



Gideon Mendel basks in beautiful Yeoville again. (page 14).

# South african Jewish Report

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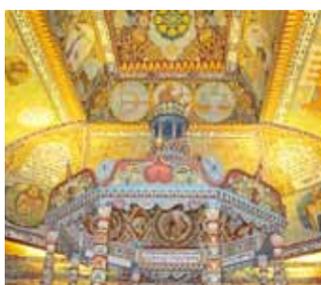


## Havdalah oomph for Shabbos Project

Letting it rip: Israeli-American Modi'im-based Jewish rock band Moshav Band, giving the 5 000 strong audience at the Havdalah Concert on Glenhazel's Yeshiva College field last Saturday night the time of their lives, seeing Shabbat out in the culmination of this year's Shabbos Project. Moshav Band is popularly considered one of the first groups to combine Jewish music with a rock beat, blending elements of alternative rock, folk and funk. Pictured are the band's vocalist Yehuda Solomon and guitarist David Swirsky. The concert also included performances by prominent British singer/songwriter Alex Clare, who became observant in the mid-2000s, a decision which he hasn't allowed to hamper his meteoric rise to popularity. See pages 2, 5, 10, 11, 12.

### A millennium-long Jewish history of Poland

"Our national cultural heritage is impoverished without all that Jewish history in Poland had been bringing for centuries," said retired Polish diplomat Krzysztof Kasprzyk.



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# Keeping it together, all around the world

Thunderstorms in Johannesburg couldn't dampen the spirit of the Johannesburg challah bakers last week Wednesday.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

## OWN CORRESPONDENT

Last weekend's momentous Shabbos Project, truly went viral and united Jewish communities all over the world as one big family with indestructible "family ties". This worthy project, the brainchild of Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein, gave its first steps last year and was warmly embraced by Jews of all stripes.

A foretaste of what was to come from this Jewish unity initiative, was a global "challah bake".

In Johannesburg 5 000 women got together last week Wednesday to make challah "under the stars" and not even inclement weather could dampen their spirits.

What went into this mammoth venture was "a year of anticipation, several months of preparing and planning and two full days of setting up". Set in the open field of the War Memorial in Saxonwold, under decorative lanterns and bunting, the women donned raincoats and gathered their family and friends for a night of blessings and baking.

As the crowds gathered and waited for the rain to subside The Moshav Band performed. Children sat on the floor while women clapped and swayed to the spirit-lifting tunes

Each woman received a pre-packed bowl filled with all the necessary ingredients and

equipment to prepare their challah dough: 1 250 litres of water, 1 ton of sugar, 70 kg of yeast, 10 tons of flour, 1 200 litres of oil, 10 000 eggs and 200 kg of salt.

Thousands of umbrellas decorated the venue, as women gathered to "knead it together", pray together and sing together. Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein welcomed the crowd, followed by a step-by-step challah-making demonstration by Robyn Smookler.

Breindy Klawansky added to the entertainment, followed by a performance by international singer-songwriter Alex Clare, who sang his heart out while participants danced in the rain.

As the night drew to an end and the clouds

blew over, groups of women began to sing and dance under the stars.

In Cape Town 1 200 women attended a similar challah bake event at the Company Gardens the same night and similar events took place across the globe - from Mexico to Melbourne; Miami to Raanana, kicking off the first- ever global Shabbos Project in which over a million Jews from all walks of life were expected to "keep one full Sabbath together".

A snapshot of numbers of women who attended some of the events: Johannesburg: 5 000; Buenos Aires: 5 000; Miami: 4 900; Melbourne: 2 500; Sydney: 2 000; Cape Town: 1 200; and Manhattan: 500.

## Leaving home - for good



Rabbi Yossy Goldman  
Sydenham Highlands  
North Shul

The story is told of an encounter between two famous rabbis of yesteryear - the Vilna Gaon and the Dubner Magid. Apparently, the Magid, or Preacher of Dubna, once visited Vilna and went to pay a courtesy call on the great sage, Rabbi Elijah of Vilna.

The Gaon asked the Dubner Magid to preach to him, as was his specialty. "Give me mussar (words of rebuke). Chastise me," said the Gaon. "G-d forbid that I should have the chutzpah to chastise the great Gaon of Vilna," replied the Magid, quite horrified at the suggestion. "No matter, that is your forte and I want to hear mussar from you," insisted the Gaon.

So the Dubner Magid thought a while and then, most reluctantly, acceded to the wishes of his illustrious host. Said the Magid: "Is it a great achievement to be a Gaon sitting in Vilna in your little secluded kloiz (small study)? Go out

into the world, mix with the people, and then let us see what kind of Gaon you will be."

Indeed, it is much easier to be scholarly and pious in our sequestered ghettos than it is in the outside world, so often oblivious - or even hostile - to Jewish values.

This, in fact, was more or less the test of Abraham in this week's parsha. "Go from your land, from your birthplace, from your father's house to the land I will show you."

And it was there - far from his natural environment and immediate comfort zones - that Abraham accomplished G-d's mission of monotheism. He spread the name of the One G-d to a pagan world and, in the process, his own name and reputation was established for eternity. It was only after leaving home that Abraham became the founding father of the Jewish people.

A hundred years ago, a generation of Yiddish-speaking, observant Jews migrated from Europe. They came to America as the golden land of opportunity, to escape pogroms and persecution. With blood, sweat and tears they transformed themselves from rags to riches and soon came to personify the American dream, an

amazing and inspirational success story.

But the fact is that for the most part, as their businesses succeeded, their religious lives failed. Unquestionably, Judaism took a severe body blow. Most were unable to sustain their Old World values in New World America. The transition from shtetl to suburbia proved too formidable and children and grandchildren grew up blissfully unaware of their own sacred traditions. And the South African Jewish experience wasn't so different.

Today, we see this phenomenon playing out on a lesser scale when families emigrate or move from city to city. Displaced from their spiritual support systems, they flounder. The bulk of their efforts are directed at just resettling and reorganising their lives. Putting religious infrastructures in place, often comes last - at great cost in the long run.

It's like the story of the shadchan, the old-fashioned matchmaker, who suggested a young lady to a fellow and absolutely raved about her. After their first date, the fellow calls up the shadchan and gives him a piece of his mind. "How dare you introduce me to such a girl,

didn't you know she limps?!" Quite unflustered, the shadchan retorts, "But, what's the problem, it's only when she walks!"

It is when we walk away from our comfortable cocoons and spiritual safety nets into the wider society that we may find ourselves limping somewhat, losing our Jewish equilibrium. It is then that our faith, our values, our morals and beliefs are truly challenged.

Please G-d, the children of Abraham will emulate their forefather who left his land and remained strong in faith and family, going on to achieve remarkable success, both spiritually and materially.

### Shabbat Times

October 31 / 7 Cheshvan  
November 1 / 8 Cheshvan  
Parshat Lech Lecha

18:06	18:57	Johannesburg
18:15	19:49	Cape Town
17:59	18:52	Durban
18:15	19:09	Bloemfontein
18:15	19:21	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:09	East London

# Woolies still bears brunt of BDS' anti-Israel action

ANT KATZ

Police were called in by an array of shopping centre managements, security companies and members of the public who felt unsafe or intimidated and, in at least one instance, Woolworths itself last Saturday, as the SA arm of the US NGO, Boycott, Divest & Sanction (Israel) continued on its monthly protests to disrupt trade in 40 random Woolworths stores every month-end Saturday.

Police attended scenes in Benoni on the East Rand, at Woolworths Blue Route Mall in Cape Town where 13 activists were detained, and at Johannesburg's Killarney Mall where, says BDS-SA, "activists had carried out the successful 'die-in' flashmob" - where they simply lay down in all the aisles and obstructed customer movement.

SABC News said that 57 members of BDS and the ANC Youth League were arrested at Killarney, taken to the Hillbrow police station and would appear in court on (this week) Monday. In the end, the demonstrators were released without being charged.

In a media statement on the Killarney incident this week, BDS claimed: "Woolworths has confirmed that it called the police and claims the activists were intimidating shoppers." A spokesman for Woolworths' corporate press office told Jewish Report on Wednesday, however, that this was not true and that the Killarney store had not called in the police.

The group was charged with public disturbance, Constable Thabo Malatji told the media. "They went to Woolies and started disturbing customers inside the shop," he said. ENCA News was at the scene and spoke to some of the many irritated shoppers. "I think it's pathetic - it should be freedom of choice. Each person should be able to decide for themselves if they want to go and shop there or not," one shopper told them.

Meanwhile, BDS-SA was quick to distance itself last Friday after an incident in which members of the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) Western Cape branch placed a pig's head on a Woolworths shelf and an ANC branch tweeted out pictures of the

incident.

"BDS is not involved or implicated at all," BDS' Sumaya Omar told the media. No surprise in that as most BDS directors and senior managers are Muslim and the students had accidentally put the pig's head in the halaal meat counter! Read more about this on [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)

Woolworths has a "Sourcing from the Middle East" statement on their website which, in part, says: "We know that the current conflict in the Middle East has affected many of our customers and our employees. We have heard many views expressed via our social media channels, e-mails and phone calls." The company says that it does not source products from the disputed territories.

"We have no political affiliations and respect our customers' right to make individual purchasing choices, which is why we clearly label every product's country of origin. We fully comply with government guidelines on products from Israel. Less than 0,1 per cent of our food is sourced from Israel," says the company.

BDS-SA's protest organiser for the Killarney incident, Tasneem Essop, contended that the protest was completely peaceful. Videos and pictures in (mainly Israeli) media, however, show it to be anything but peaceful and customers and staff being harassed.

