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Movers and shakers at Miracle Drive 2016



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

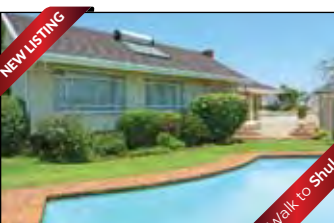
It was pomp and splendour galore on Wednesday evening when Chabad House presented its annual mega-fundraiser, Miracle Drive. Rabbi David Masinter, director of Chabad House/Miracle Drive, told the 1 800 guests at the gala dinner at the Sandton Convention Centre, that Miracle Drive raised some R20 million for Chabad Johannesburg’s wide-ranging projects aimed at helping people improve their lives. He told the glitterati that the event was “about hope and changing our world for good”. The highlight of the evening was an anonymous donor committing to matching donations of up to R18 million for a Goodness and Kindness museum to be built in the Sandton CBD. Pictured are Meyer Kahn; Rabbi Masinter; Natie Kirsh and Ben Kruger, CEO of Standard Bank. See page 2.

Excitement for Peres’ visit building, despite arrest threats Despite health concerns and empty threats of his arrest, elder statesman Shimon Peres (92), will be in South Africa this weekend to speak before a large crowd on Sunday. This Nobel Peace Prize laureate has held every significant leadership position in Israel. Photo: Ilan Ossendryver	Once iconic Johannesburg shul now a popular church The former Great Synagogue in Wolmarans Street, Johannesburg, is now the highly popular Revelation Church of G-d. So popular is the Revelation Church that the queue of worshippers easily extends inside and outside the building and into Wolmarans Street.	Anti-BDS tide hits Europe and North America France banned the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement as long ago as 2003. Yet it took an Act of the US Congress last June to jump-start the promulgation of anti-BDS laws and actions. This year adds a wave of new legislation.	Alarm bells rings for lack of decorum in Parliament In a vox pop among members of the SA Jewish community, it became clear that the unruly behaviour in Parliament (largely read Economic Freedom Fighters) does a lot of damage to the image of Parliament.	Fifa poll: Welsh Cohen spins for Prince Ali Fifa’s presidential election takes place today (February 27) to vote on a successor for Sepp Blatter. There is an ironic “Jewish connection”. One of the front runners (there are five official candidates) is Prince Ali of Jordan. His spin doctor is Jewish Welshman Shimon Cohen.
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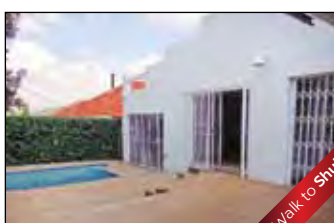


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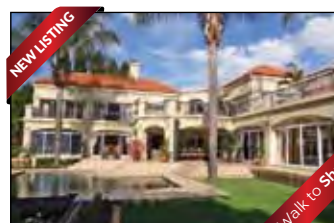
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Ki Tisa: The sensitivity of kosher



Parshat Ki Tisa

Rabbi Yossi Baumgarten
Torah Academy Shul

Involved as I am in the world of kashrut, I feel a special connection to this week’s parsha of Ki Tisa as it contains the famous verse: “You shall not cook a kid in its mother’s milk.” This verse is actually mentioned three times in the Torah: First in the parsha of Mishpatim (Ex 23:19); this week’s parsha (Ex 34:26); and in the parsha of Re’eh (Deut 14:21).

Every word in the Torah is exact and accounted for, so why the repetition? Our sages explain that the three verses teach us three separate prohibitions in the general prohibition of mixing dairy and meat:

1. The prohibition of not eating or drinking any meat products together with any dairy

- products.
 2. The prohibition of cooking (boiling, frying, baking, roasting etc) any meat and dairy mixture.
 3. The prohibition against deriving benefit from any such meat and milk mixture, including not giving or selling it to a Jew or non-Jew, feeding it to one’s pets, and more.
- The Lubavitcher Rebbe shares a deeper insight into this mitzvah, saying that it alludes to cruelty of any kind. There is an ironic cruelty in eating a kid cooked in its mother’s milk, the very milk intended to nourish it. Whether or not the goat would even know about it or feel that pain, is irrelevant. We are forbidden from indulging in an act which is even tinged with cruelty.

In keeping this commandment, not only should we remember that the Torah strictly prohibits us to engage in any form of cruelty to animals, but even more so, we should become more sensitised in our dealings with others. If

a touch of animal cruelty renders a meal treif, our sensitivity to humans must certainly be glatt kosher and mehadrin.

The parsha offers another example of sensitivity and thoughtfulness. When following along with the parsha in shul, you may notice the first two aliyot for the Kohen and Levi are extremely long, while the next five are very short.

Why the imbalance? Because the first two cover the sin of the golden calf. Being that the Levites were not involved, we do not call up someone from the other tribes, who may feel embarrassed publicly reading the sins of his ancestors.

The sin of the golden calf occurred millennia ago! Surely no one would feel personal pain and embarrassment? Yet the Torah is sensitive beyond reason.

For us, a quick thoughtless word or even facial expression can cause pain or embarrassment to another. How many times does

someone brace himself to ask a favour of us and we turn him down without as much as a second thought?

Even more so on the positive side: a friendly word, flash of a smile, or the offer of a helping hand, can brighten someone’s day and truly impact their life.

Let’s not just eat kosher. Let’s live kosher.

Shabbat Times		
Parshat Ki Tisa February 26 / 17 Adar 1 February 27 / 18 Adar 1		
Starts	Ends	
18:15	19:12	Johannesburg
18:15	20:00	Cape Town
18:15	19:05	Durban
18:15	19:23	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:31	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:21	East London

News

Miracle Drive: Changing our country for the good

OWN CORRESPONDENT

In a world that’s seems awash in negativity, the overwhelming message of Chabad’s 26th Miracle Drive gala dinner held last Wednesday in Johannesburg was about hope and changing our world for good.

Over 1 800 people attended the event at the Sandton Convention Centre, which raised some R20 million for Chabad Johannesburg’s wide-ranging projects aimed at helping people improve their lives.

During the course of the evening, several one-minute videos were shown featuring beneficiaries of the work of these projects.

Zev Krengel, past president of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, delivered a keynote address, saying he was a “passionate South African”, and speaking about the many positive attributes of South African society, such as the warmth and kindness of its people, which contrasts with the anger being expressed in politics these days.

Standard Bank CEO Ben Kruger announced his bank’s sponsorship of R1,8 million and concluded his address by saying how impressed he was with the important work of Chabad House Johannesburg. He made a commitment on behalf of Standard Bank for



Photos: Ilan Ossendryver

another three years.

Michael Whitfield, CEO of Nissan South Africa, which was the original sponsor of Miracle Drive when it started, committed his company for future sponsorship.

Other sponsors who made commitments for the future are Cruz Vodka and Chivas, Momentum, Atlas Finance, among others.

Rabbi David Masinter, director of Chabad House/

Miracle Drive, showed a video clip of the late Lubavitcher Rebbe, in which he said that each person as an individual has the power, ability and strength to turn the world upside down and make it more positive.

He highlighted the innovative and successful Ark - Acts of Random Kindness -programme, which is a comprehensive project aimed at the full range of people from children through to seniors, and at every sector of the

community.

Its objective is to increase acts of goodness and kindness in the world, which is what the Rebbe conveyed to a CNN reporter when he was asked what his message to the world is.

The highlight of the evening was an anonymous donor committing to matching donations of up to R18 million for the Goodness and Kindness museum which is slated to be built in the Sandton CBD.



Rabbi Michael Katz with Judge Meyer Joffe



Chaya Masinter with Judy Moritz



Excitement for Peres’ visit building, despite arrest threats



ANT KATZ

Despite health and safety scares, one of the world’s most famous men, Israeli elder statesman Shimon Peres (92), will be in South Africa this weekend and is slated to speak before a large crowd on Sunday. This will probably be the last time most locals have the opportunity to listen to the Nobel Peace Prize laureate who has held every significant leadership position in Israel, including two terms as prime minister and one as president.

Predictably, local anti-Israel activists have vociferously lobbied the National Prosecuting Authority to arrest Peres when he arrives here, as a war criminal and the communal leadership and embassy officials have similarly lobbied against it.

“This is a man of peace,” said Jewish Board of Deputies Vice-Chairman Zev Krengel this week. “There is no warrant for his arrest; this is merely a case of our enemies trying to bully us.”

“For (those against Israel), whatever Mr Peres has to say is irrelevant - the very fact that he will be here as a representative of the hated ‘Zionist entity’ is enough for them to wish to silence him,” SAJBD National Chairman Jeff Katz, said.

Communal leaders say that they do not believe that any appetite exists on the part of South Africa to create a diplomatic incident. “For our part, we will strenuously oppose any attempts at censorship or intimidation and do everything we can to make the visit a memorable success,” Katz said.

“This, more than ever before, shows the real intentions of our enemies,” Krengel told Jewish Report. “No-one in Israel has done more for the Palestinians than Shimon Peres.”

The legendary Israeli pioneer will be on his second visit to this country.

Peres, even in the darkest times, has never wavered in his commitment to working for peaceful co-existence between Israel and her neighbours.

In addition to addressing the Jewish community on Sunday, Peres will be having a number of official and media interviews.

Police and security officials will be on hand to deal with any possible threats and tickets are still available for Sunday’s public address at R200 for adults and R100 for students and pensioners. To book, call Lisa on (011) 645-2503 or lisak@beyachad.co.za or Miriam on (011) 645-2531 and Miriam@sazf.org for venue and booking details.

Stan & Pete open for business – as usual

SUZANNE BELLING

“We are not in the process of closing down and are strong and committed to serving our clients with the best possible venues and service at all times,” Jeff Shull, director of Stan & Pete Caterers, told SA Jewish Report, following rumours that the company was to close down.

A source close to Stan & Pete labelled all the talk as Ioshen hora.

Shull thanked the Jewish Report for allowing him to set the record straight “as there are a number of rumours floating around town concerning Stan & Pete Caterers”.

Shull said Stan & Pete had taken some strategic decisions “not to renew our long-term lease with one of our venues as we are currently restructuring our overheads and sustainability in catering.

“Although we may not have exclusivity of the venue, we will continue to make simchas wherever our clients wish to hold their functions.”

Stan & Pete have been catering for over 45 years and are looking forward to catering over another 40 years for their loyal clients, Shull said.

“It is nearly Yomtov and the time to be freilich (happy),” he added.

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Anti-BDS tide hits Europe and North America

ANT KATZ

France banned the anti-Israel Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement as long ago as 2003. The US State Department formally defined anti-Semitism in 2010 - under which BDS activities would be legally considered anti-Semitic.

Yet it took an Act of the US Congress last June to jump-start the promulgation of anti-BDS laws and actions. Many were passed during 2015, but 2016 is adding exponentially to a wave of global legislation.

Anti-BDS laws are being passed or proposed all over the US and Canada, almost every European country is discussing it and the UK, France, Austria, Germany and Spain have already killed or curtailed BDS activity in their countries.

Different countries have different laws and constitutions. Says Pascal Makowicz, head of the legal department of the CRIF umbrella group of French Jewish communities: “BDS is illegal in France.” While France has very strong Constitutional protection for freedom of speech, BDS promoters have been convicted of inciting hate or discrimination. France’s highest court has ruled that incitement trumps speech and declined their appeals.

There is an active branch of BDS in South Africa which is an integral cog in the BDS wheel that seeks to brand Israel as an apartheid state.

However, the incontrovertible fact is that BDS suddenly finds itself under severe threat.

The restrictions and bans are for the most part, either against BDS as an entity or encompass what they espouse. It seems clear that legislation is being used to curtail BDS activities.

The fight-back movement gained momentum late in 2015 and has blossomed in 2016.

In the US, Congress passed an anti-BDS act last year in negotiating a trade deal with the European Union, which included a requirement of the President to raise the US push-back against BDS in all negotiations.

This ensures that any Israel boycott becomes a key objective in trade talks with the EU (and any other country that enjoys the largesse of trade and treaties with America, such as South Africa) which could find themselves being denied favourable trading status and benefits such as USAid.

Illinois was the first - in July last year - to divest pensions from companies that boycott Israel. “This historic legislation is an important first step in the fight against boycotts of Israel,” the Governor said, and he hoped other states moved quickly to follow suit.

Almost half of all US states have, or are now considering, legislation aimed at countering BDS.

South Carolina followed Illinois mandating state divestment from companies that boycott Israel. By year’s end a further 11 states - Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York and Virginia - were in the process of drafting similar laws.

Kansas and Pennsylvania are planning to defund universities that participate in an Israel boycott while six more states have adopted (or plan to) resolutions condemning Israel boycotts.

Last month Indiana unanimously approved a ban on state dealings with BDS.

US billboard giant Lamar Advertising has this week removed a huge sign located on a major highway near Chicago’s O’Hare Airport. The BDS-sponsored billboard read: “Boycott Israel until Palestinians have equal rights.” This led to a public outcry and Lamar had to remove it.

