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South African Jewish Report

January 29 2016 / 19 Shvat 5776
 Volume 20 - Number 3

www.sajr.co.za

Celebrating Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees



Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees - was celebrated with panache at all Jewish nursery and day schools this week. Pictured at Yeshiva College in Johannesburg, are Rabbi Leron Bernstein, MD of Yeshiva College, helping Sienna Epstein plant her flower. The 'Rosh Hashanah of the Trees' is an important holiday, because 'Man is [compared to] the tree of the field' (Deuteronomy 20:19). According to Chabad.org, by growing strong roots and being dedicated to Hashem, we too produce the fruits of Torah and fulfil mitzvot. Man celebrates along with the trees. We reach upwards to the heavens while standing firmly on the ground; and when we do all this right, we produce fruits that benefit the world - namely, our good deeds. The holiday marks the start of spring in Israel, and is a time to thank Hashem for fruit. It is customary to eat the fruit of Israel: olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates. Shvat is a month in the lunar Hebrew calendar and the holiday's name means the 15th of Shvat.

Tu B'Shvat - much more than a 'minor chag'

Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees - has traditionally been celebrated in Jewish schools and was not widely acknowledged. However, each year brings more awareness. The Rosh Hashanah of the Trees is an important holiday, though, according to a Torah injunction.

2

Is smoking acceptable in halacha?

The question of whether the smoking of cigarettes is halachically allowed, is a minefield and Batei Din worldwide find it difficult to issue a prohibition against this socially acceptable but self-destructive behaviour. The jury - or the rabbis? - is out on this one.

3

The 'sweet poison' called sugar

A new study has shown that over half the population of South Africa is overweight and obese and it has recommended a 20 per cent tax on sugar-sweetened beverages. Aviva Tugendhaft of Wits believes a 20 per cent 'sugar tax' could help reduce the number of obese adults by some 250 000.

5

Double vision and an indelible imprint times two

It's hard to believe, but twins Elliot and Jeffrey Wolf, iconic headmasters in Jewish education - turned 80 on January 21. When in 1967, Elliot was offered a job at King David Linksfield, he said he had a brother and the then headmaster said: 'Bring him along as well.' The rest is history.



8

Déjà vu - a stark anti-Semitic recurrence for SA Jewry

Prof Milton Shain has written a 'timeous' book, 'A Perfect Storm: Antisemitism in South Africa 1930 - 1948'. When a debate over how to deal with hate speech rages, it is instructive to look back to when our community was subjected to vitriolic public attacks.

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Asking questions



Parshat Yitro

Rabbi Ari Kievman
Chabad's Goodness & Kindness Centre,
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we must live our lives. Faith in Hashem and the Divinity of G-d's commandments is paramount. But rather than suffice with blind acceptance alone, G-d wants us to use our intellectual skills to analyse, probe, and question, thereby understanding the Torah's instructions and making it our own.

Some of the greatest figures in the Torah asked questions of G-d. One who studies Talmud is familiar with its analytical style of questions, answers and refutations. Many works of Jewish literature are written in the style of "questions and answers". No doubt then that asking is not anathema to Jewish tradition.

There are many questions that so many of us have, and struggle with comprehending. But we mustn't cease to probe and seek. Do we lose our faith if we cannot find a satisfactory answer?

Questions can come in different forms. Some stem from a sincere desire to learn and understand, while others may be sourced in cynicism.

When a person of faith asks, then no matter how

unsatisfactory the answer may be, it still won't shake their faith. Conversely, for the sceptic, no matter how brilliant the answer, they're discontented.

By deepening our understanding of Torah, we can best connect with G-d's will, thereby fully engaging ourselves with Divine wisdom. Hence the purpose of our questions is not to dismiss but out of a genuine desire to learn while also realising the limitation of our understanding.

This method of study, acceptance coupled with understanding, ensures the eternal survival of Torah, guaranteeing that its teachings won't be forsaken because of doubts which inevitably will arise.

In my limited experience, I've learnt best by living and understood when doing. Just as fine cuisine, literature, or music are appreciated by experiencing them, there is no way of grasping kosher or Shabbos without involvement in them. Judaism can only truly be understood by experiencing it.

I encourage you to be proactive in exploring your Judaism, and your personal connection with Hashem. Today it's easy to seek answers, even anonymously, from websites to printed literature, to real-life interaction with a teacher or rabbi. I'll soon be starting a new lecture series exploring some of Judaism's toughest questions. You're welcome to send me any of your questions. My e-mail address is rak@chabad.org.za

Shabbat Times

Parshat Yitro
January 29 / 19 Shvat
January 30 / 20 Shvat

Starts	Ends	
18:15	19:34	Johannesburg
18:28	20:30	Cape Town
18:15	19:30	Durban
18:15	19:47	Bloemfontein
18:15	20:01	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:49	East London

Tu B'Shvat - much more than a 'minor chag'

OWN CORRESPONDENT AND CHABAD.ORG

Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees - has traditionally been celebrated in Jewish schools and was not generally acknowledged among secular Jews. However, each year brings more awareness.

The Rosh Hashanah of the Trees is an important holiday, though, because "Man is [compared to] the tree of the field" (Deuteronomy 20:19). By growing strong roots and dedication to Hashem, we also produce the fruits of Torah and mitzvot.

It is an interesting question as to why the trees celebrate a new year so much later than the traditional Rosh Hashanah. The reason given is that the rainy season in Israel begins with Succoth. It then takes four months for the rains to saturate the soil and nurture the trees which then produce fruit around this time.

This information is important if one is planning to give tithes of fruits, as is done in Israel, because the required tithes vary from year to year.

Man celebrates along with the trees. We, too, have deep roots, as far back as Abraham and Sarah and, according to Chabad.Org, "we reach upwards to the heavens while standing firmly on the ground; and when we do all this right, we produce fruits that benefit the world - namely, our good deeds".

On Tu B'Shvat, it is customary to eat the fruit of the Holy Land (Deuteronomy 8:8): olives, dates, grapes, figs and pomegranates. If tasting any of these fruit for the first time this season, we should remember to recite the Shehecheyanu blessing - a blessing recited on joyous occasions, thanking G-d for "sustaining us and enabling us to reach this occasion". This blessing is recited before the standard blessing recited on fruit.

Because of the festive nature of the day, petitions for forgiveness and confession are omitted from the prayers.

Iran cartoon contest has policy implications for Remembrance Day

KAREN MCDONOUGH/JNS.ORG

As millions of people around the world marked International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, this year's Iranian government-sponsored Holocaust cartoon contest is not the first of its kind, but carries added significance in the aftermath of last summer's nuclear deal between the Islamic Republic and the P5+1 nations.

"What's different this year - and most alarming - is that policy makers in the US and Europe view the Iranian regime as a stabilising force in the imploding Middle East. This is a horrific mistake," Charles A Small, executive director of the Institute for the Study of Global Anti-Semitism and Policy (ISGAP), told JNS.org. "Western governments, led by the US, are legitimising a genocidal anti-Semitic regime, and this is dangerous and can only lead to problems for all of us, not just for Jews."

Organisers of the 11th Tehran International Cartoon Biennial recently announced that the Holocaust cartoon competition is scheduled for June and will draw participants from many countries. This year, the first-place prize money is \$50 000, more than quadruple last year's \$12 000. There will also be a separate portrait contest focusing on Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

"Anybody can see that Iran's anti-Semitic cartoon contest is meant to incite hatred, which is often the motivator of violence and terrorism. The world should condemn this appalling contest as vehemently as we do," said Consul Daniel Agranov of the Houston-based Consulate General of Israel to the South-

west United States.

Ira Forman, the US State Department's special envoy to combat and monitor anti-Semitism, said it's critical that the US speak out against any type of government-sponsored anti-Semitism.

"We're really concerned this contest is used as a platform for Holocaust denial... and anti-Semitic speech," Forman told JNS.org.

Last year's Iranian Holocaust cartoon contest, organisers said, was a response to international support for such an endeavour following the Islamist terror attack on the French magazine Charlie Hebdo over its publication of cartoons of the Muslim prophet Muhammad, whose depiction is taboo in Islam. Iranian contest organisers said they're trying to show that those who defend cartoons depicting Muhammad can't have it both ways. Iran started the Holocaust cartoon contest in 2006 after a Danish newspaper published cartoon depictions of Muhammad. (JNS.org)

KASHRUT ALERT

THIS WOOLIES CHEESE IS NOT KOSHER

The kashrut division of the Union of Orthodox Synagogues has alerted the community to the fact that "Woolworths grated mozzarella cheese" has been incorrectly labelled with the Beth Din logo. "This product is not kosher," the kashrut alert states. "Woolworths is taking immediate corrective action and apologises for the error."

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Is smoking acceptable in halacha?

ANT KATZ

The question of whether the smoking of cigarettes is halachically allowed is a minefield and Batei Din worldwide find it difficult to issue a heter (prohibition) to engage in this socially acceptable but self-destructive behaviour.

Rabbi Anton Klein, director of the Beth Din of Johannesburg, told Jewish Report that the Beth Din (ecumenical court) “does not have a policy” regarding the smoking of cigarettes.

But Rabbi Aharon Rose, previously of the Waverley Shul in Johannesburg, says: “Smoking tobacco cigarettes is forbidden by every halachic authority I have ever heard of.”

There seem to be no issues relating to kashrut, but rather to the halacha. The Torah says “you must carefully guard your soul,” says Rabbi Rose. “Perhaps decades ago there was some confusion about how dangerous it is, but today, it is clear.”

The conventional wisdom has followed the writings of Rabbi Moses Feinstein who wrote it was permitted, but inadvisable. Rabbi Feinstein said then that since the risk of illness due to smoking was very small and was a widespread practice, it was therefore permitted under the rabbinical principle: “The Lord protects the simple.”

But that was written 50 years ago, before the link between smoking and health was still doubted. Rabbi Feinstein did, however, muddy the waters as he went on to state that starting to smoke would be prohibited because of the transgression of v'lo sasuru.

Rabbi Yehuda Spitz of Ohr Somayach in Israel says this is not a new issue. In fact, he says, “there is abundant halachic literature dating back to the 17th century related to the permissibility of smoking”. And, he says, much of the literature relates to whether one is allowed to smoke on fasting days; whether non-kosher ingredients contained in a cigarette are of halachic concern; whether or not smoking requires a bracha (blessing) beforehand; and “debating whether smoking on yomtov is permitted, prohibited, or actually fulfilling a mitzvah”.

Rabbi Spitz serves as the sho'el u' meishiv and rosh chavura of the Ohr Lagolah Halacha Kollel at Yeshivas Ohr Somayach in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Yisrael Meir Kagan (1838 - 1933), known as the Chofetz Chaim (“Desirer of Life”), also



sought to dissuade practitioners from smoking. He considered it a waste of time.

On June 30, 2006, however, the Vaad Halacha (Jewish law committee), sponsored by the Rabbinical Council of America (RCA), ruled that the use of tobacco is forbidden to Jews, and the committee specifically cited and reversed precedents (largely the writings of Rabbi Moses Feinstein) that permitted smoking.

The RCA's 11-page ruling (see it in full on our website www.sajr.co.za) states that it “should be noted that despite the numerous advances in our medical knowledge of the hazards of smoking, there remain some Orthodox communities that have even a higher rate of smoking than the general population.

The RCA said that one of the primary goals of their ruling, was “to show that given the medical knowledge of today, there is no basis in halacha to permit smoking.”

They did concede that in the '60s and '70s, most of the leading authorities did not issue prohibitive rulings, which is most likely because medical knowledge was evolving and its

public acceptance was a gradual process.

Rav J David Bleich noted that, given the information available in his day, Rav Moshe Feinstein certainly ruled correctly, but that Rabbi Feinstein's decision, written in 1964, “accurately reflects the societal reality of that time... However, it is more than likely that, at present, that condition no longer obtains.”

The RCA ruling of 2006 concludes: “Accordingly, this analysis must lead to the unambiguous conclusion that smoking is clearly and unquestionably forbidden by halacha and that this should be made known to all who care about the Torah and their health.”

The RCA felt the need for a “final note” which read: “People who smoke are not doing so in an attempt to flout halacha. In fact, most would dearly wish to quit, but shedding an addiction is no simple matter.

“While it is important to make clear that halacha prohibits smoking, it is also important not to condemn those who struggle with this issue. Rather we must offer our full help and support to aid them in their quest for physical and spiritual health.”

Baking challah to commemorate Daniella's life

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Daniella Moffson (pictured), niece of Rabbi Shmuel Moffson and Discovery's Adrian Gore, has died after a tragedy in Central America.

“She was worried about other people first,” said Michael Lupinacci, her maths teacher at The Ramaz School in Manhattan. “She set an example for everybody.”

Moffson, 21, was one of three people killed in a bus crash in Honduras when the vehicle, which carried 25 Columbia and Barnard students on a volunteer mission organised by Global Brigades, plunged down a ravine.

The other fatalities were Columbia College sophomore Olivia Erhardt, 20, and Abigail Flanagan, 45, a general studies student and nurse practitioner at the Columbia University Medical Centre.

The bus was travelling to the airport to bring the students home after their weeklong trip providing medical care to poor neighbourhoods.

Moffson, who grew up on the East Side, died while helping others, which was always a big part of her life.

She was an Orthodox Jewess and her school, Ramaz, on the Upper East Side, is a modern Orthodox prep school.

