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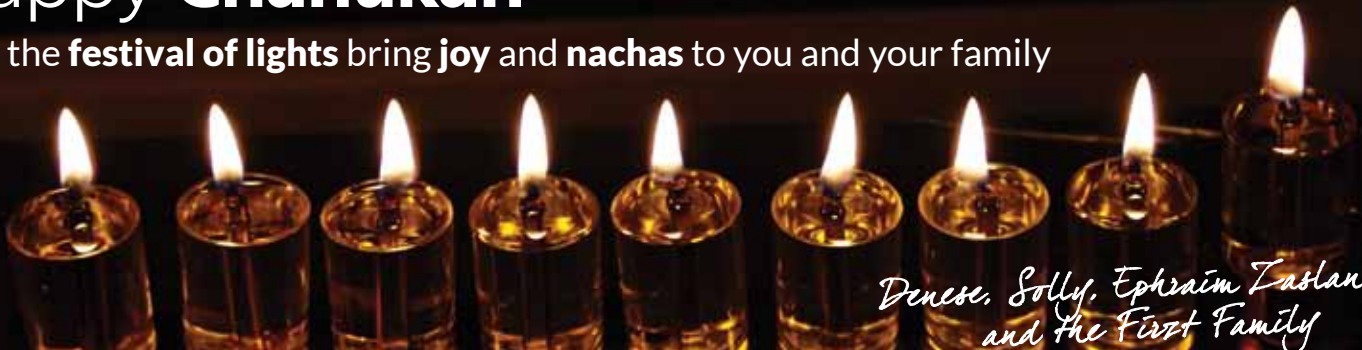
Photo: Shant Walt

Happy campers heading to machaneh

Excitement was palpable at Oliver Tambo Airport very early on Wednesday morning as Bnei Akiva campers prepared to fly to George en route to machaneh outside Mossel Bay. Pictured are Tzion campers Ari Jacks; Carly Diamond; Rachel Gerber and Shira Walt.

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2 SA JEWISH REPORT
Parsha
9 December 2016 – 20 January 2017

Fighting the pure and righteous fight, with no compromise

Parshat Vayeitzei
Rabbi Sam Thurgood
Beit Midrash Morasha

As Yaakov leaves Be’er Sheva, our Sages comment that a tzaddik, a righteous person, is the beauty, splendour and majesty of the city. When we reflect upon what it was that made Yaakov such a special person, we recall the words of his father Yitzchak before the blessing: “The voice is the voice of Yaakov and the hands are the hands of Eisav.”

On this, Gemora Gittin 57b explains that every successful tefillah in the world has in it descendants of Yaakov, every victorious army has in it descendants of Yaakov. With this in mind, we gain a deeper understanding of the Al HaNissim prayer that we say over Chanukah, when we make mention of the miraculous way in which Hashem brought about our military victory:

You delivered the strong into the hands of

the weak, the many into the hands of the few, the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the arrogant into the hands of those who were engaged in the study of Your Torah.

Rabbi Baruch HaLeivi Epstein asks: We appreciate that the miraculous and the unexpected - the fact that the small, (comparatively) weak army of Chashmonaim was able to consistently defeat the mighty forces of the Selucid Greek empire - is indeed a startling display of the greatness of Hashem; but the three other points mentioned “the impure into the hands of the pure, the wicked into the hands of the righteous, and the arrogant...” do not seem to be aligned with this theme. In fact, can we not take it for granted that, all things being equal, victory would go to the pure of heart?

The answer, he says, refers back to the voice of Yaakov. The Jewish people are not a nation that is naturally warlike; nor one that desires to be. It is easy to have the impression that one needs to be ruthless in order to bring real results in the world.

We are intimately and tragically familiar

in our Holy Land today with the dichotomy of fighting a cruel and terrible enemy while struggling to maintain our own innocence and purity; trying to create a generation of young people who are versed in Torah and Derech Eretz, people who are wise and sensitive, and yet also able to defend our country and people physically from harm - a commitment that requires the willingness to take life as part of defending it.

We know the extent to which our reticence to harm the innocent prevents us from striking decisive blows against our enemies, and now we are ready to understand fully the miracle of Chanukah. It wasn’t only that the Jewish people won despite being an inferior military force, it was that they did so while remaining pure and righteous - not compromising on their holiness despite the martial handcuffs that such behaviour inevitably entails. We are blessed to see the same behaviour reflected in our IDF, and may it always be so.

Shabbat Times		
December 9/9 Kislev		
December 10/10 Kislev		
Parshat Vayeitzei		
Starts	Ends	
18:15	19:28	Johannesburg
18:20	20:29	Cape Town
18:15	19:26	Durban
18:15	19:43	Bloemfontein
18:15	20:00	Port Elizabeth
18:15	19:47	East London

Chanukah

Message of Chanukah should carry on in new year

SUZANNE BELLING

Chanukah is a festival that celebrates the survival of the Jewish people in the face of total adversity - a theme which is commensurate with many historical highs and lows throughout the three-and-a-half millennia of our existence.

It commemorates the triumph of Judaism, the victory of the brave Maccabees over the forces of Hellenism, with the burning of the lights in the Temple - when the oil had run out - for eight days, with no explanation other than Divine intervention.

Chanukah -The Festival of Lights - serves to renew our spirituality and give the children a sense of identity through the festivities. It is an eight-day festival, beginning on the 25th Day of Kislev.

It is probably one of the best-known Jewish holidays among non-Jews, not because of any great religious significance, but because of its proximity to Christmas. Many non-Jews (and even many assimilated Jews) think of this holiday as the “Jewish Christmas”, sharing customs, such as elaborate gift-giving and decoration.

Some non-Jewish young people in the United States decorate their cars with a Christmas tree, adopting Chabad’s custom of placing giant menorahs on the roofs. (If anyone is interested, they may borrow a giant menorah from Chabad for this Chanukah.)

In Johannesburg, Chabad House invites the entire community to celebrate Chanukah with public menorah kindling ceremonies.

On all nights of the festival, events will be held at Chabad’s Goodness and Kindness Centre, 8 Stella Street in Sandton, as well as at KosherWorld in Glenhazel and at Norwood Mall.

Says Chabad’s Rabbi Ari Kievman: “Chanukah, a celebration for all time, is highlighted by the kindling of the menorah each night of the holiday. It is a holiday that enriches our lives with the light of tradition. In ancient times our ancestors rededicated the Temple in Jerusalem with the menorah. Today, we rededicate ourselves to making this world a better and brighter place.

“Chanukah also propagates the universal message that ultimately good will prevail over evil, freedom over oppression and light over

darkness.”

In its Chanukah outreach campaign, Chabad House joins thousands of Chabad centres across the globe that are staging similar public displays of the menorah and its symbolic lights. From Africa to Australia, Columbia to Hong Kong, an expected eight million people will experience the joy of Chanukah with Chabad.

“So, if you’ll be in quiet Joburg during this year’s holidays, make sure to bring the whole family to one of the giant menorah celebrations and make this your special Chanukah celebration,” Rabbi Kievman said.

For more information, contact Chabad House at 011-440-6600 or www.chabadsouthafrica.org

- The Pretoria Hebrew Congregation, which always lights a giant menorah at the shul, will be having a community Chanukah event on Wednesday, December 28.

South African
Jewish Report

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World’s hottest holiday gift has SA origins

VANESSA VALKIN

Families are searching high and low for the world’s most wanted toy for the 2016 holiday gift season. It’s the Hatchimal, a speckled toy egg that hatches out a furry, cuddly creature if one strokes and nurtures it appropriately.

Not only is it out of stock locally but globally too, and retailers say these interactive little hatchlings sell out within days. According to media reports, one eBay seller was asking £48 000 (R858 418) for a Hatchimal, way above the original retail price of R868.

Barry Berman, one of the owners of Hamley’s toy store at the V & A Waterfront in Cape Town, is very disappointed that they cannot keep up with demand. “We are waiting for more,” he says.



Spinmaster founders Anton Rabie and Ronnen Harary.

The toy is manufactured by Toronto-based Spin Master Corp, one of the largest toy companies in North America. It has produced much-loved toy sensations like the Bakugan Battle Brawlers, the Build-a-Bear workshop and the Zoomer brand of robotic animals.

The founders of Spin Master actually have South African Jewish roots. Speaking to Jewish Report, the pair, Anton Rabie and Ronnen Harary, had a special message for South Africans frantically waiting for more: “Everyone in South Africa should know there are more Hatchimals coming and we will have a new batch to hatch in early 2017 for everyone who doesn’t get one this year.”

Rabie and Harary were both born in South Africa and emigrated with their families when they were six or seven. They founded their company in 1994 soon after graduating from the University of Western Ontario.

“We actually met at summer camp when we were eight years old and continued our close friendship throughout high school and university,” says Rabie. “While having South African roots was something we shared, it was our

entrepreneurial spirit and competitive desire to build something truly innovative that formed our business partnership in the early years.”

Anton’s mom, Hilary, taught at Herzlia School in Cape Town before having a family. She says Anton was different right from the start. “All those people who knew Anton, knew that he would be a success story. Not because he was good at school, but because he had a drive to do what he wanted to do with a discipline most people dream about.”

At the age of 10, he started a paper round around the Bayview area townhouses where the family lived in Toronto.

“He would get up at the crack of dawn even in the snow. I would be so worried,” recalls Hilary.

“At 13 he wanted to go to South Africa in the holidays. He was only there for two weeks but he got himself a job at the café that was above Fourth Beach Clifton in the mornings... White kids didn’t have jobs in those days... and you could probably not see him over the counter.”

Both Harary and Rabie are very philanthropic today. “Anton just renovated a whole floor of Toronto’s Mount Sinai Hospital. He didn’t want any big accolades or signs with his name. He eventually settled a for a small sign with his name and he didn’t want any of the koved (honour),” says his mother proudly.

“They do a lot for children’s charities all over the world,” she adds. “They built a village in Malawi; they help Hebrew University in Jerusalem... the charity is endless.”

Says Anton: “A few years ago, our team at Spin Master started The Toy Movement. This is a Spin Master lead initiative to provide toys to children living in troubled parts of the world, bringing them inspiration, imagination and joy through play. We’ve conducted missions to Israel, Gaza, Jordan, and Mexico, with more to come.”

And as for the Hatchimal that parents are searching for high and low - what is the reason for its popularity?

Experts say it’s such a hit because it fulfils children’s need to nurture and love. This interactive toy makes sounds like a baby and needs bonding and attention to grow through its three life stages and can even revert to the baby stage.

“The consumer response to Hatchimals has been extraordinary, exceeding all expectations,” says Anton. “We did believe we had something special and ground breaking... We could never have predicted this level of demand.”



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What to do in the holidays in Durban



ALANA BARANOV

Sun, sea and surf – it’s true, Durban rocks! South Africa’s tropical east coast is the perfect destination for your December holiday.

Chanukah is hot and happening in the Zulu kingdom this year. Chabad of the North Coast is renowned for its hospitality (www.chabadnc.com) and has a range of activities for each day of Chanukah, as well as their famous Shabbat meals and family-centred events throughout the holiday period.

A new mikveh, with facilities for men, women and keilim, has also been opened on their property. At the Umhlanga Jewish Centre, the annual “Curry Evening” will take place during Chanukah with a catered curry and candle-lighting. Tickets are R180 per adult and R80 per child, with chicken and chips available for the non-curry eaters.

On December 18, 20, 22 and 27 and January 3 and 5, they will also be having a kosher takeaway evening. Regular Shabbat and daily minyanim will also be held throughout the festive season. For more information call (031) 566-3227.

At the Durban Progressive Jewish Congregation, December 30 is the “Chanukah Shabbat” where everyone is invited to bring their Chanukiot with them to shul for a communal lighting ceremony.

The special service will be followed by a unique Chanukah brocha including potato latkes and sufganiot among other delicacies. Services will be held every Shabbat evening and morning and all visitors are welcome to join at their temporary venue at the Durban Holocaust Centre.

As far as kosher supplies go, Durban has got you covered. In the heart of Umhlanga you can find kosher food and wine at Pick n Pay at Lighthouse Mall and Spar at Umhlanga Centre, as well as kosher accommodation at the Kosher B&B right next door to Chabad of the North Coast (www.uka.co.za). Musgrave Pick n Pay also has a

kosher bakery and stocks a range of kosher products.

The Circle Café (www.facebook.com/circlecafedurban), a sophisticated kosher café under the supervision of the Johannesburg Beth Din, serves delicious breakfasts and lunches with the best cheesecake in town! Situated in the tranquil Garden of Remembrance at the Durban Holocaust Centre, the Circle Café also offers outside catering, can be booked for events and has a new takeaway menu as an easy self-catering option.

The DHC Gift Shop at the Café has a unique range of décor and homeware, with all proceeds from the Café and Gift Shop going towards the educational programmes of the Durban Holocaust Centre (www.facebook.com/dbnholocentre).

Once you’ve lit all the candles and finished up the latkes and doughnuts, there is so much to explore in “South Africa’s playground”. From catching a ride on a traditional rickshaw bus alongside the warm sands of the Golden Mile to the fun of the water park and aquarium at uShaka Marine World, Durban is brimming with activity.

Looking inland, the Valley of a Thousand Hills boasts traditional Zulu villages and the century-old Umgeni Steam Railway train that takes families on day trips through the picturesque valleys.

Of course, the seaside village resort of Umhlanga is well known for its glorious beaches. Take a stroll along the promenade or splash in the rocks at Granny’s Pool, enjoy cocktails at the Oyster Box Hotel overlooking Umhlanga’s iconic red and white lighthouse or visit the Shark Board to learn more about marine life conservation.

For the perfect end to the year and a relaxing start to 2017, head to the shores of the Indian Ocean where there is something for everyone.

** For more information on what to do in Durban these holidays, visit the Durban Tourism website <http://www.durbanexperience.co.za/WhatsOn/Pages/Welcome.aspx>*

World News in Brief

Bill to legalise West Bank settlements on Palestinian land advances in Knesset

JERUSALEM - Following a raucous debate, the Israeli Knesset on Monday passed the preliminary reading of a controversial bill that would help legalise West Bank outposts built on Palestinian land.

The measure, known as the Regulation Bill, advanced in a 60-49 vote. It must pass three additional votes to be enacted and may be modified during the process.

Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit has said the legislation violates international law and he could not defend it before Israel’s Supreme Court.

According to the settlement watchdog group Peace Now, the bill could legalise 55 outposts and 4 000 housing units in the West Bank, The Times of Israel reported.

The bill would allow the Israeli government to recognise construction built with government assistance and in good faith - meaning those who built outposts were not aware they were building on private land. If the original owners of the land are known, they would be eligible to receive financial compensation for their land from the government.

The original intent of the measure was to legalise the small but contentious settlement outpost of Amona, which the Supreme Court has ruled must be razed by December 25. But the version advanced by the Knesset offers a path to recognise other West Bank settlements.

Under the bill, settlement residents would have usage rights of the land but not ownership, according to Haaretz.

During the debate, opposition lawmakers shouted and tore up copies of the legislation. Opposition leader Chaim Herzog, who heads the Zionist Union bloc, called its passage “a dark day for the Knesset” and slammed the measure as “national suicide”.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett, who represents the pro-settlement Jewish Home party, praised the bill as a step toward annexing the West Bank, according to The Times of Israel. (JTA)

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What to do in the holidays in Cape Town

TALI FEINBERG

If you’re “migrating” to Cape Town along with the rest of Johannesburg for the holiday season, rest assured that there are plenty of kosher options, Chanukah events and community activities. Here’s an “insider’s guide” to Jewish life in Cape Town and further afield:

Kosher food:

Avron’s Place serves a wide variety of dishes, including beef ribs and sushi. It does takeaways, catering and will pack Shabbat meals for visitors. Opening hours Monday to Thursday are 11:00 - 15:00 and 17:00 - 22:30; Fridays 10:00 - 14:00; Saturday December 17, one hour after Shabbat till 23:30. Open on December 25 and 26. Closed during the day on January 1, but open from 17:30. Address: 19 - 33 Regent Road, Sea Point, tel (021) 439-7610.

Coffee Time: Milchik coffee shop in lovely surroundings. Gluten-free and sugar-free options. It also caters for functions. All proceeds go to supporting the Astra Centre. Opening hours Monday to Thursday are 0800 - 15:30pm; Fridays 08:00 – 15:00. Address: 20 Breda Street, Gardens, tel (021) 461 8414.

Café Riteve: Milchik café, conveniently located in the heart of town, in the Gardens Community Centre. Serves kosher wine and liquors. Special buffet evenings on December 21, 22, 27 and 29 and on January 3. Open on December 25, 26 and 27 and on January 1 and 2. Opening hours: Sunday to Thursday 08:30 - 17:00; Friday 08:30 – 15:00. Address: 88 Hatfield Street, Gardens, tel (021) 465-1594.

Goldies Deli and Diner: A meat and parev deli, a sit-down diner and a bakery. The menu is increasing with more options like falafel/pita, schwarma and many interesting meat and chicken dishes. The weekly Shabbos special is running right through the season - R180 buys you a meal for 3 to 4 people. It includes one litre soup, four perogen or kneidlach, a main course (varies every week), a dessert and a challah. Opening hours: 08:30 Sunday to Friday, closing around 20:30 Sunday to Thursday and Friday 08:30 - 16:30. Address: 174 Main Road, Sea Point, tel (021) 439-300.