Continued on page 4 >>

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Norma Robinson 082 554 7260 | 011 656 0888

Glenhazel – From R2.999 Million
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Web Ref: 100753
Joel Harris 082 926 0287
Marco 082 048 2644 | 011 622 1820

Secret confab with world Jewry on combating BDS

ANT KATZ

The Jewish Telegraphic Agency (JTA) reported on Wednesday that a senior Israeli government ministry held a secret conference in Jerusalem with international Jewish leaders on ways to fight the campaigns of BDS, the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement against Israel.

Some 150 leaders and activists attended the conference held on Sunday and Monday in Jerusalem, run by the Strategic Affairs Ministry. The meeting was held a month before

the BDS annual flagship project, Israel Apartheid Week (IAW), which rolls out on campuses around the world. Combating IAW was most likely the subject of much of the discussions,

The delegates were asked to keep the contents of the conference planning and discussions secret because, according to NRG, Strategic Affairs Minister Gilad Erdan said that “exposing the information about the conference participants could be life endangering”.

Obviously no journalists were invited to attend.

Moving eulogy for Holocaust survivor Willenberg

JNS.ORG AND TIMES OF ISRAEL

JERUSALEM - Israeli President Reuven Rivlin on Monday eulogised Samuel Willenberg (pictured), believed to be the last remaining survivor of the Treblinka death camp, who died last week Friday in Israel at the age of 93.

But when international news agencies announced the death of Willenberg, referred to as “the last survivor of Treblinka”, it transpired that Willenberg was in fact, the final survivor of the August 1943 Treblinka prisoners’ revolt only and a healthy 89-year-old living in the southern Swedish city of Boros, Leon “Poldek” Rytz, also survived Treblinka.

Seeing this misunderstanding in print, Rytz’s daughter Louise had contacted The Times of Israel, pointing out: “My father Poldek Rytz is also a survivor from Treblinka, and is also still alive...

Rytz, like many Holocaust survivors, was imprisoned in several different Nazi camps, including Treblinka, Majdanek, and Bergen-Belsen.

At Willenberg’s funeral, Pres Rivlin said: “Just over a year ago I met Samuel for the last time. On Polish soil... With a trembling voice he spoke about the day he arrived at the death camp. He spoke about the man who whispered in his ear telling him to say “constructor” and thus probably saved his life. The entire transport which arrived with Samuel at Treblinka - 6 000 people - were sent to the gas chambers. None survived.

Willenberg was born in Poland in 1923. He was a teenager when the country was invaded by the Nazis in 1939. At age 19, he was sent to Treblinka, where on the advice of a fellow prisoner he posed as a bricklayer in order to survive. He was the only person among the Jews who were brought to the death camp on his transport who didn’t die in the gas chambers.

He participated in the Treblinka revolt of 1943, managing to escape the camp. Later, in Warsaw, he joined the underground resistance and participated in the 1944 Warsaw Ghetto uprising. In 1950, Willenberg immigrated to Israel.

Leon “Poldek” Rytz was born in 1927 in the small Polish town of

Warka. His family relocated to Warsaw, where father Szlomo co-owned a tea import company. By 1939, his father, pressed into service to the Polish Cavalry, was killed, leaving mother Lea alone to raise their five children just as the Nazis occupied Warsaw.

The mass transport of Warsaw’s Jews, the Grossaktion Warsaw, began on July 22, 1942, when Jews were de-

ported on packed freight cars largely to the brand-new Treblinka death camp, located northeast of Warsaw. The deportations from Warsaw continued until the uprising when most of the ghetto - and its Jews - were decimated.

Treblinka continued operating through October 19, 1943, and according to historians, as many as 10 000 Jews were deported from Warsaw to the camp per day. Up to 900 000 Jews were murdered in the gas chambers there, along with some 2 000 Romani.

After his capture in Warsaw, Rytz was transported south, to the Majdanek death camp, where he stayed for a few days. He was then again forced onto a train and taken to Treblinka.

“When I arrived to the camp by train, a man by the name of Jozef Kaufman, who was a friend of my father before the war, recognised me and pulled me out of the line of people leaving the train. He told me: ‘If you go with them, you will be dead within 24 hours,’” recounts Rytz.

Sometime after Rytz’s arrival, Kaufman told him that they must escape Treblinka to survive. No easy task, with Nazi guards and “cruel” Ukrainian and Lithuanian soldiers, who “killed

people in the line just if they stopped,” says Rytz.

Rytz, Kaufman and another man jumped from a train taking them to another death camp.

The pair joined the Polish partisans with whom they participated in different missions with the goal of blowing up railway lines and bridges.

“After some days we received word that the partisans were planning to kill us, as they too did not like us Jews,” writes Rytz.

The pair escaped the partisans, but were soon captured again and taken to a forced labour camp in the German-occupied town of Skarżysko-Kamienna, where Kaufman and Rytz attempted another escape, through a sewer, and also with a third prisoner.

“The spotlight fell on the first man who came out of the sewer pipe, and he was shot. As we came out, we raised our hands so we were captured and taken back to the camp,” writes Rytz.

In 1944, as the Russians encroached on Nazi-occupied territory, Rytz was transported to Czeszochowa and then to Germany, to the Buchenwald sub-camp Dora-Nordhausen. On the way to Buchenwald, Rytz was separated from his protector and companion, Kaufman.

In February 1945 Rytz was taken 300 kilometres away to Bergen-Belsen, where he was placed among the Russian prisoners of war. Ahead of Bergen-Belsen’s April 1945 liberation by British forces, Rytz had already left the camp, taking advantage of the increasingly “chaotic” situation.

In the spring of 1945, a co-operation of some 300 Swedish Red Cross and Danish government workers set about rescuing prisoners from concentration camps. In Sweden, Rytz, along with other Jewish youth, was put under the protection of the Zionist organisation Hechalutz (the Pioneer) and sent to a “Kibbutz school” to prepare for resettlement in British Mandate Palestine.

Rytz stayed in Sweden, where he worked in textile and eventually established his own company in 1955.





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Anti-BDS tide hits Europe *Continued*

>> Continued from page 3

At Harvard Law School, international law firm Milbank withdrew a \$1 million sponsorship this month after a “Justice for Palestine” event used \$500 in Milbank funds for food. The US Foreign Affairs Committee’s top Republican and Democrat introduced a resolution urging the Obama administration “to increase the use of its voice, vote, and influence in international organisations and other appropriate international forums, to actively oppose” acts by BDS.

Canada’s parliament this week passed a motion rejecting the movement’s goals. Tony Clement, who led the debate, said BDS was “just like boycotts that have targeted Jews throughout history”.

Britain this week announced that it plans to completely outlaw BDS. The measures will make Britain the second major European country with laws against the boycotting of Israel, France being the first in 2003. French laws have served as the basis for multiple convictions of BDS activists who were sentenced for incitement to discrimination or hate due to their actions on Israel; while the Paris City Council earlier this month passed two declarative motions expressing the city’s rejection of any attempts by anyone to boycott Israel.

Austria’s Parliament last week cancelled an event because it included the participation of Holocaust survivor Hedy Epstein, a Jewish BDS member who makes the Israel-Nazi analogy.

In Germany, DAB Bank Munich last Thursday closed the account of BDS-Kampagne. The Jerusalem Post subsequently quoted BDS as having made threats against the bank. DAB said it took this “very seriously” and would “if necessary, take corresponding measures”.

Last November saw Spanish leftist councillors simultaneously proposing a pro-BDS local law in two cities. In Cordoba, however, the proposer chose to withdraw her proposal after fellow-councillors explained that it would have jeopardised the city’s long-standing tourist benefits that accrue from its annual International Sephardi Jewish Music Festival. A similar motion did pass on the same day in the city of Santiago de Compostela.

The Israel Law Centre (Shurat HaDin) called on General Electric in the US to void a labour accord with a US trade union that had endorsed BDS. HaDin told GE’s CEO to rescind the recently concluded labour agreement, or face legal action to ensure that GE is not engaged in a litany of incitement that BDS espouses.

Once iconic Johannesburg shul now a popular church

SUZANNE BELLING

I “went to church” on Sunday - not to attend a service, but to mingle with the thousands who were gathered inside and outside the former Great Synagogue, Wolmarans Street in Johannesburg.

It is now the Revelation Church of G-d - with values based on “love, unity, mutual respect and embracing diversity and ethnicity”.

So popular is the church that the queue of worshippers extended inside and outside the building and all the way along Wolmarans Street to Joubert Park and around the corner on the other side of the building.

Worshippers sat in multiple rows on the pavements opposite the building for the full length of the block, erecting umbrellas against the hot sun and bringing food and drink to tide them over their long wait for the service.

The many marshals extended the hand of friendship to escort us to meet the leaders.

The church’s leader and founder, Prophet Samuel Radebe, has thousands of followers in southern Africa and the church website states he has the revelation to deal with African problems.

“The foundation of our church is love, not religion. There is a myth that exists in the black culture that church is for whites because it came with missionaries.”

According to their understanding, the Bible meant that what blacks were doing was culturally wrong and had to be abandoned.

“The Revelation Church of G-d wishes to dispel the belief that Christianity is antagonistic to African culture.”

According to Ishvara Dhyan, a Jew who adopted this name when visiting India, there is a sense of hierarchy in this church and everything is run from the top.

Dhyan discovered this congregation during one of the walking tours he conducts of the inner city, Hillbrow and Doornfontein, where he delves into the “ancient secrets” of the old shuls in the area.

“Jews have always been made to feel welcome by Prophet Radebe and his congregation. I have been taking people there for years and last year did a tour for Limmud.”

Dhyan is a chef by profession and was exploring different areas in a search for authentic recipes.

“The Great Synagogue was opened by Rabbi Judah Leib Landau on August 23, 1914. It was designed by a Swiss architect and paid for by Sammy Marks.”

It was the seat of Chief Rabbi Landau, Chief Rabbi Dr Louis Rabinowitz and Chief Rabbi Bernard Casper and Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, although Rabbi Harris elected to become a peripatetic chief rabbi, no longer based at the shul.

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan most recently occupied

the pulpit at the Great Synagogue until the congregation moved to new premises - the Great Park Shul in Houghton, architecturally modelled on the Great Synagogue.

What is now the church building is owned by Dhyan’s friend Jeremy Gordon. It retains the architectural features and much of the original décor, including Magenei David and a menorah which is still lit regularly. The foyer remains largely unchanged, including a memorial stone to the first president of the shul congregation.

Dhyan says the church is very African, with Christianity concentrating on the Old Testament.

“The church adopts a lot of Jewish traditions.”

As far as Jewish influence is concerned, the congregants sport T-shirts proclaiming 2016 as the year of rest, a reference to the Jewish shmitta year, during which the land is left to lie fallow, according to the Torah.



The crowds outside the Revelation of G-d Church, formerly the Wolmarans Street Great Synagogue.

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Interview with the editor

Government has been meeting with business leaders in an almost unprecedented way in the last few weeks to discuss ways of building investor confidence and rejuvenating economic growth. As the country is increasingly plagued by slumping commodity prices, the worst drought in over a century, the global ripples of China’s economic woes, a plummeting rand and downgrades from the credit rating agencies, President Jacob Zuma and Finance Minister Pravin Gordhan have been seeking advice from CEOs and experts in the financial sector. The recent State of the Nation Address reflected these consultations, while this week’s budget speech is expected to address some of the key issues the business sector has highlighted as well. After SONA, but ahead of the Budget speech, SA Jewish Report spoke to the head of Goldman Sachs’ South African office, Colin Coleman (pictured), who has been involved in the discussions with government - about his views.

What did you think of President Zuma’s SONA and what needs to be done urgently?

President Zuma identified the key issues facing the economy in his SONA speech. He successfully captured the centrality of economic growth for job creation, and the need for a partnership with business to drive an effective response.

Specifics in many areas were, however, lacking. The market will now want to see meat on the bone, particularly on fiscal consolidation, removing wasteful state expenditure, management and funding of the systemically important state operated enterprises (SOEs), “rationalisation” or “phasing out” other SOEs and labour market reforms.

Ultimately the market will respond to specific reform actions to modernise the economy. Nuclear power remains one area of uncertainty and is, in fact, academic until a feasibility study is completed. [Zuma said plans to build nuclear power plants remain in place but would only proceed at an affordable pace].

Finalising mining legislation and bold action to simplify visa regulations, particularly for tourism, needs urgent resolution to take advantage of the weak rand. Saving mining jobs requires urgent action to facilitate higher productivity at lower cost in a more certain environment, and much more needs to be done.

More than anything, South Africa must prepare for deep and wide cuts to state expenditure, and doing more with less. The President touched only the tip of the iceberg in that respect and we look to the Finance Minister’s Budget Speech for detail.

What has been the nature of the dialogue between chief executive officers and government?

In January there was a meeting pre-Davos, about 50 of us, with Pravin and Zuma and we set up working groups on different issues and then we reported back on what the challenges are and the important steps to be taken. Of these formal working groups – one was on the potential credit rating downgrade and how

to deal with it; another was on small micro-enterprise initiatives. Then there were more meetings. There’s a lot of intensive dialogue with the business community and this is probably the deepest engagement with business yet. Usually it’s just the representative business organisations talking to government but these are the actual CEOs.