A source close to her said: “She devoted her life to doing chesed for others. Since she can no longer continue performing this chesed herself, we would like to continue to do chesed in her honour.”

The main donations will go to Magen David Adom and Chai Lifeline, organisations that Moffson was passionate about.

An appeal has gone out on Facebook as follows: “Daniella Moffson lit up the world with light and love. Please bake a challah in her memory this Thursday/Friday for Shabbos as an elevation to her unique and radiant soul. Our hearts are with the very special Moffson family. Let's light up the world with her legacy.”



World News in Brief

20% of West's donations to PA 'go to terrorists' families'

JERUSALEM - The stipends paid by the Palestinian Authority (PA) to terrorists' families amounts to some \$75 million a year - about 20 per cent of the donations funnelled to the PA from Western nations and bodies, Israeli Deputy Foreign Minister Tzipi Hotovely said on Sunday in a meeting with foreign dignitaries in Jerusalem.

Hotovely said that contrary to 2012 and 2013, when the PA exercised some transparency, in 2014 Ramallah changed its regulations, making the funds harder to track by transferring them under the guise of Palestine Liberation Organisation benefits.

World Bank figures show that from 1993 to 2013, the PA received \$21.7 billion in foreign aid. Hotovely said that per capita, the PA receives far more foreign aid than any other country in the world - roughly \$800 million a year. Palestinians receive assistance to the tune of \$170 per person, while Syrians, for example, receive an average of \$106 per person. (JNS.org)

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Some splendid reads on Jewish Report website

ANT KATZ

Do you follow Jewish Report Online? It is populated with fresh content by both our editorial team as well as users who have been known to have considerable online chirp-fests on many issues of the day.

The website – www.sajr.co.za – also has a wonderful facility, allowing users to find all the LATEST posts at any time simply by either clicking on the LATEST tab or by googling www.sajr/latest (simple as that). Many of our thousands of users have either the website's home page, or latest page as the homepage on their web browser.

All the stories in the print edition newspaper are covered on the website – often at greater length and depth and with more pictures as the space allows for it. An example, this week, is the PDF attachment of the 11-page, 2006 ruling by the Rabbinical Council of America on the issue of the halacha of smoking cigarettes. Users can print it out for a Shabbos read, send it to a

friend or keep it on file.

The website also carries quite a lot of unique content which does not appear in the paper due to limited space. Examples of these over the past week have been:



- 102,000 stones – for those who never returned
- The Shoah's first historian is finally heard
- Anti-Semitism is rising – say 70% of French
- Blue Eyes' body hid among dead Jews
- Israeli food a hit among world cuisine
- Israeli basketball coach fired by US team
- 3-way race with Sanders least pro-Israel

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The multi-faceted face of the anti-Semitic scourge

DAVID SAKS

According to world-renowned Jewish historian and anti-Semitism scholar Professor Dina Porat (pictured), immigration, particularly from Muslim countries, rather than the Israeli-Palestinian dispute, is the main engine behind rising levels of anti-Semitism in Europe.

In addition to many of the newcomers being already steeped in deep-rooted anti-Semitic ideologies when they arrive, conspiratorial notions of Jews being behind the unpopular influx are becoming common currency in right-wing, anti-immigrant circles.

As a result, as Porat puts it, European Jews are finding themselves increasingly “caught between the anvil and the hammer”, with the situation getting worse as the current refugee crisis intensifies.

Porat is the chief historian at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and head of the Kantor Centre for the Study of Contemporary European Jewry at Tel Aviv University. She is in South Africa under the auspices of the Israeli Embassy and Yad Vashem to participate in the UN International Holocaust Day which was commemorated on January 27.

Immigration from the Arab-speaking countries, which commenced at a fairly low level at the beginning of the century, has rapidly increased until reaching near-flood proportions in recent years.

As Porat dryly observes, Palestinians are conspicuous by their absence within the ranks of the newcomers, notwithstanding their constant complaints about how much they are suffering at Israel's hands. The reality is that compared with their counterparts in other Arab states, most obviously in war-ravaged Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen, they are living secure and comfortable lives.

The immigration controversy has spawned a range of bizarre anti-Semitic conspiracy theories. It is claimed, for example, that Jews are behind the mass immigration in order to empty the Middle East of Arabs, leaving the ground clear for them to take over.

Others hold that the intention is to incite Muslims against Christians, while still others adhere to the time-worn theory that Jews are seeking to corrupt the purity of the Aryan races, in this case with the infusion of Semitic blood.

Porat also points to a high degree of hostility towards Jews by the immigrants



themselves, who are resentful of how well they have succeeded in integrating, whereas they themselves are facing formidable obstacles in that regard, not least the pressure brought to bear to remain a community apart by radical fundamentalists within their own ranks.

Regarding how social media is now the primary vehicle for disseminating anti-Semitism, Porat believes that the answer lies in holding the Internet companies that host such sites accountable, rather than in trying to track down and prosecute particular individuals. Some progress has been made in this regard, with the Jewish community in France, for example, having successfully compelled Twitter to clamp down on the abuse of its facility.

So far as the security situation facing European Jewry is concerned, Porat believes that there is a strong perception of danger within the various communities, perhaps stronger than the danger itself. Recent surveys show that around one in four French Jews no longer identify as such in public, with the same proportion no longer being prepared to attend Jewish events when held at Jewish communal installations.

In most European countries, it is now standard practice to remove one's kippah after shul for fear of being assaulted. Religiously observant Jews in the main wear alternative head coverings, such as caps or, in France, berets.

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The 'sweet poison' called sugar

SUZANNE BELLING

A new study has shown that over half the population of South Africa is overweight and obese and it has recommended a 20 per cent tax on sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs), Aviva Tugendhaft (pictured), co-author of the study conducted by the University of the Witwatersrand, told the SA Jewish Report.

Tugendhaft is the deputy director of PRICELESS SA (Priority Cost Effective Lessons for System Strengthening) at the Wits School for Public Health, a research institution providing evidence on the best buys for public health to help the country set better priorities.

Being overweight puts individuals at great risk for lifestyle diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.

"A 20 per cent tax could reduce the number of obese adults by about a quarter of a million," she says.

But the Beverage Association of SA says a "discriminatory tax" is not an "effective measure because evidence showed that consumers switched to different alternatives of the same or similar foods instead".



Photo supplied

late too, but the difference is that we know it's a treat, while sugar-sweetened beverages have become an everyday essential. What's even worse is that some of these drinks are considered healthy. They have no nutritional value."

She added that fruit juices had as much and sometimes even more sugar than soft drinks.

"Once the juice is removed from the intact fruit - even if freshly squeezed - the liquid has as much 'free sugar' as a drink that has sugar added to it.

"Think of how many oranges are needed to make one orange juice. None of the healthy fibre is left intact. That changes the way orange juice interacts with your body, as opposed to eating the whole fruit. Eat your fruit, don't drink it."

Jews drink sweet wine or grape juice on Shabbatot and festivals. Is this also harmful?

"A few sips of grape juice on Shabbat and on Yomtov are not going to lead to these negative long-term effects," Tugendhaft says.

"Sugar-sweetened beverages in moderation are okay if one is not diabetic.

"But we no longer consider these drinks as treats to be enjoyed on special occasions. We need to move back to that mindset," she says.

One criticism of the proposed tax is that it would affect the poor in particular.

"The poor are much more vulnerable to obesity and associated lifestyle diseases, as they do not have access to quality disease screening and healthcare," she says.

These diseases place a huge financial strain on the poor.

"SSBs are cheaper than healthy food options and we want this to change.

"Mexico implemented a sugar tax last year and it did have the biggest impact on the lower income groups - but for the good, freeing up household income for healthier options," she says.

Physician and endocrinologist Dr Hilton Kaplan, of Cape Town, who is affiliated to the Centre for Diabetes and Endocrinology, says people should be encouraged to reduce their sugar intake and also carbohydrates, "unless they are good quality carbohydrates".

He said there were very good alternatives for soft drinks and while a 20 per cent tax on soft drinks might be a good idea, he was sceptical as to whether it would solve the problem.

Even overseas, there are rumblings about sugar tax, especially on fizzy drinks.

British ministers have written to Prime Minister David Cameron urging him to impose a levy as part of an anti-obesity strategy. He has so far resisted to impose a sugar tax fearing its unpopularity with the poor. But last month he hinted he might be considering a sugar tax after research revealed obesity rates could be significantly lowered.

A study in Mexico, where a tax has been imposed on fizzy drinks since 2014, found that the sales of these had been reduced by 12 per cent.

...the Beverage Association of SA says a "discriminatory tax" is not an "effective measure because evidence showed that consumers switched to different alternatives of the same or similar foods instead".

The Association said it is working together with the Department of Health in an awareness programme, "Healthy Food Options". This is to encourage a balanced diet, exercise and a healthy lifestyle.

Health Minister Aaron Motsoaledi has yet to make any statements regarding a sugar tax, says spokesman Joe Maila.

"The Minister of Health and the Department of Health have not pronounced on that kind of tax. We are aware that there are people in the country and elsewhere in the world who have been calling for a sugar tax, but we have never said that as the Department of Health. We are not Treasury so we cannot be pronouncing on things like that in terms of tax. We can only be talking about the Department of Health."

The DA says it does not agree with the tax proposal. The party's shadow minister of health, Wilmot James, says it was regressive and would affect the poor by putting up food prices.

Cope said the party is in favour of a tax on sugar-sweetened drinks, provided all products reflect sugar in grams and teaspoons; there should be intensive education of the public and then the 20 per cent tax could be imposed, says spokesman Dennis Bloem.

Tugendhaft said a tax is not enough. It needs to be part of a broader, comprehensive approach that includes things such as easy-to-understand food labelling, work site and school-based interventions, advertising regulations and educational campaigns.

"Without preventive measures there will be another 1,2-million obese adults in South Africa by 2017."

SSBs are not only high in sugar - about eight teaspoons in a can - but they were also liquid sugar, which had an even worse impact on the body. It caused sugar levels and insulin to rise rapidly, eventually leading to fat storage in the liver.

"We are probably eating too much choco-

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BUGSY SNACK GRILL **8⁹⁹** 70g **19⁹⁹** 200g

EGOE. IMAGES MAY DIFFER FROM ACTUAL PRODUCT

Anti-black, anti-Jew - what to do... what to do?

It all started with a remark posted on Facebook by white Durban real estate agent Penny Sparrow who compared the behaviour of black people on a beach on New Year's day to "monkeys". Then Chris Hart, economist at Standard Bank, was fired for his tweet that 25 years after apartheid, "victims are increasing along with a sense of entitlement and hatred towards minorities".

Media personality Gareth Cliff was next dropped as a judge on a M-Net's popular Idols talent show - for tweeting in response to the outcry about Sparrow's comments, that "people don't understand free speech".

The current litany of racist missteps and accusations of racism is forcing South Africans to take stock. One view, expressed in this past weekend's Sunday Times by researcher/author Liz Cowan is that "centuries of conditioning have genetically engineered us to be racist: to genuinely believe that we whites are superior".

The black population is not the only one to be targeted. Only two weeks ago, the SA Jewish Board laid a hate speech charge against Port Elizabeth lawyer Maureen Jansen for a December Facebook post calling for "Bloody Israelis" or "monsters" to be "exterminated along with all the 'Jews' everywhere who support Israel by action or silence".

Racism is defined as the belief that race is the primary determinant of human traits and ability and that racial differences produce an inherent superiority of a particular race.

Coincidentally, Wednesday of this week was International Holocaust Remembrance Day. It is a UN-designated memorial day that honours the victims of the Nazi era genocide and promotes the development of educational programmes to fight prejudice.

Ironically, Israel's 2015 anti-Semitism report was discussed at the Israeli Cabinet meeting this past Sunday. It showed that more than 40 per cent of European Union citizens hold anti-Semitic views and agree with the claim that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians and that they are behaving like the Nazis. Israeli Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett said the report blames this sentiment on the spread of radical Islam; the refugee crisis; the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement; and the rise of the extreme right.

Yes, the world is full of loathing; and hatemongers will find many excuses - for anti-black attitudes or anti-Jewish attitudes. But this pervasive animosity also makes it too easy to immediately label the views and actions of people we do not agree with as prejudiced. People who criticise Israel are too easily termed anti-Semitic, or people who criticise the ANC government might too easily be termed racist.

Yet, what it all seems to point to is a primitive part of all of us to recognise difference and to make judgements based on



South African Jewish Report

it. From pre-school, where children map their worlds by putting things and people into categories of size, shape, and colour, race - black or white - is a useful sorting measure. A three- or four-year-old will ask his/her parents for words to describe the differences they see, but do not yet make independent value judgements about racial differences. By the age of four however, developmental experts say children begin to absorb the lessons of a racist culture.

There has been considerable work done in the field of "unlearning racism".

Theorists like Ricky Sherover-Marcuse, a well-known American political activist from the sixties and seventies, said that people hold on to racist beliefs and attitudes because this misinformation represents the best thinking they have been able to do at the time, and because no one has been able to assist them to change their perspective.

According to her, people will only change their minds and let go of ingrained attitudes if an alternative view is presented in a way that makes sense to them; if they trust the person who is presenting the view; and finally, if they are not blamed for having had the prejudiced view in the first place.

How do we change attitudes? It is a tough battle. We know that biased beliefs about particular groups of people tend to come from ignorance and a lack of real contact. It is very important to educate people and create environments for connection; it is often the lack of connection between groups that causes misjudgement in the first place.