Woolworths officials have expressed puzzlement over being targeted by BDS, asserting that "more than 95 per cent of our food is sourced locally [and] the government continues to authorise trade with Israel".

BDS' Essop said some of those arrested were minors. "It is completely ridiculous and it goes against the values we wish to uphold," she said.

Woolworths, on the other hand, says that when it and its landlords becomes aware that a store is being targeted, it has no choice but to contact the local authorities if it feels "the safety of our customers and employees is threatened". Woolworths said in a statement: "The police monitored the protests (on Saturday) and took action when they felt protesters violated the law. Woolworths did not arrest any protesters, nor lay any charges."



Photo: Geoff Sifrin

A recent BDS flashmob at Woolworths, Rosebank in Johannesburg, is confronted by security as they sing 'Free, Free Palestine'. On the left is BDS-SA national co-ordinator Muhammed Desai.

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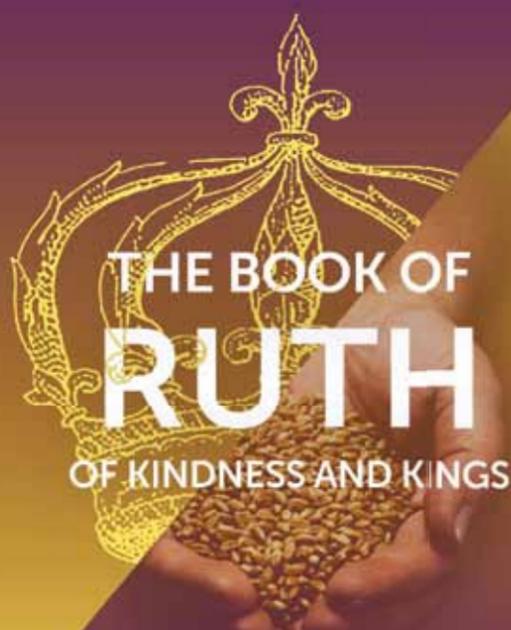


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# Did BDS outfox the DA on Israel trip?

ANT KATZ

Iqbal Jassat (pictured below), a senior executive at the anti-Israeli Media Review Network [MRN], wrote on Politicsweb on Monday that he hoped a fact-finding delegation to the Middle East which was to meet with Hamas, and which included “Barney Pityana, Vusi Pikoli, Mbali Ntuli and others, will not spare the Zionist regime”.

This statement (and the rest of the article) threw the Democratic Alliance (DA) and SA Jewry into disarray.

The reason? Mbali Ntuli (pictured right) is the former head of the DA's youth wing and currently a DA member of the KZN provincial legislature. And the trip had been organised and funded by the Heinrich Böll Foundation [HBF] which is in turn affiliated with Germany's Green Party, which supports BDS and has alleged links with neo-Nazi groups. The co-organisers are the anti-Israeli group Open Shuhada Street [OSS].

The DA constantly walks a fine line on Middle East politics, counting on many Muslim voters and much Jewish votes and funding. They had famously dropped the ball at the Cape Town Conference in December which left them with egg on their faces ahead of the elections early this year.

Seasoned Jewish DA politician Darren Bergman, now a DA MP and deputy shadow minister of Sport and Recreation, has found this issue landing in his lap.

And management was called for. Jassat has really thrown a spanner in the works by making statements like: “SA's increasing interest in Palestine and its woes is beginning to manifest in ways that's likely to attract more antagonism from Israel and her lobbyists.”

“We at MNR ...hope that the quality of their findings will unleash greater momentum within SA to fulfil aspirations and desires of Palestinians to gain freedom, dignity and justice,” he wrote.

“The mission will in all likelihood draw the ire and fire of a deeply wounded pro-Israel lobby in SA.” He also wrote that the delegation “must brace themselves for a barrage of attacks from the Israeli lobby corner... It's ugly and undignified, yet synonymous with the type of ‘hasbarah’ Israel expects its army of defenders to undertake.”

MNR aims to “propel the Zuma administration to review its foreign policy on Israel. For instance the skewed approach of so-called ‘even-handedness’.”

“Our party has a travel policy,” Bergman told Jewish Report, “and questions will be asked about whether our travel policy was followed and should the trip have been undertaken.”

While it would appear that the anti-Israel lobby may have outfoxed their more naïve KZN MPL and her provincial chairman, who appears to have signed off on the trip, there are several issues that the DA will need to investigate.

Mbali returned on Wednesday (when the paper had already gone to print) and was expected to be meet the leadership the next day - and Bergman has promised to get back to Jewish Report Online later this week.

The DA is holding several concurrent discussions, says Bergman on Wednes-



DA delegate to Israel, Mbali Ntuli

day, but nothing can be finalised until they are able to speak to Mbali. He is adamant that, at this stage there are no judges or juries, just questions which are being asked.

One such question must be: Now that the DA knows more about the trip, would the party have sanctioned Mbali's joining the delegation?

Among what the DA needs to establish, are:

- Was the DA's travel policy followed, and, if so, does their policy need to be interrogated?
- If the policy was flouted or ignored, at what point was this error made?
- Does the DA's travel policy include sufficient veracity and do the structures follow it accordingly? and
- Even if the trip was correctly sanctioned, it could still result in another investigation into why the party accepted funding from groups it would normally steer clear of.

Based on the reading of Jassat's statement, Bergman says he suspect that the trip may have been more about politicking than a fact-finding mission alluding to the “timing of these types of press releases whenever the government is under pressure over the Israel question”.

He may be correct as Jassat's article (see full text on [sajr.co.za](http://sajr.co.za)) seems to preempt the outcome of the report, inter alia when he writes of his “hope that Pityana and his colleagues will not spare the Zionist regime”.

Ironically, Israel has come up twice in Parliament this week and it seems increasingly likely that the pro-Palestinian lobby may have outmanoeuvred the DA to use Mbali and the party's name to add credibility to the final report.



## World News in Brief

### Orthodox yeshiva argues for greater privacy in conversions

NEW YORK - In the wake of voyeurism allegations against a prominent Orthodox rabbi, the head of an Orthodox yeshiva for women is arguing that male rabbis needn't be present for a female convert's ritual immersion.

Rabbi Jeffrey Fox, the rosh yeshiva of Yeshivat Maharat in New York, is preparing a teshuva, or Jewish legal opinion, arguing that Jewish law does not require a male rabbi to be present in the room of the ritual bath, or even for the door to be ajar, to witness the immersion of a female convert.

Fox expects to publish the teshuva within the next week through Yeshivat Maharat, which focuses on training and ordaining women as Orthodox clergy.

The issue of privacy for female converts has taken on new urgency in the wake of allegations that Rabbi Barry Freundel, a high-profile Washington DC rabbi, used hidden cameras to watch female conversion candidates as they immersed themselves in the mikvah.

Fox said that he and others at Yeshivat Maharat would also push to give highly trained women a greater role in preparing and shepherding women through the conversion process, rather than leaving such preparation as the sole province of male rabbis.

While steering clear of the specific allegations against Freundel, Fox said that the accusations in the case highlighted the unequal power dynamic between men and women in many areas of Jewish ritual, and potential for abuse raised by those imbalances.

“A power hierarchy exists,” Fox told JTA. “Our goal is to shift that hierarchy.” (JTA)

### Israeli cult leader Goel Ratzon gets jailtime

TEL AVIV - An Israeli polygamist and cult leader convicted on charges including rape, sodomy, indecent assault, and sexual abuse within the family was on Tuesday sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Goel Ratzon, 64, was sentenced in Tel Aviv District Court. The sentencing was delayed by several hours when Ratzon failed to arrive for his court appearance, after what the Israel Prisons Service called a glitch in its computer system which failed to alert them to transport Ratzon from his prison cell in Beersheba to the court.

Ratzon was arrested and indicted nearly five years ago, after a complaint filed by one of his 21 “wives”, with whom he fathered 38 children. He never officially married any of the women that he called his wives.

Ratzon made the women believe he was the saviour of the world and that he had supernatural abilities. He also alienated the women from their families and only allowed them to speak in public areas of their home. He sexually abused his wives as well as his children. (JTA)



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# The Project's nuts and bolts woman



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Some 5 000 women made 'challahs for Africa' last week Wednesday.

**OWN CORRESPONDENT**

Approached last year on a part-time basis to assist with the marketing and education for the Shabbos Project, hosted last week all over the world, Robyn Smookler, formerly of ORT SA who is now a fulltime social activator with the interactive advertising agency Mama, the team supporting the initiative, spoke to the SA Jewish Report.

"I have run many challah bakes in the past," she said. "After last year's unprecedentedly successful South African Shabbos Project, they approached me to come on board fulltime. Initially the appointment was going to be a travelling position, in which I would get to visit many countries all over the world to promote the project, but then the video went viral globally, through social media and my job was done; the project developed its own unstoppable momentum."

The author of several how-to guides offering

PR insights in the running of a Challah Bake, a Havdalah concert and the like, for the communities of shuls and schools, Smookler spoke of some communities who initially baulked at the idea. "They told me we're crazy and that we have no understanding of the politics in their community. I countered by explaining to them that there is no room for politics in the Shabbos Project. It is about unity and breaking down segregation."

Different international communities took ownership of the project by giving it their own name, like Shabbat UK, for instance, but "it was all handled according to the same concept and was commemorated on the same week," adds Smookler.

And what happens next? "Plans are already underway for next year's SinaiIndaba," she said, explaining that Mama is handling all the PR for projects under the mantle of the Chief Rabbi, including the publication Jewish Tradition, Generation Sinai and of course, the Shabbos Project.