Gordhan is expected to present a tough budget to try to get debt under control with cuts in government spending and generating greater income from taxes. How do you think the austerity measures will go down?

They have to distil a mixture of fiscal steps that eliminate waste and get “bang for their buck” on public expenditure. Expenditure cuts are easy to talk about but difficult to effect. Raising taxes are also easy to talk about but difficult for the population to digest. VAT increases which affect the whole population are not easy and raising taxes on the wealthy may scare away a whole important and needed segment of the population.



South Africa is not at its optimal performance levels at present. That being said, neither are the other BRICS nations who are all having a difficult time.

Finance Minister Gordhan faces some difficult challenges ahead, and South Africa and the rest of the investing world will be watching closely.

– Vanessa Valkin, editor

Key to good sex and relationships: Take risks, says therapist

LAURA KELLY
LOS ANGELES

What makes for good sex? It’s an unusual question for the wife of an Orthodox rabbi to talk about publicly, but SA-born Doreen Seidler-Feller has made a career of it.

A clinical sex therapist and professor at UCLA, Seidler-Feller has been married to Rabbi Chaim Seidler-Feller, the campus rabbi at the UCLA Hillel, for more than 40 years, and she’s been talking about sex for about that long.

In fact, the two often host public talks about sex and Jewish tradition, as they did at the Limmud FSU West Coast conference in Pasadena, California, in late January.

Theirs is a practised routine. Chaim, with unruly white hair secured under a kippah, enthusiastically discusses passages about sex in the Talmud. Doreen talks about how to make Jewish sexual traditions relevant in modern times.

When Doreen first met Chaim all those decades ago, it “wasn’t in the script” to marry a rabbi and become Orthodox, she says. The daughter of a Holocaust survivor, she grew up eating pork and shrimp in her secular South African Jewish community. But her family’s history, and being a child of divorce, motivated her to help “shattered hearts” and articulate a new Jewish identity for herself, she says.

Today, that identity means helping couples work on their relationships - and sex. For a relationship to succeed, Seidler-Feller says, there must be a balance between stability and eroticism. That means risk-taking both in the relationship and in the bedroom.

“Where sex is concerned, be experimental,” she said. “Be willing to explore new territory because that’s what gets the neuro-chemicals going.”

Seidler-Feller’s specialty is Orthodox sex therapy, where she is one of only a few clinical psychologists working on the issue. Others include David Ribner, founder of the sex therapy training school at Bar-Ilan University in Israel and author of manuals for sexual intimacy for Orthodox couples, and Bat Sheva



Doreen Seidler-Feller, far left, with her two children and her husband Chaim in an old family photograph.

Marcus, a modern Orthodox, New York-based sex therapist.

In strictly haredi Orthodox circles, Seidler-Feller says, young men and women receive their only bit of sex education right before their wedding night. Due to the lack of knowledge about sex and human anatomy, young haredim often suffer acute anxiety when it comes to sex. Frequently they come to Seidler-Feller because they are unable to consummate their marriage.

The problem often is that the men simply don’t know where to put their penis. Seidler-Feller tries to guide them by describing the female anatomy in painstaking detail - without using pictures, which would be forbidden.

“I ask him to close his eyes so he can visualise, simplify the stimulus, using descriptive and explicit language, to walk him through the anatomy,” she said.

Orthodox patients typically are referred to Seidler-Feller either through religious community leaders, medical professionals or from other patients.

Seidler-Feller’s main mission is to support monogamy and marriage, and much of her practised talk is about how religious values can

benefit any relationship. She offers three guiding principles.

One, take risks and commit. With apps for dating and hook-ups, uncommitted premarital sexual encounters are easy to find. But “the more the merrier” flies “in the face of what is good for men and women”, Seidler-Feller says.

The risks people once had to take to find partners - committing to an actual date, going to a young woman’s house and asking her parents for permission to date her - were good because they helped make us stronger, she says.

Without taking these initial first risks and opening ourselves up for rejection, Seidler-Feller argues, men and women are less likely to commit in any capacity, either in dating or marriage.

“Everyone gets their heart broken on the road to love - and they should, because that’s the only way they develop any grit and strength,” she said during her presentation at the Limmud FSU conference.

Seidler-Feller’s second tenet is that both men and women need to be honest with themselves about what they want out of a relationship. Women especially, she says, shouldn’t be ashamed of their desire for someone to lean on.

“One’s capacity to say ‘I need help’ or ‘I feel vulnerable, I need you to be strong so I can let go’, creates so much breathing room for a woman,” she said. “I think it’s important that women don’t lose contact with that side of themselves.”

While looking for dependency may not be politically correct, Seidler-Feller says it’s definitely not anti-feminist.

“Dependency is not the same as weakness,” she said. “It’s an interdependent recognition of complementary limitations that each of us have as humans.”

Seidler-Feller’s third tenet is that couples should confide in each other. Opening yourself up and sharing your deepest secrets, fears and desires with your partner creates loyalty and satisfaction, she says.

“If you want to be in a good relationship, you have to engage in deep conversation,” she said.

With a foundation of trust and reliability, partners are less likely to look for that elsewhere.

“This is an inoculation against intrusion of third parties, affairs,” Seidler-Feller said. “How deep is your conversation? What do you demand of the other person? What do you demand of yourself?”

“If you can do that and avoid the easy way of blaming the other person and looking outside yourself instead of looking inside yourself, I think you’re on the road to a lasting relationship.” (JTA)

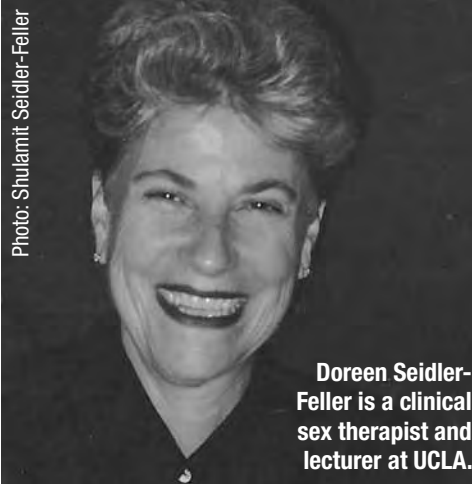


Photo: Shulamit Seidler-Feller

Doreen Seidler-Feller is a clinical sex therapist and lecturer at UCLA.

Israel Apartheid Week: piling protest upon volatile protest



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

The annual Israel Apartheid Week (IAW) on South African university campuses next month, between March 7 and 13, again raises two major dilemmas for Jews: Where is the line between legitimate criticism of Israel and anti-Semitism; and how to relate to Jews joining anti-Israel protests - are they “self-hating Jews” or people applying what they believe to be true moral values of Judaism?

At IAW Israel will be called an apartheid state, its behaviour likened to Nazis and attempts made to convince South Africans that the Palestinian struggle matches black South Africans’ anti-apartheid fight.

In the context of recent campus violence by frustrated black students fighting their own cause, attempts will be made to link them to Palestinian students. In response, Jewish students and organisations will defend Israel’s right to exist in peace and security and many will promote the two-state solution. It is a volatile minefield of different agendas.

Natan Sharansky, Israel’s former Minister for Jerusalem and Diaspora Affairs, created a three-part test to identify when legitimate criticism of Israel becomes anti-Semitism, called the “3D Test”.

Firstly, is Israel being demonised and problems of the world or Middle East blamed on it?

Secondly, is there a double standard, with Israeli faults exaggerated and far worse human rights violations elsewhere ignored?

Thirdly, is there an attempt to delegitimise the Jewish state, with the Jewish people denied the right of sovereignty?

The United States government recently also formulated a response to anti-Semitism camouflaged as criticism of Israel. Its 2005 Report on Global Anti-Semitism condemns the “demonisation of Israel, or vilification of Israeli leaders, sometimes through comparisons with Nazi leaders, and through the use of Nazi symbols to caricature them”.

What about Jews joining anti-Israel protests, particularly those with special credentials like anti-apartheid Struggle activists and Holocaust survivors?

Past examples in South Africa include former government minister and Struggle hero Ronnie Kasrils, who likened Israeli measures against Palestinians to Nazi behaviour and got the Human Rights Commission to agree this does not constitute hate speech.

Overseas, an Austrian event to honour women survivors of the Holocaust which included survivor Hedy Epstein, a Jewish pro-Palestinian activist who has likened Israel to Nazi Germany, was recently cancelled by the Austrian Parliament.

Invitations had described her as a peace and human rights activist. The Anti-Defamation League in 2005 listed statements made by German-born Epstein, who spent most of the Second World War in Britain, among examples of anti-Israel activism

that “would meet both the United States government’s and Sharansky’s definitions of anti-Semitism”.

Israel is situated in the world’s most dangerous region which is drowning in massacres and atrocities between different Muslim groups, surrounded by people and countries who want only its destruction.

Many Israeli governments in the past have tried sincerely to reach peace with the Palestinians, offering major concessions and an independent Palestinian state, only to be rebuffed and subjected to terrorism aimed at destroying Israel.

A lot of its measures derive from genuine security needs which even fervent Jewish human right activists endorse.

It is also true, however, that the country today has an extremely rightwing government methodically encouraging further Jewish settlement of the West Bank, and appearing to place peace with the Palestinians low on its agenda.

In the South African context, the point must be hammered home that there are huge differences between conditions in South Africa during apartheid and those in the land between the Jordan River and the sea.

However, they share one important feature: the claim of two peoples to the same land. How this gets resolved is incredibly complex, requiring enormous goodwill. South Africa’s model is not necessarily applicable. Students on our campuses must understand this.

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

World News in Brief

Israel bombed Scud missiles ‘meant for Hezbollah’

JERUSALEM - Israeli fighter jets carried out an airstrike against targets inside Syria late last week Wednesday night, the London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights claimed last week Thursday.

The alleged attack was the second airstrike attributed to Israel in Syria over the past week. Senior Damascus officials denied the reports, as did the Lebanese terror group Hezbollah’s Al-Manar television network. Israeli officials had no comment on the matter.

The first report of the alleged airstrike said Israeli fighter jets fired missiles at a Syrian army outpost south of Damascus. According to that report, three missiles struck the outpost and caused immense damage. There were no reports of casualties.

Later, the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights updated its report to say the airstrike had been aimed at facilities belonging to Unit 155 of the Syrian army, which oversees, among other things, the storage of the country’s Scud missiles.

According to the updated report, a shipment of Scuds earmarked for Hezbollah in Lebanon was destroyed. (JNS.org)

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Harley Davidson clubs - full of Jewish nostalgia

ANT KATZ

So many Jews went on this year’s annual Harley “Route 62 Rally” in the Western Cape, that they even organised a Shabbos dinner in Montagu. A stalwart of the event, Member of Parliament Michael Bagraim said that there were at least 40 Jewish riders among the thousand-odd who had turned up.

“One of the Cape Yids hired a special chalet which accommodated a minyan and a Shabbos dinner” for some of the riders, said Bagraim.

The annual event is the biggest in the country, organised by the Harley Owners Group and hosted by Free Chapter Cape Town (an

independent Harley Club). They attracted a whopping 700 official participants this year, although with non-registered bikers, the number was more like 1 000, say organisers.

For the past seven years, says Bagraim, the event has been held at Montagu, a sleepy town whose townsfolk love the three-day affair and even line the streets clapping raucously to welcome the bikers - who book out the entire town, erect a tent village and rent spare bedrooms from Thursday to Sunday. And, spend a heck of a lot of money.

Bagraim says that the average age of an SA Harley owner is around 60 and the average profession is a doctor or a lawyer. So, he says,



A member of the Hillel's Angels Jewish Harley Club in the US wears a T-shirt with the message “Bikers With Matzah Balls”.

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while it is loud and proud, the 24-hour rabble rousers don’t have many tattoos, do not get into fights and don’t have much hair to let down either!

“Just imagine how much beer is being consumed here,” he said. “There are 24-hour facilities, including food and beer outlets, shops and stalls selling Harley paraphernalia. It’s madness.”

Little wonder that Harley Davidson is not really attracting younger buyers in South Africa. Bagraim says a basic like his will set one back a minimum of R250 000, while some enthusiasts “pimp their rides” to enter into the customised competitions and can easily spend over R1million on a bike!

Riders from throughout the country were joined by many from overseas who fly in, hire Harleys well ahead of time and join in. Bagraim says overseas participation keeps growing. This year there was a single group of French riders from a Marseilles club. * See more and pictures on our website.

Jewish Report’s chief photographer, Ilan Ossendryver, says Harley was still headed by Jews in the 1990s, when he had to travel to a convention with his then-employer. “After giving his opening speech,” says Ilan, the Harley CEO called for a minyan.

Harley Davidson has deep Jewish roots. In 1901, 20-year-old William Harley and his childhood friend Arthur Davidson worked on bikes in their Milwaukee machine shop with a mutual friend, Henry Melk - all Jewish. They were later joined in their business by Arthur’s brothers, Walter and William.

American Jewish Harley bikers are a breed of their own, while fitting surprisingly closely to the SA Jewish professional profile. They have special bike mezuzim and cleverly-named clubs such as “Star of Davidson Motorcycle Club”

which has a T-shirt motto: “My hog is kosher” - and an equally appropriate slogan: “We’re loud, we’re proud, we’re Hebrew.”