The experts believe it is important to start at a young age. At age seven or eight, children become very concerned with fairness and are responsive to lessons about prejudice. In parts of the United States, schools are implementing programmes to help "unlearn racism": conversations with multiracial groups about racial attitudes and tensions; well-trained teachers teaching the histories of genocide; and children role playing being treated unfairly based solely on traits like eye colour or gender - to understand the experience of discrimination.

In our own country, efforts are also being made. Just next month, Independent Media, owners of the Star, the Cape Times, and other major newspapers, is launching a campaign called "Racism Stops with Me". It will include anti-racism concerts, and will encourage public debate across Independent's media outlets, and at schools and universities.

Will these steps change attitudes? Many may think not. Rabbi Jonathan Lord Sacks, in his book, the Dignity of Difference, pleads with his readers to embrace difference, the other/the stranger, as an absolute necessity for humanity to continue with integrity and dignity. Debate, conscientising, education, anti-racism campaigns, and public outcries - are all a very good start.

– Vanessa Valkin, editor

In the US Bark mitzvot becoming an industry

ANT KATZ

Only in America... The first bark mitzvah was held by the Mayor of Beverly Hills in 1958. Now, pet barmies and batties have become big business in the US.

Wikipedia defines a bark mitzvah as "an observance and celebration of a dog's coming of age, as in the Jewish traditional barmitzvah and batmitzvah."

"The bark mitzvah is a celebration not necessarily held in conjunction with a specific age, but can occur when the dog turns 13 months or 13 years of age. During some bark mitzvahs, dogs wear a tallit, a ritual prayer shawl worn during Jewish religious services and ceremonies. A male dog wears a specific yarmulke, a thin skullcap."

No kidding - if you don't believe how much of an industry this has become in the US, simply Google it. It is remarkable.

The first such celebration, in 1958, was for "Windy", Max and Janet Salter's dog. Max was a former Mayor and long-serving City Councilman of Beverly Hills, a businessman and a noted philanthropist.

Since Windy was a black cocker spaniel (whose full name was Duke of Windsor), the Salters threw him a "Cockertail" party, which Janet Salter referred to as a "bark mitzvah" on the invitation, thereby coining the term, according to JEWNIVERSE.com. The event was attended by over 100 guests, who brought the guest of honour gifts, including dog biscuits and fountain pens.

Windy was the first of the Salters' dogs to have their passage into adulthood marked by assuming tallis and kippa - each of the family's dogs had a bark mitzvah when they reached the formidable age of 13 years.

However, many bark mitzvahs are marked at 13 months. They often take place in family homes, but not always.

In 2014, more than 30 dogs and



their families took part in a mass bark mitzvah service held on the back lawn of a Raleigh, North Carolina shul. The event lasted approximately half an hour and, by all accounts, the fluffy creatures were very well behaved.

The oldest public pictures of a bark mitzvah are of a July 10, 1977 event that took place in West Orange New Jersey. Marvin and Thebe Drazin held a bark mitzvah for their dog Schnoppsie-Lewis Drazin in their backyard. It received scrutiny and disapproval from several rabbis.

One rabbi expressed his distaste for bark mitzvah in a letter to the editor of The New York Times, describing the celebration as "nothing less than a desecration of a cherished Jewish tradition" and claiming that bark mitzvahs "degrade some of the central principles of Jewish life".

Despite the idea being frowned upon by many, the idea spread throughout the United States and the celebrations have continued to occur. The ceremonies became increasingly popular on the East and West Coasts in the early 2000s.

As a result, specialty pet stores and dog bakeries now offer special bark mitzvah party packages, party favours, and gifts.

• See the story on our website, www.sajr.co.za, which includes an illustrated list of '13 Reasons You Need To Throw Your Pup A Bark Mitzvah' from, believe this or not, barkpost.com.

Dancing across President Street



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

apartheid, Glasser started the company Moving into Dance Mophatong in her garage in "white" and "privileged" Victory Park, to train dancers of all races when it was illegal for blacks and whites to share a performance stage.

She ignored this restriction, then led MDM to become the premier contemporary dance company in South Africa.

It's a pity this celebratory scene for her in President Street wasn't filmed and aired a thousand times countrywide as an antidote to the negativity about white and black relationships.

One good thing to emerge from the acrimonious race-fest kicked off by former estate agent Penny Sparrow's gaffe about blacks being "monkeys", is that it has opened the simmering debate about racial attitudes. But it has also produced gloom among some who feel the issues are unresolvable and the trajectory of the country is downward.

Accusations of white privilege and mobility really do sting when contrasted with the abysmal poverty and inertia in which most of the citizens live.

In some communities, it has revived the question of staying or going. You hear more about it among Jews than a few years ago. It is an uncomfortable topic.

One memorable thing the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris - it is 10 years since his passing - stressed was that Jews should be "enthusiastically" South African. They should not be living here just because they happened to be born here, but because they believe in the country.

But he led SA Jewry when there was still the euphoria of the Mandela era, when that was a popular slogan. South Africa was the darling of the world and everything seemed possible.

That enthusiasm is not so easy to find today, as the country approaches junk status economically and a sense of failure is all around. Inspired leadership of the Mandela and Harris brand is desperately lacking, in the Jewish community and the country.

The apartheid mindset is repeating itself as Jews - and other white minorities - keep their bags packed, ready for the day everything collapses around them. The

community divides into three: the majority who withdraw into a shtetl and carry on with their lives hoping things will turn out okay, since they don't have financial resources or the desire to do otherwise; those who have given up on the country and are actively seeking other places to live for themselves or their children; and those who still see South Africa as their home and involve themselves in the issues. The latter group seems, sadly, to be on the decline.

There are still many "Sylvia Glassers" out there today, however, working away creatively, undeterred by the surrounding negativity. Sadly, many come from the margins of the mainstream Jewish community, which barely acknowledged Glasser throughout her career right until the end.

Citizenship is conferred by birth in a country. But is also something which should be earned. Instead of complaining about the state of affairs, Jews should be getting involved.

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

Israeli mobster suspect 'free on bail of \$10 000'?

ANT KATZ

Police have been unable to explain why one of the highest profile awaiting-trial prisoners in the country, alleged Israeli mob leader Shai Musli (pictured), was not in court on January 18, as scheduled.

Musli, who has had his case remanded three times before, had arrived at court in November under unusually heavy police protection after police received a "credible tip-off" that there may have been a mob-plot to spring him.

Musli was arrested on the request of the Prosecutor's Office of Israel and Interpol. His SA prosecutor, Christo Steyn, said at an early hearing that his alleged crimes, for which Israel - through Interpol - is seeking his extradition, included murder, attempted murder and conspiracy to commit murder.

This week, Israel's Channel 10 News reported that Musli, who was scheduled to appear in court on January 18 and didn't, was released on \$10 000 bail. The TV channel merely quoted "sources" and SAPS spokesmen have not responded to Jewish Report enquiries - but it appears that there was, indeed, no hearing on the scheduled



date.

Channel 10 said that a gang member had agreed to turn state witness in Israel on the alleged charges of "assassinations, illegal possession of weapons, racketeering, arson and robbery". The TV channel also claimed that the killer, who agreed to become a state witness, said that "a fee for every murder in Bat Yam and Rishon LeZion was \$50 000".

The channel said, according to its "unnamed sources" that the SA courts had been shocked to hear that in Israel a state witness "gets paid for his/her testimony, which is unacceptable in South Africa and stressed that this exemption will impede the process of extradition of a dangerous criminal".

Israeli security officials have for years been hunting around the world for Musli. However, he has allegedly been hiding out

in SA since 2012 - lying low and moving often. He is alleged to head one of Israel's most feared crime families, a family claimed to have waged a reign of terror in Tel Aviv and using their connections to the global criminal underworld, including South Africa's, to remove rivals and expand their empire.

On November 11, Jewish Report first published the Israeli's bail and extradition hearings, telling how Israeli authorities had sought Musli across the globe, how he came to be arrested, his first appearance in the Randburg Magistrate's Court and how he was being held under guard at an undisclosed Gauteng prison. His first appearance led to a remand in custody until later in the month when he would apply for bail.

It is not certain what next date has been set for him to appear in court and so far, no confirmation could be had that Musli is in fact out on bail and which magistrate granted it, if so. If the police initially took extra precautions to ensure that Musli's "mob pals" don't spring him, it is puzzling that he would be granted bail. If he is in fact out on bail, will this elusive Israeli pitch for his SA extradition hearing?

Ban blames 'frustration' for Palestinian violence on Israelis

JTA STAFF
NEW YORK

Palestinian violence against Israel is a result of Palestinian "frustration" over "a half century of occupation and the paralysis of the peace process," United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon said on Tuesday at the UN Security Council.

He called on Israel to freeze building in the settlements and to apply justice equally for Israelis and Palestinians.

Ban condemned the four-month spate of stabbings, vehicle attacks and shootings by Palestinians targeting Jewish-Israelis and added that clashes between Palestinians and Israeli security forces have continued to claim lives.



"But security measures alone will not stop the violence," Ban said. "They cannot address the profound sense of alienation and despair driving some Palestinians - especially young people. It is human nature to react to occupation, which often serves as a potent incubator of hate and extremism."

Ban said West Bank Jewish settlements, or "so-called facts on the ground in the occupied West Bank", are "steadily chipping away the viability of a Palestinian state and the ability of Palestinian people to live in dignity".

He said he was "deeply troubled" by reports of Israel approving more than 150 new homes in West Bank settlements, as well as an announcement declaring 150 hectares in the West Bank as state land.

"These provocative acts are bound to increase the growth of settler populations, further heighten tensions and undermine any prospects for a political road ahead," Ban said. "The parties must act - and act now - to prevent the two-state solution from slipping away forever."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu criticised Ban's remarks, saying they "provide a tail-wind for terror."

"There is no justification for terror. Those Palestinians who murder do not want to build a state, they want to destroy a state and they say this openly," Netanyahu said. "They want to murder Jews for being Jews, and say this publicly. They don't murder for peace and they don't murder for human rights."

He also criticised the UN's positions on his country. "The United Nations long ago lost its neutrality and its moral force and the secretary-general's remarks do not improve its standing." (JTA)

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



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Double vision and an indelible imprint times two

SUZANNE BELLING

It's hard to believe but twins Elliot and Jeffrey Wolf, who turned 80 on January 21, have contributed as many years between them to the King David Schools.

Born in Johannesburg and brought up in Yeoville - Elliot lived with his parents for many years and Jeffrey only left home when he married Barbara - the brothers said their parents were opposed to their teaching careers for financial reasons (they are both Latin and English teachers) but they proved to be among the finest South Africa has ever produced.

In 1967 Elliot was on leave when he received a letter from the late King David Linksfield principal, Norman Sandler, offering him a job at King David. "But I have a brother," was his answer.

"Let him come too," Sandler replied and the brothers ended up as head of Latin (Elliot) and head of English (Jeffrey).

Later, Jeffrey was transferred to Victory Park as deputy-principal and Elliot became deputy head of Linksfield. In a relatively short time they became headmasters of their respective schools, nurturing and educating thousands of Jewish children.

They are affectionately said to have begun the "Lupine Legend".

Being identical twins, they occasionally swapped positions and fooled everyone.

"But we have never fooled Barbara (Jeffrey's wife), our parents, Jeffrey's children Stuart, Graham and Melissa, and Jeffrey's seven grandchildren," they said.

Jeffrey told Jewish Report when he was courting Barbara, they decided to try and fool her and Elliot turned up at her parents' house in Jeffrey's car. At the door, Barbara greeted him saying, "Elliot, what are you doing here? Where is Jeffrey?"

When Barbara gave birth to Stuart, she asked Elliot to bring the family's bris apparel to the hospital. Only fathers were permitted entrance. Elliot wavered at the doorway and a nurse waved him in saying, "Of course fathers are permitted!"

During another incident, Jeffrey



In their younger days... Jeffrey (left) and Elliot Wolf.

had cardiac surgery and was in ICU following the operation. Elliot was standing in the corridor waiting to visit his brother when a nursing sister yelled at him, "What are you doing here in the passage after surgery? You are supposed to be in intensive care!"

There is a slight difference in the voice quality, especially over the phone, but not everyone has been able to hear the distinction. "Then even our late dad couldn't distinguish who was speaking."

Since retiring, Jeffrey has been teaching Latin at St Mary's in Waverley, while Elliot is director and fundraiser at the King David Schools' Foundation.

Jeffrey therefore shops at the

Norwood Mall as he works nearby. But one day Elliot landed up in the Hypermarket. He was approached by a King David Victory Park mother who complained endlessly about a certain teacher. "I didn't have the heart to tell her she had the wrong brother," Elliot said.

In the run up to their 80th birthday, Elliot, who is still based in Linksfield, was treated to a variety of celebrations including being fetched for school in a limousine, riding pillion on a Hell's Angels motorcycle, being transported in a fire engine, and being lifted to work in a hot air balloon, a helicopter and in an Elliot's Furniture Removal van with the motto "Elliot is amazing" on its side.



Elliot (left) and Jeffrey Wolf on their 80th birthday.

One of their pranks was after a twins' assembly about 20 years ago when Elliot put on a wedding band and pretended to be Jeffrey visiting Linksfield.

"I fooled everyone, especially when I knew the names of two of the children who had transferred from Victory Park," Elliot said.

