



**Art, antiques, objets d'art,  
furniture, and jewellery  
wanted for forthcoming auctions**

For more information 011 789 7422 • [info@rkauctioneers.co.za](mailto:info@rkauctioneers.co.za) • [www.rkauctioneers.co.za](http://www.rkauctioneers.co.za)  
Bram Fischer Centre, Lower Ground, 95 Bram Fischer Drive Cnr George Street, Ferndale, 2194

■ Volume 27 – Number 06 ■ 16 February 2023 ■ 25 Shevat 5783

# south african Jewish Report

The source of quality content, news and insights

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

## ZAKA rescuers rush to assist in Turkey's worst disaster in a century

NICOLA MILTZ

Faced with life-altering, apocalyptic scenes of death, dying, and despair, a small but strong ZAKA South Africa rescue mission returned home this week from earthquake-ravaged Turkey.

The four-strong local team worked alongside its experienced Israeli counterparts in a gruelling quest to rescue people alive under mountains of rubble, making a profound contribution to search, rescue and recovery efforts.

They tried to save those who could be saved, and they honoured those who could not, in a heartbreaking recovery of those who had met their fate.

"Family members were sitting on the ground next to collapsed buildings, waiting for search and rescue teams to pull out victims, hoping it was a loved one," said Dr Deborah Weinberg who travelled with fellow volunteers Joshua Gavronsky, Yehuda Goldberg, and Ariel Marcus. They are quiet heroes in the face of extraordinary chaos and destruction in frigid conditions thousands of kilometres from home.

They spent hours ploughing through debris, doing emotionally distressing work that requires enormous sensitivity. The team, which is currently being debriefed, had a bad telephone signal, but managed to relay messages to local support staff and had access to power through power banks.

"It was challenging to face families as you worked, often not bringing up anything and seeing the despair, brokenness, and loss of hope," Weinberg said.

On 6 February at about 04:15 local time, a magnitude 7.8 earthquake struck south-eastern Turkey near the Turkey/Syria border. It was followed by a magnitude 6.7 aftershock a short while later. Tremors were felt as far away as Lebanon and Israel.

The death toll from the two major earthquakes had surpassed 41 000 in Turkey and Syria on Tuesday. The majority of the victims – at least 35 418 – were killed

in Turkey, President Tayyip Erdogan said, making it the country's worst disaster in a century.

As the tragedy unfolded, rescue missions from around the world converged on the worst-hit areas.

The first response was slow immediately after the quake due to bad weather, damaged roads, and the vast area, with the earthquake having an impact on 10 provinces in Turkey.

Israel sprang into action, sending one of the largest rescue teams.

A couple of days into the unfolding tragedy, ZAKA Israel requested the assistance of ZAKA SA. "A call went out in desperate need of aid, and we answered," said ZAKA SA Operations Director Joshua Green.

Within hours, a team of dedicated volunteers was galvanised into action in a Herculean collaboration of ground support and logistics. "From the get-go, it was a mindboggling mercy mission with many moving parts," he said.

It was vital to ensure that deployment was safe, operationally and practically viable, and could be done within the time constraints, Green said.

Once this was established, the team sourced equipment, visas, tickets, and food, all within an afternoon and by nightfall on 8 February, it had boarded a Turkish Airlines flight to Istanbul.

The urgent mission was made possible by Turkish Airlines, the Turkish Embassy, and ZAKA Israel as well as the local ZAKA team.

The team took with it things like tents, mattresses, thermals, non-perishable supplies, lighting, heavy duty clothing, batteries and backup power solutions. Heavy duty search and rescue equipment was supplied by Israel. Most of the food taken was non-perishable, such as energy bars, as well as fruit and water purification tablets.

After arrival in Istanbul, they flew to Kahramanmaraş, one of the worst affected areas, and from there had to organise scarcely available transport from the



The ZAKA SA team in Kahramanmaraş, Turkey

Kahramanmaraş airport to the ZAKA Israel base camp, arriving on Shabbos.

"It was freezing cold," said Marcus, "Temperatures went to -5 degrees centigrade at night, and we slept in tents on the floor."

"Driving to the camp, we started to sense the enormity, intensity, and destruction of the earthquakes. Thriving businesses, houses, schools, and shops in the city were torn apart, demolished," he said.

"We hit the ground running in spite of travelling for so long," said Gavronsky.

"We arrived at the disaster site late on Friday afternoon, and were warmly welcomed by ZAKA Israel and the Israeli delegation. Shabbat had already started, and we were given a Shabbat meal," he said.

Their equipment and supplies were immediately assessed, allowing the team to be ready to deploy to the disaster site at a moment's notice.

"There was a palpable sense of Jewish pride and camaraderie, with a deep commitment to saving as many lives as possible. It was moving," said Weinberg.

The team worked in shifts and groups of two, managed by the Israeli delegation. These shifts were organised with the safety of the rescue workers in mind, the environment and disaster site, and transport needed to access the disaster site.

"Very few people spoke English, which made communication with local rescue teams difficult," Goldberg said. "Translators were brought in to assist rescue teams."

ZAKA SA volunteers were struck by the immense scale of the destruction.

"Thousands of lives lost and torn apart. It's hard to conceive how widespread it was," said Goldberg.

Working shoulder to shoulder with the ZAKA Israeli

Continued on page 5 >>

A donation before 28 Feb  
= uplifted lives + a tax deduction

[www.jhbchev.co.za](http://www.jhbchev.co.za)



  
**ChevrahKadisha**





# Dukes Gold & Diamond Exchange

We buy all your gold jewellery, Krugerrands, diamonds, luxury watches & gold coins.

072 048 6812 [www.dukesgde.co.za](http://www.dukesgde.co.za) [info@dukesgde.co.za](mailto:info@dukesgde.co.za)



Read the SA Jewish Report online and sign up to our weekly newsletter  
[www.sajewishreport.co.za](http://www.sajewishreport.co.za)  
f [sajewishreport](#) @ [sa\\_jewishreport](#)

**APPLIANCE REPAIRS ON SITE**  
**Fridges, Dishwashers, Washing Machines, Stoves Tumble Dryers & more**  
Call Jason  
082 401 8239 / 076 210 6532  
**FREE QUOTATIONS**

**ANDREA'S ATTIC BUYS**  
Old Jewellery, Old Coins and Antique Hallmarked Silver Items  
**Fair and Friendly Buyer I Come To You!**  
083 760 0482 • [andrea.attic@gmail.com](mailto:andrea.attic@gmail.com)

**DRIVING MISS DAISY**  
Trustworthy and presentable 72-year-old Jewish gentleman, **Glenhazel, Johannesburg**, with a reliable luxury car looking to supplement his retirement offers the following services for hourly (negotiable) rates:  
• Airport Lifts (taking and fetching)  
• Lifts for elderly people wanting to visit friends and family.  
• Will take people to do shopping or will do it for them.  
• Drop off and fetch children from school or extramurals.  
• Dr's appointments (there and back) also to hospital and fetch after procedures.  
*If there is anything I haven't mentioned, I will do my best to accommodate you.*  
**CONTACT ME ON 083 258 8203**  
*Winston Akum - your holiday starts when you get into my car!*

**VEHICLES WANTED**  
  
**Any make, any model, any condition**  
**Accident damaged vehicles and non-runners also wanted**  
**Arnold Orkin 082 823 7826**  
**AUTO AFRICA**

## Haley points heels at Trump with bid for presidency

RON KAMPEAS – JTA

Nikki Haley, the former South Carolina governor who became a pro-Israel favourite during her two years as the Trump administration's ambassador to the United Nations, has announced her bid for the presidency, becoming the first Republican to challenge the former president ahead of 2024.

In a video released on 14 February, Haley didn't name Donald Trump, but alluded to him as a polarising figure, emphasising her efforts as governor at tamping down racial tensions and suggesting that the Republican Party was alienating moderate Americans.

"We turned away from fear toward G-d and the values that still make our country the freest and greatest in the world," Haley said, describing her 2015 decision to remove Confederate flags from state properties after a racist gunman murdered nine black worshippers in a Charleston church. "We must turn in that direction again. Republicans have lost the popular vote in seven out of the past eight presidential elections. That has to change."

Singling out her removal of the flags puts her in contrast to Trump, who has made a point of upholding resistance to the removal of Confederate monuments. Haley also leans in the 3.5-minute video into her roots as the child of Indian immigrants, another distinction from Trump, who has embraced anti-immigrant movements and has garnered the support of white supremacists. Trump announced his third run for the presidency in November.