Another group of about 50 New York Jewish bikers call themselves “The Chai Riders” which was founded in the ‘90s by Lauren Secular, a Manhattan accountant. Then there are the “Hillel’s Angels” and even a club of Jewish New York lawyers who call themselves “The Goniffs”. The big Canadian Jewish club is called “The Yowies” (an abbreviation for Yiddim on Wheels).

Several Jewish-branded clubs that attend the annual Daytona Week pilgrimage to Florida, which attracts close to one million riders, have to observe bilateral courtesies with neo-Nazi clubs and keep out of each other’s way. As one Jewish Harley-owner put it: “I ignore the booths full of Nazi memorabilia.”

• There is also at least one Harley Club in Israel.



MP Michael Bagraim is flanked by Alan Joffe, right, and Nicky Eisen at the SA festival at Montagu last week Friday.

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can continue to retain their residency permits without the need of any other criteria. The old regulation required the spouse and dependents to reapply once they had shown property ownership.

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Community Voices

Alarm bells ring for lack of decorum in Parliament



Denis Goldberg



Victor Gordon



Joy Coplan



Jonathan Silke



Wayne Sussman



Zev Kregel

SUZANNE BELLING

Previously Community Voices focused on the State of the Nation address (SONA) and the shortcomings of President Jacob Zuma and the ruling ANC. This time, however, the Jewish Report canvassed opinions on the opposition parties, with particular focus on the unruly behaviour of the EFF, the comments of the DA and the walking out of parliament by

Cope during SONA.

Rivonia trialist and staunch ANC member **Denis Goldberg** feels that “daily doses” of personal conflicts are “unhelpful”.

Although the country has “come a hell of a long way in 20 years”, he points out that there are weaknesses. “The politics of issues are forgotten and we are dealing with the politics of personalities. My own ANC, which

is a party based on non-racism, is equally at fault.”

He came out against EFF leader Julius Malema and his wealth, saying this did not stand for the socialism Malema conveys. Goldberg said Malema was allegedly worth R53 million.

“He demands President Zuma pays back the money (on Nkandla), while he owes millions in unpaid taxes. But I suppose he has come to an arrangement with SARS and is in good standing.”

Goldberg objected to slights against former DA leader Lindiwe Mazibuko, including inferences of her being a “maidservant”.

Regarding the President, Goldberg said Zuma found himself surrounded “by a group of cronies” who were doing well out of the situation. He had been damaged by some of their actions.

“It would be extremely heroic for him (Zuma) to stand down.”

However, Goldberg stresses he is very happy to be living in a democracy “where I can dare to say such things about leading members of my party”.

Victor Gordon, past chairman of the Pretoria Council of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, says: “I clearly recall my pride and excitement with the adoption of our ground-breaking Constitution which ensured that even the most humble would enjoy freedoms and liberties to a degree unique in the developed world.

“Parliament stood as the noble beacon from which the light of erudition, fairness and sensibility would forever glow, ensuring that no-one could regard him/herself above the laws of the land.”

He said during the short presidential reign of Nelson Mandela, the precepts that supported this new liberalism were clearly understood by the leaders of the ANC; “those who had languished on Robben Island or exiled in faraway places. The country belonged to the people, the ANC was its servant. Of course, with the passage of time and the erosion of moral standards, this has all changed for the worse.

“Amid it all are the parties in opposition, espousing attitudes (but

few policies) on opposite ends of the scale. One of the few measures we have to judge their grasp of democracy and their ability to exist by it, is their behaviour in Parliament.

“In one case the antics adopted are so bizarre and embarrassing to be both frightening and sufficiently unsettling to make one think whether a future for our community does, in fact, exist. The other political alternative has far more in common with what we generally regard as ‘civilised’ standards but, sadly, the chances of them ever assuming power are remote.”

Gordon says the reasons for this confusion and plunge in standards are known to all, but the question is: “Where to from here. No doubt, some faith in Divine leadership would do no harm in re-establishing our dented equilibrium.”

Joy Coplan, ANC councillor and PR for Ward 90 in Johannesburg, is shocked at the behaviour of certain members of opposition parties, like the Chief Whip of the DA (John Steenhuisen) telling the deputy chairman of the National Council of Provinces Raseriti Tau “he is talking rubbish”. [There was a subsequent apology from Steenhuisen.]

Coplan recalls walking home from school in Cape Town and often going into the Houses of Parliament when there was decorum, to listen to debates.

“Now there is total lack of respect for the institution of Parliament. “The SONA debate was chaotic and it undermined the status of Parliament. There should be intense debate, but they should show respect.”

The DA, she felt, was at fault, “but I am not including (DA leader) Mmusi Maimane”.

Advocate **Jonathan Silke**, honorary life president of the SA Zionist Federation, said the opening of Parliament and SONA should be respected by all parties. “Decorum is essential.

“The opposition parties have a chance to air opposing views and to challenge government in the various debates. It is their duty to challenge the government on policies.”

He complimented the DA, ACDP and IFP on “their balanced and ma-

ture approach”.

Silke was adamant that the president and other holders of public office should never be subjected to “personal or vindictive” attacks as the real issue should always be the policies of government.

Well known community leader **Wayne Sussman** questioned: “Who would have thought that the first dose of entertainment at the State of the Nation Address would be provided by the down-but-not-yet-out Congress of the People (Cope), and not the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF)?

“I have a confession to make. In my teens, I would watch World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) and the actions of the EFF and Cope reminded me of WWE - scripted, rehearsed and predictable, but still entertaining.

“We knew the stakes would be raised in an election year, and that voters would be glued to their communication medium.”

Sussman said he found Julius Malema’s speech in response to SONA humorous, “but [I] believe he and the EFF gave up much ground to the ANC and the DA by not participating in the bulk of the responses to the SONA. They were not able to go toe-to-toe with the ANC, like the DA did.”

Sussman quips that he is sure both the DA and the EFF would love some Vermont water in their elixir.

“Bernie Sanders, at 74, has about 40 years on the clock more than Mmusi Maimane and Julius Malema, yet he is able to energise young and first-time voters.”

Zev Kregel, immediate past national president of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies, says he is concerned at the behaviours of MPs in Parliament.

“They are undermining the structure of the legislature and the whole of Parliament.”

Kregel said failing to respect the institution of government could be very dangerous. “Go for the person, not the institution and not against the Speaker of the House.”

There were remedies through the right channels in the event of dissension, he said.



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Johannesburg takes to the streets to show love for Israel

ANT KATZ

For many years, whenever Parliament is in session on a Friday, pro-Israel supporters gather outside the imposing Cape Town building (never more than 15 at a time or it would be considered an illegal gathering) - and simply stand with placards to express support for Israel. Those who attend the gathering are a mix of Jews and members of other faiths who love Israel.

Now, every Friday afternoon in Johannesburg, a group from the Impact for Christ Ministries led by one of its members, Moses Moyo, moves through the streets of Johannesburg in support of Israel. They walk past the Gauteng Legislature, waving flags and making use of a loud-hailer to exhort passersby to “pray for the peace of Jerusalem, am Yisrael Chai”.

Occasionally drivers hoot in support or someone shouts some abuse, but for the most part people just stop their shopping or whatever they’re doing to watch this display of Israel support in the middle of the day in South Africa.

The South African Zionist Federation tries to ensure that there are also Jewish representatives among the volunteers to go along on a regular basis and in small numbers. Anyone interested should contact gavi@sazf.org



World News in Brief

Breakthrough cancer study has Israeli roots

TEL AVIV - A cancer study hailed this week as potentially revolutionary for the treatment of leukaemia is based on research undertaken by Prof Zelig Eshhar of Israel’s Weizmann Institute of Science.

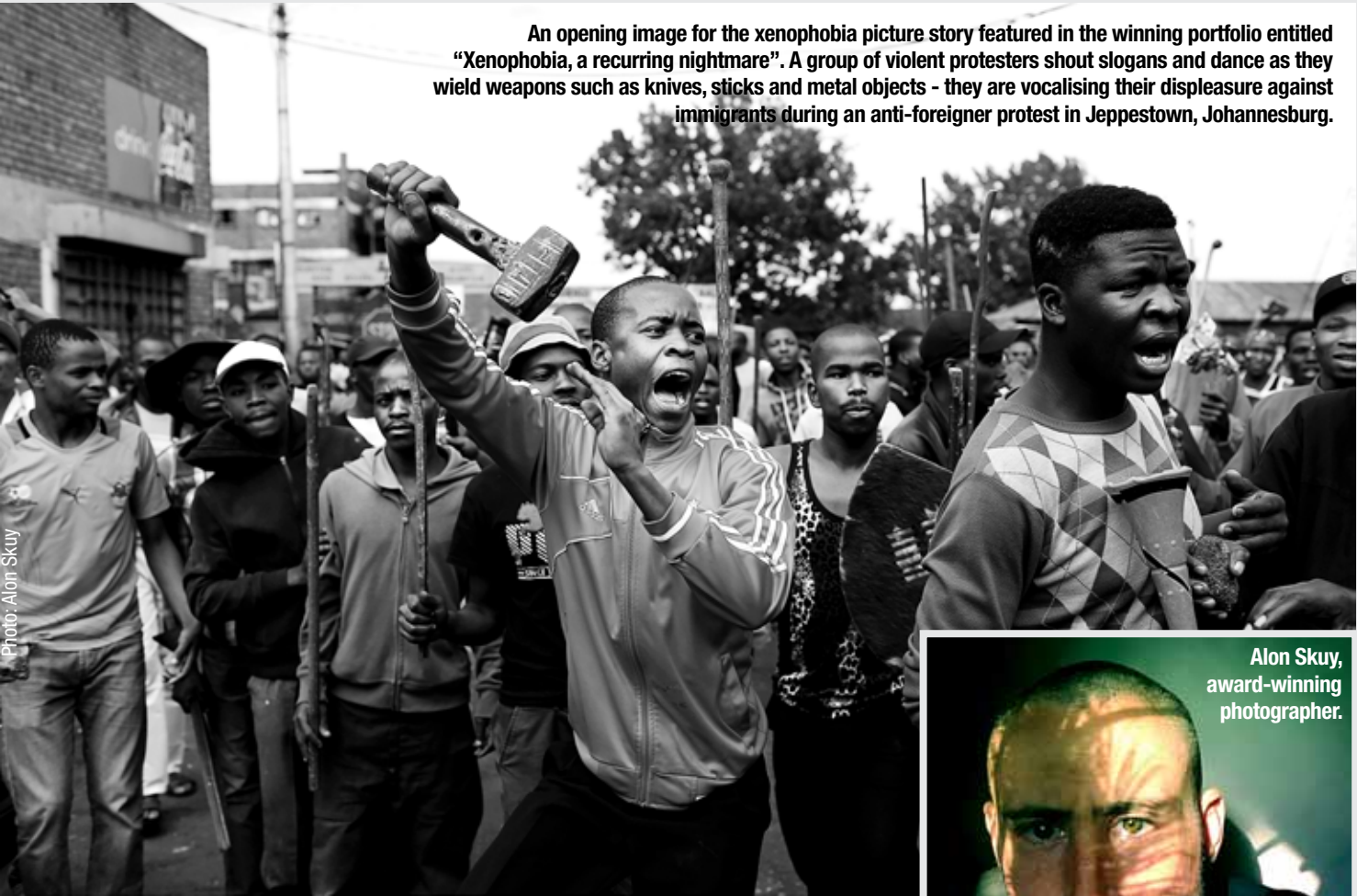
An article in the Science Translational Medicine journal outlines how researchers from the University of Pennsylvania’s Abramson Cancer Centre and the Perelman School of Medicine found that 27 out of 29 advanced leukaemia patients either went into remission or saw their illness go away completely after their T-cells were modified genetically.

In the study, carried out at the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Centre in Seattle, the cells were equipped with synthetic molecules that were able to destroy the tumour cells, particularly in cases of acute lymphoblastic leukaemia (ALL).

These results are not surprising for Prof. Eshhar, who pioneered the idea with a 1989 study in which he replaced the T-cell’s natural receptor with one of his choice, showing that T-cells can be engineered to attach to any entity. Eshhar won the Jewish state’s prestigious Israel Prize for his research in 2015.

“I’m not surprised to hear about the results,” Eshhar said, the Times of Israel reported. “In our lab, we cured many rats and mice of cancer. I have been saying for years that we could do this in people, as well.” (JNS.org)

Alon Skuy captures the world’s foibles through a camera lens



SUZANNE BELLING

Local, multi-award-winning photographer Alon Skuy (35) was recognised last year by the Donald W Reynolds Journalism Institute at the Missouri School of Journalism for his portfolio of 50 images.

The Institute is the oldest and most prestigious photojournalism programme and competition in the world.

One of his pictures in the portfolio entitled “Xenophobia, a recurring nightmare” gained first place.

Skuy also took second place for newspaper pictures of the year at Photograph of the Year International (POYI). “POYI believes it is critical for citizens to experience your documentation of the news events and social issues facing our world,” says Skuy. “When you enter Pictures of the Year International, your work reaches out to citizens worldwide and becomes a part of visual history.”