Where to buy kosher food and wine

- The following supermarkets have dedicated kosher sections stocking warm and cold food products:
- Checkers Sea Point: Regent Road, Sea Point, tel (021) 430-4680.
 - Spar Sea Point: Regent Road, Sea Point, tel (021) 439-0914.
 - Pick n Pay Adelphi: 127 Main Road, | Sea Point, tel (021) 434-8987.
 - Pick n Pay Claremont: Cnr Campground and Main Roads, Claremont, tel (021) 674-5908.
 - Shoprite Checkers Milnerton: Cnr Koeberg and De Grendel Roads, Milnerton, tel (021) 528-1680 (kosher meat section only).

The following Cape wine farms create kosher reds and whites under the supervision of the Beth Din:

- Kleine Draken: Pieter Hugo Street, Paarl, tel (021) 863-2368.
- Backsberg: Simondium Road, Klapmuts, Paarl, tel (0 21) 875-5141.

Shuls and Chanukah:

Chabad of the West Coast is having a Chanukah celebration at the Paddocks, Milnerton on Monday December 26 from 17:30. They will also be hosting a gala benefit dinner (R900 per person) on December 14, inaugurating the Sinai Foundation and celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Sinai Academy. Contact: Mandy celebration@sinaiacademy.co.za or (021) 557-7560 for reservations and information.

Chabad in Sea Point will be running Camp Gan Izzy from December 12 - 23 at Herzlia Weizmann for ages three and up. To register e-mail reception@chabad.co.za or call (021) 434-3740.

Claremont Wynberg Shul will have a Chanukah programme on Thursday December 29. Information: shul office (021) 671-9006.

Temple Israel (Progressive Synagogue) has a special Chanukah Shabbat candle-lighting. All three synagogues will run Chanukah lighting ceremonies in Green Point, Wynberg and West Coast on the evening of Friday December 30. Bring your own chanukiah or simply come along for the lighting and special Shabbat service. Information: www.templeisrael.co.za

Hermanus Hebrew Congregation: New Jewish Centre and Synagogue have modern facilities including a kosher kitchen, banqueting hall, garden space and ample parking. Services on Friday evenings and on all important Holy Days. Service times: Friday evening mincha starts at 18:30. Address: Corner Jose Burman Drive and Magnolia Street, Hermanus.

Plettenberg Bay Shul: Chanukah celebration and golf day planned. Contact: Shai (044) 533-4833 or PlettShull@mweb.co.za. Address: 16 Roche Bonne Avenue, Plettenberg Bay.

Jewish community sites:

The Gardens Community Centre (88 Hatfield Street, Gardens) includes the Cape Town Holocaust Centre (free entrance), South African Jewish Museum (small entrance fee), the Jacob Gitlin Library (free, with a new children’s library), the historic Gardens Synagogue and Cafe Riteve, and a small kids’ play area.

Visitors are requested to bring photo identification with them. Park in the Jewish Museum parking lot further up Hatfield Street, or get off at the Stop 8 of the “Hop-On, Hop-Off” Red Bus.

“**The Space Between**”, a fundraising art exhibition showcasing the work of Jewish artists in Cape Town, is on at the South African Jewish Museum until December 18. Opening hours: Sunday – Thursday 10:00 - 17:00, Friday 10:00 - 14:00.

The exhibition “**Eva’s Story: The Promise**” will be on display at the Cape Town Holocaust Centre until the end of February. It tells the story of Eva Schloss, Anne Frank’s posthumous stepsister. Entrance is free, donations welcome.

Mother City Jewish Tours will be hosting walking tours of sites with Jewish history in Cape Town, including the Castle of Good Hope, District Six, the City Hall, Greenmarket Square, the Slave Lodge, the Company’s Garden, the National Gallery, ending at Cafe Riteve. Contact Craig Nudelman for more information: craig.nudelman@gmail.com or 082-424-2545.




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wishing you all the best

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What to do in the holidays in Johannesburg and Pretoria

SUZANNE BELLING

Come December, virtually every Gautenger has the words of John Masefield’s poem Sea Fever on his lips: “I must go down to the seas again...”

But many of “us inlanders”, for a myriad reasons, may have to contend with the Highveld sky this holiday.

Some of the plus points of staying home is that there is considerably less traffic, shopping is easier and peace and quiet prevails.

For those in Johannesburg and Pretoria not trekking all the way to a holiday destination, the Jewish Report scouted around for some of the many activities on offer for children and families.

Johannesburg

- Jewishly, there is the ever-popular Gan Yisrael day camps for children from December 12 to 25. Run by Chabad, under the able direction of Rabbi Pini Pink, the camps are divided into three sections - kiddies (from three to four), girls (from five to 12) and boys (from five to 12).
- There are arts and crafts, inflatable rides and water activities among the many attractions.
- The girls’ and kiddies’ camps will be held from 09:00 to 15:30 weekdays at Torah Academy and boys - at the same times - at Yeshiva

College. Cost of the camp is R675 (for one week) and R1 200 (for two).

For more information go to cgijoburg.co.za or e-mail camp@chabad.org

- The Apartheid Museum - the first museum of its kind in the world - offers a unique opportunity to experience what apartheid South Africa was like. Tuesdays to Sundays, 10:00 - 17:00, at Ormonde, Johannesburg. Information: www.apartheidmuseum.org
- Gillooly’s Farm offers braai facilities around the lake as well as a restaurant with indoor and outdoor seating. A steep koppie walk boasts views along the Linksfield Ridge. Off the M3 highway, Senderwood. Information: www.edenvale.za.net
- Gold Reef City, created around an authentic 19th-century goldmine. The theme park has an abundance of adventure rides, restaurants and historical sightseeing tours. Tuesdays to Sundays, 09:30 - 17:00. Northern Parkway, Ormonde, Johannesburg. Information: www.goldreefcity.co.za
- Lory Park and Zoo and Owl Sanctuary in Midrand is the home of South Africa’s biggest owl collection as well as a variety of big cats. Tuesdays to Sundays, 10:00 - 16:00. Information: www.lorypark.co.za
- Northgate Ice Arena offers skating fun for the whole family. Open 10:00 – 22:30 daily at Northgate Shopping Centre, Witkoppen Road, North Riding. Information: www.triice.co.za
- The Oriental Plaza in Fordsburg is also the gateway to Mary Fitzgerald Square, Nelson Mandela Bridge, Constitution Hill and the Newtown Cultural Precinct. The plaza will surprise you with exotic spices, fabrics, flavours and scents. Mondays to Fridays, 08:30 - 17:00. Information: www.orientalplazaafordsburg.co.za
- SA National Museum of Military History, the only museum of its kind in South Africa, showcasing military memorabilia from as far back as the First World War. Daily at Erlswold Way, Saxonwold. Visit www.militarymuseum.co.za
- Sci-Bono Discovery Centre in Newtown will intrigue and entertain budding scientists with several interactive exhibits. Corner Miriam Makeba Street and President Street. Information: www.sci-bono.co.za
- Zoo Lake in Parkview is a popular spot for picnicking with the kids, even taking a leisurely boat ride. Sunrise to sunset, corner Jan Smuts Avenue and Westwold Road. Information: www.footprint.co.za/zoolake
- The Johannesburg Zoo in Parkview is a favourite place for kids. Open daily from 08:30 to 17:30. Also open for “Wild Lights Nights”. Call ahead for details. Secure parking. (011) 646-2000.

Pretoria

- The Camera Obscura (precursor to the modern camera) at Pretoria University allows you to view the whole of Pretoria. Open 11:00 - 15:00 on weekdays, four or more people at a time. Entrance is free, but visitors are encouraged to place a donation in the Science-Enza Vortex Donation Exhibit. Roper Street. (012) 420-3767.
- The Wonderboom is a fig tree over 1 000 years old. It grew to produce 13 daughter trees, forming a massive shaded area that spans 50 metres. A nature reserve has been built around it to protect it. There are also interesting iron age discoveries made near to the tree and a fort built for protection against the British. Wonderboom Nature Reserve is open from 7:00 - 18:00 in summer. Call (012) 341-5204. Adults (13 years and older) pay R25 entrance fee, kids, aged 7 to 12 years pay R15 and children aged younger than 6 years pay R9. Pensioners pay R16.
- Union Buildings - pack some picnic stuff and head to the gardens of the most famous buildings in South Africa. Be sure to visit the nine metres statue of Mandela and take in the view. Entrance free.
- Children will be fascinated to see to Mrs Ples, a 2,3 million-year-old skull at the Ditsong National Museum of Natural History (formerly the Transvaal Museum). R25 for adults, R10 for children. The museum is open every day from 8:00 till 16:00 at 432 Visagie Street, Pretoria. Information: (012) 322-7632.
- The Climbing Barn with over 450m of climbing walls is open Mondays to Fridays, 16:00 to 21:00 and also on weekends. A day pass is R70 for adults, R65 for students, R60 for scholars, R65 for gear hire (rope, shoes, chalk bag, harness). Beginner classes offered. Plot 210, Korhaan Street, Mooiplaats, 183, Pretoria. Call 082-335-3220.
- Groenkloof Nature Reserve is the first and oldest game sanctuary in Africa. A 20km mountain bike trail to explore. Open to day visitors from 05:30 to 19:00. R25 entrance fee. Eufees Road and Christina De Wet Avenue. Information: (012) 440-8316.
- Outdoor art - Marco Cianfanelli is the sculptor responsible for the Mandela Capture Site monument. His “Urban Being” sculpture stands at nearly 12 metres high and is at the front of the Pretoria City Lodge.
- The Old Mutual Music in the Gardens concerts is well-known. Have a picnic afternoon there with the family.
- The Pretoria Zoo is always enjoyed by the children. Open daily at 232 Boom Street. Information: www.nzg.ac.za



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It’s summer camp time again and young Jews are raring to go!

ANT KATZ

Thousands of young Jews from around the country will be attending an assortment of summer camp offerings hosted by five Jewish youth movements during the December holidays. The camps range from a choice of a week or two at a day-only camp to three weeks on the Cape Coast.

Each camp offers something different, but all movements allow non-movement members, or members of other youth movements, to join in.

Jewish Report has endeavoured to put together as much detail as possible and where we were not able to get all information, we are including contact details for the heads of the various youth movements, or the rosh machaneh, for all of the camps.

We have given the costs where they were made available to us. In some cases they are already subsidised. In others, deserving campers may be entitled to subsidies - sometimes even a full subsidy for movement members.

Many of the camps are fully subscribed while some still have places.



BETAR:

Guy Hadad is the man to deal with here. “Betar South Africa has decided to revolutionise the camp experience,” Hadad told Jewish Report. This December Betar is hosting a locally-based seminar called Betar Loves Jozi - Summer Edition. “This flexible summer programme allows our chanichim to explore and sightsee the many wonders of Gauteng, while still catering to parents’ needs,” he says.

Some of the highlights of their camp include visits to Sun City, Warmbaths (Bela Bela), Gold Reef City and various tochniot at the Betar bayit with a focus on Zionism, Betar ideology, team building skills and Israel advocacy, says Hadad. The camp runs from December 8 - 19 and costs R3 000 to attend.

Betar madrichim will also be travelling to Israel at the end of December to attend a hadrachah seminar, hosted by Betar Olami. They will have the opportunity to explore Israel while experiencing the spirit of Jewish life in the land. Some highlights include: Jerusalem and the Kotel, Yad Vashem, The Menachem Begin Centre and The Etzel Museum.

December 2016 sounds like it will be action packed for Betar SA. “We can’t wait to show South Africa what 2017 will bring!” says

Hadad.

Contact Hadad on 082-851-3963 or e-mail him at guyha@jafi.org. For more information go to info@betar.co.za or visit them at www.betarsa.co.za

BNEI AKIVA:

Bnei Akiva’s rosh machaneh, Jordy Sank, was preparing to take off with his sold-out campers when he spoke to Jewish Report this week. Camp Orot Yisrael will be held at their south Cape campsite between December 7 and 26.

One of the highlights of the Bnei camp will be popular entertainer Mathew Mole, who will be spending some time with the campers, and, of course, performing for them.

Contact Sank on 072-955-0046 or e-mail him at roshmach@bnei.co.za or, for more information, go to www.bnei.co.za or e-mail wintercamp@bnei.co.za.

GAN YISRAEL CAPE TOWN:

Chabad’s Cape Town Gan Yisrael Day Camp is a household name among Cape Town’s Jewish community and part of the largest and fastest growing networks of Jewish day camps in the world.

“Many of our campers wait all year to come back to Gan Yisrael!” Rabbi Mendel Popack told Jewish Report. “For 40 years, our camp has satisfied parents and delighted children from all walks of Judaism. Between our exciting outings, activity-packed schedule, great food, amazing spirit and dedicated counsellors, ‘Gan Izzy’ guarantees a wonderful experience for all,” he says. Rabbi Popack can be contacted - but only for 2017’s camp - at popack@gmail.com

GAN YISRAEL JOHANNESBURG:

A few spaces available! Rabbi Pini Pink has been the director of Camp Gan Yisrael at Chabad House since 2010 and has formulated a variety of camps to suit all, starting with day camps and ending with a sleep-over camp.

From December 12 to 23, they will be holding day camps for either one week or two. The (unsubsidised) cost is R675 for one week or R1 200 for two weeks.

Youngsters and girls will be accommodated at Torah Academy, while the boys will be at Yeshiva College. The kids and girls are fully booked, but there are a few places open for the boys’ day camp. Rabbi Pink expects between 650 and 675 to attend the day camps.

This will be followed with an overnight camp at their Uvongo campsite in KwaZulu-Natal between December 27 and January 8. This costs R5 000 including transport. The camp accommodates about 60, says Rabbi Pink, and there may be a few places still open by the time Jewish Report hits the streets.

“In true Chabad spirit,” says Rabbi Pink, “we pride ourselves on being all-inclusive - we are happy to accept kids from non-Jewish schools.” He says he finds it wonderful to see children and teens from different backgrounds interacting.

Contact Rabbi Pini Pink at Chabad House on (011) 440-6600 or 082-341-7485. Their website is www.cgijoburg.co.za

HABONIM DROR:

From December 8 to 28, Habonim will be

holding their summer camp at their campsite on the Onrus beach in the Western Cape (see their video on JR Online). They are fully subscribed, even though they had slightly fewer vacancies than last year, says David Schwartz, s’gan rosh machaneh of the summer camp.

Habonim chose to have fewer people, says Schwartz, because it “provides for a more intimate and inspiring three-week experience.” There is an open day on Sunday December 18 when friends and family may visit the campers.

The cost of camp varied, explained Schwartz, “depending on what merchandise one ordered and what travel arrangements they needed, but the cost is around R9 000.”

Schwartz says that Habonim Dror machaneh is a time for hundreds of Jewish youth from all over South Africa to come together to experience a fun and enriching time on what he maintains is the most beautiful campsite in South Africa.

“Our chanichim are always busy from their peulot where they learn about Judaism, Zionism, and other Habonim values, to havdallah parties, and of course our world-famous beach that is a 30-second walk from their tents.”

He believes Habonim is the only machaneh that provides Jewish youth with ways to connect to their Jewish identities “in ways that they all find meaningful and that challenge them to live their lives by Jewish values and morals.

“Habonim Machaneh is a place for all Jewish kids, and we have no doubt that “Machaneh16” is going to be a resounding success,” he told Jewish Report.

Schwartz is available on 082-883-0871 or e-mail david@habo.org.za

NETZER:

Netzer is the Progressive youth movement and they will be holding their summer camp in Grabouw near Cape Town between December 12 and 26. Parents may visit on December 18 between 11:00 and 14:00.

All meals served are kosher and there are still a few slots open, or at least there were when Jewish Report spoke to Daniel Norris earlier in the week. The unsubsidised cost is R9 000 with flights or R7 000 without.

For more information, e-mail camp@netzer.org.za or phone them on 078-647-1285. Visit their website at www.netzer.org.za



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Chaos of 2016 pushes youth to Israel

ANT KATZ

The number of South Africans going to Israel to do their high school and university studies there (partly free or heavily subsidised) has risen by leaps and bounds during 2016, according to the Israel Centre (The Jewish Agency’s offices in South Africa). Aliyah to Israel is up by more than 40 per cent in the past two years.

Aviad Sela, who has been the Jewish Agency’s (JA) shaliach in South Africa for the past two years, told Jewish Report this week that the Israel Centre is seeing much higher numbers of enquiries, which he attributes in part to the many young families who believe that Israel has more to offer them - and to the security uncertainty on South African campuses.

“People believe that a future offers less opportunity for young adults in South Africa,” says Aviad. “They do not believe that they will enjoy the opportunities their parents had” and are looking for a fresh start in a fast-growing economy and super hi-tech environment.

“We are expecting to see similar growth in 2017,” predicts Sela.

One popular Israeli university, IDC, had such a flood of applications and because so many enquiries were still coming in daily from South Africa, that when registrations closed in May, the university extended its deadline - for South Africans only - and eventually closed with new South African enrolments up from an average 45 per year to 70 for the 2016/18 academic year.

One of the incentives would have included the new SASI funding scheme put together by Telfed, the SAZF, the JA and South

African funders.