The brothers debunk the widely-held belief of ESP between twins and feeling pain simultaneously when the one twin suffered.

"I felt no pain when Jeffrey had his cardiac surgery," Elliot said.

"And he did not share my wedding night!" Jeffrey added, with a smile.

World News in Brief

Auschwitz survivor now world's oldest man at 112

JERUSALEM - Following the death of 112-year-old Japanese man Yasutaro Koide, the designation of being the world's oldest man likely belongs to Israeli Holocaust survivor Yisrael Kristal, who is also 112. Kristal received the title from the US-based Gerontology Research Group, pending the validation of its finding via official documentation.

In 1903, Kristal was born to a religiously observant Jewish family in a region that is today part of Poland. He lost his wife and two children during the Holocaust. After surviving the Auschwitz death camp and other concentration camps, he remarried, made aliyah, and had more children.

"The Holocaust did not affect his beliefs," Kristal's daughter, Shula Kuperstoch, told the Jerusalem Post. "He believes he was saved because that's what G-d wanted. He is not an angry person... he believes everything has a reason in the world." (JNS.org)

Uber not welcome in Israel - transport minister

JERUSALEM - Israeli Transportation Minister Yisrael Katz wants to prevent alternative taxi company Uber from entering the Israeli market, even as he faces opposition from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.

Katz said on Monday at a Knesset Finance Committee meeting that if Israel changed regulations that currently blocked Uber from legally operating in Israel, the government would owe Israel's taxi drivers more than \$2 billion in compensation, the Times of Israel reported.

At a Cabinet meeting on Sunday, Netanyahu implied that Katz opposed Uber because he was being pressured by taxi drivers, according to the Times of Israel.

Speaking to the Finance Committee on Monday, Katz defended taxi drivers, saying they are a "working community that's dealing with reality and my job is to enable them to cope on equal terms". (JTA)

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

Social media guru Avi Mayer to visit SA

Starting next week, we will have the privilege of hosting Avi Mayer, international spokesman for the Jewish Agency and world-renowned social media expert, for a week-long visit.

Together with other Jewish organisations, we have been involved in putting together his programme while in the country. Mr Mayer has been particularly successful in using social media as a positive, constructive platform through which to disseminate views and information on Israel and international Jewry.

His insights will certainly be of value to us, given how much of our attention today is bound up with using, monitoring and, where necessary, taking action concerning what appears in social media.



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

Tel Aviv University, which she headed for a long time. We regularly provide the Institute with reports and statistics on anti-Semitism in South Africa and in turn have found the comprehensive database it provides to be invaluable in assessing and evaluating the situation in South Africa, compared with those of other countries.

South African Jewry – 175 years

As featured in last week's SA Jewish Report issue, preparations are underway to commemorate 175 years of organised Jewish life in South Africa. The Cape Council of the SAJBD is already very active in this regard, given that Cape Town is the 'Mother community' of South African Jewry.

A series of events - co-ordinated to engage the community, civil society and government - will take place throughout the year. Their purpose, as the Cape Council's monthly bulletin to the community expresses it, will be to "showcase the Jewish community's great commitment to and involvement in the development of South Africa", while also using the occasion as an opportunity to "address how our community, together with fellow citizens, will continue to add to the growth of a free, democratic and prosperous South Africa".

Among the events being planned are a lecture series highlighting Jewish contributions to various aspects of South African life and an exhibition on the community's history at the South African Jewish Museum. While the events will largely be Cape Town-based, we hope in the course of the year to ensure that this milestone is appropriately celebrated throughout the country as well.

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

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

A column of the Chevrah Kadisha

Our dynamic triangle: Care, Cost, Fundraising

Everything in the world is interconnected. Cause and effect are everywhere and we can often see the ripple effect of even the smallest decisions we make and actions we take. Many people believe that even our thoughts have their own energy and effect - but that may be beyond the scope of this article.

It's understandable then, that the structure of the Chevrah Kadisha changes in response to each fluctuation in our society and economy. And when I say "fluctuation" I mean in the broadest sense. Everything that happens to anyone in our community has a direct effect on the Chev - on what, and on how much, it must provide.

Although that may sound like our response is always reactive, the truth is that we are also tuned into the community to sense changing trends and new approaches in all fields. In that way we can anticipate needs and adopt a proactive stance by sharing preventive and educational information, like marriage enrichment, abuse awareness and much more.

While it's way more complex than this, I like to draw the Chev's dynamic triangle with "Care" on the left angle, "Cost" on the right, "Fundraising" along the bottom, and in the centre, "Community needs".



ChevrahKadisha
AT THE HEART OF COMMUNITY WELFARE
Partners in Chesed
Michael Sieff
Group CEO

By way of illustration: Years ago when the devastating tsunami occurred in South East Asia, it was holiday season in South Africa and the beautiful beaches in Thailand had attracted hundreds of Jewish visitors from here.

Death and trauma are not strangers to the Chev, but the immensity and horror of that natural disaster presented some uncharted territory and new challenges. At the time, four Jewish South Africans died tragically and a great many more were injured and traumatised by the floods.

There were multiple areas in which the Chev was called upon to provide comfort and help: trauma response; repatriation of bodies for burial; and, in the weeks that followed, trauma and bereavement counselling.

Responding to the community's needs in those circumstances was demanding, but of course essential. Thank G-d situations of such magnitude are rare, but there are frequently conditions in which needs accelerate, like in response to the current drought and rand-dollar exchange rate, the full impact of which is yet to be felt.

What the Chev never wants to do is to lower standards of care. Therefore, when the centre of our triangle, community needs, is stimulated, our costs skyrocket and our fundraising department is under pressure to access additional donor funds.

Everything is amplified because everything is connected.

May our partnership continue to thrive. Feedback@jhbchev.co.za

This column is paid for by the Chevrah Kadisha

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Goodman's 50th - with works by William Kentridge

OWN CORRESPONDENT

This year the Goodman Gallery celebrates its 50th anniversary - five decades of shaping contemporary art and working with artists who challenge unequal power structures and affect social change.

Through global dialogue and exchange, Goodman Gallery has placed common histories at its core and has been instrumental in shifting perspectives through contemporary art. The year begins with an exhibition of significant recent work by William Kentridge, who has been represented by Goodman Gallery since 1989.

Kentridge's most recent film, "Notes Towards a Model Opera", is the centre-piece of his first retrospective in China - which premiered at the Ullens Centre for Contemporary Art in Beijing and is currently showing at the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul - and this month it will be exhibited at Goodman Gallery Johannesburg.

As a titular piece, Notes Towards a Model Opera is rooted in extensive research into the intellectual, political, and social history of modern China, from Lu Xun to revolutionary theatre, which Kentridge undertook in preparation for the Asian retrospective. This three-channel projection explores dynamics of cultural diffusion and metamorphosis through the formal prism of the eight model operas of the Cultural Revolution.

The work considers these didactic ballets both as a cultural phenomenon unto itself and as part of a history of dance that spans continents and centuries. Starting from its origins in Paris, Kentridge playfully overlays the aesthetic and ideological transformations of ballet as it is transplanted across the globe, an arch of influence juxtaposing contexts as disparate as Moscow, Shanghai, and the artist's native Johannesburg.

In addition to the main film installation, the exhibition includes a series of ink drawings on found paper and cut-out silhouettes in steel.

As well as portraits of key figures within both the Cultural Revolution in China and the struggle for independence on the African continent, the drawings merge seemingly benign images of flowers with text sourced from



Dada on Chinese Map.

Chinese parables, Tang Dynasty poetry and Maoist slogans.

These drawings emerged out of the research Kentridge conducted for the China retrospective and they recall and reference the contradictions within periods of revolutionary fervour, touching on both the radical socialist and revolutionary government of the Paris Commune in 1871 and Mao Zedong's turbulent three decades in power, during which he embraced and redefined political sloganeering, often alluding to Chinese verse.

The exhibition as a whole is informed by a transcript of Kentridge's lecture "Peripheral Thinking", originally delivered at the opening of his retrospective in Beijing in June last year.

About the process he says: "China certainly hovers over us like a huge zeppelin. The scale of it, the scale of its hunger for resources, the scale of everything. China in Africa today, a sense of a series of questions rather than any answers. Are we here the tethered goat waiting for the tiger? Easy pickings?"

"The project began with an invitation to show a selection of my work in a museum in Beijing. Curiosity, flattery are part of the equation. What is it in my work that would interest people there? I wanted both to find a link to it and to make a work that would refer to this question.

"Drawing, film, performance, posters, sculptures - all was possible, everything was open.

The project began as many do with a distracted reading and looking. I read the books of Lu Xun, a modernist whose sensibility placed him with Japanese writer Aktagawa and European writers in the tradition of the absurd modern like Gogol and Kafka. Books of revolutionary posters.

"Here the language pulled me in, the exhortations, the instructions, the clamour of incredible and unstoppable enthusiasm."

Kentridge's recent achievements have included premieres of major new projects: More Sweetly Play the Dance; his production of Alban Berg's opera Lulu at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, as well as being included in the 14th Istanbul Biennale with his film work O Sentimental Machine.

In addition, he has enjoyed retrospectives in Asia and in Latin America with the exhibition Fortuna having a multi-city tour over three-and-a-half years, concluding recently at Museo Amparo in Mexico.

The year 2015 saw the South African premiere of his acclaimed installation Refusal of Time at the Johannesburg Art Gallery and the same installation at the Iziko South African National Gallery. In November 2015, Kentridge was named as part of the "Power 100" people working in the art world today by the influential Art Review magazine.

• *Notes Towards a Model Opera will be at the Goodman Gallery till February 12.*

World News in Brief

Abbas 'shirks responsibility for stalled peace talks'

JERUSALEM - The Israeli Prime Minister's Office last week Thursday denied claims by Palestinian Authority (PA) President Mahmoud Abbas that the Palestinian leader had recently sought a meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, but had been ignored.

"This is another attempt by Abu Mazen (Abbas) to shirk responsibility for the stalled peace negotiations. In Davos as well, Netanyahu has urged Abu Mazen to resume talks without preconditions," one official said, Israel Hayom reported.

Last week Thursday, Netanyahu, who was participating in the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland, publicly invited Abbas to return to the negotiating table.

The Prime Minister's Office issued the clarification after a media conference held by Abbas in Ramallah last week Thursday morning. Abbas had told Israeli reporters that his office had recently reached out to the Prime Minister's Office to set up a meeting with Netanyahu and reignite the Israeli-Palestinian peace process. Abbas claimed the overture had been ignored. (JNS.org)

PA TV said to inspire killer of Israeli mother of 6

JERUSALEM - The Palestinian teenager suspected of murdering Israeli mother of six Dafna Meir at her home in Otniel last week, was incited to carry out the attack by Palestinian Authority television broadcasts depicting Israel as "killing Palestinian youth", the Shin Bet security agency said.

The Shin Bet believes that on the day before the attack, the 15-year-old suspect was exposed to televised and online content that prompted him to "want to murder Jews".

Authorities believe he chose Otniel because of its proximity to his village, Amra, and targeted Meir because her house was the first one he saw when he entered the community. The teen was arrested by IDF special forces two days after the attack. (JNS.org)

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Ari will be in South Africa from **7-15 February**, please email him to make an appointment.



JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

Young girl invents system to produce oxygen in space

TEL AVIV - A 13-year-old Israeli girl has invented a system for the production of oxygen in space, the Hebrew youth paper Ma'ariv L'Noar reported, along with an interview with the budding teen scientist from Ramat Hasharon.

The winner of the "Satellite is Born" award from the Israel Space Agency, Roni Oron developed BioSat "to solve a problem for astronauts trying to prove that life on Mars is possible".

Oron says her satellite is "built like a large bubble on one side of which there is a mirror and the other is transparent, enabling the penetration of sunlight. In the middle there is a capsule, which will be made of a membrane through which air can pass but water cannot. Inside of it there will be water and algae, and outside there will be carbon dioxide.

"Through a process of photosynthesis, the satellite will produce oxygen. There will be additional mirrors inside the satellite that will enable sunlight to reach the capsule, but not by direct radiation, which would harm the algae."

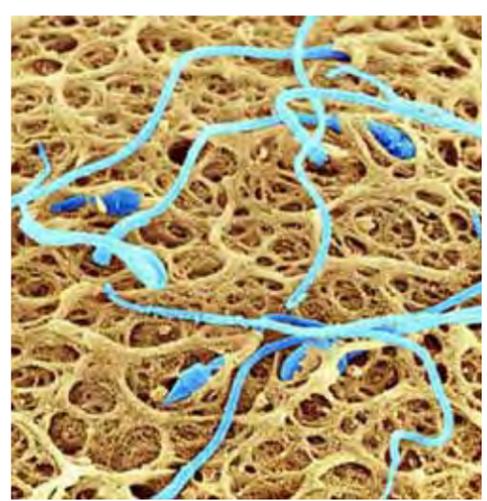
Oron told Ma'ariv L'Noar about her parents' support. "My father, an orthopaedist, was very happy when I began my research," she said. "From my mother I learned the wisdom of looking at life creatively." - Algemeiner

Over 40 per cent EU citizens anti-Semitic

JERUSALEM -More than 40 per cent of European Union citizens hold anti-Semitic views and agree with the claim that Israel is committing genocide against the Palestinians and behaving like the Nazis, according to data presented during last Sunday morning's weekly Israeli Cabinet meeting, the Hebrew news site nrg reported.