**World News in Brief**

## US payments to deported Nazi criminals

WASHINGTON - A news report has revealed that the United States continues to make social security payments to former concentration camp guards and other Nazi collaborators who had been living in the US, but were expelled once their Holocaust history became apparent.

The Associated Press reported that at least four such individuals were still collecting social security payments. They were allegedly offered the continuation of the payments as an incentive to leave the US.

"It's maddening that some of these criminals who were forced out of the US once their past was uncovered were able to collect social security and live free lives," Estee Yaari, a spokesman for Israel's Yad Vashem Holocaust research centre, told the Jerusalem Post. (JNS.org)

## 'Zero tolerance' for continued violence

JERUSALEM - After a Palestinian terrorist slammed his vehicle into pedestrians exiting Jerusalem's light rail, killing a three-month-old girl and a 22-year-old Ecuadorian woman, Jerusalem's police force announced a new policy of "zero tolerance" against any violence.

Last week's vehicle attack was just the latest in a series of violent incidents that have taken place in Jerusalem in recent months. On a regular basis, Israeli pedestrians and drivers in Jerusalem have been assaulted with rocks and Molotov cocktails by Palestinian rioters. Last week Thursday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also ordered the Shin Bet security agency to search for and arrest rioters.

The Jerusalem Police said in a statement that it "will show zero tolerance to violence and stop anyone involved in disturbing the public order". (JNS.org)

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## South African Jewish Report

# The dangerous politics of pigs' heads

Is there a place for decency in politics, or does anything go when you're pushing a political point?

We are living in an era of shocking acts of barbarism by entities such as the Islamic State, including the beheading of innocent journalists which are filmed and proudly broadcast to the whole world. Politics and religion - the most dangerous mix of all - feed off each other to cross every line of basic human decency.

Thankfully, South African society on the whole recoils with revulsion against this kind of thing. We have had our terrible times of human rights abuses, but nothing like we see today. Even during the worst days of apartheid, neither the liberation movements nor the apartheid regime slipped into this kind of mindless religious hatred which allowed bodies to be torn apart with pride.

Today we boast - even if there are incidents which don't quite live up to the ideal - about our basic notions of tolerance, respect and dignity for other peoples' traditions and values.

It was against the background of this ethos that the Congress of South African Students placed a pig's head alongside kosher food in a Woolworths supermarket in Sea Point in Cape Town. They said it was to protest the selling of Israeli products by the store - part of a BDS-driven campaign targeting the company.

South African political and religious leaders should have rushed to condemn this act. It is likely that the majority of them are revolted by it, but they have not combined to denounce it. And not doing so allows it to become a kind of "tolerated" precedent.

Muslims, Jews, Christians and all other religious and cultural groups, have a clear interest in stopping this in its tracks. So do our politicians. We must never go down that slippery slope of desecrating the precious traditions and values of our diverse population groups.

Ironically, the Cosas action ended up also tainting the Muslim halaal food on the shelves, showing how naïve and lacking in clear thinking it was, but also showing the thugishness political passions can generate if not tempered by basic decency.

Muslim religious authorities should take heed. Once you start on that road of mixing religion with politics, you can never predict where it will end up and who will get hurt in the process.

Even BDS-SA felt compelled to distance itself from the pig's-head action, while still continuing its protests against Woolworths. Other South African companies also sell Israeli products, but Woolworths has been selected as the one to make an example of.

The pig's-head saga also poses a challenge to Jewish groups or individuals who disagree with Israeli policies towards Palestinians, such as Jewish Voices for a Just Peace. If they don't condemn it, their claim to represent true Jewish values of compassion and respect begins to sound a little hollow, even for a person who might agree with their stand on Israel.

Placing pigs' heads on kosher shelves is not about Israel. It is blind hatred, implying that every Jew is synonymous with Israeli actions and must be targeted - whether he or she is secular, religious, politically left or right, old or young, and wherever he lives.

A statement issued by Cosas' Western Cape Chairman Siphakamise Ngxowa, declared that Cosas "will not allow people who will not eat pork to pretend that they are eating clean meat, when it is sold by hands dripping with the blood of Palestinian children".

We must never carelessly call anyone anti-Semitic. Doing so has caused immense harm and hurt in the past and has actually devalued the actions of "real" anti-Semites. But what Cosas has done is most definitely that. It must be called by its true name. South African society is the poorer for allowing something like this to happen. Make no mistake: It is not only Jews who should be worried, but all South Africans.

Geoff Sifrin, Editor

# Warsaw museum illuminates its 1000-year Jewish history of Poland



A view of the reconstructed painted ceiling of the wooden synagogue of Gwozdziec, a key installation in the core exhibit of the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews on October 28. Photo: M. Starowiejska, D.Golik/Polin

MICHELE ALPERIN/JNS.ORG

Given that half of the six million Jews who died in the Holocaust came from Poland, many descendants of Polish Jews may be surprised to learn about the current hospitable environment for the Jewish population of their ancestors' country.

Poland experiences far less anti-Semitism than the typical European country and is home to a burgeoning - albeit relatively small - Jewish community (estimates suggest 10 000 - 20 000, but no definitive figures are available). At the same time, young non-Jewish Poles are increasingly curious about Jews and the Jewish religion.

Recognising that this environment was fertile ground for a museum highlighting the history of Polish Jewry, a group of Warsaw-based organisers invited émigré scholars and cultural activists in New York to help promote the museum concept and identify funding sources for what two decades later became the Polin Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which opened its core exhibition on October 28.

The museum, located on the site of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising directly across from the Monument of the Warsaw Ghetto Heroes, has received more than \$60 million from the Municipality of Warsaw and Poland's Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The rest of the needed funding was raised by the Association of the Jewish Historical Institute of Poland, a non-profit that has served as a caretaker of the country's Jewish heritage for more than six decades.

As a civic initiative and state-funded institution, the museum's target audience "is much broader than the Jewish community in Poland", says Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett, programme director of the museum's core exhibition, which traces the 1 000-year history of Jews in Poland.

"It is intended for a much broader public: Poles, including Jews; the world Jewish community; and the European and world public," she says.

From the perspective of Polish-born phi-

lanthropist Tad Taube, honorary consul for the Republic of Poland in San Francisco, the significance of the museum's content goes beyond Polish Jewish history.

"In portraying 1 000 years of Jewish culture and history in Greater Poland, the museum traces the foundations of Judeo-Christian Western culture," he says, referring to the contribution of Polish Jews to the various spectrums of Jewish and Christian faith in addition to significant Jewish cultural influence in philosophy, literature, theatre, music, and the physical sciences. Taube is chairman of Taube Philanthropies and president of the Koret Foundation, which together provided significant funding for the museum.

Retired Polish diplomat Krzysztof (Kris) W Kasprzyk, who has been an enthusiastic promoter of the project for more than two decades, sees the museum as particularly important to the Poland of today.

"Our national cultural heritage is really impoverished without all that Jewish history in Poland had been bringing for centuries," he told JNS.org. "This museum is like bringing fresh water to the desert - maybe that is an overblown metaphor, but we needed this venue badly."

The museum's goal of reaching out to both the Polish Jewish and broader Polish communities, stems from the country's increasingly welcoming environment for Jews. Chief Rabbi Michael Schudrich of Poland suggests two reasons for that trend: first, namely the papacy of Polish-born John Paul II, who he notes was "the first pope to ever say that anti-Semitism is a sin according to the Catholic Church".

The second factor is the fall of Communism, which created not only political and economic change, but also a social upheaval.

"People are willing to be more open to change than under normal circumstances," Schudrich says, adding that younger Poles are curious about Jews, who had been largely absent or secretive about their identity in the country for 50 years after the Holocaust.

The fall of Communism, adds Kasprzyk, gave people the gift of free speech, which has allowed them to explore painful events from the past.

Kirshenblatt-Gimblett suggests that Jews today are not aware that their co-religionists lived in the Polish territory continually for 1 000 years. "It's quite baffling, because they assume it was one unmitigated story of anti-Semitism that led to the Holocaust," she says, explaining that if this was true, Polish Jewry would never have become a centre of the Jewish world and also, for some of its history, the world's largest Jewish community.

"We place the Holocaust within the 1 000-year history of Polish Jews, not a 1 000-year history of anti-Semitism," Kirshenblatt-Gimblett says.

Regarding how the museum presents Poland and Poles, Kirshenblatt-Gimblett says: "We are a history museum and have to be intellectually responsible, so it is not our intent to improve anyone's image and engage in any kind of polemic. We never start from the misconceptions. We think Jews will be surprised, and Poles will be surprised."

"Jews expect that the museum will whitewash Polish history, and Poles expect an unmitigated indictment of Polish history. I think the museum will be a revelation for both."

Emphasising why he believes this museum is as important for young non-Jewish Poles as it is for Jews in Poland and worldwide, Kasprzyk says: "The Jewish world of Poland was exterminated during the Holocaust, and I feel the Jewish world of Poland as the phantom pain - we don't have this limb but it hurts; we feel it; it's still there."

"This museum somehow closes the gap or brings back, very often in virtual form, what we had had for centuries," he says. "It is very important, especially for the younger generation, because the younger generation don't have Jews around. They don't have Jewish colleagues or Jewish friends." (JNS.org)

# Ebola - humanitarian tragedy on monumental scale



The Ebola outbreak in West Africa is the world's deadliest to date.

## PROF BARRY SCHOUB

The extent of media coverage of the current Ebola outbreak in West Africa has surpassed even the swine influenza scare of 2009. Much of it has been alarming and global bodies have responded accordingly. On August 8 the Director-General of the World Health Organisation declared the disease a public health emergency of international concern.