Haley, as a governor with a national reputation, was already on the pro-Israel radar when Trump in 2017 named her as his first ambassador to the UN. Heading into the job, she consulted closely with pro-Israel groups and forged a close alliance with Israel's delegation to the body.

Soon, she was at the forefront of reversing decades



Nikki Haley

Photo: Scott Olson/Getty Images

of US policy at the UN, preventing the hiring of Palestinians for top jobs, scrubbing Israel-critical reports, quitting the UN Human Rights Council, and influencing Trump's cutting of funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA), the body providing relief to Palestinian refugees and their descendants.

That profile soon made her a star at conferences of the

Continued on page 3>>

## The antidote to objectification

Torah Thought



**Rabbi Shmuel Ozhekh – Ohr Somayach Cape Town**

*"If a master beats his servant and causes the damage of a tooth, eye, or limb, then the servant must immediately be released." (Shemot 21:26-27)*

The Netziv, Rabbi Naftali Zvi Yehuda Berlin (1816 to 1893), asks why the Torah goes to such an extent to obligate that a servant be freed if the value of the servitude sometimes exceeds the value of the damage caused.

The Netziv reveals that the Torah teaches us a fundamental lesson about objectification. A master who can beat his slave sees the slave no differently to an object, and thus loses his right to retain any mastery over them.

Thankfully in most parts of the world, slavery no longer exists, although the Torah's lesson about objectification still rings true.

Many of us are still enslaved by the trap of objectification.

We may "beat" ourselves or others up when we fail, or view ourselves or others as cogs in society, unworthy of respect and existence if we don't function perfectly.

The antidote to objectification is found in the message the Torah has for the ultimate proclamation of objectification – a slave that chooses to enslave themselves forever.

The Torah says:

"The slave shall be brought to the door or the doorpost, and their master shall pierce their ear with an awl, and the slave shall then remain their master's slave for life." (Shemot 21:6)

The Rabbeinu Bahaya (Rabbi Bahya ben Asher (1255 to 1340)), questions the significance of piercing the

ear of a slave on a door. He provides the following powerful insight:

The Hebrew word "*delet*" (door) is a reference to the Hebrew letter *daled* in the word "*echad*" (one). "Listen Israel ... Hashem *echad*." Piercing the ear of the slave on a door is a reminder to the slave that they have forgotten to listen to their true self, to remember never to objectify themselves, that they are intrinsically free because of their connection to their inner G-dliness, the undefinable self.

"And Hashem formed man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became

a living soul." (Genesis 2:7)

The Torah is teaching us that to be freed from objectification, we need to recognise that who we are isn't based only on our external appearance, successes or failure, and that we and others deserve basic love and respect by virtue of our inner G-dly soul.

The more a person becomes aware that they aren't cogs in the machine of society and that at their core, they are a G-dly, expansive, undefinable soul, the less they will fall into the trap of objectification and the more they will be able to access true freedom.

### Shabbat Times brought to you by

**Spencer Schwartz from You Realty**  
**Residential Property Sales and Rentals**



	Starts	Ends
Johannesburg	18:15	19:21
Cape Town	19:15	20:11
Durban	18:15	19:14
Bloemfontein	18:15	19:32
Gqeberha	18:15	19:42
Plettenberg Bay	18:15	19:51
East London	18:15	19:31
Jerusalem	16:51	18:05
Tel Aviv	17:06	18:07

Spencer Schwartz • 084 524 4616 • [spencer@yourealty.co.za](mailto:spencer@yourealty.co.za)



Following the revelation at Sinai, G-d legislates a series of laws. The people of Israel proclaim, "We will do, and we will hear all that G-d commands us." Moses ascends Mount Sinai, and remains there for 40 days and 40 nights to receive the Torah from G-d.

### South African Jewish Report

Editor Peta Krost – [editor@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:editor@sajewishreport.co.za) • Sub-editor Julie Leibowitz  
Journalists Nicola Miltz • Tali Feinberg • Intern Hanna Resnick • Photographer Ilan Ossendryver  
Editorial co-ordinator Dylan Berger – [editorial@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:editorial@sajewishreport.co.za)  
Proofreader Kim Hatchuel Advertising Britt Landsman: 082 292 9520 – [britt@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:britt@sajewishreport.co.za) • New business development manager Laura Kaufman [laura@sajewishreport.co.za](mailto:laura@sajewishreport.co.za) • Design and layout Bryan Maron/Design Bandits – [bryan@designbandits.co.za](mailto:bryan@designbandits.co.za) • Distribution Sandy Furman  
Subscriptions Avusa Publishing (Pty) Ltd. Tel: 0860 525 200 • Board of Directors Howard Sackstein (Chairperson), Dina Diamond, Herschel Jawitz, Shaun Matisonn, Benji Porter. • Advertisements and editorial copy do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor, staff and board of directors. Tel: 011 430 1980.





# Joburg’s most wanted burglar behind bars

NICOLA MILTZ

A man who allegedly traumatised the community and dozens of Johannesburg residents for years by robbing and even going so far as allegedly forcing his victims to crawl like dogs on all fours, is behind bars.

The man, who cannot be named until he is formally charged, has been in police custody for several months already for house robbery under a false name. He’s in custody following a joint effort by Community Active Protection (CAP) and the South African Police Service’s (SAPS) Serious and Violent Crimes Unit, and was arrested with two others. During the arrest in November last year, which followed a shootout and led to the recovery of a firearm and a stolen vehicle, the suspect was critically wounded.

“He was transported to hospital under police guard,” said CAP Chief Operating Officer Sean Jammy. “During this time, he gave authorities a false name, and the identification process was subsequently delayed due to his injuries.”

A fingerprint picked up by Fairlands Police Station finally identified him last week, linking him to the man police and CAP had been searching for.

He allegedly robbed more than 100 homes in predominantly Jewish areas in a reign of terror over about eight years, earning him the title of Johannesburg’s most wanted criminal.

Sometimes referred to as “The Ghost” or “The Owl”, he was known to use a handgun and operate mostly on his own roughly between the hours of 19:00 and 21:00. He would allegedly stake out residences in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg, often scaling neighbours’ high walls to gain access to properties he had earlier identified. He “did his homework”, according to insiders close to the case.

Once inside the perimeter walls, he would “confidently” confront victims either on their balconies or outside on their patios, or use open windows and sliding doors.

Described as “calm, calculated, and meticulous”, he is tall and in his mid 30s, and would often make

himself comfortable in his victims’ homes, helping himself to food and drink and smoking cigarettes. He was known to use one of the vehicles on the property to make his getaway, often leaving it abandoned near Alexandra township.

In some cases, he’d leave on foot, in others, he would be picked up. According to CAP, he would mostly act alone but would on occasion operate with two other suspects.

One security insider said the man had “caused a significant amount of trauma and had mentally terrorised his victims”.

“He would occasionally rough up some of his victims and used crawling as a means of control when there were multiple victims in the house,” he said.

Proof of his ability to manipulate his victims, he often appeared to be considerate. In one case, he offered a victim who was coughing some water, in another, he gave one of his victims who was lying on the floor a pillow. However, he would sometimes show aggression and lock one of the victims alone with him in an adjoining room.

One Johannesburg man who wished to remain anonymous said his family was left traumatised about five years ago after the man gained entry to their home in the greater Glenhazel area through an open sliding door.

“It was about 19:00, the family was eating dinner, and we ignored the dogs barking,” the man said. “The robber appeared with a hood on and cocked his gun, causing the dogs to go mad. From the start, he had us under his control, he was very professional. It was humiliating.

Time heals, but we have learnt to be vigilant and jack up our security.

“He was so calm, controlling, and professional. He made us crawl on our knees to one room, where he sat on the bed and smoked a

shoot our dogs who were barking. His calmness stood out, and he seemed very professional. He stole some jewellery, cash, and laptops, and used my car to get away,” he said.

The man told the SA Jewish Report that the incident had left him and his family shaken.

The suspect has been on the radar of CAP and almost every Johannesburg police station for years. Arrested more than once, he managed to escape custody and proceeded to continue his rampage under false names.

The SAPS Serious and Violent Crimes unit; SAPS JHB K9 unit; JHB Crime Intelligence Unit; and the CAP Special Operations Division initiated a full investigation into a house robbery syndicate late last year, which led to the suspect being wounded, hospitalised, and arrested.

“After further investigation and collaboration between SAPS Provincial Head Office Serious and Violent Crimes Unit and SAPS Fairlands, the true identity of the suspect was established via positive

fingerprints with matches and confirms that the suspect arrested in November 2022 is Johannesburg’s ‘most wanted’,” said Jammy.