Ahead of International Holocaust Remembrance Day (which took place on January 27), Israeli Diaspora Affairs Minister Naftali Bennett, who also serves as minister of education, presented the country's 2015 anti-Semitism report, pointing to the trends emerging in Europe as a result of the spread of radical Islam; the refugee and migrant crisis; the anti-Israel boycott, divestment and sanctions movement (BDS); and the rise of the extreme right.

The "new anti-Semitism" explored in the report deals mainly with Jew-hatred among Muslims, rather than fringe parties in various European countries. The report states that "anti-Israel protests and accusations that Israel is a blood-thirsty, illegitimate country, creates a slippery slope that eventually leads to the assault on Jews identified with Israel". - Algemeiner



Microscopic technology finds best sperm cells

TEL AVIV - For women struggling to conceive or maintain full-term pregnancies, the low success rates of assisted reproductive technology (ART) treatments (through which eggs are fertilised with sperm in a lab and then returned to a woman's uterus) - only 20-30 per cent, according to the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - are not always hopeful.

Now, a team of Tel Aviv University scientists say they've come up with a game-changing microscopic technology that will change the field of reproductive assistance.

Dr Natan Shaked, of the Department of Biomedical Engineering at TAU's Faculty of Engineering, believes his new imaging process, which harnesses phase imaging methods to record the passage of light through a sperm sample to assess its thickness, can quantify the quality of sperm used in ART, leading to more successful ART treatments.

To date, there are two effective ART methods available: in vitro fertilisation (IVF), in which

a woman is treated with drugs that cause her ovaries to produce multiple eggs; and intracytoplasmic sperm injection (ICSI), in which a single sperm is injected into a mature egg and then transferred to a woman's uterus.

Shaked's method is applicable to both methods, but is especially helpful in ICSI.

"Until now, clinicians have chosen the 'best' sperm according to their speed, but speed is not necessarily an indicator of DNA quality," says Shaked. "Some of the best sperm candidates are slow or even immobile because their tails have malfunctioned.

"If we can better determine the full structure and composition of the sperm, the success rate of ART treatments will be higher. Success means more births without congenital defects. In cases where sample staining is impossible - such as in vitro fertilisation and ICSI - our device provides a promising new direction."

Shaked's new device, a small "black box" attached to an existing microscope, is smaller, cost-effective, and easier to align than conventional interferometric imaging methods. It is joined to new automated software that produces a thickness map of the sample and other physical parameters to evaluate the sperm's viability in real time

and, at a cost of only \$1 000, can be used in any doctor's rooms already outfitted with a conventional microscope. - Israel 21c

London Mayor Johnson's initiative against anti-Semitism

LONDON - Mayor Boris Johnson has backed an initiative calling on municipal leaders to tackle anti-Semitism.

Johnson signed up to Mayors United Against Anti-Semitism, a scheme launched by Jewish advocacy organisation AJC.

He said: "However it manifests itself, anti-Semitism is totally unacceptable and can never be justified. In London we have a large and visible Jewish population, which makes a massive contribution to our city's success, and as mayor I take this issue very seriously.

"It is important for mayors to stand shoulder to shoulder to condemn and challenge anti-Semitism, which, like all forms of religious or racial discrimination, has no place in our cities." - Jewish Chronicle

British physicians attempting to revoke membership of IMA

JERUSALEM - A group of 71 British physicians have approached the World Medical Association (WMA) in a bid to revoke the membership of the Israeli Medical Association. This was revealed in a meeting of the Knesset Science and Technology Committee dealing with boycotts against Israeli academic institutions.

Chairman of the Committee of University Heads, Technion President Prof Peretz Lavie, said during the debate: "We have no complaints against the world academic leadership.

"Our problem is with the campuses. In the beginning this took place in marginal campuses, but very quickly it spread to leading campuses in the US. The students who are being exposed to these activities will be the next generation's senators, and this is where the long-term danger is hidden.

"The American Anthropological Association wrote in its report that we are apartheid universities. The same association decided to conduct a referendum, should they boycott Israeli academia.

"We must reach every single one of the 12 000 association members. This is a symptom, and if we don't act the fire will spread. There must be one authority in charge of this issue."

Prof. Zvi Ziegler, professor emeritus at the Technion and chairman of Israel's Inter-University Senate, said: "There exists a hidden boycott among academic staff members. It's still below the surface, because they still think it's illegitimate. We don't manage to stop the flood with our measly resources. I am very concerned about the future." - Behind The News

CORPORATE PARTNERS ENJOY NEW BOSTON CITY CAMPUS & BUSINESS COLLEGE

Boston City Campus & Business College opened a brand new campus. Situated in the thriving commercial hub of Rosebank, this new campus offers Boston's full range of study options, but is a rather unique campus in the Boston stable.

"As we are literally situated in the centre of Rosebank, our student body is marvellously diverse," explains Eli Katz, the principal of Boston Rosebank. Eli has spent the last 3 years being mentored by his father Ari, the group founder of Boston, and explains, "On the one hand, we have matriculants registering to study at tertiary level for the first time, while on the other hand we have working people who come to further their education so they can climb the ladder at work. Most of these people work at nearby legal firms and banks, as well as at retailers and other businesses in the Rosebank and Hyde Park Malls."

What is pulling in the student numbers, besides the central location, is the attraction of the high tech teaching methodology, personal attention and success rates of the students. Katz points out "the fact that Boston has been rated 1st in Africa and 3rd globally by the prestigious international testing organisation, Comptia International, is testament to the quality of tuition, the effectiveness of the teaching methodology and that the courseware is practical and relevant to the world of work." As a result staff at various corporates have already aligned themselves with Boston in Rosebank, including, Rosebank Mall, Hyde Park Mall, Planet Fitness, Dream Nails, PPlacecol group, Holiday Inn as well as various financial institutions in the Rosebank node. Staff from these corporates are registering for degree, diploma and certificate qualifications, accredited by the Council for Higher Education in various disciplines such as Information Technology, Human Resources, Management, Marketing, Business and Financial Management.

"While matriculants tend to enrol for full time studies, those working opt mostly for part-time studies," says Katz. "This where our location is a bonus - part-time students can pop in at lunchtime to sit through their modules or directly after work, before heading home for the day. It is convenient and students can save loads of time and money that they would otherwise spend on travelling to and fro to attend classes."

The day at Boston Rosebank is split into four distinctive study sessions (morning, lunchtime, afternoon and part-time) to accommodate the various students. To ensure that tutors and lecturers can give personal attention and to encourage healthy interaction among students, the sessions have a limited number of students.

"We're very flexible in accommodating students, but we impose this limitation on students per session to ensure quality education," Katz comments. "Boston has been providing top-notch education since 1991 and in our experience, ensuring personal attention works best."

The tried-and-tested Boston approach of blended learning also applies at Boston Rosebank: students first work through computerised lectures at their own pace and then interact with the tutors and lecturers at their disposal in the lecture room. "We have recruited some of the best minds and skills in Gauteng to join our staff," adds Katz, who himself lectured accounts at Boston Pretoria for a while and is currently completing his MSc (MOTI - Management of Technology and Innovation). In their "time-off", students can chill in the student lounge or work on assignments in the study centre - both of which are high-tech and fit in with the luxurious surroundings.

For more information, phone (010) 040 5252.
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KDVP Schools plant trees for Tu B'Shvat



Photo: Nirvana Rogers
Pupils at King David Victory Park Pre-Primary, Jamie Smith; Jacob Waner; and Ava Rozen proudly displaying their new plants.

NIRVANA ROGERS

While the current water shortage crisis weighs heavily on all of us in the country, there is also a responsibility on everyone to protect and nurture our environment. Tu B'Shvat, the Jewish festival celebrating the new year of the trees, was held on Monday.

The children from King David Victory Park Pre-Primary, as well as the primary and high schools, were involved in planting seedlings at the schools and were given lessons on the importance of protecting the environment.

Tu B'Shvat very much on point at KDVP

SHMUELI GISCHEN AND JESSICA VINOKUR, DIJE KDVP

The Torah teaches that G-d created the world so that we could experience goodness in general and His goodness in particular. Experiencing His goodness - bonding with G-d - is the greatest joy imaginable, and Kabbalists have taught that celebrating Tu B'Shvat, particularly through a seder, enhances this experience.

This is what the Division of Informal Jewish Educa-

tion team at King David Victory Park accomplished as Tu B'Shvat sederim were experienced throughout the day.

Each grade was given the opportunity to embrace the day fully as they planted trees in their school's garden, followed by a seder conducted by DIJE members and volunteers. This was a first for the High School. Both learners and teachers enjoyed the delicious "fruits of the land" but also understood their significance to Tu B'Shvat. A truly wonderful day was experienced by all.



Photo: Yael Gordon
Back: Brett Slotsky; Gadiel Shepherd; Nicole Kochukov; Tova Swartz; Andrew Baker (headmaster); Michael Rootshtain; and Hanna Ben-Moshe. Front: Jason Mervis; Daniel Fleishman; Mikaila Sher; Rebecca van der Walt; and Jamie Gordon.

Tu B'Shvat at Minnie Bersohn Nursery School

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The children at Minnie Bersohn Nursery School in Johannesburg celebrated Tu B'Shvat with great excitement.

Rabbi David Shaw came to plant a pomegranate tree with the children. The tree was donated by Joan Lurie in honour of her grandchildren and her birthday.

The children learnt all about the pomegranate and they were fascinated to know that the pomegranate has 613 pips which is the same number of mitzvot in the Torah. The children then got an opportunity to plant their own flowers in the school garden.



Pictured at the planting of a pomegranate tree are Kaelee Hope; Siara Glasser; Rabbi David Shaw; Joan Lurie; Mandi Defries (principal); Tyler Maron and Judah Katz.

Rabbi Tzvi Chaimovitz joins Yeshiva College

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Rabbi Tzvi Chaimovitz (pictured) has been appointed menahel of Yeshiva College, heading up the Boys' High School Limudei Kodesh. Rabbi Chaimovitz is pictured putting up a mezuzah on one of the doors of Yeshiva College's new staffroom.

"Rav Tzvi brings a real fresh, dynamic, structured and passionate approach to education, coupled with his signature integrity and drive to make a profound difference to Am Yisrael," the school said in announcing the appointment. "We are very pleased to welcome Rav Tzvi into this crucial role."

Rabbi Chaimovitz is the rabbi of West Street Shul and in his short time at Yeshiva College has made an incredible contribution to the lives of the school's learners, the school said. He grew up in Brooklyn, New York and he and his family spent a number of years in Jerusalem.

He has grown through exposure to many prominent rabbonim and renowned Torah institutions and has done numerous courses and gained much experience in rabbanut and chinuch.



A fig tree at KD Linksfield to commemorate Tu B'Shvat

CARLY RACHELSON, GRADE 8

To celebrate Tu B'Shvat, the grade 8s at King David High School Linksfield planted a tree in the grade 8 area of the school. Principal Lorraine Srage (pictured) did the actual planting while Rebbetzen Aliza Sofer talked to the children about the significance of this day - One year for the trees.

This ceremony was very special in many ways. The tree itself is a fig tree which is one of the seven species of the Land of Israel and is truly symbolic. Also, the grade 8s coming into high school will, for the next five years, be able to watch the tree grow as they themselves grow. And finally, they will always be able to return and see it after finishing school.



Hirsch Lyons learners combine outreach with Tu B'Shvat

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Hirsch Lyons Boys' High School celebrated Tu B'Shvat, the new year of the trees, with an outreach activity for an informal settlement in Johannesburg. The Boys' High School learners planted trees and ran fun activities for the children living there. A big thank you to Toni Roomer and Rabbi Meir Zaiden for organising the outing. Pictured are Hirsch Lyons learners in uniform and green tops celebrating Tu B'Shvat by planting saplings at an informal settlement in the Denver industrial area.



Sydenham's tots learn all about Tu B'Shvat

SUE BENJAMIN

Young children make sense of their world by hearing, tasting, seeing, touching and smelling. What better way for Sydenham Pre-Primary School tots to celebrate Tu B'Shvat than by planting herbs in the school's sensory garden: parsley, sage, rosemary and thyme, to name but a few which were planted.

The children used all their senses to explore the different herbs and are going to be encouraged to take care of them.

Everyone dressed in green and Rabbi Yossy Goldman talked to them about the five special fruits that are eaten on the day.

Songs relating to the chag were sung and the children had a picnic in the garden.



Photo: Ingrid Seerf

TA girls celebrate Tu B'Shvat in style

SUZANNE BELLING

Tu B'Shvat - the new year of the trees - was celebrated by the pupils of Torah Academy Girls' High School on Monday.

"We humans can celebrate along with the trees," the girls were told.

"After all, the Torah says: 'Man is a tree of the field.' We are nurtured by deep roots as far back as Abraham and Sarah; we reach upwards to the heaven while standing firmly on the ground; and when we do this right, we produce fruits that benefit the world - namely our good deeds."

Using fruits from the trees, dried fruits, nuts and other ingredients, teachers judged the girls on finding the "Master Chef" who produced the best display. The girls from grade 10 and matric tied for first place.

Pictured are matrics, back: Tali Gien; Kayla Drutman; Sheina Kinn; Yocheved Cohen; and Toubia Nikfard. Seated: Hadassah Carlebach; Penina Berkowitz; Shani Shaw; and Ashira Aronson.