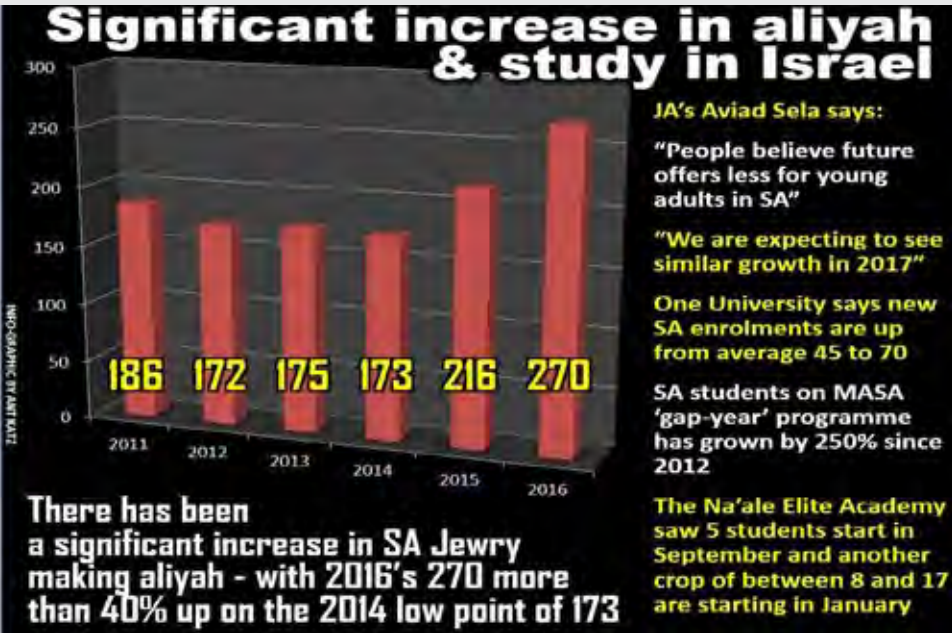
The one-year MASA “gap year” programme has also attracted record numbers from South Africa, Sela told Jewish Report. In fact, he says, the number of post-matric gap year students on the programme has grown by 250 per cent since 2012.

The Jewish Agency also opened what is only their fourth Project TEN community outside of Israel in Durban last month. It has already issued a newsletter of its October activities and will be holding an official opening in February where the keynote speaker will be Jewish Agency Chairman Natan Sharansky.

Sharansky announced recently that he will retire in June next year when his current term of office ends. He has chaired the agency since 2009.

The Israel Centres in Cape Town and Johannesburg are the Jewish Agency’s agents for the Na’ale Elite Academy, which offers free high school tuition and boarding in Israel, starting with English tuition. Five students started in September and another crop of between eight and 17 are starting in January.

The latter was a special arrangement made by the Israel Centre,



as the programme only takes teens up to 16 and a half years, which would have precluded the 17 applicants starting next month. They will all start grade 10 in Israel.

“Masa, free schooling and private travel to Israel are likely to encourage many people to stay,” says Sela. “We (the Jewish Agency) see this as the ultimate way to attract olim.” Many South African visitors who don’t want to study further, says Aviad, also stay because they see so many job opportunities in Israel.

Community

Bloem’s Jewish community - small in numbers, huge in spirit

MARGOT COHEN

Small in number but big in spirit, best describes Bloemfontein’s small Jewish community. “Presently there are just over 50 souls,” says Leah Chabas, organising secretary and archivist for the congregation.

Shabbat services are conducted by members of the community. All Yomtavim like Purim, Pesach, Shavuot and Succot are celebrated and suitable functions are held.

Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft, the SA Jewish Board of Deputies’ country communities rabbi, takes a deep interest in the Bloemfontein community. He pointed out that the Orthodox shul goes back to the 1890s. However, in 1996 the Reform shul was consecrated as the Orthodox shul by the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris, as the original Orthodox synagogue had become too big for the dwindling community.

Theology students of the University of the Free State regularly visit the shul as well as a number of other non-Jews, says Chabas. According to Rabbi Silberhaft the relationship between the different religious groups in the city is very cordial.

Popular Cantor Chaim Ehrlich conducts

the High Holy Days. The present chairman is Alan Berelowitz, who is also chairman of the Chevrah Kadisha.

“The highlight of our year is the communal breaking of the fast in the shul hall. It is a great social event.”

Says Chabas: “The highlight of our year is the communal breaking of the fast in the shul hall. It is a great social event.”

Julian and Benita Kowal who are 91 and 83 respectively, are good examples of lively active congregants. They have lived in Bloemfontein all their married lives. “Our days are busy with reading, gardening, walking and playing bridge, and of course visits from our daughter Lesley Harris and two grandchildren who live in Johannesburg, which we visit often,” says Benita. Husband Julian only



A communal breaking of the fast held at the community hall is a highlight of Bloemfontein's Jewish social calendar.

recently gave up bowls.

The late Ronnie Rosen as a past president was instrumental in establishing the archives with Dr Sheila Aronstam. This has proved to be a vital source of information for many visitors to the Jewish Communal Centre. Descendants of former congregants enjoy strolling through the archives, remembering their loved ones.

Thinking back on her youth in Bloemfontein in

the 60s and early 70s, Lesley Harris recalls the thriving and energetic large Jewish population of the town. Orthodox and Reform shul services were well attended.

The bayit was the meeting place for Habonim. Many visitors spent holidays in the city. There were countless high achievers who made their community proud and who contributed in many fields.

Tenacity and faith keep this small community going, boxing way above their weight. Despite not having had a rabbi for more than 20 years, they are still continuing to hold their own and to live their Yiddishkeit.

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The end of a memorable chapter

South African Jewish Report

It is with a mixture of sadness and relief that I am stepping down as editor of the SA Jewish Report at the end of this year. This, our bumper Chanukah edition, is our last print issue of 2016, though we will still be posting news on our website and Facebook page.

This most supportive team, both staff and board, have made it easier but the strain of commuting between Johannesburg and Cape Town every week just became too difficult to maintain. Fortunately, I have been encouraged to continue writing and contributing.

A few weeks ago, ChaiFM host Charisse Zeifert had me as a guest on her radio show. She asked me, now that I was leaving, to reflect on some of the challenges of the job, particularly, keeping all factions of the SA Jewish community happy. Was the community too divisive, too opinionated, too rigid, too right wing? What were my sentiments?

Before I began two short years ago, I had been warned that I would definitely find myself threatened, ridiculed and the object of anger at many points along my editorial journey.

And indeed, I think I did leave a few of the Orthodox rabbis quite aghast at times, particularly when we ran a story about a gay Jewish couple from Cape Town getting engaged at an Adele concert in Spain. We certainly angered members of the Victory Park community, when we provided extensive coverage of the Bobroff family’s fraud allegations since it is the neighbourhood where even the uninvolved Bobroffs live.

And we also irritated Jewish organisations



and schools who, at times, felt we did not give them enough coverage or offered too much attention to competing institutions.

The right-wingers told us the paper was too left and the left-wingers said we were too conservative.

That was to be expected though I never felt personally attacked, and my approach was to hear everyone out and not be too defensive.

But in reflection, what stands out for me - far beyond grumblings like these - is what an amazing community this is. For a demographic that is continually punctured and bruised by emigration as new generations choose to leave South Africa’s unsolvables behind - we still manage to thrive and innovate.

Despite our numbers, there are never enough pages in this paper to include all the accomplishments of our members, or the great initiatives they set up toward progress and to help others.

It was indeed a great privilege to be at the nerve centre of this vibrancy during my tenure. My message to the new editor (whenever that individual is appointed) is that there is a lot to be excited about!

I would like to think that I have helped to make the paper more relevant, more topical and more engaging; and my wish for my successor is that he/she builds on this and makes it even better.

To Jewish Report staff, our board and the community of readers, both local and international, you shall be missed.

– Vanessa Valkin, editor

Donald Trump will be ‘pro-Israel president’, most Israelis believe

JERUSALEM - Some 83 per cent of Israelis believe that President-elect Donald Trump will be a “pro-Israel president”, according to a new poll.

The poll commissioned by the Ruderman Family Foundation also found that 49 per cent of Israelis thought that the status of Jews in America would remain the same in the wake of the US election, while 32 per cent thought their status would be stronger and 19 per cent weaker.

Five hundred Israelis responded to questions about the recent US presidential election and its aftermath for Israel and the Jewish community.

The poll found that 32 per cent of Israelis were either slightly concerned or concerned by the increase in anti-Semitic incidents reported in the United States since the election, with 16 per cent very concerned and 20 per cent not concerned at all.

Some 48 per cent of respondents thought there was no chance that efforts by Trump would lead to a peace treaty between Israel and the Palestinians, with 45 per cent saying there was a possible chance.

At the same time, 49 per cent said there was a possible chance that Trump would move the US Embassy to Jerusalem from Tel Aviv, with 26 per cent giving a high chance and 22 per cent no chance.

On the Iran nuclear deal, 42 per cent said there was no chance that Trump would scrap the deal, with 43 per cent saying there was a possible chance. Only 2 per cent said there was no doubt that Trump would scrap the

deal.

“Our poll of Israelis regarding the new US administration and its impending impact on Israel and American Jewry shows that Israelis are optimistic that President-elect Trump will be a friend of Israel while at the same time they are concerned about the growing incidents of anti-Semitism in the United States and its impact on the American Jewish community,” Jay Ruderman, president of the Ruderman Family Foundation, said in a statement issued on Monday. (JTA)

Israeli Knesset bans short dresses and miniskirts inter alia

JERUSALEM - The Israeli Knesset has issued a new dress code, banning visitors and employees from wearing miniskirts and short dresses.

The rules were based on an earlier version and were “intended to clarify, as much as possible, the ambiguity that existed in the past - while expressing sensitivity and attempting not to hurt the feelings of our visitors and guests,” Yotam Yakir, a Knesset spokesman, told The Times of Israel on November 30.

Other banned articles of clothing include tank tops, cropped tops, shorts and three-quarter length pants, ripped pants, shirts with political slogans, flip flops and open back clogs, according to the Knesset website. The rules apply to those over the age of 14.

The main difference from previous rules is “the additional regulations regarding miniskirts,” a Knesset source told The Marker, according to The Times of Israel.

Guards have been instructed to watch out for dress code violations. (JTA)

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A lot of kick left in the old Yiddish mare

CINDY MORITZ

It was around 2002 when Philip Todres had staged the first two sold-out Yiddish Song Festival fundraisers for the Cape Jewish seniors that he had a lightbulb moment. After the Herzlia School choir's various renditions of old Yiddish favourites, including "Rosinkes mit mandlen", Jack Shmukler, a child Holocaust survivor, whispered to Todres (in Yiddish): "If we weren't doing this they wouldn't have a word of Yiddish in their mouths."

Todres understood that this was a chance to preserve the Jewish heritage l'dor va'dor, meaning from generation to generation.

"Yiddish is not just a language," says Todres. "It's a culture. It's about literature, film, theatre, song, food. There's a cultural imperative for us to regain those voices that were silenced in the Holocaust."

The Yiddish Song Festival ran for 10 years in Cape Town and had its 11th swansong performance in Johannesburg in 2011. It had expanded to include a three-day Yiddish immersion course, Otazay, which proved hugely popular, and continues today to give students the full cultural experience.

If an annual dose is not enough, doyenne of Yiddish studies in South Africa, Dr Veronica Belling - who did her doctoral thesis on Yiddish - teaches a weekly Yiddish class at the Cape Jewish Seniors Centre in Sea Point. In Johannesburg Yiddish classes are taught by Tamar Alswang and Cedric Ginsburg at the Yiddish Academy.

For Belling, who has a rich and varied academic footprint and has contributed enormously to chronicling Yiddish history and translating Yiddish work during her 31 years at UCT's Kaplan Centre for Jewish Studies, Yiddish has not been well served in South Africa despite South Africa's being predominantly a Litvak community.

“Other than two years when it was taught in the extramural programme at UCT and Wits, Yiddish has

never been taught as a subject in the universities here," she said, adding that nonetheless there is a body of Yiddish literature written in South Africa reflecting the eastern European immigrant experience.

But does it really warrant university-level study?

“From a cultural point of view it does,” says Belling, “in order to deepen and enhance our understanding of Jewish history and culture. From a linguistic point of view it also enhances the study of the languages from which it was derived, such as German, Hebrew and Polish, as well as the languages it has influenced, such as modern Hebrew and American English in particular.”

Columbia, Oxford and Chicago are among the many prestigious universities offering Yiddish studies, and no list of resources would be complete without mentioning the prolific YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. Widely known for his Yiddish research, writing and teaching, is Prof Dovid Katz, currently at Vilnius Gediminas Technical University.

He also lectures at the Jewish Cultural and Information Centre in Vilnius while continuing to advocate for preserving and defending the Yiddish culture and history. In Melbourne, Australia, Yiddish is a matric subject at one high school.

Clearly Yiddish culture - the language, food, song and theatre - is alive, even thriving, around the world, but are we doing enough in South Africa to keep up?

Possibly with baby steps. Todres is working with producer Heather Blumenthal of Spirit Sister on a documentary on the Yiddish Song Festival. Young talents are staging their own musical shows, and the Otazay course is attracting some younger blood as well.

At Herzlia, the choirs regularly belt out Yiddish favourites under the baton of Ivor Joffe, exposing them to at least some of the language in song. As the native Yiddish speakers become fewer, it will take some effort for South Africans to preserve their Litvak culture. There is no doubt, however, that Yiddish still matters.

Invigorated Fed keeps abreast of latest trends



Nicci Raz; Ben Swartz; Julie Berman, executive director of the SAZF's Cape Council; and Ginette Searle, executive director of Zionist Federation of Australia in New York last month where the Fed presented some of its programmes to key Jewish leadership.

ANT KATZ

The SA Zionist Federation's top national duo of Chairman Ben Swartz and Executive Director Nicci Raz, in an interview with Jewish Report last Friday, reviewed their activities over 2016 and how they have had to move to meet the changing needs of the time.

The national top team of lobbyists for Israel had been involved in Israel advocacy before, but 2016 has seen them redefining the organisation's priorities and strategies.

Swartz took over the chair early in 2015 from long-serving Avrom Kregel who had seen out his maximum allowed eight years. Raz came later, taking over what is effectively the CEO position from a retiring Isla Feldman - after a legendary 35-year-long reign - in January this year.

Do the two work well as a team? "We get each other," says Swartz. "Great," says Raz. And, adds Swartz, the Fed's very strong team in Cape Town and other centres around the country, have played a huge part in the process of rejuvenation.

Swartz said Raz had “made it her business to know how the community perceives the Fed”. Raz herself, has set herself some tough goals, like how to effectively engage with the community’s “middle-tier” - those aged between 25 and 35, who have historically been difficult for communal organisations to reach and get involved.

"It has been a year of revitalisation and reorganisation," explains Raz. Swartz says that Raz has been able to "mix her corporate experience with communal work". This, he posits, has led to a new "results-orientated organisation", which has had the effect of "pushing people out of their comfort zone".

The SAZF 2017 is very different from the 2015 version of itself, says Swartz, and today has a “dynamic of constant renewal”. While full of praise for the foundation of success of their predecessors, Swartz and Raz say that lobbying for Israel these days requires pushing boundaries, setting goals and measuring results. In the fast-moving digital world we live in today, says Swartz, it is essential to be prepared to have to react quickly.

"Whenever we deal with major issues we do so in collaboration and consultation with our affiliates and strategic partners," says Swartz.

"The strength of our affiliates and primary partners adds a huge degree to any success we are able to achieve."

Their primary partners are the likes of the Jewish Agency's Israel Centre, the SA Jewish Board of Deputies and the Fed's own structures around the country. Their second tier of affiliates and partners include the many

and various organisations and associations of people who love Israel, in South Africa and Africa, Jews and non-Jews alike.

He has noted the uptick among Jewish community organisations and other NGOs and civil society organisations seeing the value of what the Fed is doing. According to him, the Fed has become the “go-to” organisation for people seeking collaboration and assistance, not just in South Africa, but even global Jewish organisations are noting what the Fed is doing, he says.

Some of the strategic objectives and changes the two have instituted - most of which have already been implemented or are in the process of being so - are:

- Moving to a “proactive stance” to be prepared to deal with anti-Israel lobbyists;
- Becoming part of the digital revolution;
- Through the SAFI initiative, reaching further into pro-Israel community (the SAFI organisation recently passed the 100 000-member threshold);
- Improving the working dynamic between the Cape, Durban and Johannesburg. “We are all on same page,” says Swartz;
- Growing South Africa’s pride of place in programme’s like the Diller Foundation and the Jewish Agency’s Project TEN and Na’ale programmes;
- Looking at new-hires who are tech-savvy;
- Reaching out and collaborating with younger Jews;
- Being more proactive in media moderating and campaigns.

Among the big-ticket events of 2016 were finding private sponsors and building a new national office at Beyachad. Raz says this was done as the Fed needed more space, a more open-plan environment and to add rejuvenation to the workplace.

Another large portion of the Fed's resources have been directed to assisting seedling organisations, supporters and friends of Israel within South Africa and Africa, says Swartz. In terms of civil society organisations, there are over 20 fledgling groups in South Africa alone.

“This is not just pie in the sky,” says Swartz. The Fed has held numerous events in 2016 where more than half of the attendees were not Jewish.”

It is easy to know if one is doing a good job in communal Jewry, says Swartz. "When you do a bad job in the community, people tell you. We have had less and less of that," he says.

