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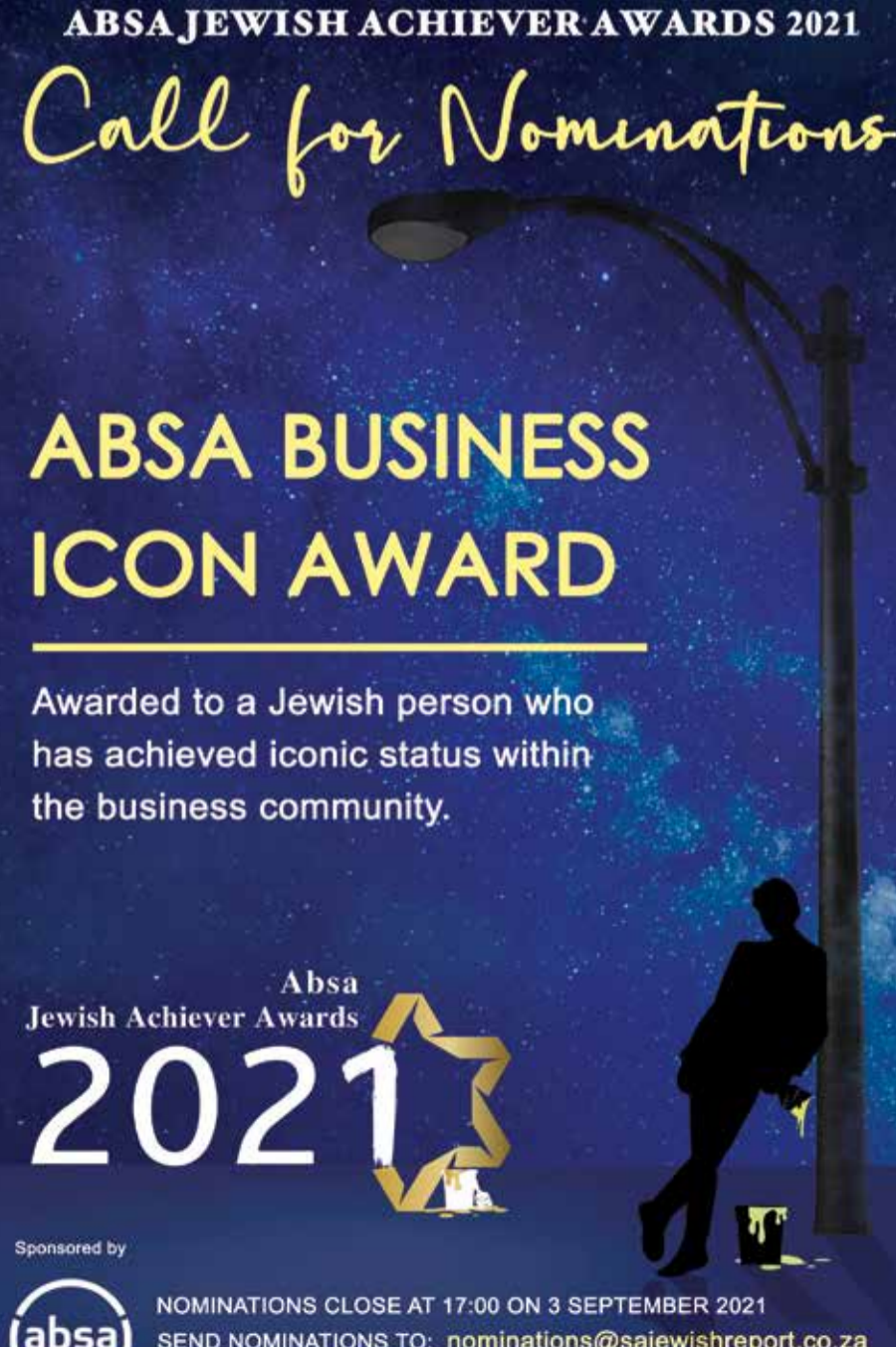
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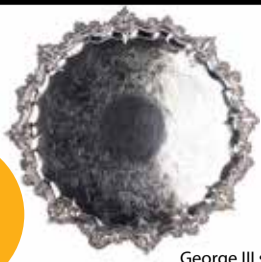
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A silhouette of a person is shown painting a large, stylized star on a wall. The person is standing next to a tall, curved street lamp. The background is a dark, textured wall, possibly representing a night sky or a wall being painted. The overall theme is artistic and iconic.





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Young and old on record-breaking aliyah flight

TALI FEINBERG

Families, *yeshiva bochurs* (students), lone soldiers, and a nonagenarian will be among the 87 new arrivals at Ben Gurion in Israel this week in the largest group of South African *olim* on one flight since 1994.

"I feel incredibly proud to be a part of this record-breaking aliyah flight. It's comforting to make aliyah surrounded by so many South African *olim* who have different expectations and aspirations, but who all share the dream of beginning a new life in Israel," Eliana Lewus told the *SA Jewish Report* ahead of the flight on Tuesday, 27 July.

When Jared Glass was three years old, he almost drowned. Thirty-six years later, he will be among this group of new *olim*. "I feel like I'm being dragged out of the deep and taken to safety again," says Glass from Johannesburg.

Aliyah is also for the young-at-heart, as Dr Hymie Erlich proves. At 91, he's ready for more adventure (he celebrated his 90th birthday by hang-gliding in his home city of Cape Town). He will join his children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren. His daughter and son-in-law were among the last to land in Israel in January 2021, when the Israeli government closed the airport due to COVID-19.

Speaking to the *SA Jewish Report*, Erlich says, "Everything in life is a step, and this is another step onwards." He's sad to be leaving a "beautiful community. I wish everyone *b'hatzlacha* [good luck] and *lehitraot* [until we meet again]. See you in Israel!"

His son-in-law, Philip Stodel, says that when planning his own aliyah, "we asked him whether he would consider coming with us, but he was happy to stay. But following the onset of COVID-19, Hymie, who was still active as a medical doctor, was advised to stop working. He also found himself alone at his Shabbat table every week. He started his aliyah process in October 2020. At 91, Hymie's mind is sharp, but he lacks technical skills. I've always been his 'IT support system', so I continued to do this remotely [to help him make aliyah].

"One of his biggest tasks was clearing his apartment of just about everything. We know this was very emotional at times. I feel like I've done aliyah twice, and I can honestly say that it was far easier the first time! As I sit here on a Friday afternoon, approaching what will be Hymie's last Shabbat in South Africa, my immediate concern is for the last-minute pressure that I know await us. I will heave a huge sigh of relief once he is on the plane, and a bigger sigh when we see him on Wednesday!"

"The significance of Israel, aliyah, and a home for the Jewish people remains as relevant today as ever," says recently-appointed Telfed (South African Zionist Federation in Israel) Chairperson Robby Hilkowitz.

"Telfed plays a vital role in facilitating the absorption of new *olim*," says Telfed Chief Executive Dorron Kline. "Our role is to help new *olim* prepare for life in Israel. Our services centre on this and include guidance in dealing with the first bureaucratic steps; employment counselling; an in-house social worker; rental apartments in Tel Aviv/Ra'anana [depending on availability] at below-market rates; and a volunteer-based scholarship programme. Our regional volunteers welcome new *olim* to their communities, and are an important source of information for those considering aliyah as they decide where to settle."

Hilkowitz says all new *olim* are required to go into

quarantine. "For the first time, we will invite new *olim* to join our daily virtual Tea at Ten with Telfed, which details the important steps for the early stages of their aliyah journey. These webinars don't just provide



Dr Hymie Erlich on his arrival in Israel

practical guidance, they make sure our new arrivals feel connected. We see the positive influence that a strong, connected community plays in a successful absorption. Our ultimate objective is for *olim* to integrate fully, to contribute to the country, but not forget their roots because being a part of a connected and dynamic community is empowering."

They will also provide virtual activities for children and welcome packs. And, *olim* are invited to participate in a

virtual musical Kabbalat Shabbat.

Liat Amar Arran, the director of Israel Centre South Africa, says many of the *olim* are making aliyah ahead of the new school year in Israel. "Like all flights during the pandemic, there have been challenges. For example, we needed to get agreement from Israel that there is enough space in its quarantine hotels to accommodate them. There has been a lot of work in the past two weeks, and our team has worked around the clock. *Olim* have to fill in many forms just before they leave." Even with all of this extra administration related to COVID-19, she's excited that the flight is able to go ahead.

Meanwhile, Lewus, who is 20 years old, is making aliyah from Johannesburg by herself. "I will be doing a year of national service in Israel [as an alternative to the army] before starting to study," she says.

While it may seem like this group of *olim* are fleeing the current civil unrest, making aliyah takes time, and they started the process some time ago. "My aliyah process was gradual. I began the process about nine months ago," Lewus says.

She is motivated by "pull factor" rather than "push factor". "When I was in Israel on the Ohrsom gap year, I fell in love with the people, landscape, and feeling of unity. I knew I wanted to go back," says Lewus. "I wanted to be a part of it, to be able to contribute."

"The recent unrest hasn't influenced my feelings about aliyah," she says. "I'm under no illusion that the perfect country exists. However, I do hope for a better future for South Africa. I feel so grateful and privileged to have been brought up as a South African Jew. Our community, culture, and upbringing are unique, and have paved the way for me to embark on my journey."

I feel supported by family and friends in my decision to make aliyah, and my biggest hope is that they will be able to visit me soon."

Tammy Wainer is 34, and making aliyah from

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Ben & Jerry’s chair denies antisemitism amidst froth over boycott

BEN SALES – JTA

One week after Ben & Jerry’s announced that it would stop selling ice cream in the “Occupied Palestinian Territory”, the company’s board chairperson for the first time publicly rejected the suggestion that the move was antisemitic.

And the brand’s parent company, Unilever, disavowed the movement to boycott Israel. The disavowal comes as Unilever faces the prospect of being penalised financially in states that have anti-boycott laws.

Those are two of the developments to emerge in the continuing fallout from the Ben & Jerry’s boycott of Israeli settlements. Here’s a rundown of what has happened over the past day or two:

On Tuesday, 27 July, Anuradha Mittal, the chairperson of Ben & Jerry’s board of directors, tweeted her first comments on the boycott since it was announced last week. She stood by the decision, and denied being antisemitic following Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid’s statement that the boycott was a “shameful surrender to antisemitism”.