Soon after, the UN Security Council, on reviewing the unprecedented extent of the outbreak, declared it a threat to international peace and security. As at October 22, 10 114 cases and 4 912 deaths (49 per cent) had been recorded in the three affected countries, Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone.

These are only the officially recognised cases; undoubtedly the numbers are significantly higher and certainly the death rate is considerably greater - more likely 70 per cent. The epidemic has shown no signs of abating and with the number of cases doubling every 20 days, it is predicted to reach 20 000 by early next month and the Centre for Disease Control in the US calculated the figure to be 1,4 million by the end of January next year.

There are now grave concerns that the Ebola epidemic could destroy what is left of the civic structures in the three main affected countries. To date 450 healthcare workers have been infected and 244 have died, dramatically depleting the meagre health resources of these poverty stricken countries and further aggravating other formidable health challenges such as malaria and diarrhoeal disease.

Their fragile economies have also been hard-hit by the necessary control measures such as the curtailment of movement affecting, among others, the food supply. Ebola is truly developing into a humanitarian tragedy on a monumental scale. How did this come about and what are the risks of this dreadful epidemic spreading beyond these countries?

Ebola is a new disease, with the first outbreak recognised in 1976 in Sudan and Zaire (now the Democratic Republic of the Congo). The virus was named after the Ebola River in the DRC.

Since then there have been some 25 outbreaks in eastern and central Africa, each involving a few hundred cases, with death rates varying from 25 to 90 per cent. These outbreaks have generally lasted from a few weeks to a few months and have then died out.

The virus is spread by direct contact with infectious body fluids from a patient who has developed symptoms of the disease. There is no evidence of it being spread by any other means, including through the air.

Therefore, by identifying a patient and isolating him/her for 21 days (the upper limit of the incubation period of the infection), as well as identifying contacts and similarly quarantining them for 21 days, the epidemic should be stopped



in its tracks. Indeed this has been the case in the US and Spain, as well as in Senegal and Nigeria, following isolated imported cases.

Paradoxically the infection should be relatively easy to control, but why then has it spiralled out of control in West Africa where it has now lasted close on a year and is still on an upward trajectory?

A number of socio-economic, political and cultural factors are involved. These three countries rank among the poorest in the world - the multi-dimensional poverty index of the UNDP

(United Nations Development Programme) puts Guinea having the highest rate of severe poverty in the world, 68,6 per cent, with Liberia and Sierra Leone not too far behind at 52,8 per cent and 46,4 per cent respectively.

Liberia and Sierra Leone have also just emerged from ruinous civil wars, further aggravating the resistance, distrust and anger of the communities and several healthcare workers have even been murdered. Ingrained cultural practices, especially relating to the preparation of the dead for burial, have promoted the spread of the virus in at least 50 per cent of cases. Health services are pitiful. For example, Liberia has 0,1 doctors, 1,7 nurses and eight hospital beds for every 10 000 people.

Could infection spread beyond the three affected countries? Fifteen countries with land borders have been on high alert for potential importation. But what of more remote spread by air travel, as has occurred in the US, Spain and Nigeria?

Fortunately control is facilitated by the virus only becoming transmissible once symptoms of the disease develop. The risk from a planned medical evacuation under strict bio-containment is extremely remote. However, unplanned entry of infected patients may pose a somewhat higher risk to healthcare workers and other contacts, particularly if Ebola is not suspected.

Ebola is thus not an imminent threat to countries outside of those already affected, other than the isolated imported sporadic cases, but there is no cause for concern that these could develop into significant outbreaks. However, the history of global health will, in the future, record this Ebola outbreak to be one of the humanitarian disasters of this century.

*Barry Schoub FCPATH, FRSSAf, MASSAf was appointed the first professor of virology at Wits in 1978; director of the National Institute for Virology, 1982 and founding executive director of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, 2012, retiring in August 2010.*

*He served on several international advisory committees of WHO including polio, measles, RSV, influenza, the Advisory Committee for Poliomyelitis Eradication [ACPE] and the International Health Regulations [IHR], as well as the Board of the International Association of Public*

*Health Institutes (IANPHI). He was founding chairman of SA's National Advisory Group on Immunization. He has published over 280 scientific publications.*

*Among his awards are: the Order of Mapungubwe from*

*the State President; the Paul Harris Award of Rotary International; the 2012 Jewish Achievers Award; the first Lifetime Achievement Award of the African Society for Laboratory Medicine.*

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# A DIFFERENT BEAT

## The KIA Picanto: Awesomeness amplified

The second-generation KIA Picanto has been turning heads since its debut in 2011 thanks to its award-winning design, high quality interior, frugal and efficient engines and exceptional levels of standard equipment. Born from the simple idea that an affordable car should make no compromises on styling, features or technology, it was instantly recognised as a car that is, quite simply, awesome.

### Hey, good looking!

With a raft of local and international awards under its belt, the Picanto remains one of the most striking and comprehensively equipped vehicles in its segment. With a revised "tiger nose" grille and a restyled front bumper, the Picanto is even sportier and sexier than before with its more expressive, three-dimensional visage. Compact and easy to manoeuvre, it also looks the part thanks to stylish 14-inch wheels on the LX model, and sporty 15-inch alloys on the range-topping 1.2 EX.

### Performance meets efficiency

With two of KIA's renowned Kappa engines doing duty in the all-awesome Picanto, it's a case of performance meeting efficiency: in the 1.0 LX, a three-cylinder, 998 cc engine with 51 kW and 94 Nm of torque ensures low consumption and emissions, while the four-cylinder, 1248 cc engine in the 1.2 EX - with 65 kW and 120 Nm of torque - adds extra punch. Both engines are mated to a five-speed manual transmission, but a four-speed automatic transmission is available as an option.

The Picanto's high quality interior has reflected the range's newfound maturity since its debut in 2011, and this remains one of the Picanto's major selling points.

Major controls are arranged in an attractive, easy to use layout, while the thick rimmed, uniquely designed, two-spoke steering wheel and the signature KIA "three cylinder" instrument cluster continues to reflect the consistency with which KIA's new design philosophy is being used throughout the brand's product line-up.

### Topnotch features and safety

Features available on both models include manual air-conditioning, an underfloor trunk storage box, retractable dual cup holders and sun visors with vanity mirrors, as well as AUX/iPod/USB connections for the radio CD player with MP3 compatibility (the EX also sports steering wheel-mounted controls and hands-free Bluetooth®).

The 1.0 LX and 1.2 EX boasts driver and passenger airbags. ABS anti-lock braking is standard on the 1.2 EX, as is an ESS (Emergency Stop Signal) system. Sensors detect when the driver is braking suddenly and hard, and then flash the brake lights three times to alert motorists behind you that the car is slowing rapidly. All models ship as standard with ISOFIX child seat anchors.

### Value proposition: Amplified

All derivatives of the KIA Picanto ship as standard with a class-leading five-year/150 000 km warranty, while a two-year/45 000 km optional service plan is also available. And with pricing from R133 995, value for money also comes standard.

Whether you're downsizing to a nippy, city runabout or buying your first car, the Picanto is proof that "affordable" can also be "awesome".

For more information, visit [www.kia.co.za](http://www.kia.co.za).

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Ray Levin,  
CEO – KIA Motors South Africa

## Kretzmer's Snapshots - an unputdownable book

OWN CORRESPONDENT

SA-born British journalist Herbert Kretzmer (pictured), has written a most entertaining book, called "Snapshots", on celebrities such as Peter Sellers and Cliff Richard he interviewed over a long and illustrious career.

Snapshots is a selection of his best interviews done with the famous, the admirable, the hateful, the glamorous, from Yul Brunner - The Bald Philosopher, to Cary Grant - Love and Marriage, and Leni Riefenstahl - In Hitler's Shadow, to Frank Sinatra - Ol' Blue Eyes, with a few on the side like boxer Cassius Clay, millionaire miser J Paul Getty and guitarist Tommy Steele.

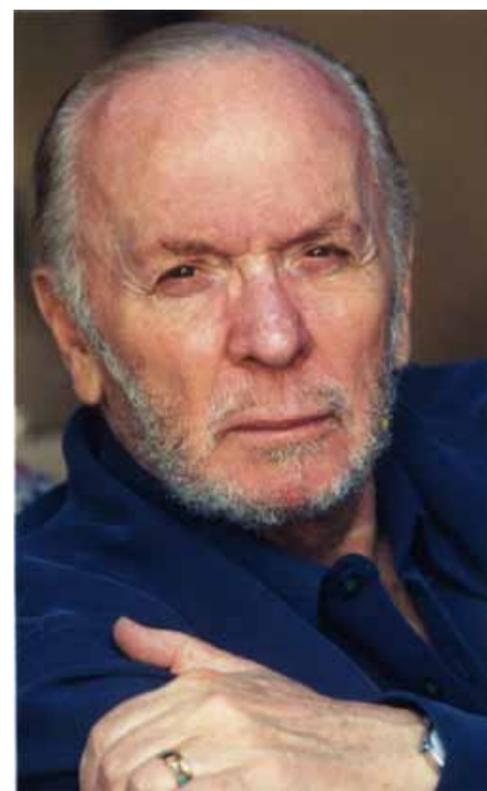
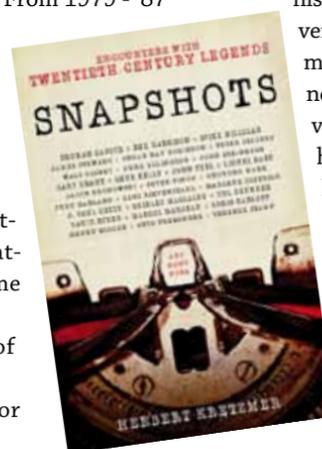
"Kretzmer's style is intimate and straightforward. You get the impression he somehow managed to create an equality between himself and his quarry and there seems to be if not a chumminess, a frankness and honesty about these interviews. Example: 'Spike Milligan enters his Notting Hill office in a chunky green jersey and a foul temper.' And: 'If Cliff Richard wants to do himself a favour he might resolve in future to open his mouth in public only to sing - and not, for Heaven's sake, to talk,'" a reviewer once wrote.