Sandton Sinai Primary don green for Tu B'Shvat



AMY JAFFE

The learners at Sandton Sinai Primary School were beaming in green as they planted flower seedlings in honour of Tu B'Shvat. This annual tradition adds an array of colours to the beautiful gardens.

Pictured are the tots thoroughly enjoying the new year of the trees.

World News in Brief

US envoy Shapiro regrets timing of comments criticising Israel

JERUSALEM - US Ambassador to Israel Daniel Shapiro told Army Radio on Monday that he regrets the timing of controversial remarks he made last week that were critical of Israeli policies in Judea and Samaria.

Shapiro had said at a conference in Tel Aviv on January 18: "Too many attacks on Palestinians lack a vigorous investigation or response by Israeli authorities; too much vigilantism goes unchecked; and at times there seem to be two standards of adherence to the rule of law: one for Israelis and another for Palestinians."

Earlier on the same day, Israeli mother of six Dafna Meir was laid to rest in Jerusalem after being stabbed to death by a Palestinian terrorist in Otniel, while a pregnant Israeli woman, Michal Froman, was wounded in a stabbing in Tekoa.

In Monday's Army Radio interview, Shapiro said: "I understand the timing [of the comments] was not the

best. I started with a condemnation of the attacks in Otniel and Tekoa. There were just one or two lines that caused disagreement, but if this, G-d forbid, hurt the Meir family or anyone else mourning Dafna's death, may her memory be a blessing, then of course I regret it." (JNS.org)

Netanyahu orders ramped-up security for settlements

JERUSALEM - Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is demanding that the army create a "detailed and encompassing programme" to protect West Bank settlements from terrorist attacks. Netanyahu's order, which the Times of Israel reported on Monday, came in response to three terror attacks occurring inside settlements within eight days. Earlier on Monday, two women were injured, one critically, when two Palestinians attacked a supermarket in the Beit Horon settlement northwest of Jerusalem. A security guard fatally shot both attackers. (JTA)

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CHURCH DOCUMENTS SHOW AFFINITY CATHOLICS HAVE FOR JEWS

I'm a Roman Catholic Christian living in Yeoville. I look forward every week to my copy of the SA Jewish Report which I receive from a friend.

I have always felt a nearness, great love and affinity for my Jewish brothers and sisters. It is a particular joy for me that Pope Francis has as great a love and closeness for and towards the Jewish people, as I have.

While still the Archbishop of Buenos Aires, his very closest friend was a Jewish rabbi whom he invited to join him on his recent visit to the Holy Land and the prayer service later, arranged in the Vatican Gardens. Pope Francis makes a special point of mentioning the Jewish people positively and with obvious love, wherever possible. For this we thank him.

I was educated at Christian Brothers College, a Catholic school in Boksburg. There was one Jewish pupil in my class of 40, Theo Kopenhager, who today is a specialist gynaecologist. At the end of each year, when we had our religious instruction test, the Brothers would contact Theo's rabbi to ask him to set the questions especially for Theo from the Hebrew Scriptures.

The documents of The Second Vatican Council (1963-65) of the Catholic Church, state inter alia, that to the Jews "belong the sonship, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship and the promises; to them belong the patriarchs, and of their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ" (Rom 9:4-5), for the gifts and the call of G-d are irrevocable (Rom 11:29).

"The Church cannot forget that she received the revelation of the Hebrew Scriptures through the People, with whom G-d in his inexpressible mercy deigned to establish the Ancient Covenant. Indeed, the Catholic Church believes that Christ has reconciled Jew and Gentile, making them both one.

"The Church recalls too that from the Jewish People sprang the Virgin Mary, the apostles, her foundation stones and pillars, as well as most of the early disciples who proclaimed the Christian Gospel to the world.

"The Church awaits the day known to G-d alone when all peoples will address the L-rd with a single voice and serve him with one accord" (Soph 3:9 cf Is 66:23, Ps 65:4).

"Since the spiritual patrimony common to Christians and Jews is so great, this Sacred Synod wishes to recommend that mutual understanding and respect which is the fruit of brotherly dialogues.

"The Church repudiates all persecutions against any man, and she deplores the hatred, persecutions and displays of anti-Semitism directed against the Jewish People at any time and from any source." (Nostro Aetate: 4 Vatican Council II).

With sincere brotherly love and esteem

John Lee
Yeoville, Johannesburg

The letter has been slightly shortened. – Editor

DO YOU RECOGNISE THOSE IN THE PHOTOGRAPH?

The photograph of the Hashomer Hadati machaneh was taken many, many years ago. Charles Loeb (now living in London) submitted the photograph and would like to know where those in the photograph are today. He writes: "If you recognise anyone in the photo, please e-mail me at charlesandrina@yahoo.co.uk with contact details or comments.

"PS: the late Tony Factor (Downtown Discount Furnishers) is sitting on the grass in the front row."

**World News in Brief****IDF official: Hamas is ready for next war**

JERUSALEM - A senior Israel Defence Forces Gaza Division official has said that the Palestinian terror group Hamas has completely rearmed itself and is prepared for the next war with Israel.

The terror group "has rebuilt the tunnels, its rocket systems, intelligence collection, reconnaissance, and it is essentially prepared for war", said the senior IDF official, Yedioth Ahronoth reported.

The source, however, conceded that Hamas currently does not yet desire a conflict with Israel and is instead focused on defeating rival Salafi terror groups in Gaza, who seek to overthrow Hamas's rule there.

Hamas is also believed to have completely rebuilt its network of terror tunnels running underneath the border between southern Israel and Gaza. (JNS.org)

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

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

Guidelines for letters

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

A RABBI IS A RABBI IS A RABBI...

Your recent issue carried an article and a subsequent letter posing the question whether a Reform rabbi should be addressed as rabbi.

The original letter makes pleasant and encouraging reading. However, if the writer had chosen to call both the Orthodox and Progressive rabbis “ministers”, it would have been most unusual to most of us, depending on context, but it would have been most unlikely that there would have been an issue.

In this case the Orthodox Chief Rabbi (referred to) is respectfully addressed as “Chief Rabbi Casper” and the Reform rabbi is addressed in the same sentence and context as the “Chief Minister of the Reform movement”.

I do recall Rabbi Hoffman z”l telling me how some correspondence from Orthodox sources refused to address him as anything other than “Mr”. Many of our rabbis will tell you of a similar situation.

I’m sure that you will therefore conclude that this is a sensitive matter. We don’t have “Chief Minister” and our rabbis are rabbis and are addressed as such. As Jews all our learned ordained rabbinic leaders are referred to as rabbi regardless whether they are Orthodox or Progressive.

The World Union for Progressive Judaism is the umbrella body that covers the Liberal, the Reconstructionist and the Reform movements. The Progressive movement worldwide has about 1 300 synagogues in over 50 countries, each with a long history and indigenous language, so it could be arrogant to say that we have never used the word “Minister”. So, before shooting from the hip, I did some research.

The term “minister” in the Jewish context, could refer to a religious leader who is perhaps knowledgeable and skilled in leading religious services; it is not used to refer to an ordained

rabbi, but one who leads a congregation as spiritual leader.

“Ministers”, if the word is used, might have referred to quite capable people, but they will not have received smicha from a rabbinical seminary.

The title “reverend” has often been an essential requirement in some countries and was common in the smaller towns in South Africa where there were no rabbis and where a formally recognised religious leader needs to be licensed to perform formal communal functions such as weddings and funerals.

Rabbi Joel Oseran, vice-chairman of the World Union, states that gone are the days when Reform rabbis, as well as Reform Jews in general, are excluded from Klal Yisrael and their rightful place within the Jewish community.

Religious pluralism means that we can respect one another even as we may disagree with one another. Today, all over the world, including in Israel, our Reform rabbis are addressed as rabbis not ministers. I am reminded that both President Reuven Rivlin and Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu refer to our Reform rabbis as rabbis.

In the context in the article, it is not difficult to find clear prejudice which stirs up some hurtful issues, mainly from the past.

We expect our ordained rabbis to be addressed as rabbi and avoiding giving these learned ladies and gentlemen the recognition that they deserve, is hurtful to all members of the Progressive movement and to many of our friends in the Orthodox movement.

Alvin Kushner
National Chairman
South African Union for Progressive Judaism

HAS ANYONE GOT NEWS ON THE ‘FEISTJES’?

Gertrud Hollederer (68) lives in the small town of Crainfeld, 75 km from Frankfurt in Germany. She would like to get in touch with members of the family Stein (known as “Feistjes”) who left Crainfeld where they had a small business, in October 1933 for Frankfurt to flee violent anti-Semitism. From there they left for Johannesburg. Hollederer writes: “When exactly they arrived in Johannesburg I do not know. They kept contact with their Christian neighbours for a very long time. Their names were: Jakob Stein (father) born October 2, 1871; Julius Stein (son) born June 12, 1908; and Fritz Stein, (son).”

Hollederer’s contact details are: Frankfurter Straße 3, D-36355 Grebenhain-Crainfeld.

US AMBASSADOR SHAPIRO DOESN’T ACT AS FRIEND

Daniel Shapiro, the US ambassador to Israel, has been vocally critical towards Israel and said that “too much Israeli vigilantism in the West Bank goes unchecked”. This despite the murder of 25 innocent Israeli citizens by Palestinians.

He said that at times it appeared that Israel had a standard of adherence to a law for Jews and one for Palestinians.

In light of the present “intifada” by Palestinians, this comment by Shapiro is unfortunate and also unhelpful. He goes on to say that the “United States is concerned and perplexed” by recent Israeli government actions on settlements “which raise questions about Israeli intentions”.

Perhaps the US is perplexed, but not as perplexed as Israelis who continue to read daily about former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s e-mails from a former US ambassador to Israel - Thomas Pickering’s - suggestions to Clinton to incite Palestinians to “non violent” demonstrations against Israel, in order to re-energise stalled peace talks.

The US State Department has also apparently expressed concern over Israel’s controversial NGO bill, requiring registration of foreign-funded NGOs. However, this legislation must be seen in the light of Israel protecting itself against nefarious schemes and ideas from “deeply concerned” organisations.

Pickering, in one of the e-mails to Clinton,

wrote: “Most of all, the United States in my view, cannot be seen to have stimulated, encouraged or be the power behind it (the protests) for reasons you will understand better than anyone. I believe third parties and a number of NGOs on both sides would help.”

Pickering is used to siding with Israel’s (and America’s) enemies. In 2009 he held a secret meeting with two senior Hamas officials in Switzerland.

It seems clear that Shapiro is talking from the Obama administration’s standpoint and not as a Jew. American-Israeli relations have been frosty since Barack Obama took office and are likely to continue until he leaves the scene. With so much underhanded activity from Israel’s so-called “allies”, is it any wonder that Vladimir Putin has extended a helping hand to Europe’s Jews?

And consider the fact that Netanyahu recently met with Putin in Moscow to discuss Russia’s intended foray into the Syrian turmoil, and cooperation with regard to Israeli air space.

The Israeli Prime Minister’s Office was correct in condemning Shapiro’s remarks. In fact, such statements from an ambassador of any country, would be deemed disgraceful, let alone from one of Israel’s allies.

Nathan Cheiman
Northcliff, Johannesburg

ZUMA’S MANTRA: HEAR NO TRUTH, SEE NO TRUTH...

President Jacob Zuma discourages travel to Israel for ANC members and representatives, because he is absolutely petrified that, should they experience the Israeli culture and economy, they would return with glowing reports extolling a flourishing and vibrant nation, people enjoying one of the highest living standards in this miserable world of ours.

Obviously the average Israeli doesn’t enjoy the level of existence that President Zuma himself does. But it far surpasses the humdrum lives of a large portion of the South African population to whom Zuma would dish out a free meal and a T-shirt immediately prior to the elections!

Jack Miller
Johannesburg

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Déjà vu – a stark anti-Semitic recurrence for SA Jewry

DAVID SAKS

Timeous is a word that inevitably comes to mind regarding Milton Shain's *A Perfect Storm: Antisemitism in South Africa 1930-1948*. At a time when an acrimonious debate over how to deal with racist hate speech continues to rage, it is instructive to look back on a time when our own community, unprotected from legislation prohibiting defamation on the basis of race, religion or other such grounds, was for years subjected to vitriolic public attacks over the length and breadth of the country.

Speaking at the Cape Town launch of the book last November, Tony Leon caused ructions by drawing parallels between the South Africa of that time and the situation today, commenting that: "The presumed power and wealth of the 1930s Jewish community finds contemporary expression in the attacks, on all fronts these days, on the white community as a whole in South Africa."

Back then, Jews were scapegoated as the cause of the country's economic plight, accused of excessive control of the economy and depicted as being an alien, unassimilable element operating as the agents of sinister foreign powers.

This, increasingly, is how whites are being spoken of today. Even today's controversial "black empowerment" questions had their counterpart back in the 1930s, when none other than Hendrik Verwoerd argued for quotas limiting the number of Jews in the professions and the economy and thereby facilitated the socio-economic upliftment of the Afrikaner.

A common theme of anti-Semitic discourse was that Jews exercised too much economic power, to the detriment of the rest of the white population.

Shain records how pro-Nazi agitators like Louis Weichardt, citing "outrageously inflated statistics", would tell audiences that 90 per cent of licensed hotels, 100 per cent of wholesale butcheries, the stock exchange, theatres and bioscopes, 70 per cent of retailers and 90 per cent of the press, were in Jewish hands.