“I’m proud of @benandjerrys for taking a stance to end sale of its ice cream in the Occupied Palestinian Territory,” she tweeted, using the same term for the West Bank that the announcement used. “This action isn’t antisemitic. I’m not antisemitic. The vile hate that has been thrown at me does [not] intimidate me. Pls work for peace – not hatred!” (Mittal didn’t detail the “vile hate” she has received, though critics of the decision have attacked her on social media.)

Mittal’s post came days after a report by NBC News that her board was unhappy with the text of the statement put out by Unilever announcing the boycott. Ben & Jerry’s would “stay in Israel through a different arrangement”, it said. That



Photo: Aleksander Kalka/NurPhoto via Getty Images

clause didn’t appear in the announcement drafted by the board.

Mittal hasn’t said that Ben & Jerry’s should withdraw from Israel entirely, and the board hasn’t voiced that position publicly. But on Twitter, Mittal has previously endorsed the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement against Israel known as BDS.

“The catastrophe continues #Nakba70 years later #palestine bleeds Boycott Divest Sanctions #israel,” she wrote in 2018.

On Tuesday, she also tweeted a statement of support from liberal Jewish groups and quoted a passage from the Unilever statement emphasising “a clear distinction between the state of Israel and the Palestinian territories it militarily occupies”.

Unilever is also stressing that the settlement boycott isn’t the same as BDS. The company’s statement, made in nearly identical letters sent to Jewish organisations on Tuesday, comes as a handful of states are considering divesting funds from Unilever under laws that ban the states from doing business with companies that boycott Israel.

The letters say Unilever is committed to doing business with Israel, where it employs 2 000 people and has invested nearly \$296 million (R4.3 billion) in the country’s market.

“We look forward to investing in our business in Israel long into the future,” say the letters, which were sent to the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organisations, both of which had criticised Ben & Jerry’s West Bank

pull out. “We have never expressed any support for the BDS movement, and have no intention of changing that position.”

Both the ADL and Presidents Conference said they appreciated the letter, but reiterated their previous criticism. The latter said Unilever’s “response does not go nearly far enough” and encouraged the company to try to override the Ben & Jerry’s board decision, though an internal agreement between Unilever and the Ben & Jerry’s board appears to make that impossible. The umbrella group also praised the states that are looking into whether the boycott violates anti-BDS laws.

The Presidents Conference said it opposed the Ben & Jerry’s decision, “as boycotts of Israel are discriminatory”. While the announcement and letter make clear that the boycott applies only to the West Bank, which Israel controls but hasn’t annexed, Presidents Conference Chief Executive William Daroff told JTA that the boycott would force the closure of Ben & Jerry’s plant in Israel, and that the group feels an “obligation to speak out when Jewish-owned businesses are singled out”. Daroff said that Ben & Jerry’s had made a political decision that singled out Israelis and one “disputed” territory.”

The ADL also thanked Unilever for its statement against BDS, but said, “While ADL is a strong supporter of the two-state solution, we believe that it’s wrong for any company to single out Israel by refusing to sell its products to Israelis and Palestinians living in the West Bank.”

Ben & Jerry’s store in New York City opposed the boycott and plans to donate 10% of its profit to Israel.

A Jewish owner of a Ben & Jerry’s franchise on Manhattan’s Upper West Side has joined a group of local store owners protesting the West Bank boycott. On Monday, Joel Gasman posted on Facebook that, “We feel the recent actions by [Ben & Jerry’s] corporate office don’t reflect our personal views.”

Gasman, whose store is in a heavily Jewish neighbourhood, promised to donate 10% of its profit to “state of Israel educational causes”. He did not specify

Continued on page 11>>

Torah Thought

Take heel of your character flaws

“If you do obey these rules...”

This is the opening line of the Torah portion this week.

More accurately, the Torah states, “If you *eikev* obey these rules...”

The word “*eikev*”, which, in fact, is the name of our Torah portion, seems to be redundant. Moreover, it’s an uncommon use of the word. The root of the word “*eikev*” comes from the word “*akeiv*”, meaning “heel”. There are far more common options that the Torah could have employed in this context.

Rashi, the famous biblical commentator, interprets this phrase to mean, “If even the lighter commands, which a person typically walks upon with one’s heels, you will listen to...” Rashi, thus, understands “*eikev*” as denoting emphasis. One must not only obey and abide by the so-called “big” commandments, but also – and perhaps especially – the “smaller” commandments that one would figuratively-speaking walk over.

The portion of Eikev is a reminder and a warning that we must remain vigilant in regard to all our actions, the seemingly important and the seemingly unimportant. There are, perhaps, things we do every day by rote and by habit without thought. It’s how we treat others and how we allow others to be treated. It’s about how we regard the world around us.

It’s in the realm of the mundane and the ordinary that we must remain particularly vigilant.

In the Book of Proverbs, the wise King Solomon wrote, “In all your ways know Him.” It’s not only when we are actively engaged in the performance of a *mitzvah* that we need to bring Hashem into our lives. Every moment and every place should be filled with G-dliness. We shouldn’t be so hurried in our journey through life that we pass these moments by.

Yes, the heel symbolises that upon which we step. However, the heel,

more importantly, symbolises what we stand for.

What defines us as individuals isn’t necessarily the actions on which we place the highest value. We aren’t defined by the length of time we spend in shul over Yom Kippur (please do, though, come to shul this *yom tov*, and don’t keep glancing at the clock) or the size of the annual donation we give to charity. Rather, it’s in the everyday moments – the ways in which we interact with others socially, in our homes, and in our places of work – that we are measured.

Our *eikev*, our heel, indeed our very foundation, is established upon our behaviours that are almost automatic, the ones we may take for granted.

It’s here where we need to stand tall.
Shabbat Shalom!

Rabbi Rodney Richard, Emmarentia Shul



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SA seethes as Israel scores diplomatic coup in AU

NICOLA MILTZ

The South African government this week lashed out at the recent decision by the African Union (AU) to grant Israel observer status. After nearly 20 years of persistent diplomatic efforts, Israel last week attained observer status at the AU. The development was welcomed by Israel, who has long held that the Jewish state has much to offer Africa.

However, predictably, it has been shunned by the government and local pro-Palestinian groups. In a statement on 28 July, the Department of International Relations and Cooperation (DIRCO), said it was “appalled” at the decision calling it “unjust” and “unwarranted”.

It said that in the context of the recent flare-up of violence in the Middle East, the decision was “inexplicable”, and accused the AU Commission of taking the decision unilaterally without consulting its members.

DIRCO said it would ask the chairperson of the commission to provide a briefing to all member states, which it hoped would be further discussed.

“South Africa firmly believes that as long as Israel isn’t willing to negotiate a peace plan without preconditions, it shouldn’t have observer status,” the statement said.

Earlier this week, the SA BDS coalition slammed the government for its silence on the matter, and for not immediately criticising the move like it has done in the past. The organisation urged the government, as well as other AU member states, to reject Israel’s claim to accreditation.

“We are extremely disappointed that our government didn’t immediately publicly reject the Israeli claim and announce that it would lodge an objection to the AU chair,” it said.

The SA BDS coalition accused Israel of “falsely claiming” that its assistance to African states in fields such as agriculture, technology, and economic development was philanthropic.

“In reality, this is simply opportunistic leverage,” it said, adding that Israel’s objective was to “muscle recipient states” to support it at the United Nations (UN) and other international fora.

One local pro-Palestinian media organisation tweeted “Remove the Zionist cancer from the AU”.

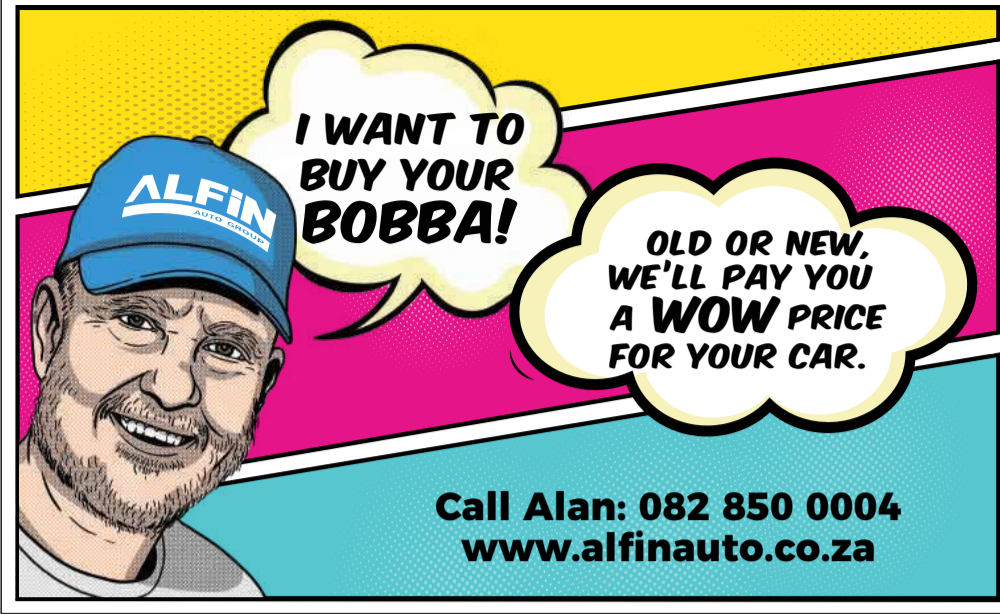
South Africa, along with several other African nations, has long opposed Israel’s desire to gain observer status at the 55-member continental organisation. While chairing the AU Commission from 2012 to 2017, Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma strongly objected to Israel’s rapprochement with the

organisation. In November last year on the UN International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, DIRCO Deputy Minister Alvin Botes accused Israel of “vociferously” lobbying African states to support its bid, saying that it was “more important than ever” to ensure that this didn’t happen. Said Botes, “There is a growing and justifiable sense that certain African and Arab nations no longer see the liberation of Palestine as a common objective.” He said Israel, with the support of America, was driving a wedge between these nations. “If Israel continues to score political victories while facing little resistance, it could eventually dominate Africa,” Botes said. Algeria on Sunday condemned the decision of the AU to grant Israel observer status. Israel previously held observer status at the



Assembly of the African Union

Organisation of African Unity (OAU), but has long been thwarted in its attempts to get it back after the OAU was disbanded in 2002 and replaced by the AU. Former Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu prioritised Israel’s relations with Africa during the latter half of his 12 years in office, including with several Muslim-majority countries on the continent. Besides seeking new markets for Israeli expertise in fields like agriculture, high-tech, and security, Netanyahu was keen to improve African nations’ voting record on Israel-related matters in international fora such as the UN Security Council. Aleligne Admasu, the Israeli ambassador to Ethiopia, Burundi, and Chad, on 22 July presented his credentials to Moussa Faki Mahamat, the chairperson of the AU Commission, at the bloc’s headquarters in the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Israeli Foreign Minister Yair Lapid hailed it as a “day of celebration for Israel-Africa relations”, noting that Israel currently has relations with 46 African countries.