“This is a significant accomplishment for our teams, and a testament to the determination and dedication of all key role players,” he said. Jammy said the CAP legal department worked closely with members of the SAPS Provincial Head Office Serious and Violent Crimes Unit, and could confirm that the suspect had been denied bail and remains in custody.

He said the man would be charged for a multitude of crimes which occurred throughout Johannesburg, mainly house robberies in Bedfordview, Bryanston, Birdhaven, Emmarentia, Fairlands, Forest Town, Greenside, Glenhazel, Houghton, Linksfield, Northcliff, Morningside, Melrose, Norwood, Oaklands, Parkview, Parktown, Parkwood, Sandton, Sandringham, Senderwood, Strathavon, Saxonwold, and Westcliff.

## Haley points heels at Trump with bid for presidency

>>Continued from page 2

American Israel Public Affairs Committee, where she consistently drew crowds and applause. It was at an AIPAC conference, in fact, that she coined her personal motto: “I wear high heels. It’s not for a fashion statement, it’s because if I see something wrong, I will kick it every single time.”

Haley quit her ambassadorship at the end of 2018, but increased her pro-Israel profile. She used an appearance at the 2019 AIPAC conference to announce the establishment of her advocacy group, Stand for America, the first substantive sign she was running for president. She’s a star speaker at the Republican Jewish Coalition, and used the RJC platform in 2021 to chide AIPAC for what she said was an overemphasis on bipartisanship.

She has also cultivated Trump’s Jewish daughter, Ivanka, and her husband, Jared Kushner, who led Middle East diplomacy under Trump. Kushner’s father, Charles, has raised funds for her.

Haley used a version of her motto in her video in a way that could be read as a warning to Trump, who takes no prisoners in deriding opponents. “I don’t put up with bullies. And when you kick back, it hurts them more. If you’re wearing heels.” Haley notably called Trump a bully when in 2016, she backed a rival, Marco Rubio, for the GOP (Grand Old Party) presidential nomination.

Haley’s relationship with Trump is characterised by wariness – effusively praising him at times and then criticising him. She seemed to cut him off entirely after the deadly Capitol insurrection by

his supporters in 2021. “He went down a path he shouldn’t have, and we shouldn’t have followed him, and we shouldn’t have listened to him,” she told Politico the day after the riot. “And we can’t let that ever happen again.”

Within weeks, as it became clear that the GOP was not yet quitting Trump, Haley tried to make any talk of her differences with him the fault of the “liberal media”.

“Strong speech by President Trump about the winning policies of his administration and what the party needs to unite behind moving forward,” she said on Twitter in March 2021 after Trump’s first post-presidency speech. “The liberal media wants a GOP civil war. Not gonna happen.”

Haley scores in the single digits in polling, and announcing early is one way of getting her out in front. Trump’s most formidable challenger, Florida Governor Ron DeSantis, has yet to announce, although that hasn’t stopped Trump from criticising DeSantis almost daily.

Haley can count on pro-Israel money, but even there she has rivals. Mike Pompeo, the former secretary of state who is also likely to announce a presidential bid, devoted a chunk of his recent autobiography to minimising Haley’s role in the Trump administration, including in Trump’s Middle East policy. Pompeo accused Haley of plotting with Kushner and Ivanka Trump to replace Mike Pence as vice-president. Pence, who has broken with Trump, is also considering a presidential run and has deep ties in the pro-Israel community.



JAWITZ

PROPERTIES

Leading

REAL ESTATE COMPANIES OF THE WORLD

FOR SALE

GLENHAZEL | R 1 899 000

3

2

Web Ref: RL91831

Best value on the market. Situated in Silvamonte on the Glenhazel border. A lovely warm, eclectic and inviting 3 bed, 2 bath family home. Separate stunning playroom or guest suite. Stylish open plan lounge, dining and well-fitted kitchen with breakfast bar. Inviting covered entertainment patio. Pool and outside studio-flatlet. Excellent security.

Joel Harris: 082 926 0287  
Laureen Shalpid: 083 789 0229

FOR SALE

GLENHAZEL | R 3 999 000

5

3

Web Ref: JRL1546

Asking More. Set in an exclusive enclave; this is a majestic & stylish “French Provincial” style double story with ambience & character galore. Offers 5 luxurious & bright bedrooms with stylish BIC, 3 en suite bath rooms, 4 reception rooms incl open plan lounge & dining room opening out to a sophisticated entertainment patio.

Joel Harris: 082 926 0287  
Laureen Shalpid: 083 789 0229

FOR SALE

WAVERLEY | R 1 050 000

1

1.5

Web Ref: JRL3269

A slick & stylish renovation results in a tasteful blend of old meets new! This spacious apartment, flooded with good natural light, offers sleek, modern kitchen, comfortable dining area, living room, spacious bedroom, attractive bathroom + guest cloak, north-facing balcony, 1 parking bay.

Chrissie Hammer: 082 568 0440

FOR SALE

SANDOWN | R 4 999 000

3

3.5

Web Ref: JJRL1977

Enjoy a secure lifestyle in this exclusive estate! The lounge, family room and dining flow easy to entertain friends and family. Superb Kitchen layout. Inviting patio and gorgeous pool set in a perfect size garden. Upstairs has 3 spacious bedrooms en-suite loads of cupboards and a large sunny patio with views. Triple garaging & single staff acc.

Jeremy Craig: 076 246 4900  
Linette Oosthuizen: 082 572 5314



# SARU called to account for banning of Israeli rugby team

NICOLA MILTZ

Angry individuals and organisations locally and abroad are demanding answers from the South African Rugby Union (SARU) and other stakeholders over its decision to disinvite an Israeli rugby team from competing in an upcoming tournament.

The Tel Aviv Heat had been invited by SARU to take part in the Mzansi Challenge next month, but was given the boot over alleged security concerns. It's a team comprised of players from a host of nations, including numerous South African players and less than a handful of Israeli players. The team is also a member of World Rugby and the International Olympic Committee.

According to SA Rugby President Mark Alexander, security threats were the main reason for the organisation rescinding its invitation to Israel's rugby team, and the decision was taken following "representations from multiple stakeholders". There were also alleged "death threats" against members of SARU by anti-Israel lobbyists who also threatened to disrupt the tournament. The team's withdrawal was announced on 3 February.

A New Zealand high court barrister, Ian Dunwoodie, has filed a formal complaint with World Rugby in his personal capacity. The *SA Jewish Report* has formally requested information about the decision in terms of Section 53 of the Promotion of Access to Information Act (PAIA). The South African Friends of Israel (SAFI) has also written to SARU requesting the meeting minutes and names of stakeholders that were consulted by SARU in making its decision. Failure to provide these

details timeously would result in SAFI also submitting a PAIA application later this week, according to its spokesperson, Pamela Ngubane.

Too many questions remain unanswered about this hasty decision that has left a team of players, their management, and staff nonplussed.

Which stakeholders were consulted? According to the Tel Aviv Heat, the first professional Israeli rugby union team, the decision took them by surprise. They said neither them, the Israeli Rugby Union, nor the Israeli embassy in South Africa were consulted prior to the decision. Which organisations and people were present when the decision was made, and on what grounds was it taken? Who or what was behind it? Also, where did the alleged threats emanate from?

These are some of the questions the *SA Jewish Report* and many others would like answered.

With its request for information, the *SA Jewish Report* wants to obtain:

- all records of interactions by SARU with stakeholders and others relating to the decision to withdraw the team;
- records of all communication with government departments or government representatives relating to the decision;
- minutes of all meetings relating to the decision;
- records of communication where threats were made relating to the inclusion of the team; and
- police case numbers relating to the threats.

The department of sport, arts and culture said it supported SARU's decision "to ensure a safe environment for its tournaments".



The ruling African National Congress (ANC) also expressed its support for the decision, and said, "We hope this decision will serve as a reminder to Israel that its illegal occupation of Palestinian land is an injustice that shouldn't be tolerated."

Dunwoodie, a rugby enthusiast, claimed that SARU's decision allegedly amounted to "multiple breaches" of World Rugby rules and regulations, and has called for an enquiry and an investigation into SARU's conduct.

SARU didn't provide substantive reasons for withdrawing the invitation, Dunwoodie said. Nor did it consult with the Israel Rugby Union before withdrawing the invitation or withdraw any of the invitations to the 10 other teams it had invited. According to his legal submission, the conduct of SARU appears to breach the World Rugby's constitution. It seemed clear that rule three, which forbids discrimination in general, and rule four, which forbids discrimination against the rugby union of a country, had been broken, he said.

Dunwoodie submitted that SARU had discriminated against a member union and had hurt and prejudiced the game of rugby.