As was intended, such "revelations" did much to stir up feelings of resentment and distrust against Jews, and to at least some degree, we are seeing similarly emotive, and factually questionable claims being made about whites today.

One of those consistently guilty of indulging in such rhetoric is ANC Western Cape leader Marius Fransman who, for example, told the Cape Town Press Club in October 2013 that whites (and particularly Jews) constituted 98 per cent of land owners and property owners.

If parallels can indeed be drawn between pre-war South Africa and our own times, it is vital not to overstate them. Regarding anti-Jewish prejudice, this can only in part

be attributed to scapegoating and fears of competition at a time of widespread economic hardship.

As Shain makes clear, the Jew-baiting rhetoric of the time "resonated precisely because a widely shared negative Jewish stereotype had been firmly laid in the preceding decades".

By contrast, anti-white feeling among blacks, rather than being driven by crude race or religious-based prejudices, are rooted in very real and bitter historical experiences, even if this often manifests in questionable generalisations, over-statements or factual inaccuracies.

Shain meticulously details how after 1930, anti-Semitism shifted from being a fringe phenomenon located essentially in the realm of ideas to the centre of public discourse. It was a major issue, for example, in the 1938 general election, when it was used by the opposition Gesuiwerde Nasionale Party as a stick with which to beat the government.

In addition to resulting in legislation radically cutting down on German-Jewish immigration (the

Aliens Act of 1937), this involved debating whether to place restrictions on the economic and professional activities of Jews already in the country.

Far from being limited to the Afrikaner community, moreover, such sentiments were common currency among English speakers, including not a few prominent intellectuals.

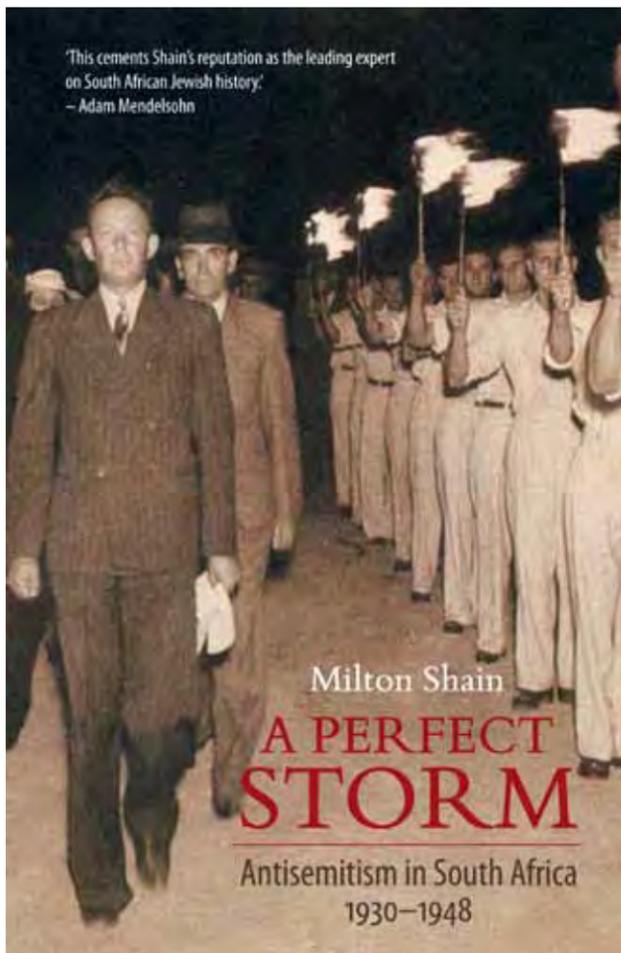
Nevertheless, it was within Afrikaner nationalist circles that anti-Semitism was especially pronounced. This can be attributed both to the prevalence of severe poverty ("Poor Whiteism") in this sector and to the rapid burgeoning of an assertive, exclusive form of Afrikaner nationalism which mirrored in many ways the basic tenets of German National Socialism.

Intense anti-British sentiment, dating back to the defeat and absorption into the Empire of the former Boer republics following the Anglo-Boer War, was a major driving force within Afrikaner nationalism, leading many to identify with Britain's enemies.

A similar reason might be advanced to explain why, in its foreign policy, today's ANC-led government consistently adopts positions antithetical to the Western democracies.

Much more, of course, could be said concerning these and other compelling questions raised by *A Perfect Storm*. Suffice it to say that Shain has produced a great deal more than an account of what was experienced by a minority community within the white population during the pre-war and wartime years.

As readers will discover, it provides trenchant new insights into political developments during a watershed period in South African history as well as providing much food for thought with regard to where the country finds itself today.



Leon and Juliette Reich make aliyah



Leon and Juliette Reich are handed a gift by past national SA Zionist Federation President Avrom Krengel and Chairman Ben Swartz, both of whom had spoken of their high esteem for this famed Zionist fighter.

ANT KATZ

It was with mixed feelings that the Zionist community bade farewell to Leon and Juliette Reich on Tuesday evening, January 26, as the couple are fulfilling their long held dream of following their four children and nine grandchildren who are today all Israelis.

A life-long Zionist, Leon, 82, was toasted farewell by both the SA Zionist Federation President Avrom Krengel and Chairman Ben Swartz (which he has served for many years) and LikudSA and Betar (both of which he re-established in SA).

There were dozens of guests and while there was a sadness at losing two such Zionist fighters in South Africa, everyone was overjoyed that Leon and Juliette Reich were able to fulfil their ambition to spend their last years in Israel.

World News in Brief

New details uncovered on Nazi medical experiments

JERUSALEM - Newly discovered testimony provides brutal new details about Nazi medical experiments on concentration camp prisoners, including reportedly locking one man inside a glass cage with thousands of mosquitoes in order to infect him with malaria.

An archivist recently stumbled upon an undated, three-page deposition submitted by a Jewish survivor of several concentration camps while cataloguing Jewish Agency files at the Central Zionist Archive, Haaretz reported on Monday.

The deposition, believed to have been recorded in the early post-war period, is the testimony of Heinz Reimer, a Jewish survivor of Dachau, Mauthausen and other camps. Reimer tells of undergoing Nazi hypothermia experiments at Dachau in which he and other prisoners were on multiple occasions immersed in ice water and then in boiling water.

His testimony is part of an application Reimer submitted requesting financial assistance from the Jewish Agency.

Reimer reported that along with other tortures he endured in the camps, he was purposely infected with various diseases by Nazi doctors in order to test cures for them.

Reimer names several Nazi doctors who experimented on him and told of being infected with malaria and syphilis so the doctors could then test various cures on him.

Rather than infecting him with an injection, the doctors, Reimer testified according to Haaretz, "locked me up every day for two hours in a glass cage and I had to endure thousands of Anopheles mosquitoes on my body.

"Once I could no longer stand the pain I made an attempt of resistance against the mosquitoes while I assumed that this would not be seen. But the doctor, if you want to call this beast like this, saw my attempt of resistance in the mirror. For this I received seven days of strict detention. But before I was led away to the detention, I received 25 lashes with a leather bullwhip." (JTA)

Parole violation fears keep Jonathan Pollard mum

NEW YORK - Jonathan Pollard delivered only brief remarks at what was to have been his first speech after 30 years in prison as a spy for Israel

Aaron Troodler, a spokesman for Justice for Pollard, said Pollard briefly introduced himself on Monday at the meeting at the offices of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, and then asked his wife, Esther, to read from his notes.

News of the meeting, which was off the record, had been leaked to the Forward. Troodler said in his release that Pollard's lawyers feared that anything more expansive than a few remarks could be used against the former spy and send him back to jail. Pollard remains on parole.

The conditions for Pollard's five-year parole include wearing an electronic ankle bracelet with GPS tracking and surveillance of his and any employer's computers.

He also is confined to his New York home between 19:00 and 07:00 – a condition, Pollard's attorneys have argued in requesting an easing of the restrictions, that has interfered with his ability to observe the Jewish Sabbath and certain holidays, and could possibly preclude him from holding a job. (JTA)

HRW report ramps up pressure on settlement activity

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

The collapse of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process a year ago has led to an accelerating war of words over Israeli settlements, with Israel accusing its growing chorus of foreign critics of prejudging the final terms of a peace deal at best - and anti-Semitism at worst.

The battle has heated up with the release of a report by Human Rights Watch last week arguing that doing business with West Bank settlements reinforces Israel's presence there and contributes to human rights abuses.

The report came a day after the European Union, which in November announced new guidelines to label Israeli exports produced in the settlements, declared that any agreement with Israel "must unequivocally and explicitly indicate their inapplicability to the territories occupied by Israel in 1967".

And the US ambassador to Israel, Daniel Shapiro, while not going nearly as far, decried Israel's seizure of West Bank lands last week and what he described as a two-tiered justice system.

"Too many attacks on Palestinians lack a vigorous investigation or response by Israeli authorities; too much vigilantism goes unchecked; and at times there seem to be two standards of adherence to the rule of law: one for Israelis and another for Palestinians," Shapiro said in a speech on January that otherwise extolled U.S.-Israel closeness.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was infuriated by the remarks, calling them "unacceptable and incorrect". But his wider strategy against the settlement criticism has been to lump such efforts together with the wider Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, or BDS, and liken them to the pre-Holocaust boycotts of Jewish businesses in Europe.

"Because bureaucracies or set patterns entrench themselves, and then we get the absurdity of the EU in Brussels, from European soil, labelling the products of Israeli citizens, of Jews," Netanyahu told foreign reporters last week. "And the last time that was done on the soil of Europe was over 70 years ago."

Israel has largely been able to stave off questions about the status of the West Bank as long as it seemed substantially engaged in the peace process. But developments this week seem to confirm warnings last year that the collapse of the peace process, followed by statements from Netanyahu on the eve of his re-election in March that appeared to reject the possibility of Palestinian statehood, would lead the US and Europe to focus anew on the settlements, if only as a means of keeping open the option for a two-state solution.

The Human Rights Watch report argues plainly that trading with the settlements entrenches Israel in the West Bank and makes businesses a partner in the oppression of the Palestinians. It recommends that businesses "avoid financing, administering or otherwise supporting settlements or settlement-related activities and infrastructure, such as through contracting to purchase settlement-manufactured goods or agricultural produce, to ensure the businesses are not indirectly contributing to and benefiting from such activities."

The report cites an example of how bringing attention to Israeli practices in the West



SodaStream's West Bank factory was relocated to the Negev following international criticism.

Bank can impede them. Human Rights Watch contacted a factory in a West Bank settlement that its researchers found provided linens for an American retailer and was underpaying its Palestinian labourers.

"During the conversations that followed, the factory agreed to close its operations in Barkan and locate to new facilities inside Israel," the group reported, without naming the parties.

"We are not looking for problems," Human Rights Watch quoted the factory's co-owner as telling the group. "It seems it really bothers people that we're there, so we'll leave."

Centrist and right-wing pro-Israel groups insist that such efforts to target settlements are aimed at setting the terms of a final peace deal. In December, the American Israel Public Affairs Committee posted a lengthy analysis of the European Union's decision on settlement labelling.

"The EU's action - taken outside the context of peace negotiations - is designed to impose Brussels' vision of Israel's future borders," said AIPAC, a prominent pro-Israel lobby. "These commercial attacks against Israel increase the prospect of isolating the Jewish State, while strengthening its most vitriolic critics and slowing the pursuit of peace."

The fight over settlements is also playing out in Congress and state houses. AIPAC has garnered bipartisan support through Congressional statements rejecting attempts to single out settlements. And several state-level legislative moves to target BDS explicitly, include attempts to distinguish the settlements.

Pro-Israel groups on the left argue that such efforts are mutually self-defeating. Attempts to isolate settlements are a good thing, they say, as they help neutralise the wider BDS movement.

"A more accurate labelling system, as Israel never annexed the West Bank, will allow European residents to make purchases according to ideological considerations," Americans for Peace Now said at the time of the European labelling decision. "This system will help curb efforts to boycott Israel entirely, such as those advocated by the BDS movement." (JTA)



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Splendid piece of in-your-face Jewish theatre

REVIEWED BY PETER FELDMAN

Show: *Bad Jews* (Auto & General Theatre on the Square, Nelson Mandela Square, Sandton)
Cast: Oli Booth, Lara Lipschitz, Glen Biderman-Pam, Ashley Carine de Lange
Director: Greg Karvellas
Until: February 14

Few plays with strong Jewish themes reach the South African stage and that's why it's a revelation when an acutely crafted, biting funny diatribe such as "Bad Jews" arrives in Johannesburg (after a highly successful Cape Town run).

The reason it's such a revelation is because Joshua Harmon's meticulously constructed work cleverly exposes the complexities of being Jewish. What is also apparent in the context of the play is the manner in which a modern playwright approaches the legacy of the Holocaust.

While most dramatists may show a degree of reverence and respect, Harmon tackles the subject with irreverence, using cutting wit as a telling device.

The play centres on four sharply defined characters: Jonah (Oli Booth), a placid and inarticulate individual; his rude and dominating elder brother, Liam (Glen Biderman-Pam); a religious cousin Daphna (Lara Lipschitz); and a sweet, non-



Lara Lipschitz as the religious cousin Daphna.

Jewish girlfriend Melody (Ashley Carine de Lange).