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The move will enable stronger co-operation between the two parties on various aspects, including the fight against coronavirus and the prevention “of the spread of extremist terrorism” on the African continent, the statement said.

In a separate statement, Faki Mahamat stressed the AU’s position over the longstanding Israeli-Palestinian conflict, reiterating the bloc’s stance that a two-state solution was “necessary for peaceful co-existence”. Steven Gruz, the head of the African Governance and Diplomacy Programme at the South African Institute of International Affairs said it was a pragmatic decision by the AU rather than an ideological one, as “Israel has a lot to offer Africa”.

“South Africa will feel a little out-manoeuvred on this one, given that during Dlamini-Zuma’s tenure as AU commissioner, the proposal was blocked presumably by Arab states in the North of Africa as well as countries like South Africa.

“This seems to be a diplomatic coup for the Israelis. It has been quite a long time coming, and even though symbolic in many ways, it’s an entry into a forum where their interests are being discussed, and it will provide a platform for a deeper engagement with the continent.”

Since 2016, Netanyahu has been to Africa five times, displaying Israel’s keen interest in growing relations with African states, Gruz said.

“Also, as part of the Abraham Accords process, we’ve seen normalisation with Morocco and Sudan, both Muslim-majority states. So, Israel’s forays into Africa is paying dividends, and I think it will be very pleased about this. South Africa is a strong supporter of the Palestinians, and I guess will see this as a defeat, but

it’s not like pressure on Israel is going to be reduced by South Africa.”

Rowan Polovin, the national chairperson of the South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), welcomed the development, saying it was hopeful that AU members would work more closely with Israel on issues such as fighting the coronavirus, improving regional security, and implementing water, agricultural, and healthcare technology solutions.

“We are also further encouraged that the AU status may assist other African countries to do the same,” Polovin said.

“The SAZF believes that greater intercontinental co-operation with Israel is a sign that the South African government should follow suit in building and improving its relations with Israel. Furthering the partnership with Israel would bring increased positive benefits and impacts for all South Africans, and would help address the triple challenges of poverty, unemployment, and inequality.”

Israel re-established relations with Guinea in 2016 and Chad in 2019. In October 2020, Israel also signed a normalisation agreement with Sudan.

In July 2016, Netanyahu became the first Israeli premier in decades to travel to the continent when he visited Uganda, Kenya, Rwanda, and Ethiopia. There has been ongoing collaboration and engagement ever since with a number of African countries.

Meanwhile, the first direct commercial flights between Israel and Morocco landed in Marrakesh on Sunday, 25 July, more than seven months after the countries normalised diplomatic relations in a United States-brokered deal. This is another example of Israel and Africa moving closer together.

Passengers from Tel Aviv arrived on an Israir flight early on Sunday afternoon, and were met with dates, cakes, and mint tea at a welcoming ceremony organised in their honour. A second flight, by Israeli national carrier El Al, landed in Marrakesh later in the day. Both airlines are planning several flights per week to Marrakesh and Casablanca.

Morocco was one of four regional states to agree to normalise ties with Israel last year, along with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, and Sudan.


The normalisation deals between Arab states and Israel have been deemed a “betrayal” by the Palestinians, who believe the process should follow resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.



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
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

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Aliyah interest spikes after unrest

TALI FEINBERG

The director of the Israel Centre South Africa, Liat Amar Arran, says the organisation received “100 enquiries” into aliyah over the past three weeks, and that “at least 50 files were opened” – the first step in the aliyah process.

Comparing these figures to the 30 to 40 enquiries the organisation normally gets every month, Amar Arran says although she’s happy South African Jews see Israel as an option, we shouldn’t make aliyah in a panic.

“Making aliyah in an emergency means the person isn’t ready and hasn’t had time to do their research. It means they’re running away, and it’s very hard to settle when you are running away from something. Aliyah is a process.” Amar Arran emphasises that while Israel will always be there for South African Jews, it’s unlikely it would ever evacuate the community unless lives were truly at stake.

She says the Israeli government was updated during the unrest, but didn’t see it as an evacuation-type situation. Her team and the Israeli government have faith that the Jewish community will stay and succeed in South Africa for decades to come. “Israel will be there to strengthen, support, and assist,” she says.

She points out that Israel isn’t a solution to the complex challenges that people might be facing in South Africa. “If you are struggling financially, Israel isn’t going to save you. Yes, it gives some support and assistance, but aliyah doesn’t mean all your problems are going to be solved. You will probably carry the same problems with you. We want to see *olim* succeed, not collapse. You may get some assistance in the beginning, but eventually, you need to live your life there. We don’t want you to look back and say, ‘Why did I make this decision?’”

If you want to have the option of aliyah in a time of emergency, “then open a file now, and work on it [getting documents]. Don’t wait. You want to be ready on your side. Then you know that you have the documents, even if you might never use them. That’s your insurance.”

She emphasises that the Israel Centre doesn’t have the capacity to “hold people’s hand”, and that it’s each individual’s responsibility to gather their documents and do their research. While she and her team offer guidance, advice, and support, each person has to take their own steps.

She refers to the joke of a man in a town that’s flooding, and people keep offering him help – in a car, a boat, and a helicopter, but he refuses to go with them because he’s “waiting”. Eventually, he drowns and goes to heaven, where he asks G-d, “Why didn’t you come save me?” And G-d

answers, “I sent you a car, a boat, and a helicopter!” Essentially, she’s saying that you can take practical steps like opening an aliyah file if you want to have an option during times of crisis. You can also watch the informative video explaining the aliyah process that the Israel Centre recently released online. There will also be an aliyah Q&A webinar on 5 August, and the Israel Centre hosts these webinars often for prospective *olim*.

Though the organisation has been stretched to capacity in recent weeks, Amar Arran doesn’t expect the high level of interest to continue unless there’s more unrest. In addition, she says there is always more aliyah interest during harder lockdowns, when people are at home, less busy, and thinking about the future.

Meanwhile, *olim* who are making aliyah this week say the process takes time. “Getting all my South African documents [to make aliyah] was the biggest challenge, especially during COVID-19,” says Tammy Wainer.

“At times it felt like I was climbing up a mountain with no end in sight! Once I had all my South African documents, it was smooth sailing.”

To others considering aliyah, she says: “Aliyah is a very big decision. Do your research, and weigh the pros and cons. Israel will be there waiting with open arms, but ultimately, it will be up to you to make a new life for yourself.”

The recent unrest in South Africa didn’t have an impact on her decision, but “it made it easier for me to say goodbye. I won’t miss going to bed at night feeling anxious at the sound of gun shots. But at the same time, it makes me worried about the loved ones I leave behind. Just because we are leaving South Africa, doesn’t mean we are turning our back on South Africa. The fire of South Africa lives in all of us, and I will continue to be proudly South African and proud of our incredible Jewish community from afar.”

Tamar Lutrin is in Grade 10, and making aliyah with her family. “Making aliyah during COVID-19 was both beneficial and hard. It was easier to leave because we weren’t spending every second with the people we love, but at the same time, we couldn’t say proper goodbyes.” To others considering making the move, she says, “Don’t prolong it, go as soon as you can. It’s hard to break down a life here without building up a new one there.”

The recent unrest “made it easier to leave”, Lutrin says. “My family and I were never leaving South Africa because we hated it, we love South Africa and the community, but it did make the grass look greener on the other side.”

Says Sandra (Sandi) Shapiro, “After the current unrest in South Africa, I can say that I’m fortunate to be one of the lucky ones to be able to leave South Africa in such uncertain times. I leave behind family and friends, and I worry for them all. I can only pray that Hashem will protect all of South Africa, and that peace, harmony, and tranquillity will prevail.”



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Anglican ministers break ranks over church’s anti-Israel stance

TALI FEINBERG

“What do you do when the leadership of an organisation you’ve spent your whole working life serving adopts a policy or position that your conscience won’t tolerate?” asks Reverend John Atkinson. He is one of four local Anglican Church ordained ministers who recently spoke out against the Anglican Church of Southern Africa’s (ACSA’s) anti-Israel doctrine.

Atkinson, along with Reverends Dave Doveton, Dudley Greenshields, and Allan Smith also wrote a letter to the United Orthodox Synagogues’ Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein, thanking him for taking a stand against ACSA’s approach to Israel, especially in the light of his recent open letter to Anglican Archbishop of Cape Town Dr Thabo Makgoba. In that letter, the chief rabbi said the archbishop was “making a terrible mistake that endangers your own church”.

After receiving the letter from the four ministers, the chief rabbi invited them to meet him, which both parties said was very positive. “We wanted the chief rabbi and the Jewish community to know that there are many Anglicans who would find these policies offensive and a contradiction of our faith,” said Atkinson. “We may be sanctioned, but we aren’t afraid. Standing for the truth and against antisemitism is much more important.”

The group believes that ACSA’s anti-Israel resolution “expresses the ideological perspective of a small but influential elite, and by no means is representative of the average Anglican in Southern Africa. This is why we have made public our rejection of anti-Israel decisions and policies in our denomination”.

Between them, the four ministers have about 160 years of service looking after congregations within their denomination. Two of them were lecturers in theological institutions. All of them have a wealth of experience in their chosen professions.

They are close to retirement, so their careers are unlikely to be negatively impacted by speaking out. “It won’t make us popular, but that doesn’t worry us,” said

Atkinson. “There are more people who would speak out if their careers wouldn’t be impacted.

