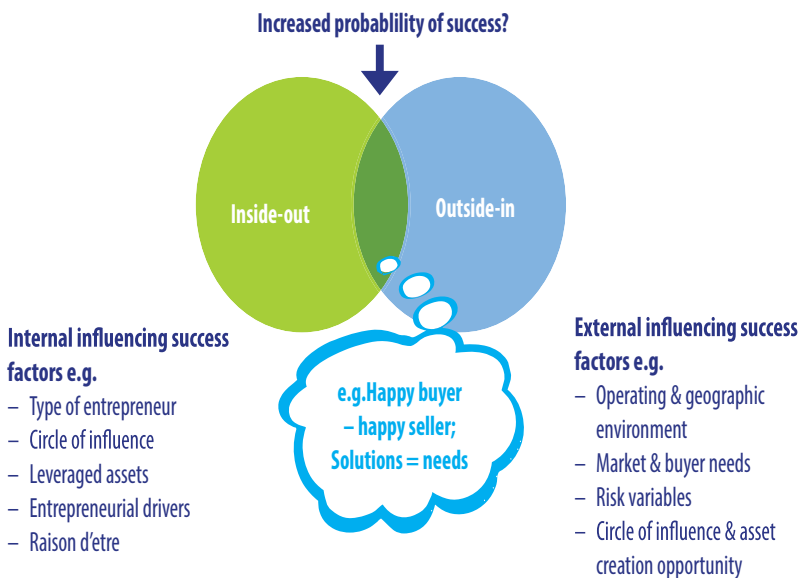
The Jewish community owns an impressive portfolio of assets and investments, worth probably hundreds of millions of rands. Has there ever been an audit (of these assets) - to make sure that nobody ever helped himself.

Yossi Bogacz
Highlands North, Johannesburg

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DYLAN PIATTI is currently the Consumer Business Industry Chief of Staff at Deloitte Africa, where he focuses on strategy & operations. He will be facilitating a discussion in the boardroom on entrepreneurship at the ORT JET/ Deloitte mentor enrichment forum.



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Tech-savvy Parenting: A Guide to Raising Safe Children in a Digital World by Nikki Bush and Arthur Goldstuck (2014: Bookstorm, Johannesburg)

REVIEWED BY ROBYN SASSEN

Our babies come into this world with a cell phone in one hand and your wallet in the other, say Nikki Bush and Arthur Goldstuck in this lucid book that engages with everything you wanted to know about the interface between children and technology, but were too afraid to ask.

It's a frank, sometimes chilling, sometimes hilarious, never foolish foray into the values and horrors of the digital world and offers pragmatic guidelines on how to rein it in.

Both writers are parents; both have the expertise, humour and savvy to offer insights into all aspects of the Internet generation, from babyhood. The book covers everything from the initiatives of young tech entrepreneurs Nadav Ossendryver with his Latest Sightings app and Tanya Meyer who wrote a Teen Guide to School iPad Use, to the Internet's sinister face, evident in realities like Outoilet and the rapidity with which an innocent prank can turn viral.

Not without its own poetry, the publication is highly readable yet text-bookish. In each chapter, both authors' opinions cleave together smoothly with that of other experts in explaining how computers have brought our world irrevocable change. Each chapter concludes with a summation, which is hard hitting in its focus on how children can run amok, screen in hand, because of adults' ignorance toward the medium.

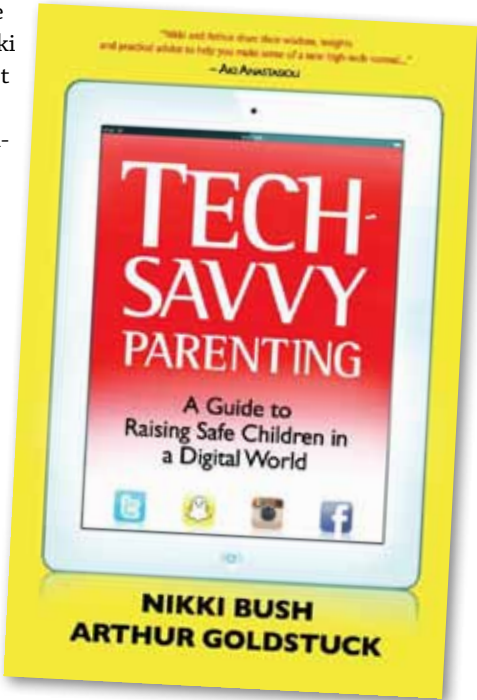
Bush and Goldstuck do not pull punches in describing the horror of "losing your child down the rabbit hole of technology", and the value of "tilling the fields of the hearts and minds of your child".