In an interview with *Rugby365*, Dunwoodie said that if the reasons for the withdrawal were on the grounds of safety, he would encourage Alexander to release the threat assessment report that was presumably compiled by SARU.

"This report would no doubt have been made in consultation with security professionals and the South African Police Service. The report would surely set out the nature of those threats. It would be sad and somewhat embarrassing if he capitulated because of a few rumours and an angry phone call."

Given the response to the alleged threats, "Is SARU actually saying that South Africa is no longer a safe venue for international sporting events?" Dunwoodie asked, implying that this could have an impact on the hosting of future international tournaments.

SAFI said in a statement, "Over the past week, statements slamming SARU's decision were made public by Stand With Us, the Africa Christian Democratic Party, the Freedom Front+, the South African Jewish Board of Deputies, the South African Zionist Federation [SAZF], and rugby legend Joel Stransky."

Ngubane said SAFI had asked that SARU list the names of the stakeholders that were consulted, "to ascertain which voices were afforded an undue influence in our country's sporting fixtures and affairs".

Following the ANC's press statement commending SARU's decision, SAFI said it remained concerned that political interference and alleged death threats from the anti-Israel lobby may have contributed to the decision-

making process. She said it was "sad" that Israel was being treated in this manner by a South African sporting entity.

"South African musicians, models, and comedians are always welcomed to expand and promote their careers with visits to adoring fans in Israel. We shouldn't hesitate to welcome their players over to sunny South Africa for a rugby match as well. Discrimination on any basis must not be tolerated in South African sporting fixtures and events," she said.

The SAZF said a number of South African stakeholders including some political parties had voiced their "unequivocal opposition to this degree of discrimination in South African sport".

It said it supported SAFI in its move to submit a PAIA application to ascertain which stakeholders were consulted in the decision-making process.

"The SAZF is grateful to see the public support that has been mobilised to address this issue in South African sport. SAFI's move to submit a PAIA application will help provide us all with an indication of who was involved in this decision-making process and if SARU allowed ANC politics and the antisemitic BDS [Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions] agenda to define who is welcome to participate in sporting events in our beautiful country."

I am trying to contact any living members of my family. Can you help?

For starters, there is some information below about my family tree. If I can trace any member of my family who is still alive, and they contact me, I would be willing to extend the communications and perhaps we can arrange a personal meeting. I would undertake the payment for any such communications or face-to-face meeting. Alternately, if there is no possibility of contact, even some information that this is so, would be helpful for me to receive.

- **Nathaniel Michael Roper** (Friedman) father
- **Violet Isabel Roper** mother
- **John Richard Roper** (eldest son) (born in Transvaal: 08/11/1921) (last location – 28/05/1955 : Kensington, Johannesburg) (Occupation: Electrician) – passed away
- **Alison Elvira Dyer** (John's wife) (born: 23/08/1935) (last location – 28/05/1955: Kensington, Johannesburg) – passed away
- **Lance Frederick Roper** (John and Alison's children) (born: 29/02/1956) (passed away: 14/02/2010 in Roodepoort, Gauteng)
- **Elizabeth Roper** (John and Alison's children) (location: unknown)
- **Harold Roper** (second son) (Born: 25/05/1932 Johannesburg, South Africa)

(Location: Sydney Australia) ME

- **Barbara Roper** (Harold's wife) (Born: 13/01/1937 Warrawe, Broken Hill, Australia) (passed away in Sydney Australia in 2020)
- **Vicky Roper** (Harold and Barbara's daughter) (born: 24/05/1964 Pretoria, South Africa) (location: Sydney Australia)
- **Valerie Roper** (White) (daughter) (born: 1927) (location: unknown) – passed away
- **Richard George White** (Valerie's husband) (location: unknown) – passed away
- **Richard White** (Valerie and Richard's first son) (location: unknown)
- **Alan White** (Valerie and Richard's second son) (location: unknown)

**HAROLD ROPER: halroper@bigpond.com**

## Jewish bikers roar into Shabbos

PERSONAL STORY

MICHAEL BAGRAIM



As 750 Harley Davidson riders gathered for their first Montagu Rally in three years from 9 to 12 February, so too did the sprinkling of Jewish riders.

In the past, we've done our best to contact Jewish riders before the rally, mostly from the Free Chapter in Cape Town and a few smaller clubs, so that we can have a Shabbat dinner together.

It has become an evening of camaraderie, friendship, and discussion. Last weekend didn't disappoint.

The late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris commented that the South African Jewish community was extraordinary. Even those within the community who aren't religious invariably still belong to an Orthodox synagogue and try their utmost to uphold traditions.

The Jewish Harley Davidson riders very much fit this mould.

The small contingent gathered, and discussions ensued similar to that around the country in Jewish homes. We

discussed last week's parsha, which dealt with the structure of setting up justice and the administration of law. Those of us who are practicing attorneys certainly found the discussion interesting.

Though one imagines Harley riders to be heavily bearded, tattooed, and rough rally riders, this wasn't the case with our Shabbat gathering. Although many individuals attending the rally could fit that bill, the majority were middle aged and older and gathered to celebrate their love for motorbiking and the Harley Davidson brand.

This little gathering has become almost as much a part of the Montagu Rally as the magnificent Cape Route 62 that the riders follow that meanders through the most scenic areas between Cape Town, Oudtshoorn, the Langkloof, and Gqeberha.

• *Michael Bagraim is a member of parliament and deputy shadow minister for employment and labour.*



3 Times Diamond International Award Winner

60 Year Legacy - Where History, Reputation & Artistry Connect

Bespoke Craftsmanship & Custom Design Jewellery

TRUSTED SINCE 1963 | VALUATORS OF ESTATE JEWELLERY | BUYERS OF OLD GOLD AND DIAMONDS

CONTACT DAVID FORMAN 082 389 9300 OR EMAIL: SHOP@SIDFORMAN.CO.ZA FOR MORE INFORMATION



# Aliya still high, but don't rush to leave, say experts

TALI FEINBERG

Though aliya numbers from South Africa were lower in 2022 than the previous year, about 1% of the South African Jewish community is making aliya annually. So says Liat Amar Arran, the director of the Israel Centre South Africa. In addition, there's one aliya flight a month from South Africa, which has about 20 to 40 people on each flight.

According to the official numbers from the Jewish Agency, 471 South Africans made aliya in 2022. Following the record breaking numbers in 2021 in which there were 577 South African olim, the trend continues with the highest aliya numbers since 1994. Already in the new year, 38 olim arrived on a group flight in January, and about 20 on a group flight in February.

"This was the first year after the pandemic, and there were no riots like there were in 2021. It gave people a chance to 'breathe', and not rush to leave," says Amar Arran, regarding the slightly lower numbers in 2022. However, the numbers aren't what drive her. "I care that everyone is making aliya for the right reasons and with the right integration plan. I want their decision to be made based on what they are losing here and getting there. We're here to help people weigh up the pros and cons."

People who are struggling financially sometimes see aliya as the solution, "but it doesn't always mean a better life", Amar Arran says. However, "if you cannot afford solar power, a borehole, and a generator", it might be better to go to Israel. She continues to see South African Jews going to live in Israel for ideological reasons. There are many families who feel that their children will have better opportunities there.

The olim come from all demographics, Amar Arran says: youth, lone soldiers, students, couples, young families, middle aged people, elderly, secular, and religious. This is no different to previous years. Because Johannesburg is a bigger community, most olim come from there, while about 10% hail from Cape Town. A few families a year make aliya from Durban.

She says the biggest challenges facing olim are the language and change in lifestyle. Some struggle to find work. However if you're "willing to compromise on what job you do, you'll find opportunities. Some are finding great jobs and loving what they're doing."

She notes that it's difficult to find a job before arriving, as most companies will hire only once the person is in Israel. Olim also need to

decide where they want to live before seeking employment. Children mostly adapt quickly and love the freedom Israel offers. "It's important to find the right school as it's a very different education system," Amar Arran says.

Telfed Chief Executive Dorron Kline agrees that the pandemic drove the high aliya numbers, but says they are now back down to what they were before, similar to 2019. "The majority are young families with children. Many people see a future for their children in Israel, even though it's a difficult adjustment for adults."

South Africans are settling in Jerusalem, Tel Aviv, Tel Mond, Beit Shemesh, Netanya, Modi'in, and Ra'anana, he says, and there are about 25 000 South African olim in Israel altogether.

His advice to anyone making aliya is to "concentrate on learning Hebrew. Do an ulpan in South Africa and when you get to Israel. Most can get by without good Hebrew, but you don't want to just 'get by', you want to be absorbed and part of the country. If not, you'll always be one step behind."

