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TikTok 'influencer' finds six million Holocaust victims 'k*k' funny

TALI FEINBERG

n a series of crude antisemitic outbursts across social media, a South African man who is popular on the TikTok social-media platform laughed and joked about six million Jews dying in the Holocaust. He proudly admitted to admiring Hitler, and hurled a racial slur at a young black man who stood up to him.

Dustyn Drummer is 24 years old, and lives in Springs. When black matric pupil Neo Carolissen confronted him and asked him why he thought the Holocaust was funny, he responded, "I just find it funny. The same as when I can't help but laugh when I see car accidents. I will support anybody who tried to do what no one else could do. Hitler tried

it, he failed, because people wouldn't let him be the best person in the whole wide world. And now I can't stand Jewish people for not letting him finish his dream. The truth is I dislike them for what they did to him."

When Carolissen responded that he couldn't understand the logic, Drummer called the six million Holocaust victims a highly derogatory term. He then called Carolissen a "n*gger" and left the chat. This video has been seen at least 9 186 times. Many other Instagram users expressed their disgust at Drummer's comments.

Another young black man, Lindo Shandu, also confronted Drummer, who apologised for the racial slur against Carolissen but not for his antisemitic comments. A recording of the conversation was shared on Twitter. "It wouldn't be funny if 6 000 people died. Six million people died – that's what made it funny!" Drummer said to Shandu, laughing. "Six million people dying is k*k funny." He said it would be even funnier if more people had died.

Shandu asked him for his phone number so he could talk to him further. Drummer said, "I'm not going to drop my number because you guys are going to attack me, and you know what, I'm not a Jew who will sit there and get gas chambered to death. I will fight back."

Shandu told the *SA Jewish Report* that he had confronted Drummer because, "Earlier

Laid

Anthony Sacks, the owner of RTG and Next Door in Norwood, and his staff, join a

lay off 30 out of 54 of his staff members, and things have not eased up.

countrywide protest by the restaurant industry on Tuesday against lockdown regulations

that have put the industry under unbearable strain. Sacks says he has had no choice but to

Restaurant plight sto

this year, I learnt about what happened back then [the Holocaust] and it hit home because I have a Jewish friend and whenever we play rugby at different schools, they mock him. So I've had it up to here with people like him, and on top of that, he offended my race and was saying racial slurs."

Drummer's antisemitic outbursts began after a Johannesburg Jewish Grade 9 pupil joined an Instagram live group chat, and he saw her name in Hebrew on her profile. "He's really well known on South Africa TikTok, and especially well known in the Afrikaans community," says the Jewish teen, who asked not to be named.

"I have friends from his area. They were the ones who showed me his TikTok and Instagram [presence]. So on Friday

> [17 July], he did a live video and I was one of the people he allowed to join the discussion. I got disconnected, and when I came back on, people had begun fighting with him because he made a Hitler joke since he saw my name was written in Hebrew. People started joining the [live video] to defend me.

> "The next day, he did a TikTok 'live', saying that he would block anyone who supports Jews in

general or takes our side. One of his friends contacted me to ask what would happen. [Drummer] got scared, and then made an apology video. But then more people who tried to confront him were muted from the comments, and were blocked later on."

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In the apology video, Drummer said, among other things, "I was uneducated for saying that. I had no reason to say it. I honestly need to educate myself. It was ignorant. The jokes I made weren't jokes, they were insensitive. I know you guys aren't going to forgive me, and I can't expect forgiveness for something that I had no right to speak of. I always tell everyone to be kind, but I couldn't be kind to you guys, which means I'm not who I say I am. To everyone, especially what I said about the gas chambers, who had family who died, my apology."

Drummer's comments come soon after another Instagram influencer, Simone Kriel, made antisemitic statements on social media and refused to apologise. The South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) has since laid criminal charges against her.

However, in this case, the SAJBD has taken a different approach. "Our view is that the individual concerned genuinely didn't realise the implications of what he was saying," says SAJBD President Mary Kluk. "He has since sincerely apologised and expressed a desire to learn more about the issues, and the Board has been in touch with the Holocaust & Genocide Centres to assist him in this regard.

"As recently pointed out by World Jewish Congress President Ronald Lauder, the root cause of the problem is that the TikTok platform is becoming a dangerous breeding ground for antisemitism and often forms of racism, especially among impressionable young people. TikTok is a platform catering primarily to young audiences, and is



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Nominations open for a historic Jewish Achiever Awards

guests taking photos of themselves at home and

While they tuck into their meal at home,

The awards are another area where exciting

"While guests are eating and watching the

have their awards handed over to them at home

means that guests will actually see the handover

Some of the award categories have also been transformed. In spite of the challenges posed by our trying circumstances, members of our

Edna Freinkel

- the 2019

Europcar

Women in

Leadership

winne

by a team waiting to ring their doorbell. This

of the award, and feel as though they are still part of the event without actually being there."

community remain determined to stand out

and make tangible contributions, and the

awards need to reflect this, Sackstein says.

"COVID-19 has ensured that the Absa

Jewish Achiever Awards has changed, and

which we are living," he says.

"Beyond being online, the event must be

experiential in that it is relevant to the times in

certain award categories have been adjusted to

reflect our reality. Business leadership in the

time of COVID will replace the usual Business

Leadership Award, the Professional Excellence

award will become the Professional Excellence in

COVID award. Other categories will be similarly

Changes like these are essential,

guests will enjoy a livestream of the event,

enjoying the evening's entertainment and

sharing them online."

changes have been made.

awards.

JORDAN MOSHE

he Absa Jewish Achiever Awards 2020 is now open for nominations.

Just when you thought nothing familiar and fabulous was going to happen, the SA Jewish Report is calling you onboard to begin its journey to this year's Absa Jewish Achiever Awards.

COVID-19 may have brought live entertainment and events to a grinding halt, but this year's awards will be held in a format that will make history and give ample recognition to those who have achieved great things

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ceremony in which Jewish individuals are acknowledged for the powerful, influential, and life-changing roles they play in South Africa. The Absa Jewish Achiever Awards acknowledges those who deserve recognition for their contributions to society, paying tribute to the men and women who have enhanced our community.

Scheduled to take place in mid-October, the annual extravaganza evening will go ahead in spite of a host of virus-related challenges.

"For the first time in the event's history, we will be holding an online-offline event," says Howard Sackstein, the chairperson of the SA Jewish Report. "While the actual event will be streamed live for people to watch without being present, guests will still be able to take part in this incredible event."

Sackstein explains that while tables can be purchased as usual, the seating is virtual, as guests will experience a gourmet dining experience in the comfort of their own homes while watching the live event.

> "Those who buy tables will have their meal delivered to their home, from cocktails to dessert," says Sackstein. "We will also feature a virtual red carpet, with

Torah Thought

Why we refuse to forget

adjusted."

evarim is the parsha associated with Tisha B'Av, the Jewish national day of mourning. This Shabbos, we read the famous Haftarah of Chazon, the vision of Isaiah. And, next Thursday, we will recall the destruction of our holy temple nearly 2 000 years ago.

But why remember? The world cannot understand why we go on about the Holocaust, and that was only 75 years ago! For more than 19 centuries, we have been remembering and observing this event, and it has become the saddest day in our calendar. Why? Why not let bygones be bygones? It's history. What was, was. Why keep revisiting old and painful visions? They say that Napoleon was once passing through the Jewish ghetto in Paris, and heard sounds of crying and wailing emanating from a synagogue. He stopped to ask what the lament was about. He was told that the Jews were remembering the destruction of their Temple. "When did it happen?" asked the Emperor. "About 1 700 years ago," was the answer. Whereupon Napoleon stated with conviction that a

people who never forgot its past would be destined to forever have a future.

Elie Wiesel once said, "Jews never had history. We have memory." History can become a book, a museum, and forgotten antiquities. Memory is alive, memories reverberate, and memory guarantees our future

Even amidst the ruins, we refused to forget. The first temple was destroyed by the Babylonians. As they were led into captivity, the Jews sat down and wept. "By the rivers of Babylon, we sat and wept remembering Zion." What did they cry for? Their lost wealth, homes, and businesses? No. They cried for Zion and Jerusalem. "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand lose its cunning." They weren't weeping for themselves or their lost liberties, but for the heavenly city and holy temple. Amidst the bondage, they aspired to rebuild, amidst the ruins, they dreamt of returning.

Sackstein says.

"Awards which ignore our circumstances would be meaningless," he says. "We have moved to recognise those doing remarkable work and their efforts at this very moment which are most relevant to our community.



"We are celebrating our heroes. Heroes emerge in moments like these. Ordinary people have really grasped the mantle of leadership and provided such a remarkable example that we should all emulate."

Every member of our community is encouraged to participate in acknowledging the tremendous efforts of those who have risen to the occasion of COVID-19 and beyond.

"While a lot of people are depressed and fatalistic about our reality, others have seen the opportunities it offers and striven to make our lives so much better," says Sackstein. "We have to recognise and celebrate them, using them as an example of what we can do in these difficult times."

Shabbat times this week				
Starts	Ends			
17:20	18:11	Johannesburg		
17:44	18:38	Cape Town		
17:01	17:54	Durban		
17:22	18:14	Bloemfontein		
17:15	18:09	Port Elizabeth		
17:08	18:02	East London		

Rabbi Yossy Goldman, **Sydenham Shul**

rebuilt proud Jewish communities the world over while our victors have been vanquished by time.

The Babylonian and Roman destroyers of old are no more. Those nations became history while we, inspired by memory, emerged revitalised and regenerated, and forever it will be true that am Yisrael chai.

Only if we refuse to forget can we hope to rebuild one day. If we are to make our return to Zion successful and permanent, if our people are to harbour the hope of being restored and revived internationally, then we dare not forget. We need to observe our national day of mourning next Wednesday night and Thursday. Forego whatever entertainment options your COVID-19 lockdown allows. Sit down on a low seat to mourn with your people, and perhaps even more importantly, to remember. And, please G-d, He will restore those glorious days, and rebuild His own everlasting house. May it be speedily in our day.





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Neighbour snatches family from fire

NICOLA MILTZ

fast-acting neighbour has been hailed as a hero for rescuing a young family whose flat was moments away from being engulfed in smoke and flames.

Last Thursday night, Jonathan Penn and his heavily pregnant wife Simone put their children and themselves to bed early due to unscheduled loadshedding, which plunged their flat on the third floor of Glen Manor in Glenhazel into darkness.

The couple ate an early dinner while it was still light enough to see, and were tucked up in bed by 18:30 with their two children, Judah, 5, and Ayden, 3, in the main bedroom with them.

Simone had lit candles to provide

and Simone's kitchen. We dumped our bags and takeaways, and rushed to try get them out of there," said Tali, 23.

Working together, the father and daughter team sprang into action and began screaming and knocking at the door to the flat. Pandemonium ensued as the family jumped out of bed and were greeted by a wall of smoke.

Simone, who writes a blog titled Mothers' Nature, related her experience the next day. "In the glass windowpane above the front door we could see burning orange reflections. We all started to cough. We couldn't breathe. The children were screaming. Jonny was trying to pull us away from the flames and the smoke into the lounge. He was scared the blaze was in the passage. He knew not to touch the handles. He knew not to open any

've seen my of trauma, t's entirely erent when vou our fat h into a fi

dash into a fire."

Once the family was safe, Marlon said his focus turned to extinguishing the fire which was getting out of control

"My priority was first to get the family out of the flat, and then to contain the spread of the fire. There are 88 flats with many elderly residents. I had no time to think about anything other than putting out that fire," he said.



some soft ambient lighting, including a vanilla scented Yankee Candle on the mantle

Sometime later, the family was shaken awake by frantic, loud banging on their front door and screams to get out

The Penns were oblivious to the fire which had broken out in their kitchen just a few doors away.

Neighbours Marlon Nathan and his daughter, Tali, were arriving home after fetching takeaways when they saw rising flames in the kitchen of the flat next door to theirs. Had they been a few minutes earlier, they wouldn't have seen the fire.

"As we rounded the stairs and turned left, we saw flames and thick black smoke coming from Jonathan

"I fumbled with the keys, one arm over my mouth. I couldn't remember how keys worked. I couldn't remember how the door worked."

doors. He thought we were trapped.

She told the SA Jewish Report that at that moment, she feared for their lives.

As Marlon was about to kick down the front door, it opened, and frantically, he pulled Simone, Judah, and Ayden out. The little girl, disorientated, ran back inside when she couldn't see her father through the smoke. Marlon ran headlong into the smoke to retrieve her.

Tali, a student nurse currently working the COVID-19 wards at Milpark Hospital, said, "I've seen my share of trauma, but it's entirely different when you see your father

Jonathan and Marlon ran through the building collecting fire extinguishers to battle the flames. Security guard Prince Elliot used

large buckets of water to put out the last of the fire.

A distraught Judah was worried about his two birds, Tweety and Koko, whom he had left behind in all the commotion. He was calmed when a firefighter much later appeared clutching a perfectly intact bird cage containing two finches.

"That was when I broke down. Every single Penn was safe and accounted for," said Simone.

The family believe a surge caused by the power outage caused a spark which ignited the fire. "We suspect a spark landed on a large tablecloth I had



folded in the kitchen," said Simone.

Relieved and grateful, she said, "I think Hashem sent angels in the form of Marlon and Tali, and then Prince. But of course we owe everything to Marlon. We owe him our life. He and Tali appeared at the exact right moment. I shudder to think what five minutes either way would have meant."

Marlon, 56, who has been treated for smoke inhalation said, "I'm not a hero. I just did what anybody in that situation would've done."

He was meant to be in Israel for his daughter's wedding, but cancelled his trip the day before the fire. His daughter says she now knows why. "He was meant to be here to save lives," she said.

"I believe the family was minutes away from dying. The smoke was so heavy and thick, they would have died in their beds. They wouldn't have got to the front door. You could hardly see them when



kitchen by the stove

The fire broke out in the



they came out. It was scary," said Marlon.

A firefighter told the SA Jewish *Report* it could have ended very differently. "This was a potentially deadly fire. One flat can take out the building. There are many different people living there with different needs, including elderly in wheelchairs. There is a petrol station next to it and restaurants. It was potentially very dangerous."

> The Penns say their experience has taught them a lot about fire prevention. They recommend keeping a fire extinguisher, installing smoke alarms, turning off the mains when the power is cut, and installing surge plugs for appliances.

Both the Penns and the Nathans are living with family members while their homes are cleaned and repaired.