In South Africa, he won first prize in the

SADEC competition.

Skuy, who is Jewish, took the first steps in his career after completing a course at The Market Photo Workshop in Newtown, Johannesburg.

Chief photographer for The Times for the past nine years, he has also worked as a freelance photographer for The Star, The Saturday Star and the Sunday Independent newspapers. His first fulltime employment as a photographer was with The Star.

His achievements also include being a finalist in the Bayeux Calvados award for war correspondents.

Skuy also placed second in the Issue Reporting Picture Story category for his work on evictions in the Johannesburg inner city.

At the time of Marikana shootings four years ago, he won additional international awards, including first place in the News Picture Story “Marikana Massacre”.

“I feel great when my work is seen by a wider audience,” Skuy told SA Jewish Report. “It is

good to be recognised by one’s peers.”

Some of his assignments “take their toll”, he said when he captures the pure pain of evictions, people in situations of raw poverty and violence.

He feels he is making a statement and this is the importance of photojournalism.

“It is always interesting to document events and be part of the creative process.

“I knew my vocation and passion from 2004 when I was an intern on The Star.”

Skuy has given exhibitions - including a solo “Xenophobia - Never Again” at the Constitutional Court in Johannesburg.

He has published articles and been published in books.

Skuy grew up in Johannesburg and matriculated from Eden College.

#TeamMaccabiSA trials for 2017

#TeamMaccabiSA is gearing up for gold at the 20th Maccabi Games. Be a part of the biggest Jewish sporting event and experience of a lifetime, taking place from 4-18 July 2017 in Israel.

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Go to maccabi.co.za for info on registration, age groups, trials and selection.

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If you would like to enter a sport not included above, please contact us!

Enquiries: admin@maccabi.co.za www.maccabi.co.za Maccabi South Africa @MaccabiSA

REFORM JUDAISM IS A RELIGION BASED ON CONVENIENCE

The oral Torah, as the name implies, was originally transmitted orally and written down in a cryptic form and later elaborated and vigorously debated. It is not man-made.

Yes, there are some fences which rabbis with knowledge of the entire Torah and all life sciences set, but there is even a hint in the Torah for those. Reform rejects even what’s written in the written Torah, so this is just an excuse to justify a religion based on convenience whereas Orthodox adds to it; which do you think is more authentic?

I have a few questions on Rabbi Schell’s understanding: Firstly, even before Sinai there were seven Noachite laws which contained an unsaid command to do good, proof being that Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed for being selfish.

Secondly, if everyone starts basing their philosophies on what they think is good, then there is no true good as everyone has his own interpretation of what good is. For example, Hitler’s ideology of good is outlined in Mein Kampf. Al Capone thought he was good.

Legalising abortions, or as others may see it as babies that haven’t yet left the womb, is an example of how a misguided will to do good can lead to even murder of babies or the elderly, under the pretext of merciful population control. What seems abhorrent to us today can be the norm tomorrow. Only G-d in a clearly defined Torah can define what good is.

Those believing I’m horrible for claiming Reform leaders do not possess the knowledge to warrant being called rabbi, will also have to call Moshe horrible. Korach was the first Reform Jew

according to Rashi.

Korach’s claim was that Moshe made up a lot of the Torah and brought into it logical inconsistencies, for instance proclaiming that if we have a room of Sifrei Torah and seforim why do we need a mezuzah which contains but a small fraction thereof and if my entire garment is techiles (the dye used on one of the tzitzit which was the highlight of the tzitzit mitzvah) that I don’t now need tzitzis.

Moshe giving up a life of luxury to identify with the enslaved Jews and even willing to sacrifice himself, proclaimed in last week’s parsha: Forgive the nation or wipe my name from Your book, after the sin of the golden calf. But when it came to Korach, he organised that he be swallowed up by the ground. Why? Not because of his own ego because we see Moshe was the humblest of men.

Nevertheless, we see that Korach’s children repented at the last moment and lived; one of his descendent being the great prophet Shmuel.

This shows the great potential of every Jew exemplified by the way Reform Jews excel at kindness and charity, but who will bear the responsibility of fettering their souls by limiting their spiritual growth to a few mitzvot and a diminished Torah, when, if they had access to a rich Torah and 613 mitzvot, their spiritual accomplishments like those of Shmuel would be enormous.

For even if Orthodox Jews sin, they are on a path with much more potential for spiritual greatness.

Eli Knight

Johannesburg

CROSSING THE LINE FROM FREE SPEECH TO HATE SPEECH

On behalf of the World Union for Progressive Judaism (WUPJ), we are writing to express our shock and condemnation of the South African Jewish Report’s publication of hateful and defamatory claims against Reform Jewry.

These letters cross the line from free speech into hateful speech, the kinds of incitement that should be neither tolerated nor validated in the public news arena. Not against Jews, not between Jews and not against any human being.

The World Union for Progressive Judaism, established in London in 1926 and now headquartered in Jerusalem, is the international umbrella body of the Reform, Liberal, Progressive and Reconstructionist movements, serving 1 200 congregations with 1,8 million members in 50 countries.

Reform Judaism has a long and distinguished history in South Africa, dating back to the founding of Temple Israel in Johannesburg in 1936. Under the bold and indomitable leadership of the

late Rabbi Moses Cyrus Weiler, Reform Judaism was at the forefront in the fight for human rights and values as taught by our prophetic tradition.

Reform Jews in South Africa are an essential part of Klal Yisrael both in the country and worldwide - those who deny our legitimacy weaken the strong fabric of unity which bonds us together.

To deny the legitimacy of Reform Judaism is to deny the very core Klal Yisrael values which constitute the heritage of all Jews: Torah (study), Avodah (worship) and Gemilut Chassidim (acts of loving kindness).

Our tradition teaches that Sin’at Chinam - baseless hatred - among Jews was the catalyst for some of the worst events in Jewish history.

We call upon the South African Jewish journal to discontinue publishing such hate mail and reject this incitement in future editions.

Daniel Freeland

President

Carole Sterling

WUPJ chairman

THE UNTHINKABLE CAN HAPPEN THROUGH POWER OF THE PROGRESSIVE MIND

It has been a tough past week, as once again we (Progressive Jews) have been at it again with our “Orthodox” counterparts in South Africa. (See last week’s Jewish Report for more on this.)

While I am not from SA, it is rather obvious that my (Progressive) community feels constantly put down or made to feel “less than” by our fellow Jews in this country. I think as such that it is important for us to take a step back and make an observation.

Today progressively thinking or “Progressive Jews” (to me there is no material difference) have become a force to be reckoned with on the international stage. In the US and the world over we now number in the millions. Not only this, but the State of Israel is moving in a progressive direction. (Note my column last week, on the Israeli Supreme Court’s decision regarding “Women of the Wall”.)

There is naturally resistance to this, but to those who have any depth of thought and or observation, the world - and Israel hauled along with it - is unequivocally moving in this direction. It is high time that the so-called “Orthodox mentality” come to realise that there is indeed more than one way to express oneself as a Jew, or Christian etc.

This “holier than thou” attitude or mentality - we know better than you/or any other community, for that matter - so prevalent among our Orthodox brothers and sisters - MUST FALL. It is this precise thinking, “one community’s G-d-given superiority” over another, that lead directly to our very own Holocaust!

This brings me to my point: How many of you are aware that the next president of the United States - which is beginning to look more likely every day - may very well be, not just a progressive thinker, but a “progressive Jew!” We are indeed becoming a force to be reckoned with; we (as a community) are becoming more powerful, and wielding more influence by the day - let us use such influence positively!

(Democratic presidential hopeful) Senator Bernie Sanders was born 74 years ago and raised in Brooklyn New York. On the (very rare) occasions that he has mentioned that he is Jewish, he has done so with great pride.

It is clear from his life story that while being a proud Jew, he has aspired to be much more than just this, this being one of the fundamental tenets between Orthodox and Progressive thinking.

If we as Jews wish to make a difference on the world stage, we need to move away from an antiquated way of thinking and into the light of a progressive mindset.

If we can do this, we (Jews) will be able to accomplish things literally unthinkable just a single generation ago - such is the power of the progressive mind!

Rabbi Julia Margolis

Johannesburg

THE RELIGIOUS PATH A JEW FOLLOWS IS A PERSONAL CHOICE

I agree 100 per cent with the editor’s reply (to letter writers in the Orthodox/Reform brouhaha on the letters pages) and I am also in total agreement with Rabbi Schell, Gila Efrat, Karen Staltz, Monica Solomon, Rabbi Julia Margolis and Diane Fine.

I am continually disgusted by the arrogance of Orthodox Jews who belittle Reform Jews. (Incidentally I follow the Orthodox path).

A Jew is a Jew is a Jew and whatever path we follow is our own personal opinion. The Torah teaches us tolerance - is this how tolerance is perceived?

Do we ever read about Reform Jews berating Haredi etc? They don’t because they practise “tolerance”!

Did the Nazis ask the Frank family if they were Reform or Orthodox - they were Jews and that was the bottom line.

Barbara Geer

Johannesburg

A WARNING WITH THE RING OF PROPHETIC TRUTH

Last week’s issue of the Jewish Report provided a breath of fresh air with two lead articles - Vanessa Valkin’s editorial and Geoff Sifrin’s “Taking Issue” column.

In her editorial - published ahead of the State of the Nation address - Valkin urged President Jacob Zuma to be forthright in his address and not gloss over the serious problems besetting South Africa and “cheerfully wade through a speech of smiling platitudes”.

She also predicted the “usual disruptive antics from the enfant terrible Julius Malema and his cohorts”.

Sifrin urged South Africans to “beware the seduction of populist thugs”, wise words in the light of the appeal that the image of a beleaguered president cowering before the EFF leader would have - willy-nilly - for many.

Throughout their history, the Jews (and I am a gentle observer) have suffered the effects of thuggery used for nefarious ends, and a sober warning against what “could” happen here is timeous; the warning has the ring of prophetic truth.

Arnold Theron

Lyndhurst, Johannesburg

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SEVENTY YEARS AFTER SHOAH, HAS EUROPE REALLY CHANGED?

Ant Katz’s article in last week’s Jewish Report, “Anti- Semitism a growing scourge in Europe”, aroused my curiosity.

There are many views as to the cause of this hatred and anti-Semitism by people in Europe and indeed all over the world.

One of the questions asked by some Jews today, is that having regard to the Holo-caust some 70 years ago, why did Jews elect to stay (or go back) to Europe?

It also seems clear that Europe, today, would rather have Muslims as immigrants than Jews, despite reports on anti-Semi-tism, such as the one referred to by Dutch Education Minister Jet Bussemaker, who said the report “shows a reality that is inconvenient and sometimes painful”.

Of course, this is pure and unadulterated sophistry, designed to mask the singling out and demonising of Jews by Europeans.

Why, you may ask? Consider that France and Italy, both marked International Holo-caust Remembrance Day (on January 27), by hosting the president of Iran, a country that has not only threatened to “wipe Israel off the map”, but also holds a cartoon competition featuring works trivialising or denying the Holocaust.

The Italian prime minister also covered up naked statues so as not to offend his Iranian counterpart when the latter visited Italy.

And furthermore, while mourning the murder of six million Jews, these European

leaders had their eye on billion dollar con-tracts with Iran.

Margot Wallstrom, Sweden’s foreign minister, is also obsessed with Jews. She condemns Israel for defending its citizens from terror attacks.

Michael Oren, former Israeli ambas-sador to the US, author and member of the Knesset, says that there are more than 200 territorial disputes in the world but Europe “does not label products as made in Chinese-occupied Tibet or Turkish-occupied Cyprus”. Why then label Jewish goods from Judea and Samaria, “The West Bank” and “Golan Heights”?

There are no Palestinians in the Golan Heights, but Europe is determined to single out Jews, so much so, that it doesn’t care if it hurts the Palestinians who are employed by Israeli businesses in the West Bank.

As Oren puts it: “The vacuum created by America’s retreat from the Middle East is being filled by Russia and other actors.”

Instead of grasping the opportunity to play a leading role diplomatically in Middle East politics, Europe has lost the equity for mediation. So, too, has Europe’s ability to fight anti-Semitism, disappeared.

The rhetorical question posed by Oren, is: “More than 70 years after the Holocaust, has Europe really changed?”

Nathan Cheiman
Northcliff, Johannesburg

MOCKING THE OLD TRUSTED WAYS SMACK OF RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

In a letter in last week’s Jewish Report, Monica Solomon falsely referred to an assertion I had supposedly made about Progressive rabbis. This is untrue. I never men-tioned them in any way, neither directly nor indirectly. She also accused me of “hate speech”. I would like to request her to back this up with evidence. What exactly did I write that constitutes hate speech?

Solomon mentions that all Progressive rabbis have studied the Talmud. Can she produce any such rabbi who is able to open any book of the Talmud in its standard Aramaic format and explain what is going on, without having to research it first?

Many Reform temples (as they are often called over-seas) were indeed modelled on Christian services.

