



There's a hefty Dance Umbrella on the horizon (page 18).

South African Jewish Report

www.sajr.co.za

Jewish glitz and glamour



Photos: Ilan Ossendryver

The crème-de-la-crème of the Jewish community were there, with a good smattering of non-Jewish peers, for the annual celebration of Jewish achievers in a variety of fields - from business, industry, arts, sport and humanities. This year's Jewish Achiever Awards event has come and gone, but the afterglow lingers. This prestigious black-tie event drew a record number of outstanding nominees - nearly 300 - and has become a who's who list and highlight on the Jewish social calendar. This year the function moved to Vodaworld in Midrand, and was sold out - at R3 000 a plate - with a waiting list. Another "first" was that the function moved to a Sunday afternoon start and continued well into the night. Clichéd as it may sound, there truly weren't any losers, only winners. See pages 9 to 16.

When is a (kosher) crisis not a crisis?

"There is no shortage of kosher meat. There is an abundance of sensationalist journalism designed to create panic for no reason."

2

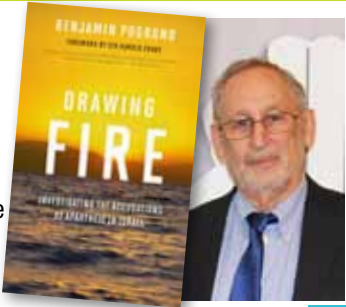
Jew-saver Chiune Sugihara, remembered

In "a period of utter desperation", he showed his fundamental humanity, and in today's turbulent times, it's a lesson the world at large needs.

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A journalist penetrates: Is Israel apartheid?

Benjamin Pogrund: "Israel is not perfect. We deal with our neighbourhood sometimes well, sometimes badly, but are not the rogue society you read about."



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Wits Jewish SRC candidates aim to impact

Ilan Kinkel, Dani Hovsha and Kira Genende are out to keep Wits calmer and make the SRC accountable to the students.

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Jubilation and relief as Gaza ceasefire kicks in

In a bizarre take on the Gaza conflict, Iran said Palestinian militants had emerged the "victors" and brought their Israeli foe "to its knees".

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Wits Jewish SRC candidates want to make a difference



Kira Genende

ANT KATZ

Three Jewish students were elected to the Wits SRC last year on the Project W ticket and all made substantial contributions to campus life. All three are bowing out as the election of a new SRC looms next week - to be replaced by another three quality Jewish candidates.

This year's Jewish SRC candidates are Ilan Kirkel, Dani Hovsha (who is a member of SAUJS and is involved in interfaith work) and Kira Genende, the younger sister of Ethan who excelled as a member of the current SRC.

The elections are being held next Tuesday and Wednesday, September 2 and 3. The candidates are hoping that both Jewish and non-Jewish students who are their



Dani Hovsha

friends, will turn out in numbers to vote as they did last year.

Project W's website lists the many positive contributions by the party and the Jewish students on the Wits campus over the past year. These include helping to "create a calmer campus" and making "the SRC accountable to the students". They also ran new initiatives such as the Wits Safety Week and HIV testing events. Project W also raised money through a raffle of iPads that were donated to the Wits humanitarian fund.

The website lauds the effective delivery of Ethan Genende, the strategic officer, "who helped to review a number of processes in the university that had become problematic". One such process was the so-called Kudu bucks machines



Ilan Kirkel

that students use to pay for library services.

Ethan also conducted the "Food and Residences Review" and a review of the election rules of some of the other non-SRC structures at the university.

Avigal Cutler was the community and transformation officer on the current SRC and, says the website, "assisted and worked on issues close to the heart of Wits students such as the Wits silent march against abuse". She also helped set up the first Wits Food Bank for hungry students.

The third Jewish SRC member, Jarred Hart, worked with different clubs and societies on campus and "assisted their work in making Wits a vibrant campus," says the Project W website.

When is a (kosher) 'crisis' not a 'crisis'?

ANT KATZ

Kosher butchers in Johannesburg and well-placed industry sources say there is a kosher meat crisis - both in the short term ahead of the High Holidays and in the long term regarding sustainable supply. But the UOS insists there is no crisis...

Asked on the Kashrut SA Facebook page on Tuesday if there is a shortage of kosher (red) meat, UOS Executive Director Darren Sevitz responded: "There is no shortage of meat. There is an abundance of sensationalist journalism designed to create panic for no good reason. One of the abattoirs is no longer doing kosher slaughter, and we are looking for a replacement."

But also on Tuesday, however, Ian Lurie (proprietor of Nussbaums, which is arguably the largest kosher butchery in South Africa), sent thousands of customers the following e-mail: "At the moment we are experiencing a shortage in supply of beef and lamb; we do recommend you take your meat for the Yomtovim early and freeze, to save you and us the last minute pressures."

Dr Shaun Morris, a specialist feedlot expert, a veterinarian and long-standing shareholder of one of the larger kosher butcheries in Johannesburg, told Jewish Report on Wednesday: "I concur with Ian Lurie that there is a shortage."

Morris, who is integrally part of the industry, from feedlot to retail, says that the majority of large feedlots in the country are vertically integrated, meaning they own their own abattoirs.

Morris says the problem arose when a new imam was appointed at the National Independent Halaal Trust who went to major kosher abattoir Morgan Beef and took a different view to his predecessor.

He wanted two changes: That the processing line being held up for an hour to sterilise it between kosher and halaal slaughtering; and that separate refrigeration storage facilities would be required for kosher and halaal and that there needed to be an hour's interval between when kosher slaughter is done, and halaal slaughter begins.

Morris says that while in most years at the end of winter kosher shochtim reject around 50 per cent of the cattle offered for slaughter due to lung disease from pneumonia, the rejection rate this year is around 60 per cent.

He is concerned about this as the kosher community "doesn't have a long-term plan to consistently supply kosher beef to the South African community", he told Jewish Report. "I was in Polokwane trying to arrange supplies yesterday."

While he does not believe the new imam was acting with any political agenda, he says: "I would suggest that our rabbinate sit down with the halaal representatives and try and sort it out."

The biggest concern he has is that butchers are going to have to stock up ahead of Sukkoth and Simchat Torah, because those festivals fall on problematic days for slaughtering.

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Our direction must be set by Torah compass



Rabbi Ari Woznica
Eden College

This week's Torah reading begins with the commandment to appoint judges in all communities. This points to one of the fundamental thrusts of Judaism, namely that a person be continually prepared to subject himself and his conduct to the review of an outside, objective authority.

That authority, however, is not merely another person, wiser and/or more experienced than oneself, but rather a repository of Torah knowledge. His decisions reflect the Torah's wisdom, and not his own. In that vein, our sages refer to a Torah scholar as "a walking Torah scroll".

For the guidance which he gives, is an extension of the rulings of the Torah and not merely what he thinks is right at the moment.

To explain this principle: Judaism is not merely confined to the shul. Its scope goes beyond the realms of prayer and study and encompasses every human endeavour.

Therefore the Torah contains laws governing agriculture, commerce, employer/employee relationships and other matters which we would not ordinarily place in the sphere of religion.

Needless to say, all the situations one encounters in these areas are not cut and dry and there is not necessarily an explicit injunction in Torah law governing every given circumstance.

This is the purpose of a Torah judge. He must use the principles of Torah law to determine the course of action to follow when the Torah does not tell us precisely what

to do. By doing so, he brings all the different elements of our worldly activities into connection with the Torah, showing how a person can bring the Torah into every aspect of his life.

This concept applies not only within the personal realm, the guidance and direction a particular individual needs in his personal life, but also to communities at large.

In that vein, our sages teach that the judges of the Sanhedrin, Israel's highest court, may not sit in repose in their chamber in the Temple courtyard, but instead must "gird themselves with bands of steel, lift his robes above his knees, and traverse from city to city to teach the Jewish people".

For every Jewish community and our people as a whole should have its direction set by the compass of the Torah's principles. Instead of depending on the vicissitudes of mortal knowledge, our course should be

steered by the spiritual insight the Torah endows.

By empowering Torah judges to show true leadership in the present era, we anticipate the fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy: "I will return your judges as in former times," with the coming of Mashiach in whose time the Sanhedrin will again convene and guide our people.

Shabbat Times		
August 29 / 3 Elul August 30 / 4 Elul Parshat Shoftim		
17:36	18:25	Johannesburg
18:08	19:00	Cape Town
17:21	18:12	Durban
17:41	18:31	Bloemfontein
17:39	18:32	Port Elizabeth
17:31	18:23	East London

South African

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designbandits.co.za • Website: Anthony Katz • Subscription enquiries: Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860-13-2652. Board of Directors: Howard Feldman (Chairman), Issie Kirsh (Deputy Chair), Marlene Bethlehem, Bertie Lubner, Benji Porter, Herby Rosenberg, Howard Sackstein, Elton Bondi, Michael Sieff, Steven Krawitz, Denese Bloch.