They have come together in a cramped New York studio apartment after the funeral of their grandfather, Poppy. From the beginning, the devotedly Jewish, self-opinionated, motor-mouth Daphna makes it clear that she wants the gold "Chai" which her beloved grandfather had with him during his incarceration in Hitler's concentration camp.

This medallion, bearing the Hebrew word for "life", symbolised his boyhood suffering and survival against overwhelming odds.

Liam, her obstinate secular cousin, however, harbours other ideas. Sitting in the middle is Jonah who states emphatically that he doesn't want to be involved in the war of words which is about to be unleashed. Liam is completely detached from his cultural traditions and intends marrying Melody, his

non-Jewish girlfriend who has unwittingly been plunged headlong into a family feud.

Volatile emotions erupt and family secrets are revealed as a lava of words engulf everybody, venom spewing from Daphna's mouth and unleashing her true feelings. It's a penetrating and absorbing slice of theatre where the constant wrangling is stoked by incendiary questions about Jewish faith, identity and the Holocaust.

It's a revelation when an acutely crafted, biting funny diatribe such as "Bad Jews" arrives in Johannesburg (after a highly successful Cape Town run).

All three of these characters clearly idolised Poppy, who served as a major role model, but their actions manifest in different ways and are based on their attitudes to their Jewish background.

The South African cast, airing their American accents, emerges as a pretty tight unit and under the deft direction of Greg Karvellas, the play is beautifully nuanced and paced. Each of the actors manages to command the stage, inhabiting their characters with depth and understanding.

The renowned Saul Radomsky has conceived an impressive set and the lighting design by Daniel Galloway and Benjamin du Plessis, captures the mood.

Although "Bad Jews" is a thought-provoking, in-your-face experience that will generate debate and focus on what it means to be Jewish, it deals with universal themes of family values and traditions and can be enjoyed by all.

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Books, books and more books...

STEVEN KRAWITZ

From the hundreds of titles coming out in the next few months, these are the ones I am most looking forward to.

FEBRUARY RELEASES:

Art lovers are in for a treat with Observer art critic Laura Cumming's "The Vanishing Man", which blends her love for Velázquez with a true detective story about his one missing masterpiece.

In "Always Hungry", David Ludwig, world expert on obesity, tells us about the science behind a good diet and permanent weight loss.

Marceline Loridan-Ivens, Holocaust survivor, writes a letter to her father who did not survive, in "But You Did Not Come Back", while 33-year CIA veteran and master spy writer, Jason Matthews, delivers a thriller that the CIA had to vet prior to publication in "Palace of Treason".

Virginia Macgregor delivers domestic drama in "The Astonishing Return of Norah Wells" and Janice Lee takes us to Hong Kong for "The Expatriates", a novel about forgiveness and self discovery. Read "The Good Liar" by Nicholas Searle for the twist at the end.

"The Widow" by Fiona Barton, bound to be a bestseller, asks what goes on in the mind of the wife of a man accused of child abuse.

MARCH RELEASES:

"Anatomy of a Soldier" is a powerful war story told by the objects used by the soldiers and civilians; it has instant classic written all over.

In "Hunter Killer", Col Mark McCurdy lifts the lid off the US military's remotely piloted

aircraft programme in this techno-thriller/war memoir.

Ingrid Carlberg's authoritative biography "Raoul Wallenberg" investigates all aspects of the life of the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Hungarian Jews during the Second World War.

"The Forgetting Time" is Sharon Guskin's thought provoking novel about a child who tells his mom he wants to go home, spanning lives and death. Padraic O'Donnell tells a magical story with a cast of unforgettable characters in his debut novel, "The Maker of Swans".

"The Supernotes Affair" is the truth about counterfeit money schemes and governments' attempts to kill the spy who uncovered the story, by agent Kasper, the secret agent who was meant to die but survived.

"When Breath Becomes Air" is the heartbreaking account written by Paul Kalanithi of a talented neurosurgeon who was

diagnosed with terminal lung cancer just after he finished his training.

Sunil Yapa joins the ranks of top literary authors with his debut "Your Heart is a Muscle the Size of a Fist", interweaving multiple storylines into the maelstrom of protests in Seattle in 1999.

In "West of Eden", Hollywood princess Jean Stein gives us the oral history of the golden-age of the movies we have all been waiting for, and in "The North Water", Jan McGuire places a murderer on a ship bound for the whale hunting waters of the Arctic ocean and allows the tension and suspense to work themselves out.

Romantic comedy shines in Meg Rosoff's "Jonathan Unleashed".



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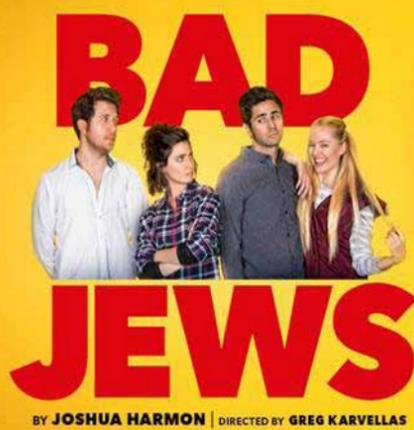
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What's On

Today, Friday (January 29)

- Shalom Masorti Seniors Club meets on the last Friday of each month. Tea is served and there's a selection of board games to play, cards and bridge. David Grinker will speak on "Who is a Jew". Enquiries: Esther (011) 485-5619 Monday, Wednesday, Thursday or Friday mornings.
- The Annual Jazz and Blues weekend starts today and is on until Sunday 31. It is an annual Jazz event with local and international Jazz musicians. Venue: Theatre On The Square, Sandton. Enquiries: (011) 883-8606.

Sunday (January 31)

- Second Innings hosts Michael Waters, MP and DA deputy chief on "The Local Government Elections - 2016". Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R30 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Linda Fleishman (011) 532-9701.

Monday (February 1)

- UJW's Adult Education Division hosts David Shapiro, financial consultant to

SASFIN group and financial journalist on "Is it Lights Out for South Africa?"
Venue: I Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

Tuesday (February 2)

- Morris Rutstein - SAZF Evening Hebrew Ulpan course commences today and terminates on May 18. Times: Every Tuesday evening from 19:00 - 21:15. Venue: Yeshiva College (in the classrooms). Registration: Monday, February 1 at 18:30 at same venue. Enquiries: SAZF (011) 645-2531 (office hours).

Wednesday (February 3)

- UJW's Adult Education Division hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer Wits dept of English, on: "The Written Word Leaps off the Page". Venue: I Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW Office (011) 648-1053.

Thursday (February 4)

- JJAC invites Jewish singles between 27 - 49 to meet in Braamfontein at 19:00. Plenty places to eat and drink and a great range of art galleries to pop into.

Community

Top performers bring much joy to Sandringham residents



Lorraine Gaylard and Emmanuel Castis last week Thursday entertained residents of Sandringham Gardens. With them (centre) is events co-ordinator Cynthia Ambrose, who organised the concert.

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Sandringham Gardens residents were treated to a fabulous afternoon of song and nostalgia when well-known performers, Emmanuel Castis and Lorraine Gaylard, entertained them last week Thursday. The visit was organised by events co-ordinator Cynthia Ambrose.

The two entertainers sang separately for the most part and focused on classical hits that brought memories flooding back and even had some residents dancing in the aisles! Among others, Frank Sinatra and Barbra Streisand numbers were featured and especially delightful was the Jersey Boys hit, "You're just too good to be true..."

SA-born Castis now lives in California. This man with the magnificent voice won the celebrity reality competition Strictly Come Dancing in 2008 and is also known

for his acting roles in many stage and television productions.

He was a lead in the Broadway hit musical Jersey Boys which also took South Africa by storm and was part of the Isidingo inner circle for which he won a 2004 People Magazine Crystal Award for Best Actor in a soapie series.

Gaylard is a classical songstress and concert performer who developed a love for singing at a very young age and soon realised she could bring pleasure to others through her music. She spends a great deal of time and energy expanding her repertoire which she takes to various venues in the Gauteng area.

Both performers were warm, generous and charming in their approach to the audience, giving of their talents wholeheartedly. The afternoon will long be remembered for the joy it brought to a very appreciative audience.

Tennis bosses must act on match fixing allegations

JACK MILNER

Match fixing in tennis has been put under the spotlight again with the BBC making claims of massive corruption in the sport. The ATP Tour was quick to deny the claims, stating that these were all old, isolated cases and they are satisfied the sport is clean.

The statement, however, sounded too much like Richard Nixon's famous "I am not a crook" comment.

How prevalent match fixing is, is difficult to determine, but it's like the elephant in the room: there is match fixing in the sport.

Obviously when Roger Federer plays Novak Djokovic in an Australian Open semifinal, neither player will rush off to the on-site betting office to have a punt on his opponent.

In an article in the Sunday Times this past weekend, the blame for this scourge is placed squarely on the tennis organisers as the writer of the article quite correctly claims that players ranked outside the top 100 battle to make a living out of the sport.

Many see tennis as this glamorous sport with players jet-setting all over the world, but while the top players are treated like royalty, those who participate in Challengers and satellites, battle.

I remember a journeyman American doubles player who shared a room at a dump in Earl's Court with a South African player during Wimbledon, saying the highlight of the tour for him is arriving at Southfields station with all his gear and everybody gawking at him to see if they could recognise him.

"Don't they realise that if I were anybody, I wouldn't be on the underground and would certainly not have to walk that mile and a bit from the station to the courts? But at least it makes me feel important."

South African Chris Haggard found himself

in Uzbekistan at a tournament and did not have enough money at the end of the tournament to buy a plane ticket out of the country. At the time Israeli Noam Behr, who was a good friend, offered to lend him money so they could fly to Israel and play the tournament in Ramat Hasharon.

It turned out to be a lucky break for Chris as he made the finals of the singles and won the doubles so he could afford to fly on to the next event!

So, these journeymen have to find a way to earn a living and betting often offers a way out.

While the ATP is in denial, at the present Australian Open a mixed doubles game has come into question. An online bookmaker suspended betting on a match in which Lukasz Kubot and Andrea Hlavackova beat David Marrero and Lara Arruabarrena 6-0, 6-3. Most of the money was placed on Spain's Marrero and Arruabarrena to lose.

All four players, when interviewed by the Tennis Integrity Unit, denied the possibility of match-fixing. Marrero blamed a knee injury for the pair's poor display.

Online bookmaker Pinnacle suspended betting before the match and notified local police.

Poland's Kubot, 33, and Czech partner Hlavackova, 29, said they had never been approached by the TIU before and said they were unaware of anything unusual or irregular about the match.

"It's not very comfortable to think we didn't win the match on our terms," said Hlavackova. "We played our best, we did very well and we won."

At the same time there is a court case going on in Australia in which a former rising star of Australian tennis, Nick Lindahl, is accused of attempting to fix a match. At the trial the



Former Australian professional player Nick Lindahl in court this week on charges of bribery and match fixing.

police claimed he had told them: "This is what tennis players do."

Lindahl, 27, allegedly asked a junior player for a bribe to throw a match and then tipped off two men who placed bets on the contest. Police allege Lindahl, who beat Australian tennis number one Bernard Tomic in 2009, told opponent Andrew Corbitt through a third party that he would "tank" their match at the 2013 Toowoomba Futures Six tournament if the junior player paid him.

It is then alleged Lindahl told Ryan Wolfenden and Matthew Fox he was going to lose the match and they went off to bet on Corbitt to win - which Corbitt did 6-2, 6-3 - and they reported the alleged bribe to officials, prompting an investigation by the Tennis Integrity Unit as well as Victorian and NSW police.

Where there's betting, there will be match fixing and at the Australian Open one needs

to walk no further than the betting tent at Melbourne Park to put money down for a bet.

Roger Federer is right when he says it is time to name and shame those players. "I would love to hear names," said Federer. "Then at least it's concrete stuff and you can actually debate it. Was it the player? Was it the support team? Who was it? Was it before? Was it a doubles player, a singles player? Which Slam?"

"It's super serious and it's super important to maintain the integrity of our sport," Federer added. "So how high up does it go? The higher it goes, the more surprised I would be."

Tennis authorities need to ensure that like golf, many more people are able to earn a living from the sport, and not to bury their heads in the sand as they have done over drug cheats.

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News

Jews are targeted for being Jews says Netanyahu

JTA STAFF
JERUSALEM

Jews are again being targeted for being Jews, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu (pictured) said at the start of International Holocaust Memorial Day on January 27.

"Preserving the memory of the Holocaust is more important today than ever, for in this period of resurgent and sometimes violent anti-Semitism, it is commemorations like these that remind us all where the oldest and most enduring hatred can lead," Netanyahu said in a statement released on Tuesday evening.

"Around the world, Jewish communities are increasingly living in fear. We see anti-Semitism directed against individual Jews, and we also see this hatred directed against the collective Jew, against the Jewish state. Israel is targeted with the same slurs and the same libels that were levelled against the Jewish people since time immemorial."

The Israeli prime minister said that "Islamic extremists incorporate the most outrageous anti-Semitism into their murderous doctrines", citing the Gaza Strip, Syria and Iran. He also criticised the "obsession with the Jews - the fixation on the Jewish state."

He said the fact that there is an independent Jewish state means "we can protect ourselves and defend our freedom".

He added: "When a state like Iran and movements like Daesh (Islamic State) and Hamas openly declare their goal of committing another Holocaust, we will not let it happen. But Europe and the rest of the world must stand up together with us. Not for our sake, for theirs." (JTA)