We like to speak of tolerance, yet when it comes to our ancient traditions we sometimes lose that tolerance and even mock the “old ways”. For example, one of the letter writers spoke of being inclusive, accepting and loving, but referred to those with a different view as narrow-minded.

Another writer compared someone to the Fuhrer. Yet another one seemed to imply that there is a belief that men cannot control their sexual urges if they see a woman’s hair. (Perhaps she was thinking of the tradition of a married woman covering her hair so that it remains for her husband’s appreciation only.)

Calling oneself “Progressive” smacks of elitism. What does that suggest about those who do not follow their approach?

The Orthodox believe that the halacha is the way of G-d and therefore cannot be changed by man. They also believe that adhering to it would benefit us spiritually. We may not agree with this but let us at least respect it. And if they are correct, it would then be harmful to influ-ence people away from it.

Anyway, most of those who tried new approaches to Judaism throughout our history are themselves history. We do not know the details of Jewish law before it was codified in the Mishna about 2 000 years ago, but we do know that Jews have followed those laws since then without change.

Reform only began about 200 years ago by rejecting most of the ancient practices. This was mostly done in an attempt to escape anti-Semitism and out of convenience even if many of its current members are sincere in their spirituality.

Unfortunately these reforms led to disruptions in families and communities.

Regarding those who are offering a watered down version of Judaism to the youth so as to attract them to the fold, the Lubavitcher Rebbe pointed out that young people prefer that which is real.

There are many Orthodox Jews who are intolerant of outsiders. This is usually a defence mechanism born out of fear that members will go astray. It is offensive and scares people away. Hate the sin but not the sinner!

Some of the leading Orthodox rabbis positively glowed with love for others, even if the “others” weren’t reli-gious. These included the Chofeitz Chaim (Gadol Hador), Rav Kook (Modern Orthodox), The Lubavitcher Rebbe (Chabad) and Moshe Feinstein (Gadol Hador). These leaders were motivated by love to keep others from aban-doning the age-old religion.

Remember, the Talmud teaches that the great Second Temple was not destroyed because the Jews were irreligi-ous, but because of baseless hatred.

Martin Zagnoev
Sunningdale Ridge, Johannesburg

THE SAD HOMECOMING OF STANLEY ROBBINS

I want to share a story of how somebody who was missing was located. I was the one who found him. Phyllis Robbins, a friend of mine, phoned me and told me that her brother, South African-born Stanley Rob-bins, had not phoned her for a month from America; this was about December 24.

She asked me to help find out what had happened to him. She gave me an address. I tried to get the telephone number from the address, but failed to do so. I also knew that Stanley was a pharmacist and the pharmacy group he worked for. I phoned them all, but with no luck.

I knew that Stanley was stay-ing in Los Banos, California and decided to phone the Los Banos police. I spoke to a policewom-an who promised to find out if Stanley was still at the address

that Phyllis had given me.

It then became apparent that Stanley unfortunately had passed on. The policewoman gave me the phone number of the deputy coroner. Stanley was found after a friend of his, Henry Lowe, was unable to make contact with him. His body was found on December 16. It appeared he had gone into a diabetic coma and died.

Stanley’s body was flown from Los Angeles to Johan-nesburg. He was buried in the Brakpan cemetery on February 12.

At the funeral I said the Kaddish and will do so for 11 months as there is no one else to do so.

So Stanley came home.

Sydney Brian Shefts
Illovo, Johannesburg

SAJFP PREACHES EVEN-HANDEDNESS, BUT GUNS FOR PERES

Writing in a publication called Polity, an organi-sation called South African Jews for a Free Pales-tine (SAJFP) raises some questions around the visit of former Israeli President Shimon Peres to this country and questions his peace initiatives.

The Peres Centre for Peace is a non-govern-mental, non-political and non-profit organisa-tion founded by Peres, recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, the very same prize awarded to Yasser Arafat, President Nelson Mandela, and President FW de Klerk.

All these were involved in conflict of one kind or another but SAJPF singles out only one of these prizewinners. One must surely question why and the answer is pretty obvious - this organisation is fiercely opposed to any peace process between the Palestinians and Israelis. If it wasn’t, why won’t it support and endorse the various peace initiatives that have been proposed over the past number of years?

This nefarious organisation claims that it stands for a free Palestine, but how can Palestine ever be free when generations of these people are brought up from a young age to hate - hatred so inbred that little children as young as 11 are en

couraged to murder, to simply go into the streets of their towns and villages and murder Jews.

Surely teaching little children to kill must be a crime that surpasses anything they accuse Peres of? If this group were at all sincere in their quest for a free Palestine, their efforts and resources could be far better employed in working towards educating the children of Palestine to value life, their own as well as others, rather than glorify death.

Educate mothers not to encourage their children to aspire to death, but rather a life of fulfilment. When that day happens, Palestine will become free. A footnote to the SAJFP article says the organisation says it advocates for a just resolution of the Israeli/Palestinian conflict. (But it won’t endorse or support a two-state solution.)

It says it opposes all forms of discrimination, including anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism and ethnocentrism. (But it doesn’t seem to have a problem with the stated goal of Mahmood Ab-bas who says that no Jews will live in Palestine.)

Allan Wolman
Rosebank, Johannesburg

Help needed with ‘Lost Shtetl’ museum project in Seduva

Eli Rabinowitz of Perth in Australia, on behalf of The Seduva Jewish Memorial Fund Team, is seeking help in collecting information from descendants of the Seduva shtetl in Lithuania, in the form of family stories, documents, artefacts and the like.

He writes that over the past three years the Seduva Jewish Memo-rial Fund has been implementing a unique heritage project, called “Lost Shtetl”. Planning is under way for a state-of-art “Museum of Lost Shtetl”, adjacent to the Jewish cemetery, due to open in 2018.

The museum will feature lo-cal shtetl history, “where one can discover how our ancestors lived, prayed, married, worked and died, as well as in many other similar shtetls, forgotten today. These shtetls thrived with Litvak life.”

Rabinowitz may be contacted at e-mail eli@elirab.com or the fund may be contacted at info@lostshtetl.com

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KDL’s Jewish pride culminates in ‘Israel Week’

TALI KADISH

“I not only have the right to be Jewish and to have a homeland, but I also have the responsibility to show that I am proud of being Jewish and supportive of the State of Israel.”

Last week, King David Linksfield expressed their love for Judaism and took the initiative to show its Jewish pride by holding “Israel Week”.

On Monday the school was made aware of anti-Semitism by taping off certain areas of the school with the words - NO JEWS ALLOWED.

Tuesday, the learners expressed their appreciation and support of the Israeli Defence Forces by reciting tehillim and singing Hebrew songs during the breaks, as well as wearing Tzahal shirts.

Israeli Culture Day was celebrated on Wednesday with traditional Israeli food and music.

Thursday was the day that King David Linksfield learners had the opportunity to identify, both communally and personally, their connection with Israel.

On Friday, they concluded the week with an assembly celebrating the various aspects of the State of Israel.

The school was addressed by Ben Swartz, national chairman of the SAZF and Cheryl Unterslak of Divote. The learners also wrote notes to be placed in the Kotel.

Israel Week was a great success and conveyed a powerful message, touching every learner by making them more aware of their Jewish identity.



Daniel Gewer; Tyler Richter; Gabi Herbert; and Daniel Schwartz wearing Israeli flags and a Tzahal shirt during Israel Week.

Family fun-day for a very good cause



Photo: Andy Haefner

GABY COHEN

Last Sunday King David Yiddish Folk Pre-Primary School hosted a fantastic family fun-day.

Children were delighted by the face painters, balloon artists, soap-making activities, creative hair-plaiting sessions and state-of-the-art jungle gyms on the school’s playground.

While the kids enjoyed the fun and entertainment, the adults socialised and appreciated the tasty food on sale.

Proceeds from the family fun-day are to be donated towards the “Trying to Make a Difference Fund”, set up to provide financial assistance to children at Yiddish Folk who cannot afford to pay for therapy.

For parents looking for an exciting and fun party venue, King David Yiddish Folk Pre-Primary is now available for hire during after school hours. For more information contact (011) 640-5852 or e-mail yiddfolk@sabje.co.za

Jordyn and Ricky Weinstein aged 8 and 4.

Two TA boys successfully complete Midmar swim

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Sporting their medals, two learners from Torah Academy Boys’ High School Aryeh Berkowitz (grade 7) and Yakov Drutman (grade 10) successfully completed the Midmar Mile swim earlier this month.

The boys were happy at having completed the swim. “I really pushed myself,” said Aryeh.

Both boys have been swimming since nursery school age.

“We are proud of our children who shine over and above academics. It is good to celebrate excellence,” said Rabbi Yossi Chaikin, principal of Torah Academy Boys’ High.

Aryeh is the son of Joffie and Kari Berkowitz. Yakov is the son of Yisroel and Natalie Drutman.



Photo: Joffie Berkowitz

Yeshiva College kids shine in interhouse gala



Rachel Bollel with Samantha Hodges, head of girls sports



Eliya Ossin (Junior Victrix Lidorum)

Yeshiva College’s interhouse gala was held last week Friday amid a sea of green, blue and yellow, courtesy of the houses - Tzion, Israel and Judah. Well done to Judah for winning both the boys’ and girls’ galas.

Yad Aharon Sandton Sinai’s 2016 selected charity



Photo: Natascha Scher

The grade 1, 2 and 3 learners proudly display their swimming medals.

MELINDA CHAZEN

On Monday February 15, the grade ones, grade twos and grade threes of Sandton Sinai Primary, went on a chesed outing to Yad Aharon.

The children were amazed to learn how many families Yad Aharon supports. The learners worked hard packing baby marrows into bags; they felt a sense of satisfaction after filling seven trolleys which they were told would be distributed to families in need.

Last week Friday, Sandton Sinai with great excitement, held its first “Strokes for Charity” event, with kids swimming for a good cause. The school’s charity of choice for this year is Yad Aharon, who will be receiving the proceeds.

The visit to Yad Aharon motivated the children to give of their best in order to raise as much money as possible, as they now had a clear understanding where their sponsorships were going.

There was an unbelievable atmosphere at school as each and every child participated in the team event. The children learnt the wonderful lesson that together as a team they can achieve greatness.

A big mazeltov to the grade three girls for winning the trophy for the best spirit and a very special mazeltov to Amber Ross who swam an unbelievable 35 lengths!

It was Rosabelle Klein’s week for colours



Photo: Caron Levy

CARON LEVY

At Rosabelle Klein Nursery School in Johannesburg, the kids have been learning all about colours this week.

The classroom walls are filled with collages of the primary colours of red, blue and yellow and they all had lots of fun drawing and creating images of colour.

Pictured is one of the younger groups with teacher Lauren Kier proudly showing off their orange collages.

Warm little hands explore icy wonders



Photo: Moira Berkowitz

JENNY MILLER

Polar bears, penguins, huskies, igloos, snow and ice, have been talked about during Sydenham Pre-Primary School’s theme on “Polar Region”. To enhance this icy theme, the kids went ice picking last Friday. They were required to pick an ice cube using tweezers, toothpicks, golf tees, tongs

and matches and were then given the opportunity to play with the ice blocks and encouraged to explore its textures. The goal was to reclaim a toy that was frozen in the ice. This was a great time to work on fine-motor skills, eye-hand co-ordination and language skills. Pictured are Shaiya Crouse and Cameron Myers showing off their finds.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

UK, US and Canada confront the BDS fraud

For the past decade and more, a global campaign has been underway aimed at boycotting the State of Israel at all levels, be it in the economic, diplomatic, cultural, academic or sporting spheres.

Going under the name Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS), it is modelled on the South African example, where international isolation played a key part in the downfall of the apartheid regime. There is, of course, an active branch of BDS in South Africa.

In recent days, BDS has suffered significant setbacks, firstly by the UK's decision to outlaw boycott campaigns by town halls and other public bodies and thereafter by the Canadian parliament's adoption of a motion condemning the BDS movement.

The UK ruling prohibits all public authorities from imposing a boycott against any country,

including Israel, signed up to the World Trade Organisation government procurement agreement. As such, it sets an important precedent for other democratic states to follow.

These moves, moreover, have come in the wake of last year's far-reaching Trade Facilitation and Trade Enforcement Act, by which the United States, among other things, unambiguously denounced BDS and committed itself to opposing it on multiple levels.

In adopting these steps, the US, UK and Canada recognise that BDS, far from wishing to promote human rights or even the welfare of the Palestinians, has as its core aim the undermining and eventual destruction, of Israel.

In the words of Michael Mostyn, CEO, B'nai B'rith Canada, it has "no interest in actively helping Palestinian Arabs. Instead it seeks to demonise and delegitimise Israel and its aim is the annihilation of Israel and the Jewish people".

BDS singles out the Jewish State alone for special punitive action. Wherever it surfaces, it is accompanied by anti-Jewish abuse and harassment, a reality that we in South Africa

can readily testify to. The battle against BDS is far from won, but it is encouraging to see that increasingly, world policy makers are coming to see the movement for what it is.

Shimon Peres visit

This week, the legendary Israeli pioneer, statesman and peace activist Shimon Peres will once again be visiting South Africa, this time as a guest of the IUA-UCF.