GENERAL MANAGER Karen Knowles - 082 855 2131 - karen@sajewishreport.co.za • EDITOR Geoff Sifrin - geoff@sajewishreport.co.za • Sub-editor Paul Maree • Ed Co-ordinator Sharon Greenblatt - sharon@sajewishreport.co.za • Sports editor Jack Milner • Books editor Gwen Podbrey • Arts editor Robyn Sassen • Cape Town correspondent Moira Schneider: 021-794-4206 • Pretoria correspondent Diane Wolfson: 082-707-9471 • Advertising: Adi Lew: adi@sajewishreport.co.za, Britt Landsman: 082-292-9520 - britt@sajewishreport.co.za, Marlene Bilewitz: marlene@sajewishreport.co.za • Classified sales: Susan Walunda: jrclassified@global.co.za • Distribution manager Britt Landsman • Design and layout: Bryan Maron/Design Bandits - bryan@designbandits.co.za

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Jubilation and relief as Gaza ceasefire kicks in

OWN CORRESPONDENT

There was jubilation in Gaza City when an Egyptian-brokered peace deal between Israel and Hamas - a longer-term truce - was announced on Tuesday, after seven weeks of the deadliest Israeli-Palestinian violence in a decade. The ceasefire took hold at 16:00 on Tuesday.

During the announcement celebrations several senior Hamas and Islamic Jihad figures emerged onto the streets for the first time since the war began, having feared assassination by Israel, which had labelled them “legitimate targets”.

“The Egyptian initiative [includes] an opening of the crossings for goods and humanitarian and food aid to enter Gaza, as well as medical supplies and materials to repair the water, electricity and mobile phone networks,” chief Palestinian truce negotiator Azzam al-Ahmed said.

Restrictions on fishing would end “immediately” with boats allowed to fish up to 9,6 km offshore with the limit later extended to 19 km, he said.

At a later date, Israel and Gaza would discuss “the exchange of [Palestinian] prisoners and of the bodies of those [Israeli soldiers] killed” during Operation Protective Edge.

Israel confirmed the negotiating teams would return to Cairo “within a month”.

A senior official added: “We have accepted, once again, an Egyptian proposal for an unconditional and unlimited-in-time ceasefire.

“The framework includes an immediate and unconditional ceasefire and then, inside a month, both delegations will be in Cairo raising issues with the Egyptians,” he said.

“We will be raising our concerns about demilitarisation and preventing Hamas from rearming.” As well as rebuilding the battered enclave, senior Hamas official Mahmud al-Zahar said the Islamist movement would continue “arming itself and developing its resistance capacity”.

Egypt’s foreign ministry said the two sides had agreed to the “simultaneous opening of the border crossings between Israel and Gaza to enable the rapid entry of humanitarian aid and relief and reconstruction supplies”.

The statement mentioned a “continuation of indirect negotiations between the two sides on other matters within one month of the ceasefire taking effect”.

News of the deal came after weeks of Egyptian-led efforts to end the violence which resulted in several short-term cease-fires, all of which broke down in the absence of agreement on a longer-term truce.

The latest ceasefire collapsed on August 19, as hostilities resumed, killing more than 120 Palestinians and two Israelis, one a four-year-old child.

There had been no sign of any letup in the fighting earlier on Tuesday, with 12 Palestinians killed in Israeli air strikes and tank shelling, among them two

In a bizarre take on the Gaza conflict, Iran said on Wednesday that Palestinian militants had emerged the “victors” and brought their Israeli foe “to its knees” during the bloody 50-day conflict.

“The heroic Palestinian people have forged a new era with the victory of the resistance which has brought the Zionist regime to its knees,” the foreign ministry said in a statement.

“This victory prepares the way for the final liberation of all the occupied lands especially Quds (Jerusalem),” it said, congratulating the Palestinian people and the militant groups in Gaza that Iran supports.

The conflict, which began on July 8, when Israel began Operation Protective Edge in

a bid to stamp out cross-border rocket fire, cost the lives of 2 143 Palestinians and 70 on the Israeli side.

UN figures show nearly 70 per cent of the Palestinian victims were civilians, while 64 of the Israelis killed were soldiers.

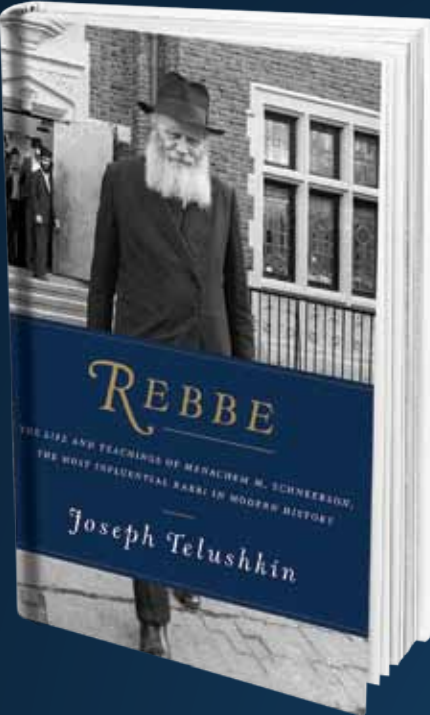
A Palestinian official said the Egyptian-mediated deal would involve bringing an end to Israel’s eight-year blockade of the Gaza Strip.

Ending the blockade had been a key Palestinian demand in truce talks, with the Islamist movement Hamas that rules Gaza hailing the agreement as a “victory for the resistance”.



Israeli soldiers attending a ceremony at the Mount Herzl Military Cemetery in Jerusalem, on August 21, honoring Lee Matt, who died in July while fighting in Gaza.

Photo: Hadas Perush/Flash90/JTA



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Energetic Benevolent Society remains a communal pace-setter

Judy Wainer, the new chairman of the Johannesburg Jewish Women's Benevolent Society (left), with the outgoing chairman, Maureen Disler.



MICHAEL BELLING

Three exceptional long-service awards were a highlight at the 121st annual general meeting of the Johannesburg Jewish Women's Benevolent Society (JWBS) at Golden Acres, last week.

The first was presented to Michael Goldin of Goldman Judin Inc; they have been the honorary JWBS attorneys for 70 years. Joyce Segerman received her award for 60 years' service to the organisation and Marlene Bethlehem, president of the JWBS, has been a member for 50 years.

Bethlehem called Michael Judin, who joined the firm as an articulated clerk at the age of 17 and was now the senior partner, "not only a great lawyer, but a great friend to the Benevolent".

Segerman said the Benevolent was the organisation she really wanted to be part of.

Presenting the award to Bethlehem, JWBS Vice President Annette Angel, referred to her "tremendous achievements in serving the community", as well as to her distinguished tennis career, that included a Wimbledon plate trophy.

"Tennis might be Marlene's 'racket', but the

Jewish Women's Benevolent Society is her passion," Angel said.

"Not everyone can change the world, but everyone can change a world. Marlene used her abilities to change many people's worlds," she said.

In her response, Bethlehem urged: "Don't be afraid to dream, because dreams can be achieved. Thank you Benevolent for making my dreams come true."

Outgoing chairman, Maureen Disler - the only person to have served two terms as chairman of the JWBS - said the Benevolent played a pivotal role in the community in many areas, from accommodation to food, clothing, transport and educational assistance.

It also offered special services, such as the warm hospitality, entertainment and catering at the 55 Club, occupational therapy, the Befrienders Group and blankets, clothes and books in Alexandra and Soweto. It was also responsible for the Sandringham Gardens library.

In her treasurer's report, Loraine Ware commented on the healthy state of JWBS finances, which had enabled it to assist more people than in previous years.

Rabbi Jonathan Fox, minister to the JWBS, said it assessed the needs of its recipients and helped them in a way they could benefit immediately. One example of this was the Befrienders Group, where help was offered by shopping, transport and more.

"This is tailor-made chesed and a joy to many," he said.

Michael Sieff, CEO of the Chevrah Kadisha, brought greeting from all the organisations with which the JWBS worked. He pointed to the relationship of well over 100 years between the Chevrah and the JWBS.

"The Johannesburg community is that much richer for all the efforts you make," he said.

JWBS Life Vice President Natalie Koren, presented her daughter, Linda Schneier, with a medal on her election as an honorary vice president.