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Schools remain closed for community's sake

TALI FEINBERG

he South African Board of Jewish Education (SABJE), which governs King David Schools, and Yeshiva College, announced last Friday that it was keeping its schools closed and moving online.

Parents were notified in separate but similar letters that as of Monday, 20 July, the date most pupils were scheduled to return to school after the holidays, they would resume online learning. This followed a limited opening of the schools over the past six weeks.

"Based upon the advice of our medical team, including Barry Schoub, professor of virology and founder of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases, and Dr Anton Meyberg, a physician at Linksfield Clinic, we have had to reconsider the model implemented over the past few weeks," wrote SABJE director Rabbi Craig Kacev.

"In Gauteng, the spread of the virus is doubling every ten days, and more than 25% of tests are returning positive. This, together with the number of active cases and the increased pressure on hospitals, has brought to bear the need for us to change our approach.

"While schools remain a safe environment for students, a view which has been reinforced by many research papers, rising infection rates have significantly increased the risk to our academic and support staff and, in turn, to all our families. Schools cannot be isolated from the broader community and cannot, based on advice, offer enough protection when rates of transmission are at their current levels," he wrote.

"We are aware that many of our pupils are struggling emotionally by remaining at home and a return to school will be of tremendous benefit to them. Despite the importance we place on their emotional well-being, we must take the decision at this stage to prioritise the health of our community."

Said Schoub, "The decision to recommend that schools remained closed was a difficult one, and was made after careful consideration of the risks to teachers and children. The extent of infection in the Gauteng area has overtaken expectations. There are now many members of the community ill with the infection, a large number seriously ill, and there is a disturbing number of deaths.

"The pandemic has taught us that we have a responsibility not only to ourselves – but to each other. Now is the time to stand up for that responsibility, and work together as one."

"The teaching staff and school administrations took extraordinary precautions to minimise risk of infection when the schools were open. Nevertheless, in view of the rampant spread of the infection at the moment in the country and in the province, it was decided that the threat, particularly to teaching staff, would be too great at this point in time to consider reopening the schools. The situation will be monitored and assessed on a very regular basis, and as soon as it is deemed reasonably safe, schools will reopen."

"The decision was made with a heavy heart,"

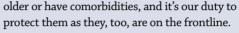


The SA Zionist Federation Cape Council, an umbrella organisation for all Zionist Organisations in the community, provides the bridge between the Jewish community in the Western Cape, South Africa and Israel. It also acts as a point of contact for stakeholders in Israel and SA interested in furthering the Israel – SA relationship.

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said Meyberg. "I have three children who have been going to school. Their anxiety levels have dramatically reduced since going back. The reason we are closed for now is that due to the surge and large numbers in Gauteng, we have to protect our teachers, cleaning, and auxiliary staff who are at a far higher risk of transmission and infection. We know that children aren't super-spreaders, as well as the fact that they don't get severely ill if they get infected. But most staff are



"The situation in Gauteng is dire," he said. "Numbers are still rising daily, and I'm concerned that people are not showing sufficient responsibility." He emphasised that the decision was made as a result of the exponential spread of the virus in Gauteng. "This has been exacerbated by the government's decision to allow taxis to operate at 100% of capacity. The pandemic has taught us that we have a responsibility not only to ourselves – but to each other. Now is the time to stand up for that responsibility, and work together as one."

"Torah Academy has delayed the opening of our school campus due to input from medical experts," said Rabbi Dovid Hazdan. "Lessons will continue online. We will re-evaluate regularly and consult experts and other schools."

Kacev told the *SA Jewish Report*, "The schools are guided by scientific data as well as educational and emotional needs. At the time of returning on 1 June, the transmission level in Gauteng was low, and as such, medical data that children don't transmit as much as adults was sufficient to rely on, knowing that the schools had good protocols in place.

"New research, as described in the *New York Times* on 18 July, indicates that 11 to 19 year olds may be able to transmit the virus in the same manner as adults. We will use a riskadjusted approach, ever aware of emerging information."

Natalie Altman, the director of kodesh and ethos at Yeshiva College, emphasised that the decision was made with the entire community's safety in mind. "Infection in our community has skyrocketed. We are also thinking of our staff who would have to use public transport.





Gia Arenson, Grade 1, King David Linksfield Junior Primary School

For example, "There are challenges with connectivity or the number of devices. We are recording lessons in case any are missed, and we have sourced deals for families to either purchase or rent IT hardware at preferential rates," said Kacev. In addition, "Online learning hasn't been as effective for pre-school children and as such, we have reduced fees at that level."

A teacher speaking on condition of anonymity said she supported the school's decision. "The surge in our Jewish community is so massive that there are many teachers who are COVID-19-positive and won't be back for at least three to four weeks. Many of these teachers are able to teach online, but can't go into school. There are also teachers with comorbidities who aren't allowed to return to school, but can teach online."

The SA Jewish Report asked approximately 40 parents how they felt about the decision. Most said they supported it, while 10 said they did not believe schools needed to close.

"It's absolutely the right decision. We need to find ways to help our medical personnel and hospitals to bear the burden, and being back at school will just create more pressure," said one mother. "I sincerely hope that parents don't arrange for their children to have playdates, which would totally negate the situation." Another parent said, "We are a fortunate community, equipped for online education."

A third commented, "I've been blown away by our school and the extra lengths teachers have gone to ensure the best for our children. I do worry about my boys, and pray that they are making progress and improving academically. [Online learning] is tricky and I hate what it does to our relationship some days. It involves a lot of discipline."

One parent, disagreeing with the decision, said, "I know we are at the peak, but I think

they could have gone back to school. I felt totally safe and secure having my son back. I think that psychologically, we are harming our kids more by keeping them isolated. Yes, they can get sick, but I don't believe keeping them home any longer is going to change the course of the virus. It's here to stav for the time being, and keeping to the basic rules will keep us healthy. Our kids would be better off at school." "We have no intention of closing unless the president decrees it," said Andries van Renssen, the executive director of United Herzlia Schools in Cape Town. "We are taking all reasonable precautions to ensure safety protocols are adhered to and to keep our staff and pupils as safe as humanly possible. We also have a safety officer continuously assessing our protocols and ensuring there is a high level of compliance. The school is probably 'safer' than any restaurant. We have been blessed to have had very few positive cases in our staff and pupil body and, while we expect it's unlikely to remain that way, we are prepared to react should it happen."

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Tanna Jayde and Nathan Arenson, Junior Group, King David Linksfield Pre Primary School

This is in the best interests of the community." At both King David and Yeshiva, matriculants writing prelims will be able to return to campus. At King David Schools, Grade 11s will be required to return in a limited form. If a teacher finds that a concept or skill can't be transferred online, then under very strict procedures, they can teach it on the school grounds. Both schools will re-evaluate the situation every two weeks.

Both Kacev and Altman believe that teaching and learning is on track for Grades 12s, and that the other pupils will be able to complete the year successfully. At the same time, the online model continues to present challenges.

Lockdown brings predatory policing to our suburbs

TALI FEINBERG

or Kevin Greenberg and Stefnie Perlman, a recent "date night" turned into a nightmare when they became victims of harassment and verbal abuse by two policemen who identified themselves only by saying that they were from Edenvale Police Station.

"I want people to be aware of what's going on in our suburbs. It was traumatic, and I don't want someone else to go through this," says Greenberg. He reported the incident to the station, and says "it's being taken seriously by the South African Police Service (SAPS) and the colonel of Edenvale Police Station".

He has also reported the incident to the Independent Police Investigative Directorate (IPID), an agency of the South African government responsible for investigating complaints against the SAPS and municipal police services. He says he plans to sue, and his lawyer believes he has a case.

On the evening of 9 July, Greenberg and his girlfriend decided to go on a "date night" – not easy under lockdown. They drove around, bought desserts from Woolworths, and parked their car at the corner of Elm and Linksfield roads where they ate, listened to music, and looked at the night sky.

"About 15 minutes after we parked, at about 23:00, two cops arrived on either side of us and demanded to search the vehicle. They gave no reason for the search, and refused to identify themselves besides saying that they were from Edenvale Police Station." One kept taking off his mask, and both refused to keep a social distance, Greenberg says.

According to his account, the police were verbally aggressive and abusive, making statements like, "We are the law so you must listen to us"; "White people must listen to black people"; and "There will be justice for George Floyd."

At one point, one of the police called Perlman "a racist white b*tch", and threatened to take her to the station to be physically searched, says Greenberg. While she was emotional, he tried to stay calm. He took a couple of photos of the officers, which angered them further.

Greenberg was relieved when a private security



patrolman arrived and asked what was going on. It diffused the situation, and the policemen soon left, but the couple were shaken by the encounter. They say it may have an impact on their decision to stay in South Africa or not.

The *SA Jewish Report* contacted the Edenvale Police Station and IPID for comment, but had not received a response at the time of going to print.

The incident happened before the imposition of the latest curfew by President Cyril Ramaphosa. On 15 July, Police Minister Bheki Cele said that the SAPS would ensure that South Africa's lockdown regulations were enforced through increased police visibility, roadblocks, and patrols.

"There will also be random stop-and-search operations to ensure that the prohibition of the transportation of alcohol and tobacco isn't being subverted," he said. "Throughout all of this, lawenforcement officials will be dependent on the cooperation of community members to ensure that these operations are handled in the best possible spirit and with the least disruption."

David Bruce, an independent researcher

specialising in policing and public security, says, "It's not strictly true to say that police are given more powers during the lockdown, but what is true is that the range of laws that they are enforcing has expanded." This means that it's likely that the South African Jewish community might have more interaction with the police than previously.

So, what do you do if you are stopped, searched, or confronted by police? Bruce advises to act with caution. Just like Greenberg kept calm, it's vital to avoid aggression, be polite, and to try to establish a rapport.

An interaction may become

confrontational because "often, some police officers don't know how to negotiate simple differences of opinion. They experience any contestation as a threat to their authority. Their jobs require them to exercise authority, and once they start to feel that they may not be able to do this convincingly, it makes them very insecure," says Bruce.

After hearing Greenberg's story, Bruce surmised that this could have been "a situation of predatory police conduct. It seems likely that the agenda of the police involved in this situation wasn't limited to law enforcement, and was possibly linked to a corrupt motive." He notes that this isn't always the case, and just like in any organisation, some people are aggressive and others aren't. One of the factors that might lead to a situation escalating is if one is isolated, as Greenberg and Perlman were. More witnesses create a more stable dynamic.

Often, the civilian will become agitated, leading to an aggressive response by the law-enforcement officer, "who is required in his occupational capacity to get the upper hand. He may feel obliged to do this whether by lawful means, bullying, or beyond that," says Bruce.

While staying calm, Bruce says filming the incident or taking pictures may help in cases of aggression, but it could also provoke further anger. It's a delicate balancing act that has to be evaluated individually.

He says he rarely hears of police interaction becoming racial or personal. Police officers mentioning Floyd and making racial slurs shows "heightened awareness and sensitivity around race", and may have meant that these particular officers were acting from a place of personal anger.

Bruce says that while police brutality is quite widespread in South Africa, it usually targets specific communities where crime is more common. With the lockdown, this has the potential to expand.

Such a case must be reported to IPID, he says, and the police station concerned, and he applauds Greenberg for taking these steps. While it's debatable if their complaint will be resolved to their satisfaction, civilians should still empower themselves by going on record and pushing for an investigation. The fact that this complaint is being investigated is a positive development in keeping police brutality in check.

Continued on page 14>>



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Jewish Report The source of quality content, news and insights Living in the time of COVID

s the days get longer, and we move slowly towards summer, are we sensing a glimmer of hope or is it still bad, bad, and more bad?

Living in the time of COVID-19, I have a sense of us initially being quite nervous about being stuck in our homes. We were worried about what would be available to us, and concerned that everything would come to a standstill. I recall people going out and buying loads of toilet paper, while others stocked up on long life milk and eggs.

Fear for our livelihood set in as industries were shut down, and so many began being unable to earn a living.

But then, for some, there seemed to be an almost

euphoric period where they got used to being at home with their families, working from home, with their children involved in online learning in the room next door. There were all types of different permutations of this period, but people almost relaxed into it, and saw the benefit of it all.

But as time went on, and the coronavirus escalated, lockdown became increasingly difficult, and so many began questioning their lives and the paths they had chosen. They contemplated their career paths, marriages, where they lived, and how they ran their lives. These were deep, difficult questions for the most part, causing distress and requiring the making of big decisions.

Now, we find ourselves at a time where we are living with those decisions, and needing to go forward into a new world with different insights.

Just how will we look back on this time of COVID-19? What will stand out for us? For me, this has been a time where politicians and business leaders have lost their lustre, while doctors and scientists have become heroes. They are at the forefront of this fight, and we listen to what they are saying, hanging onto every word.

I guess we know that, right now, our lives and those of our loved ones are in their hands like never before. We also know that they are working around the clock to keep people alive, which is undoubtedly the most honourable thing a human being can do.

There are names that you will recognise forever associated with our community and its leadership at the time of COVID-19 and, for the most part, they have "Dr" or "Professor" in front of them.

I will remember this as a time for family closeness, when we were isolated from the world, and we only had each other. And a time that internet connectivity became our lifeblood. We were disconnected from the world without it. It enabled us to see friends and family, often on Zoom, WhatsApp video, or some other app. It enabled us to work from home, depending on what we did. In some cases, it helped us to keep in contact with loved ones in faraway countries, and those fighting for survival in hospital.

In his opinion piece on this page, Ronen Ayres hits the nail on the head. We are, in fact, learning to live the way our children were programmed to be. I genuinely believe that this period is easier for most of them than it is for us.

They are born into a world of the internet of things. Many of them are happily living their lives online rather than wanting to rush around to do things. They have been communicating online for most of their lives, often not even needing to talk, but rather texting each other.

Their main connection with the people next door or in other countries is via the world wide web. Though we often worried about them – and I guess, to be honest, we probably still do, they have long been living in the world we find ourselves in right now. They started living in this world long before being thrust into it by COVID-19.

They are now leading us in how we live our lives going forward. To them, working from home on project-based employment was perfectly feasible and acceptable, but to us, it seemed unstable and insecure. They don't feel the need for stability and foundation, they prefer flexibility.

We have a lot to learn, and the time of COVID-19 is pointing to them as our teachers.