Regarding employment, "You still need to do an ulpan in Israel, settle down, and decide where you want to live. So it's

help someone find a job.

Though 98% of olim do well, Telfed supports about 450 needy individuals every month. "Often they have fallen on hard times like illness, divorce, or a death in the family. Some have poor financial planning or brought their challenges with them."

He advises against making aliya if you are already on welfare. "It's much easier to navigate the welfare system when you know the community and the community knows you. In Israel, all forms and meetings are in Hebrew, and you don't have family and friends for support."

In addition, anyone suffering from mental illness needs to know that making aliya is stressful. "It's a new country, culture, language, and weather, and they're leaving friends, family, and the familiar. So even if they were stable in South Africa and are taking the same medication in Israel, the stress can knock them off kilter."

Kline says people need to be realistic about the cost of living in Israel, and need to live in an area they can afford. Even if they aren't close to the main centres, there are wonderful places to live with warm English-speaking communities. These areas can be 30% to 40% cheaper than living in the main centres.

"Israel welcomes olim, and there are so many opportunities, programmes, and people working around helping olim," says Amar



Telfed members welcoming the latest group of olim from South Africa in February 2023

Arran. "At the same time, no one is going to make your aliya successful other than you. You need to take it forward, build relationships, look for help, do research, and then you will succeed. It can take at least a year to feel settled."

She predicts that 300 to 400 people will make aliya in 2023, depending on the political situation in South Africa and Israel. "But I think the numbers will get less because the community is shrinking."

She has about six months before her shlichut in South Africa comes to an end. "I might stay until my successor comes. We have a brilliant team, and I'm sure the next person will make things even better. The main thing we do is give an honest, realistic picture, and that allows olim to succeed."

Amar Arran believes there will always be a Jewish a community in South Africa, and that a strong diaspora is important. "I can't promise that Israel will give you a better life. You need to balance the pros and cons yourself, and get there with all the challenges along the way."



The Adler family who made aliya in December 2022  
unusual to have a job waiting. That's why you get a *sal klita* [basket of absorption benefits] to support you when you arrive."

He emphasises that olim should contact Telfed as soon as they've made their decision. "The sooner you contact us, the more we can help your absorption, and the smoother it will be. We help to make sure that your absorption plan makes sense."

He says all Telfed services are free, and they have a full-time employment advisor, who can offer vital support. "For example, you may be a bookkeeper who has studied a specific programme. But we can say, 'They don't use that programme in Israel, they use this.'"

Telfed also offers support from its 24 regional committees made up of South African olim who live around Israel who can offer advice on living in those areas. There are also 145 professional volunteers who are successful South African olim that can advise on their industry and even

## ZAKA rescuers rush to assist in Turkey's worst disaster in a century

>>Continued from page 1

delegation, they worked on a few collapsed buildings out of hundreds.

The team said all searches, rescues, and recoveries were conducted with humility and sensitivity, to the point that they were asked for at certain sites because of the way in which they conducted themselves. "We, and the Israeli delegation, were given tremendous respect on the ground," the team said.

"The drive to save lives was palpable in the camp and at all times when working alongside one another. It was inspiring, and helped us get through very difficult scenes and days," they said.

The team assisted many tragic recovery missions, including the recovery of a family of four who were

found huddled together buried deep under the rubble.

Having returned to South Africa, the team is proud at having made a meaningful contribution to search and recovery efforts.

"We didn't wait around, we jumped on a plane, and responded. We picked up and left our families at a second's notice, to spend a week in uncomfortable and uncertain conditions, to help those who needed it most. We assisted search and rescue efforts for hours. We recovered bodies, bringing an element of closure to bereaved and broken families. We were able to deal with scenes very sensitively, and with the *kavod* [respect] and dignity that these helpless and unfortunate victims so deserve," ZAKA SA said.

5 UNITS ONLY

Limited Offer


NEW DEVELOPMENT  
IN FLORENTIN, TEL AVIV

SEVEN BENBINISHTI

Benbinishti 7 is a Hold Signature development located in the heart of Florentin, Tel Aviv. It's a perfect location neighboring Neve Tzedek and just a short walk to Rothschild Boulevard and the famous Levinsky Market.

There are 5 apartments available with excellent payment terms.

If you are looking for an excellent investment in the Israeli property market, you cannot miss this opportunity.



Apartments	Floors	Rooms
14	5	1, 2 and 3 rooms

SCAN THE CODE TO FIND OUT MORE



ONLY 5 APARTMENTS AVAILABLE AT PRESALE PRICES

FROM NIS 3,000,000 20% DEPOSIT DELIVERY IN 2027



Contact Julian Nathan

Managing Director  
Hold Real Estate

 julian@hold.co.il

 +27 87 551 0734

 +972 58 631 9754

A HOLD

SIGNATURE PROPERTY

Visit our website [www.hold.co.il](http://www.hold.co.il)



## Our local heroes

When I heard that ZAKA South Africa was heading to Turkey on a search and rescue mission, I was overcome with pride. I had a sense that as small as we are as a community, we do large things. As few resources as we may have, we always find enough to share. We also have big hearts and are always there to help others, even when those in need are almost 10 500km away from us.

While our government and politicians are deeply involved in their own infighting and hopefully trying to sort out local problems, they aren't sending any rescue missions to Turkey. Other countries, like Israel, are sending people and resources to help save lives following the earthquake on 6 February.

At the time of publication, the death toll from the earthquake in Turkey was about 36 000 with tens of thousands of people injured and maimed. In Syria, about 5 800 people died from the same 7.8 and 7.6 magnitude quakes and more than 2 000 aftershocks. And the number of fatalities keep climbing as rescue operations comb through the devastated area.

The Israel Defense Forces sent more than 450 people to help, the second largest group sent from any country. In South Africa, it seemed like the only organisation that was sending a team was the incredible humanitarian group, Gift of the Givers, which sent at least 25 specialised people.

But then, there was an announcement on 9 February that ZAKA SA was sending a search and rescue delegation to Turkey to assist with the horrific aftermath of the earthquakes.

These volunteers literally dropped everything they were dealing with in their work and personal lives to go and help (read the story on page 1). *Kol hakavod* to them!

A little further into our newspaper, on page 3, you can read about one of Johannesburg's most wanted criminals being put behind bars because of our own CAP working closely with the South African Police Service. Once again, understanding the extent of the intelligence gathering and knowledge bank that is CAP makes me feel safer on our Johannesburg streets and in our homes.

In this same edition, we have an opinion piece from Rozanne Sack (page 7), who speaks about the dangers facing our children from sexual predators and paedophiles. Sack is one of the two founders of Koleinu SA, a community organisation that helps victims of abuse. Once again, while reading what she has to say is truly frightening, it's such a relief to know that we have the likes of Sack, Rebbetzin Wendy Hendler, and Koleinu SA there for us.

The support, education, and guidance they provide is truly astonishing. All because they want to ensure that predators are stopped before they can harm any more people. They do whatever they can to bring such monsters to justice and empower the survivors of abuse.

I'm so grateful for the fact that our community has a Koleinu SA on our side. Also in this edition, we write about how the family of the late Shaun Lipshitz, a Community Security Organisation stalwart who was killed protecting his family in a house robbery, is raising funds for the organisation he helped build.

The money raised in his name will be used to buy training equipment to teach kids and community members to protect themselves.

There are so many things people can do with money, but in our community, there's a selflessness or communal generosity that knows no bounds.

While I honour the Lipshitz family for what it's doing, it doesn't shock me that it has put communal needs before its own. Such is our community!

It's no secret that our community does its fair share of moaning and, without doubt, we have lots to complain about. I can write lists and lists for you of all the things we can legitimately whinge about. However, on the flipside, there are such powerful reasons to be proud and hold our heads up high.

I know I've said this before, but it warrants repeating until such a time as we recognise what we have here: we're so lucky to be a part of this community!

I don't know what other Jewish communities are like around the world, and so I cannot categorically say that there are no others as phenomenal as ours. However, look around us and see what we have within our community.

Look at the fact that from this little community, we make such a big difference on so many fronts. Imagine, we sent a team to Turkey to help those in need after the quake. How many other communities are doing that?

And while our aliya figures show that members of our community are heading to Israel in numbers, we need to be cognisant of what we leave behind when we do this. It's a lot.

In Israel, you may not have to pay for security, medical aid, schooling, and many other huge expenses. However, you won't have Hatzolah around if you need it, or CAP figuring out who the worst criminals are and helping to put them behind bars. You won't have a Chevrah Kadisha in case you fall on hard times. You also don't have the community you grew up with, which will stand by you no matter what.