They write of "talking a child clever", singing the praises of commonsense in parenting involving reading to children, listening to them, and buying into technology in more ways than just financially. If your child is playing on Facebook, Snapchat or twitter, if he's Mxing or cavorting around with an iPhone, you need to too, and be able to understand, and refract the medium's dark sides.

The book is peppered with a tweet-like beat, but it is never cheap in its articulation of real values. For instance, "one mind, one body, one reputation" encapsulates what a child must protect. "Stop, block and tell" a play on the "stop drop and roll" dictum in a fire emergency, is a strategy to adopt in online bullying or unwittingly slipping into clutches of ever-present sexual predators in social networks, hiding behind fabrications.

Replete with a section addressed to 13-18-year-olds and a dictionary of popular acronyms, ranging from the benign FOMO (fear of missing out) to alarmingly sexually explicit ones, the book contains a cell phone contract between your 13-year-old and yourself and a fascinating section on how the world interferes in a child's developmental needs.

It is exhaustive in reach, but so succinctly constructed and thought through, that it is a bible-like must have in any household where children and computers co-exist.



On the web this week

In order of popularity, the most read stories on SAJR.CO.ZA this week have been: Jew-hater gets his comeuppance; BDS group roundly defeated in UCT election; SAUJS elects 2015 national executive; Zionist Spring to launch in SA; Ever wondered if they're Jewish?; Ostroff's open letter to Alon Liel, et al; Price's emphatic no to UCT Israel academic boycott; and Political anti-Semitism an increasing problem says Chuck Volpe.

DISASTER IN NEPAL: Much of SA Jewry switched off for three days and we awoke on Sunday to the news of dead and injured Israelis. SAJR.CO.ZA covered it all day Sunday as the typically Israeli style of getting over there quickly to look after her own emerged, much

to the delight of our readers who followed our four comprehensively researched stories and exclusive pictures through the day.

New stories just posted: Shabbos Project: All you need to know plus the WIZO campaign, a dozen great Zionist Shabbos reads from Bev Goldman for those participating; Zionist Spring - last chance to join free; and Despite Gaza war, UK-Israel trade up 28 per cent.

The Presidents and the book: Israeli President Reuven Rivlin finds a rare book borrowed from the National Library by former President Shazar but never returned it!; and the history of Israel's presidents.

See all this and much more on www.sajr.co.za



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Alas, when common hatred transcends ideological differences

Jewish history is replete with tragic ironies, where initiatives that at the time seemed a logical way of addressing the “Jewish problem”, have not only failed, but ultimately been instrumental in worsening the situation.

Wholeheartedly embracing German nationalism made Jews more, not less hated by their compatriots and it was German nationalism, in an extreme, perverted form, that rose up to destroy them. Likewise Communism, which so many Jews, with quasi-religious fervour, seized upon as the answer to their perennial non-belonging, mutated into something deeply hostile to world Jewry.

The Soviet Union both sought to eradicate Judaism within and, through its implacable proxy war against the Jewish state, without as well. What remains of the hard left - fortunately, now largely bereft of political power - continues to be imbued with anti-Zionism in its most extreme form.

The unlikely alliance that has emerged between leftists and Islamists - the Hitler-Stalin Pact of our time, as some have termed it - is a bizarre proof of how a common hatred can transcend the most glaring ideological differences.

In the US, home to the largest concentration of Jews in the history of the Diaspora, Jews have in the main embraced liberalism, adhering almost unquestioningly to a set of values and social attitudes broadly reflective of “broad tent” tolerance and permissiveness, encompassing not just politics but the whole gamut of social behaviour, culture and religion.