The other thing that this time has brought to our attention is how intrinsic racism is to our lives. George Floyd is a name that will indelibly be linked to this time. His murder at the hands of police officers in the United States struck a match that literally ignited a #blacklivesmatter fire around the globe. It reminded



They were right, those millennials



t wasn't in the quiet bliss that I had this realisation. I was on my couch for the fifth consecutive week, logged into a virtual conference, my phone pinging on my lap, and Netflix humming in the background. And that's when it hit me: the notion that after all this time, they were right.

"They" – the ones that leaders shunned for being too "entitled", too "lazy", and far too addicted to technology to be productive. Yes, they. The same "they" that we mocked for their obsession with living in the moment and worklife balance at the start of their careers.

Raised as the "centre of their own universe", this 2.0 generation was born with different factory settings that admittedly bugged us, but little did we know they were wired differently for the greater good of all "gens" that came before

them. We called them "disrupters". We called them "narcissists". We called them ... the millennials. They were right, you know. About everything.

It was this cohort, born after *Knight Rider* but before Zoom, that came to us with the answers, long before we realised that we needed any. Flashback to when Simon Sinek said the millennial generation was really only lobbying for "free food and beanbags". Everyone laughed. I laughed too.

But no one's laughing now. As convenience junkies, their desire to share, to collaborate, and co-create has transformed into a force of innovation in the way we now

live, work, and play. With their emotional settings set on "sensitive", their drive for connectedness and community intact, millennials were sent to us to remind us how important it is to feel; to feel for others who are marginalised; to feel for the environment; to feel for ourselves.

Essentially, millennials were primed to expect the most out of life. And who primed them? We did. We told them they deserved more, they should stand up for more, they should demand more of this life.

The things we were deprived of growing up became the same things we encouraged this "me" generation to push for, and they did. But they did it their way, by advocating for a more flexible, meaningful, and balanced world in which they could integrate work, family, hobbies, and side hustles ... joyfully juggling all of it from their beanbag at home. But "flexible" was pushing it too far, right? We scorned this because our belief system was pre-set to thinking that being "flexible" was a thing we had to work damn hard to earn, not a right handed to you at the beginning of your career. Justifiably, they were angry about the world that they had inherited from previous generations, and were unapologetic in their two-tier approach to change, namely: changing the house from within, or burning it down. They are the torch bearers with a higher purpose of challenging the status quo of the world and our societies, of breaking down our many institutions that remain inefficient, corrupt, and broken.

RONEN AIRE

Millennials are now the emerging leaders in their respective organisations and businesses. For years, millennials have been advocating for companies to "flatten the curve", long before we were introduced to the term itself.

Chasing growth for growth sake, bloated executive pay, narrowing the gender gap, racial diversity, and breaking down management hierarchies have all been some of the soft targets for millennials to lobby.

They want to live in a more equitable world, where purpose is as important as profit, and where their contribution matters.

COVID-19 has been nature's way of making space for this upcoming leadership to shine, while sidelining older generations as vulnerable. One would argue that the millennials were ready for this "new normal",



while the rest of us were too attached to the old world, with old ways, resisting the change.

It's taken a global pandemic to teach us that we were wrong, about what they were right about all along, and now, we need to adapt quickly ... or face irrelevance.

Eric Yuan, the chief executive of Zoom, says, "Millennials grew up realising they could get the job done without having to go to the office. Sooner or later, this is going to be normal, because the world doesn't belong to us anymore."

It belongs to them. Yes, them. The millennials, and the centennials (Gen Z), the latter already proving to be the 3.0 version of their predecessors. If you notice the things that come naturally to these younger generations, it's clear that their particular "settings" are what's required to thrive in this chaotic world. But no matter which of the younger ones land up shaping the future, we must recognise that millennials were our agents of change. They are ours to learn from, ours to engage with, ours to follow - and really, ours to thank. Because, say it with me: they were right. Incidentally, the global beanbag market was valued at \$3.3 billion (R55 billion) in 2018, and is anticipated to expand at a compound annual growth rate of 4% in 2020. #Justsaying

us of apartheid, and the big racial problems we still have right here.

It also seems to have made some people believe that racism is acceptable. I speak about Simone Kriel, who was unapologetic about her antisemitism a few weeks back, and Dustyn Drummer's comments reported in this week's newspaper (on page 1). The shocking part for me is that they don't really see that expressing their outrageous beliefs about Jews is a problem.

There is nothing acceptable about racism, antisemitism, sexism, or any kind of hatred towards people because of the way they were born.

I hope that when we look back at the time of COVID-19, we are able to see how much we have grown, leaving behind the ugliness of this time, because we have learnt a better way of life.

I hope we can take the hardship of this time, and make it better by learning to treat everyone with respect, from our millennial or Generation Z children to people of other races.

Also, I hope that we can recognise that when we hold someone in high esteem, it shouldn't be because they are rich or powerful but because they do good in this world and make saving lives paramount. Those are the real heroes!

Shabbat Shalom! Peta Krost Maunder Editor • Ronen Aires is the founder and chief executive of Student Village, is a thought leading pioneer of Afrillennials, and a long time scholar of the generation gap. He has spent more than two decades understanding and researching generational behaviour and statistics. SAJBD 2020 GAUTENG COUNCIL CONFERENCE

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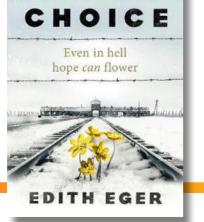
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Rambam Trust assists those with nowhere else to go

TALI FEINBERG

he lockdown has left many of us financially insecure and worrying about basics like how to feed our families, pay school fees, or service a bond. The Rambam Trust is a vital source of financial support for those navigating this rough terrain, lending funds of just less than R3 million to more than 275 families since 27 March

"All applicants are facing a common storm. Some are closer to shore, and others are lost at sea. People are scared and dealing with a lot of uncertainty," says trustee Craig Sacks.

Shirl Ginsberg, is just one of those who borrowed from the Rambam Trust after her business was decimated by the lockdown. "I'm in the events-decorating business. In a matter of 36 hours, more than 61 of my functions were cancelled," she says. "I had bought everything for the events, so I had lots of stock but no tangible cash. It was absolutely terrifying. I didn't know which way to turn.

"I saw adverts for loans from Rambam, and approached it. From the moment I reached out, the compassion and empathy I received was one of a kind," says Ginsberg, who had had a negative experience with another Jewish organisation a decade ago.

"I was treated with such dignity, kindness, tolerance, and understanding. I realised I needed to use the funds wisely to generate an income." While she couldn't utilise her stock, she could use her skills and creativity to pivot her business. She realised that a "no contact", drive-through service of individualised, beautifully curated balloon bouquets were just what was needed as people still celebrate simchot under lockdown. She has since expanded this to a safe delivery service.

"It wasn't a huge amount, but I've done a huge amount with it. I was able to get a cylinder of helium, and balloon supplies. I put an advert on Joburg Jewish Mommies and my own Facebook page, and the orders started streaming in. I'm now keeping my head above water while working very long hours."

There are many challenges – Ginsberg has had to absorb the costs of sanitisation and safety, which are her priority. She spends hours communicating with a client to get their order just right. Loadshedding has

meant that she has had to expand balloons with hand pumps. But she's grateful and overjoyed that her work is bringing so much joy to others.

Established in 1995 with a mere R2 500 in donations from five individuals, the Rambam Trust has grown into a highly successful lender of last resort for members of the South Africa Jewish community. More than R165 million has been lent to individuals and public-benefit

Barmi **One of Shirl Ginsberg's** balloon bouquets

organisations such as schools. On average, the trust assists more than 150 people a year. The loans are interest-free, and are typically repaid over a period of two years. "With a bad-debt rate of less than 0.5%, donors can rest assured that the funds entrusted to the trust will keep circulating and having an impact on the South African Jewish

community," says Sacks. The organisation's mandate and reach expanded dramatically after COVID-19 arrived. "With news of the impending lockdown, we were aware of the financial catastrophe and other effects on the country and Jewish community in particular," he says.

"We had an urgent impromptu trustee meeting on Zoom on the Wednesday [when Zoom was still a novelty], one day before

the start of lockdown. We agreed that we were living in unprecedented times, and that anyone in financial trouble would require urgent help. If there was ever a communitywide financial emergency, this was it.

"We agreed to allocate a limited amount of surplus funds in the trust towards a new 'coronavirus campaign', and to allow for loans of up to R10 000 per family. This was later raised to R15 000 due to the extension of the lockdown. These loans would ensure

> that we would have the greatest community-wide impact. The loans would have a one-year repayment term starting a few months after the beginning of lockdown, and the requirement of surety would be waived.

"The lockdown has had a serious financial impact on the Jewish community," Sacks says, with four broad categories of applicants affected:

First, there is the self-employed who face the prospect of months without an income, for example hairdressers and beauticians. Second, there are those with diminished income like electricians, plumbers, builders, and pool

services, or professionals like therapists and accountants.

Then there are those who were employed, but whose salaries were cut anywhere between 25% to 50% as the businesses they worked for couldn't cover their full salary.

Finally, there are part-time employees like mashgiachs or contract workers who now have no income.

hirl Ginsberg

"A key success factor of the coronavirus campaign has been our ability to assist those with nowhere else to go," Sacks says. "Much has been said about the 'forgotten middle' – people 'too wealthy' for a handout, but 'too poor' to eat. The Rambam Trust has attempted to fill that gap. It gives a breather to people who are usually able to sustain themselves, and assistance to get back on their feet."



The campaign is continuing. "We are seeing people who are really struggling in the current economic environment. Loan application forms are available on our website. We also have ways to assist applicants who don't have internet access or a printer. The campaign has been formulated to make the borrowing process as simple as possible. For example, there is a simplified two-page application form to speed up the process.

"A key criteria for approval is assessment of the borrower's ability to repay the loan," Sacks says. "We are custodians of generous donations received over many years. We review each loan application, and interview each potential borrower to assess the need and ability to repay."

The Rambam Trust is different to other funds or support systems in the community like the Gesher Fund. "While Gesher is an initiative to assist Jewish-owned SMMEs [small and medium-sized businesses] with interest-free loans, the Rambam Trust focuses on individuals," says Sacks. "Gesher shares a trustee with the Rambam Trust."

"Those people who are in a fortunate position to be able to give, please continue to support all the Jewish organisations that assist our community," Sacks says. "We're in a time of great challenge and distress."

"Rambam was the hand that picked me up. I couldn't have survived without them," Ginsberg says.

TikTok 'influencer' finds six million Holocaust victims 'k*k' funny >>Continued from page 1

increasingly being infiltrated and used by people sharing vicious types of hatred. This particular incident was reported to the SAJBD by a horrified 15-year-old in our community."

Milton Shain, emeritus professor of history at the University of Cape Town and an antisemitism expert, says, "It's paradoxical that just as we are waking up to 'Black Lives Matter' and developing a historical sense of justifiable hurt on the part of black people worldwide, historical sensitivity on the part of Jews is pushed aside. Even the Holocaust has become a joke for the likes of Dustyn Drummer. I wonder if slavery is also a joke to him. The bottom line is that Jewish anguish cannot be understood because Jews are perceived – often incorrectly – to be 'top dogs'."

While it's alarming that two South African 'influencers' in their twenties are spouting hatred for Jews and a love of Hitler online, this kind of antisemitism isn't new. Tali Nates, the director of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre, believes that "Antisemitism, 'othering', xenophobia, and racism were always here, and are possibly more so now as people look for scapegoats in a very difficult global situation with the pandemic and economic challenges we face. These views are also more easily heard because of social media, WhatsApp groups, and more. "Institutions such as the three Holocaust & Genocide Centres in Cape Town, Durban, and Johannesburg are even more important now in our mission to educate about the Holocaust, genocide and human rights in South Africa," Nates says. "Of course, we can never educate every single person in the country, and some will choose to quote from conspiracy theories or hate-filled ideology. However, we must and should continue, and invite every single person to learn, discuss, and draw lessons for humanity from the histories of the Holocaust and genocide."

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Beware, the Lithuanian army may need you!

JORDAN MOSHE

id you know that if you hold a Lithuanian passport, you could be eligible for conscription into the Lithuanian army? Whether you live in the Baltic region or not, there's a chance that your number has come up, and you weren't aware of it.

Frightening though this may sound, you needn't fear being hauled away by the authorities. Exemptions are easily obtained, and while it's your responsibility to check if you have been drafted, getting out of it is simpler than you think.

"I've been approached by a few clients who were concerned about being drafted," Nida Degutiene told the *SA Jewish Report.* "There's so much speculation about it, and it scares people to think they could be forced to join an army."

Degutiene is the chief executive of Next Steps, a consultancy which processes the reinstatement of Lithuanian citizenship. She has worked closely with many members of the South African Jewish community, helping those eligible to trace their European lineage to secure citizenship and a passport. However, with applications on the rise, it's become more critical to know about conscription.

Conscription is a recent development. "The idea was widely discussed in light of Lithuania's neighbours," says Degutienė. "Some of them, like Russia, aren't the best. We find ourselves needing to be better prepared for anything which might happen, and so conscription was reintroduced five years ago."

Until 2015, the army had been a small force of about 5 000 troops, made up of professionals who volunteered for service. Since then, it has gradually grown in size, and should consist of 20 000 troops by the end of 2021.

"Conscription happens by lottery, and is aimed at young men between the age of 18 and 23," says Degutiene. "There are a few draft dates during the year, but every person serves only nine months." The names of those conscripted appear in a document released by the government in January every year, and it's every eligible citizen's responsibility to consult the list and look for his name, including citizens living outside the country.

"About 3 800 military conscripts are called in each year" the



put on the list."

This means that any eligible Lithuanian citizen must consult the list, and can't expect to be notified directly. Looking up your number is no easy task, not least because the online database features no translations nor English equivalents for those who don't speak Lithuanian. You establish whether you have been drafted by entering your name and the last two digits of your Lithuanian identification number on the site.

Degutiene says that she has contacted the military service about the issue of dual citizens living abroad who don't speak the language. "Few people actually understand that it's a problem. Most think that a citizen is obviously one who speaks the language, and that's that."

While she's motivating for the implementation of an English translation, Degutiene emphasises that the onus of checking remains the responsibility of all citizens no matter where they are in the world. However, if you discover that your name is on the list, there's no need to panic.

"No matter what, the first thing you have to do is register," says Degutiene. "You fill in a simple form online to let the authorities know that you acknowledge your conscription.

"The vast majority of those in the army are volunteers. They don't need to force anyone to go, especially if you don't live in the country. While they will be understanding, you must get in touch with them, register, and explain why you are unable to enlist." unfit for service, having no military experience, or holding public office.