Kretzmer was born in Kroonstad in 1925, where he began a career in journalism writing the commentary for a weekly cinema newsreel. He moved to London in 1954, and has since pursued twin careers as a newspaperman and songwriter.

He joined the London Daily Express in 1960 and later became its senior drama critic, a position he held for 18 years. From 1979 - '87 he wrote television criticisms for the Daily Mail, winning, in this capacity, two national press awards.

As a lyric writer he wrote weekly songs for That Was The Week That Was, the British BBC's groundbreaking satire programme, which became one of the most significant programmes in the history of British broadcasting.

He won the prestigious Ivor Novello Award for the Peter



Sellers-Sophia Loren comedy song Goodness Gracious Me. Other award-winning songs include two written with, and for, Charles Aznavour: Yesterday When I Was Young and the chart-topping She. He wrote the book and lyrics for the West End musical Our Man Crichton, and the lyrics for The Four Musketeers, which ran for over a year at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane.

Herbert Kretzmer is probably best known for his greatly expanded English language version of the Boublil-Schonberg musical Les Miserables. Kretzmer's now iconic lyrics formed the official version of the show, and as such, have been translated into over 22 languages for performances around the world during the last 28 years and counting.

He has been honoured by the French government, being appointed Chevalier of the Order of Arts and Letters. In 2011 he was appointed Officer of the Order of British Empire (OBE).

## Applaud these round ball sponsors

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Last Sunday, a soccer team from the Elias Motsoaledi Informal Settlement in Soweto, proudly donned their new soccer kit, sponsored by Rabbi David Masinter of Chabad and his Miracle Drive. Fansport of Balfour Park sponsored the team with a soccer ball and training bibs.

The sponsorship came about as photojournalist Ilan Ossendryver who takes visitors from around the world on trips to Soweto, came across this struggling soccer team ready to play in one of the

local leagues. But they had no kit and most didn't even have proper soccer boots.

"I immediately approached Rabbi Masinter," says Ilan. "I told him about the team and their needs."

Rabbi Masinter, through Miracle Drive made sure the team got decent soccer kit. As the shirts, pants and socks were handed out, there were emotional expressions of joy, especially when the soccer ball was handed over.

The league, with players between 10 and 21 years of age, plays every Saturday and Sunday.



Rabbi David Masinter and photojournalist Ilan Ossendryver, flank the newly-kitted Grow Your Life soccer team.

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

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

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

### JVJP DOES NOT SEE BROADER ISRAEL/PALESTINE PICTURE

I read, with utter disbelief the letter in last week's Jewish Report by Leonard Shapiro, Rina King and Jessica Sherman, from South African Jewish Voices for a Just Peace. These Jews together with Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu, are totally deluded about the Israel/Gaza conflict.

Firstly, Tutu has generally become the laughing stock of the Christian community and very few people, except the authors of the letter, seem to take him seriously. Even the ANC is not enamoured with him.

Secondly, the Palestinians have no water or electricity because of Hamas' actions. They live in ruins because they lost the war which they started by firing rockets at Israel (which is a sovereign state).

Thirdly, there was no land grab at all. The land belongs to the Jews. The three letter writers can read all about it in the Torah if they so

wish.

I know of no Jews who are troubled by Israel's actions. I can assure you that there are many Jews and Christians deeply concerned about the actions of Hamas, ISIS and radical Islam.

How can JVJP possibly facilitate respectful dialogue when it fails to see the broader picture and fails to condemn the Palestinians killing innocent Jews?

The Palestinian problem is not only a Jewish problem; it has infested the lives of almost the entire world in its quest for radicalism against "infidels".

Shapiro, King and Sherman elude the real truth of the matter and for that reason they will stand alone.

**Nathan Cheiman**  
Northcliff, Johannesburg

### HAS THIS GENERATION OF JEWS GONE COMPLETELY SOFT?

I am writing in response to Dr Mark Potterton's request in last week's edition of Jewish Report, for the community not to be so vicious towards Joshua Broomburg and also in reply to the Chief Rabbinate's call for all of us to be "nice to each other" regarding the words and actions of Joshua and his friends.

I'm sure that the vast majority of Jews in South Africa were not around at the time of the Second World War and the unspeakable horrors of the Holocaust, but let us juxtapose those times to the present situation in our one and only Jewish state, which of course had not yet been reborn at that time.

No one can deny the obvious similarities that exist between then and now. In both cases the Jewish people were confronted by adversaries who were determined to kill as many of them as possible, by whatever means possible. Hitler succeeded in his mission mainly because there was little or no opposition to his barbaric plans.

For certain, Hamas/Palestinians would carry out their own plans of annihilation of Jews with equal fervour if allowed to do so. To a certain extent they too have succeeded in carrying out a minor Shoah in Israel during

the last 20 years, brutally killing and maiming thousands of Jewish men, women and children, in suicide bombings and through other brutal acts.

Imagine if in South Africa - the country fought with the Allies in the war against Germany - some young Jewish schoolboys got together in a public forum, or a whole lot of Jews placed an advert in the local press, strongly condemning the Allied bombing of Dresden which killed hundreds of thousands of "innocent" German civilians.

Imagine in your worst nightmare young Jewish boys anywhere in the world wearing a swastika on their sleeves in solidarity with the Nazis.

Think for a moment: Is there any difference between Hamas/Palestinians now and the Nazis during the Second World War?

I suggest that the younger Jewish generation have gone completely mad and soft in their attitude - worse still, that they are being abetted by many in the academic, commercial, and worst of all, by some in the Orthodox religious community.

**Choni Davidowitz**  
Sandringham, Johannesburg

### Information sought about three South Africans

A lawyer in Israel is urgently looking for information on three South African people, namely Helen Katz and David and Reuven Glass. Unfortunately at this stage it is the only information we have, but we will try and flesh it out in due course. But should you have any information, you may phone Helena Hurwitz on (011) 440-8860.

### Eva Bedell: '...accept this intimation'

In the notice of the unveiling of the tombstone of Eva Bedell in last week's Jewish Report, a gremlin crept in, in the last line. It should read: "Kindly accept this intimation" and not "invitation". We sincerely apologise.

### BDS IS FAILING MISERABLY IN ITS ISRAEL BOYCOTT CAMPAIGN

While the BDS movement has spent millions of dollars to try and influence companies to boycott Israel, below is a short list of international companies that have chosen to ignore the BDS campaign.

As there are well over 250 international companies who have established manufacturing and R&D facilities in Israel, the list below proves a point. The list is from an article by Yoram Ettinger.

Intel, Microsoft, IBM, Apple, Motorola, Computer Associates, Qualcomm, Hewlett Packard, EMC, General Electric, AT&T, Xerox, Dell, AMD, Marvell, Cisco, General Motors, Google, Oracle, PayPal, McAfee, Polycor, Telephonica, Ebay, AOL, Yahoo, San Disk, SAP, Siemens, Philips, Deutsche Telekom, Samsung and the Russian Internet Security giant Kaspersky Labs.

This week, India decided to purchase the Israeli-made anti-tank missile as opposed to the American one.

This is a stunning victory for those who have actively opposed the BDS movement. Well done to them.

**Sonny Myerson**  
Oranjezicht, Cape Town

More news on our website [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)

### WHAT ABOUT JUSTICE FOR ISRAELIS AS WELL?

I ask Leonard Shapiro, Rina King and Jessica Sherman (regarding their letter in the name of SA Jewish Voices for a Just Peace in last week's Jewish Report), to define exactly what the intent is of "JVJP" as everything they say in their letter points to justice for Palestinians alone with no mention of justice for Israelis.

Listing "actions by Israel and the human rights abuses which are inflicted on Palestinians", as well as "land grabs" (which are not land grabs at all but the development

of block E1, being part of East Jerusalem annexed by Israel after 1967), the threesome deem it unnecessary to even mention any Palestinian excesses that had contributed to the counter-reaction which was conducted by Israel.

What is it about being a liberal left-winger that appears to so seriously affect one's memory and sense of equal justice?

**Victor Gordon**  
Pretoria



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# Shabbos Project takes the global Jewish world by storm in it's second year

ANT KATZ

"It is so exciting what has taken place," Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein said of his Shabbos Project brainchild which truly set the international Jewish world alight.

In eight languages (or nine if you count Ukrainian), in 64 countries and 461 cities around the world, last Shabbos was one the modern Jewish world will never forget.

"I am an optimist by nature", says Chief Rabbi Goldstein talking to Jewish Report about the Shabbos Project on Monday. But, he adds: "Not even the most optimistic predictions among all of us working on the Project came close to what eventually took place!"

At the local level, says Rabbi Goldstein, the team had hoped for the same level of success as last year. "We couldn't have expected that we could have done better", he says of the Project which has only been in its second year. But they did - the SA level of participation and response was even greater, he says, clearly elated.