Among the awards were two 40-year service certificates, given to Belle Katz and Marge Peiser, and a different long service award was presented to the JWBS driver, Samuel Mohale, who joined the organisation 40 years ago.

The office bearers elected for the next year are: Marlene Bethlehem, president; Judy Wainer, chairman; Leigh Brouze, first vice-chairman; Doreen Zurel, second vice-chairman; Jackie Feldman, treasurer; Glynne Wolman, assistant treasurer; Loraine Ware, secretary; Sheri Hanson, assistant secretary; and Maureen Disler, immediate past chairman.



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Jew-saver Chiune Sugihara remembered in Johannesburg



SAJBD Diplomatic Liaison Aviva Moses; SAJBD President Zev Krengel; Japanese Ambassador Yutaka Yoshizawa; and SAJBD National Chairman Mary Kluk, pose with a portrait of Chiune Sugihara.

DAVID SAKS

Members of the Jewish and Japanese communities, diplomats, business leaders and Holocaust survivors, packed into the Abe Abrahamson Auditorium at Beyachad last Wednesday to remember Chiune Sugihara, the heroic Japanese diplomat who exceeded his authority to issue 6 000 life-saving visas to Jewish refugees during the Second World War.

The event took place under the combined auspices of the SAJBD Gauteng Council, Embassy of Japan and Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre.

Among those famously saved from almost certain death at the hands of the Nazis by Sugihara, were most of the members of the Mir Yeshiva, which was able to relocate to Shanghai for the duration of the war. Four of those present at the function were Johannesburg descendants of those survivors, Rabbis Yossy Goldman and Weinberg and Rebbetzins Rochel Ehrman and Chaya Sternstein.

In her message SAJBD Diplomatic Liaison Aviva Moses, who headed up the initiative, stressed the enduring example Chiune Sugihara had set by his heroic actions.

In “a period of utter desperation”, he had stood out and shone through the fundamental humanity he displayed, and in today’s turbulent times, it was a lesson the world at large needed more than ever to take to heart.

“No matter what continent we live on, our world is in turmoil. We are bombarded on a daily basis with news of torment, terror, death and destruction. And there has never been a time when it has been more important for every individual to rediscover his or her humanity, because without this intrinsic component of our being, what are we?” she asked.

The keynote address was given by Hugh Raichlin who recently added Japan to the growing

list of places he has lectured on.

In addition to speaking on the life and achievements of Sugihara, Raichlin gave an overview of the Jewish connection to Japan since the 1860s, combined with entertaining insights into the nature of Japanese society today.

Raichlin depicted Sugihara as a genuinely saintly man who to the end refused to take any special credit for what he had done.

Raichlin also stressed the unfailing support provided by Sugihara’s wife, Yukiko, and the crucial involvement of the family of the young Solly Ganor.

Rabbi Goldman and Rabbi Weinberg spoke about their own fathers, both of whom were provided with visas by Sugihara. Rabbi Weinberg said that his father, the only one of 11 siblings who survived the Holocaust, would relate his story to his family on the first night of Chanukah every year.

This had instilled in his children an awareness of how important it was to remember and be grateful to their benefactors. Similarly, Rabbi Goldman’s father was the only survivor of his family in Poland. On his behalf, as well as that of his descendants, Rabbi Goldman said: “I thank you for the gift of life, for the gift of the generations. G-d bless Mr Sugihara’s precious soul.”

Messages were also given by Japanese Ambassador Yutaka Yoshizawa, SAJBD President Zev Krengel; Holocaust educator and director of the Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre Tali Nates; and SAJBD National Chairman Mary Kluk.

Ambassador Yoshizawa noted that in Japanese culture, it was at this time of the year that the spirits of one’s ancestors were believed to return, and therefore it was a time when those who had passed away were traditionally remembered.



Deputy Director

United Jewish Campaign (UJC) Cape Town

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

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Achievers to astound and delight

When you invite an eminent person to be honoured for excellence at a high-profile function like the Absa Jewish Achiever awards, and ask him to say a few words to the 600-strong audience, implicit in the invitation is that he is free to talk about things he feels strongly about, whether pleasing to the crowd or not.

Sunday evening’s audience at Vodaworld in Midrand, comprised decision-makers and influential people of all stripes and persuasions.

Asher Bohbot spoke as an Israeli, appealing fervently to South African Jews to continue supporting Israel, particularly in its time of trauma during the Gaza conflict. Ivor Ichikowitz insisted Jews should stop moaning about how bad things are in this country and elsewhere and seek the amazing opportunities and possibilities.

Meyer Kahn described the incredible journey his long life has been and how his success has been in no small part due to surrounding himself with people “smarter” than him. Rabbi Dovid Hazdan told a delightful parable about a little bird - a thrush - which, with its tiny song, triumphed over a lion with a loud roar for a great honour, because the bird made everyone sing with it - a tribute to the value of teamwork.

Johnny Clegg told of a tour with musicians to Syria a few years ago, the dream that Damascus would become a great cultural centre of the Arab world - and the tragedy that has befallen Syria since then.

If anyone thought the noted educationist and vice-chancellor of the University of the Free State, Prof Jonathan Jansen, would limit his talk to bland words about South Africa and education, they were mistaken.

He caused the most reaction when he lauded “the great humanitarians” he admired and had worked with. This included the much-loved late former Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, z”l - “Mandela’s rabbi”. He also mentioned others who are controversial in the Jewish world for their critical views on Israel: Dennis Davis, Daniel Barenboim and, most recently, King David schoolboy Josh Broomberg - to whom Jansen actually dedicated his award.

He also quoted an Arab doctor who lost family members in the Israeli bombing of Gaza, about whether Arabs should hate Israelis - and, if so, which Israelis.

An inspiring feature of the evening was the presence of many young people, in the audience and among winners. The resounding message was that as precious as the wisdom of the older “achievers” is, it is just as important to honour up-and-coming young men and women whose greatest years still lie ahead and who exude optimism and dreams.

Seeing the incredible talent and creativity in a diverse range of fields, from business to the arts and humanities, from both the young and not-so-young, was invigorating. The ability to not only have a dream, but go out and make it come true, despite the doomsayers surrounding us, and in a country hovering on the brink of a recession, in an increasingly unstable world, is remarkable.

In each category, the judges faced an unenviable task, not just regarding who to select as winners, but who to leave out.

This event has become a benchmark for celebrating excellence. The Jewish Report and SA Jewry are proud of it. The credibility and integrity of the judging process have been jealously guarded over the years and the event attracts the crème de la crème of nominees and sponsors.

Every table and seat in the house was sold, with a waiting list. It must be said that without the creative energy and dedication of the Achievers team under chairman Howard Sackstein, this event would not have been the colossal success it has been.

We are grateful to all our sponsors, including our main sponsor Absa, which has been with us for no less than 11 years. Our other sponsors are KIA, Chivas and Creative Counsel. Without them, we could not host an event of this magnitude.

A big, heartfelt vote of thanks to all of them.

Geoff Sifrin, Editor

A journalist penetrates the rhetoric: Is Israel apartheid?

“Living in apartheid SA was easy in moral terms - good versus evil,” says Benjamin Pogrund, former dep editor of the anti-apartheid newspaper, the Rand Daily Mail, whose new book investigates accusations of apartheid in Israel. “In Israel, both Jews and Arabs have right on their side, through history, land, religion, geography and tradition. In the long struggle between them, neither side has always behaved well.” Pogrund was interviewed by GEOFF SIFRIN.

In “Drawing Fire” Pogrund (pictured) analyses attempts by BDS and others to label Israel an apartheid state, and Israel’s actions, particularly the West Bank settlements. He spares no criticism of either, aiming at facts rather than political rhetoric. He draws from sources such as his years as a journalist in apartheid South Africa, and the Yakar Center for Social Concern which he founded in 1997 in Jerusalem to foster dialogue between Jews, Muslims, Christians, Palestinians and Israelis.

A turning point for Pogrund was the 2001 UN Conference Against Racism in Durban, where he was part of the Israeli government delegation. He was outraged at the distorted, bleak picture of Israel portrayed there.

“Israel is not a perfect society,” he says. “We deal with our neighbourhood sometimes well, sometimes badly, but we are not the rogue society you read about.

“I took the criticisms and deconstructed them: What do the words mean? Then I looked at what we [Israelis] do. Both left and right will hate my book. I want it to appeal to people who want a rational approach and information. People like BDS lie their heads off - I try and counter that.

“But they are getting ammunition because we feed the crocodile with our own actions. I am against the occupation - it brutalises the Palestinians and brutalises our people. When you have an occupation with soldiers with guns facing people, horrible things happen. I normally rate the settlements as the biggest problem. Most are there for economic reasons, but 10 - 15 per cent are zealots with rifles and hate.”