Because of the age bracket selected for conscription, perhaps the best option is to request exemption as a student.

"It's the easiest and the best," says Degutiene. "It applies to students studying towards a degree anywhere in the world. Studies are deemed important, and no student will be drafted." However, this exemption doesn't remove you from the list. Instead, the service is deferred for one year, meaning that you must renew exemption the following year, a necessity until the age of 26.

If you are no longer a student at that point, you may need to rely on another basis for exemption. These are equally obtainable, according to Degutiené. "If you have a contractual obligation of any kind you can exempt yourself. This includes bank loans, rental agreements, employment contracts, and others. Also, it's possible to be exempted on medical grounds, or if a person is a single father or on paternity leave."

Perhaps the most relevant option for South Africans is exemption based on the fact that you don't live in Lithuania or speak the language.

Says Degutienė, "Explain that you weren't born in Lithuania, have never been there, and don't speak the language. Proficiency in Lithuanian is not a requirement for citizenship, and as a citizen who lives outside the country, you can make the case that you won't be able to understand anything. It's a good enough reason."

Regardless of the reason, the conscription service stresses that any request must be based on facts and confirmed by relevant documents, saying that "requests will be adjudicated by special deferment commissions".

Having helped a South African client who was drafted earlier this year, Degutiene says that the exemption process isn't particularly difficult and that the Lithuanian authorities are more than understanding.

While you can't be forced into the army, failure to respond to conscription can incur severe penalties. If a draftee fails to register, he is fined between 140 and 300 euros (which doesn't exempt him from service) and can face criminal charges. Interpol is also notified, meaning that you can theoretically be stopped and taken to court when you cross any borders, not only those of Lithuania.

Claiming ignorance of conscription doesn't absolve anyone, says Degutiene. "You are avoiding military service, and whether you know it or not, you are breaking the law," she says. "If you meet the criteria, you have to check the list in January. There are different deadlines depending on your draft date, so check when you need to contact the authorities."

Beyond the conscription issue, the Lithuanian embassy in South Africa says that all citizens have a legal obligation to register their marriages, births of children, and divorces if those events occurred after 11 March 1990 outside of the Republic of Lithuania.

- Those eligible for conscription can check their status at https://sauktiniai.karys.lt/
- The name, surname, date of birth, and the last two digits of your Lithuanian identity number must be entered.

Israeli teacher dies after pleading for pupils to stay home

MARCY OSTER – JTA

n Israeli kindergarten teacher has died of coronavirus, two weeks after she made an emotional appeal for parents to keep home children who had been exposed to the deadly virus.

After Shalva Zalfreund, 64, died on Friday, the mayor of her city posted on Facebook the message that she had sent to parents of children in her class weeks earlier, back when she thought she was past the worst of the disease. In it, she said "official sources" had told her she had contracted the virus from a child in her classroom.

She also said she knew that some families hadn't followed the rule barring attendance for children with a

schools should operate, one that has been informed already by widespread outbreaks associated with schools in Israel after they reopened rapidly for all grades in May.

In the United States, where the disease is widespread in many places, some states and cities say classes will take place exclusively or mostly online, and teachers across the country say they are uncomfortable about returning to the classroom.

A South Korean study published this weekend found that older children, like those associated with Israel's largest school outbreaks, may spread the disease at a higher rate than adults. But the precise role that younger children play in transmitting the disease remains unclear.

Lithuanian Military Conscription and Recruitment Service told the *SA Jewish Report*. "In 2020, the plan is to call up 3 828 military conscripts. Conscripts living abroad are included in the draftee list. It doesn't matter where conscripts live. If they have Lithuanian citizenship, they could be

According to the Lithuanian conscription service, there are several grounds for exemption and deferment. These include being family member at home under official quarantine.

"For me, it no longer matters who I contracted it from and who violated isolation," Zalfreund wrote. "I just beg and plead for the grandparents, neighbours, and older relatives who surround us and don't deserve to die, even if they have underlying illnesses."

Zalfreund's story adds to a pressing debate over how

In Israel, where restrictions have been reimposed amid a rise in cases, only children in Grade 4 and younger will be allowed to attend daily classes.

Petah Tikvah Mayor Rami Greenberg called Zalfreund "an amazing teacher who educated many children in the city". Her death came the day before the country's death toll reached 400.



Tuesday 28 July 20:00

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There will be enough beds, say private hospital groups

NICOLA MILTZ

ne of the scariest aspects of the COVID-19 pandemic is whether there will be enough beds and trained staff to accommodate patients across both private and public health sectors as the infection rate surges in several provinces.

Dr Richard Friedland, the chief executive of Netcare, says, "We are still in a dangerous position, especially in Gauteng and KwaZulu-Natal, but there are some rays of light."

Although the private-healthcare sector is under strain, he's hopeful that it has the capacity to survive the surge in COVID-19 patients at hospitals, and is adequately equipped to cope as the virus continues to wreak havoc across the country.

South Africa has the fourth highest number of new confirmed cases in the world behind the United States, India, and Brazil, and is by far Africa's hardesthit country. This is astonishing, say experts, given the size of our population. They acknowledge that the statistics are stark.

By 22 July, the number of confirmed cases was 381 798. There were 5 368 deaths recorded, and 208 144 recoveries. According to current projections, the virus peak will occur at different times in each province between July and September.

"It's a blessing that South Africa came into this pandemic late," says Friedland. "Certainly, from a treatment point of view, we have been able to benefit from the experience of the rest of the world and our treatment regimes are getting better as a result. We now know not every patient needs a ventilator; not every patient needs an intensive care unit (ICU) bed; and many can be treated at home with the help of their general practitioner."

Added to this the introduction of the use of oxygen, anti-coagulants, and steroids at the appropriate time has "changed the outlook for COVID-19", he says.

"As a result, hospital admissions have decreased; patients' length of stay has decreased; and mortality has decreased dramatically."

A lot of the initial planning for ICU beds and the number of ventilators needed was based on initial projections from countries like Italy, China, France, Spain, and the United Kingdom, and things have changed.

"We believe there is sufficient capacity based on our remodelling of what we are seeing in our hospitals. The treatment modalities are improving, and we are getting on top of this virus in terms of understanding it better.

"That's not to say patients aren't still dying, but from a hospital perspective, we are admitting less patients," he said.

Friedland said there was enough capacity across the private sector, but it still wasn't known to what extent the government would require private beds.

Public hospitals are at breaking point, say medical insiders. It has been reported that they are likely to run out of beds before the end of the month. The national health department has negotiated service-level agreements (SLAs) with the private-healthcare sector for additional beds, but the details have yet to be finalised. Most provinces are reportedly under heavy pressure to finalise their respective SLAs with private hospitals and health practitioners. cases surge in the province."

Life Healthcare Group said on Tuesday, that for now, it had available bed capacity.

Dr Charl van Loggerenberg, Life Healthcare's general manager for emergency medicine, says that contrary to rumour on social media, no Life



Health Minister Dr Zweli Mkhize is aware that bed capacity is expected to be breached in most provinces, having warned parliament about it two weeks ago.

The government has been scrambling this week to ready field hospitals, with several across the country finally accepting patients.

Jack Bloom, the Democratic Alliance's Gauteng shadow health MEC, said more field hospitals were promised. "As public hospitals in Gauteng struggle to cope, only one field hospital is operating," he said.

"Another four sites have been identified for field hospitals, but aren't ready to take patients even as COVID-19 Healthcare hospitals are turning patients away. This group of hospitals is ready and able to admit COVID-19 and non-COVID-19-related patients.

He says the capacity of any hospital to manage COVID-19 infections is based on a number of factors, not only patient and bed numbers. "All hospitals need to balance available staffing – nurses, specialists, and allied healthcare professionals – with the need to accommodate and treat patients who are admitted for various health-related conditions.

"The bed-capacity situation across all our hospitals is fluid, and is being reassessed frequently. Hospital management teams remain in constant contact with one another, their doctors, and other healthcare professionals, and private hospital groups as well as provincial health authorities to ensure that additional beds are available should this be required," he says.

"The decision to admit patients who are seriously ill with COVID-19-related conditions is based on the capacity in ICU and high-care wards, taking into account the availability of specialists, ICU nurses, ventilators, and high flow oxygen. All our hospital management meetings include representation from the Doctor COVID Committee to manage admissions of seriously ill patients and not turn anyone away."

Dr Stefan Smuts of Mediclinic says that COVID-19 is known to place strain on critical care and high-care resources, and since the outset of the pandemic, focus has been placed on these key care delivery capabilities.

"Given that there are a number of factors involved in increasing ICU/highcare capacity, which includes potential infrastructural changes and accessing ventilators amongst other things, effort at this stage has been placed into repurposing existing care spaces to better facilitate COVID-19 treatment through the different phases of the pandemic," he says.

In anticipation of the pressure on the availability of qualified healthcare workers, Mediclinic sought early on to train and upskill staff from other areas of the hospital to ensure that it had more staff capable of working in ICU wards at its hospitals.

Most South African Jews of Sephardi origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND, ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Lithuanian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Lithuanian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African Jews do qualify for European citizenship, whether they can prove their Lithuanian lineage or not, and most South African Jews of Sephardic heritage are also eligible for European passports.



Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania existed until 1918.

At the end of World War I, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/ reborn. Only then did residents became citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Lithuanian or Polish.

Horesh advises that eligibility for a Lithuanian or Polish passport depends on the city from which your grandparents (or their parents) hailed.

Horesh says many South African Ashkenazi Jews of Lithuanian origin have been refused Lithuanian citizenship because their heritage is actually Polish. They would, accordingly, be entitled to Polish citizenship and an EU passport.



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Living in Israel – a four-hour flight from Warsaw and Vilnius – offers him quick and easy access to Poland and Lithuania, Accordingly, he is able to work closely with local professionals who assist him in tracing the documentation required for successful applications for European citizenship.

Adv. Avi Horesh has in-depth knowledge of the applicable legislation and in his experience, the majority of South African Jews have ancestors who were illegally deprived of citizenship. As their descendants, these Jews are eligible for European citizenship which will result in them obtaining an EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three empires: Russia, After World War II, the borders in Europe changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

Sephardi: The descendants of Sephardi Jews (who were exiled 500 years ago) are most likely eligible for a Portuguese successful. Portuguese citizenship enables one to enter the Unites States without the need to apply for a visa.

In addition, Horesh is filing many applications for descendants of Sephardi origin who arrived in South Africa from Greece, Turkey, and North Africa. Descendants from other countries in the Middle East – even Holland – are also potentially eligible.

Horesh resides in Israel, but has spent seven years in Poland, and is recognised as a leading lawyer in the field of European citizenship, with a full In addition, and as a result of his close ties with Portuguese authorities, to date he has had a 100% success rate with applications for Portuguese citizenship.

Horesh is available to discuss your specific details. He is often in South Africa, and can meet you in person to discuss your specific needs.



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How to stay positive if you're positive

ver the past few weeks, when I have phoned patients to tell them that their COVID-19 results are positive, I have been met with disbelief, horror, and fear.

Much of this fear is based on concern about a bad outcome and anticipation of the worst-case scenario. Patients' minds race to images of being alone in an intensivecare unit on a ventilator, dving and separated from their families. They worry about which family members they have unknowingly infected.

They also feel anxious about the stigma associated with testing positive. Will they be blamed for getting infected and shunned by the community? There is concern about not being able to go to work, with a resulting loss of income.

The isolation that follows a COVID-19-positive diagnosis brings with it more unique anxieties. It's especially difficult to have to isolate from your family and support systems.

Emotional reactions that can occur during quarantine or isolation include:

- Fear and worry about your own health and the health of your loved ones;
- Stress from monitoring yourself. Am I feeling short of breath? Are my oxygen levels ok? Is my fever too high?

Worry about needing to go to

hospital;

- Sadness, anger, or frustration because friends or loved ones are afraid of getting the disease from you;
- Guilt about not being able to perform normal parenting and work duties because you are sick or in quarantine; and Loneliness.

a balance between keeping informed and not becoming overwhelmed; • Finding a reliable source of information, and checking your facts on reputable websites or with

your doctor; Empowering yourself with knowledge about how to monitor your symptoms and which medicines and vitamins you should

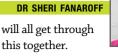


Strategies to reduce anxiety include:

- · Eating, drinking, and sleeping properly;
- Thinking about and using strategies that have helped in the past to cope
- with stressful situations; Limiting the time you spend reading about COVID-19, listening to the news, and on social media. Finding
- be taking. (Your GP can guide you);
- Registering with the Hatzolah Wellness programme. It will provide you with a thermometer and a pulse oximeter, check in with you daily, and alert your doctor if there is any deterioration;
- Deliberately spending time engaging with tasks that take your mind away from the current crisis;

- Taking breaks and time away from your phone and electronics;
- Staying in touch with friends and family. If you can't see them, make time for regular phone calls, Zoom sessions, or video calls;
- Focusing on the things that are in your control. You can control your own actions, but not those of others. For example, you can't control what others do, but you can keep distant, wear your mask, and stay home; Focusing on what you do know
- as opposed to what you don't. For example, you know that most people who get the virus will have mild symptoms. You don't know there will be a need for you to go to hospital;
- Being kind to yourself and others; Offering others help and support
- where you can it's good for your own anxiety;
- If you feel overwhelmed, get support. Reach out to family and friends. Contact your doctor or a psychologist for counselling and support if you aren't coping;
- Maintaining a good routine, even if you're at home;
- If you feel well enough, plan regular activities that you enjoy;
- Remember that you aren't alone in this situation. Most of the world is going through a similar experience.

As we enter this challenging time of rising infections, some anxiety is normal. Take things day by day. We



Remember to keep some perspective - the pandemic will end. This won't last forever. • Dr Sheri Fanaroff is a GP in private practice in Johannesburg.

Lockdown brings predatory policing to our suburbs

>>Continued from page 5

It's also important to note the identifying features of the officers concerned. Speaking to a local councillor could also have an impact.

"In the literature on police corruption, they talk about 'grass eaters' and 'meat eaters'. 'Grass eaters' will be corrupt if the opportunity comes their way, while 'meat eaters' will aggressively pursue opportunities for self-enrichment," says Bruce. "It sounds like this incident was probably more the latter.

"The minister of police suggests that we don't have these problems in South Africa, but the opposite is true," he says. "Don't think that we don't have our own 'George Floyds'. The systems of control, management, and supervision are too weak to manage police effectively, and control these problems in a meaningful way. That's why it's vital to remain calm in confrontation with the police, and then report such incidents for investigation."