The sheer number of participants at shuls and communal dinners, and the stories he has since heard from people about what it had meant to them, have overwhelmed him. "I am feeling very grateful and appreciative," he says.

And at the international level, says Rabbi Goldstein, "the response has been astounding, both in how far and how wide it has gone. Stories are coming in from all parts



Photo: The Shabbos Project/Mama Creative

Chief Rabbi Warren Goldstein. His Shabbos Project took the Jewish world by storm.

of the globe, and what is astonishing is not only the depth, but the breadth of participation that we managed to achieve."

The Chief Rabbi won't take the credit, however. He says a large team had worked to make the Shabbos Project the global success it had been. "It really is something astonishing," he concedes, "but it was

the South African Jewish community's response last year that set up the global spread of (The Shabbos Project) for this year". International enquiries started flowing into his office when other Jewish communities read about how SA Jewry had embraced the Project in 2013.

Benita Kursan of Mama Creative is cur-

rently co-ordinating the information from 460 partner cities, so final numbers are as yet hard to come by. But, says Kursan, the six most active participants, not in order, were Johannesburg, Toronto, Melbourne, Miami, Buenos Aires and Israel which celebrated as a country, rather than as

<To page 11>

ADVERTORIAL

## Community Talk

### JJMC presents Concert for Peace

The Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir, through the medium of song, will be presenting their annual concert in the magnificent Sandton Synagogue. Titled "A Concert for Peace", it will take place on Monday, November 10 at 19:30 for 19:45.

The programme includes... Sim Shalom, Shalom al Yisrael, and the overpowering Ose Shalom Bimromav. A first in the country will be an acknowledgement of the men and women of the Israel Defence Forces, Mi Shebeirach composed by a young musician Dovi Zeltser.

Complementing this composition are favourites



including Avinu Malkeinu, V'hi-sh'amda, V' Zakeini and Hamavdil by Rosenblatt.

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

The audience can look forward to a night of uplifting entertainment of Jewish music from past to present.

Hatzolah will be a part beneficiary  
Reserved seats available from Evelyn Green, (011) 728-5570; 082-704-2322 or, Prof Russel Lurie, 082-331-3019; or Sandton Shul Office (011) 883-4210.

### November is KDL Reunion month!

Did you matriculate from KDL in the following years?

- 1974? - November 16 @ 17:30
- 1984? - November 9 @ 17:30
- 1994? - November 30 @ 17:30
- 2004? - November 23 @ 17:30

Then make sure you join the King David Schools' Foundation for your reunion! Reminisce, reconnect and catch up with your old classmates and teachers.

For booking please contact Gila glazerg@kdsf.org or (011) 480-4701.

1974	1984	1994	2004
Sun 16th Nov @ 5.30pm	Sun 9th Nov @ 5.30pm	Sun 30th Nov @ 5.30pm	Sun 23rd Nov @ 5.30pm
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### Great Park's Shabbat dinner under an African sky

As part of The Shabbos Project which took the Jewish world by storm, Great Park Shul in Johannesburg hosted a huge street dinner for over 1 000 seated guests in the middle of the streets which had been closed off for the occasion. One hundred tables in three long stripes, traversed an entire city block. Lorin Boolkin and Janice Blechman of the Great Park community, with help from their families, co-ordinated the event.

Prior to the dinner the shul was packed to capacity when more than 700 congregants gathered for the Friday night service. After the service the community walked one and a half kilometres in a huge expression of Jewish pride, to the streets that had been closed off. The streets were spilling over with men, women and children, marching in celebration of the joy and serenity of Shabbos.



<From page 10>

individual cities. Some of the numbers that have come in are incredible.

"All of these communities on the ground, around the world, did it themselves," says Rabbi Goldstein. "We gave them the methodology. We expanded our Guidebook and Toolkit Book into eight languages and we produced all of the marketing material here," he explains.

The languages were English, French, Hebrew Portuguese, Spanish, Russian, Italian and German. The material was produced in South Africa and then sent to the various countries to be produced, printed and distributed.

"A few days before Shabbos, Ukraine wanted to join in," says the Chief Rabbi. "All the South African team could do at that stage was to send Ukrainian Jewry the Russian material as open files so they could adapt them."

Similarly, French Jewry wanted to change some of the translations so they, too, were sent the open files and adapted them to suit. "We worked closely with the Chief Rabbi of France," says the Chief Rabbi.

Whatever the numbers turn out to be, they were staggering: For the Challah Bake in South America, for example, Buenos Aires had 4 000 women attending and Chile had over 1 000. In North America, stats that have come in showing that Miami led the pack (so far) with 4 900 participants; 2 500 Toronto women turned up, Baltimore had 1 200 and Manhattan 500.

Israel celebrated differently and each community held their own challah bake events by suburb. Beit Shemesh is the top number in so far at 600.

In Europe challah bakes took place in Basel, Switzerland; in several places in the Netherlands and in Belgium where Antwerp drew 550 bakers alone. Moscow had 200 and Pinsk in Belarus saw 100 turning out. The only figures in from Asia at this stage are the 190 who baked in Hong Kong.

Australia embraced The Shabbos Project in every which way and the challah baking events drew 2 500 in Melbourne, 2 400 in Sydney and a smaller number in Perth.

South Africa was hard for organisers to count. The Cape Town Challah Bake attracted 1 200 - but with the Johan-



Photo: The Shabbos Project/Mama Creative  
Robyn Smookler, with Rebbetzen Gina Goldstein, making challah last week Wednesday.

nesburg event being interrupted by a cloudburst, it was difficult for organisers to count the bakers. In fact, estimates range from a minimum of 3 000 up to 5 000.

Many of the participating centres did not have a Challah Bake or Havdalah Concert and the total number of participants in all the events is difficult to call.

The South African website, which was shared by many countries, has over 300 000 people officially signed up. However some countries managed their own sites and many who participated didn't sign up officially.

Sydney, says the Chief Rabbi, did a 10 000 print run of the booklets, for example. Anecdotes and stories are coming in by the bucket-full. "We are busy collating the stories right across the world," he says.

The Israeli press reported that more than one million Jews participated. This figure, however, may be conservative, if one takes into account the very high levels of involvement in Israel itself and the fact that many of the most active partner-cities also boast among the highest Jewish populations globally.

Miami, for example, has a Jewish population of 535 000; London, 200 000; Buenos Aires and Toronto each have Jewish populations of 250 000.

The driving force behind The Shabbos Project, says the Chief Rabbi, is threefold:

1. The spiritual connection between the Jewish people and Shabbat;
2. The fact that Shabbat has such a compelling message for modern life; and
3. The deep need there is for true Jewish unity - "not like that which has been forced on us by war and hatred.

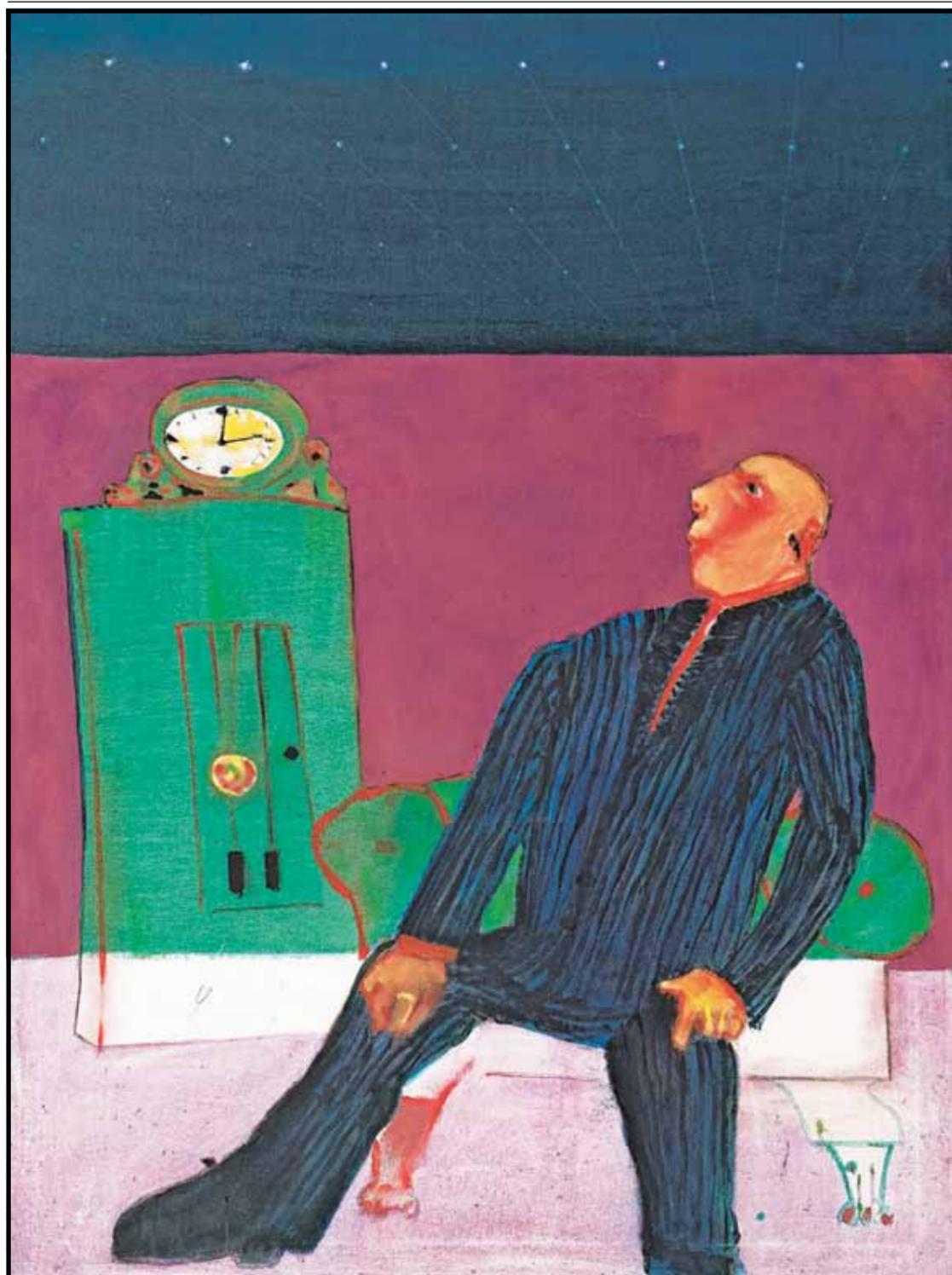
The Shabbos Project has allowed us to share voluntarily rather than having something imposed on us!"