But even liberalism - or at least, what passes for it - has turned nasty of late. Israel has nothing to fear from genuine liberalism, where the aim is to arrive at as just and balanced a conclusion as possible and to which end all sides of the issues at hand are scrupulously taken into account. The problem is that it is increasingly being excoriated - to a point veering close to outright demonisation - by those popularly considered to be representative spokespeople

for liberal, human rights values, but who, when it comes to Israel, are shamelessly flouting those values.

Impartiality, avoidance of double standards, not accepting uncritically the version of only one side in a conflict before carefully hearing and taking into account that of the other, recognising and empathising with the legitimate needs and concerns of all the disputing parties, not exaggerating the failings of one while understating or disregarding those of the other - all of this is fundamental to any credible judicial process and as such should underpin all bona fide “liberal” commentary on the Israeli-Arab question.

We know too well, however, how little many supposed champions of liberalism - whether individuals like Robert Fisk and John Pilger, or organisations like Human Rights Watch (significantly, started by a Jew, who has since denounced that body for its consistent anti-Israel bias) - actually adhere to these basic norms and practices.

Perhaps the most striking of the above-mentioned “tragic ironies” is how political Zionism, the ideology aimed par excellence at “normalising” the Jewish people (and thereby ending anti-Semitism) is, with the passage of time, having radically the opposite effect.

The anti-Jewish hostility generated by Zionism was initially confined mainly to the Arab-Islamic world, leading in due course to the mass exodus of Jews from those lands. Then came the Soviet-led campaign - ideological, diplomatic and, through its Arab proxies, military - against the Jewish state, which also gave that regime a further pretext for discriminating against its Jewish citizens.

Even so, the establishment of Israel and its subsequent successes did, for a time, bear out its founders’ hopes of raising the status of Jews throughout the world.

In Western Europe and the Americas (in



BARBARIC YAWP
David Saks

those days, even its southern, Hispanic portion), Israel was admired and Jews everywhere basked in that admiration.

How dramatically that has all changed, particularly since the beginning of the century, although one could already go back to the Lebanon war and First Intifada of the 1980s to identify the real beginnings of the shift.

Most Jews remain proud of Israel, but it is now an angry, defensive pride as opposed to the “stand tall with heads held up high” pride of our grandparents’ generation. Israel - not just by virtue of its actions, but by its very existence - is undoubtedly the primary source of anti-Semitism in the world today.

An environment is also being assiduously fostered by its enemies in which the only good Jew is an anti-Zionist Jew, and anyone else is an apologist for colonialism, apartheid and - obscenely enough - genocide.

Somehow, our historical experiences have yet to convince us that no matter how reasonable our actions, we will not be permitted to function as a “normal” nation. None of the alternatives to Jewish separateness - patriotism, Communism, liberalism, Zionism - have succeeded in normalising the position of world Jewry, but instead, in twisted form, have been used by others to accentuate the difference between Jews and the rest of humanity.

None of this will come as a surprise to the Jewish sages imbued with a Torah-oriented understanding of how things work.

Our mission is to embrace our role as “a people who will live apart” rather than to make futile attempts to evade that destiny. This is surely something for all of us to think about this coming weekend, which marks the second Shabbos Project in this country and, to the great credit of the South African Jewish community, the first Shabbos Project worldwide.

Olga strides the moral high ground on Israel

DAVID SAKS

One of the best-received addresses at the solidarity rally in Johannesburg on August 5 in support of Israel, was that of Olga Meshoe, daughter of African Christian Democratic Party leader Rev Kenneth Meshoe. Like her father, Olga is a passionate and indefatigable champion of the Jewish State.

Few of the estimated 12 000 present on that occasion, will have heard of her, but her eloquence, insight and sincerity made a profound impression and contributed significantly to the success of the event.

On October 5, members of the Jewish community had another opportunity to listen to Meshoe, this time in the less raucous, more intimate setting of Beyachad. Her talk, entitled “When Black and White Became Dangerously Grey”, was the first of an envisioned series of monthly “Likud Town Hall

Meetings” under the auspices of Likud-SA.

Formerly a senior attorney at Webber Wentzel and now senior transformation facilitator and manager at Transcend Corporate Advisors, Meshoe also founded and heads the Christian action and Israel advocacy organisation, Defend, Embrace, Invest, Support Israel (DEISI).