Most Jews of Polish, Lithuanian and Latvian origin are entitled to EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP AND ACCORDINGLY, AN EU PASSPORT

A common misconception is that South African Jews of Ashkenazi heritage are of Polish, Lithuanian, and Latvian descent, and that only those who are able to prove their eligibility for Polish, Lithuanian, and Latvian citizenship are able to obtain a European passport. The fact is that most South African



descendants, these Jews are eligible for European citizenship which will result in them obtaining an EU passport.

Ashkenazi: It is important to understand that until 1918, all of Eastern Europe was divided between three empires: Russia,

> Prussia, the Austro-Hungarian empire. Neither Poland nor Lithuania existed until 1918.

At the end of World War I, the territory was divided, and countries like Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, and others were born/reborn. Only then did residents became citizens of these countries. As a result, people who, for example, were born in Riga (nowadays Latvia) could actually be Destroyed Warsaw, January 1945 Lithuanian or Polish.

After World War II, the borders in Europe changed, resulting in cities changing nationality. The resultant effect for descendants of Jews who were born in Vilnius, for example, is that their application for Lithuanian citizenship will be declined, but an application for a Polish passport may very well be successful.

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24 - 31 July 2020



Avi Horesh

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COVID-19 vaccine results hopeful, but don't hold your breath

JORDAN MOSHE

hile South Africa begins its part in the human testing phase of a COVID-19 vaccine, our experts don't expect any such vaccine to be available until next year.

Professor Lucille Blumberg, the deputy director of the National Institute for Communicable Diseases (NICD), is extremely positive about the vaccine tests, but says, "Realistically, we aren't looking at a vaccine before early next year. That's the best we can hope for."

Professor Barry Schoub, emeritus professor in virology at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), and the former director of the NICD, says, "We can really talk about a widely available, reasonably cheap and safe vaccine only at the end of next year. That's assuming all the trials go well. We need to be really careful about health safety as we're giving a virus to healthy people."

Nonetheless, Schoub says the preliminary results have

been positive. "They have produced the necessary antibodies and minimal side effects. It looks very promising."

The initial South African vaccine trial is being run at Chris Hani Baragwanath Hospital in Soweto by Shabir Madhi, professor of vaccinology at Wits. This is part of

a multinational study that includes South Africa, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and the United States.

While sourcing a vaccine typically takes about a decade, researchers are expediting the process. More than 100 vaccine candidates are being developed. There are, however, four vaccines which are leading the race, says Jeffrey Dorfman, an associate professor of virology at Stellenbosch University.

"Of the four, two are being developed by Moderna and Pfizer BioNTech, and are RNA vaccines," Dorfman, told the SA Jewish Report.

who participated in Chief Rabbi Dr Warren Goldstein's webinar on Sunday, is from Astra-Zeneca (in partnership with Oxford University's Jenner Institute).

"This vaccine is based on a common-cold virus of animal origin. It has been modified so it's safe. It doesn't multiply, and is coded to produce the spike protein for the COVID-19 virus," she says.

"If you inject this vaccine, the body will mount an immune response to it. So, when you are challenged with the virus itself, you already have antibodies. Early studies

> would support it producing an immune response," Blumberg says. Dorfman says

vaccine-trial preparation is taking place in Johannesburg and Cape Town, with volunteers being recruited to test the efficacy of the

He believes this vaccine is probably better than the CanSino vaccine because it uses a chimpanzee cold virus. "This is helpful because very, very few people have been previously exposed to it. If a patient who has been vaccinated has already been exposed to the cold virus that is the

scaffolding of the vaccine, then that immune response will inhibit the vaccine.

"The cold-virus-based vaccines also have much more data to back up their safety from testing of these other vaccines," Dorfman says.

The group in South Africa is "highly experienced in testing vaccines, probably the most experienced at this in Africa", Dorfman says. "The antibody measurement will be done at the laboratory of Professors Lynn Morris and Penny Moore at the NICD, which has been measuring neutralising antibodies for HIV-1 and influenza for years, making this a very experienced choice."

He says the trials have been approved by authorities within Wits and by the South Africa Health Products Regulatory Agency.

"This is necessary to be sure that study participants aren't exposed to any undue risk or incentives large enough that might make them overlook risks," he says.

While no one is sure what the trials will yield, results of initial trails have given hope.

"At this stage, they are close to the best possible results for the four vaccines," says Dorfman. "The basic idea concerns neutralising antibodies or antibodies that bind to the virus in a way to prevent it from infecting a cell. If a virus can't infect a cell, it can't reproduce.

"These antibodies are the most logical thing to look for in a vaccine, and are logically presumed to protect

the person vaccinated." However, both he and Schoub stress that no one knows if neutralising antibodies will protect people, how long it will be effective, or if other immune responses are needed.

"This will only become clear in the bigger trials now running that will vaccinate larger groups of people and look to see if the vaccinated study participants are less likely to contract COVID-19," says Dorfman.

"Keep in mind that only something like one in 10 vaccines that go to trial are good enough to be licensed, and none for more difficult diseases such as HIV-1 and malaria.

"Vaccine development usually takes about 10 years," says Schoub "It goes from proof of concept in a laboratory when an agent is identified, to being developed for animal testing, and only then can clinical trials begin."

The last leg comprises three phases, he says.

"The first two involve small numbers of human volunteers [about 100], and are aimed at determining the dosage which will elicit an immune response without side effects and whether the vaccine is genetically stable.

"Phase three is when we get to evaluate the efficacy of a candidate vaccine. Typically, it needs a large number of test subjects, so thousands of people are involved. This is where we are right now."

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"These vaccines are made up of RNA, which is taken up by cells and directs the body's own cells to make a protein that the virus uses to get into cells, called the spike protein [that attaches itself to the cells].'

The vaccine that South Africa is testing, according to Blumberg,

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Division of Jerusalem 'not on the cards'

STEVEN GRUZD

"To expect to wave a magic wand and the settlements would vanish is totally unrealistic. We saw the national nightmare of uprooting 9 000 people from their homes in Gaza in 2005. Israel isn't going to give up Jerusalem – it's just not on the cards. There is no way it will re-divide Jerusalem."

So said Dr Dore Gold on a Zoom webinar hosted last Wednesday by the Zionist Organisation of America, in conjunction with the South African Zionist Federation. He was talking about his book, *The Fight for Jerusalem*.

Gold was previously Israel's ambassador to the United Nations (UN), and the director general of the ministry of foreign affairs. He served as a foreign policy advisor to Prime Ministers Benjamin Netanyahu and Ariel Sharon. He is currently the president of the Jerusalem Center for Public Affairs.

The year 2020 is a century since the San Remo Agreement of 1920. There, the allied powers met after World War I to decide the fate of the defeated Ottoman Empire's territories. It recommended a Jewish national home on both sides of the Jordan River, including all of modern-day Jordan. There was no international control over Jerusalem proposed.

Dr Dore Gold

With their rejection of the 1947 United Nations Partition Plan, Arabs also rejected the internationalisation of the city.

Following the 1948 War of Independence, Jerusalem was divided. Israel controlled the west of the city, Jordan the east, including all of the Old City. "The Jordanians expelled Jews, and took over their homes," said Gold. "At least 55 synagogues and yeshivot were desecrated or completely destroyed. The UN was supposed to protect them, but did nothing." East Jerusalem was spectacularly recaptured by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War.

Gold recounted the legacy of United States President Bill Clinton's efforts at Camp David

to strike a deal between then Israeli Prime

Minister Ehud Barak and the president of

Yasser Arafat, in 2000. Israel had been

the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO),

prepared at that time to make concessions on

the future of Jerusalem, but the PLO walked

away from the deal. Gold said Israel therefore

had no obligation to be bound by the terms of

that stillborn agreement. His book reinforces

"It's not that it made me a lot of money,"

this point, and it became a New York Times

bestseller when it first appeared in 2007.

Gold said, "but it did allow the book to be seen and get good placement in bookstores. The book became a very important way to get these ideas to senior officials, especially in Washington." This book has generated enduring interest in its arguments. It was required reading for those who formulated US President Donald Trump's "deal of the century" for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

"Muslims aren't as connected to Jerusalem as people think," said Gold. He mentioned Muslim theologians who consider the adoption of Jerusalem as a holy site a "Judaisation of Islamic practice". The city has become important to Muslims, but it is a distant third after Mecca and Medina in Saudi Arabia.

Gold characterised the Trump plan as "remarkable", and said that it proposed ideas to settle the conflict that Israel could live with. "Israel won't accept international forces in the Jordan Valley. Its experience has been extremely negative. They run away at the first sign of trouble."

"It's only under the free and democratic control of Israel that the city has been open to all faiths. It protects mosques, churches, and synagogues," Gold said.

"The most important thing we can do is reaffirm the importance of Jerusalem to the Jewish people. There shouldn't be any ambiguity on this strong position. Both Netanyahu and Benny Gantz are very firm that the city will remain united under the state of Israel."

Gold confirmed that in spite of their public denouncement of the peace process, he has

frequently been sought out by Palestinian leadership for behind-the-scenes discussions.

He stressed the importance of Israel maintaining strong ties with both major US political parties, when asked about the prospect of a Joe Biden victory in the November elections. "We must not get caught up in American political struggles."

"Israel won't accept international forces in the Jordan Valley. Its experience has been extremely negative. They run away at the first sign of trouble."

Gold also said that the world should strongly condemn Turkish President Recip Erdogan's "reprehensible" recent move to convert Istanbul's Hagia Sofia from a church into a mosque. "I don't go around defending Byzantine churches, but an attack on any religious site is an attack on all religious sites.

"The Temple Mount is the centre of what we consider to be holy, and it's what the Muslims are interested in as well," Gold said. "The complicated status quo must be maintained, in spite of the difficulties. We don't want to turn it into a bonfire for religious fanatics of any side. It must be a free area for prayer. When I go to St Peter's in Rome, anyone can enter. But Muslims fear the Jews are planning to destabilise and literally undermine the Temple Mount. We have no plans to destroy the Al Aqsa Mosque – it's a complete lie. We need to reassure the Muslim world of this, repeatedly."

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Jewish Report

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Jewish Report

Mandela – not just Mr Nice Guy

JORDAN MOSHE

elson Mandela was much more than a famous statesman and democratic leader. He was a person who cared about individuals, listened attentively, and believed in the inherent goodness of humanity.

These were the reflections shared by former Constitutional Court Judge Albie Sachs, and one of Madiba's bodyguards, Rory Steyn, in a special panel discussion held on Saturday night. In celebration of Mandela Day, the panellists shared their encounters with the beloved former president, and fond memories of the man they worked with.

"Mandela is often presented as 'Mr Nice Guy', and he was," said Sachs. "But he wasn't just that. He was a freedom fighter. He was tough and willing to fight. He took hard decisions, and was prepared, if necessary, to give his life for the cause. Throughout his life, a belief in humanity lay at his core.

"I get a little irritated when people speak about the father of a nation who gave us our freedom. He never wanted the title, and it's actually inappropriate, the nation was created by the people. He was a wonderful listener, a great embodiment of the people, and that's the greatest quality he had."

Steyn, who served as one of the four security team leaders charged with the protection of Mandela, remembers his service fondly.

"They were the best years of my life," he said. "I was privileged to have served Madiba for five extraordinary years which I'll never forget."

At the time that Madiba came into office, Steyn was a member of the dreaded John Vorster security branch. When former President FW de Klerk made the historic announcement in 1990 that he would release Mandela and unban the African National Congress (ANC), Steyn found himself without a job.

"My commanders didn't know what to do with me, a naïve lieutenant," he recalled. "Someone said I should set up a VIP protection unit, and that's what I did."

Four years later, Steyn found himself working with the ANC's security to ensure the safety of South Africa's number one: Mandela himself.

"We had to integrate with the ANC bodyguards and intelligence personnel that were our sworn enemies the week before," he said. "As the commander of a police VIP protection unit, I found myself spending three quarters of my working day doing advance security, going to each venue at which Mandela would appear, and making sure it was secure."

Steyn recalled the day in May 1994 that Mandela was inaugurated, remembering receiving a message that the president would be appearing at Ellis Park Stadium at a soccer match immediately after his inauguration ceremony at the Union Building.

"Who goes and does that literally half an hour after becoming the first democratic president?" said Steyn. "Madiba did just that.

"Someone astute on the organis committee decided that if we put 60 000 soccer fans in Ellis Park and screened the proceedings from Union Buildings on the big screen, that's 60 000 fewer people clogging up the M1 going to Pretoria." Steyn and his team were tasked with conveying 184 VIP visitors to a lunch held in Mandela's honour, including heads of states, government officials and others, even royalty. "Our job was to move the motorcade from Joburg to Pretoria," he recalled. "Among presidents, you have an order of precedence determined by those who have been in office the longest, with dictators at the top. These included Gaddafi, Arafat, Castro, Mugabe, and others." "You try going up to a dictator as a cop to tell him we need to leave now. Good luck with that." After successfully negotiating the motorcade, Steyn returned to Ellis Park to secure the presidential suite and await Mandela's arrival to greet the teams at half-time.



The SA Jewish Report Manuela Day webinar

"The motorcade arrives at half-time, but instead of going to the suite, Mandela goes out onto the field of play in front of 60 000 celebrating fans," Steyn remembered.

"It was an absolute celebration. People were ecstatic. Madiba greets the teams, goes back up in the lift, makes his apologies, and goes to Pretoria to host the VIPs for lunch at Sun City."

With Madiba safely in his bullet-proof vehicle, the motorcade prepared to set out. However, it wasn't moving. Steyn recalled, "The team leader calls the bodyguard in the vehicle and asks what's going on. We see Mandela trying to open the door and wanting to get out after just having got in. He gets out, and starts heading to the back of the reception hall and towards the vehicle ramp we're supposed to be driving along."

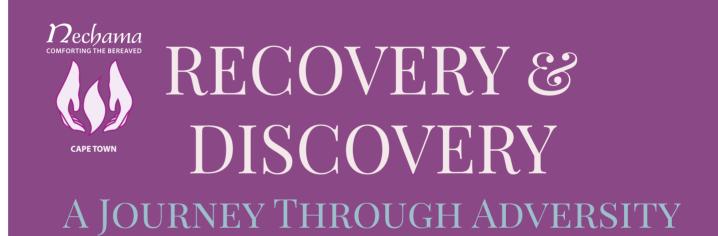
The only man back there is an old school, apartheid-era police colonel, whose eyes are getting bigger as Mandela approaches him. "Madiba stops in front of him, puts out his hand, and says, 'Colonel, from today, you are our police, too. I want you to know that from now, it's not you and us. You are our police as well."