“The average Anglican hasn’t thought about the Middle East at all,” he said, so the Jewish community needs to know that it’s not like three million people have turned against Israel. The ministers will therefore work to increase education and awareness.

He was moved by the meeting with the chief rabbi, and hopes that it “will open the way for greater dialogue between our communities and a greater appreciation of the values we share”.

Delving into why they have taken a stand, he said “this crisis of conscience was precipitated by a resolution that was passed at the highest decision-making body in the denomination in 2019 to support the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions [movement] and call for a boycott of Israel. The resolution also called on local bodies within the church to adopt these measures.

“Since then, the chief rabbi has had discussions with the Anglican Archbishop, only to be rebuffed. This has been of particular concern because of rising incidents of antisemitism in South Africa,” said Atkinson.

In the letter to the chief rabbi, they wrote, “We want to convey our assurance to you that not all Anglicans support the aforementioned [anti-Israel] synod resolution. Indeed, we are appalled that people in our church would even think of proposing such an antisemitic stance and shocked beyond belief that the synod would uncritically and without any debate pass the resolution.”

Asynod is a council of a church, usually convened to decide an issue of doctrine, administration, or application.

They said they weren’t against the criticism of any state and its policies, “but the one-sided diatribe against the government of Israel elected by the people of Israel and the total alignment with certain militaristic

organisations bent on the destruction of the Jewish homeland is beyond belief”.

It had caused “much grief and disappointment, as it casts a slur on all of us. The simplistic analysis ignores the role of other countries and organisations who play a direct and indirect role in geopolitics and conflict in



Reverend John Atkinson and Reverend Allan Smith

the region, and one suspects is meant to advance a propagandistic narrative and shut down other points of view. Certainly, no representative of the Israeli state was invited to give their perspective at the synod.”

The ministers said that “to lay all the blame on the Israelis amounts to scapegoating, which as you are all too painfully aware, is a classic hallmark of the scourge of antisemitism”. They were also deeply disturbed by the resolution calling on them to boycott Israeli companies. “What a terrifying reminder of the horrific genocidal acts against the Jewish community in Europe,” they wrote.

They disagree with the assertion that the present state of Israel isn’t tied to “the historic Jewish nation recorded in the sacred scripture that we as faith communities share. We believe that it’s a thinly veiled attempt to undermine Israel’s right to exist, and is against the historical record. This, too, is a mark of antisemitism.”

They questioned why a church which is based thousands of kilometres away from the conflict “should be so committed to the promotion of one narrative and the total exclusion of the other. If our church is so

concerned about the lives of Palestinians, why was it silent about the deaths of 3 383 Palestinians in Syria? We believe the answer is obvious.

“We would like to assure you that we will remain faithful and vocal about Israel’s right to exist and defend itself against attack,” they said. “We will continue to engage with other Christians on these issues to ensure that the pro-Palestinian narrative isn’t the only voice that is heard.”

“The significance of their letter struck home to me powerfully,” Goldstein said. “It shows that there is another voice within the Anglican Church and the Christian community in South Africa, so many of whom love and support Israel and appreciate its role in the world.

“We can easily make the mistake of thinking that certain politicians or religious leaders speak for the country when they come out with such anti-Israel vitriol,” he said. “This letter is indication of a much broader movement of South Africans who have a completely different view. It’s important for us to know that we have many allies and friends across the length and breadth of this country. That’s why I wanted to meet with this group who wrote to me, to express to them on behalf of our community how much we appreciate their friendship and their partnership in getting this message out.

“I’m sure that their letter will encourage others to come forward. Often people feel intimidated and don’t want to speak out. We need to create an environment in South Africa where all citizens can come forward and show their support. There is an enormous groundswell of the silent majority of South Africans who support Israel. I met this group to encourage them to get the message out so that more people can come forward and express their true views.”

Going forward, the ministers will work to “encourage the support [of Israel] in the Anglican population and beyond”, according to Atkinson. “The Jewish community can assist us in this endeavour by communicating with Christians they know about Israel and the Jewish perspective of the Middle East.”

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It ain’t so bad here

I can’t say I’m surprised that people get nervous when they read that aliyah figures are at a record high. They aren’t worried about those leaving the country, but about those of us staying behind.

I understand if you might be wondering if you are missing something. Are you not reading the writing on the wall?

I will stick my head out and say that there’s no writing on the wall. We are a country that, like many others, has crises.

And if there are people running away, I believe they take their troubles with them. Those people who are pulled to go to live in Israel or somewhere else, I’m sure they will find happiness. Emigration happens around the world, and it’s healthy.

Having spent three and a half fabulous years in Israel, I know the pull of that country, but I also know that despite everything we have and are experiencing, we have a wonderful life here.

There is a strange belief that Israel will come and rescue South African Jews if things get tough here. I was glad to hear the Israel Centre’s Liat Amar Arran say this week (on page 1 and 4) that Israel isn’t waiting for us. She also said Israel isn’t going to come and rescue us, as such.

Israel is the Jewish homeland, but it’s a tough country to live in and competition is rife. So many of the niceties and luxuries we take for granted here aren’t readily available in Israel. *Olim* don’t arrive in Israel and have the pick of their careers. Nobody is waiting to hire us. Those tiny flats in Tel Aviv that you would have snubbed in South Africa are extraordinarily expensive and difficult to come by.

Far be it for me to dissuade anyone from making aliyah, I would be loath to do that because I love Israel. All I’m saying is, don’t romanticise living in Israel because it isn’t easy. It may be wonderful and challenging, but not a walk in the park.

After what we have experienced this year in South Africa, what with the pandemic and the recent violence and looting, it’s easy to be disheartened enough to say you want to leave.

But don’t leave in a panic. Don’t leave in desperation. Know that the grass isn’t always greener on the other side unless you have done your research, made your plans, and have a clear idea of what is on the other side for you.

And know that while Israel is an exciting place to live, it’s difficult to move away from everything you know and love, not least of all friends and family.

Though your parents and grandparents put on a brave face because they believe you’re doing the right thing, leaving them behind will be tough for all of you.

Just this week, I read a Facebook post written by a woman I shared a tent with when we were teenagers at Habonim machaneh. She has been living in Australia for many years. I shed tears reading her heartache in losing her mother and not being able to be with her. I took it that her mother was here in South Africa and died from COVID-19, because I could feel her frustration in not being able to say goodbye, not being at the funeral, and so on.

That’s part of the sadness of emigration. Once again, I consider what we have here, and I’m grateful. I recognise that there are many who may have been well off or comfortable who are now really battling for money. I also acknowledge that our communal organisations may not be getting the kind of finances they used to get or would like to get.

I also know that for most of us, life is a lot more challenging than ever before. However, we have the most incredible community in the world – and I say that with complete conviction.

Look around you, we support one another without question. We have communal organisations that literally ensure that we have ambulances when we need them, medicine when we need it, and that we are protected. We have organisations that will take care of us in times of need. I can go on and on because our communal structures are world class.

I know of family and friends overseas who may be content and happy in their new homes, but they long for the communal life we have. And with good reason.

We are a real community! We fight with each other, but when push comes to shove, we back each other and stick together.

Over the past year and a half during the COVID-19 pandemic, it wasn’t just Hatzolah and our doctors that rallied around to support the sick in the community. Jewish women created groups to make sure that those who were sick were supported and didn’t feel alone. Others made sure they had food.

Which other community had someone checking on those at home with COVID-19 a number of times a day? If you needed oxygen, it would arrive. If you needed to go for x-rays, you would be taken.

And now, in the case of vaccinations, a young Jewish doctor arranged a slick, fast-paced drive at The Base Shul in Glenhazel on Sunday, where more than 3 000 were vaccinated in one day. And, this wasn’t the first time. Now, The Chev and Hatzolah have set up their own vaccination sites to get the rollout done and dusted so we and everyone else can move on out of this pandemic.

That’s our community. I’m not sure there are others in the world quite like us, and that makes me proud and so hopeful.

So, yes, times are tough. Yes, there are many of us leaving South Africa to go to Israel. May all those who have gone be happy and healthy. May they find what they are looking for there.

But for those of us who remain behind, I feel confident that we will be far better than just okay. We will thrive as we have done before.

And as we launch our nomination drive for the Absa Jewish Achiever Awards, please nominate those incredible people in our community. Let’s give them the acknowledgement and *kavod* they deserve.

Shabbat Shalom!
Peta Krost Maunder
Editor



No evidence that COVID-19 vaccines cause infertility

OPINION

DR LAWRENCE GOBETZ



Fighting misinformation and a pandemic is taxing. However, it doesn’t help for Reform UK leader Richard Tice to make misleading claims about COVID-19 vaccines and fertility.

In a widely shared and now-deleted tweet posted on 19 July, Tice claimed that “forcing” young women to have the COVID-19 vaccine is “almost certain” to lead to “increased stillbirths, miscarriages, disabled children, and infertility”. There’s no evidence to support his claim.

There’s no evidence that new vaccines against COVID-19 cause infertility, yet that’s a worry that’s been cited by some healthcare workers as a reason why they’re reluctant to be first in line to get the shots.

Unfortunately, there was already a bunch of people out there saying there’s no such thing as COVID-19. “It’s no worse than the flu,” said some. Many of these people gained substantial followings for themselves on social media. When the vaccines came along, they used these platforms to stir up conspiracy theories.

Claims that the vaccine can affect a woman’s fertility due to the generation of the spike protein have been circulating since the start of the rollout of the vaccine.

In early December 2020, a German doctor and epidemiologist named Wolfgang Wodarg, who has been sceptical about the need for vaccines during other pandemics, teamed up with a former Pfizer employee to ask the European Medicines Agency (the European Union counterpart to the United States Food and Drug Administration) to delay the study and approval of the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine.

One of their concerns was a protein called syncytin-1, which shares similar genetic instructions to part of the spike of the new coronavirus. That same protein is an important component of the placenta in mammals.

If the vaccine causes the body to make antibodies against syncytin-1, they argued, it might also cause the body to attack and reject the protein in the human placenta, making women infertile.

Their petition was picked up by anti-vaccination blogs and websites, and posted on social media. Facebook eventually removed posts about the petition from its site for spreading misinformation.

The idea that vaccines could be deployed for population control was also woven into the plot of a recent, fictional mini-series on Amazon Prime Video called *Utopia*. In that



show, a drug maker obsessed with population control creates the illusion of a flu pandemic to convince people to take its vaccine, which doesn’t prevent infection but acts against human reproduction.