In her warmly-received address, she spoke about the work of her organisation, as well as in more general terms on the need to take a firm stand on behalf of what one believed to be true and morally right.

The title of her talk, Meshoe stressed, did not mean that she advocated maintaining a clear-cut right-wrong approach to the moral and ethical issues of the day. On the contrary, adopting a nuanced, open-minded approach and looking for common ground was both healthy and

necessary.

However, it also had to be recognised that open-mindedness was not the same as moral relativism, and there came a point where one had to take a firm stand on matters of fundamental principle.

Meshoe’s support for Israel is bound up in her identity as a committed Christian. Much of the motivation behind the establishment of DEISI was the outrage she felt over Israel being labelled an apartheid state. Her father had lived under the apartheid system and still bore the scars of that time.

Having frequently visited Israel, he could say at first hand that the charge was utterly without foundation. This was why much emphasis was put by Christian Zionists like herself on bringing people to Israel to see things for themselves and thereafter bring home a different message from that usually seen on the Internet.

Addressing the rising manifestations of hostility towards South African Jewry because of its identification with Israel, Meshoe assured her audience of the deep reservoirs of goodwill that existed towards the community at all levels of society.

Following the rally for Israel, a young Jewish university student had approached her and said how reassuring it had been for her to learn that there were people outside the Jewish community who cared about the things she cared about and empathised with her.

By reaching out and building bridges of friendship, Jews and Christian Zionists could stand together in affirming the common values that were fundamental to their heritage and identity.

“If they make you feel that you do not belong in the country you call home, know for sure that we are standing by you - even if the other side seems to be shouting louder,” she said.

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Nadav is SA’s social star



Arthur Goldstuck, CEO of World Wide Worx; Nadav Ossendryver, CEO of Latest Sightings; and Mike Wronski, CEO of Fuseware.

OWN CORRESPONDENT

King David Linksfield matriculant, 18-year-old Nadav Ossendryver, has been named South Africa’s “Social Media Star” of 2014. And his “Latest Sightings” YouTube channel, has become the most watched channel in South Africa, with over 80 million views.

Ossendryver, who founded the Kruger Sightings website when he was just 15, was presented with the “Media Star” award for building his wildlife sightings service into the most viewed YouTube channel based in South Africa.

According to the SA Social Media Landscape 2015 research study launched by Fuseware and World Wide Worx at a conference in Johannesburg recently, the Kruger Sightings YouTube channel had reached more than 75 million views by the end of August this year and soon after it passed the 80 million mark. The next biggest South African-based YouTube channel has had 53 million views in that period.

Presenting the award after the release of the research findings, World Wide Worx CEO Arthur Goldstuck, said Ossendryver was an example to big brand marketers of how to build a community through compelling content.

“It also proves that one individual with a powerful vision can achieve what even the biggest marketing budgets cannot,” added Goldstuck.

“People are drawn to passion,” said Ossendryver. “If you make videos on topics you love, those people will watch. I have always been in love with wildlife and have wanted to share that love through the means of sharing people’s experiences.”

He pointed out that his YouTube channel did not exist in isolation, but was the hub of activity across several social media platforms, going under the brand of Latest Sightings.

“It’s easy to see what he did right, but it’s incredibly difficult to replicate the model,” said Mike Wronski, CEO of data analytics company Fuseware, which analysed the YouTube data for the study.

“It takes a combination of understanding the topic and the community on the one hand, and on the other coming up with both great content and a great content-sharing model.”

The SA Social Media Landscape 2015 study shows that YouTube has become the second most popular social media platform in South Africa, growing by 53 per cent in the past year to reach 7,2 million active users.

TA Boys’ High welcomes two shluchim

SUZANNE BELLING

They blew into Johannesburg like a fresh spring breeze - “JJ” (Yaakov Yehuda) Duchman and Mendel Zaltzman, two young men who reinstated the Torah Academy shluchim project - mentors of learners at the TA Boys’ High School. They are the first shluchim to arrive here after a five-year hiatus in the programme.

“We look forward to creating a warm environment and to be acting as ‘big brothers’ to the learners, instilling energy and passion by creating something extra-special in the school framework,” they say.