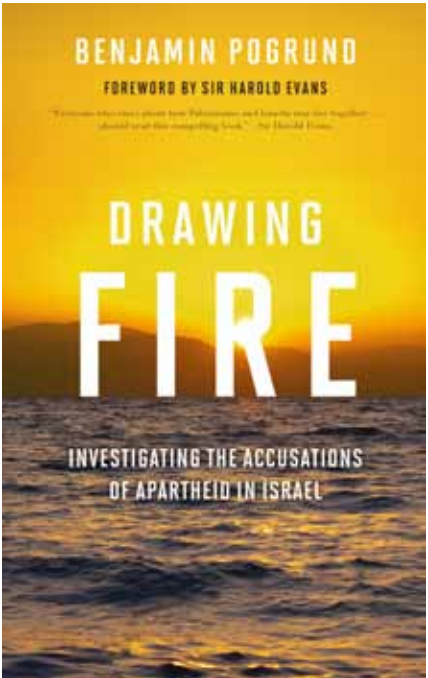
Pogrund takes a range of social indicators in Israel proper inside the Green Line, and compares how they operated in apartheid South Africa for blacks, and how they operate in Israel for everyone, including Arabs.

He looks at voting, freedom of movement, speech, association, sex, health insurance, social welfare, prison, right to work, trade unions, legal systems and many others. There is almost a complete absence of the kind of ‘apartheid’ syndrome claimed by Israel’s accusers.

Then he examines the area including Israel and the West Bank. There, broader issues like religion, international status, third party intervention and violence sometimes have similar rings to South Africa and in other instances are totally different. Two chapters examine Israel’s numerous critics, ranging from those who condemn it for its actions, and those who reject it for its existence.

Pogrund goes into depth about the idealistic and survivalist threads running through Zionism from its origins, the establishment of Israel and events since then - with a full chapter devoted to the occupation of the West Bank, about which he is scathing.

“Israeli settlement there began out of idealistic belief. It became zealotry, which has gained its ends through mass deceit, land theft, corruption and abuse of law. The result, in Israel’s military occupation, is the oppression of Palestinians.”



Some political analysts say the two-state solution is dead, that events have made it no longer viable. Pogrund disagrees: “It is the only solution. It has got to work. There are people who know only Israelis with a gun. Three years ago at Bar Ilan University, (Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin) Netanyahu declared the two state solution as policy, although he has undermined it since then and the present coalition includes people like Naphtali Bennett and Avigdor Lieberman, who are totally against it.

Pogrund is elated about the new democratic South Africa. “After the Rand Daily Mail closed, I was in despair. But kyk hoe lyk ons nou! Boycotts contributed to apartheid’s fall, but it needed a giant external event - the end of the Cold War, when both sides lost their patrons.

“Israelis and Palestinians don’t seem to be able to manage on their own, unless the leaders suddenly get some steel in their spines. It needs a giant event to bring people to the realisation that we can’t go on like this, both sides have to back off somewhere. No one is going to get all they want.”

People-to-people contact through the apartheid years across racial lines was critical in building South African democracy, he says. “The apartheid government tried to prevent people being in contact, but they climbed over the fences, made friends and began to trust each other. When things began to change, people knew each other and had enough goodwill to work together.

“That’s what we must do in Israel between Israelis and Palestinians. It is happening, but the split is gigantic. A few years ago at Yakar we searched for Israelis and Arabs working at crossing the lines. There

is a huge amount, more than there was under apartheid.”

Religion played a very different role in South Africa compared to Israel. “The religious component is very dangerous,” says Pogrund. “In South Africa our Christianity was not only a unifying factor, it was a factor against apartheid.

“People could appeal to Christian morality. But in Israel religion is totally divisive and getting worse because of ISIS, Boko Haram and Muslim infiltration into Europe. Everyone is caught up in this.

“We in Israel are right on the edge of it. My single biggest fear is the flashpoint at al Aqsa Mosque and the [Western] Wall in Jerusalem. You’ve got crazies on both sides. Muslims say the Jews want to destroy the mosque. We have Jews saying: ‘Let’s destroy the mosque.’ Nothing is being done, but it is a danger. On Fridays, 50 000 Muslims come to pray at the mosque.”

The whole West is scared stiff about the radical Islamist question, he says. “We are not alone, there are close exchanges among governments throughout the world.

Pogrund is disappointed that there seems no hope of South Africa playing a role in the Mideast today. “When 1994 [the democratic elections] happened I was filled with hope. I thought Israel and South Africa had an immense amount to offer each other - with technology, education and so on. For example Israel’s success in solving its water problem - for the first time, we are restocking the Jordan River rather than taking water.

“I saw ANC links to the PLO as important. (Former President Thabo) Mbeki tried but he failed. Now the atmosphere is so poisoned I don’t think much can be done.”

Most people don’t realise how small Israel is. Recently Netanyahu took foreign diplomats to show them the vulnerability of Ben-Gurion Airport - which is just a few miles from the coast - to rocket attacks.

“Ben-Gurion carries 90 per cent of our people traffic in and out of the country. Anyone with a rocket can bring down a plane. Well, the nightmare is coming true. Hamas has said they will fire at the airport. They have sealed their own fate with that statement.

“The safety of Ben-Gurion is a game-changer: The moment those rockets are aimed at it, everything else becomes irrelevant and academic. We will not yield an inch until we are sure our airport is not in danger.”

Will Pogrund’s book have any impact in South Africa, where hostility to Israel is rising in many quarters, among BDS, Co-satu and others who demonise Israel? Or in the staunchly Zionist Jewish community which is increasingly nervous and defensive about it?

As a factual resource, it will be valuable to anyone who genuinely seeks an understanding of the real situation on the ground, behind the political rhetoric.

Sadly, reliance on actual facts is not the motivator for many political crusaders on Israel and Palestine - which is precisely what Pogrund wants to challenge.

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

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

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

HAD THE SCARVES BEEN ON SOME OTHER NECKS?

I wonder if the three young gentlemen - one from King David Victory Park - representing the National Debating Society in Thailand, who so proudly wore their Palestinian scarves, stopped for one moment to consider what would have happened to three young Hamas learners if they had proudly worn anything representing Israel?

Ilana Lurie
Beacon Bay

CUT OUT ALL THE MIDEAST ‘ATIONS’ - ANSWER 4 QUESTIONS

I would like to address this to Tony Ehrenreich and the 500 signatories of the anti-Israel letter.

I have read hundreds if not thousands of letters and articles pertaining to the Middle East and it strikes me that very few of them deal with the basic, fundamental issues and those that do, are answered by obfuscation, justification, rationalisation, generalisation and all the other “ations”.

So, for the sake of clarity, I would like to put four simple questions to Ehrenreich et al. These questions can be and should be answered with a simple Yes or No.

1. Do you accept that the Hamas charter demands the destruction of Israel and the

annihilation of the Jews?

2. Do you accept that Hamas has rained down thousands of rockets on Israel since Israel left Gaza?

3. Do you accept that the missile barrage is equivalent to a state of war and that retaliation must be expected, as no nation can be expected to submit meekly to such an attack?

4. A nation at war will build shelters to protect its citizens from the expected enemy attack. Do you accept that Hamas failed to build such shelters for the protection of its citizen?.

Leslie Hotz, Rouxville, Johannesburg

RESPONSE TO JOSHUA BROOMBERG VICIOUS AND DISPROPORTIONATE

I hesitantly write as a principal of a school reluctant to perpetuate the Josh Broomberg debate. However, I do want to express my concern and disgust. I think the response to a young person has been particularly vicious and disproportionate. I am really worried what this kind of debate might do to a person, a very thoughtful young person, and his own perception of “community”.

I always imagined that the founders of the King David Schools would have encouraged a variety of views on issues based on conscience. I recall that these schools were established to accommodate a spectrum of Jewish thought.

I don’t want to discuss the ethics of war, but one of the main messages of Broomberg’s detractors is that his action brought into question the entire State of Israel. His own response clearly stated that he did not question the right of the nation of Israel to exist.

If I compare his views to my own, for example, on how Osama bin-Laden was captured and assassinated: I strongly believe that his hasty execution was wrong and that the United States’ forces acted entirely unjustly. However, my stance does not question the entire US establishment.

Josh was at primary school with my own daughter, and I can only imagine what the response of some in the Jewish community to a young person would have done to her. I truly hope that Joshua will be a mensch and live up to his namesake, who in biblical thought is regarded as a faithful, humble, deserving, wise man.