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Sherlock Holmes as you have never seen him before



PETER FELDMAN

PLAY: *Sherlock Holmes and the Curse of the Queen's Diamond*
CAST: Robert Fridjhon; Craig Jackson; Bronwyn Gottwald
DIRECTOR: Alan Swedlow
VENUE: The Studio, Pieter Toerien's Montecasino Theatre, Fourways, until January 15.

Two Jewish members of the theatre fraternity, renowned director Alan Swedlow and Robert Fridjhon have combined their creative forces to come up with an engaging and inventive satirical romp into the world of Sherlock Holmes.

This is one case that the famed detective never wanted mentioned or written about - and after watching the antics on stage, who can really blame him?

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's celebrated fictional detective is given a new sense of purpose in a production that breaks all the rules, a scenario where Monty Python meets the Goons and where anything can and does happen.

It is a weird and wacky pastiche that we enter and any resemblance to the real workings of Conan Doyle are purely coincidental. The props and the scenery are designed for quick changes and wooden benches cleverly double up as a carriage and then a train.

The script, penned by Fridjhon and assisted by Bronwyn Gottwald, is fresh and lively and embraces the key characters who have dominated Arthur Conan Doyle's numerous

books.

They are brought vividly to life by a sinister looking Fridjhon (playing both Holmes and his arch nemesis Moriarty), Craig Jackson (as Dr Watson, Queen Victoria and other entities) and Bronwyn Gottwald (as the faithful housekeeper Mrs Hudson, Irene Adler and Lord and Lady Salisbury among others).

The performers play wonderfully off each other and one can forgive them for occasionally corpsing on stage or the odd line fluff because it all adds to the utter insanity of the piece. They are having a good time and this transcends to the audience. When the hilarious Craig Jackson emerges as Queen Victoria in full regalia we can only applaud the sheer inventiveness in the costume department. Jackson is an amazingly adept actor and each of the characters he briefly portrays are striking personalities.

The story involves the theft of the massive Kohinoor diamond belonging to Queen Victoria. The famed sleuth and Dr Watson are dispatched by Her Royal Majesty to find it. The yarn takes the team to different locations where they eventually encounter the evil Moriarty who holds the key to the mystery.

Director Alan Swedlow keeps the action brisk. So, if you are looking for a fluffy two-hours of innocuous fun at the theatre this festive season, then this take on Sherlock Holmes is an ideal holiday outing for the whole family and even those without one.

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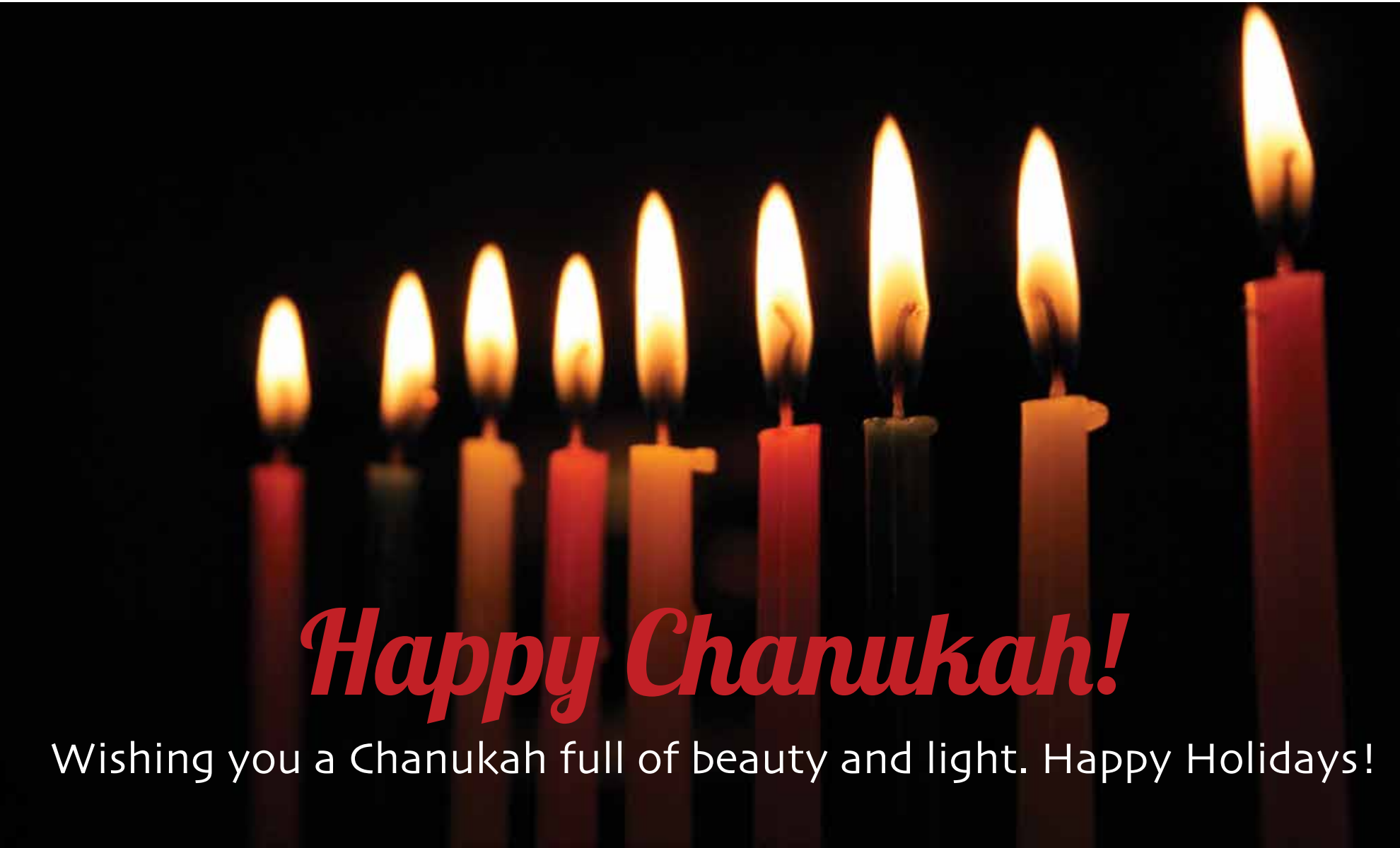
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Disclaimer

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.

ABOUT RABBI SILBERHAFT AS ‘GUEST RABBI’ IN PE’S SHABBOS PROJECT

I refer to the recent article regarding the Shabbos Project in Port Elizabeth which appeared in Jewish Report. I was under the impression that Rabbi Moshe Silberhaft is the country communities rabbi and I was therefore very surprised to read that he was the guest rabbi in a community which has a rabbi and which also had a visiting rabbi/chazan.
Surely a community without a rabbi, such

as Oudtshoorn, Kimberley, Bloemfontein, etc, would have benefited more from his visit, especially on that particular Shabbat?

Ellen Ettinger
East London

PS: East Londoners appreciated the write-up you gave us about our Challah Bake earlier in the year.

A HOLY CONFERENCE SHOULD BE HELD IN A HOLY LAND.

The picture in last week’s report showing thousands of Chabad emissaries and their guests at the annual Lubavitch kinus (conference) was indeed awesome. One can almost hear the thunderous sound of “We want Moshiach now” emanating from the throats of these dedicated Jews.

My first reaction would be that since this slogan would entail the speedy ingathering of our entire people to our Land of Israel after 2 000 years of exile, any conference of this kind by so many holy Jews should be held in our own land and not in a doomed Diaspora. A football field in Tel Aviv is far holier than any venue in the Diaspora.

Rabbi Dovid Hazdan was quite right when he reminded us of the time 26 years ago when the Rebbe “assured” South African Jews that it would be “good” for Jews in South Africa, and even better when Moshiach arrives.

Rabbi Hazdan, however, did not tell us that the same Rebbe also wrote the following profound words: “Any Jew living outside of Israel should always feel deep pain and remorse that he is living in exile away from his Homeland.” (Likutei

sichos Vol 30 p234).

In my opinion, if any Jew in the Diaspora felt this emotion at the time before the Second World War, he might have thought of making his way to “Palestine”. Almost all the chassidic and Orthodox rabbis in Europe before the war gave their communities the same advice to remain where they were. We all know the tragic and unspeakable consequences of their judgement.

Today, the raging plague of intermarriage and assimilation in the Diaspora is staggering. No amount of kiruv by Chabad or any other outreach movement is going to stop it. It is a crisis that only aliyah can stop. I believe that Chabad should concentrate much of their holy work in the Diaspora to this end. Isn’t this what we mean by “We want Moshiach now”?

I repeat: The picture in last week’s Jewish Report was indeed awesome. (But) it would be far more awesome if future conferences were held at the greatest gift of love Hashem gave to His people: The Land of Israel.

Choni Davidowitz
Golden Acres, Johannesburg

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

COMMUNITY HAS MUCH MORE TO WORRY ABOUT THAN KOL ISHA

The kol isha singing issue is unbelievably small and petty and the height of hypocrisy and intolerance by the Orthodox; the Orthodox don’t own the Holocaust. All kinds of Jews died, including women and children - including girls.

That means nothing to some small-minded Orthodox who think they are the judge of Jewish people.

It took months of talking to (finally) decide to have two services! That could have been decided in 10 minutes by sane, serious Jews.

Is this all that the South African Jewish community has to talk about - this utterly

ridiculous trivial “argument”? And to worry about?

South Africa is in a bad state in very serious ways; rather think about the future of the Jewish community whose position is fragile, to say the least. What are you going to do when the bubble pops and the crunch comes?

How will the “problem of Jewish women and girls singing” look then?

The action is utterly selfish and stupid.

Stanley Friedman
Israel

Who can help with information on Karri Davies?

Belinda Eisenhauer, a freelance librarian of Perth in Australia, wrote to Jewish Report about an article which appeared in the paper’s Community Buzz column on May 22, 2009, on “Karridene” on the KwaZulu-Natal south coast.

She writes: “I am busy researching David Walter ‘Karri’ Davies (1861-1926), an Anglo-Boer War personality, mining magnate and founder of Karridene on the KZN south coast. Karri Davies was from a Western Australian family based in Karridale - hence the interest, as there are descendants living there now. “I have come across a couple of gaps in Karri Davies’ history in South Africa. Despite extensive research we are unable to find any further information.”

She is appealing to Jewish Report readers for more information.
“We are especially interested in establishing when he left South Africa permanently.”
Eisenhauer may be contacted at beaemgm25@yahoo.com.au.

Holiday fare will be on our website

This is the last print edition of SA Jewish Report until January 20. Our website www.sajr.co.za will publish fresh news and user content daily, 24/6 so stay tuned.

We will also highlight the most-read stories of the year and publish our free weekly newsletter (subscribe on any page of the website).



Were claims of Israel’s ‘arson intifada’ overblown?

ANDREW TOBIN
TEL AVIV

As wildfires threatened Israel last week, rhetoric linking arson to terrorism heated up.

For about a week, fires across the country burned huge swaths of land, destroyed hundreds of homes and businesses, and forced tens of thousands of people to flee. Dozens were injured, though fortunately few seriously.

As the blazes raged, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said several times that they were set by arsonists and amounted to acts of terrorism. He and other ministers in his government pledged to work to revoke the residency of those found guilty - a threat typically reserved for Arab Israelis.

“Every fire caused by arson, or by incitement to arson, is terrorism,” Netanyahu told reporters last month at a briefing in Haifa, a northern city where tens of thousands were evacuated from their homes. “Anyone who tries to burn parts of the State of Israel will be punished severely.”

Netanyahu was not alone in apparently singling out Israel’s Arab residents and citizens. Interior Minister Aryeh Deri and Culture Minister Miri Regev both threatened last month to revoke the citizenship of arsonists.

Education Minister Naftali Bennett described the blazes as “terrorism in every sense of the word.” And Defence Minister Avigdor Lieberman called for expanding West Bank settlements in response to the supposed terror wave.

But now that the fires have been stamped out by the heroic efforts of Israeli and foreign firefighters and rain has finally come, it appears that some of the claims about terrorism may have been premature. Amid ongoing investigations, fire and security officials investigating the blazes have been much more cautious about drawing conclusions than Netanyahu and his government partners.

“In most areas you won’t find many things that say whether it was arson,” Ran Shelef, the Fire and Rescue Authority’s chief investigator, told The Jerusalem Post last Sunday.

A day earlier, the authority’s Northern District investigator Herzl Aharon said, according to Israel’s Channel 2: “We still don’t know anything. I wish I had a direction. I go to a place and get an insight - and then I go to another place and everything changes. This is what you call a illusion of the topography, the bedlam of the mountainous region, and it’s very difficult to investigate.”

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At least 35 people were arrested on suspicion of committing arson or inciting others to do so, mostly Palestinians and the rest Arab Israelis. But by last Saturday, only 10 remained in custody for suspected arson, with the rest released unconditionally, Channel 2 reported.

Only two suspects have been indicted, and one claims he was just burning garbage. And though no one doubts there was some arson involved, motives remain unclear.

“It’s still too early to rule nationalistic motives,” police officials told Channel 10 on Tuesday. “Yes, there were incidents of arson, but nationalistic motives are far from being



definitively concluded.”

In the absence of proof, some have criticised the rush to judgement.

“The habit of inflaming the atmosphere by politicians is playing into the hands of the terrorists,” Yoram Schweitzer, a former Israeli intelligence official and head of terrorist research at the Institute for National Security Studies think tank, told JTA. “A basic principle of fighting terrorism is to differentiate between the community who is allegedly or potentially supportive of such acts and the terrorists themselves. This is the first principle that was breached,” he added.

On Monday, Ayman Odeh, head of the Joint List, a coalition of Arab political parties, said he would seek to have Netanyahu

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investigated for incitement for seeming to accuse Arab Israelis of deliberately setting fires. Odeh said he would formally request a probe by the attorney general.

“Everyone knows that there wasn’t a wave of terrorism, there wasn’t a ‘fire intifada,’” he said, using a term some Israeli media outlets had put in their headlines.

Police officials have said they suspect arson

was widespread rejoicing and talk of Divine punishment under the Arabic hashtag “Israel is burning”,

But especially after the Palestinian Authority sent firefighting help and some Arabs publicly condemned the arsonists, people began asking questions like: “If it’s coming from G-d, what did we do wrong to explain what’s happening in our states?” she said.

Schweitzer, the terrorism researcher, said it was noteworthy that the arson had flamed out on its own, despite the incendiary comments by Israeli politicians. Among other things, he said, that was because Arab Israelis are “part of the victims and part of Israeli society”.

“Instead of calming the population, which is the task of leaders, Israeli politicians did the reverse and claimed an ‘arson intifada,’” he said. “That’s just not wise, to put it very mildly.” (JTA)



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Nine things you didn’t know about Chanukah

JULIE WIENER
NEW YORK

Chanukah, which starts at sundown on December 24, is among the most widely celebrated Jewish holidays in the United States. But that doesn’t mean there is nothing new to learn about this eight-day festival.

From the mysterious origins of gelt to an apocryphal beheading to Marilyn Monroe, we’ve compiled an item for each candle (don’t forget the shamash!) on the Chanukah menorah.

1. Gelt as we know it is a relatively new tradition – and no one knows who invented it.

While coins - “gelt” is Yiddish for coins, or money - have been part of Chanukah observance for centuries, chocolate gelt is considerably younger. In her book “On the Chocolate Trail”, Rabbi Deborah Prinz writes that “opinions differ” concerning the origins of chocolate gelt: Some credit America’s Loft candy company with creating it in the 1920s, while others suggest there were European versions earlier that inspired Israel’s Elite candy company.

Prinz notes, as well, that chocolate gelt resembles a European Christmas tradition of exchanging gold-covered chocolate coins “commemorating the miracles of St Nicholas”.

2. The first Chanukah celebration was actually a delayed Succot observance.

The second book of Maccabees

quotes from a letter sent circa 125 BCE from the Hasmoneans, the Maccabees’ descendants, to the leaders of Egyptian Jewry describing the holiday as “the festival of Succot celebrated in the month of Kislev rather than Tishrei”.

Since the Jews were still in caves fighting as guerrillas on Tishrei, 164 BCE, they had been unable to honour the eight-day holiday of Succot, which required visiting the Jerusalem Temple. Hence it was postponed until after the recapture of Jerusalem and the rededication of the Temple. Many scholars believe it is this - not the Talmudic legend of the cruse of oil that lasted eight days - that explains why Chanukah is eight days long.

3. The books of Maccabees, which tell the story of Chanukah, were not included in the Hebrew Bible – but they are in the Catholic Bible.

There are different theories explaining why the first-century rabbis who canonised the scriptures omitted the Maccabees, ranging from the text’s relative newness at the time to fears of alienating the Roman leadership then in control of Jerusalem.

4. Marilyn Monroe owned a music-playing Chanukah menorah (the Marilyn Monrorah?)

When the Hollywood star converted to Judaism before marrying the Jewish playwright Arthur Miller, her future mother-in-law gave her a menorah as a conversion gift. The Chanukah lamp, which the meno-



Children spinning dreidels at the Eldridge Street Synagogue in New York City. The game of dreidel was inspired by a German game played at Christmas time.

rah’s current owner says Mrs Miller brought back from Jerusalem, has a wind-up music box in its base that plays “Hatikvah”, Israel’s national anthem.

The Marilyn menorah is featured in the Jewish Museum in New York City’s exhibit “Becoming Jewish: Warhol’s Liz and Marilyn”, but sadly you cannot wind it up.

5. The game of dreidel was inspired by a German game played at Christmas time that itself is an imitation of an English and Irish one.