At the end of The Shabbos Project last year, says Rabbi Goldstein, there was no plan to expand. "But we got such a great response after Jews around the world read about the response of SA Jewry, that the global initiative sprung up in seven or eight months. Very powerful forces are at play here," he told Jewish Report.

Rabbi Goldstein and his team were somewhat surprised how well the Project worked in Israel. The team had been confounded by conventional wisdom which, they believed, indicated that this would not be a big event there.

When Rabbi Goldstein went to Israel to talk about the subject at the beginning of last week, he was surprised to see The Shabbos Project advertised on buses (there were 300 of them bedecked in advertising for the Project), signboards, in fact everywhere. He found he got an "enormously warm response" wherever he went and that their three-week-old Facebook page already had over 30 000 likes. The media coverage in Israel was fantastic and The Shabbos Project seems to have sparked interest in the newsrooms of every print and digital title in the country.

See more on [www.sajr.co.za](http://www.sajr.co.za)



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# TA matric girls bid school life farewell

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Torah Academy Girls' High matrics celebrated their farewell from the school in style at a black-and-white-themed dinner organised by the grade 11 girls, at the Killarney Country Club.

Principal Rebecca Sarchi presented each girl with a beaded red rose and the girls are eagerly awaiting their personalised books of psalms, which are being sent from Israel.

All the girls, in turn, addressed and thanked their teachers, while Sarchi spoke to the girls. MC was Keren Swartz (grade 11).

The matrics, pictured, are: Gina Isaacman; Danielle Goshier; Dina Gien; and Mushkie Bacher (seated). Standing: Chani Wainer; Estee Masinter; Chaviva Carlebach; Ariella Cobb; Ori Shalpid; Chanele Chaikin; Shifra Saks; and Ariela Berkman.

Photo: Joffie Berkowitz



# KDHS Victory Park's SRC 2015



Photo: Yael Gordon

FRANKI FRIEDMAN (HEAD GIRL) AND YOSSI BANK (HEAD BOY)

King David High School Victory Park has elected its Student Representative Council for 2015. Pictured are, back: Amy Novick; Bradley Segal; Benjamin Lazarus; Jarred Wood; Benjamin Promnick; Keagan Parsons; Yair Bisnowaty; Asher Klug; Simon Wolfson; and Paige Butkow. Front: Gina Norwitz; Ilan Malkin; Yossi Bank; Franki Friedman; Paris Pencharz; and Nicole Meyerson.

As the newly elected SRC of King David High School Victory Park we plan to represent and lead our school and continue the legacy left for us, one that creates a fun and enjoyable environment and symbolises how King David Victory Park High School is a home and family. We, the new SRC representatives will lead King David High School Victory Park with integrity, tolerance and respect.

# KDL grade 5s and London young meet via webinar

Last week Friday a very special webinar took place connecting the grade 5 learners at King David Linksfield in Johannesburg, with learners between the ages of three and six, at Mathilda Marks Kennedy Primary School in London.

In a media release, Jewish Interactive in Johannesburg who was the moving force behind the initiative, called the excitement at the webinar "palpable", with the learners from London singing Eyn Keloheinu, while the South African learners waved and clapped along.

Then the King David learners sang Adon Olam, with the British learners responding. The webinar ended with a rousing Shabbat Shalom from both ends of the world. "All teachers, learners and organisers felt the beauty and power of the moment."

Jewish Interactive is an innovative non-profit organisation that strives to create interactive Jewish programmes, utilising modern technology, to make Torah more relevant, accessible and alive to Jewish educators, children and parents globally.



King David Linksfield learners participating in the webinar from Johannesburg.

# Lots of fun when tots had their sports day



Ready, steady and away we go! Children at Sydenham Hebrew Pre-Primary School had such fun at their sports day recently, racing and shouting war cries!

SUE BENJAMIN

Every child took part in this annual event and the spirit of good sportsmanship prevailed. Flat races, bike rides and relay races, were the order of the day.

War cries and loud cheers and yells could be heard from afar. While winning is important, each learner was encouraged to do his or her best and just have fun.

We try to instil in the children that the real winners in sport are those who know how to persevere and to behave with dignity - whether they win or lose.

Photo: Sue Benjamin

# Havdallah experience at Yiddish Folk

ROMY ADLER

The grade Rs at Yiddish Folk learnt and experienced the beautiful warmth and essence of Havdallah. Each child got to make their own Havdallah and take it home.



Photo: Romy Adler

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

## Cosas shows the student body's worst anti-Semitic face

Every day brings both inspiration and challenges. The task of any Jewish communal leader is to combine celebrating and building upon the good with confronting anything that arises to threaten our wellbeing. For our community, both the good and the bad have been in evidence this past week.

The action by Cosas, by contrast, flew diametrically in the face of everything our democracy stands for. Ostensibly framed as a protest against Woolworths for stocking Israeli produce, it took an anti-Semitic form, both in terms of the hateful symbol used and in the media release that was subsequently issued.

In our media release, we stated that Cosas' actions had nothing to do with human rights activism, but were aimed instead at causing maximum offence to Jewish people. In declaring that it would "not allow people who will not eat pork to pretend that they are eating clean meat, when it is sold by hands dripping with blood of Palestinian children", Cosas had made it clear to whom their message was directed.

We have lodged a complaint with the SA Human Rights Commission against Cosas for its contravention of our community's constitutional right to dignity and equality.

Two days prior to the Cosas demo, the Board took the lead in organising a media breakfast meeting of the Hate Crimes Working Group. We are proud to be founding and executive members of this body, which deals with issues affecting the whole of South African society, regardless of race, creed, religion or any other factor.

It is through building partnerships like this that we can better fulfil our mandate to uphold the civil right of South African Jewry, while at the same time contributing, as Jews, to building a society where all South Africans are protected from the evils of bigotry and hatred.

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

This column paid for by SA Jewish Board of Deputies



**Above Board**  
**Mary Kluk**  
National Chairman

Even as we were preparing to take part in the inspiring Shabbos Project, we were confronted with the news that the Congress of South African Students (Cosas) in the Western Cape had deposited the head of a pig in a Woolworths store in Cape Town, and that this act was explicitly aimed at sending a message to South African Jewry. Much of the Board's work this week has involved responding to this outrageous demonstration.

In the days leading up to the Shabbos Project and following it, I have been inundated with messages from friends across the globe describing the enthusiasm this has generated in their particular communities. This has been from the outset an unequivocally "Made in South Africa" export, one that has brought countless Jews together in a very special way.

Whatever hostile fringe elements exist in this country, South Africa remains a place where the Jewish religion and culture are able to thrive, while at the same time allowing Jews to fully participate in and identify with the broader national ethos.

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## Gideon Mendel - one of SA's photographic greats



Yeoville Park, 1986, by Gideon Mendel (A vintage archival silver bromide print, printed in 1988; 20 x 30cm).

**ROBYN SASSEN**

You might remember Gideon Mendel's (pictured) name if you lived in Yeoville in Johannesburg or read *The Star* in the 1980s. A self-trained photographer who worked at *The Star* before moving on to *Agence France-Presse*, in 1988 he showed a body of photographs at the Market Theatre Gallery dealing with the suburb of Yeoville.

It broke new ground in celebrating tentative outreaches between black and white South Africans. The work is on show again at Gallery Momo in Parktown.

Mendel came into the discipline through a back door of his own making. He was part of the "last generation to grow up under the dark days of apartheid: before the Bang Bang Club, in which Greg Marinovic, Kevin Carter, Joao Silva and Ken Oosterbroek rose to prominence".

A contemporary of photographers including the late Gisèle Wulfsohn, he cut his professional teeth on the background of politicised restrictions. "In 1986, emergency was declared in SA. A list was published, forbidding photographs to be taken at funerals, gatherings..."

"I was living in Hunter Street (in Yeoville) and, armed with a staying-out-of-the-army degree from UCT, I got a job at *The Star* which brought me back to Johannesburg. I loved the park next to the recreation centre." He balks at the idea of considering this a passion project. "It was an obsession."

It manifested in a series of postcard-sized images, which quickly became a critical cornerstone. "I really like the intimacy of a small picture."

When Okwui Enwezor, co-curator of the *Rise and Fall of Apartheid* exhibition, approached him a few years ago to consider work for the exhibition, this series was in a box. "It blew him away. He didn't have space to show it all. Instead, he commissioned me to make a video of it."

Mendel, who emigrated to London in 1990, believes photography's in his blood. Uncle of photographer Mikhael Subotzky, his German-Jewish maternal grandmother was an independ-



ent photographer. "She made beautiful prints in the 1920s and 1930s; they say nothing about what was going on at the time."