A spokesperson for Amazon Studios says the series is pure fiction.

The coronavirus’s spike protein and syncytin-1 share small stretches of the same genetic code, but not enough to make them a match. This is like two people having phone numbers that both contain the number 7. You couldn’t dial one number to reach the other person even though their phone numbers share a digit.

Looking at the two largest systems currently monitoring adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccines, the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in the United Kingdom, and the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System in the United States rely on voluntary reporting from medics and members of the public, and are intended to provide early warning of any previously unknown risks.

There is no evidence that COVID-19 vaccines affect fertility. The Pfizer/BioNTech and Moderna vaccines have been widely used during pregnancy in other countries and no safety concerns have been identified. Evidence

reviewed by the MHRA has raised no specific concerns about safety in pregnancy.

The Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists states on its website: “COVID-19 vaccines don’t contain ingredients that are known to be harmful to pregnant women or to a developing baby.” It goes on to say that studies of the vaccines in animals to look at effects on pregnancy have shown no evidence that the vaccine causes harm to the pregnancy or to fertility.

It’s clear that getting the COVID-19 vaccine won’t affect your fertility. Women actively trying to conceive may be vaccinated with current COVID-19 vaccines. There’s no reason to delay pregnancy after completing the vaccine series.

Importantly, COVID-19 can be severe in pregnant women. The Centre for Disease Control includes pregnant women as a high-risk group for severe COVID-19 illness, therefore we need to see pregnancy as a comorbidity for COVID-19.

Therefore, getting vaccinated against coronavirus is an important consideration for pregnant women. Recent data report an increased risk of intensive-care admission, the need for mechanical ventilation and ventilator support, and both intra-uterine foetal death and death in pregnant women with symptomatic COVID-19.

We can gain perspective by looking at the available statistics. By January 2021, consider that more than 22 million people in the United States had been infected by SARS-CoV-2. In fact, experts believe that number is much higher because 22 million is just the number tested and found positive.

Most think the real number is at least three times that. Therefore, consider that 70 million Americans have been infected, or about 20% of the population. If the infertility theory was true, we would expect that the body making antibodies against natural infection would show up in the fertility statistics. It hasn’t.

The incidence of infertility in any population is one in seven couples. There is no evidence that this pandemic has changed fertility patterns, so if the raw viral illness doesn’t appear to affect fertility, why should vaccination do so?

Although there’s no reason to believe that the vaccine poses a risk to women who are pregnant or are trying to conceive, there is evidence about the danger of COVID-19 infection for pregnant women, which is a reason we should embrace rather than avoid vaccination.

Pregnant women get sicker when they get COVID-19 compared with other people their age, and pregnant women with COVID-19 are more likely to experience pre-term delivery. The effect of COVID-19 disease on pregnancy is real, and it’s important to prevent it.

A recently published peer-reviewed journal article discusses the potential negative impact of the COVID-19 disease on testicular function, sperm production, and

male fertility.

Some studies have shown that the SARS-COV-2 virus has been found in the sperm of men with COVID-19 infection, and it may have an impact on the male hormones necessary for normal sperm production. Also, there are numerous reports of men with testicular or scrotal pain after getting COVID-19.

Men who are worried about their fertility should probably get the COVID-19 vaccine as there are some concerns about the potential effect of COVID-19 disease – but not the vaccine – on male fertility.

In all the data thus far, we don’t see any increased risk of developing infertility, either in the near or distant future, with getting these vaccines.

We need to get everyone vaccinated as soon as possible, otherwise we’re going to completely muddle through an ongoing pandemic.

This article doesn’t replace the option of discussing COVID-19 and vaccination with your primary healthcare provider.

• *Dr Lawrence Gobetz is a reproductive medicine specialist and the medical director of Vitalab, a centre for assisted conception.*

The miracle of the maroon handkerchief

TALI FEINBERG

Seventy-eight years ago, a Jewish man gave his 17-year-old daughter a maroon handkerchief as a way to remember him. She never saw him again – he died in the Holocaust. But she survived, went to America, and recorded her testimony in 1984. Fast forward to 2020, and 14-year-old King David Linksfield pupil Noa Nerwich is asked to write a poem for a competition based on a Holocaust survivor's testimony. She came across Ruth Halbreich's recording, which includes mention of the handkerchief. Nerwich wrote a poem about the handkerchief and won the competition.

A year later, Halbreich passed away. Shortly thereafter, her grandson, Reg Tigerman, came across the poem in a newsletter he received, and realised it was about his grandmother. But that's not all: soon after that, he also found the maroon handkerchief. He made contact with Nerwich [who is now 15], bringing a story that has spanned generations and continents full circle.

Speaking to the SA Jewish Report from Los Angeles, Tigerman says, "When I discovered the poem, I was shocked. Ruth, who we affectionately called Nanny, had just passed away a few months ago. The maroon handkerchief had been a topic of conversation within our family because my wife and I revisited her testimony right after she died and talked about trying to find it.

"My mom, who was going through Nanny's things, did end up finding it. So, not only did Noa write a poem inspired by my grandmother's testimony, which is an honour in and of itself, but she picked up on an item she mentioned at the very end of her testimony (proving that Noa was paying very close attention), and it was something that a lot of time and attention had been spent on recently. It was a series of *dayenus* [it would have been enough]. A true miracle. It felt like the world was telling us how important Ruth and her story is, and how important it is to continue to share her story."

According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Halbreich was born in 1926 in Warsaw to a well-to-do family of three sisters and one brother. In 1939, their father fled with them to the Russian part of Poland, where he continued his work in the paper business. She, her father, and one sister crossed back into Warsaw, but her mother and two other siblings were sent to Siberia.

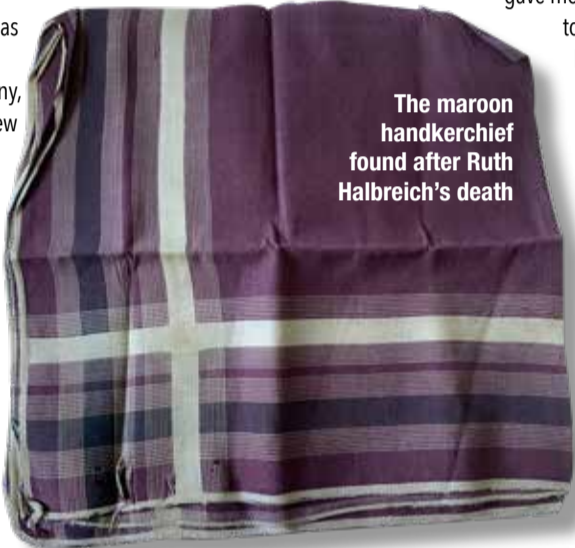
Halbreich and her family moved into the Warsaw ghetto in 1940. When the Germans started sending people from the ghetto to the camps, she and her sister were sent outside the ghetto to live in a convent. After the Warsaw ghetto uprising, Halbreich and her sister were sent to a slave labour camp in a small town in Germany. They were liberated in April 1945. She found out that her father had died in the ghetto in 1943, fighting in the underground. She met her husband, a fellow Holocaust survivor, at a displaced-persons camp. She also found out that her mother and two siblings had survived in Siberia.

In her testimony, Halbreich says, "The uprising was in April 1943. My father had left the ghetto in the trucks carrying merchandise. I met him in his office. He



Photos: Reg Tigerman

Ruth and Siegfried Halbreich



The maroon handkerchief found after Ruth Halbreich's death

gave me a handkerchief of his to remember him by. My father's biggest wish was to be able to save his children, and he was able to do this. He went back into the ghetto, and no one really knows what might have happened to him."

A million miles away from that time and place, Nerwich entered the 21st Annual Holocaust Art &

Writing Contest run annually by Chapman University and The 1939 Society (a community of Holocaust survivors, descendants, and friends). "The brief was for a piece of creative writing based on the testimony of a Holocaust survivor," she told the SA Jewish Report.

The poem describes the handkerchief as the only thing Halbreich has left from her father as her world is destroyed, and how it symbolises the flames of destruction and her father's deep love.

"Hearing her story and writing the piece itself was an enriching experience," says Nerwich. "I was thrilled when I was awarded first place, a first for King David High School. I always smile just thinking about my poem. However, a small part of me always wished that Ruth would be able to read the poem and know that her story is being shared, that she is being heard."

So, when she received the email from Tigerman on 15 July, "it changed my life. I read it and re-read it because I was sure my eyes were deceiving me," says Nerwich.

She was shaking as she read the email. "I felt a deep sense of loss to learn that Ruth had passed away, but I was also deeply moved to learn that her family had the gift of this poem and that Ruth's story continues to be told. Seeing the actual picture of the maroon hankie – the last memory that Ruth had of her father, the piece of fabric that guided her throughout the horrors she endured – is an image that will be permanently engraved in my mind."

She says she chose to reflect on this story in her poem "because I could relate to Ruth. I'm a very sentimental person. Just like Ruth's dad gave her

a red handkerchief, my dad made me red roses out of Lego, which I keep in my room. So, the fact that she mentioned the maroon handkerchief that her dad gave her really resonated with me. It made it so

much more real. It's a symbol of her story, and what she and so many others went through."


Her mother, Daniella Nerwich, says she felt breathless when she read Tigerman's email. "All this really shows the value of Jewish education. We are so fortunate that King David creates opportunities like this [to enter the poetry contest]. This just shows how it can be so far-reaching. So huge credit must go to King David for creating this opportunity. It has been life changing."

Because of the pandemic, Nerwich was unable to travel to the United States to collect her prize, but Tigerman's message has made up for that disappointment. They hope to meet in person one day, and possibly even work together to share the story of the maroon handkerchief as a form of Holocaust education.

Says Tigerman, "While my grandmother didn't often share her story (she would if you asked, but she wasn't very proactive about it), my grandfather [Siegfried Halbreich] was a regular speaker. He was a survivor of multiple concentration camps over the course of five and a half years. He served as president of The 1939 Society, the organisation that published Noa's poem, and was a founder of the Los Angeles Holocaust Museum. Everyone's story is worth telling and remembering, which has made the oral histories and recorded testimonies so important."