The man began crying, and as the tears ran down his face, Madiba patted him on the shoulder, comforted him, and left.

"If you had smacked me on the nose that day, I would have been less surprised," said Steyn. "I didn't believe the stuff Mandela said when he came out of jail about South Africa being for all. I was a cynic.

"One hundred and eighty four of the world's most important people could just wait because that colonel needed to hear a message. It said to me that on the day Mandela became our president, he started implementing his agenda of reconciling South Africans. The colonel represented a system which had pursued, arrested, tried, convicted, and imprisoned Mandela for 27 years, yet he found it in his heart to speak to him.

"From that day, in spite of all my training, I was so amazed that I said I would give the new South Africa a full go. I bought into the dream, and I still believe in it. I still miss Madiba today."



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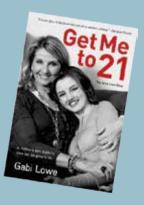
TAI Tali is Johan

GABI LOWE

Gabi is a mother, sought-after life coach, author of "Get me to 21", director of the Jenna Lowe Trust that assists pulmonary hypertension patients with access to medical care and co-founder of the Resilience Factory.

TALI NATES

Tali is a lecturer, writer, historian and the founder and director of the Johannesburg Holocaust & Genocide Centre and chair of the South African Holocaust & Genocide Foundation. Born to a family of Holocaust survivors, Tali's father and uncle were saved by Oskar Schindler.





DR DAVID PELCOVITZ

Dr Pelcovitz is an author, a Chair of psychology at Yeshiva University, as well as clinical professor of psychology at NYU School of Medicine. His areas of research and clinical speciality include family violence, stress management and coping with trauma and loss.

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CPD points are being applied for.

Teaching while wresting with a T-Rex

saw a post on Twitter last week that really spoke to me.

"Please be prepared," it said, "to teach online, in person, both simultaneously, on a moving train, while juggling, in a burning building, under the sea, during a wrestling match with a T-Rex, as a hologram, and riding a unicorn. Also be safe, and we value you."

I laughed, stifled a sob, and shared it on my Instagram. (I'm a teacher, but I'm also a cardcarrying millennial). I received many responses from fellow teachers who could, of course, relate.

My 2020 started off at a gallop. I was starting my second year as an English teacher at Redhill, and I was looking forward to tackling the teaching of middle school. I was the choreographer of the school play, and alongside Joseph Gerassi, our executive head and the director of the show, was spending busy days on campus, often until 21:00.

Between prepping for lessons, marking, syllabus planning, the school production, and a bit of a social life, life was moving fast, and I was loving it.

Then, all of a sudden, in early March, it all came to a grinding halt. School closed, the production was postponed (at that point to the end of April - let's all laugh together), and we were suddenly all home-bound.

The school shifted the April holidays forward so that staff would have time to prepare for our distance learning programme, and so the first few weeks of lockdown were - except for the hours of planning and learning the ropes of G-Suite – slow.

The pace of my life decelerated so dramatically that, at first, I was at a total loss. I tried to create a routine of early wake-ups and exercise,

but mostly I'd stay in bed until 10:00, rouse myself to get working by 11:00, and then climb onto the couch with a book by 15:00. It was by no means awful, but it was a strange and unwelcome turn of events.

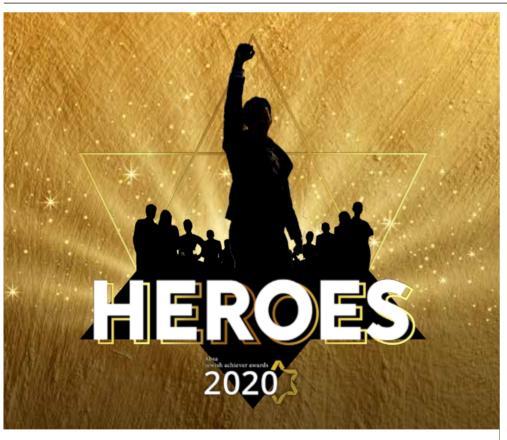
In those weeks, our school's management was communicative, decisive, and transparent. And so, after four weeks of anticipation and careful preparation, we started our distance learning programme. Our teaching cycles had been planned, the videos filmed, the lesson plans uploaded, and still I got into bed that night feeling like I was starting Grade 1 the next day.

The very first Google Meets call I had was with my group of Grade 8 mentees - the 15 students I had been assigned to mentor for the year.

The mentor/mentee system isn't new at Redhill, but it took on a whole new meaning as we were tasked with guiding these children through a whole new system of learning. This first Meet calmed me as I connected with familiar faces and felt reassured and reenergised by them. When it ended, I felt braver - brave enough to tackle the rest of the day.

And that day, a day of trial and error; of "Ma'am, I think you're on mute"; of "Sorry Ma'am my Wi-Fi is being glitchy, I've been logged off for the past twenty minutes, what did you say?" turned into a week, and then, pretty quickly, into seven weeks.

Those weeks felt weirdly long and short simultaneously. The timetable changed frequently. The number of students who turned on their cameras got smaller. But we kept pushing. There were frustrations, of course, but I remained fully cognisant of just how lucky our school community was that we all had Wi-Fi, full bellies, and roofs over our heads as we kept



growing and learning through it all.

Once the government announced the introduction of Level 3 in June, our school made the decision to re-open its doors.

Going back to school was more difficult than I anticipated. The atmosphere was tense and with fewer than half the students coming in, campus felt ghostly quiet. After my first day, I was disorientated and exhausted.

In the first weeks back, we taught only students who were on campus and set "athome" tasks for the rest. Those who chose to remain online were taught "in real time" on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Those Saturdays taught me that I can teach a full school day six lessons back to back - without moving off my bed. That's something to add to my CV.

It has changed again since then, and we now teach all students in real time, Monday to Friday, half in class and half online. That was a tricky balance to master (remember that



relatable tweet?). But still, we keep pushing. Students, although feeling stifled by

their masks, are slowly starting to find their rowdy selves again, and the familiar buzz on campus is making its return.

No one knows what the weeks and months ahead of us will look like. Will school stay open? Will the number of students and teachers testing positive for the virus become too many? Will the academic year remain intact? I don't know.

I do know I have students who bring a smile to my face no matter what global cataclysm happens to be taking place at any given time. And I know that I can teach online, in person, both simultaneously, and, if need be, during a wrestling match with a T-Rex.

• Micaela Browde is an English teacher at Redhill High School.

Lockdown creates thirst for new opportunities **CLYDE ACKERMAN OPINION**

efore coronavirus ground the country to a halt, our business, a thriving national mobile bar company, served customers at some of the country's biggest events.

After the lockdown and alcohol ban commenced in March, the events industry was shut down virtually overnight. It led to a rollercoaster ride of trying to navigate a starkly different business landscape amid two alcohol bans.

Prior to the lockdown, we were on course to do a record turnover in our 15-year history for the financial year running May to May. With the government banning alcohol, and events out of the question due to social distancing, our main revenue stream was suddenly no longer relevant. We lost R4 million in confirmed income for March.

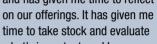
As a business, the crisis forced us to adapt to a new and changing market virtually overnight, pushing us to re-examine and adapt our core offerings. We examined our resources, and made them work for us in creative ways. The key for us, like many others, was to transition online quickly to serve customers we could no longer interact with in person.

We had a fleet of 12 vehicles sitting dormant which we could use for distribution and delivery

of alcohol. We used our event trainers as drivers. Our aim from the outset was to stick to the basics, do it simply, and ensure top-notch service.

We switched to an ecommerce alcohol store overnight, which was gaining traction until the latest alcohol ban. It was our first venture into the online space, and we literally put it together in two days. This online offering has exposed us to an entirely new audience of customers.

Essentially, we are a family busin ss. This crisis



what's important, and how we can simplify our lives. We have spent significant time reassessing overheads, re-examining the structure of the business, and ways to simplify it.

The latest booze ban took the wind out of our sails. We've had to restrategise and cut costs to survive. We've also, unfortunately, had to consider retrenchments, something we were adamant about not doing at the outset, but we've been left with no choice.

We support wholeheartedly the protests against the most recent ban. Our industry has been cut off at the knees. These are desperate times, and we all need to stand together and make sure we have something to come back to when this is all over.

Of course, while the virus has challenged our business, it has also given us new opportunities. Instead of focusing on the negative, we have decided to focus on adapting, innovating, and surviving by finding new opportunities and gaps in the market. We are constantly looking for new ways to connect with our customers and remain relevant.



Clyde Ackerman with business partner Rael Lasarow and their longest standing staff member, bar tender Silly Ndlovu, at their Thirst offices

> The latest ban will help us to further refine our ecommerce offering. It will give us time to test and examine what will and won't work to ensure that by the time the ban is lifted, we'll be ready to launch a new, experiential ecommerce offering, among other products.



PROFESSIONAL E IN THE TIME XCEL LENC AWARD

Awarded to a Jewish professional who has achieved national recognition and acclaim in their profession during the COVID pandemic.

Nominations close at 17:00 on 14 August 2020 SEND NOMINATIONS TO nominations@sajewishreport.co.za Go to www.jaa2020.co.za

Jewish Report

has brought us closer together. Rael Lasarow (the co-owner) and I have formed a stronger partnership, and we have worked as a cohesive team to ensure the survival of the business.

Our priority was to keep our staff employed. Non-governmental organisation FeedSA hired all 20 of our warehouse staff to pack thousands of food parcels for those in need across Gauteng, ensuring that they retained their jobs. We also placed staff at our biggest supplier, which was inundated with order backlogs. Other measures included reducing the hours of permanent staff.

This period has been incredibly stressful. It can be hard to clear the fog when you are stuck in the trenches. This has been the most challenging three months of my career.

But, strangely enough, I've thrived under the pressure, and enjoy being able to come up with creative solutions to take the business into the future.

This period has also been incredibly humbling,

While we're attempting to navigate this new landscape day by day, we anticipate that the events industry will take a long time to recover and revert to pre-COVID-19 levels. Big gatherings will certainly be off the cards for the rest of 2020, but we hope things will start returning to normal in 2021.

In the meantime, we anticipate an increased focus on unique home-entertainment experiences. We are examining ways to safely bring our experience into peoples' homes for small groups.

Lots of restaurants will close down, putting chefs out of work. We are talking to some leading restaurants to work together on these offerings. • Clyde Ackerman is the managing director of Thirst. hen future scholars write the history of the administration of Donald Trump, he may end up being called, among many other things, the "conspiracy theorist president". Trump famously began his ascent to power with the false and racist "birther" claim that Barack Obama wasn't really an American.

Trump and his followers have also legitimised bizarre conspiracy theories against Hungarian American financier and philanthropist George Soros. It now appears continued attacks on Soros will be a part of the president's re-election campaign.

Soros has been a punching bag for authoritarians, antisemites, and conspiracy theorists around the world since 1992, when he became famous as "the man who broke the Bank of England" by making more than \$1 billion (R16.5 billion) by "shorting" the British pound.

Born in Budapest in 1930, Soros barely survived the destruction of European Jewry by the Nazis. Living in New York City since 1956, he has combined a long career as a successful capitalist while doing philanthropy under the banner of his Open Society Foundations.

Attacks on Soros have circulated on the margins of mainstream politics for years, tinged with antisemitism and fuelled by half-truths and outright lies. Russia has always been at the heart of anti-Soros propaganda, and it's now joined by China in promoting attacks, distortions, and lies. Over the past few years, these conspiracies have entered mainstream debate in Hungary, Poland, Brazil, and the United States.

The Trump movement attempted to scapegoat Soros as part of its "Make America Great Again" rhetoric. Trump supporters accused Soros, among other things, of supporting the caravan of migrants attempting to enter the United States from Central America, being behind the attacks on Brett Kavanaugh during his Supreme Court nomination (a falsehood Trump himself tweeted about), and promoting an elitist globalist agenda that undermined American jobs and culture.

Most incredibly, in recent weeks, Soros has been accused of paying Black Lives Matter protesters who demonstrated across the US after the police killing of George Floyd.

Trump has major liabilities in his quest for reelection: his incompetent handling of the coronavirus pandemic; his polarising opposition to protesters after the Floyd killing; and the decline of the US economy since the outbreak of COVID-19. Loss of support among suburban white women, members of the military elite, and moderate Republicans are now a threat to his electoral prospects.

Attacking China, stoking nationalist resentments, uncritically defending the police, claiming economic competence, and bashing Joe Biden will be Trump's major electoral strategy. But Republican attacks on Soros are also likely to circulate widely until the election.

Soros is a perfect foil to try to convince people that Trump stands for the average American. What better scapegoat than a wealthy, uber-liberal currency speculator who helped fund Obama and Hillary Clinton, supports abortion, gay and trans rights, and gives generously to the electoral campaigns of liberal public defenders and prosecutors? In Trumpist rhetoric, Soros is soft on crime, and promotes the values of cultural liberalism and global elites over the average American.

Soros's history of supporting Palestinian rights and calling for a negotiated peace settlement created an opportunity for the White House to exploit. Rhetoric about big finance linked to a "globalist" Jewish philanthropist understandably concerns Jewish voters and others opposed to antisemitism, but anti-Soros rhetoric can unify evangelical Christian



Zionists, pro-Israel Republicans, interventionist neoconservatives, and far-right extremists.

Attacking Soros is also part of a Trumpist appeal to conservative Black voters, now being led by Candace Owens, a young media figure and Republican activist.

Prone to gaffes that expose her ignorance about history and politics, Owens has gained a massive online presence among far-right-wing Trump supporters by directly challenging the mainstream Democratic Party narrative on racism, police violence, and poverty in America. She's also attacked George Floyd's character. What's more, Owens has spread anti-Soros paranoia online, giving it a cooler, hipper, and younger flavour.

The core of the Trumpist scapegoating of Soros is an attempt to blame Soros for the Black Lives Matter protests, and calls for defunding the police. The lie that Soros is paying for the protests that have swept through the US and is promoting riots is deeply corrosive to American democracy.

Conspiracy theories work best when lies, exaggerations, and paranoia are linked to real things in the world that can be distorted by spin. Soros's recent pledge of \$220 million (R3.6 billion) to support civil rights and racial equality groups like Black Voters Matter will add fuel to extremist fire.