The two say they look at youth “not as the leaders of tomorrow, but as the leaders of today”.

They have already implemented programmes to enhance the learners’ feel for Judaism, with the aim of making them

“proud to be Jews”. They have started a FaceBook page (TABHS Shluchim), Sunday entertainment programmes, learning sessions and imparting their own knowledge to the learners.

“JJ” hails from California, where his father runs a shul for children in the heart of Hollywood, attracting those who rub shoulders with the stars - and some of the stars themselves. So “JJ” is well-versed in interacting with young people.

Although Mendel was born in the US, he hails from Toronto, Canada, where he has lived since early childhood. The two are among 250 talmidim hashluchim, or emissaries of the Lubavitcher Rebbe, who travel to communities, schools and yeshivas throughout the world, bringing with them the spirit of Lubavitch Chabad.

“We look forward to inspiring the youth of South Africa,” Mendel and ‘JJ’, said.



Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, principal of Torah Academy Boys’ High School, with newly-arrived shluchim Mendel Zaltzman and “JJ” Duchman (right) who are mentoring the Boys’ High School learners.



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Mary Kluk
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We in Durban look forward to the influx of youngsters but, I urge them not to get carried away by the heady feeling of recently attained freedom, but to act responsibly and avoid putting themselves at risk.

The need to maintain a high level of communal security over the chagim was of particular concern this year. Our CSO throughout the country did an outstanding job. On behalf of the community, I commend and thank them for this, as well as for everything else they do on our behalf throughout the year.

This weekend the high we have experienced during the festivals will be prolonged through the second Shabbos Project. All those involved in last year's inaugural project will remember what an inspiring success it was.

Congratulations to Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein and his team for introducing and following through with this initiative.

- This column paid for by SA Jewish Board of Deputies*

Lighting candles in spirit of unity

All the Jewish women in our community:
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I now have in mind....

- That I am lighting together with all the women of klal Israel for peace and unity, to welcome in the Shabbat Queen
- To fulfil the mitzvah of candle-lighting with simcha and joy
- To welcome the Shabbat as a day of kedusha (holiness) and oneg (delight) with Hashem
- That this mitzvah of lighting the Shabbat candles will bring refuah (healing) creating harmony between body and soul
- May “He who makes peace in his heights may He make peace upon us and upon all Israel; and say, Amen”

Blessed are You, Lord our G-d, Ruler of the Universe, who has sanctified us with commandments, and commanded us to light Shabbat candles.



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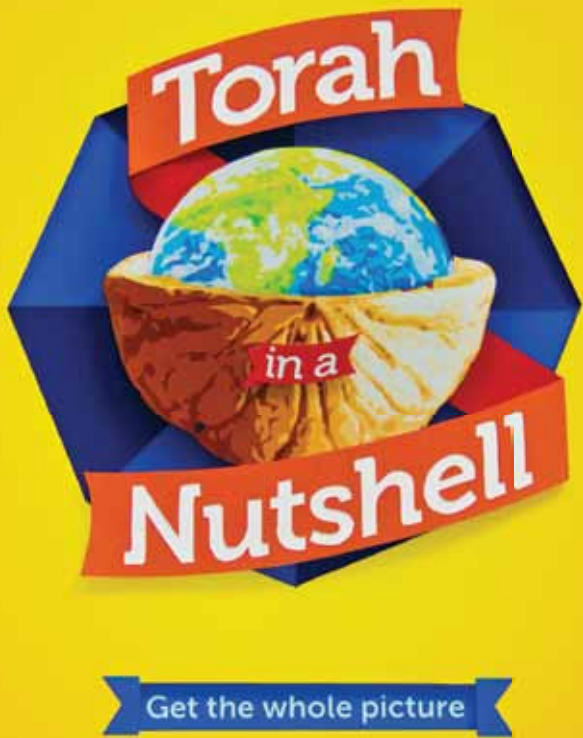
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LOUIS HARRIS ZIEGLER

passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on October 20, 2014, aged 69. Devoted husband of Leah. Father to Giselle, Michael and Jeanine. Father-in-law to David, Lauren and Larry. Adored zeida to Dani, Romy, Ryan, Adam Benji and Eli, Elder Brother to Sam. Each and every day you will be in our hearts forever. **MHDSRIP**