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Vaccination is the *mitzvah* of the moment

OPINION CHIEF RABBI DR WARREN GOLDSTEIN



On Sunday, amidst all the challenges and trauma of this pandemic, I had a most inspiring experience. I decided to visit the pop-up vaccination site at Rabbi Aharon Zulberg’s shul, The Base, just to see what was happening. I witnessed a truly heart-warming spectacle: scores of passionate volunteers from our community helping people of all backgrounds register on the Electronic Vaccination Data System and get vaccinated.

The pop-up site was part of a wider initiative called GiVV (Gauteng Vax Volunteers). Set up and run by Dr Menachem Hockman, Josh Falkson, and Raphi Segal, in partnership with the Gauteng health department, it involves high school and university students volunteering at vaccination sites and government hospitals across the province to speed up the data-capturing process and improve efficiency at these sites.

The kindness and selfless concern for others; the ingenuity to come up with innovative solutions to tough challenges; and the determination to see them through – this initiative represents the best of our community, exemplifying everything we stand for. And all in service of that most sacred of Torah principles – *pikuach nefesh* – the *mitzvah* to protect and preserve life.

In one day, the team at The Base vaccinated 3 000 people, which is truly remarkable. That’s 3 000 people now protected from the worst effects of COVID-19, with all the positive knock-on effects that it entails for our society.



Photo: Ilan Ossendryver

Nobuhle Gumbia gets a jab in front of the ark

It also serves as a reminder of the urgency to get vaccinated. Vaccination is the *mitzvah* of this moment. It falls squarely within the parameters of *pikuach nefesh*, and we need to seize it with both hands. Every day we delay can potentially cost life.

We have a *mitzvah* to preserve our own life and take care of our health, and to save the lives of others. By getting vaccinated, we fulfil this vital *mitzvah*. We take steps to prevent ourselves from becoming seriously ill, and we protect those around us from a potentially deadly disease which, in its current Delta variant, is particularly contagious.

And, it goes well beyond the people we come into direct contact with. As a country, as a society, the sooner we reach societal

immunity, the sooner we rid ourselves of the suffering and death of COVID-19. Every immunisation is a step towards freeing ourselves of this pandemic. Vaccination is the only way out. Like polio and numerous other diseases humanity has overcome, the only way we will get past coronavirus is to vaccinate the disease into oblivion.

By getting vaccinated, we also fulfil our role as Hashem’s partners in creation. The Talmud teaches that G-d gave doctors permission – and in fact, a mandate – to heal. The commentators explain that G-d wants our partnership in healing the world. Doctors, nurses, virologists, immunologists, all of those involved in the holy work of healthcare are, in fact, Hashem’s partners in creation.

Having faith in G-d doesn’t mean that we can sit back and do nothing and expect Him to take care of us. Of course, we recognise that no doctor can heal and no vaccine can protect from disease without Hashem’s blessing. But our sages teach us explicitly that G-d wants us to work as His partners in creating a better world by using the laws of nature that He, Himself created. And we daven to Hashem and acknowledge that even our best efforts cannot succeed without His will and partnership. There is no contradiction. Both are essential.

And so, at this pivotal time, we need to act with speed and urgency. We need to fulfil our obligations to Hashem, our community, our fellow countrymen, and to ourselves. We need to embrace this *mitzvah* and get vaccinated if we are eligible. This isn’t a *mitzvah* that can be delayed even for a moment. *Pikuach nefesh*,

the opportunity to preserve life, isn’t something we stand around debating.

The virus won’t burn itself out, no amount of wishful thinking will make it magically disappear. SARS-CoV-2 will constantly reinvent itself, mutating into new variants, wreaking fresh havoc on our lives, our livelihoods, and our health. The only way to stop it is the vaccine. The data is conclusive. Countries around the world with advanced vaccination

programmes have shown us that even when infections start to rise again, hospital admissions are lower by orders of magnitude relative to previous waves. In effect, through vaccination, we transform coronavirus into a manageable form of flu.

I’d like to take this opportunity to call on everyone who is eligible in our community to vaccinate themselves and to assist and encourage those who haven’t. The options are plentiful, the process is easy. Our own Hatzolah and The Chev have just launched a programme: you make a booking; you arrive; you are in and out of the door in minutes, with very little paperwork and at no cost.

The vaccine is our ticket back to the life we knew. We must take it.

COVID-19 vaccination could be compulsory at workplace

OPINION

MICHAEL BAGRAIM



As vaccination becomes more freely available in South Africa, questions arise such as can you make vaccination compulsory and can you dismiss someone if they refuse? Do you have to allow time off to get vaccinated, and what happens if an employee has an adverse reaction? These questions and many more are new to our labour law, and will be subject to litigation over the next many years.

In terms of the department of employment and labour’s latest regulations, the minister has recognised that employers may in terms of their own internal rules make COVID-19 vaccination compulsory.

Obviously, the compulsion must be subject to certain oversight, and must be reasonable in all circumstances. The employer would have to take into account their own operational requirements, and must be able to justify that in terms of these requirements, they would expect employees to be vaccinated against COVID-19.

Over and above this, each case must be carefully explored, discussed, and subject to proper consultation, taking into account the employee’s circumstances. These circumstances can include medical, religious, bodily integrity, and any other factor reasonably raised by the employee or the employee’s representative.

Obviously, each particular employer would develop a set of guidelines and rules which would be read with the disciplinary code and would be properly implemented after consultation with the employees or their representatives.

These rules must be made subject to the above-mentioned criteria, and would probably be differently implemented in accordance with the operational requirements of the position of the actual employee.

For instance, if a buyer for a company has the duty to travel abroad and can do so only if vaccinated, then there would be a compulsion to be vaccinated. It would be incumbent upon the employer to explore whether there are other ways of doing the job or whether an employee is willing to accept another position which doesn’t require vaccination.

It’s absolutely vital for every employer to read the regulation, and to advise all the necessary parties within the next three weeks of their intention to make vaccination mandatory and which employees will be affected.

Obviously, even once vaccination has been made mandatory, it would be subject to the employees being able to obtain the vaccination, and might require the employer to help obtain them. The employer’s policy will take into account various factors such as consultation with all the representatives at the workplace, and will respect bargaining council agreements and any other collective agreements with trade unions.

If there is an informal committee representing the staff and/or a workers forum, these bodies must also be consulted.

The minister of health has published draft regulations for the establishment of a no-fault compensation fund for injuries caused by the COVID-19 vaccination. The Vaccine Injury Compensation Fund will be established in terms of the regulations as an amendment to the regulations of the Disaster Management Act of 2002.

Although this compensation fund for vaccine injury

hasn’t been formed yet, the various ministers involved are taking into account commentary from the public, and will be getting legal advice from parliament’s legal advisors.

The injury must be related to vaccination. An injured person may not institute a claim through the court process against the national or provincial government until the claim has been adjudicated by the relevant



panel through the compensation fund.

Only if the person is dissatisfied with the outcome of the adjudication or the amount awarded can that person lodge an appeal, and the appeal must be determined by the relevant decision maker. Only after pursuing a claim with the scheme can a person look to the courts if that person is still dissatisfied.

Businesses are urged once again to warn their staff that protocols are in place, and breach of COVID-19 rules and regulations will lead to spread of infection and almost inevitably disciplinary action.

I’m involved in no less than a dozen cases where employers have reported and taken action against recalcitrant employees. It’s time, once again, to reiterate the fundamental, basic rules such as social distancing, mask wearing, and sanitising. Over and above this, any staff member exhibiting symptoms must report these symptoms to their health officer or senior management, and should immediately take sick leave.

The consequences of a staff member remaining silent could be loss of their position and more seriously, the spread of infection.

Employers will have to educate staff about the value of vaccination along with normal social distancing, masks, and hand sanitising. Education in these circumstances, I believe, will be the strongest factor in convincing all staff to get vaccinated.

A consolidated direction on occupational health and safety measures in certain workplaces was gazette on 11 June 2021. This contains new requirements with regard to vaccination.

It’s clear from this that an employer must give employees time off to be vaccinated. The employee may be required to provide proof of an appointment to be vaccinated. Time off shouldn’t be regarded as sick leave, but should be given as a form of special leave.

If there are negative effects from vaccination, the employer will grant paid sick leave in terms of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act. If the sick leave has been exhausted, there could be a claim in terms of the Compensation for Occupational Injuries and Diseases Act. Employees will produce the vaccination certificate thereafter, and a medical certificate if they’ve had complications.

• Michael Bagraim is an attorney specialising in labour law, and advises nationwide on the restructuring and management of labour forces. He is also a Democratic Alliance member of parliament.

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Mental health – the pandemic behind the pandemic

OPINION

DORIANNE WEIL



In addition to the health pandemic we are, unsurprisingly, in the midst of a global mental-health pandemic. Instead of hiding behind whispers and closed doors, mental health has, unfortunately and out of necessity, become a pervasive hot topic. The stigma has, in part, been eroded, as we have a sense that the uncertainty and huge challenge of our times effects all of us, albeit in different ways.

Mental health isn't just the absence of mental illness, it also refers to functionality, resilience, and ability to cope and self-regulate at least most of the time. Of course, there are bad days, but generally, if functioning at work, at home, or in regard to other relationships isn't impaired, we experience "normal" reactions to an unprecedented, abnormal global situation.

Having said this, the pandemic has served as an incubator, with high levels of depression and anxiety launched by loss and uncertainty.

Initially, I resented the term "new normal" and would talk only about "now normal", which encompassed the belief that we wouldn't be forced to settle for this, and that our world mostly as we knew it was awaiting us on the horizon.

What has transpired, however, is that the horizon is being extended and in addition to the anxiety, sadness, and fear that spills out everywhere, there's also an identifiable unnamed feeling precipitated by the extent and duration of unfamiliar and scary ways of being.

The losses and feelings are expected and obvious. Fear of contracting the virus, fear of isolation, uncertainty about the



future, and loss of control. The losses are unprecedented. Unquestionably, most of all is the loss of life without the capacity or necessary rituals associated with severe illness, death, and mourning. Beloved family members are on their own at a time when they need us most.

Often, there is the lack of closure and the inability to pay our respects according to our culturally comforting way. Then there is the overwhelming sadness and anger because "it's just not fair!"