Dr Mark Potterton
Victory Park, Johannesburg

More news on our website
www.sajr.co.za

SISTERHOOD PRAISED FOR ITS WORK IN ALEXANDRA TOWNSHIP

I am in absolute awe of seeing the wonderful work that the Sisterhood does at the M C Weiler School in Alexandra township.

“A hungry child cannot learn” and you make sure that no child goes hungry.

Each child, who needs a uniform and new shoes, receives them. I am convinced that this helps to instil in the child a sense of worth and dignity.

The help that you give the school and its teachers assist the children in receiving a stimulating education. After you have been doing this for so many years, I am sure that you have improved the lives of thousands of people.

When Hashem looks down and sees what you do, I think He says: “This too is good.”

Kol hakavod to you, your committee and your members.

Sara Leigh.
Observatory, Johannesburg

AS A COMMUNITY, LET’S STAND TOGETHER AND FOCUS ON POSITIVES

A lot has been said in recent weeks about Operation Protective Edge. That the debate has aroused passion is good. That as a community the vast majority support Israel’s right to exist is a given.

Please let us not dissipate our passion and energy fighting with other members of our community. Let’s take that incredible passion, that intense energy and focus on positives.

Let’s go and fill the shuls of our main centres on Shabbos - Ma’ariv, Shacharis and Mincha (weekdays would be great as well).

We got 12 000 into Huddle Park - that’ll fill up a number of shuls! It doesn’t matter when you were last in shul, know that your presence there is helping Am Yisrael and suddenly you will feel the pride of being part of a

kahal. Perhaps then a tingle will run down your spine, as it does mine, during the recital of Shema Yisrael during Kedushah.

Let’s do a mitzvah that you weren’t previously doing.

Once we step up, perhaps Hashem in His Divine wisdom, will ensure that Am Yisrael prevail.

Jews do not want any conflict in Israel and Jews do not want casualties, whether they be Israeli or Palestinian. As Jews we want to live in peace with everyone, but like every country in the world Israel has a right to defend itself.

So please everyone out there, let’s make a difference and help Am Yisrael. See you in shul.

Jonathan Davis
Bedford Park, Bedfordview

Ray 082 8937613



Les 082 8018684



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Letters

SA JEWISH REPORT 7

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Community Talk

Calling all King David Victory Park alumni

The King David Schools' Foundation invites all VP alumni who matriculated from King David Victory Park, to join us at one MEGA reunion to celebrate the 50 years of this incredible school's history.

Date: September 21, 2014 (all expats come home for Rosh Hashanah)

Time: 19:00 - till late

Venue: King David Victory Park High School Hall

Cost: R250 pp

Bookings: Gila Glazer glazerg@kdsf.org or (011) 480-4701



Who is the DL Link?

Lifestyle support for families battling cancer. We focus on helping, while they focus on healing.

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Awareness for CSO packs a punch

Thursday August 21 saw the Community Security Organisation Gauteng NPC (CSO) hosting a Box 'n Dine Knockout Evening at HOD, Johannesburg.

More than 350 guests attended the event to spend an evening of discerning entertainment, professional boxing and superior dining between friends and colleagues. Among the guests were six times world champion Cassius Baloyi, South African featherweight champion Lusanda Komanisi and 24-year-old Pro MMA lightweight contender Adam "The Prodigy" Speechly.

The primary goal of the event was to raise awareness for the CSO, as well as funding for specific projects.

The evening was a huge success and we would like to thank all those who participated. The CSO is proud of the passionate and committed individuals who dedicate so much to "Protecting Jewish Life and the Jewish Way of Life".

We are a non-profit organisation and solely reliant on donations and community support.

• For more information, please contact Romy on 0860 276 276.



Jewish Report

Please support the SA Jewish Report... Keep knitting !

Join the **SA Jewish Report** by continuing to knit your squares and blankets for '67 blankets for Nelson Mandela Day'. In February/March we will do an aerial shot of the blankets, placed at the feet of Madiba's statue at the Union Buildings. This will become an iconic photo around the world, depicting our commitment to keeping the legacy of Nelson Mandela alive. Stitch by stitch we will keep our beautiful country warm in all the years to come, in the name of our beloved Nelson Mandela.

– Carolyn Steyn,
67 blankets for Nelson Mandela Day

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Applications including CV and References should be sent as soon as possible to Jonty Cohen at execd@sydshul.co.za.

Jewish Achievers 2014

Where Great Minds Meet

STAFF REPORTER

Jewish talent spans across the generations – from the achievements of a 17-year-old to an 80-year-old. This is what emerged at the SA Jewish Achiever 2014 awards held at Voda-world on Sunday.

“Disproportionate” is the word Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein used, at the opening of the event.

“This is a word that is being used a lot these days, but tonight we celebrate the disproportionate contribution of South African Jews in terms of numbers in every sphere of life. We are one of the smallest communities, but look at our impact.

“This evening we stand with humility and feelings of blessing for our achievements. It is a matter of quality versus quantity. Our

impact is felt in every sphere in disproportionate numbers,” he said.

Howard Feldman, non-executive chairman of the SA Jewish Report, said anti-Semitism was at an all-time high and there was “a feeling that we are walking into the perfect storm.

“At home in South Africa, we are witnessing unacceptably slow economic growth; we are struggling to find the balance between the right to strike and the damage to industry; anti-Semitism is at a level never seen before in this country; and our power flickers with unpredictable consistency as Eskom battles to keep the lights on.

“It feels that we are on the brink. And that is why the need for Jewish media is so critical. At a time when the world is raising its voice against us, we play a vital role in communicat-

ing with each other and in setting the record straight. The SA Jewish Report has a commitment to Jews in South Africa and Israel,” he emphasised.

Howard Sackstein, chairman of the Jewish Achiever awards event, said that in these harrowing times, the role of the media and accurate reporting, was crucial.

“The event is aimed at a group of remarkable South Africans who have contributed to the development of South Africa. Whether it is business, the arts, entrepreneurship or community service, the Jewish community can take enormous pride, not only in our achievements, but also in our part as role models for the rest of South Africa.

“Our community has been at the forefront of the development of this nation, but achievement only reaches greatness when

it serves as a means to inspire others,” he pointed out.

This year, the event got two new sponsors, KIA Motors and the Creative Counsel, in addition to Absa, the main sponsor over many years, and Chivas. There were 270 nomination - an all-time record, he said.

Stephen van Coller, CEO, Corporate and Investment Bank, Barclays Africa Group said the bank was proud to be the sponsor of the event.

“Our support goes back over a decade. The awards are not only about accomplishment, but also about leadership which aligns with our corporate values of respect, integrity, service, excellence and stewardship. They provide us with an excellent opportunity to interact with our valued clients, colleagues and members of the Jewish community,” he said.

Meyer Kahn with Eric Samson



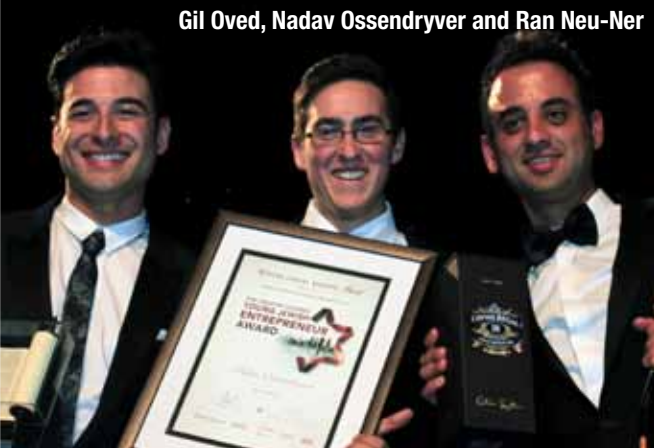
Rabbi Dovid Hazdan with Clive Blechman



Valerie Mizrahi with Dr Ali Bacher



Gil Oved, Nadav Ossendryver and Ran Neu-Ner



Stephen van Coller, Daniel Levy, Gil Sperling, Ryan Silberman and Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein



Bobby Malabie, Ivor Ichikowitz and Asher Bohbot



Jonathan Jansen with Johnny Clegg



David Hodnett, Steven Braudo and David Frankel



Absa
jewish achiever awards

2014



Nadav and Corinne Ossendryver



Paul Ballen, Howard Sackstein, Ryan Peimer and Danny Nochumsohn



Howard Sackstein and Kathy Kaler



Dominic and Annette Ford



Nadav Ossendryver, Herbie Rosenberg and Dan Stillerman



Howard Sackstein and Ian Fuhr



Ryan and Lauren Silberman



Steven and Leanne Braudo



Marlene and Bryan Bethlehem



Ivor and Debbie Ichikowitz.