Our Eastern European game of dreidel (including the Hebrew letters nun, gimmel, hey and shin) is directly based on the German equivalent of the British totum game: N = Nichts = nothing; G = Ganz = all; H = Halb = half, and S = Stell ein = put in. In German, the

spinning top was called a “torrel” or “trundl”.

6. Oily food (think latkes and sufganiyot) isn’t Chanukah’s only culinary tradition.

Traditionally, Chanukah has included foods with cheese in recognition of Judith, whose liberal use of the salty treat facilitated a victory for the Maccabees.

7. On Chanukah, we celebrate a grisly murder.

The aforementioned Judith had an ulterior motive for plying the Assyrian general Holofernes with salty cheese: making him thirsty so he would drink lots of wine and pass out, enabling her to chop off his head and bring it home with her. The beheading - particularly the fact that a woman carried it

out - was said to have frightened Holofernes’ troops into fleeing the Maccabees.

8. The next “Thanksgivukkah” (sort of), is only 55 years away.

In 2013, the convergence of Thanksgiving and Chanukah on November 28 inspired everything from turkey-shaped menorahs to a giant dreidel float in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Parade.

While experts say a full day of Chanukah won’t coincide with the fourth Thursday in November for thousands of years, the first night of Chanukah will fall in time for Thanksgiving dinner (assuming you have the meal at dinnertime rather than in the afternoon) on November 27, 2070.

9. The largest menorah in the world, according to the Guinness Book of World Records, is 32 feet high and weighs 4 000 pounds.

The Shulchan Aruch stipulates that a menorah should be no taller than about 31 feet. Incidentally, Guinness lists at least three other Chanukah-related records: most dreidels spinning simultaneously for at least 10 seconds (734), most people simultaneously lighting menorahs (834) and largest display of lit menorahs (1 000). We’d like to know the most latkes ever eaten in one sitting. (MyJewishLearning via JTA)

• Julie Wiener is the managing editor of MyJewishLearning.)

How to light the Chanukah candles

AISH.COM
NEW YORK

- 1 Use candles big enough to burn for at least 30 minutes. Many use olive oil to recall the original miracle in the Temple. They should be the same height and preferably in a straight line.
- 2 The prevalent custom is to light the menorah indoors by a window facing the street; in Israel many light the menorah outside their front doorway.
- 3 The preferable time to light the menorah is at nightfall. It is best to light in the presence of many people in order to publicise the miracle.
- 4 Light the Shamash, recite the blessings and, then use the Shamash to light the Chanukah candles. Light the new candle added that day first.

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Five oils to try this Chanukah

SHANNON SARNA
NEW YORK

It’s the week of frying while we celebrate the miracle of the oil lasting for eight nights, instead of just one. That’s how the story goes, right?

And if you are getting into the spirit of enjoying some fried foods, you might be wondering which oils are best to use. While your extra virgin olive oil might be great the rest of the year, let it sit the week of Chanukah out. Here are a few other oils to consider:

Coconut oil

If you are trying to be healthy, or keeping a paleo-style diet, then coconut oil is for you. Coconut oils get extra points for health benefits as well as a high smoke point, which is important for frying both latkes and sufganiyot. Caution: Some coconut oils may leave a (surprise, surprise) slight coconut taste, so experts recommend trying a few brands before frying up latkes for 100 people.

Peanut oil

If you care more about flavour than health, peanut oil might be for you. Similar to coconut oil, it has a high smoke point but does not

impart the same health benefits. For doughnuts, it can lend a complimentary nutty flavour to the sweetness of your fried treats.

Safflower oil

Safflower oil is very light and imparts almost no taste to the foods you are frying, but like peanut oil doesn’t do anything for your health.

Red palm oil

Red palm oil is one of the latest “superfoods” and is said to be both neutral in flavour and have major health benefits when consumed daily. Some health experts say the oil of the red palm fruit is regarded as a sacred healing food by ancient civilisations. However, others warn that the production of red palm oil plays a role in rainforest depletion and the habitat destruction of orangutans.

Vegetable oil

Personally I stick to vegetable oil or canola oil for the simple fact that I almost always have it on hand, it does not impart any flavour to fried foods and it gets the job done. But it does not have the same health benefits as coconut or palm oil. (JTA)



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Alan’s latkes have set a very high benchmark

Chanukah without latkes... Unthinkable! But then there are latkes and latkes. And for the connoisseur, there’s Alan Bender’s latkes. Bender is the master chef at Feigel’s in Johannesburg and a fellow of the SA Chef Association. He has added spice and variety to his basic latke recipe.

ALAN BENDER

Alan Bender’s latke recipe

- Ingredients:**
- 6 large potatoes peeled and left in water
 - 1 large onion peeled
 - 4 eggs
 - 1 tablespoon salt
 - ½ cup sugar (more or less)
 - ½ to 1 cup flour
 - 1 heaped teaspoon baking powder
 - Oil for frying

Method:

- 1: Fill a large pan one third of the way with oil, and heat to a medium temperature.
- 2: Grate the potatoes and onion into a bowl and add everything else. Fry a tablespoon of the mixture to test and taste to see if there is enough sugar, salt and flour, then adjust accordingly. If the latke disintegrates, add a little more flour and if it’s an oily heavy lump, add a little more baking powder and raise the heat of the oil.
- 3: Be careful of the hot oil. Wear long sleeves; always place the latke mixture in carefully and turn the latkes over away from you when one side is golden. Have a tray lined with absorbent paper to suck up the surface oil ready to receive the cooked latkes.

Cooking tips:

- When turning the latkes, use a slotted spoon; it reduces the splash and helps the oil drain.
- The potatoes will start to weep water the moment they are mixed. Don’t add more flour; just use your fingers or a slotted spoon to separate the potato mix from the liquid, discarding the liquid left over.



Master Chef Alan Bender (centre) with Feigel’s team Patsy Dakes and Jos Zaslansky.

Some variants on the latke:

- The classic American sour cream or apple sauce is great, but we are South Africans, so try this for size:
- 1: Slip some fried fish fingers into the latke mix just before frying and as it comes out of the oil, place a slice of cheese on top so it melts slightly.
 - 2: Place a piece of cooked wors in the middle and top with chakalaka.
 - 3: Mix some fine biltong powder with mayo and use that as a dip.
 - 4: Smoked salmon and cream cheese make a classic topping.
 - 5: Pulled (shredded) beef in a sticky sauce is delicious.
 - 6: Just before you put the latke in the oil, sprinkle over some corn flakes for extra crunch.
- If you don’t feel like potatoes, replace with grated butternut, sweet potato, tinned corn (not sweet corn) or just about any vegetable as the flour and egg will turn it into a great latke.

Egg free and dairy free latkes for Chanukah are a big hit

VICKY COHEN AND RUTH FOX
NEW YORK

Ask and ye shall receive, or so the old saying goes. We’ve had several requests on our Facebook page for vegan latkes. And we are glad to discover that our dear friends Vicky and Ruth of “May I Have That Recipe” had already tackled this holiday dish. So, if you are looking for an egg free and dairy free version of your favourite potato latkes, look no further.

- Ingredients:**
- 2 lbs yukon gold potatoes or a good local brand
 - 2 tsp salt
 - 1 cup chopped cilantro (coriander)
 - 1 large garlic clove, grated
 - ¼ tsp black pepper
 - 2 tsp onion powder
 - 2 tsp turmeric
 - 1/3 cups vegan mayo/sandwich spread
 - ¾ cups vegetable oil for frying

Directions:

- Preheat oven to 350F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Place grated potatoes in a colander with a bowl or plate underneath. Sprinkle 1 tsp of salt on the potatoes and mix well. Let stand for 10 minutes (the potatoes will release some liquid).



- Using a cheesecloth or a clean kitchen towel, ring out excess moisture from the grated potatoes (make sure to squeeze out as much liquid as possible).
- Add garlic, salt, pepper, turmeric, chopped cilantro and vegan sandwich spread and mix well until well combined with the potatoes. Use your hands to form about 15 small latkes.
- Heat about a ¼ cup of oil in a non-stick skillet and drop about 5 latkes in at a time. Cook at medium heat, 3 - 4 minutes per side or until golden brown. Place them on a plate lined with paper towels to absorb excess oil.
- Repeat the process 2 more times, using ¼ cup of oil each time. Place latkes on the baking sheet and bake for 15 - 20 minutes or until crispy. (JTA)



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Creamy white bean soup with sauteed spinach.

- 4 scallions, thinly sliced, divided

For the eggs:

- 4 cups water
- 4 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon white vinegar

Preparation:

Preheat the oven to 375 F. Place a rimmed baking sheet in the oven to heat.

To make the pancakes:

- Steam the broccoli until tender but still crisp, about 3 to 5 minutes. While the broccoli cooks, sauté the spinach in 1 tablespoon of the olive oil in a skillet until wilted, about 3 minutes, then remove from the heat and roughly chop.
- In a large bowl, scramble the eggs, and then add the baking soda, flour, bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese; stir to combine. Add the broccoli, spinach and half the scallions. Mix to combine.
- Remove the hot baking sheet from the oven and grease with the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil. With an ice cream scoop, place pancakes evenly on the baking sheet. Gently press the top of each pancake to flatten. Bake for 10 minutes, then flip and bake for another 2 minutes, or until the centres of the pancakes are cooked through.

- To make the poached eggs** (start with about 8 minutes remaining on the pancakes):
- Boil the water in a large high-rimmed skillet.

- heat to low and let simmer for about 20 minutes.
- Once the garlic is roasted, add it to the soup by popping each clove out of its protective paper. In batches, transfer to a blender or food processor and puree until smooth, then pour the soup back into the stockpot.
 - Add the remaining can of white beans, remaining 1/4 cup vegetable stock and the Parmesan to the pureed mixture and heat through, about 10 minutes. Season to taste with salt.
 - In a sauté pan, heat the remaining 1 table-spoon olive oil, then add the spinach. Cook until completely wilted, about 4 minutes.
 - To serve, pour equal amounts of the soup into each of 4 bowls and top with the sau-téed spinach and an extra drizzle of olive oil.

Tips: Make sure you are constantly scraping the bottom of the stockpot - that’s where so much flavour lives!

Use the best olive oil you can find; it really makes such a difference, especially when used as a garnish.

Spinach, broccoli and scallion pancakes with poached eggs
Serves 4

Ingredients:
For the pancakes:

- 1 1/2 cups chopped broccoli
- 4 cups packed baby spinach
- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese



MEGAN WOLF
NEW YORK

Chanukah is a celebration, a joyful holiday with delicious food and family memories. I remember lighting our menorah as a little girl with my bubbe. Now, raising my daughter, I hope to create special memories with her. Food is typically at the centre of our celebrations and this Chanukah I have created a spinach-focused menu for a delicious and festive meal.

Starting with creamy white bean soup, inspired by my mother’s love for soup served in large mugs, this dish sets the tone for a deliciously healthy meal. Warm and satisfying, this dish is topped with jewel-toned sautéed spinach and is pretty enough to serve to company. And it’s easy enough to make on a week night.

Most people think about traditional potato latkes on Chanukah. My spinach, broccoli and scallion pancakes with poached eggs are just as delicious - you can serve it without the eggs, if you like.

Growing up, we would enjoy sour cream and applesauce with our potato latkes. Sour cream (or Greek yoghurt!) would be a perfect pairing for these light, vegetable-filled pan-cakes. I like mine with hot sauce.

Spinach salad with quinoa, toasted pista-chios and cranberries is among my favourite recipes from my cookbook “Great Meals with Greens and Grains”, with its interesting tex-tures, bold flavours and a bright and balanced dressing. It could not be easier to make and is sure to be a hit on your holiday table.

Creamy white bean soup with sautéed spinach
Serves 4

- Ingredients:**
- 1 head garlic, top quarter sliced off and discarded
 - 1/4 cup olive oil, divided, plus more for garnish
 - 1 tablespoon butter
 - 1 medium Vidalia onion, sliced
 - 2 1/2 cups low-sodium vegetable stock, divided
 - 1 dried bay leaf
 - 2 cans (15 ounces each) white beans, rinsed and drained, divided
 - 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
 - Salt to taste
 - 5 ounces baby spinach

- Preparation:**
- Preheat the oven to 375 F.
 - Place the garlic on a piece of aluminium foil and drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil. Wrap into a pouch and roast for 30 to 40 minutes, or until the garlic is soft and golden brown.
 - In a large stockpot, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil and the butter over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until soft, stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Add 2 1/4 cups of the vegetable stock, the bay leaf and 1 can of the white beans to the onions. Bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the

Once the water comes to a boil, crack each egg into its own ramekin. Add the white vinegar to the boiling water, reduce the heat to medium-low and drop each egg into the hot water. Cover the skillet and let the eggs cook for 3 minutes.

- Remove the pancakes from the oven and serve 2 or 3 to a plate depending on their size. Top each plate with a poached egg and a sprinkle of the remaining scallions. Serve immediately.

Tip: If poaching all four eggs at once feels too daunting, try two at a time. Eggs cook quickly and this won’t greatly delay your meal.

Spinach salad with quinoa, toasted pista-chios and cranberries
Serves 4

- Ingredients:**
For the lemon vinaigrette:
- 1/4 cup olive oil
 - Juice of 1 lemon
 - 2 cloves garlic, pushed through a garlic press or very well minced
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt (or more to your taste)

- For the salad:**
- 1/4 cup quinoa
 - 1 cup water
 - 1/2 cup shelled pistachios
 - 10 ounces baby spinach
 - 1 medium Anjou pear
 - 1/2 cup dried sweetened cranberries
 - 1/2 cup pitted and sliced olives
 - olives
 - Salt to taste

Preparation:
To make the lemon vinaigrette: Whisk the ingredients together.

- To make the salad:**
- Combine the quinoa and water in a pot and bring to a boil. Once the water is boiling, turn down the heat to low, cover the pot and cook another 10 minutes, or until the quinoa has softened and the water has evaporated; set aside.
 - Toast the pistachios in a small skillet over low heat until they are just golden brown and fragrant, 3 to 5 minutes; set aside.
 - Place the spinach in a large bowl. Thinly slice the pear and add it to the bowl along with the cranberries and olives.
 - Just prior to serving, add the toasted pistachios and cooked quinoa, toss with the lemon vinaigrette and season with salt.
 - Serve family style or in individual bowls or on plates.

Tip: Getting the garlic really finely minced or crushed will help the flavour dissipate, so that instead of biting into a piece of raw garlic, the salad is nicely seasoned with a garlic essence. (JTA)

Time-travelling candles

SARAH BENDETSKY
JERUSALEM

I am seven or eight years old. I am an ordinary girl with blonde hair and an unordinary last name. And I have a big secret, too.

The windows are frosted; it’s dark and snowing outside. I sit on a warm carpet in our living room, enchanted by the lights of multi-coloured Chanukah candles.

Packed in a light-blue box, these candles arrived in a humanitarian aid parcel from Israel, together with a tin candleholder, a blue dreidel and I have a big secret - a small bag of chocolate coins - the most delicious treat in the entire world. My world includes our apartment and suburb, and the whole city of Moscow. And it also includes the faraway country of Israel, where people speak Hebrew - the language I don’t know yet but will definitely learn one day.

The country featuring a blue star on its flag - the same star as the one I wear on my necklace. The country where multi-coloured candles live in light-blue boxes and get to travel to other places to spread their light.

We are getting ready for the New Year at school. There is a huge Christmas tree in the auditorium decorated with balls and garlands. During the day we practise for the end-of-year concert, where I play a “snowflake” - just like all the other Russian girls. But I can’t wait for the night time, when a different holiday will enter my life - the one I don’t talk about in school. It’s my Chanukah...

Time goes by, and I change schools. Now the auditorium features a big menorah. Our teachers say that another menorah is going to be lit in the Red Square in the centre of Moscow. Can you believe that? Now that’s a Chanukah miracle!

During the festive week, our classes are shortened; we enjoy school concerts, doughnuts and latkes, and - guess what? - each learner receives a genuine American dollar for Chanukah gelt!

Coats are abandoned in the cloakroom and we run to the currency exchange booth near the school, laughing away. The snow is crisp, our cheeks are red... Ah, the joy of Chanukah!

Time travels fast, and here I am celebrating my first Chanukah in the United States. I am 16, and I’ve been here for exactly one month and 10 days. Apparently, it’s quite common to erect electric menorahs on car roofs. I stop each time I see one, realising that it’s possible to reveal my Jewishness here.

“Happy Chanukah to you, too!” I answer back. “And may you be blessed with an abundance of miracles, no matter where you end up celebrating this wonderful holiday!”

I rush into a Judaica store and buy my first menorah, which is designed to look like the Kotel, the Western Wall. I hold it tight and run back home to light it.

Time passes... now I am a 19-year-old seminary student in Montreal. My friends and I are in charge of Chanukah activities. It is a big responsibility to bring the holiday spirit to life, knowing how many children are looking forward to our Chanukah party.

So I try really hard to make decorations and choose the right music, while my friends are practising the play, setting up the game stations and selecting the raffle prizes. And very soon, another Chanukah miracle takes place - our

young audience is mesmerised by what they see on stage.