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E-mail **cindy@jhbchev.co.za** or fax (011) 640-7069

Notice is hereby given of the:
BIENNIAL GENERAL MEETING of the Johannesburg Jewish Helping Hand Society (**Chevrah Kadisha**) which incorporates the following registered non-profit organisations: Arcadia Jewish Children's Home; Jewish Community Services; Kadimah Occupational Centre; Our Parents Home; Sandringham Gardens; Society for the Jewish Handicapped; Society for the Welfare of the Jewish Deaf. **Date: November 5 2014. Time: 17:00. Venue: Golden Acres Card Room, 85 George Avenue, Sandringham.**

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for a permanent position to assist our relationship manager with all her administrative requirements. The successful candidate will need to be able to enter information on an in-house data base, write up all correspondence, co-ordinate deliveries of gifts for functions, set up meetings and arrange travel arrangements and do research on the Internet. Proficiency in Microsoft Office, excellent interpersonal skills, meticulous attention to detail, ability to problem solve and work independently, are key requirements of this position. **Interested candidates please e-mail CV to: cindy@jhbchev.co.za** Only short-listed candidates will be responded to. **Closing dates for submission of CVs is: Monday November 3 2014.**

What's On

Today (October 24) and tomorrow (October 25)

- Spreading Light with WIZO and The Shabbos Project. This campaign appeals to Jewish women of all nationalities, ages and backgrounds, to light candles and make a special prayer for the welfare of Jews in Israel and the Diaspora. (Prayer can be found in WIZO SA's column by Tamar Lazarus in Jewish Report on page 14).

Today, Friday (October 24)

- UZLC hosts Prof Barry Schoub on "Ebola - Do We Need to be Afraid?" Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria, 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

- WIZO Etgar branch hosts a visit to three of Johannesburg's renowned landscaped gardens. There will be a talk and a tea in the last garden. Tickets: R200 per person. Bookings and addresses of gardens: Helen Maisels Trisk 083-267-2607 or Jo Livingstone 082-414-4352.

Monday (October 27)

- UJW hosts Yda Walt, artist and silkscreen printer on a project "Where is Kovna?" to explore the world of grandparents in Eastern Europe. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (October 28)

- UJW hosts Simon Scharma, British historian and writer on "The Story

of the Jews", from ancient to modern times. Part 1: "In the Beginning and Among Believers". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

- WIZO Forum hosts: "Do My 'Genes' Fit?" with Prof Amanda Krause and Rabbi Gidon Fox on "The Halachic Considerations of Genetics". Venue: Beyachad. Cost: R40 (incl refreshments). Contact: Sandy (011) 645-2515.

Wednesday (October 29)

- UJW hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the Dept of English at Wits, on "Exploring the Wonders of Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" part 1. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

- Chev Social Services/CAJE's "Enrich Your Life" presents "Understanding Postnatal Depression", with psychologist Joanne Zagnoev and Jewish Life editor and co-author of "Recognising Postnatal Depression", Paula Levin, who shares her story. Venue: Sydenham Shul Hall. Time: 19:45. Cost: R30 (incl light refreshments). Bookings: Sharon (011) 532-9616/sharonp@jhbchev.co.za

- Second Innings hosts an outing to Lory Park Animal and Bird Sanctuary. Time: Bus leaves Golden Acres at 09:00. Cost: R160 (incl bus, guided tour and entrance). Enquiries: Fay Smaller, (011) 640-5839.

- JWBS's book sale at Benmore Gardens Shopping Centre. Information: Gloria, tel and fax (011) 485-5232.