Yes, these are just a few of the gifts we give ourselves in this community. These are just some of the incredible offerings we so often take for granted.

Far be it for me to tell people they shouldn't make aliya. I couldn't do that. I love Israel. I also wouldn't stop someone moving to a place where they will be able to improve their lives and careers. *Behatzlachah* to those who do!

All I'm saying is, look at what we have here, and measure it against all our complaints and problems. Can I suggest that what we have far outweighs the problems? I believe it does, and I'm so grateful for that.

So, thank you to all our incredible communal organisations and to our community. Here's to building on what we have to make it even better.

**Shabbat Shalom!**

**Peta Krost**

**Editor**



## SONA 2023 – I need a Xanax!



OPINION

HOWARD SACKSTEIN

Last week's presidential State of the Nation Address (SONA) was once again held in the Cape Town City Hall after Christmas Mafe Guy Fawkes-ed our democracy last year by setting the Houses of Parliament ablaze.

Predictably, the proceedings commenced with our annual political fashion show, as members of parliament poured themselves into ill-fitting dresses and fancy-dress costumes best worn on Halloween. The gaudy, glitzy fashions seemed tone-deaf to a nation struggling with poverty, unemployment, and ongoing electricity blackouts.

Not wanting to be outsmarted by the African National Congress' (ANC) catwalk, the Democratic Alliance (DA) decided to arrive in sombre black. Rather than looking elegant and sophisticated, their polyester suits were reminiscent of the waiters at a Stan & Pete function.

Watching the podgy politicians, the obese soldiers loading cannons for the 21-gun-salute, and the round bellied security officials, the proceedings looked like a failed Weight-Watchers convention. At the risk of being accused of "fat-shaming", rarely have I seen so many fat people in one location.

The president shuffled to the podium and stopped to sip water five words into his address. He seemed surprised that the Economic Freedom Fighters (EFF) hadn't objected to his presence, or maybe he was just very thirsty.

Not wanting to allow the opportunity to pass, the EFF stood, speaker after speaker, to raise "points of order" against the president. Each time Cyril Ramaphosa got up to speak, he was met with a new barrage of EFF objections. To quote British comedian Rowan Atkinson, "He was up and down like a whore's drawers."

There was nothing new in the EFF's "points of order" shenanigans. It was as predictable as *The Fast and Furious 7*. We've seen it all before and we know how it's going to end. The speaker, dressed in what looked like curtains salvaged from the burnt ruins of the parliamentary building, ejected the EFF from the proceedings.

Determined to add a new spin to their "point of order" franchise, Julius Malema and his boy band stormed the stage, wearing their red workers overalls and, what Twitter pointed out, were R15 000 Gucci loafers. The EFF appeared to have no plan about what to do once it had successfully mounted the dais. If ever there was an analogy, that was it.

Within moments, a gang of burly security guards pushed the protesters from the platform. Some of the security wore green camouflage uniforms and balaclavas. It's hard to fathom the need for camouflage inside the City Hall unless they were hiding behind the pot plants – who knows?

Police Minister Bheki Cele, adorned in his standard Dick Tracy fedora hat, likened the EFF's mounting of the stage to Dimitri Tsafendas, the parliamentary messenger, who stabbed Prime Minister Hendrik Verwoerd to death during a sitting of the House of Assembly in 1966. Julius, however, was armed with only his sharp wit and a piece of paper that read, "Ramaphosa step down now". I don't think he'll be in coalition with Ramaphosa any time soon.

Not to be outdone, John Steenhuisen, the leader of the DA, felt the need to capture time in front of the TV cameras. Steenhuisen, in a display of cringeworthy "Karenhood", objected to the timing of the entry of the parliamentary security guards who protected the president, almost asking the speaker to see her manager.

In response, the Freedom Front Plus rose to its feet to give Steenhuisen a *snotklap*, supporting the security forces, and telling the leader of the opposition that it was their job to protect the president.

In the second act of this drama, a dishevelled president finally took to the dais to deliver his address, which turned out to be longer than the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy.

Ramaphosa announced the appointment of yet another cabinet minister, the Minister of Electricity, much to the

surprise of the other two members of cabinet who both thought that they were responsible for electricity supply. The minister of minerals and energy, Gwede Mantashe, soon explained that the new cabinet minister would be more like a "project manager". We all know how effective politicians are as project managers. Let me rephrase that, we all know how effective cabinet ministers are.

The other big news of the evening was the declaration of a State of Disaster. The president seemed determined to spring this declaration upon us as a surprise, informing us that as he was speaking, the declaration was surreptitiously being gazetted. This sneaky act of gazetting prevents us from rushing out to buy open-toed shoes, rotisserie chickens, and alcohol, which were all banned during our COVID-19 State of Disaster.

Almost a week later, *Biznews* pointed out that in spite of the State of Disaster having been urgently sprung upon us, the government was yet to take any action under its declaration.

A few days later, the government declared another State of Disaster, this time relating to the floods around South Africa. How many states of disasters does one need for a full house? At least the new State of Disaster stems from natural rather than ANC causes.

In terms of the Disaster Management Act, the minister of co-operative development is empowered to take any action to solve the electricity supply problem. Given that the cause of the problem is the ANC's own theft, corruption, and mismanagement, I look forward to Minister Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma removing the ANC from power.

The remainder of the speech appeared to be a collection of one liners strung together without any theme or purpose. Subsequent to SONA, Steenhuisen lambasted the president for declaring the State of Disaster, in spite of him having demanded that one be imposed in November 2022.

The evening had some clear winners and losers. On the winners' side:

Speaker Nosiviwe Nolutando Mapisa-Nqakula, whose name is impossible for anyone to pronounce (you try), held it together in impossibly difficult circumstances. The Freedom Front Plus came out with flying colours, strong, no-nonsense, and supportive. But the clear victor of the evening was former Miss South Africa, Basetsana Kumalo, who crushed it in, what I'm told, is a pale, seafoam green, body-hugging piece of couture magic.

On the losers' side:

The president failed to impress with his rambling, two hour, 15 minute address which appeared passive, disjointed, and lacking any answers. His attempt to channel former President Thabo Mbeki in saying, "For we are a nation defined not by the oceans and rivers that form the boundaries of our land. We are not defined by the minerals under our earth or the spectacular landscape above it," fell completely flat, and pissed off the former president. Ramaphosa's office offered an apology.

Also falling flat was the leader of the opposition, Steenhuisen, whose whining Hamlet equivocations, brought him no new friends.

The final loser of the evening has to be the EFF, whose attempt at a January 6 insurrection overplayed its hand, and made it look unfit to participate in a parliamentary democracy.

When the speaker opened the session, she mistakenly said, "We will now have an opportunity for silent prayer or medication." By the time the evening ended, I definitely needed the medication!

• *Howard Sackstein is chairperson of the SA Jewish Report.*



President Cyril Ramaphosa

Photo: Parliament of RSA Twitter page



Julius Malema

Photo: EFF Twitter page



# Ackerman case shows peril of predators for children

OPINION

The case of Gerhard Ackerman, who faces 740 charges ranging from rape, attempted murder, distribution of child pornography, and human trafficking of minor children for sexual exploitation may not seem relevant to our community, but it most certainly is.

Ackerman is alleged to have worked in a sex ring with his co-accused, renowned human rights lawyer and acting judge Paul Kennedy. Ackerman is alleged to run a child sex ring in Johannesburg, where he would lure teenage boys online and link them with adult men who would require massages that would escalate to rape. Kennedy took his life in February last year.

This case has rocked South Africa, and compares closely to the Jeffrey Epstein case in America.

According to Sarah Hoffman from Klikd, 70% of our children will be involved in requesting, sending, or seeing a “sext” or nude. Sexting refers to the sharing of nude or semi-nude and sexually provocative photos via mobile phones as well as on other social media platforms.

Teens today live their lives largely on social media. One of the reasons sexting may be so prevalent in this age group is their need to form attachments. They are easily convinced that in exchange for their pictures, they will receive adoration and affirmation, connection, and perhaps a long-term relationship. The requesting and sending of sexts is done equally by boys and girls. There may come a point at which the teen begins to feel uncomfortable and unsafe and tries to extricate themselves from the relationship. This is when the threats may start. The other party will often threaten to expose the nude pictures to the child's entire list of social media contacts. This fear of exposure can hook them into sending more and more.

The danger with this new currency of interacting is that it easily opens the way for predators to gain access to children. Online predators will use the same grooming tactics as any abuser to gain trust and forge a bond with



Photo: Facebook

the child. They will have a fake profile picture, fake age, fake shared hobbies, and often adopt a persona that's just a bit older than the victim with the promise of a special and unique friendship. In a society where most teens feel inadequate about their bodies and image, it's easy to fall into the web of flattery and agree to these intimate exchanges.