And now, here I am, frying latkes in my tiny kitchen in Crown Heights, New York. They don’t look great - which isn’t surprising. I never cooked before I got married. I am upset that half of the latkes look overdone, while the other half are too pale... But it’s not the end of the world, since the “first-Chanukah smell” is coming out of every apartment in our building, where so many newlyweds start their life together. A year later, my husband Avi is lighting the menorah while holding our newborn son on his lap. And my latkes are golden and perfect (well, not quite perfect, but good enough). Time leaps, and I make a new discovery: In Australia, Chanukah falls during the summer! No more frost on my windows, but a wonderful concert in Caulfield Park instead - with magical fireworks, reaching higher than the palm trees and eucalyptuses. And here is my daughter, twirling around like a dreidel herself... One year, I get the opportunity to celebrate Chanukah in Israel. I’m flying in the middle of the holiday, and I have a layover in Thailand. I worry that I won’t be able to light candles in the airport. I ask one of the airport staff members to allow me to light these tiny candles in a tin candleholder. (Yes, they are in the light-blue box identical to the ones I had in my childhood. To my surprise, I found these at a local supermarket the day before my flight.)

I calmly explain to the staff member: “Chanukah is a Jewish holiday, which celebrates the miracle of oil and the victory of one’s faith over circumstances - so we light candles for eight days... Yes, no matter where we end up in the world... And this Chanukah, I am in Bangkok, so will you let me light them... Please?

No, madam, it is not my birthday today... So why do these candles look like birthday-cake

candles?... Well, haven’t I just explained to you the whole story?”

Resigned, I make my way to the El Al counter, which finally opens up for check-in. Suddenly, I realise that Chanukah isn’t a purely religious holiday in Israel, but a national one too, uniting people from all walks of life. Passengers are offered jam doughnuts, and I get a warm feeling that I am going home.

Once in Jerusalem, I can’t stop looking at the sparkling lights on the roads. These are golden menorahs, as opposed to Christmas trees and garlands, which decorate all the cities I’ve lived in at this time of the year.

All I have is six days here. I try to see and feel as much as possible, but, most importantly, to understand what it is like to live on one’s own land and not be a minority.

Meanwhile, the country enjoys its break from work and school and Israelis of all ages are seen in shopping centres, playgrounds and bakeries, where doughnuts of all flavours are waiting for their turn to be chosen. And let me tell you, choosing just one is next to impossible...

At night, when I walk on the streets of Jerusalem, I see little children in almost every window, enchanted by the playful lights of Chanukah candles. “Happy Chanukah!” I hear at the Machaneh Yehuda market, at a bus stop, and just about everywhere else. I’m not used to hearing greetings from complete strangers and I smile back, frantically trying to recognise these people, revealing that I am a visitor from overseas.

“Happy Chanukah to you, too!” I answer back. “And may you be blessed with an abundance of miracles, no matter where you end up celebrating this wonderful holiday!”

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“SEARINGLY FUNNY ... THE FUGARD’S *BAD JEWS* RAISES THE BAR”
CAPE TIMES

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Winners of Infinity draw will be known early next year



SUZANNE BELLING

Every year Torah Academy has a competition to raise funds for bursaries for learners whose parents cannot afford the school fees. Some 20 learners received bursaries this year. Called Infinity, the annual draw with a first prize of R50 000 and a second prize of R10 000, was held at Lubavitch House at the school on Thursday last week. The winners will be announced early in the new year.

Smith and Tager are Crawford Sandton’s Dux scholars



OWN CORRESPONDENT

Congratulations to Adina Tager (Grade 4) and Carmen Smith (Grade 5) who were awarded the most prestigious academic awards at Crawford Preparatory School Sandton - the Dux Scholars for 2016.



Yeshiva College 2016 matriculants get huge send-off



Rabbi Leron Bernstein (MD of Yeshiva College) and Rabbi Tzvi Chaimovitz (Menahel, Boys' High School) with some of the Yeshiva College matriculants.

OWN CORRESPONDENT

The Yeshiva College matric class of 2016 was treated to a huge celebration at the end of their final exam, complete with balloons, confetti and graduation caps. The learners wrote their final exams in civvies so that they could donate their uniforms and school shoes to those less fortunate. They may no longer be Yeshiva College learners, but they will “now and forever” remain Yeshiva College alumni.

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

Sydenham Nursery School bids ‘graduates’ farewell

SUE BENJAMIN

Sydenham Hebrew Nursery School bade a fond farewell to their grade R graduates of 2016. The school wished all of them going to “big school” next year success in all they do and “may they endeavour to uphold the tiny spark that our special school ignited within them as they make their way to a bright future”.



Rosabelle Klein’s grade Rs graduate with aplomb

CAROL LEVY

There was not a dry eye in the room when Rosabelle Klein’s beloved, mature and self-assured grade Rs last week received their graduation caps and gowns and walked off proudly to a very new and exciting chapter in their young lives. They have acquitted themselves very well this year, growing into responsible menschen of whom the school are very proud. Their graduation ceremony was a moving tribute to them and all they have learned under the capable eye of class teacher Lisa Klaff. “Congratulations! Today is your day. You’re off to great places! You’re off and away! You’ll move mountains!” Rosabelle Klein will miss them all. Pictured is the grade R class. Back: Lisa Klaff (teacher); Jack Senior; Aaron Pantanowitz; David Zwarenstein; and Camden Lewis. Front: Ricky Kur; Joseph Human; Isabella Cohen; Franki Block; and Sam Ellert.

But some of my best friends are black!



TAKING ISSUE

Geoff Sifrin

One of the ugliest racial incidents of 2016 occurred last month when two white farmers near Middelburg sadistically forced a young black man into a coffin, pushed the lid down and threatened him with setting the coffin alight, because he took a shortcut over their farm. They videoed their act and put it on YouTube, with the victim’s terrified cries clearly heard on the soundtrack.

Most South Africans were disgusted and wished the worst on the white men when they appeared in court. Indeed, the experience of most people in urban areas today - South Africa is a highly urbanised society - is the opposite: a remarkable degree of kindness and warm-heartedness between blacks and whites.

Frans Cronjé, CEO of the SA Institute of Race Relations, says within most

South Africans there exists a “vast well of common decency and mutual respect across the colour line”, despite the country’s brutal racial history and politicians attempting to turn people against each other.

He quotes a 2016 poll asking people whether “the different races need each other for progress and there should be full opportunity for people of all races”. Nearly 84 per cent of people in mainly black urban areas said yes. In informal areas and shack settlements almost 90 per cent agreed. Among white people just over 80 per cent agreed.

But what about personal friendships between black and white? Last Monday marked three years since Nelson Mandela died, and anyone who witnessed the scores of black and white people hugging, crying and dancing together in the road outside his house in Houghton, Johannesburg that day would have thought he had made it possible for skin colour not to matter anymore.

In the beautiful nation he envisaged, blacks and whites would not just tolerate each other, but become friends in the

deeper sense. Sadly, it has not happened on a mass scale, despite many people’s best intentions. The power relationship between blacks and whites is too skewed, not a good foundation for genuine friendship. In the main, whites are still too wealthy and powerful compared to their black compatriots.

How many people in the Jewish community - or any other white community - have personal black friends? Not just colleagues at work, or familiar waiters in restaurants with whom they exchange greetings, but actual friends with whom they socialise, share intimacies and spend lots of time. Very few. Superficial, contrived friendships are not enough to show that racism has gone.

Indeed, those sorts of light friendships referred to above ring alarm-bells for Jews who have often heard Jew-haters loudly proclaiming how many Jews they know, as if this proves their non-racial credentials: “You can’t say I’m anti-Semitic, because some of my best friends are Jews!”

Sisonke Msimang, a Ruth First Fellow in Journalism at Wits University, posed a

tough question in the book *Ties that Bind: Race and the Politics of Friendship in South Africa*. She asked whether, as Mandela’s rainbow nation myth recedes, reconciliation in South Africa still requires interracial friendships as a barometer of the nation’s health. From a black perspective, she says, black dignity may be more important than having white friends.

“The power imbalances [between blacks and whites] are too great, the possibilities for manipulation and domination... are simply too high...” Many young black people today, she says, are saying that friendship with whites is not a goal for them - we must instead be guided by the need for black people to live dignified, equal lives commensurate with whites.

They are only half right. Friendship cannot wait for the politics and economics to sort itself out. It is as urgent as equality. The foul coffin farmers and their ilk mentioned above cannot be allowed to derail it.

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

When computers conspire, you’re in BIG trouble



FROM THE BELLING TOWER

Suzanne Belling

They say lightning never strikes twice in the same place. But there is always the exception.

The first was during my matric exam when (and this was in Cape Town!) a big flash of fork lightning hit the pine tree outside our open exam room window. And that is where the wisdom of the adage was relayed by the invigilator.

A few seconds later it struck again. Electric sparks bounced off our pens and some of us were thrown from our desks. Attending a Victorian-style all-girls school, they made us finish the exam.

Today we - or our parents - would have run straight to the Minister of Education to complain. But our parents did not do much complaining in my high school years. Also, today the Minister is not in a very good space herself.

The storms we have been experiencing in Gauteng have been welcome (from the drought point of view - though we didn’t ask for hail) but are having an adverse bearing on the economy. For one thing it affects our work.

Inputting stories on the computer is far better than using bottles of eraser fluid

What do when technology fails - or when it is in cahoots with the dark powers of Eskom? A: Cry. B: Cry some more. C: Try and find someone, somewhere, who has a working computer.

Then follows the problem of lost data and trying desperately to download it from the cloud - not Cloud 9, I might add. But an elusive cloud that floats in the ether and only sends down some particles of information.

Don’t ask me how I managed to input several stories over the last couple of weeks. My computer is still not fixed. I have had to tender my apologies from our weekly Skype meetings.

Technology is great - but not when it conspires against us. I have come to the conclusion that the pen is mightier than the computer.



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Six amazing Israeli inventions discovered by accident

JERUSALEM - When Avram Her-shko was a post-doctorate fellow at the University of California in San Francisco from 1969 to 1971, he made an unexpected discovery that led to his receiving the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry.

The professor at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology tells ISRAEL21c that he was interested in examining the mechanism that causes protein degradation in living cells. He assumed it had to do with running out of energy. Surprisingly, his experiments revealed the opposite: Proteins need energy to fall apart.

“It was serendipity,” he recalls.

Rather than abandoning the research due to this unexpected result, he and his Technion graduate student, Aaron Ciechan-over, spent years unravelling the mystery. They found that for protein degradation to occur, a “tag” or marker called ubiquitin must selectively attach to the protein - and this process requires energy.

“The lesson is that when you discover something that is not what you asked for, you should follow it up,” says the Nobel laureate.

Serendipity - finding something when you weren’t looking for it - was also responsible for these five significant Israeli innovations, among others.

Drought-resistant plants

Plant biologist Shimon Gepstein’s globally hailed technology for producing drought-resistant rice, wheat, sugar beets, cotton, millet and other food crops was created when he and his lab team at the Technion-Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa forgot to water some tobacco plants they had genetically engineered for an experiment in prolonging growth period and shelf life.

To their surprise, the parched plants bounced back to life when re-watered after several weeks. That is how Gepstein, now professor emeritus at the Technion and president of Kinneret College in the Galilee, discovered that the plant hormone cytokinin increases a plant’s ability to withstand drought.

The technology was patented and licensed to a California agro-tech company, which sublicensed it to seed companies that sell the product in the United States and abroad. In July 2013, a Chinese patent was approved, increasing the market for Gepstein’s unexpected discovery.

Dog vaccine

Dr Shimon Harrus was attempting to determine how long ticks must be attached to a dog’s fur in order to transmit CMT, a sometimes fatal tick-borne disease. In the process, he unintentionally found the world’s first vaccine against CMT in dogs.

“I was using bacteria I cultured in my lab, and all of a sudden I realised the two dogs in our experiment did not become sick, and the ticks I put on the dogs did not become infected,” Harrus said. “Then we performed a big

study and we realised something important was going on.”

The unexpected results of the experiments done by Harrus and his lab partner, Dr Gad Baneth, led to a CMT vaccine that was licensed out by Yissum, the tech-transfer company of the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, to a Brazilian company. Harrus tells ISRAEL21c they are now working toward commercialising the vaccine.

Silicon-free solar cells

Israeli chemist Jonathan Goldstein stumbled across a novel way to produce inexpensive, clean solar energy while he was experimenting with titanium dioxide to make toothpaste flow more easily from a newfangled toothbrush he’d invented.

The cheap white powder, he discovered, is known to be sensitive to light when treated with an absorbable dye. This led him to drop the toothbrush project and go in a direction nobody had gone before.

3GSolar, the Jerusalem company born in 2003 of that chance finding, is now focusing on indoor applications for its silicon-free photovoltaic cells printed on plastic.

Goldstein says 3GSolar cells perform three times better than cells made with silicon (which is difficult to work with and dispose of) and are especially suited to the emerging and IoT and sensor markets. A Chinese investor is soon building a plant to produce 3GSolar’s dye-cell solar energy modules.

Text messages from trees

A programmable sensor that sends a message from tree roots to farmers when water levels dip below a predetermined value - or even turns on the irrigation tap itself - was developed at the Ministry of Agriculture’s Volcani Centre-Agricultural Research Organisation after unrelated research more than 10 years ago took a serendipitous turn.

Volcani soil physics researcher Arie Nadler was experimenting with an expensive new scientific device to measure water content and electrical conductivity in tree root stems at the same point and time independently. When he increased the salinity of the irrigation water, he was baffled to see no change in electrical productivity readings.

“That was absolutely unexpected since it’s been known for 300 years that if you increase the concentration of a solution you’ll always see a difference in electrical conductivity,” Nadler tells ISRAEL21c.

“And that’s where everything started, because if stem electrical conductivity depends only on water content, I now have the basis for a new cheap irrigation-control measurement tool.”

He and his research partner, citrus expert Eran Raveh, believe the device could help fruit farmers save at least 40 per cent on water and fertiliser. They are working toward receiving the pat-

ent rights and getting the product commercialised.

Assessing climate change

Prof Colin Price of Tel Aviv University’s Department of Geophysical, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences and his graduate student Yuval Reuveni found out by accident in 2009 that observing ordinary lightning strikes can provide a definitive and reliable tool for measuring the sun’s rotation even when sunspots aren’t visible.

This is a new way for meteorologists, ecologists and space scientists to study the effects of sunspots on climate and the overall interaction between sun and Earth.

Price tells ISRAEL21c that

another unanticipated discovery happened in 2013 as he and PhD candidate Israel Silber used simple radio antennae to measure radio waves reflecting back to Earth from the ionosphere.

They saw that weaker signals seem to indicate greater fluctuations in temperature in the upper atmosphere, offering a new and cost-effective way to keep tabs on climate change.

Nano-lubricants

Revolutionary inorganic fullerene-like tungsten disulfide (IF) nanoparticles, created in 1992 in the lab of Prof Reshef Tenne at the Weizmann Institute of Science in Rehovot, have become indispen-

sable in manufacturing lubricating oils, greases, coatings, metal working fluids, polymers and composites.

Menachem Genut, a member of the group that discovered the nanoparticles and successfully synthesised them, recalled: “IF was discovered by serendipity. At the Weizmann Institute, we were looking for a technology to convert solar energy into electricity.

“The result was completely unexpected. We discovered these nanoparticles which have very interesting properties - [they] act as excellent lubricants, have great shock absorbing powers, and are also efficient semiconductors.” – ISRAEL21c

Community

Sassy Reuven relives Operation Entebbe - 40 years on

ELISHEVA MASINTER

Marking the 40th anniversary of the Entebbe Raid, IDF Commander Sassy Reuven, who was second off the plane at the raid, delivered an inspirational talk to South African youth last week at the World of Yamaha, where Chabad hosted its “Young Drivers” event.

He shared inside stories and details of the raid and told his audience about the many injuries he refused to show the doctor in case they would forbid him from taking part! Commander Reuven’s essential message was that the most important and only thing he could think about all along was that nothing could stop him from going on this mission (at Entebbe) to save Jewish lives.

It was a privilege for the audience to hear a first-hand account from such an uncharacteristically humble man and they were captivated by his encounters.

This was the last Young Drivers event for the year in Johannesburg.

Some background on Operation Entebbe:

It was a successful counter-terrorist hostage-rescue mission carried out by commandos of the Israel Defence Forces (IDF) at Entebbe Airport in Uganda on July 4, 1976. A week earlier, on June 27, an Air France plane with 248 passengers

had been hijacked by two members of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and two members of the German Revolutionary Cells.

The hijackers had the stated objective to free 40 Palestinian and affiliated militants imprisoned in Israel and 13 prisoners in four other countries in exchange for the hostages.

The flight, which had originated in Tel Aviv with Paris as destination, was diverted after a stopover in Athens via Benghazi to Entebbe, the main airport of Uganda.

The Ugandan government supported the hijackers and dictator Idi Amin personally welcomed them. After moving all hostages from the aircraft to a disused airport building, the hijackers separated all Israelis and several non-Israeli Jews from the larger group and forced them into a separate room. Over the following two days, 148 non-Israeli hostages were released and flown out to Paris.

Ninety-four, mainly Israeli, passengers along with the 12-member Air France crew, remained as hostages and were threatened with death.

The IDF acted on information provided by the Israeli intelligence agency Mossad. The hijackers threatened to kill the hostages if their prisoner release demands were not met. This threat led to the planning of the rescue operation. These plans included preparation for armed resistance from Ugandan

military troops.

The operation took place at night. Israeli transport planes carried 100 commandos over 4 000 km to Uganda for the rescue operation. The operation, which took a week of planning, lasted 90 minutes; 102 hostages were rescued. Five Israeli commandos were wounded and one, the unit commander, Lt Col Yonatan Netanyahu, was killed.