Shalya and Elliot Hirshson



Dawn Nathan-Jones



Mark and Sara Samowitz



Adrienne Hirsch and Ilana Dembo



Banje and Lizelle Claasen



Geoff Rothschild



Ran Neu-Ner, Howard Sackstein and Banje Claasen



Howard Sackstein and Mark Kaplan



Howard Sackstein, Gil and Kelly Sperling



Ari Mandelberg, Naphtali Mandelberg and Lawrence Rau

Absa
jewish achiever awards
2014



Denise and Jeff Bloch



Gil Oved with Aviva Tugentaft



Dina Diamond with Bobby Malabe and Emmanuelle Manzoni



Dean Lazarus and Yajina Gold



Laurie Davidoff and Greg Ginsberg



Steven and Zoe Blend



Daniel Levy, Gil Sperling and Ryan Silberman



Adam Levy and Daniel Levy



Reeva Foreman and Dr Len Konar



Clive and Janice Blechman



Rabbi Dovid Hazdan, Clive and Janice Blechman



Arthur Goldstuck and Howard Feldman



Ruth Lenk with Michael and Sigalit Friedman



Stan Rosenberg and Carolyn Steyn and Herbie Rosenberg



Danielle and Richard Rovetti



Howard Sackstein and Benjy Porter



Philip and Doreena Smith with Ariel and Aiden

Absa
jewish achiever awards
2014



Matthew Cigler



Professor Valerie Mizrahi



Grant Friedman and Greg Blend



Howard Sackstein and
Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein



Herbie Rosenberg and Reeve Foreman



Jacqui Clingman with her son



Anthony Orelowitz and
Zahava Aarons



Laurie and Viv Davidoff
with Robyn and Terry Pillemer



Gillian Ezra and Sheila Ezra



Herbie Rosenberg
and Richard Cohen



Professor Barry Spitz



Paul Ballen



Kevin Mondschein



Herbie Rosenberg, Leon
Rubenstein and Mike DuPlooy



Lawrence, Cheryl, Dalia
and Carly Diamond



Lindi and Michael Rudnicki



Robyn and Garrun Cliff



Grant Friedman, Jenna Kampel
and Lawrence Friedman



Lawrence and Nadine Sacke



The Dome at Vodaworld



Sylvaine Strike



KIA display



Chris Forrest

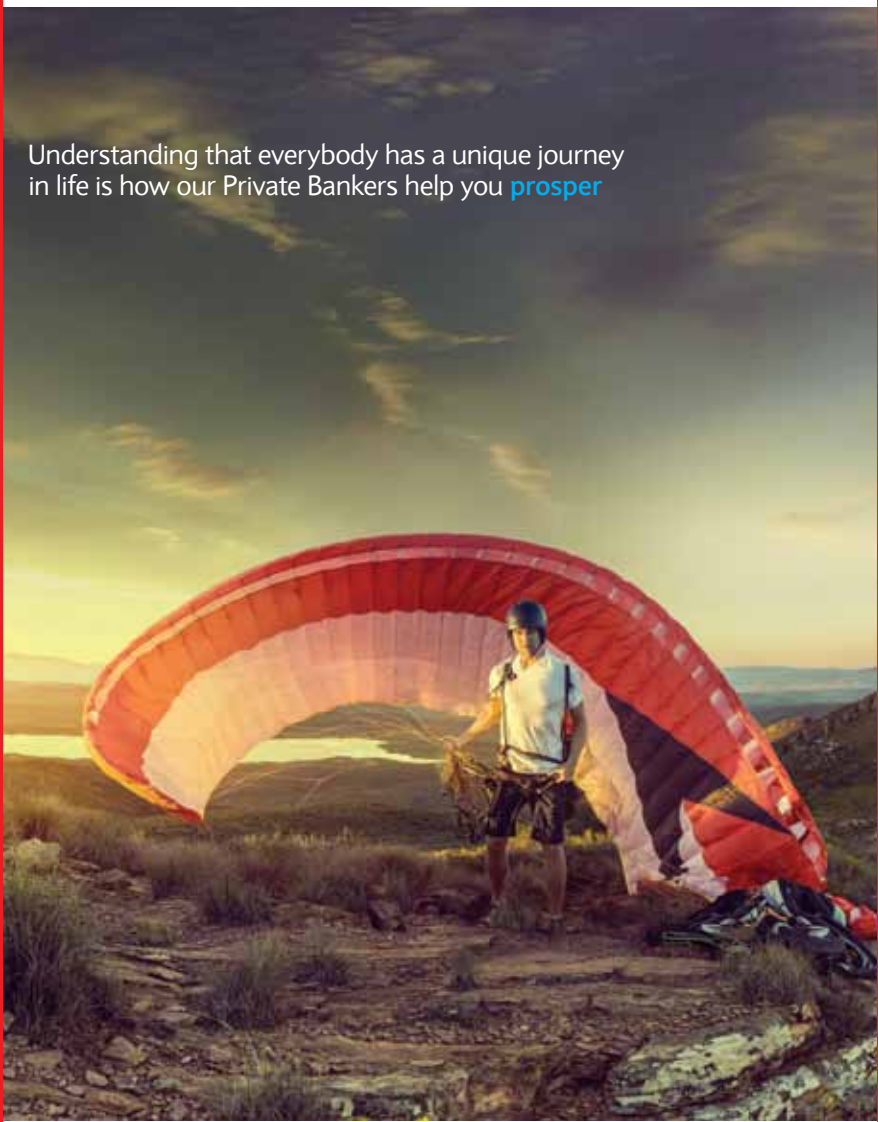


Field Band



Gilan Gork

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The SA Jewish Report Sport, Art, Science and Culture Award was presented by former SA cricket great, Dr Ali Bacher who said he had never seen such a division in the Jewish community over events in Israel. “There is so much hatred and poison on social media, and through direct contact. I am a great supporter of Israel - unequivocally and unashamedly,” he said.

The award went to Professor Valerie Mizrahi who established a research unit at the SA Institute for Medical Research and at Wits University and the National Health Laboratory Service, where she built a world-class programme in TB research.

She is director of the Institute of Infectious Disease and Molecular Medicine, a postgraduate research institute where world-class scientists work together to tackle the major diseases of Africa,

Mizrahi said it was wonderful to be honoured by her own people.

“I am proudly Jewish. I also thank the South African government which invested in me which enabled me to carry on my research. I have worked hard to train other South Africans and it makes me proud to see them at work. We work together tackling diseases of Africa in Africa,” she said.

The Creative Counsel Young Jewish Entrepreneurs Award was presented by Ran Neu-Ner and Gil Oved. They said the award was for entrepreneurial youngsters under the age of 28.

The award went to 17-year-old Nadav Ossendryver for his Latest Sightings website, which reports live animal sightings from the Kruger National Park. He has created a com-

munity of over 100 000 visitors. He started the site at the age of 15 and has already had 70 million hits on YouTube. His is the fourth most-viewed in South Africa. He has also created an app for iPhones which has had over 30 000 downloads.

Nadav, who is writing matric prelims at King David Linsfield, on accepting the award, said: “Wow - it’s an amazing honour. I have been inspired by my leaders in the community. I thank the Jewish community and my school friends and teachers who have supported me in my project.”

The Chivas Humanitarian Award in honour of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris was presented by Johnny Clegg who said he had encountered a lot of tough moments on his overseas tours with strong anti-Semitism. The award went to Professor Jonathan Jansen (also the event’s keynote speaker) who said all was well in South Africa.

“I work with 30 000 students from all walks of life and who, against all odds, work well together.”

The Absa Entrepreneur Award went to Gil Sperling, Daniel Levy and Ryan Silberman of Popimedia, a social media and Adtech company which provides cutting-edge social media services and technology platforms to blue chip multinationals, as well as companies in Africa, the Middle East and Europe.

In receiving the award they said they were honoured and grateful for the prestigious award. “Let entrepreneurs lead the way, not government. We live, breathe and eat social media. A culture of innovation and idea generation are at the core of the

company, always keeping us ahead of the pack,” they said.

The Absa Unlisted Companies Award went to Ivor Ichikowitz of the Paramount Group, who has built successful businesses across the diverse fields of oil, gas defence, aerospace, manufacturing, property, retail, tourism, mining, agriculture and sustainable development across Africa.

Accepting the award, he said he was honoured and owed a lot to his, the Jewish community. “We are celebrating good news stories for the African continent tonight. We moan a lot about everything, but in 20 years we have a huge amount to celebrate - but we still need to do a lot more.

“There has never been a more exciting time to be in Africa. The Jewish community is woven in the web of South African society and has played a huge role in its liberation, politics and philanthropy.”