According to OffenderWatch.com, there are an estimated 500 000 online predators active each day. Children aged between 12 and 15 are particularly susceptible to being groomed by a predator they have met online. Even more alarming is that these children may eventually agree to meeting this “new friend” in person.

Koleinu SA has been involved in various cases in which Jewish children have become the victim of online predators, sextortion, or revenge porn. Sextortion is a serious crime which occurs when someone threatens to distribute sensitive material of a private nature if the victim doesn't adhere to their demands for images of a sexual nature, sexual favours, or money. Revenge porn involves the distribution or sharing of any nude or sexually explicit material of someone without their consent or permission for the express purpose of humiliating them or getting back at them for a break up.

In the Ackerman case, the father of one of the victims

told the high court that his son met Ackerman via Facebook, where he allegedly offered him an opportunity to become a masseuse. He initially refused to let his son leave the Free State to meet the accused in Johannesburg, who was a complete stranger. However, he eventually spoke to Ackerman on the phone, who explained the business to him and assured him that he was trying to help his son become independent, even going so far as assuring him that it was a legitimate business with no “funny business” like sexual contact. He then allowed his son to meet him, after which he was forced to perform sexual acts on clients.

So, what can parents do to equip their children with the skills to respond to requests for sexts, which have the potential to land them in a situation of either threat, intimidation, sextortion, or even worse, meeting a predator face to face.

According to Klikd's mini e-book available online titled *The Ultimate Parents Guide to Teens and Sexting*, parents can teach their children how to deflect a request by using a strategy called “the alternative no”. This technique uses diversion and humour, and examples of quick come backs can be found in the e-book. Its aim is to help teens hold onto their cool status without losing face. As we teach children in our SchoolSafe prevention of child-abuse programme to always tell a trusted adult if they find themselves in a situation that they cannot manage, so too should parents help their teen identify who their trusted adults are. They can also teach their teen that if the other person doesn't accept “no” and the harassment persists, they need to give a stronger “no”, block the person, take screenshots, and tell a trusted adult.

Social media lawyer Emma Sadleir describes online content as having a tattoo effect. What you put out there stays out, and can surface years later. She reiterates the warning that digital content is dangerous, and can have devastating consequences down the line for the teen in

terms of university or job applications.

The average age of first exposure to pornography is 11, Sadleir says, and she's finding 10 to 14 year olds to be the most problematic age groups with regard to cyberbullying. Sadleir says children from the age of 14 have full criminal capacity and can be jailed for these online sexual offences. From the age of 12, children can be held liable and an assessment of their criminal capacity would be made.

The new Cyber Crimes Act of 2021 criminalises online behaviour such as harassment and sextortion. For children under the age of 18, sexting is a criminal offence under the Act. A child who receives a sext and keeps it on their phone can be held criminally liable from the age of 14 for possession of child pornography. A child who distributes that photo to just one other person is criminally liable for distribution of child pornography. If a child older than 14 could have done something to stop the sharing and didn't, they are legally liable. Any admin of a WhatsApp group now has the ability – and thus the responsibility – to delete any offensive posts for the whole group, and has to report it.

This is scary territory, but the best prevention is having an open line of communication with your teen. Let them know that nothing is ever too terrible for them to tell you, and you will always be there for them. Keep in mind that the time for consequences is always later.

Koleinu SA works closely with Klikd on cases, as well as with social media lawyer Emma Sadleir, child development specialist Luke Lamprecht, as well as psychologists specialising in this field. Reach out if you need help.

• *Rozanne Sack is the co-founder and director of Koleinu SA, the helpline for victims of abuse in the South African Jewish community. The helpline number is 011 264 0341, operating on Sunday to Thursday from 09:00 to 22:00 and after Shabbat until midnight.*



ROZANNE SACK

Parents & Learners

COME FIND OUT MORE ABOUT

PROGRAMMES & STUDIES IN ISRAEL

TALK TO DELEGATES FROM ISRAEL REPRESENTING MASA

✓ ALIYAH

✓ UNIVERSITIES

✓ GAP YEAR PROGRAMMES

✓ CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

✓ VOLUNTEERING PROGRAMMES & MORE

PROGRAMS INCLUDE:

Tel Aviv University • Aardvark • Bnei Akiva • Ohrsom

PZC Hagshama ( Kibbutz Ulpan, Habonim, Masloul )

Ariel University • Bar Ilan University • Reichman University

Hebrew University • Aliyah • Naale • Israel Student Authority

Catch us at:

KING DAVID TERTIARY EDUCATION

EVENING IN JOHANNESBURG - 20 FEB @ 18:15

HERZLIA EXPO IN CAPE TOWN - 22 FEB @ 18:30

FIND OUT ABOUT:

• Internships

• Academic Options

• Scholarships

• Volunteering Opportunities

CONTACT US

060 891 1557

masa@israelcentre.co.za

ISRAEL CENTRE SOUTH AFRICA

מסע

masa

ISRAEL JOURNEY

האגודה היהודית

THE JEWISH AGENCY

FOR ISRAEL

ישראל

Every one of us, together.

מדינת ישראל

STATE OF ISRAEL

Scan the QR code to register for the expo and to set one-on-one meetings.

JOHANNESBURG MEETINGS:

21 Feb - from 14:00 - 18:30

CAPE TOWN MEETINGS:

23 Feb - from 14:00 to 18:30

SCAN ME



# Master swimmer loses life in accident off Bondi Beach

TALI FEINBERG

South African-born Peter Michaelson (57) was an acclaimed master swimmer and got much joy from swimming in the ocean. However, it was in the water off the coast of Sydney, Australia, where he lived that he had a freak accident that led to his death.

He and Roy Cohen both left Johannesburg for Sydney decades ago, and although they didn't know each other in South Africa, they became firm friends in Australia. Both excellent swimmers, they were enjoying the ocean at Bondi Beach after work on 1 February, when the unthinkable happened: Michaelson dived into the water, possibly onto some rocks, and suffered catastrophic injuries, including skull and vertebrae fractures.

Along with their friend, Lawrence Kopping, who is also a South African expat, they usually swam to Flat Rock, about 200m away, and relaxed there before heading back. "This time, we swam to the boat ramp, then walked to Flat Rock. We were there for a bit, and then jumped in to swim back to shore. Lawrence and I were already in the water, so we didn't see exactly what happened, but Pete must have dived in and hit some rocks that were submerged.

"Thirty seconds later, we looked around and couldn't see him. We then saw he was on top of the rocks – he must have been washed back onto them. We started to do CPR, and there happened to be a nurse there who helped us. Lifeguards from the beach responded very quickly. I'm not sure who called for help, but there was quite a commotion. Paramedics were called, and they worked on him for about half an hour. They then carried him up off the rocks to the ambulance, and he was taken to hospital. He passed away the next day."

"The only consolation is that he didn't suffer," says Cohen. "Pete was a powerful and accomplished swimmer who broke records as well as mentored others. We've done that swim a hundred times. He was the best swimmer and diver amongst us. But he died doing what he loved."

His cousin in Cape Town, Trevor Abromowitz,



Peter Michaelson



Peter Michaelson

says that Peter's wife, Leeanne, was visiting her sister in Perth when the accident occurred, and had to rush back. He was told that Peter's 17-year-old daughter, Siena, held his hand at his hospital bedside while the room filled with people. "Everyone loved him and wanted to be there for him." Cohen says Peter's daughter and wife were his pride and joy.

"It was a freak event – Peter was highly experienced at diving from that particular spot," says Leeanne. "Siena and I are heartbroken. Our family and community are rallying around us. Peter's funeral was the largest that the rabbis had attended. Peter was connected to South Africa through his family, and was hoping to travel to Cape Town for the birth of Trevor's son in a couple of weeks' time."

Peter was born in Johannesburg to Joyce and Jack Michaelson. "From a young age, it was apparent that he was a natural-born athlete and excelled at swimming and running, winning multiple titles at state and national level," says Leeanne.

He attended Fairways Primary and Hyde Park High. "The last time I saw Pete was in April

2022, when we visited Sydney for Pesach," says Abromowitz. "Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine it would be the last time. I also went to Fairways, and remember looking up at the achievements board and seeing his name there as 'Sportsman of the Year'. I remember thinking I wanted to be just like him. He was a real Joburg boy.

"He was a popular student, shown by the friendships that stood until his recent passing," says Leeanne. "The family migrated to London in 1981. Peter's swimming talents further developed, and his persistence earned him a place in the British swimming team. Peter was extremely humble and downplayed his achievements." The family eventually settled in Sydney.