All the hijackers, three hostages and 45 Ugandan soldiers were killed, and 30 Soviet-built MiG-17s and MiG-21s of Uganda’s air force were destroyed.

Kenyan sources supported Israel, and in the aftermath of the operation, Idi Amin issued orders to retaliate and slaughter several hundred Kenyans present in Uganda.



IDF Commander Sassy Reuven.

UJW lives up to its motto ‘Women of Action’

On hearing about the recent devastating fires in Israel, all six branches of the Union of Jewish Women in South Africa immediately rallied to the cause and this week a generous donation was handed to the Jewish National Fund to help rehabilitate the forests in the Neveh Ilan region. In thanking the UJW, executive director of JNF SA, Amber Cummins, said that while South African Jewry had done them proud with their call for help, the Union of Jewish Women has given the single biggest donation toward the campaign.



Lynne Raphaely, national president of UJW SA, and Amber Cummins, executive director of JNF SA.



First Jewish High Court judge in Australia in 85 years

CANBERRA – Justice James Edelman has been appointed the first Jewish Justice of the High Court of Australia since Sir Isaac Isaacs, who retired from the court in 1931.

“It’s extremely exciting and a wonderful appointment,” Edelman said last week. “I was telephoned by the Prime Minster and Attorney General on Monday.”

Edelman, who grew up in Perth, had his barmitzvah at Temple David, but has travelled a fair bit since then.

“I went to the shul in Oxford in England, went back to Perth and moved to Queensland.

“I see myself as Jewish, but very liberal,” the 42-year-old said.

“I fast on Yom Kippur, don’t eat ham, bacon or prawns and am bringing up our children Jewish.”

Edelman said being Jewish won’t have much of an impact on his judicial rulings because the law is based on an underlying natural foundation and moral base that transcends religion.

Edelman holds degrees of Bachelor of Economics, Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of Commerce, and a Doctor of Philosophy.

In 2011, he was appointed to the Supreme Court of Western Australia and was appointed to his current position as Judge of the Federal Court of Australia in April 2015.

Edelman is expected to remain on the High Court until the statutory retirement age of 70. - Australian Jewish News

Breast cancer patients’ modesty could force male surgeons out of business

TEL AVIV - If the current trend of increasing modesty continues, it will become more difficult for male breast surgeons to find patients. A study published last week in the Israel Journal for Public Health Research, shows that a third of women prefer a female breast surgeon to examine them.

Five hundred and fifty women who attended breast clinics in two university-affiliated tertiary hospitals, answered a 25-item anonymous questionnaire.

“Patient preferences regarding the gender of their physicians is a highly sensitive issue, which can be particularly salient in intimate medical situations,” the interviewers wrote. Previously published studies found that women tend to prefer female physicians, especially in the case of obstetricians and gynaecologists.

Data regarding other intimate specialties, such as breast surgery, are scarce. The present study was undertaken to assess gender preferences of women regarding their choice of a breast surgeon.

A total of 160 (32 per cent) of women preferred to undergo breast examination by a female breast surgeon, 296 (59 per cent) had no preference, and only 44 (nine per cent) preferred a male surgeon.

The younger the patient, the more likely she would prefer a female surgeon.

The growing number of Orthodox Jewish and observant Muslim young women raises the demand for protecting their modesty.

However, there is still hope for male surgeons, as an equal number of patients preferred a woman to actually perform breast surgery (14 per cent) or a male (13

per cent), while most patients (73 per cent) had no gender preferences. - Jerusalem Post

Virtual reality and treadmill training may prevent falls in the elderly

TEL AVIV - A combination of virtual reality and treadmill training may prove effective in preventing dangerous falls associated with ageing, Parkinson’s disease, mild cognitive impairment or dementia, according to an Israeli study published in The Lancet.

The intervention described in the study combines the physical and cognitive aspects of walking and could be implemented in gyms, rehabilitation centres and nursing homes to improve walking skills and prevent the falls of older adults and those with movement disorders.

“Falls often start a vicious cycle with many negative health consequences,” said co-lead author Prof Anat Mirelman of Tel Aviv University’s Sackler School of Medicine and Tel Aviv Sourasky Medical Centre’s Centre for the Study of Movement, Cognition and Mobility.

“The ability of older people to negotiate obstacles can be impaired because of age-related decline in cognitive abilities like motor planning, divided attention, executive control and judgement,” she said.

“Current interventions typically focus almost exclusively on improving muscle strength, balance and gait. Our approach helps improve both physical mobility and cognitive aspects that are important for safe walking,” she continued.

“We found that virtual reality plus treadmill training helped to reduce fall frequency and fall risk for at least six months after training - significantly more than treadmill training alone. This suggests that our use of virtual reality successfully targeted the cognitive aspects of safe ambulation to reduce the risk of falls.” - ISRAEL21c

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A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies



Above Board
Jeff Katz
National Chairman

It was a year the Board made its presence felt

As has become traditional with the year’s final Above Board column, this space will be devoted to looking back on the year that was and how the SAJBD responded to the challenges and opportunities it provided.

If there is any one aspect of our work that can be said to sum up the past 11 months, it would be that during this period, the Board made significant strides in making itself - and therefore the Jewish community - an active, visible presence in issues of broader national concern.

Our activities ranged from regularly making input into important new legislation in Parliament, through to ensuring meaningful participation by our community in such areas as the local government elections, public holidays and anti-racism initiatives. Because of this, we are increasingly being seen as important role-players who, while continuing to fulfil their core mandate of upholding the civil rights of South African Jewry, are simultaneously committed to contributing to the wider society of which they are part. This year - in part because it was a Jewish leap year - saw our having to deal with an unusually high number of cases of university exams being set on Shabbat and Yomtov. That we were able to do so successfully is testimony to the dedication and hard work of the staff and lay leaders concerned, and especially our indefatigable National Director Wendy Kahn.

Through working closely with the Beth Din and Chief Rabbi’s Office, we were also able to assist Jewish medical interns seeking community service placements within reasonable proximity of an organised Jewish community.

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

The Board continued to monitor incidents of anti-Semitism and take action where required, including laying complaints with the SA Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) and following up in the Equality Courts. Several cases before the SAHRC were satisfactorily concluded while others are still being pursued.

Overall, anti-Semitism levels in South Africa have remained constant over the past two decades, rising only during times of heightened unrest on the Middle East front, and in addition continue to be strikingly lower than those recorded in other Diaspora communities.

That being said, in the beginning of July we received a sobering reminder that our country is not, and cannot, be immune to the threat of global terrorism when four people in Johannesburg were arrested on suspicion of planning such attacks, including against an unidentified Jewish community installation.

As a result, much work and thought have gone into upgrading security at all our installations as well as in raising levels of awareness and personnel training in order to adapt to these new realities.

The year 2016 was a special one in that it marked the 175th anniversary of the birth of the Jewish community in this country. Various events were held to celebrate this milestone, particularly in Cape Town but also at our Gauteng Council conference, where it was the keynote theme.

During these troubled and uncertain times in our country, it was heartening to be able to look back at how much has been accomplished by our community over the decades. It also was a timely reminder of the many, sometimes even more formidable challenges, that have faced South Africa in the past and which were successfully overcome.

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

A column of WIZO South Africa

During Israel’s fires, WIZO again showed its mettle



WIZO South Africa
Moonyeen Castle
President

It’s hard to believe that a whole year has gone by so quickly. And what a tumultuous year it has been for us all! The news reveals disaster in every corner of the globe and we all held our breaths as we watched events unfold in Israel.

As Israeli society battled wild-fires around the country, new challenges emerged every day, for which WIZO provided the solutions. WIZO branches have been doing all they can for those who have lost everything - house, contents, clothes, memorabilia - everything.

Unfortunately, WIZO Achuzat Yeladim Boarding School had to be evacuated due to raging fires. One hundred children as young as seven years old, and teenagers with severe emotional conditions, were among the boarders.

The children were taken to WIZO Nahalal. Those who have homes to go to were sent home for the weekend and remain there for the moment. For children lacking family support and unable to go home, WIZO staff opened their hearts and homes to host them. Upon receiving further details, WIZO will be able to plan the immediate future, with much sensitivity to minimise the disruption to their daily routine and school work.

WIZO invites you to make a gift to support the WIZO Fire Appeal today and help one of the various WIZO projects in Israel desperately needing our help at this time. Banking details: WIZO Johannesburg, Nedbank, bank code 151105, account: 1511028858. Ref: Surname + Fire. For credit card donations please phone Batya on (011) 645-2515.

In June this year, Adi Altschuler, 29-year-old Israeli social entrepreneur, educator and activist launched WIZO SA’s Biennial Campaign. The audiences were riveted by her presentations, by her energy, by her remarkable achievements and her passion for changing and improving lives.

As an extraordinary “Agent for Change”, Altschuler’s talk reflected the embodiment of WIZO whose focus is to change and improve the lives of the vulnerable and less fortunate through a range of initiatives.

Helen Maisels Trisk, vice president of

WIZO SA, spoke about WIZO’s many programmes in Israel and their high standards of excellence and care. She said that all WIZO facilities are real and that they do not simply live in the minds of the donors.

WIZO added a further dimension to its #SpreadingLight campaign in conjunction with the Shabbos Project, where it invited women from around the world to help spread the light by lighting candles and reciting a special prayer for peace in the home, for Israel and the world at large.

This year, we are inviting people to nominate women in our community who give so selflessly of themselves, bringing light into

the world through their good deeds and actions. These women will appear on the WIZO Facebook pages as #ShiningLights because their light is one we should share as far and wide as possible!

Last month, WIZO South African Council members countrywide gathered at the beautiful home of Mushe Kirsh, in Johannesburg, for its Enlarged Council Meeting. All the necessary reports were presented and a wonderful address was given by Ayellet Black, deputy head of Mission Embassy of Israel in South Africa. The ECM reflected on the past and planned for the future.

Since the very beginning, WIZO federations around the world and in Israel, have always looked to its own next generation of chaverot to bring new ideas to the table, to provide fresh solutions and to engage women of their own age to volunteer in the WIZO movement, a movement that must march ever-forward hand-in-hand with the State of Israel.

WIZO needs Aviv members to harness the pioneering spirit of tomorrow, to encourage leadership and solidarity, to build upon the foundations laid by our mothers and grandmothers and to take WIZO forward into a future that belongs to them.

As this year draws to an end, we thank all those who worked hard and gave their commitment to ensure that our special projects in Israel continue to serve Israeli society.

We wish you a happy Chanukah and a safe and peaceful holiday season.

This column paid for by WIZO SA

Art

Schneider’s work reflects on ‘stillness of nature and energy of wild places’

MOIRA SCHNEIDER
CAPE TOWN

Photographer Jenny Schneider’s work helps her reconnect with her South African roots and re-forms her relationship with home after many years of living overseas. This we learn from the artist’s statement that accompanies her current exhibition on at the 6 Spin Street Restaurant Gallery until January 7.

Born in Cape Town, Schneider left here at the age of 21 to live in London. She was away for 23 years, returning to this country 10 years ago.

“When I returned I began travelling and visiting places in nature and I began to photograph the landscape. I realised that this process was helping me connect with

being back here after such a long absence,” she reflects.

“I am nourished and restored by both the stillness of nature and the powerful energy of wild places.”

Titled “Intimate Earth”, this, her fourth, exhibition is a collection of 33 works that trace her travels in the Western Cape and further afield. Schneider still shoots on the same Hasselblad camera she bought in London second-hand as a photography student some 31 years ago, using black and white film.

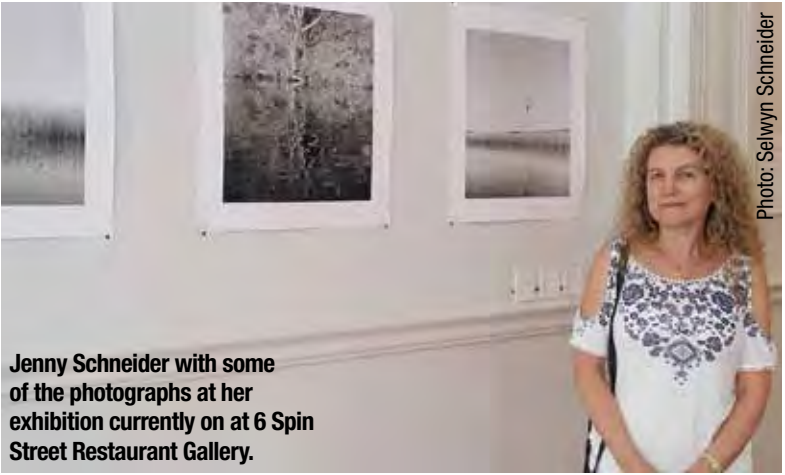
“The simplicity of one camera, one lens, and only 12 frames per film imposes a sense of structure, a discipline to create within these constraints,” she reasons. “The most exciting part, however, is the uncertainty of what has been cap-

tured while one waits in anticipation for the film to be processed.”

Opening the exhibition, Malcolm Kohll, head of production, postgraduate studies at AFDA, said the photographs were “all about evoking emotion, and demonstrate the power of landscape to help us mirror our inner world with our outer world, and in that reflection to find a connection, not only to our land but to ourselves”.

He noted that Schneider had covered “thousands of kilometres recording the images”, including the Northern, Eastern and Western Cape, the Karoo and Free State.

Ten per cent of the proceeds from the sale of the photographs will go towards providing sanitary products to girls in need from rural and underprivileged areas.



Jenny Schneider with some of the photographs at her exhibition currently on at 6 Spin Street Restaurant Gallery.

Photo: Selwyn Schneider

Girls who cannot access adequate protection miss up to 50 days of schooling annually, often resulting in them dropping out of school altogether.

• 6 Spin Street Restaurant Gallery,

6 Spin Street (off Plein Street), Cape Town. Gallery hours Monday - Friday 08:30 – 17:00. On Thursday January 5 (first Thursday) it will be open in addition from 17:00 – 21:00. Other times by arrangement. Tel (021) 461-0666.

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Kerry on two states: There are ‘things we can do’ to preserve it

RON KAMPEAS
WASHINGTON

Outgoing Secretary of State John Kerry signalled in a speech that the Obama administration was still considering action on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in its final days, although it might fall short of a direct intervention on the issue.

There’s no way to “force-feed” peace between Israel and the Palestinians, Kerry said in a lengthy speech delivered last week Tuesday at the Women’s Foreign Policy Group conference, but there are “other things we can do” to preserve a two-state solution.

It’s not clear whether President Barack Obama favours any action on the two-state front, and Congress and the mainstream pro-Israel lobby have said they would vehemently oppose it.

Kerry also defended the Iran nuclear deal, as did the outgoing CIA director, John Brennan, in an interview with the BBC, part of what likely will be a full-court press by the Obama administration to persuade President-elect Donald Trump not to kill the 2015 agreement that exchanged a nuclear rollback for sanctions relief.

The Obama administration is coming under pressure from groups that favour an assertive US posture on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to take steps to preserve the two-state solution before Trump takes office. Former President Jimmy Carter in a New York Times op-ed last week urged Obama to back a UN Security Council resolution that would recognise Palestinian statehood. J Street, a liberal Jewish Middle East policy group, also has urged Obama

to take actions to preserve two states as an outcome, including backing a “balanced” Security Council resolution.

The Palestinians reportedly are preparing a resolution condemning Israel for settlement expansion that they hope a sympathetic nation will submit to the Security Council.

Kerry, who spearheaded the last major round of talks between Israel and the Palestinians, in 2013-14, said in his speech that “no one has expended as much time as I have to try to move the process forward.

“But the old saying is real: You can lead a horse to water, you can’t make him drink,” he said. “If they’re not prepared to take the risks - everybody knows what has to be done - but if they’re not ready, then there’s no way to force-feed it. There are, however, other things that we can do that may try to save the possibilities of a two-state solution, and we have to think about that.”

Israel vehemently opposes outside intervention, a posture that is shared by much of Congress. In September, 88 senators signed a letter urging Obama to veto any Security Council resolution that recognises Palestine.

Last week Tuesday, the US House of Representatives approved a nonbinding resolution that called on the government to oppose any “Security Council resolutions that seek to impose solutions to final status issues, or are one-sided and anti-Israel”.

The American Israel Public Affairs Committee backed the letter and the resolution, which were aimed at stemming any far-reaching final moves by the Obama administration. Obama has suggested that he is reluctant, in his final days, to hamper



US Secretary of State John Kerry delivering remarks at the Women’s Foreign Policy Group Conference in Washington, DC, on November 29.

his successor with any last-minute major policy initiatives, including on Israel and the Palestinians.

If Obama does pronounce on the issue, he may prefer a forum less dramatic than the Security Council, for instance outlining his vision for two states in a speech or news conference.

It’s not yet clear how Trump would approach Israeli-Palestinian peace. The president-elect has said he would like a crack at negotiating a deal. On the other hand, with his campaign’s approval, the Republican Party over the summer adopted a platform that for the first time since 2004 does not mention a two-state solution, and defers to Israel on what the parameters of peace negotiations should be.

Kerry in his speech also defended the Iran nuclear deal reached between six major powers, led by the United States, and Iran.

“Consider where we would be if Iran’s nuclear programme was still going ahead full steam in the middle of all of this,” he said.