One motivation for reshowing this work is to encourage support for a project he's worked on for years. "Drowning World is my attempt to address climate change. I have become a global flood vulture. In 1987, there was a flood in England. I was experimenting with making portraits with a newly-acquired Rolleiflex camera. Six weeks later, there was a flood in India. And the die was cast for a series. This work is counter-intuitive: they are conventional portraits in hectic environments."

Mendel wants to show this work at next year's Paris Climate Change Conference; he's also keen to make photo books. "I also want to do a book of my Yeoville work. I've been doing work in Yeoville recently: there's new Yeoville, and there's old Yeoville. They deserve to interface. I have been remiss in not doing enough books over the years."

• Mendel's website: [www.gideonmendel.com](http://www.gideonmendel.com); *Living in Yeoville Revisited* is at Gallery Momo 7th Avenue, Parktown until November 24: (011) 327-3247.

### Something Complex in Pam-Grant's studio

Artist and theatre maker Sue Pam-Grant presents a new work, *Something Complex*, on November 12 through to 22. It's a three-hander, featuring Leila Henriques, Neil McCarthy and Megan Willson and will perform in Pam-Grant's Melville studio which can seat approximately 25 at a time. Contact Sue on [pamgrant@icon.co.za](mailto:pamgrant@icon.co.za) for details.

### Johnny Clegg at Walter Sisulu Botanical Gardens

Recent winner of the Brandlaureate Awards in the category of Brand Personality, self-invented South African music icon Johnny Clegg - also familiarly known as the Jewish Zulu - performs live at the Walter Sisulu National Botanical Gardens in Roodepoort on November 30 at 17:00. Contact <http://po.st/i1Qdvz> for ticket information and bookings.

Arts Briefs

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**Today, Friday (October 31)**

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

**Sunday (November 2)**

• Second Innings hosts Charlene Brett on "Remain in Touch - Stay in Tune - Retain Independence". Venue: The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Time: 10:00 for 10:30. Cost: R20 members, R30 visitors (incl tea and light refreshments). Contact: Hylton Marks, (011) 532-9616.

• SA Jews for a Just Peace (JVJP) and Constitution Hill present "Breaking Down the Wall" (A day of live music, art, theatre, film and talks about our concerns over human rights violations and the continuing military occupation of Palestinian territory in the West Bank and Gaza.)

**Monday (November 3)**

• UJW hosts Dr Adrian Tiplady, Square Kilometre Array site bid manager on "Searching for the Origins of the Universe with SKA". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

**Tuesday (November 4)**

• JH&GC and the Jewish Genealogical Society of SA host a talk by filmmakers Lee Ann Dance and Cliff Hackel on "Feiga's Choice: A Forgotten Jewish Story" about the multigenerational impact of the 1917 - 1920 Russian pogroms on one family. Venue: HOD, Oaklands. Time: 19:00 for 19:30. Admission free. RSVP to hannahkarpes@telkomsa.net or (011) 640-3100.

• UJW hosts Simon Scharma, British historian and writer on "The Story of the Jews", from ancient to modern times. Part 2: "A Leap of Faith". Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW

office (011) 648-1053.

**Wednesday (November 5)**

• UJW hosts Dr Lorraine Chaskalson, former lecturer in the Dept of English at Wits, on "Exploring the Wonders of Milton's 'Paradise Lost'" part 2. Venue: 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Time: 09:30. Donation: R35. Contact: UJW office (011) 648-1053.

• Chevrah Kadisha's Biennial General Meeting takes place at Golden Acres Card Room. Time: 17:00. Contact: (011) 532-9600.

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

**Friday (November 7)**

• UZLC hosts Judy Jaye on "Your Personal Journey Going Forward Into the New Year". Venue: Our Parents Home. Time: 12:45 - 14:00. Contact: Gloria 072-127-9421 or (011) 485-4851.

**Community**

**Toni Yoko's Quartet - and all that jazz!**

The Toni Yoko Quartet is on the cards in the not too distant future.



Photo supplied

October 19 was a beautiful Sunday afternoon at Inyoni Retirement Village in Johannesburg. The weather was hot and so was the jazz! The band which was featured was the Toni Yoko Quartet, with the proceeds going to Hatzolah Medical Rescue. The event was organised by B'Nai B'rith Aviv branch.

On the keyboard was Andre Benkhe; the double bass was handled by James Sunney; the lady who played three instruments and did the vocals was Pam Mortimer; and the man who "drummed up a storm" was none other than bandleader Toni Yoko.

Two of the jazz standards which received a standing ovation were "Route 66" and Dave Brubeck's "Take 5". Toni Yoko's drum solo was simply outstanding.

The tune "Smiling", sung by Pam Mortimer was great! One of the female guests at the concert sent me an SMS afterwards, saying: "Hi Rollo, thanks for a wonderful afternoon of the highest quality of jazz. The musicians blew us away - the best since Archie Silansky and Dan Hill."

That was a compliment if ever there was one! In other words, the afternoon was a resounding success. I have since heard that another concert featuring

**A tea of note in E London**



Photo: Lisa Schewitz

**The talented Bruce Gardiner; Felicity O'Leary; Unis and Nelson Kram; Ethne Schewitz (UJW chairman EL); and Phylis Strelitz.**

The women of the Union Of Jewish Women, East London, hosted an annual senior citizens tea for residents at McClelland Adult Centre, D J Sobey, Kennsley Park, Fairlands Home, Silver Crown, Langham House, Manor House and Meals on Wheels.

This year East London's UJW had over 100 guests who were entertained by Helena Archer, Lloyd Brent, Bruce Gardiner and George Mountjoy. They chose to give a donation to child welfare for their garden.

**Shlomo Carlebach's 20th**

In honour of the 20th yahrtzeit of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach, the Sandringham Gardens Shul will hold a special special Carlebach Friday night service on October 31.

"Come and daven and help 'liven' up Kabelat Shabbat for the 'young people' of Sandringham Gardens" says the invitation (their emphases).

Mincha will be at 18:00 followed by Kabelat Shabbat.

The service will be conducted by Shaun Zagenov and the drosha by Rabbi Jonathan Fox.

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# Politics and sport - an eternal disaster

**JACK MILNER**

Will sport ever be able to rid itself of political interference? I fear not. Hardly a day goes by without some politician meddling in some form or another with what happens during a match.

In the latest instance of sport mixing with politics, the Sudanese Chess Association's president has resigned and apologised to the Sudanese and Palestinian people, after a Sudanese player played a game against an Israeli.

The Sudan Tribute reported how Tariq Zarog stepped down from his position after Omar Albargdar Eltigani took on Is-

raeli Matan Poleg at the World Youth Chess Championships in Durban. Eltigani was told by the Sudanese Chess Group not to play the match, but decided to do so nevertheless, which caused an uproar in Sudan.

To make matters worse for him, Poleg won the match after the 45th move.

In another case of anti-Semitism in the world of football, Uefa has acted over Partizan Belgrade supporters holding up an anti-Semitic banner during the club's recent Europa League game against Tottenham Hotspur, by fining the club about R540 000 and ordering the partial closure of its stadium during its next European game.

How all this will stop racism in soccer,



**Football club Partizan Belgrade was fined R540 000 after supporters displayed an anti-Semitic banner inspired by the Only Fools and Horses logo.**

is anybody's guess. Uefa came up with the usual platitudes about stamping out racism. "The fight against racism is a high priority for Uefa," the European football body said in a statement.

"The European governing body has a zero-tolerance policy towards racism and discrimination on the field and in the stands. All forms of racist behaviour are considered serious offences against the disciplinary regulations and are punished with the most severe sanctions. Following the entry into force of new disciplinary regulations in June 2013, the fight against racist conduct has been stepped up a level, resulting in stricter penalties to deter any such behaviour."

I am also amused when I watch club soccer in Europe and one member of each team walks on to the pitch with a pennant stating: "We oppose racism." The players concerned hold the pennant at their sides and occasionally wave it in a half-hearted manner. It is quite ludicrous.

If they really wanted clubs to take action against racist supporters then deduct points or even better, use a "three-strikes and you're out rule" expulsion from the competition.

There's a long way to go in the battle to eradicate racism and if this is all Uefa can do to stop it, the journey will be even longer.

Perhaps one of the strangest stories I've heard is that of Kreshnik Berisha, the first suspected member of ISIS to stand trial in Germany. He was arrested upon his arrival

back in Frankfurt in December after spending six months in Syria.

When Jewish soccer coach Alon Meyer heard the news he apparently thought it was a bad joke, the reason being that this young man was the same boy who had once stood by his side and taken the field in the shirt of Makkabi Frankfurt, Germany's largest Jewish sports club.

Only once journalists began to call him, did Meyer remember Berisha, a 20-year-old born in Frankfurt to Kosovan parents. "This was a guy who used to play with Jewish players every week; he was comfortable there and he seemed so happy. He was a normal player, never shouting too much and was fighting on the field with his friends.

"We are a Jewish club with a Jewish heart - and everybody who has been involved with us knows that."

Three years later Berisha was back in Germany, expecting to receive a sentence of between three to four-and-a-half years for allegedly being a member of a foreign terrorist organisation. He was offered a more lenient sentence than usual in exchange for a confession and information about ISIS.

Interestingly neither Israel nor organised Jewry had anything to do with his decision. It was all about the "inconceivable violence used by the Alawite Assad regime against the Sunni majority" that he found "enraging and bewildering".

He said: "No-one wanted to help the people there; I saw it as my duty to fight against the suppression and tyranny."

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