Fox News host Tucker Carlson will play a major role in all this. During a recent segment on his show, former Missouri governor Eric Greitens attempted to

Photo: AP Photo/Ronald Zak



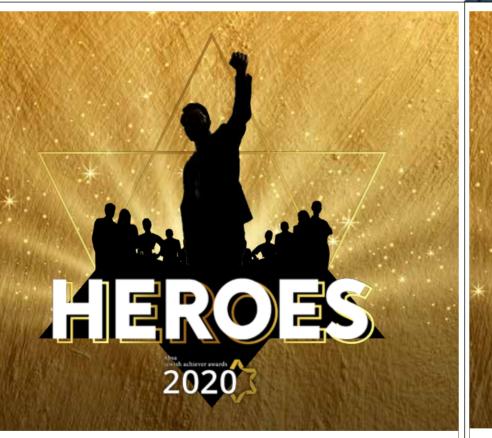
link Soros to anti-police violence and made reference to a "George Soros-funded prosecutor" involved in the case of the couple in St Louis who stood in front of their house with guns while antiracism protesters marched on their street.

None of this is likely to save Trump from going down to an electoral defeat in November. While there are legitimate criticisms to be made of the role of billionaires like Soros in politics and economic life, the divisiveness of anti-Soros paranoia will take years to repair.

 Neil McLaughlin is professor of sociology at McMaster University in Ontario, Canada. This piece originally appeared on theconversation.com

> • Iga Mergler is a PhD candidate in Sociology at McMaster University in Canada

> > George Soros has become a favourite target of right-wing groups that support Donald Trump





SA JEWISH REPORT 19

KIRSH FAMILY ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Awarded to a Jewish person who has a proven track record in entrepreneurial ventures.

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(KIA)

Jewish Report

EUROPCAR WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP AWARD

Honouring the leadership, impact, achievements, success and overall contribution of distinctive Jewish women in business or in the broader South African community.

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KIN

Jewish Report

24 - 31 July 2020

Missing the mark on elephant poaching

▶ ila Green's novel, *No Entry*, aims to alert readers to the oft overlooked issue of elephant poaching and the illegal ivory trade, which is an admirable

venture. However, she fails to draw her audience in emotionally.

While the book was undoubtedly gripping, I was disappointed by the lack of character and plot development.

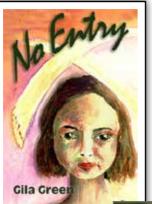
No Entry follows 17-year-old Yael Tamar's journey from her native Canada to South Africa's Kruger National Park. Here she partakes in a two-

month elephant-conservation programme following the death of her brother, Erez, in the hope that it will give her the opportunity to heal.

She quickly makes friends, and falls comfortably into a routine at the conservation camp, where she is later joined by her boyfriend, David. However, things take a dark turn during a game drive in the park, and Yael realises that elephant poaching is much closer to home than she thought. Yael must decide whether to stay silent and safe, or blow the whistle on the dark underbelly of the Kruger.

While *No Entry* draws attention to elephant poaching on our reserves and the exploitation of animals for profit, the novel doesn't inspire action. I felt removed from events.

Green fails to set the scene, making readers



feel more like a fly on the

wall than an active participant in the plot. The characters remain one dimensional, and as a result, the reader doesn't feel empathy.

KARYN MOSHE

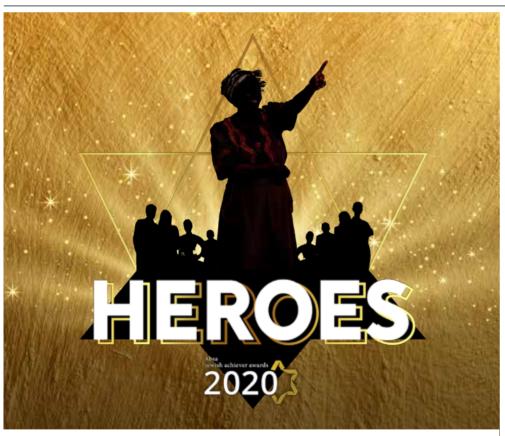
More emphasis is placed on the clothes the characters wear than their thoughts and emotions, isolating readers from the cast. I would have liked more evidence of research in the novel, as well as a more encompassing depiction of South Africa other than poverty and bribery. Punctuation throughout the novel is poor, and I had to reread certain sentences before they made sense.

Not to be misunderstood, I

enjoyed Green's novel, and I applaud the step she took in drawing attention to elephant poaching in our country. But the novel had so much unrealised Green potential. However, it

has value in educating South Africans about the hidden, darker side of our country. I hope the upcoming books in the series will be more immersive, spending more time on character and plot development.

• Karyn Moshe is an archaeologist by profession, and is pursuing her Master's degree at the University of the Witwatersrand. She appreciates a chai latte almost as much as a good book, and you can usually find her sorting artefacts with a book in one hand and a cup of coffee in the other.



Corona children's book takes the load off kids **BOOK REVIEW**

■ very day, we are inundated with Information about the dreaded coronavirus, our inboxes packed with an excess of literature which many of us struggle to comprehend.

Facts, figures, and statistics overwhelm us, making the thread of reality

difficult to follow. If COVID-19 is too much for an adult to wrap their head around, how on earth can you teach your young children about the virus in a way that makes sense to them? By using your imagination, and thinking like a child.

That's what Corona goes Viral has accomplished. Written by Asif Segal, the locally published children's book skilfully handles the

subject in a way that children can appreciate by making it simultaneously fun and informative. It's about as comprehensive as a children's book can get, making it a useful educational tool at home or in the classroom.

Segal's book is entertaining and wellresearched, its rhyming narrative following the adventures of the thrill-seeking Corona, a youngster who wants to make a name for herself in the big world. Tired of her boring life with mommy Flu, daddy SARS, and uncle MERS, she is bitten by the travel bug, and sets out in search of fame and stardom.

While the character names are immediately revealing to adults, their roles as members of a family make their connection interesting and understandable to young readers. Young Corona's journey (whether she's befriending a dog or boarding a train) similarly speaks to the actual events in which the virus spread, but it is accessible to children without the challenges parents and teachers so often encounter when engaging with youngsters.

This accessibility is helped in no small part by the book's vibrant illustrations, all of which collectively depict Corona's story in a way that children can follow alongside the text. Simoné Kur's artistic flair brings to

Cycalive in final lap of international competition

brah Academy's Cycalive, is a finalist in Shalom Corps, an international competition to find the best volunteer projects that bring about social change.

Initiated by Torah Academy in 1998, Cycalive is an annual bicycle ride from Johannesburg to Durban covering 700km. It has been selected as a finalist from 83 projects across 30 countries.

Shalom Corps is looking for Jewish projects that address social responsibility and have a



It teaches that pride, passion, and commitment to culture and religion, rather than compromise, can help breed tolerance, empathy, and respect for diversity.

Winning this competition would highlight the international reach of Chabad in caring for all Hashem's children and countering racism. It will create a kiddush Hashem (sanctification of G-d's name) particularly in the present climate of divisiveness and hate. Vote on this link: https://shalomcorps.org/rfp/voting/ to ensure that Cycalive wins the competition.

JORDAN MOSHE

life a grinning, green-bodied Corona (complete with tutu and pigtails) and her assorted virus relatives, all of them imitations of their real-life microscopic

equivalents, although far more memorable,

clothed, and smiling.



Beyond capturing the journey of transmission, the book finds a way to illustrate the various health protocols which have become routine activities for all of us. Handwashing and social distancing are simplified, and their importance stressed, making them part of the everyday routine for children and encouraging them to modify their behaviour, whether they're sneezing or washing their hands. In an effort to concretise its contents, the book includes

interactive pages following the

story, giving children a space where they can engage with the material. Pages for colouring in characters and writing down what they learned about Corona encourage further thinking, and make the relevance of what has been read long-lasting without being didactic or superfluous.

If it achieves anything, however, Corona goes Viral restores some much-needed normality to the lives of children. As scary as a virus is, the book attempts to show youngsters that they can play an active role in confronting the situation without being afraid and without trivialising a very important subject. Moreover, the narrative ends on a positive note, hinting that the time will come when Corona will stay at home after having had her fill of world travel.

Parents and educators alike will find a useful tool in Corona goes Viral, whether they are seeking to broach the subject with their children or solidify an existing basic understanding. Best suited for ages five and up, this book is sure to set a trend of children's Corona literature in South Africa, and begin a viral literary following.

• Corona goes Viral is available for purchase at Exclusive Books and on Kindle.

IFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

IN HONOUR OF HELEN SUZMAN

Awarded to a Jewish person who has contributed in an extraordinary manner over a long period of time.

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KIN

Jewish Report

transformative impact on society's vulnerable and needy.

In a world fractured by racial tension, Cycalive has done much to cultivate hope and inspire



The first cut is the deepest

t started perhaps as it always does – fairly innocently. Sunday was the *bris* of my greatnephew, and because of COVID-19 rules, we couldn't be there. I had travelled to Israel in the past for such an occasion, and now I wouldn't be able to attend this celebration that was taking place a few blocks away.

And so, as anyone would do in 2020, I shared my disappointment on Twitter. "Today is my great-nephew's *bris*. It will take place down the road, but we can't be there. In the past, I would have flown around the world to celebrate, but now we will Zoom it from a few blocks away. Today, I really hate this #COVID-19 reality." I wrote this partly to indicate that we are all in this together, partly to encourage people to adhere to social distancing regulations, and partly because I wanted to share how I was feeling.

At first, I received the responses that I thought I would. People shared their own experiences, wished me *mazaltov*, and others told me to look on the bright side. And then, just when I least expected it, I received the following message. "In a normal world, cops would be called. They would come and protect the baby from this ritual of penile sacrifice, handcuff the mohel and the parents, and put them in jail for mutilation and rape."

I was shocked. And in my shock, I responded, "Penile sacrifice? [laughing face, laughing face] Rape? Gosh, all I was upset about was missing the smoked salmon bagels. You lot have it much worse!" It turns out that anti "circumcisers" don't have much in the way of a sense of humour, because they accused me of having the "laugh of impunity". It also turned out to be the tip of that iceberg (so to speak), because for two days, I was hit by a barrage of messages from accounts with names like "Stop cutting boys" and others who believe that everyone has the right to the "genitalia that they were born with".

INNER VOICE Howard Feldman

On Monday, I invited listeners to suggest songs that would be fitting to play in honour of this occasion. They were true to form, and suggested titles like, *The First Cut is the Deepest* and *Cuts Like a Knife*. Good times.

By Tuesday, I had grown bored with the level of drama, and had moved on. I couldn't imagine focusing on this for more time than I already had, and I guess that this mob had found someone else to harass.

For me, the incident was nothing more than a few hours of good, clean fun. But it could also have been unnerving (if I were sensitive), and if I took the vitriol seriously. Perhaps, if the subject was different, I could have been personally triggered by it, and it might have had an impact on me.

Which is what's happening on social media. Earlier this week, Adriaan Basson, the editor of *News24*, announced that he would no longer be active on Twitter. "It's time to move on from social media platform Twitter which has become dominated by hateful, ignorant, and divisive content," he said. Basson, in his role in media, has other outlets for debate and engagement, but for most, Twitter and other social-media platforms are important places to engage.

A grave danger to freedom of expression and debate is the aggressive mob approach to social media. There are no simple solutions, but the problem is clear. If we don't find a better way to engage, it will be more than smoked salmon that we'll lose.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies Online conferences allow for greater participation

Both the Gauteng and Cape Councils of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) are gearing up for their upcoming biennial conferences, to take place on 16 August and 6 September respectively. At these conferences, new councils will be voted in to serve for the next two years.

As was done in 2018, the Gauteng conference has been divided into two parts. The first is for affiliate organisations and community members, with those attending mainly being delegates representing various organisations affiliated to the Board. It will deal with the substantive, technical aspects of regional conferences as per the constitution. The second part is for a more general audience. Both, of course, will take part online for the first time, which means on the one hand not being able to meet as usual with colleagues and friends, but on the other allows for greater participation by the community at large. This was the case with this year's Virtual Yom Hashoah ceremony, in which more than 17 000 participated. The online platform also offers opportunities for international exposure.

At the 2018 event for the community at large, we were honoured to have President Cyril Ramaphosa in conversation with Investec's Stephen Koseff. This year, we are no less pleased to host as keynote address the renowned speaker, author, and psychologist, Dr Edith Eger. Aged only 16 when sent to Auschwitz, Edith was forced by Josef Mengele to dance for his amusement, thereby saving herself from the fate of her parents murdered just hours before. When the camps were liberated, she was pulled, on

ABOVE BOARD Shaun Zagnoev

the verge of death, from a pile of corpses. Instead of being broken by her ordeal, she has used her harrowing personal story to assist those who have suffered trauma. In the light of global concern over the resurgence of prejudice and hatred, we believe Dr Eger's messages have never been more relevant, and that she will bring a much-needed message of hope and resilience to our conference.

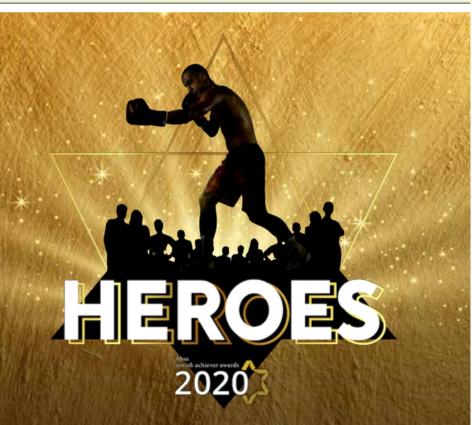
Beyond COVID-19 and the specific challenges it brings, the Board continues to carry out its core mandate of upholding the civil rights of the Jewish community. I'm pleased to report that last week, the University of South Africa confirmed that all religiously observant Jewish students who missed exams on Shabbat and Shavuot will have another assessment opportunity so as not to have to wait for the supplementary dates in October. This follows extensive engagement on our part with the university, involving adapting previous accommodations to current circumstances in which assessments have to be done online.

Last week, we launched our Mandela Day video giving feedback on the projects that have been funded by the SAJBD Food Relief Fund. While there are nearly 100 of these projects, 67 of them were chosen in line with Mandela Day. The video, which has been viewed more than 2 000 times and has elicited much positive feedback, can be viewed on our Facebook page and website.

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

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





KIA COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Awarded to a Jewish person who has served the Jewish community with remarkable distinction.