Kerry noted that before the negotiations began on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, as the pact is known, Iran had the ability to produce enough fissile material for a nuclear device in two months and enough highly enriched uranium to build 10 to 12 bombs.

“That’s where we were - two months away from a bomb,” he said. “But under our agreement, Iran agreed to actually reverse that direction altogether.”

He cautioned: “The Iran agreement has made the world safer, including our allies and our friends in the Middle East.”

Brennan, who is scheduled to depart as CIA director in January, told the BBC last week that it would be the “height of folly” for Trump to tear up the agreement, saying it would lead to a nuclear arms race in the region.

Trump has said he would renegotiate the deal if not abrogate it outright, and has nominated as his CIA chief, Representative Mike Pompeo, (Republican Kansas), a fierce opponent of the agreement. The president-elect also is considering deal foes for other top national security posts.

Al Monitor, a Middle East news site, reported last week that Kerry, in private meetings with Democratic senators, urged the lawmakers to do what they can to preserve the deal. Trump has a range of executive actions at his disposal to pull the United States out of the deal. However, if he chooses not to act, Senate Democrats, while in the minority, could filibuster any congressional effort to force Trump to pull out of the agreement.

Separately, the House last Tuesday passed two bills that would advance US-Israel co-operation on cybersecurity. The bipartisan bills, which would expand existing joint research and create a grant for new development, were introduced by Representatives John Ratcliffe, (Republican Texas), and Jim Langevin, (Democrat Rhode Island), after they joined a congressional delegation visiting Israel in the summer.

Langevin in his release alluded to what intelligence officials have said are likely Russian government-backed hacks during the past year on the Democratic Party and senior figures in the party.

“My trip to Israel with Congressman Ratcliffe was an illuminating experience and reinforced my belief that our countries have much to learn from one another when it comes to cybersecurity,” Langevin said in the release.

“This belief has only been reinforced in the intervening months as we saw cyberattacks that targeted the very foundation of our nation, our electoral system.” (JTA)



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World News in Brief

Peres’ son, granddaughter to light Chanukah candles at White House

JERUSALEM - The son and a granddaughter of the late Israeli President Shimon Peres reportedly will join the first family to mark Chanukah at the White House.

Nechemia “Chemi” Peres and Mika Almog will join President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle for their last traditional Chanukah candle-lighting ceremony at the White House, Ynet reported on Monday. Almog is an Israeli screenwriter and satirist.

Peres and Almog will visit the White House next week, when the ceremony will be held, according to the report. Christmas and Chanukah coincide this year.

They will bring with them a menorah passed down through the Peres family since the Holocaust, Ynet reported. (JTA)

How Israel is courting tourists from India and China

DEBRA KAMIN
TEL AVIV

When Bollywood star and Indian fashion icon Sonam Kapoor appeared on the cover of the June-July issue of Harper’s Bazaar Bride, India, she did so wearing a sheer pink confection and a radiant smile.

Behind her sprawled the Old City of Jerusalem.

It wasn’t happenstance. The Israeli government - keen to tap into a growing Asian middle class who are armed with passports and eager to explore the globe - has thrown its weight behind a number of creative efforts to promote Israel as a destination for tourists from India and China.

Kapoor, a fixture in Bollywood films and the daughter of renowned Indian actor and producer Anil Kapoor, came to Israel in May as a guest of the Israel Tourism Ministry. The hope is that A-list celebrity endorsements, in the form of social media posts, will translate to millions of shekels in tourist visits down the road.

In the two years since the Gaza War, with tourism still sagging and hotel stays 22 per cent lower than in the months before the war, the Israeli government has doubled down on its efforts to woo Asian visitors. Call it the new frontier for Israeli tourism: When it comes to courting visitors, there is no doubt that the Holy Land is looking east.

“India and China both have a huge

economic potential, a huge number of people, and have shown huge growth in the number of people travelling overseas,” said Pini Shani, the director of the Overseas Department at the Israeli Ministry of Tourism.

Celebrities, of course, are key to tapping into that potential. Kapoor chronicled her trip with a flurry of Snapchat selfies, which saw her visiting sites around the Old City and showing off a series of big sunglasses in taxis on the way to Tel Aviv and the Dead Sea with gushing captions like “Meeting incredible people through my travels is such a plus!”

While Kapoor came to Israel for the Harper’s layout - the photo shoot featured her frolicking in the streets and alleyways of ancient Jerusalem wearing a number of stunning gowns by both Indian and Israeli designers - she intended to take in a few quick tours of Jerusalem’s holy sites. But according to reports in the Indian media, she and her mother, who accompanied her on the visit, were so smitten by the country that they chose to stay longer.

In August, just after the magazine appeared on newsstands, the Israeli Tourism Ministry kicked off an approximately \$1,5 million campaign in India, unveiling a symphony of television ads, print media endorsements and shout-outs on social media, as well as a dedicated website for Indian travellers to Israel.

Such a campaign is not unprecedented; the ministry drew upon its

success two years earlier in courting Chinese visitors.

Back in 2014, just months before the start of the Gaza War, a Chinese film crew crowded the stark bank of the Dead Sea filming a scene for “Old Cinderella” - a Chinese blockbuster starring Zhang Jingchu about a May-

pany the soapy dialogue.

The filmmakers wrote the country into the plot, with the female lead deciding amid a life crisis to restart her career and become a tour guide. It is during a guided tour of the Holy Land, of course, that the bulk of the film’s action occurs.



The Israeli government is taking several initiatives to promote Israel as a destination for tourists from India and China.

Photo: Itamar Grinberg, Israeli Ministry Of Tourism

December love triangle that played well in the world’s most populous country.

Among the elements that made “Old Cinderella” beloved by Chinese viewers - an ageing female protagonist, a dashing young suitor and a romantic former husband determined to woo back his former wife - there was also a surprising amount of stunning Israeli scenery to accom-

Zhang isn’t the only Chinese movie star popping up at Israeli tourism sites. A month earlier, actor Liu Ye was hosted by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism and granted an honorary title - tourism goodwill ambassador - for playing his part to promote Israel in his home country.

The government’s efforts to court Chinese travellers paid off: Visits to Israel this June rose a whopping 93

per cent over June 2015, bolstered by three new nonstop flights each week from Beijing to Tel Aviv on China’s Hainan Airlines.

Also helping were two major achievements from the Tourism Ministry: the cancellation of group visa fees (which were about \$9 a person) and the extension of multiple entry tourist visas up to 10 years.

Visitors from India in 2015 increased 13 per cent over the previous year, and the Israeli government opened its first tourism office in Mumbai last year.

As demand from Asian tourists increases, hotel chains are doing their best to keep up.

A new government course for Mandarin-speaking tour guides has opened in Israel. Nearly 30 Chinese immigrants to the country - mostly native Mandarin speakers who married Jewish Israelis and earned citizenship in the process - have now passed the certification process to be licensed tour guides.

“There is tremendous demand,” said Noam Porat, a tour guide co-ordinator who helps run the Chinese-language course for would-be guides.

Yang Cheng, a 33-year-old tour guide originally from Huwan, China, who now works on the Asian desk of the tour company Vered, chalks up the demand to a shift in the way Israel is viewed.

“The perception of Israel is changing in Asia,” she said. (JTA)

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Lucky Solomon Gordon will watch Chelsea versus Arsenal

ILAN HERRMANN

The Soul Workout non-profit’s Grand Sports Raffle was drawn at Norwood Mall on December 4 amid festivity, song and dance. The Tshiriletse School from Soweto and Hughs Haven kids sang and danced and read poems while the winners were drawn.

An ecstatic Solomon Gordon was the winner of two VIP tickets to London to watch Chelsea vs Arsenal and a thrilled Lewis Weinstein was the winner of two tickets to the quarter-finals of the Australian Tennis Open.

The raffle was a fundraiser for disadvantaged schools: Tshiriletse, Walmer Schools, John Masiza and Hughs Haven orphanage.



The Grand Soul Sport raffle at Norwood Mall.

Concert kudos for Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir

OWN CORRESPONDENT

Monday afternoon, November 14, the heavens opened up over Johannesburg and cried - so did all those staunch supporters of the Johannesburg Jewish Male Choir as it was going to be a wet ride to Sandton Shul where the 31st concert of the choir was to be held. Fortunately the rain finally abated and there were smiles everywhere!

This year was unique in that three local artists collaborated with visiting Cantor Aryeh Leib Hurwitz from New York. They presented a “Kaleidoscope of Song”, accompanied by a musical ensemble under the direction of Evelyn Green.

There was a wide spectrum of music encompassing Hebrew, Yiddish and English. Of the 14 compositions listed in the

programme brochure, 10 were new.

The choristers excelled and each of the soloists, Aryeh Leib, Ezra Sher (Pine Street Shul), Russel Lurie (Sandton Shul) and Ivor Joffe of the Marais Road Shul in Sea Point, were in control and reacted to Green’s sensitive conducting; the blend of voices was excellent.

The singing of the words of “Balalaika”, “if I forget thee Jerusalem”, transcended the boundaries of music; the ever so popular music from “Joseph” had the audience joining in.

The old time “Mama” songs were synthesised into a new compilation. The number of tissues being passed around was testimony to the success of this composition!

The heart strings of a new version of “Avinu Shebashamayim”



arranged by Meir Finkelstein, brought the audience close to each other and to the Holy Land; in the last few bars the rousing sound of Hatikvah... li yot am chofshi b’artzeinu... brought on an indescribable emotion.

Ivor Joffe did justice to the songs of Yonatan Razel of

“Katonti”, and “Ashira la-shem” fame, as well as Romania. Not to forget the Jewish wife and mother, a new “Eishet Chayil” was sung.

Synagogue music is part of Jewish culture; a first-time composition “Umi-p’nei Chatoeinu”, sung on Holy Days and festivals, was well received as was the song “She-ma Yisrael” by Yitzy Waldner - a gentle reminder of those dark days 75 years ago.

Cantor Avron Alter was the surprise participant, singing a composition by his grandfather.

There were just too many compositions to name them all, suffice to say this was a memorable concert emphasising Jewish heritage.

The final number was a tribute to statesman Shimon Peres by the singing of “Avinu Malkeinu”, which was also sung at his funeral.

The concert was narrated by the enigmatic Helen Heldenmuth.

For those who missed the concert, a CD will be available towards the end of January. Part of the proceeds from the concert will go to DH Link a remarkable group who care for unfortunate people suffering from cancer.



Maccabi SA Needs You!

Maccabi SA is looking for two Junior Managers (1 Male, 1 Female) to supervise and assist the Junior sports teams at the 20th Maccabiah, July 2017 in Israel. The position is a voluntary and is not remunerated, however the trip cost is covered. Preferably JHB based, to start in March/April 2017.

- | | |
|---|---|
| ROLE: | QUALITIES: |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Manage and resolve a wide range of challenges and issues facing Juniors Teams.• Overall supervision of Junior Sport teams from start to finish of games.• Day to day management of teams and team mangers.• Work with Head of Delegation and other Maccabi SA personnel. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Worked with youth before.• Able to handle conflict and stressful situations.• Able to resolve issues and take initiative.• Effective communicator.• Highly organised <p>Candidates may be a married couple or two single individuals.</p> |

Send CV and letter of motivation to admin@maccabi.co.za or call 0116945081 for more info.

Afrika Tikkun opens world-class skills training centre in Braamfontein



Marc Lubner, CEO of Afrika Tikkun; Gary Lubner, Belron Global CEO; and Leonie van Tonder, COO of Afrika Tikkun.

Afrika Tikkun and international auto glass giant Belron have partnered to open a state-of-the-art training centre in Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Afrika Tikkun said in a media release this training centre will focus on career development and giving young people the skills they need to enter the job market. The opening marks the integration of a formal skills development training facility into the Afrika Tikkun Cradle to Career model.

Onyi Nwaneri, head of marketing and development at Afrika Tikkun, says that the new Belron Training Centre was established in response to a need to extend Afrika Tikkun’s existing skills development programme.

“We know that unemployment is a big issue and when people migrate from rural to urban areas to look for work, they come to the inner-city and settle here in Hillbrow, Yeoville and Berea,” Nwaneri said. The addition of the training centre, which includes two computer labs and two lecture rooms, will significantly increase Afrika Tikkun’s existing capacity.

The centre will provide training in both hard and soft skills, including the Absa Ready to Work programme, EQ life skills, end-user computer skills and some vocational skills.

Nwaneri said that Afrika Tikkun was also in talks with a major technology giant to provide e-learning platforms and training opportunities, which would enable beneficiaries to upskill themselves on any subject through experts from around the world.

The training centre was made possible through Afrika Tikkun’s 16-year-long partnership with Belron. Belron Global CEO Gary Lubner says that although Belron now operates in 34 countries across the globe, it hasn’t forgotten its roots, “Belron started in Johannesburg and through the annual Spirit of Belron Triathlon it continues to give back to where it came from.”

Over the years, Belron has become a strategic partner in the development of Afrika Tikkun’s Cradle to Career model and programmes, helping the organisation grow from strength to strength.

For Leonie van Tonder, COO of Afrika Tikkun, the transformation of the 100-year-old building into a space where young people can “think, dream and learn”, was a team effort.

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28 SA JEWISH REPORT Sport 9 December 2016 – 20 January 2017

Maccabi's 1977 basketball victory still makes big men cry...

JACK MILNER

We are on the map and we will stay on the map, not only in sports but in everything.

Those words were spoken by American-Israeli basketball star Tal Brody after underdog Maccabi Tel Aviv's upset victory over powerhouse CSKA Moscow in the 1977 European Cup semi-finals.

Maccabi, led by Brody, would go on to win their first European title by defeating Mobilgirgi Varese two months later. It was one of those great David versus Goliath stories that make sport such a nation builder.

Now the team's dramatic success has now been brought to life in a new documentary film called "On the Map", directed by Dani Menkin.

Who would have thought that basketball would become one of the biggest sports in Israel, and even more so, one of their most successful?

Brody, now 73, still remembers those wonder years with Maccabi Tel Aviv.

"It has never been forgotten here," said Brody. "Maccabi have won five European titles since then, but you always remember your first love and for 40 years we've been remembered like that in Israel. It's amazing. It left a stamp. It was a win with very heavy meaning for generations."

Brody said he was happy the story was now being told to the English-speaking world via the film, which focuses on the team's six American players.

"Each time I've seen it, it has given me goose bumps," he said.

The semi-final against CSKA Moscow - who featured the best players from across the Soviet Union - was played in a tiny gymnasium in Belgium because, for political reasons, the Russians would not allow the game to be played in either Tel Aviv or Moscow.

"To think that we could beat this team... it was something illusionary or a dream," Brody recalled. "As sportsmen, you always go into a game feeling like you have a chance to win, but our fans were just hoping we wouldn't be embarrassed. Yet every Israeli and Jewish person in Europe tried to find that gymnasium, and they did."

"So we had not only the majority, but around 99 per cent of the people in that gymnasium were rooting for us, with Israeli flags. That gave us spirit, confidence and adrenaline. And the Russians were really shell-shocked; they had never been in an atmosphere like that."

Maccabi ended up winning the game 91-79 and Brody was carried off the court on the shoulders of ecstatic fans.

A New Jersey All-Star basketball player in high school, Brody led his team to an undefeated state championship. In college in 1965 he was a high-scoring, slick-passing player at the University of Illinois. That year, he was number 12 in the NBA (National Basketball Association) draft. Before the NBA season started, he travelled to Israel where he led the American team to a gold medal in the 1965 Maccabi Games.

Persuaded by Moshe Dayan and others to return to Israel to help elevate the country's bas-



Tal Brody is carried on the shoulders of his teammates following their upset victory over CSKA Moscow in the 1977 European Cup semi-finals played in Belgium.

ketball team and lift its morale, he passed up his NBA career to instead play basketball for Maccabi Tel Aviv.

Menkin who directed the film was born and raised in Israel but now lives in Los Angeles. He grew up with the story. "The team was like a ray of light after the Yom Kippur War. I was just amazed that there wasn't a movie about it. I'm really encouraged by the fact that so many Americans are loving the film and are seeing a positive story about Israel, which is not something they usually get in the news."

The events portrayed in the film, Menkin told the *Algemeiner*, are "kind of like a 'Forrest Gump' of Israeli history. It's an intersection that combines so many things in our journey and our destiny, including figures like Moshe Dayan and Yitzhak Rabin, the Russians and the Cold War, and the peace process with Egypt."

"So within this sports drama, it was not just a game, it was much bigger than sport."

On Brody, Menkin said: "If there are still people like him out there, can you find them and please let me know? He is somebody who gave up the NBA to play in Israel. And for many Israelis his iconic statement, 'We are on the map', has become an 11th commandment. It's beautiful how from the sports world, you can affect so many people."

Nancy Spielberg, sister of Steven Spielberg, one of the film's executive producers, said she loved the feel-good story about Israel. "We loved the feeling of Jewish pride. A key message I wanted out there was two-fold. First, there are those who want to delegitimise Israel's right to exist and they will not win, just like the Soviets who refused to recognise Israel. That's very current for today with the BDS movement. That's just not going to happen. We're never going to let that happen."

"We will be victorious, we will stay on the map, no matter what."

"And secondly, I loved the co-operative American-Israeli effort to rise above what lies in front of us - the hardship and the obstacles."

"I'm absolutely not a basketball fan, but you don't have to be a basketball fan to love this film. At screenings I've sat next to big men who've cried out of pride. I love to see big men cry."