The Absa Listed Companies Award was given to Steven Braudo, deputy CEO of Liberty Holdings. He is responsible for turning the company around, which Liberty’s (positive) results over the past 12 months, indicate.

He was one of Liberty’s main contributors in the phenomenal turnaround which was recognised by the company and which led to two promotions in four months. He said he was greatly honoured and added that the awards were meaningful for the Jewish community. He thanked his team and said the success of the company was due to smart recruitment, retention and productivity of its sales force.



MUCH MORE THAN JUST MAKING MUSIC

The Field Band Foundation is a Section 21 company that was established in 1997 to develop an indigenous variant of the global marching band concept. The Field Band Foundation creates opportunities for the development and self-empowerment of young South Africans through participation in music, dance and active citizenship projects.

The Foundation believes that improved quality of life comes from a holistic appreciation of individual and community wellbeing. A critical mass of confident young people who have the appropriate balance between their personal rights and their collective responsibilities, will contribute to a vibrant civil society.

The popular appeal of music, dance and song, attracts members who learn the technical skills and discipline necessary to master the creative arts. At the same time, self-esteem and communication skills are enhanced.

Life skills of critical thinking, empathy and conflict management, are integrated into all activities, along with an emphasis on volunteerism and action. The result is a joyful manifestation of ubuntu - where a person becomes a full and fulfilled person by virtue of their respectful and fruitful relationships with other people. *Umuntu ngmuntu ngabantu.*

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Umuntu ngmuntu ngabantu



KIA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

The KIA Community Service award went to Rabbi Dovid Hazdan of the Great Park Synagogue and dean of Torah Academy. He is well-known for the origination of the Cycalve project where grade 11 learners from Soweto and Torah Academy in relays cycle to Durban, not only as a cultural exchange, but also to raise funds for underprivileged schools.

On accepting the award, Rabbi Hazdan said it was not his alone. “Community service takes place only when we are surrounded by worthy people and organisations working together - no individual can do it alone,” he said, putting the emphasis on teamwork.

He thanked the Lubavitch Foundation for believing in him as an educator. “There are so many rabbis who believe in South Africa and who do so much to contribute to the country,” he said.

LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Lifetime Achievement Award in honour of political stalwart Helen Suzman, was presented by Eric Samson of Macsteel who, speaking on the situation in Israel said: “We shall overcome. We in the Diaspora need Israel and 90 per cent of us are behind that country.”

Samson handed the award to Meyer Kahn, the chief executive officer, and later chairman of SABMiller. At the height of his career, and at the request of former President Nelson Mandela, Kahn did a two-year sabbatical secondment to the SA Police Service as its CEO in 1997. Kahn has always been a philanthropist who has kept his activities and community involvement to himself. However, his contributions to the Chabad Miracle Drive are well-known, as is his support for Israel.

On accepting the award, Kahn said he felt like an Oscar award-winner. He emphasised that the award was not for him alone, but for the whole team at SAB who had helped to make him successful. “I am delighted and proud, but I believe my personal achievements have been highly exaggerated,” he joked.



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OWN CORRESPONDENT

Research has shown that exposure to the do-re-mis of making music can enhance a child's perception of the world around him. Music is good for a young person's mathematical comprehension and it stretches the intellect in the same way that learning a new language does.

Above all, being part of a musical entity opens social doors for a young person that few other learned skills can do. And it is with these principles in mind that the Field Band Foundation was formed, 18 years ago.

With a burst of brass blasts here, and lots of bashing of percussion there, the melodious resonance of a pan drum here and the glorious spectacle of shining musical instruments played by children there, guests at this year's Jewish Achiever Awards on Sunday, were entertained by the young members of the Field Band Foundation, which made for a special opening to an already special event.

The Foundation is an innovative, successful youth social development organisation built on the principles of a creative

after school programme, outside the formal education sector and modelled on the Drum Corps or Show Bands practised in other countries.

Registered as a Non-Profit Organisation, when it was established in 1996, by Plate Glass and Shatterprufe Industries Ltd the band, traditionally comprising 120 players aged between 7 and 21, plays a range of musical instruments, from great big tubas to tiny little triangles, and has underlying principles that enhances the process of social cohesion and moral regeneration, allowing the exchange of cultural and educational experiences.

The Field Band played outside the Achievers venue as guests were arriving, they played while guests were chatting in the main venue's vestibule and they enjoyed time onstage, during the evening's proceedings.

In the pursuit of eradicating poverty and underdevelopment in disadvantaged communities, the Foundation creates opportunities for skills development, teaching discipline, focus and essential life-skills to serve over 6 000 young people in building self-sustaining livelihoods.



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Mentalist Gilan Gork leaves his audience gobsmacked

ANT KATZ

Mentalist Gilan Gork amazed the audience at the Jewish Achiever event on Sunday, by locking some predictions in a sealed box at the beginning of proceedings, hanging those predictions above the stage the entire night. At the end of the event, he had members of the audience select random people by each one throwing a paper ball backwards to the next - to whom he posed questions.

He wrote the answers down on a flipchart. Everyone was astounded that when he lowered and opened the sealed box, he had predicted who would win the Absa Listed Company Award as well as the answers that the audience had suggested would make a good prize.

Gork is a renowned and sought-after mentalist who travels South Africa and the world, doing stand-alone shows and appearing at corporate events.

He specialises in presentations of thought reading, psychological influence, predictions and body language. He again showcased his abilities in the most entertaining way and the sophisticated black-tie audience had one question: How does he do it?!

His show went down a treat and fitted in well with an evening of glitz and glamour.

Gork's impact has seen him as guest star on dozens of prime time TV programmes, radio shows and in the print media. His "Achievers feats" remained a talking point long after the event.

Known as "The Master of Influence", Gork's talks and master classes are designed to deliver practical techniques which enable people to be more influential, particularly in business.

• Read more about his amazing feats on www.gilangork.com or contact him at bookings@gilangork.com.



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The SA Jewish Achiever Awards team would like to thank Martin and Judy Moritz of Comair Limited for sponsoring the nominees' air tickets.



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TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Our vibrant Jewish community is alive and kicking




Above Board
Mary Kluk
National Chairman

This past week has been a very uplifting one for our community. A number of highly successful and well-supported communal events have taken place in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban, including the annual Limmud learning and cultural festival, the SAJR Jewish Achievers Awards and a very memorable partnership with the Japanese community in celebrating one of the heroes of the Holocaust.

These have demonstrated that despite the enormous pressure we have all been under as a result of the ongoing war in Gaza, it has not prevented us from focusing on the many positive things we have achieved as South African Jews, nor from celebrating our rich and diverse Jewish heritage.

On August 20 at Beyachad, the Board partnered with the Embassy of Japan and Johannesburg Holocaust and Genocide Centre in holding a tribute evening to the Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara, who during the war saved the lives of some 6 000 East European Jews, by issuing them - on his own authority - with life-saving transit visas.

It was tremendously moving for all of us to celebrate the life of this extraordinary human being, with the added poignancy of having with us some of the descendants of those whom he saved and who brought a special tone to the evening by sharing their stories with us.

During this past month, our community has been feeling very vulnerable and disquieted, and it was thus uplifting for us to pause and focus on what is best in humanity. I congratulate the

professional staff of the Board for organising this special event, despite the many testing challenges they have had to deal with, and in particular Aviva Moses, who managed the whole process so capably and with such dedication.

The Jewish Achievers function, from all accounts, was another rousing success. This is an event that showcases not just the talent and creativity within our community, but also what so many of its members are contributing to the greater society in the philanthropic and social upliftment fields. I commend Howard Sackstein and his team at the SA Jewish Report for putting it all together. While I would very much have liked to have been at the Jewish Achievers

function, I decided instead to attend the annual CSO appreciation dinner in Durban.

The work that the CSO does to safeguard our community and the Jewish way of life in South Africa, is ongoing, but its benefits have been especially apparent during these past few unsettled weeks. I felt, therefore, it was particularly important for me to join with my own community in Durban in showing my appreciation to the CSO and the dedicated professionals and volunteers who ensure that its critical functions are carried out.

Also over the weekend, the Limmud festival kicked off in Cape Town and has since come to Durban. This coming weekend, it will be in

Johannesburg. As ever, the festival offers a wide range of outstanding speakers and a diversity of topics that will leave participants spoiled for choice.

It reminds us of how privileged we are to have so many opportunities to be exposed to and enriched by our Jewish heritage, and that there are so many dedicated people in our community who on an ongoing basis are providing us with opportunities to do so.