There are also job losses, which generate a lack of purpose and money, fuelling fear of survival. All of this is in an environment of loss of predictability, certainty, routine, physical contact, and some degree of emotional connectedness.

Boundaries have become blurred. We don't work "from home", we work "with home", parents becoming teachers, children online, limited socialisation, adults having

no transitional time, teenagers skipping milestones and rituals concerned with the development of their identity. All of this has required courageous conversation, task negotiation, and often an unsuccessful attempt at establishing any kind of personal boundaries or appropriate self-compassion.

Often, our clients are embarrassed to step forward as what they're feeling may be unnamed. "It's just a lack of motivation and energy" they say, a lethargy, a tiredness, and an inability to flourish, a sense of resignation.

In this way, so many of us feel dissociated and de-personalised, not connected enough with "my life as I knew it" and with the outside world. "Who am I?" is a regular question.

These feelings are usually associated with diagnosable mental illness but at these times, appear societally contagious. All you need to do is state your case with openness,

vulnerability, and authenticity, and you will open a floodgate, if not an echo chamber, of people who tell you they know exactly what you are talking about because they're feeling the same thing.

So what do we do? First, to tame it you have to name it. It's counterproductive to try to dismiss or deny your personal reality. If you don't own the story, the story will own you,

and will manifest through disassociation withdrawal, or prolonged sadness that can become depression, irritation, low frustration tolerance, and the inability to self-regulate. There may also be physical symptoms like headaches, lower back pain, and appetite and sleep disturbances.

Now, more than ever, we need to experience the immeasurable power of empathic support. This means to develop trust in the people who "have your back", who will listen to understand, who will really "get it", and won't pre-empt you with their own story, at least not initially.

Your tribe, and it can be a tribe of one, will check in, show genuine interest, and understand that love and care are verbs – doing things, not just talking about things. And, usually the "doing thing" is being there and listening. You feel recognised, validated, understood, and not crazy!

Taking care of yourself isn't selfish, it's

essential. You cannot be available for anyone else unless you feel worthy of your own compassion and self-care. This starts with the basics. Good nutrition, enough sleep, and understanding the importance of exercise – which should never be underestimated in relation to mental health. Take care of your children's parent, of your parents' child, and of your boss's employee.

Conflict often manifests when you have time and space in your head, and unresolved issues and relationships emerge and become toxic. It's difficult to remember that it's always more important to be happy than to win.

The pandemic has made us realise that life can change in a heartbeat, and what we thought was under our control might not be. It also has resulted in a priority shift. Mostly, a new priority of relationships and gratitude for connection that we now realise is more important than anything. So take a risk, and make the first move, even without a guarantee. People can't hear what you don't say.

And please, cut yourself some slack. Recognise the resilience that you have displayed, the obstacles that you have overcome, and the value that is uniquely you.

We move on by remembering the past, using our experiences and memories, and reimagining and creating a better future – the horizon is getting closer!

We will navigate the journey together.

• Dorianne Weil (Dr D) is a clinical psychologist.

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NICOLA MILTZ

Kim Kur founder and lead volunteer of Community Circle SA one of the many volunteers who helped coordinate Operation Mercy

NICOLA MILTZ

The Spencer siblings – first cousins to Princes William and Harry – spent their early years in the Spencers' family home, Althorp, in Northamptonshire, before moving with their parents to South Africa in 1995, two years before Diana's death.



It's believed that Lewis' three grown-up children from

Some of the brands in the TFG stable include Foschini, @home, @homelivingspace, American Swiss, Fabiani, G-Star RAW, Duesouth, Sportscene, TotalSports, and

"Amore. Per Sempre," Kitty captioned a photograph with her husband, which translates to, "Love. Forever."

On Tuesday, a coalition of Israeli progressives took out a full-page ad in *Ha'aretz*, a left-leaning newspaper,

"Using the full force and power of government to penalise those who exercise their rights in opposition to Israeli policy does nothing but generate further attention and sympathy for boycotts, and frames backing Israel as being in opposition to fundamental freedoms in the minds of many Americans," the letter says. "That is a strategic disaster for those, like us, who are trying to maintain and grow a healthy US-Israeli relationship."



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In the driving seat of the vacci-nation

MIRAH LANGER

Victor Nkomo is one of the backstage heroes who is helping community members get vaccinated against COVID-19.

Over the past few months, Nkomo has become a pro at finding the shortest queues, best venues, and escorting those who need assistance to get their jab.

“I feel proud. I believe we are doing something good – we are saving lives,” he says, estimating that he has helped dozens of people including elderly shul congregants, staff, and any others in need.

When he began escorting people, he kept returning to the same venue. But then he “started driving around and scouting which are the better places with less of a queue. Mostly my guesses have been good, and I will find I have made the right choice.”

While many praise him, Nkomo reserves his admiration for the staff on site. “Once I took an elderly couple who were in wheelchairs to get vaccinated. Everyone in the queue was just so happy to let them through. Wherever we go, people are always so happy to help.”

Nkomo officially works as a driver at the company, Legal & Tax Services. He arrived in South Africa from Zimbabwe in 1999 and, to begin with, worked as a gardener and doing newspaper deliveries. It was through the latter that he met one of the owners of the company, who encouraged him to pursue his dream for a better future. A few years later, he had obtained his driver’s license, and was “hired on the spot” by the owners of the company,



Victor Nkomo

both members of the community. First, he helped company employees and their elderly family members get to their vaccination venues, then he expanded it to helping “whoever needed to be vaccinated and didn’t have transport to get there or know how to [organise the process] themselves”.

Recently, Sydenham Shul asked if Nkomo could help in getting its staff and some of its congregants to vaccination venues.

He performed this service with aplomb, said the shul’s executive director, Jonty Cohen. “He does everything with such good grace. Besides the frontline heroes, Victor is one of my heroes. He goes out and assists the community without expecting anything in return; nothing is ever too much trouble for him. Victor is probably the kindest, gentlest, warmest soul that I know on this earth.”

He describes how Nkomo stays with people in queues when needed. At other times, he has shlepped back and forth taking people in separate shifts throughout the day to ensure proper social distancing at all times.

Judge Ezra Goldstein said that although their encounters were brief, Nkomo made an immediate impression when he took Goldstein and his wife to a vaccination venue.

“I liked him immediately. He was calm and warm, taking us there and back very kindly. He is obviously a *mensh*,” says Goldstein.

Getting your COVID-19 jab is a duty, not a right

OPINION

DR DANIEL ISRAEL



The drop in cases of new COVID-19 infection in the community in the past week is like the loosening of a noose around the necks of my colleagues and myself, and though we’re still diagnosing new cases daily, fear of a further exponential increase has abated.

As we start to sigh the first breaths of relief, our imagination has started to venture into the prospect of a fourth wave, which as professionals, perhaps we wouldn’t mentally survive.

During this week, when my mind has wandered into these overwhelming thoughts, I’m instantly reassured that we now have a vaccine for COVID-19. It’s our golden armour in this disastrous pandemic, and the single most effective tool we have to get our lives back to normal.

Yet, I’m intrigued by the number of people I still consult on a daily basis who are truly undecided as to whether or not they will be enrolling for a COVID-19 vaccine. Some cite well thought-out arguments that deter them from enrolling for vaccination. Others have, in fact, enrolled, but an emotional barrier with fear at its foundation prevents them from taking the next step.

To date, there has been no scientifically robust data that has called to question any of the readily available vaccines. When I’m posed a question like, “Is it worth the risk of having a COVID-19 vaccine if it can cause blood clots or infertility?”, my logical reply is almost always with the counter question, “Have you considered the risks of COVID-19 pneumonia or being a conduit for COVID-19 pneumonia in someone else? Have you weighed those risks against that vaccine risk that concerns you?” Life is fraught with daily risks, and we navigate the best balance of these risks in our daily routines. For example, we wouldn’t accept the risk of going without food against the risk of crossing a busy road to collect the food, even though both risks are real. The same logic should be employed here.

Six months into worldwide vaccine deployment, just less than four billion doses have been given. This sample size certainly allows us to quantify risks. One in 100 000 Johnson & Johnson and AstraZeneca recipients developed a clotting disorder called thrombocytic thrombocytopenia. The occurrence of myocarditis (inflammation of the heart) in Pfizer patients has been pitched at about one in a million.

These numbers are statistically so insignificant, it’s almost more responsible not to mention them at all in my opinion. The risk of complications of the anxiety caused by their discussion alone may be higher than the original risks themselves.

So, why are we still struggling to convince a significant proportion of the larger community to get the jab? German psychologist Professor Cornelia Betsch proposed five c’s as factors that deeply affect vaccine uptake. All of these are important here.

Confidence: trust in the vaccine’s efficacy and safety, and confidence in the people rolling them out. We are making great strides here, particularly with community and religious organisations now opening vaccine centres. We need to produce more paper reading material about vaccine safety in different languages, and rely less on digital education only.

Complacency: whether the disease is considered a serious risk. The third wave and its devastation has shifted most minds here. We need to focus on the appreciation that healthy young people can become significantly unwell too.

Calculation: weighing up the costs and benefits. We need to encourage those reluctant to be vaccinated to do this exercise themselves. The risks of COVID-19 complications are big. The risks of vaccines are, at most, little.

Constraints: availability and ease. Justifiable or not, we have failed here. However, South Africa can be proud of its catch-up and current stock availability.

Collective responsibility: the willingness to protect others from infection through one’s own vaccination. I will focus the rest of the article on this responsibility.

COVID-19 has taught us the paramount lesson that we are responsible for one another. This spans from the responsibility of informing contacts if you test positive, to the responsibility of supporting infected individuals with medication to prevent them from infecting others, to the responsibility of emotional support for bereaved families, to now, the biggest responsibility of getting vaccinated. This is your greatest moment of responsibility to others in COVID-19, even if you believe you are taking on “vaccine risk”.

It’s so clear to me that the only way out of this pandemic is for us to stop framing our COVID-19 lives as individuals, and embrace the responsibility of being a member of a community. We need to take up our duty to protect others. Getting vaccinated to protect others shouldn’t be seen as a mere act of altruism. In fact, it’s the only way we will rebuild our communal life and develop population immunity. Ironically, it’s this focus on others will that will enable us as individuals to resume our own social interactions and a normal lifestyle. The true test of COVID-19 is seeing beyond one’s own immediate protection.