In addition to addressing our community on Sunday, he will be having a number of official meetings and media interviews (which the Board is helping to set up). Mr Peres, even in the darkest times, has never wavered in his commitment to working for peaceful co-existence between Israel and its neighbours. The message he brings is as important as ever, not just for the Middle East but also for our own country.

As could have been predicted, local anti-Israel activists have vociferously condemned the visit and are attempting in various ways to undermine it. For them, whatever Mr Peres has to say is irrelevant - the very fact that he will be here as a representative of the hated "Zionist

entity" is enough for them to wish to silence him.

For our part, we will strenuously oppose any attempts at censorship or intimidation and do everything we can to make the visit a memorable success.

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

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Jewish Report

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A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Just a really big family

Unless you have a large family, few people can imagine the logistics behind co-ordinating a household with 15 children aged 7 - 20 years.

At Arcadia that's on average how many we care for in the residential facility, excluding a further 25-plus in day-care. Clearly, organisation is key.

Staff are on duty around the clock and the children

get woken at six on school mornings. Youth and

childcare workers help the little ones to wash, dress and eat breakfast, while the older ones make their own beds and pack their lunches from the range of food laid out in the kitchen.

Working out the drivers' schedules requires meticulous planning. Children have to be delivered to seven different schools and finish at varying times.

In the afternoons there are extra lessons, sports, doctor and dentist appointments and a range of extracurricular activities. Almost all the children in Arcadia are placed there for their protection by the Children's Court, so therapy sessions are not uncommon. Many deal with difficult histories and painful family situations.

The day-care caters to children identified as being at risk. They go home to sleep in the evenings, but spend their afternoons with the residential



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Michael Sieff
Group CEO

children, eating lunch and doing homework under supervision. There are days when lunch is served to as many as 40 children.

Just like in any family, there are times when discipline is needed and others when a hug, chat, or shoulder to cry on will do the trick.

There's bath time, supper time, tidy-up time and

bedtime; Yomtov, Shabbat and shul; visits to friends and family and holidays to plan. Time is allocated for playing, reading and watching TV. There are simchas to attend and gifts to buy, clothes shopping days and even pocket money to arrange. Every opportunity is taken to teach life skills in a normal environment and to eradicate any institutional feel.

Just like in any family, every child is an individual with a unique personality, tastes, skills and needs. Their uniqueness is celebrated to build identity and self-esteem.

At Arcadia the kids talk and listen to each other, offering support as they would to biological sibling - because in essence, they are brothers and sisters and will always have each other's backs. Just like in any regular, really big family.

May our partnership continue to thrive.

feedback@thechev.org.za

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Bloemfontein Jewish community holds reunion in Sandton

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Bloemfontein Jewish community, which in its heyday in the 1970s, was one of the largest country communities in South Africa, has in recent years diminished in line with other smaller communities in the country.

A team of former Bloemfonteinners, led by Trevor Wasserman, took the initiative and organised a “Charity Reunion Party” in Sandton to help raise awareness of the plight of the Bloemfontein community, as well as to reconnect Bloemfonteinners from far and wide.

It was a very well-attended event with visitors from as far afield as the US, Israel, Cape Town, Bloemfontein and Johannesburg, attending.

The audience was entertained by Chazzan Ezra Altschuler and young singing sensation, Shmuli Brill.

The evening was a great success and much needed funds were raised for the Bloemfontein community.



Roxy Horwitz; Loraine Solomon; Trevor Wasserman and Ros Hurwitz.

Twenty Diller Teen Fellows graduate

LIVNAT KATZ

Twenty Diller Teen Fellows from King David Linksfield and Victory Park took part in a graduation ceremony at Beyachad, on Monday.

South Africa is the first community outside of Israel and North America to be a part of this exceptional programme, which is run by Gilad Spitalnik, Johannesburg Diller Teen Fellows coordinator, at the Israel Centre.

The programme included bi-weekly workshops and weekend retreats throughout the year. The programme also included a three-week seminar in Israel and a 10-day peer-to-peer exchange in South Africa with their Israeli counterpart group from the Partnership2Gether region of Beit Shemesh - Mateh Yehudah.

The programme has proven to be extremely successful. The teens were also involved in launching four different programmes that will have a real impact in the community on a daily basis.



Matisonn keeps his audience spellbound

RUTH COGGIN

Community icon and member of the Board of Directors of the SA Jewish Report, Bertie Lubner (right), was among the audience that packed the Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre in Johannesburg last week Sunday to listen to a talk by South African author John Matisonn (left) on his recently published book, “God, lies and spies”.

Matisonn’s book is a riveting account of the “inside story” of the tumultuous apartheid years, written from the perspective of a well-connected and highly-regarded journalist. By spelling out an “unvarnished” examination of the past, Matisonn also pinpoints the roots of some of the important challenges facing post-apartheid South Africa and suggests practical ways for South Africans to dig themselves out of the holes in which they find themselves in. “God, lies and spies” by John Matisonn is available from Exclusive Books.



Motivated Pearl Seigel sees her disability simply as a challenge

MARGOT COHEN

A horrendous motor accident 30 years ago left Pearl Seigel badly injured and paralysed. At the time a promising accounting student, she has had to make great changes to her life.

She completed her studies and articles and began a new career. She now lectures and gives motivational talks to business groups and stressed entrepreneurs.

Seigel recently published a book entitled “Seven Tried and Tested Triangles” which offers great insights. “I’ve used them both in my personal life and in coaching many individuals, teams and businesses,” she says.

Seigel gets about on her motorised wheelchair, which she calls “my Harley” and her adapted car.

Her sense of humour, tenacity and courage and her positivity even in extremely adverse times is underpinned by her belief in Hashem. She holds a masters degree in business leadership from Unisa’s Graduate School of Business. “My thesis was on brand symbolism of the Proudly SA brand and individual and community values and SA national culture,” she explains.

Her work experience includes branding, communication, consulting, marketing,



training and auditing. She has worked in varied business environments in retail and service industries.

As a business and motivational speaker, she provides sessions and workshops on “Seven Tried and Tested Triangles”.

The indomitable Seigel is hard at work on her second book which deals with research on brain plasticity.

She has coined a new word: “creality” which she says describes understanding reality and working creatively round it.

To get in touch with Seigel, call 074-187-51370 . Her e-mail is pearl@trainingshop.co.za.

Young Jessica Hurwitz is a ballerina with the world as her oyster

ALLISON FOAT

A young Jewish ballerina from Johannesburg, is setting the local dance scene ablaze. Jessica Hurwitz from Oaklands in Johannesburg is competing this week in the 5th SA International Ballet Competition (SAIBC) in Cape Town at Artscape. The competition ends on Sunday.

There are 70 entrants in the SAIBC, Africa’s most prestigious competitive ballet event.

Jessica started dancing at the age of four with her mother, Nadine Sacker, who was a former principal dancer with PACT Ballet. Jessica is currently training at the Carstens/Ireland ballet studio where she is under the tutelage of another former PACT Ballet soloist, Natasha Ireland, as well as being trained by Sandra and Anya Carstens.

In 2014, Jessica was awarded a 100 per cent

scholarship to attend the American Academy of Ballet’s annual five-week summer intensive in New York. She has been performing with Joburg Ballet since 2013, dancing with the corps de ballet in numerous productions such as La Bayadere and Swan Lake.

At the East Rand Dance Festival last year, Jessica was runner-up in the national set dance as well as the national championships. At the ballet festival in Johannesburg, she won the trophy for her improvisation, as well as “most outstanding performance”.

At Concours de Ballet, Jessica was awarded the prestigious Shield Scholarship award. Along with writing matric this year, Jessica is also performing in Giselle with Joburg Ballet, doing her Advanced 2 ballet exam and the Solo Seal examination thereafter.



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Artificial light at night can make us fat

HAIFA - Turning off lights and drawing the shades when you go to sleep could help your body control weight gain, according to a study from Israel, newly published in the International Journal of Obesity.

The study also affirmed past research showing a link between artificial light at night (ALAN) - especially from white LED bulbs - and some types of cancer.

“In recent years there are a lot of studies that use ALAN as a proxy for different health issues including obesity. Some lab studies have examined how ALAN leads to body-mass gain among mice,” explains University of Haifa mathematics and economics PhD student Nataliya Rybnikova.

“Researchers think this is because light suppresses the production of melatonin, a hormone produced by animals and humans mainly at night,” she told Israel 21c.

“Melatonin is responsible for metabolic function, and ALAN also influences metabolic function in people. So we decided to check if there is an association between ALAN and body-mass gain.” - Israel 21c

Israeli films win in Berlin

BERLIN - This year the two winners of the Panorama Audience Awards presented at the 66th Berlinale - the Berlin International Film Festival - are from Israel: Udi Aloni’s Junction 48 in the fiction film category and Tomer and Barak Heymann’s Who’s Gonna Love Me Now? in the documentary section. Aloni’s Junction 48 tells the story of a Palestinian rapper in Lod. Since 2003 he has presented all of his films at Berlin. Junction 48 was the sixth production to premiere in the Panorama section.

The Heymann brothers’ Who’s Gonna Love Me Now? is about an Israeli gay man with HIV who lives in London, and his relationship with his family. This is the second Panorama Audience Award for Tomer Heymann, whose documentary, Paper Dolls, won in 2006.

The Heymann brothers recently released the popular documentary, Mr Gaga, a portrait of the Batsheva Dance Company’s artistic director, Ohad Naharin, which Tomer directed and Barak produced.

During the festival, moviegoers were asked to rate the films shown in the Panorama section on voting cards after the screenings. A total of 30 000 votes were



cast.

This year, 51 feature-length films from 33 countries were shown in the Panorama section. - Jerusalem Post

‘Don’t sell out Israel for UN Security Council seat’

OTTAWA - Canada should not seek a seat on the United Nations Security Council if it means compromising its support for Israel, says Conservative foreign affairs critic Tony Clement.

“If turning our back on Israel is the price of admission, I don’t think it is worth it,” Clement said at the annual conference of the McGill Institute for the Study of Canada.

In 2010, Canada, under Stephen Harper’s government, failed to win a seat, finishing in third place during first-round voting in the General Assembly. Canada had held a seat on the Security Council on and off for some 60 years.

Clement said given that rejection, the chances are very good Canada would get a seat in its next foray.

“I can’t imagine we would not get it, if we don’t do something really wrong... This is an easy one for Mr Trudeau to promise,” he said.

- Canadian Jewish Chronicle

British Board chairman stands by meeting with Putin

LONDON - Board of Deputies President Jonathan Arkush has defended his decision to meet Russian leader Vladimir Putin.

The communal head spoke to the Russian

president at the Kremlin as part of a European Jewish Congress delegation.

Arkush said at the Board plenary on Sunday last week that though Jews had endured “a difficult, difficult history” in Russia, the meeting had been a good idea.

“What I think is really important is that the Jewish people need to be able to have a conversation with some of the most powerful leaders in the world,” he said, “and to be able to discuss things openly, and I was very proud therefore that on behalf of the Board of Deputies I was able to be there present at this meeting.”

During what Arkush called “a strikingly friendly meeting” the Board president said he raised the issue of Russian weaponry finding its way into the hands of Hezbollah.

He added that Russia was relatively friendly to Jews, saying: “You can walk down the streets of any Russian city with a kippah, which is more than you can about some Western European cities.” - Jewish Chronicle, London.

Manchester City in deal with Israeli company

MANCHESTER - Arab-owned football club Manchester City has announced a partnership with an Israeli company.

The club, bought by United Arab Emirates Deputy Prime Minister Sheik Mansour in 2008, will collaborate with the Tel Aviv-based firm Wix.com.

Wix will design the former Premier League champions’ website and content on social media networks and the Wix brand will appear around the Etihad Stadium during all domestic league and cup matches.

The Israeli web development experts will also work for New York City FC and Melbourne City FC, which are owned by Man City’s parent company City Football Group.

To celebrate the partnership, the two

companies have made a video in which first-team players Raheem Sterling, Pablo Zabaleta, Fernandinho and Nicolas Otamendi create a club chants site while football pundit Chris Kamara commentates.

Wix chief marketing officer, Omer Shai, said following a successful advertising spot during the Super Bowl, the company had been “looking to expand to the most popular sport in the world – football.

“The partnership with CFG is a natural one as our two brands share values and vision, and we’re confident it will boost the Wix brand among the massive fan base of all three clubs.” - Jewish Chronicle, London

Survey: Modern Orthodox Jews in US straddle two worlds

WASHINGTON - Just as Haredi Jews in the United States are likely to enrol their kids in a yeshiva, attend synagogue every week and vote Republican, so too are modern Orthodox Jews.

But also, just as non-Orthodox Jews in the United States tend not to marry before the age of 25, earn at least a bachelor’s degree and have a significant number of non-Jewish friends, so, too, do the modern Orthodox.

And unique among Jewish Americans, the majority of modern Orthodox households earn at least \$150 000 (R2 400 000) per year, and a large majority believe caring about Israel is essential to being Jewish (79 per cent), and that the US is not supportive enough of Israel (64 per cent).