Nominations close at 17:00 on 14 August 2020 SEND NOMINATIONS TO nominations@sajewishreport.co.za Go to www.jaa2020.co.za

KIN

Jewish Report

ART, SPORT, SCIENCE, AND CULTURE AWARD

awarded to a Jewish person who has excelled in any of these spheres.

Nominations close at 17:00 on 14 August 2020

SEND NOMINATIONS TO nominations@sajewishreport.co.za Go to www.jaa2020.co.za

(KIN)

Jewish Report

Illovo CAN keep Ikageng children going

n honour of Mandela Day this year, the community rallied together to support CAN lkageng (Illovo) by preparing "meals in a bag" – a bag of nutritious ingredients that can feed four people.

CAN lkageng is a welfare organisation that was set up following the closure of schools in March 2020 to help provide food security and educational materials for the beneficiaries of Ikageng, an organisation that has supported families and orphaned children in Orlando West, Soweto, since 2001. CAN Ikageng has received more than 600 bags to date.

Ikageng was created in response to the worsening vulnerability of South African children, and since 2001 has supported over 3 500 families and 15 960 orphaned and vulnerable children under the determined and courageous leadership of Carol Dyantyi ("Mum Carol").

In March 2020, the closure of schools due to COVID-19 meant that lkageng now had to find a way to provide food security and educational materials for its beneficiaries. One of Ikageng's long-time supporters, the strategic marketing

communication consultancy, F/NE, stepped in to magnify this call for support and eventually helped to establish CAN Ikageng (Illovo) in April 2020.

CAN lkageng began as a small Selpal making weekly deliveries to Ikageng for CAN Ikageng

(but motivated) group of supporters in Glenhazel and has since grown to include generous partnerships with the Illovo community, Selpal (which assists with distribution to Soweto on a weekly basis), Thrupps &

Co., The Angel Network, Illovo Jetline, 4u2c Print, and F/NE For Good.

This community-based network has successfully donated over 20 000 meals, as well as other essential items, including: toiletries, masks, sanitisers, and education materials and children's books to the beneficiaries of Ikageng.

CAN lkageng has also run initiatives to nourish the mind. To this end, it has printed and donated hundreds of educational packs to primary and high school students, as well as general COVID-19 communication materials for lkageng and its surrounding schools in Soweto.

It was a proud moment to see President Cyril Ramaphosa spend time with the children of lkageng in a virtual book reading session this Mandela Day - echoing the importance of education and development, even in these challenging times. And CAN lkageng will continue to support lkageng in its vision, even when the spotlight has gone but the hard work still needs to continue.

For more information or to get involved with our CAN please contact Tanya Kahanovitz on 082 330 9003 or follow the updates on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/ canikageng/



Food and non-perishable items collected by the community every week



Five-year-old turns birthday into feast for hungry

ineteen million South Africans go to bed hungry every day in South Africa, an unimaginable statistic, especially as we move into the heart of winter when extreme cold exacerbates the suffering of the food-vulnerable. Yet, from the depths of the gloom, there are many uplifting stories of people making a difference.

One of these is five year-old Ariella Janks who, quite spontaneously, asked that instead of her friends giving her and her brother, Rafa – whose birthdays are two days apart – presents for their birthdays, they should bring

parcels of food that they could donate to children less

fortunate than themselves. The response was outstanding.

Ahrlene Yudelowitz,

Aimee Janks, Ariella Janks

No doubt, the idea came to her through the work of her granny, Ahrlene Yudelowitz, during lockdown with food-rescue organisation SA Harvest. Yudelowitz has organised the collection of the equivalent of hundreds of meals in the Glenhazel area for this organisation.

"We have delivered more than 1.7 million meals in the lockdown period to beneficiaries who feed people on a daily

basis," says Alan Browde, the chief executive of SA Harvest. "I've seen so many acts of kindness in this business, and none more moving than Ariella's. Her selflessness is most unusual, especially in light of the fact that she sacrificed all those wonderful birthday presents that a typical five-year-old dreams of to make a difference to others. It's humbling and inspiring."

SA Harvest most recently collaborated with not-for-profit organisation Chefs With Compassion on Mandela Day, 18 July, to cook 77 455 litres of soup, smashing the organisation's target of 67 000 litres of soup, and translating into 309 820 cups of soup fed to the hungry all over the country.

In 10 cities: Johannesburg, Cape Town, Pretoria, Durban, Bloemfontein, Mokopane,

Rustenburg, Vereeniging, Port Elizabeth, and Nelspruit, nutritious soup was cooked with compassion and care by about 300 chefs from restaurants, hotels, cooking schools, and catering operations.

Browde says the exercise was a magnificent tribute to the spirit of Madiba, especially his philosophy that one needs only to do something positive every day in service to others, not necessarily huge, to change the world. "The collaboration with Chefs with Compassion was a perfect example of the power of individual contribution becoming a substantial collective success," he said.

Matric students host GBV webinar at Yeshiva

eshiva College matric students Dani Sack and Alexa Price hosted a webinar on gender-based violence on 10 July on behalf of the school.

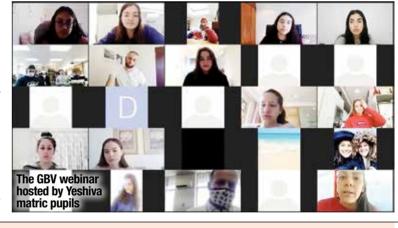
Supported by principals Rebbetzin Natalie Altman and Rob Long, and school social worker Gabi Stein, the webinar aimed at offering students from Grades 9 to 12 a platform for thought-provoking discussion

on this vitally important topic.

Male matric students were chaperoned by Long, and he held a discussion with them afterward on what they had heard and discussed in order to ensure a positive takeaway

message. Altman, one of the proponents of holding the webinar, has always had a female-centred approach to the girls' school.

The school has noted the enormous effort and insight displayed by Sack and Price in heading up the webinar, saying they are both "wonderful examples of Yeshiva college students".



Letters

OCKDOWN ENHANCES THE VALUE OF GOING TO SHUL

UMANITARIA AWARD

IN HONOUR OF CHIEF RABBI CYRIL HARRIS

Awarded to a Jewish or non-Jewish person who has contributed substantially to the betterment of the lives of the people of South Africa.

Nominations close at 17:00 on 14 August 2020 SEND NOMINATIONS TO nominations@sajewishreport.co.za Go to www.jaa2020.co.za

Jewish Report

The lockdown has had an enormous effect on everyone psychologically and physically. I have been thinking a lot about what Friday nights in shul mean to me as a secular Jew and someone who is largely unobservant. My entire life has been similarly structured, whereby I would try my utmost to ensure that I was in shul on Friday evenings wherever I was in the world. I know this is strange, but it appears to be quite a common South African Jewish trait. I don't observe Shabbos, and my lifestyle is completely reflective of a secular South African Jew. With the advent of the lockdown and the closure of shuls (which I completely understand), I have done a lot of thinking and certainly have been trying to understand why I always found the need to get to shul timeously every Friday night for the past 50

years. Even while camping in the mountains, I have always ensured that I could sit for

some quiet time, and contemplated a shul service and discussed with my fellow campers the parsha of the week.

The shuls have gone out of their way to keep us informed, involved, and structured. Well done to the rabbonim and our spiritual leadership! But, somehow, it's not the same, and I do miss terribly the communal gatherings as we bring in Shabbos.

I received a wonderful gift of a book written by Rabbi Matthew Liebenberg. The very first chapter describes the possibility of closure of shuls to bring people back to Judaism. Upon reading that and internalising it, I experienced an "aha moment". The absence of the shul service with fellow community members is probably a blessing in disguise as most of us can feel how valuable shul going actually is, and will treasure it much more in the future.

- Michael Bagraim, Cape Town

ADVERTORIAL

How to secure your finances in a pandemic

he year 2020 has changed our lives dramatically, and with the economic outlook remaining murky, it isn't surprising that investors are left asking, "What's next?" While the COVID-19 pandemic rages on, and with many governments and central banks around the world firmly in "whatever it takes" mode, what does it mean for you, the investor?

The severe social distancing and lockdown policies adopted around the world to counteract the pandemic have shrunk economic activity dramatically, with an expected output gap of more than \$12 trillion (R197.9 trillion). In response, governments have launched large support programmes, causing debt levels to grow dramatically. Monetary policy is also extraordinarily loose, with low interest rates, and through unprecedented asset purchase programmes.

All this new debt will have to be paid back at some point. But how?

Some argue that repayment can happen over several decades, given that the pandemic is a once-in-a-lifetime event. The painless way to reduce the debt burden over time is through economic growth. But in the absence of remarkable economic growth (or debt defaults), higher taxes, and/or financial repression is the likely route.

What is financial repression?

A simple definition is a set of policies that result in savers earning negative after-inflation (real) returns in order to reduce funding costs for lenders — both government and private. This often coincides with a weaker currency and higher inflation.

Enter higher prices and the concept of financial repression

When debt can't be repaid through growth alone and default is unpalatable, higher inflation provides a route out of the quandary. Couple higher prices with financial repression - where governments adopt policies that result in savers earning a rate of return below inflation - and debt can gently be inflated away over time.

What about South Africa?

We have already moved closer to financial repression locally, with policy interest rates moving from 6.5% in January (about 2.5% real), to 3.75% at the time of writing, which is 0.75% ahead of the inflation rate at the end of April 2020. We expect inflation to remain at or below 3% until early 2021,

manifest in financial repression, we question the ability of cash to provide appropriate inflation protection, especially when considered relative to alternatives such as more diversified multi-asset portfolios.

Prioritising real assets by taking enough risk

To protect yourself against the risk of inflation, real assets should form the cornerstone of your portfolio. To gain exposure to these assets, you need to be invested in a fund with a mandate that allows exposure to the most appropriate combination of real assets and longer-duration income assets given your ability to take risk.

Many investors who have de-risked their portfolios over the past five years, or who may have invested too conservatively to begin with, need to consider taking action to increase the risk in their portfolio to an appropriate level.

Over the long term, a well-diversified multi-asset portfolio with a wide mandate and adequate exposure to growth assets remains one of the most robust approaches to protecting your purchasing power.

Apart from being able to invest in cash and bonds, multi-asset funds have the ability, subject to the regulatory and risk-management levels limits that apply, to invest in:

- equities (domestic and foreign);
- listed property;
- physical gold and other precious metals;
- other offshore assets; and
- government and corporate bonds, including inflation-linked debt.

All of these assets have higher expected returns and thus better long-term inflation protection ability than cash. In addition, multi-asset portfolios are diversified and constructed to achieve good risk-adjusted outcomes over time.

A multi-asset fund for every investor need

We strongly encourage you to review your current asset allocation to ensure that it consists of sufficient equity, other real assets, and offshore exposure. We recommend that you consider, with the help of a financial adviser, matching your individual risk profile and time horizon with an actively managed, multi-asset fund as your best defence against a possible

which creates room for further interest-rate cuts this year. Having said that, the long-term risk of inflation remains a critical consideration for South Africans.

What does this mean for you?

In short, your money will need to work harder for you. With the South African Reserve Bank cutting the repo rate by a cumulative 275 basis points since the start of 2020, cash has become significantly less attractive. Cash investors are currently earning a third less on the asset class compared to the beginning of the year, with cash no longer offering the real returns that it used to.

Multi-asset portfolios with larger risk budgets, which include the ability to have healthy equity and offshore exposure, as well as to invest in longerduration income assets, have become significantly more attractive on a relative basis.

Inflation protection should be a priority when constructing your long-term investment portfolio. And in a tough economic environment that could

* This article was published prior to the interest-rate announcement by the SARB on 23 July 2020.

rise in future inflation.

Coronation offers a range of actively managed multi-asset funds suited to most investor needs (local, global and unconstrained) and has built a compelling track record of generating real returns over the long-term across the range. We believe we offer options well suited to the needs of most investors.

To read more about investing with Coronation, visit https://www.coronation.com/it-all-comes-down-to-trust



Advertorial

SosherWorld is South Africa's only all-kosher Ksupermarket. It is a franchisee of the OK Franchise Division and has now proudly teamed up with corporate parent, Checkers, to offer an extensive kosher section in Johannesburg's newest community shopping development in Linksfield known as The Neighbourhood.

The new shopping centre is part of the redevelopment of the new Huddle Park Golf Club, on Club Street, turned into a Golf Club with a residential development now in progress.

Its spanking new shopping centre, to service not only The Neighbourhood, but the surrounding areas such as Linksfield, Senderwood, Edenvale, Bedfordview and Glendower - all areas with a large Jewish representation.

"Very exciting and so convenient"

"It is always good to have a corporate parent," explains KosherWorld.

Checkers has increased its outstanding service to the Jewish community by having KosherWorld provide the Kosher speciality goods to the market, with KosherWorld adhering to its ethos of being a shop for everybody, providing kosher goods at affordable prices.

The sizeable KosherWorld section includes a large amount of shelf-space, fridges and freezers. It also sports a scrumptious bread table with a wide assortment of baked goods that is restocked daily.

Over the years, KosherWorld has seen an increasing number of customers looking for "Jewish" or "Israeli" foods, and now they are able to provide their products and services to the Linksfield area.

Partnering to bring Kosher closer



THE NEIGHBOURHOOD SHOPPING CENTRE

When the Checkers store opened last week, people visiting the new local shopping centre were so pleasantly surprised that it caused quite a stir on social media. The Jewish community, as they tend to do, immediately started posting pictures to friends on every social media platform imaginable and within days everyone knew about it.

Heart of the Community

KosherWorld is situated in "The Heart Of Glenhazel", opposite Yeshiva College.

The new World Class store has allowed KosherWorld to extend its extensive product range further afield. The kosher store may soon have to change its payoff line to "The Heart of the Community".

Asked if this was "a once-off venture, or could it be the beginning of something more?", KosherWorld's management would only say, "Watch this space!"

Partnering for the new world

KosherWorld says it is proud to be associated with Checkers. This partnership is making Kosher more accessible, especially timely in these heady days where shoppers want to shop in one store as close to home as possible.

KosherWorld's slogan says it all: "Kosher at Everyday Prices".

Social media buzz

People were thrilled to see the KosherWorld section at Checkers last weekend. The phones at its Glenhazel store were ringing off the hook with congratulatory messages.

It became viral on social media and pictures were proudly posted with wonderful comments the news spread quickly.

One Rabbi vlogged, "I've just had a good shop at the new Dischem and then I had a great shop at Checkers. I discovered at Checkers a KosherWorld section with kosher meat, kosher dairy even Chalav Yisrael. They had lots of delicacies at pretty decent prices."



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