If you are in still in doubt as to whether or not to get vaccinated, you aren’t alone. You have every right to ask questions. But COVID-19 vaccinations aren’t about rights. They are foremost about a deep responsibility and personal duty to society as a whole. No formidable soldier has stood at the frontlines of a battleground worrying about his rights. You have a responsibility to go out there now and fulfil your duty. Otherwise, you may want to consider “staying home and saving lives” for the rest of your life.

• Dr Daniel Israel is a family practitioner in Johannesburg.

Pop-up vaccination site sets record

SAUL KAMIONSKY

A pop-up vaccination site in Glenhazel carried out just more than 11% of the total 27 053 vaccinations administered across the country on 25 July, setting what is believed to be a record.

Three thousand COVID-19 vaccinations were administered at the volunteer-run site at The Base Shul on Sunday.

“Discovery has exceeded the number of vaccinations we did at The Base in a day, but the district manager of Joburg told me at the site that they haven’t exceeded more than 1 200 in any one of their sites in Gauteng,” said 27-year-old Dr Menachem Hockman, popularly known as “Dr Menoosh”.

Menoosh attributes the speed and efficiency of the process to the many volunteers who did the administration and all the other necessary procedures for vaccination.

“This is an initiative that we are trying to roll out at

the moment, and it just shows the impact of having those extra hands to volunteer,” says Menoosh. “Bara [Baragwanath Hospital] and other sites have as many nurses as we have, they just don’t have those volunteers, and it shows what a difference they made. It was also something special at the site to show the impact of all our volunteers.”

One of the volunteers, Dalya Gerson, a dietician, said, “My role prior to the day was recruiting volunteers, organising them, showing them what they would have to do on the day, and giving them specific roles. I was also a volunteer for the day.”

According to the messages Menoosh has received, everyone was in and out within half an hour, including the 15-minute waiting time. “That’s brilliant for any vaccination site,” he said.

The speed came from the strategy of divorcing the administrative role from the vaccination role. “All the vaccinators had to focus on was administering vaccines, so they could push people through much

quicker. That was our strategy.”

To help other government sites achieve a similar speed, volunteers may be dispersed through Gauteng VAX Volunteers (GiVV), a programme that operates at vaccine sites. These volunteers assist with, among other things, administrative tasks, filling out vaccination cards, registering individuals that are eligible for vaccinations, and updating and processing information once vaccinations have been administered.

“Running these sites is how we are helping the health department, which provided us with the vaccines,” said Menoosh. “We want to maintain that close relationship with it to allow us to do more. I want it to be given the credit for allowing us to do it, and it’s very important for it to continue to allow us to do so.”

• To help out or be a part of GiVV, apply by completing the sign-up form on www.givv.co.za. GiVV can also be found on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Gauteng VAX Volunteers

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MIRAH LANGER



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Orthodox women make case for life beyond Netflix

MIRAH LANGER

As the spotlight shines on the introduction of the “Jewish Kardashians” in *My Unorthodox Life*, ordinary Jewish women have begun to air their own stories under the title of #MyOrthodoxLife. Their personal portraits are in response to the Netflix series, and other shows like *Unorthodox* and the documentary *One of Us* that depict people who reject Orthodox communities, and paint them as stifling and oppressive environments.

The *SA Jewish Report* invited six women in the South African Jewish community to add to the gallery of reflections that stretch beyond the streaming service. As a starting point, many of them cautioned against trying to confine the complexities of Jewish identity into neat categories: “What does the word ‘religious’ mean? Keeping Shabbos and kosher and wearing a skirt? There are 613 other *mitzvot*. Why have we chosen those three as the barometer for religiosity?” asks Chaya Ross.

For her, the concept of “religious” is a social imposition. “I don’t think Hashem makes such distinctions. In Hashem’s eyes, I believe we’re all Jewish, the Torah belongs to all of us equally, and His only expectation of us is for us to do our best and to try to be better than we were yesterday,” she says. She suggests that Jewish identity isn’t set, but an ongoing process. “In Judaism, growth is gradual, consistent, small steps to an eventual goal. Making these distinctions in Judaism can stop organic growth and close us off to what could be great spiritual and connecting experiences.” Breindy Klawansky, suggests that labels across the Jewish community can easily be misunderstood. “Your religious identity is your spiritual relationship and ties to Hashem and the Torah. No one can know how spiritual someone else is. If it’s hard to understand your own relationship with Hashem, then

imagine how hard it is to understand someone else’s.” Adrienne Kay says that even within the concept of orthodoxy lies a “spectrum” of experiences. “It definitely depends upon where you and your community are holding. I can talk only from the South African perspective, and the level at which I’m holding. There are definitely more liberal and more stringent Orthodox communities.” These women celebrate the importance of communality, especially in South Africa. “South Africans Jews are extremely lucky,” says Lesley Sacks.

pro-feminism,” says Sacks. “Anyone that knows even a little bit of Judaism, knows that it’s not true that women are second-class citizens.” Having become more religious since young adulthood, Sacks says it doesn’t mean that she “didn’t have meaning in [her] life before”, but [becoming more religious] has brought joy to it. “It’s now intrinsically part of who and what I am.” “I’ve never once felt subjugated as an Orthodox Jewish woman. In fact, I feel empowered and proud,” says Kay. She gives examples of the extensive career

of a healthy society. “It’s at home that the bedrock of our Judaism is set. The foundation of a home is the woman. She sets the tone, the environment, and the culture for the family. Judaism places much value and emphasis on women. I strongly believe that if you inspire a woman, you inspire a family. And if you inspire a family, you inspire communities!” Ross notes how “when the Torah was given, Hashem said to Moshe that he must first go and talk to the women and instruct them about the ways of Torah, and then only after that instruct the men. The reason for this, amongst other things, is that women play a central role in giving over the Torah to their children, and imbuing their homes with it.” Far from feeling cut off from



“We are unique in that even if you’re not remotely *frum*, a lot of South African Jews consider themselves Orthodox and very traditional.” Rebbetzin Estee Stern, says that in her home, inclusivity was always embraced as “my parents instilled within us respect for each person, no matter their background or level of Jewish observance.” “The South African Jewish community is united,” says Ross. “We have one Beth Din; we daven in the same shuls; and our lives are connected beyond the type of *kippah* our husbands and sons wear. Instead, we are connected in the way that we answer each other’s questions on Joburg Jewish Mommies; in the way that we chat in the line at Moishies on a Friday; and in the way that our *tehillim* WhatsApp groups represent every type of *kippah* or non-*kippah* wearing Jew.” In addition, many express a deep sense of fulfilment in Jewish femininity. “Judaism is very

opportunities enjoyed by Orthodox women. “Rachel [Ruchie] Freier is a criminal court judge in New York from a religious Hasidic community. Beatie Deutsch, a *frum* Israeli woman, is considered to be amongst the top marathon runners in the world. She’s a 31-year-old mother of six, and runs in modest clothing.” Klawansky is an award-winning musician and singer in her own right. Though she performs only to women, incorporating *tehillim* verses in her cutting-edge style, her expressiveness has such powerful resonance, it has even crossed cultural lines. Alongside her husband, the duo has received a Global Music Award and a South African Music Award nomination. Most recently, two of her poems have been selected for publication in an international anthology. Rather than feeling restricted, Klawansky asserts quite simply, “My music is in me...” The women also say that we need to expand the way in which we measure success and fulfilment. Stern points out that the home is the beating heart

modern society, they describe how Judaism helps them find balance in what otherwise can feel like a frenetic pace. “The thing I wish everyone understood is the power of Shabbos,” says Blumenthal. “I run my own business, and it often causes boundaries to be blurred, but when Friday afternoon arrives and I can turn off my phone and close my laptop, there’s no greater feeling. Without having that distinct boundary between the work week and my down time, I wouldn’t survive, and it’s because of the gift of Shabbos that I’m able to push forward, keep going, and do the best work for my clients.” Kay concurs in the pleasures of life beyond Netflix in more ways than one. “In my personal Orthodox life, I have found a balance between modernity and the ancient traditions of Judaism. I love the fact that on Shabbos, I switch off from the modern world, including cell phones and TV, and find a unique peace with myself and a deep connection to G-d.”

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KDL rises to honour Hatzolah

In response to our community’s continuing struggle with COVID-19, King David High School Linksfield recently ran a challah bake to pray for those in need and to honour the selfless work of Hatzolah. This organisation is a constant source of light and a pillar of strength in the community, and has helped nearly 6 000 people since the beginning of the pandemic. The school raised nearly R22 000 for this unbelievable organisation. A huge thank you to everyone who made it happen, and of course, a massive thank you to Hatzolah.

Yeshivah stories pack a message of hope

Yeshiva College Primary School staff started the term by partnering with Read for Hope to prepare and

distribute 20 story packs. Read for Hope is an educational initiative that offers readings to underprivileged communities and schools by

people around the world, who record and share audio and video of children’s stories. Every pack included a video recording of a story, a worksheet, an activity relating to the story, and of course, a treat for every child. The teachers worked in pairs to create their packs. The packs were received with gratitude and appreciation. A small amount of effort can have a lasting impact.

LUKE ALFRED

Playing out of Melaleuca Field in Idaho Falls itself, the Chukars count as their regional



Eric Brodkowitz

This is because one of their players, a young New York investment banker by the name of Eric Brodowitz, used his experience pitching for them in the minor leagues as a springboard to becoming a member of the Israel baseball team. Brodowitz thought he had played his last game of competitive baseball in 2018, when he pitched for Yale in a losing cause in an Ivy League game against Columbia. He had given the sport his best shot, and was now off to Goldman Sachs in Manhattan. Baseball was something he'd tell his grandchildren about.

Fate had other ideas. Watching from

Their mascot is called Charlie the Chukar, a chukar

Intrigued and irritated in equal measure, the 25-year-old pitcher replied that he was.

Truth be told, very few are expecting the Israelis to get a medal, but stranger things have happened. There are only six competing teams in the competition itself (the hosts, the US, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, and South

Brodkowitz wouldn't have it any other way. "I thought my baseball career was probably over," he told the *Wall Street Journal's* Andrew Beaton in talking about the punishing loss to Columbia when pitching for Yale in 2018. That was three years ago, and so much has happened in-between. Perhaps there's a chapter or two left for the pitcher and his team.

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