In its report, the Pew Research Centre looked deeper into the Orthodox segments of the survey data from Pew’s groundbreaking 2013 study of US Jews. The new data reveal what was already widely, yet anecdotally known - that while Haredi Jews differ greatly from non-Orthodox Jews in virtually every demographic, political, economic and religious category (and, in fact, align more closely with Evangelical Christians by most religious, social and political measures), modern Orthodox Jews, by contrast, straddle two worlds.

For example, in their views on Israel, American politics and religious observance, the modern Orthodox and Haredi communities are closely aligned. But when it comes to levels of household income or education or immersion in the non-Jewish world, the Haredim are on one side, and the modern Orthodox and non-Orthodox Jewish communities are on the other. - Los Angeles Jewish Journal.





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Turkish pizza with chopped salad and herb tahini

SAMANTHA FERRARO

Two years ago, my husband and I went on a food tour across Istanbul; our guide was boasting about lahmacun, Turkish-style pizza.

I watched the Turks walk around the old cobbled streets, bustling from the street food vendors with lahmacun in hand. Rolled up tightly and easy to eat on the go, from afar it kind of looks like a burrito.

As tradition states, lahmacun is commonly eaten with a sampling of toppings, including sliced raw onion, fresh herbs and a healthy splash of squeezed lemon.

I decided to modernise the recipe a bit. Instead of flatbread dough made from scratch, I used store-bought pizza dough, which worked beautifully! To add a bit more texture and contrast, my modern lahmacun is generously topped with chopped salad, a bright herb tahini dressing and an extra pinch of sumac and spicy red pepper.

Ingredients:

- ½ pound (.227 kg) pizza dough, at room temperature
- ¾ pound (.340 kg) ground beef or lamb (or mixture of both)
- 1 teaspoon turmeric
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ½ teaspoon sumac
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon dried mint
- Pinch of cayenne
- 1 tomato, roughly chopped and seeds removed
- 1 shallot, roughly chopped
- Small bunch of fresh parsley and cilantro
- 1 bell pepper



- 2 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
- Salt and pepper, to taste

For the chopped salad:

- 2 cucumbers, peeled
- 1 large tomato, seeded and chopped
- A few fresh mint leaves, chopped

- The juice of 1 lemon
- Olive oil, for drizzling
- Salt and pepper, to taste

For the herb tahini dressing:

- ½ cup tahini
- Small bunch of fresh parsley and cilantro
- 1 garlic clove, roughly chopped
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- Pinch of cayenne (optional)
- 1 lemon, juiced
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- Water, for thinning out dressing

Additional toppings:

- Sliced onion
- Sumac
- Lemon wedges

Directions:

- First make the chopped salad. Chop tomato and cucumber to ½-inch (12.7 mm) pieces and add to bowl. Add the chopped mint, olive oil and spices and toss together. Set aside.
- To make the tahini herb dressing, add everything except the water to a food processor and pulse to combine. Then add about ¼ cup of water to thin out consistency. It should be the same thickness as syrup and be pourable. Continue blending until everything is smooth and add more water if necessary. Taste for seasoning and set aside.
- To make the lahmacun, in a large bowl, add the chopped meat and spices and mix together well. Then in a food processor, add the tomato, bell pepper, shallot, garlic and herbs,

and pulse until blended well and it looks like a salsa. Remove and drain any excess moisture. Add the tomato mixture to the meat and mix well to combine. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

- Next, divide pizza dough into 4 equal pieces, about 2 ounces (56.7 grams) each and roll out on a very floured surface with a rolling pin. Roll dough as thin as you can, or to about 8 - 9 inches (203 - 228 mm) in diameter. Then take some of the meat mixture and use your hands to gently press the meat mixture evenly into the dough, leaving a shallow border. You can either bake it in the oven, or cook it on the stovetop.

To bake:

Place lahmacun on baking sheet or pizza stone and bake at 450 degrees F for about 5 - 7 minutes or until meat and dough is fully cooked.

On the stovetop:

Preheat a large non-stick skillet over medium heat and drizzle with a bit of olive oil. Place lahmacun in skillet and cover with a lid. Cook for about 5 minutes, until the meat mixture and dough is cooked through.

Once done, top with chopped salad, sliced onions, herb tahini dressing and serve with additional sumac and lemon wedges. (JTA via The Nosh)

- *Samantha Ferraro is the food blogger and photographer for The Little Ferraro Kitchen. She blogs about world cuisine recipes made easy.*

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We’re waiting for your
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SA Jewish Report will be holding a Pesach recipe competition! Please send us your favourite recipes... new ones you have recently tried and are excited about, old ones your grandmother made, and anything else you love!

We will run the good ones in the weeks leading up to Pesach. The winning recipe will be announced in the Pesach issue or the one shortly thereafter.

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Today, Friday (February 26)

• UZLC hosts Isaac Reznik on “Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow”. Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

• Bet David has its Family “All Generations” Kabbalat Shabbat Service. Time: 18:00 - 19:00 followed by light refreshments. No charge. Venue: Bet David, Morningside. Enquiries: Sharon (011) 783-7117.

Saturday (February 27)

• Bet David has its Torah study and light breakfast. Time: 08:45 - 09:45. No charge. Youth service and activities for children ages 3 - 10, from 10:00 - 12:00. Shabbat morning service 10:00 followed by a brocha. Yoga-Shabbat morning service with instructor Karen Turis. Time: 10:00. Venue: Bet David, Morningside. Enquiries: Sharon (011) 783-7117

Sunday (February 28)

• JWBS has its Sonia Bernstein Book Fair from 09:00 - 13:00 at the Jabula Recreation Centre, Sandringham. All books R10 each. Information: (011) 485-5232.

• Second Innings hosts Bridges For Peace, Ebenezer and Christian Friends of Israel. “The Tireless Work for Israel by Non-Jewish Organisations”. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Cost: R20 members, R40 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: (011) 532-9616.

Monday (February 29)

• UJW adult education division hosts Janine Randall - business owner and marriage course consultant on “Conflict Resolution”. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Wednesday (March 2)

• RCHCC hosts an exhibition of paintings by Thando Makhosini Ngwenya from today 18:00 until Thursday March 24. Hours: Monday - Thursday 09:00 - 16:00. Friday 09:00 - 12:00. Sunday 18:30 - 21:30. Information: Hazel or René (011) 728 8088/8378, a/h (011) 728-8378.

• UJW adult education division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, formerly of Department of English at Wits, on “The Written Word Leaps off the Page” Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (March 3)

• Bet David hosts its weekly discussion group with Rabbi Adrian Schell covering “The Prayers of our Siddur”. Time: 18:00 – 19:30. No charge. Venue: Bet David, Morningside. Enquiries: Sharon (011) 783-7117.

Community

Young Jews making waves

NISSEN GOLDMAN

A yacht party on the bobbing waves of Table Bay, last Sunday, brought together close to 150 of Cape Town’s young Jewish students for the “Chabad on Campus” official launch. The Sea Princess, South Africa’s largest day passenger boat, was commissioned to accommodate a sold out crowd for cocktails, live music and vibrant Jewish socialising.

In social media, and overwhelmingly positive e-mail feedback, students shared their appreciation for this long overdue addition to the network of Jewish life in Cape Town.
Samantha Miller, a UCT third year student who is events co-ordinator for Chabad on Campus, said: “All my friends couldn’t believe how much fun you could have at a Jewish event. This is exactly what we need!”



Dani Bergman; Talya Michaels; Emma Rosenzweig; Leigh Sayag; and Jenna Kampel.

Water polo trials for Maccabiah 2017 coming up

South Africa has a proud tradition of water polo at the Maccabi Games and the trials for Juniors (born 1999 - 2000) and Opens (18 - 35 years of age) to attend the 2017 Maccabiah will take place at a two-day training camp on Sunday, March 20 and Monday, March 21. The trials will be held at Rondebosch Boys’ High School in Cape Town.

The selectors are Dean Rimmer (head coach); Daniel Horwitz (assistant coach); Theo Yach and Alex Hawkins. Teams will be announced at the conclusion of the trials camp. For players from Gauteng and other areas who cannot attend, the selectors will either arrange a trial later in the year or for the head coach to assess them, so anyone interested, but unable to attend, may contact Ian Neuburger ian@medpages.co.za; 083-448-4555 or Ari Jacobson arij@aurumriver.co.za; 082-895-0506, co-conveners of Maccabi SA Water Polo.

A junior and senior side will be selected. Each team will include 13 players and two non-travelling reserves. However, based on the response and the pool of players available, the selectors reserve the right to select a senior side only.

The 15-man squads will train from the trials date until Maccabiah 2017, with head coach Dean Rimmer. Players from outside of Cape Town will be required to attend occasional training camps. Details will be announced later.

Fifa poll: Welsh Cohen spins for Prince Ali

JACK MILNER

There is an old joke about the four students who have to write a thesis on the elephant. The English student’s thesis is on hunting and shooting the elephant, the German student prepares a detailed analysis of the anatomy of the elephant, the French student puts together a thesis on the love life of the elephant and the Jewish student writes about “The Elephant and the Jewish Question”.

So, when we have a world event happening like the Fifa presidential election which takes place today (Friday, February 27), our first question is always: Which candidate will be the best for Israel?

As a lot of people will know, last year the Asian bloc, supported by much of Africa, tried

to get Israel thrown out of Fifa over claims the country did not allow free passage for (Palestinian) soccer players to enter Israel for practice purposes.

Israel managed to avoid the vote by making a series of concessions and that stopped any chance of the opposition getting the two-thirds majority to have Israel suspended.

The favourites to win the presidential vote are Sheikh Salman Ebrahim bin al-Khalifa, the Bahraini Asian Football Confederation president, and Gianni Infantino, the Uefa general secretary who decided to stand when Michel Platini was suspended, then banned, from football for eight years.

The other contenders are Prince Ali of Jordan, former Fifa official Jerome Champagne of France and South Africa’s Tokyo Sexwale.

The pundits claim Champagne and Sexwale are absolute no-hopers.

Champagne would need the support of Europe and most of those votes have already been pledged to Infantino, while Sexwale has lost most of Africa’s support to Sheikh Salman.

Prince Ali looked the principal player last year when he stood against Sepp Blatter, but Sheikh Salman now seems to have the support of Asia and Africa, making him the front-runner.

However, based on an incident last week, the election of Sheikh Salman could prove a nightmare for Israel, as the race for the top job turns ugly. Infantino and Prince Ali have both launched attacks on Salman as the result of a bizarre furore concerning the Jordanian’s public relations head, Shimon Cohen.

Mohammed Al Mudaweb, who works for the Bahraini Football Association, had been accused of conducting a smear campaign



Shimon Cohen, a Welsh-born PR practitioner, is the public relations head for Prince Ali of Jordan in his campaign to become president of Fifa.

Jewish Youth Leader Award, led the local Bnei Akiva as a teenager.

He is a member of Hampstead Garden Suburb Synagogue and was once an adviser to former Chief Rabbi Lord Jakobovits. After leaving Jakobovits’s office, he went to work with Saatchi & Saatchi co-founder Tim Bell, after an introduction from David, Lord Young.

During his 14-year tenure at Bell Pottinger, Cohen says he wrote “a number” of speeches for Nelson Mandela and counted Andrew Lloyd Webber as a close client.

“This is a disgraceful racist attack by Salman’s home football association, implying that just because I am a Jew, there is an Israeli plot afoot,” Cohen said.

against Cohen after suggesting he was a former Israeli footballer. He posted a series of tweets claiming Cohen was born in Tel Aviv and played football for Israel in the 1960s.

But the “PR Cohen” is, in fact, a 55-year-old Welshman rather than the footballer of the same name, who played nine times for the Israeli national team in the 1960s.

“This is a disgraceful racist attack by Salman’s home football association, implying that just because I am a Jew, there is an Israeli plot afoot,” Cohen said.

“A Google search would have shown I’m a Welsh PR guy, not a retired footballer.”

Cohen grew up in an Orthodox home in Wales and attended a comprehensive school on a council estate in Cardiff, where classmates called him George.

“I was a child of the sixties and the only Cohen anyone had ever heard of was the footballer George Cohen. There was only one other Jewish boy in my year, but I had a great time being Jewish at school. There was no anti-Semitism at all.

“As long as you all hated the English, you had a common hate!”

Cohen, a recipient of the Pierre Gildesgame

“If there are spin-doctors in the world, then I’m probably a spin-consultant. Spinning the story means spinning it to go in the right direction. The notion that PR people make things up is simply silly. You have to tell the truth, but you don’t have to tell the whole truth, so long as what you say is nothing but the truth.”

Prince Ali has now put in an appeal to delay the election in order to have transparent voting booths installed so that there can be no intimidation of voters.

Fifa, however, believes the current rules, the same ones that were in place when Blatter defeated Prince Ali last May, days before he was forced to stand down, are sufficient.

Prince Ali, who is said to be hopeful of polling up to 35 of the 209 available votes in the first round of voting and then building on that base in later rounds, has been vocal in complaining of intimidatory tactics by his rivals.

Whoever is elected will have to deal with a Fifa not trusted by seven out of 10 supporters. That was revealed in a recent poll which added that 50 per cent of fans believe the organisation will never be able to restore its tainted image.

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