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

This column paid for by SA Jewish Board of Deputies

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The ‘African Chief’ - a man for all seasons

ISAAC REZNIK

This year marks the ninth anniversary since the passing of Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris zt”l on the ninth of Elul in Hermanus in September 2005 on the eve of his 69th birthday, less than a year after his retirement.



Chief Rabbi Harris was born in the district of Langside in Glasgow in 1936 and grew up in a close-knit family and spent his early childhood in the small Scottish town of Ayr.

Initially schooled in Glasgow, he later attended the University of London where he obtained a BA (Hons) degree in Hebrew and Aramaic, then went on to obtain a M Phil degree in Talmudic and Mediaeval Hebrew Languages and Literature.

He was awarded the Minister’s Diploma and Rabbinical Diploma of Jews College, London (and his smicha was signed inter alia by Chief Rabbi Immanuel Jakobovits zt”l and Rabbi Kopul Kahane z”tl).

Rabbi Harris embarked on a career distinguished by his appointment to a number of key communal posts in the United Kingdom, then finally as chief rabbi of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues of South Africa in 1988.

Rabbi Harris was fondly known as the “African Chief” and was received everywhere as a “Man for all Seasons”,

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Walking together for King David Schools



More than 3 000 braved a chilly Sunday morning for the King David Big Walk.

The King David Big Walk which took place in Johannesburg last Sunday, was a resounding success. More than 3 000 learners, teachers and their families, braved a chilly winter's morning to walk together for King David Schools at the annual King David Big Walk sponsored by Discovery. The 5km walk began at King David Victory Park and continued through Delta Park. The objective of the Walk is to encourage unity and cohesiveness between the various campuses as well as to celebrate health, wellbeing and community unity. This year also marks King David Victory Park's 50th birthday. The walkers returned back to the school for fun, music, carnival rides and prizes.

Tapestry

Dance Umbrella - small, but with a lot of punch



ROBYN SASSEN

It's the smallest programme in over 20 years, but this year's Dance Umbrella, from Sunday, packs a hefty punch, not only in important and focus-shifting productions, but in seeing this Johannesburg festival of contemporary dance turn a corner, at the age of 26. The SAJR spoke to Georgina Thomson, the festival's artistic director. For 19 years, she has fought battles of funding versus critical merit, staving off everything from Steven Cohen's outrageous gestures to amateurism in Stepping Stones, Dance Umbrella's fringe. She agrees that this Dance Umbrella is tiny. "But it's tight." With seven works over seven days, you can easily see everything. Its featured collaborations include Vuyani Dance Theatre (VDT) founder Greg Maqoma, op-posite Roberto Olivan from Spain in "Lonely

Together", and "Cargo: Precious", premised on Saartjie Baartman's tragic life choreographed by PJ Sabbagha and directed by Sylvaine Strike, which debuted at the Grahamstown National Arts Festival. There's also a work by Dunia Dance Theatre, a Brussels-based company from Zimbabwe, "Baobab Shadows", and Portia Mashigo's "More in Than Out of Time". Luyanda Sidiya, artistic director of VDT presents "7 Pillars". This Dance Umbrella is headlined by "Les Nuits" choreographed by Paris' Ballet Prel-jocaj. "I saw them in Reunion," Thomson is unequivocal. "I've never seen anything like it. And I've been around. It blew me away. What-ever else you might see on any stage, you will never see something like this. Ever."

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What's On

Today, Friday (August 29)

- UZLC hosts David Batzofin on "The Green Green Grass of Somebody's Else's Home". Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria, 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

Today Friday (August 29) - Sunday (August 31)

- Limmud Joburg brings together over 100 presenters, including 20 international presenters and over 150 sessions in this weekend programme - a celebration of Jewish culture and learning. Eight choices to be made every hour between 08:00 and midnight. Attend Sunday only or the full weekend residential programme including Shabbat. Venue: Indaba Hotel, Fourways. Contact: limmudsa@gmail.com or 079-381-6811

Sunday (August 31)

- JNF Ladies Choir invites you to "Chiribim" - an afternoon of beautiful song. Venue: Beyachad. Time: 14:30. Tickets: Thelma 073-481-3293 or Cheryl 082-450-6264.
- Bikkur Cholim's AGM takes place at Athol House, Highlands North, at 10:00. RSVP Joy (011) 440-3606 (am).
- UJW CT Na'arot Group fundraiser: "Children's Chess Day". Time: All day (exact times to be advised). Venue: Weizmann School Hall. Cost: To be advised. Information: Tel: (021) 434-9555, fax: (021) 434-

9302, info@ujwcape.co.za

- Second Innings hosts Clifford Matthews on "The Forgotten Hero". Venue: Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R30 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact Hylton Marks, (011) 532-9616.

Monday (September 1)

- Israel Centre and Partnership2Gether are hosting two former South Africans, Sara Gluch and Evida Fenster, living in the Beit Shemesh-Mateh Yehuda region of Israel. They will present information on the beauty of the region and reveal their personal aliyah stories. Venue: Beyachad. Time 19:00. RSVP: Debbie (011) 645-2560 or debbie@israelcentre.co.za

Wednesday (September 3)

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

Friday (September 5)

- UZLC hosts Tali Nates on "A Bird's Eye View of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre". Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 – 14:00. Contact: Gloria (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.

Community Briefs

Rabbi Herring: 'Tefillin and mezuzah issues'

Following up a May communiqué regarding sifrei Torah, tefillin and mezuzot (STAM) sold by Rabbi Hylton Herring, Johannesburg's Beth Din confirms that Rabbi Herring has ceased trading in STAM. All STAM checking must be done by either of the following rabbis: Rael Drutman 082-347-8744/(011)640-1834, Chaim Klein (011) 485-4059, Gary Braude 079-978-5243, Simcha Frenkel 072-655-7715, or Dov Kazilsky 071-935-6005. Possul mezuzoth supplied by Rabbi Herring should be brought to Rabbi Drutman for verification, who will replace them accordingly. According to Rabbi Klein, unresolved financial disputes relating to STAM should be referred to the Beth Din.



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Young spark with a bright future

ILAN HERRMANN

It took one unintended trip to a gymnastics class – and a new door was opened for young Livya Eliana Firer (pictured). It all started when Livya insisted that she wanted to go with her sister one evening to have some fun at gymnastics, which ended with the coach asking her parents if Livya could immediately be slotted into the team and competition stream. That was last year, one in which she went on to win two silver and two bronze medals in her first regional encounter. The seven and a half year old from Hirsch

Lyons School, made her mark again in the recent Central Gauteng Challenge. She won one silver and three bronze medals in the four disciplines of floor, beam, vault and bar. Livya claimed the distinction of third overall best gymnast. She was nominated with Junior Gauteng colours and named for the Gauteng A team, both for the second year running. The biggest challenge, however, is yet to come with her having been put forward for the inter-provincial meeting in September. She is passionate about her training and thrives on competition. Her parents are delighted and feel that the exercise, discipline

and challenges she receives through her sport, are tools that help build both character and esteem. Being a Shomeret Shabbat family, the complexity in the very seldom occurrence of a Shabbat coinciding event, has been negotiated through careful planning to ensure walking proximity to location and avoidance of all prohibitions. It's not every day that a talent emerges that is so clearly marked with sporting grace and giftedness at such a tender age. And while it's early days yet, a young spark may have been awoken with a very bright future.




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Noah is a world karate champion at age six



ILAN HERRMANN

Young Noah Maisel from Cape Town at the tender age of six, is the world champion in karate for his division, after competing in the KSI World Karate Championships held in Sun City earlier this month. Participants came from 27 different countries, with Noah being pooled in a group of 50 athletes which he successfully qualified through with six fights, all won by knockout. His toughest opposition came in the semi-finals against the Danish champion, with the contest, after regular time, ending in a draw. This led to sudden death; the winner would be decided by whomever scored the first point. Noah at 24kg was the lightest and smallest of all the fighters in the competition. His show of nerve and inner strength under immensely stressful conditions, was a factor throughout the tournament.

So, what happened? The youngster astonished the thousand-strong spectators with a skillful and audacious “Ippon” by a kick to the head, falling short of contact. Two points were scored which won him through to the final, where he eventually took gold and the world title. Noah is a first Kyu brown belt, one removed from black. His strength is in his kick and his speed. He was born tiny at 800grams and usually comes up against fighters who are often far bigger and heavier than him - but they have never intimidated him. Noah attends Herzlia School in Cape Town and is recognised by his peers and his school for his achievements. He models his karate on world champion Rafael Aghayev from Azerbaijan. His parents are grateful that he is gaining valuable disciplines through karat, which his father calls “a schooling in life and character”.

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