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Taking a pot shot at the media - again

JACK MILNER

Surprise, surprise! There’s life after the biggest real-life soapie this country has ever seen. Everybody, from Pete the plumber to Barney the baker, overnight became legal experts and terms like dolus eventualis became part of the everyday lexicon. The main actor, Oscar Pistorius (pictured), has started a five-year jail sentence for culpable homicide after killing his girlfriend Reeva Steenkamp. Long before this sad case Oscar had become a household sports name as a double-amputee who refused to accept his disability. He became a symbol of how to overcome adversity. Two issues about the Pistorius affair are

relevant to sports people. The first is his (extremely doubtful) sports future and the second are comments made by his agent, Peet van Zyl, about the role of the media. After the sentence the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) made it clear that according to its rules, Pistorius will not be allowed to participate at the Rio Paralympics in 2016, even if he is on parole. The ban would apply for the full duration of the five-year jail sentence. He will however, technically be free to compete at the Tokyo Games in 2020. Pistorius would be almost 34 by the time of the Tokyo Paralympics in August 2020 and it remains to be seen whether he would wish to mount a comeback or whether the SA Olympic

Committee (Sascoc) would even consider him. The IPC declined to comment on Tuesday about Pistorius’ sentence, despite its spokesman, Craig Spence, having done so just before Pistorius was convicted of culpable homicide. Spence had said before sentencing, that the IPC wanted to differentiate between what went on in the Paralympic Movement relating to Pistorius and what went on in his private life - which had nothing to do with the IPC. “Pistorius has been one of the stars of the Paralympic Movement, but a whole host of global and national stars have emerged, as London 2012 showed. The Movement has never been about one person, and never will be.” Van Zyl’s comments are most irritating. During his evidence in mitigation of sentence, he extolled the virtues of his client, how much he did for charity and how much he could still have done had it not been for the state and the media. Prosecutor Gerrie Nel tackled him on the issue, especially his blaming of the state, by asking him if he considered Pistorius to be the victim in this case. Van Zyl backtracked and apologised. The interest has to be there for the media to get involved. Yes, we may from time to time tend to sensationalise things; yes, we may take what some may think are irrelevant “fringe” issues and put them under the loupe. But that is



because the journalist may have seen something others may have overlooked. It is ironic how people quote the press approvingly when they agree, but vehemently knock the same journalist or paper when they don’t. Pistorius was a cash cow to Van Zyl and now that the agent is losing that income, he seems to lash out at everybody else. When his client was at the top of his game and was attracting all the positive stories, nobody ever complained about the intrusion of the press. It remains true: if Oscar wants to know why he has had the worst 20 months of his life, all he needs to do is look in a mirror - not a newspaper.

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Community

Rabbi Moshe Sher passes on

ISAAC REZNIK

Rabbi Moshe Sher zt”l passed away three days prior to Rosh Hashanah, after a long illness. Rabbi Sher loved Hashem and His mitzvot, loved all Jews and lived a worthwhile life preparing for the next world - as written in a book he wrote: “The moment of death, is the crown of life. It is the moment that the King invites one to come visit Him and what greater privilege can one have than that!” He had a positive influence on many people, not because he preached to them, but because they felt his true love and concern for every Jewish neshama. One facet of this deep Jewish concern manifested itself in his association with bereaved families, guiding them with their loss and arranging the tombstone for their loved one. He was a calligrapher par excellence and did his best to ensure that every memorial stone be a tribute for the family member who had passed on. He was born in Johannesburg to Jack and Marjorie Sher in 1942 and grew up in Kensington. After matriculating he attended the Hebrew



Teachers Training College in Johannesburg where he received his degree. He then travelled to Rabbi Marcus in Cape Town to learn the laws and art of kosher slaughtering. In 1965 he enrolled at the Keren BeYavneh Yeshiva in Israel; he also spent time in Jerusalem, learning to be a mohel and a scribe. Over the next 49 years he performed 6 500 brissim for Jewish children, south of the equator. He became an expert in all facets of doing a bris, so much so that he was sought out by surgeons to share his expertise with them. In 2002 he published a book “It’s a Boy” - a practical guide to the ceremony of the bris. He was the rabbi in Springs, both before and after his marriage to Judy and thereafter was the assistant rabbi to Rabbi Nachman Bernhard of the Oxford Shul. He became rabbi of the Germiston Hebrew Congregation for many years and then occupied the pulpit of the Etz Chaim Shul in Berea, Johannesburg for 15 years. He is survived by his wife Judy, six children and their spouses, many grandchildren, brother Bernie and sisters Orlene Bar-Chaim and Heather Bloch.

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