Peter initially worked in the family business and was a much-respected antique jewellery dealer, travelling to London regularly. "When his father retired, Peter put his gemologist training to use, and expanded the business to include modern jewellery, which he sold out of his store in Cross Street. The shop was renowned as being the social hub of Double Bay," says his wife.

Peter returned to competitive swimming with the Warringah Aquatic Swim Club as a masters athlete, "where he was a much loved and respected team member, breaking state records

in his age category for 50m and 100m freestyle", Leeanne says. "He always lived close to Bondi Beach, and in summer, Peter and friends would swim out to Flat Rock. A challenging swim for most, Peter found it relaxing, and encouraged as many people as he could to swim the bay."

Cohen describes his friend as a "giant", literally and figuratively, at 6 foot 4 (1.9m) and weighing 95kg. "And he had the biggest heart." He says Peter was "tops at freestyle, but he was also excellent at all the strokes". Abromowitz says Peter had a Facebook group where he shared tips on freestyle swimming. "I think he was working on his dive, because in a 50m sprint, everything has to be perfect. He had a real sprinter's build." Peter was the fastest swimmer in Australia in his division.

Abromowitz says his cousin "Loved Yiddishkeit and loved Yiddish. He would often throw out a Yiddish expression. He had a real grounding in Judaism, and love of the Jewish people." And his athletic ability was passed onto his beloved daughter, who he supported at the Maccabi Games last year, where she played netball. "He was very excited about going to Israel."

Rabbi Danny Yaffe of CBDChabad Sydney says he thinks Peter loved swimming "because he was a man of life, energy, and nature".

When he heard about the accident, he felt shock and disbelief. "It has been surreal. Sometimes I look at my phone waiting for a joke or a question from him to come through. At the last shiur, a few of us were wondering if he would show up late as usual! Each week, I would present a controversial topic, and Peter would be on fire, presenting arguments and counter arguments, proving and disproving, between lively *L'Chaims* and side stories or jokes.

"As a rabbi, I believe the best that can be done in the wake of tragedy isn't to stop but to do more, build more, reach out more. And if it's done in Pesach Ben Yaakov's memory, it would keep his legacy alive."

Though South Africans are scattered around the globe, "our communities are like one body with one heart", says the rabbi. "Thus, when we lose someone, especially in these circumstances, it's like losing a part of our body – we all feel it. So one *mitzvah* helps all of us where ever we may be in the world."

A GoFundMe fundraiser was started by the family's close friend, Nicole Sussman. "Peter was taken from us in the prime of his life, doing what he loved," she wrote. "But his greatest love was his wife, Leeanne, and daughter, Siena. All he would want right now is stability for them. Let's all come together as a community and help take care of our dear friends. Let's support Pete's family for him the way he supported us during his lifetime."

To support the Michaelson family, visit [gofundme.com/f/for-pete-alway-in-our-hearts](https://gofundme.com/f/for-pete-alway-in-our-hearts)

ALREADY THINKING OF IMMIGRATING TO CANADA?

IF SO, COME LEARN ABOUT WINDSOR, ONTARIO!

In 2021, Canada welcomed over 405 000 newcomers - the most it has ever welcomed in a single year. It plans to welcome 465 000 permanent residents in 2023, 485 000 in 2024 and 500 000 in 2025. Windsor is a Canadian city of 200 000 bordering Detroit, USA, a Jewish community of 70 000. The Windsor Jewish Federation has launched J Welcome Home to showcase our small, tight-knit Jewish community and assist prospective Jewish immigrants with their resettlement in Windsor.

FREE WORKSHOP

Tuesday 28 February 2023 | 19:00-20:00 SAST

Featured Speakers: Dan Brotman (Executive Director, Windsor Jewish Federation); Daniel Mandelbaum (Canadian Immigration Attorney); Ronna Warsh (Leadership Coach); Marion Zeller (Recent Immigrant from South Africa).

To register, please visit [jwelcomehome.com/workshops](https://jwelcomehome.com/workshops)



Windsor  
JEWISH FEDERATION &  
COMMUNITY CENTRE



Welcome  
Home  
HAMILTON  
LONDON  
WINDSOR



# “Shaun’s Call of Duty” honours community hero and father

GILLIAN KLAWANSKY

When armed intruders entered his home on 28 January 2013, father, husband, businessman, and Community Security Organisation (CSO) stalwart Shaun Lipshitz did what he did best – protect his family. Tragically, he lost his life in the process. Marking his ten-year *yarzheit* last week, his daughter, Rachael, launched “Shaun’s Call of Duty Initiative”, a CSO fundraising campaign in his memory.

In her Facebook post promoting the fundraiser, Rachael recalls the night her family’s life changed forever. “Our home, a place filled with invaluable memories and immense love, was broken into by three armed men,” she writes. “On seeing the intruders, my father instantly drew his gun and a shootout began. In the frenetic exchange of gunfire, several rounds struck his body, and he was gone within seconds.

“My father left this earth as a protector, a hero. He left this earth fulfilling his true purpose, his true passion – the protection of Jewish life.” With the support of her mother, Tarynne, and two brothers, Dovi and Yoni, Rachael decided that raising funds for the CSO, which was founded

on this philosophy, was the perfect way to perpetuate Shaun’s memory.

The R43 500 that the campaign aims to raise will be used to purchase training equipment to teach kids and community members to protect themselves, a fitting memory for Shaun, the family says.

Though Rachael, who was only eight when Shaun died, says a lot of what she knows about him comes from stories others have told her, she’ll never forget how family-oriented he was. “He was incredibly busy, but did whatever he could to be at every one of my ballet concerts and every one of my brothers’ soccer games,” she told the *SA Jewish Report*. “Even if he was working late in his office in our converted garage, he would always come and kiss me goodnight and read me stories.”

Rachael, in Matric at King David High School Linksfield, her father’s alma mater, says that the *yarzheit* together with the realisation that she’s the last of Shaun’s children to go through the school system, sparked the need to commemorate his legacy.

The fact that 2023 is Shaun’s 30-year high school reunion also contributed to the initiative. “The kids of the parents who will be attending the 30-year reunion are all coming up on stage with a picture of their parents when they were in matric,” Rachael says. The school’s social worker approached Rachael asking if she would be comfortable in participating. “I said to my mom, ‘It’s hard, but if I don’t represent him, it’s like saying he wasn’t there, but that’s not the truth.’”

Writing an oral about her father, Rachael was inspired to do a little digging, and she went through a box of his old belongings. “His principal, Elliot Wolf had written him a letter of recommendation

for university, and it spoke about his community service and participation in sport and in productions as a part of the sound and lighting team. I also found photos of him in his school uniform.”

Though she wishes she could

have gone through the mementos with her father, it had an impact on her. “It was crazy for her to read about her dad, knowing she’s now where he was then,” says Tarynne. “All of this stirred up the juices in her, and she knew she needed to do something in his memory.” They brainstormed, and realised that raising funds for the CSO would be the perfect way to commemorate Shaun.

Jevon Greenblatt, operations director at CSO Johannesburg, says the organisation is proud to be part of the initiative. He describes Shaun as “a giant in the community, who always thought of others”.

“He was among the first intake into the CSO,” he says. “Shaun played an integral role in the development of the CSO. His passion was to serve and protect the community.”

Shaun served as a bodyguard for the late Chief Rabbi Cyril Harris for a year, and was always part of the CSO, says Tarynne. “Every *yom tov*, he would be in shul early, lifting up every seat to check for anything that shouldn’t be there. It was just part of him.”

The CSO decided to use the funds to give back to the community, says Goldblatt. “Though the training equipment will be used at schools, it’s also for the greater community who will be taught situational awareness and self-defence.” The training forms part of the organisation’s Body and Mind Programme.

“In today’s world, we believe that the community as a whole needs to play its part in becoming more vigilant and managing its own security,” he says.

Tarynne says becoming a single mother at the age of 36 was daunting initially. “When Shaun passed away, I was naïve. I had never done anything on my own, I didn’t even know how to do internet banking or how to budget. It was frightening for me. But I also knew that my kids were relying on me, so I didn’t have a choice.”

Tarynne kept “pedalling the bicycle”, and told her children they would get through their heartbreaking loss together. “I wasn’t prepared to embrace any form of victimhood, and I said to my kids straight from the get-go, this isn’t going to define you,” she says. The family continues to live by Shaun’s mantra: “Play the cards you have been dealt to the best of your ability.”

Having left university when she fell pregnant with her first child, Tarynne eventually returned to her studies, and is completing a master’s degree in industrial psychology.

Tarynne is proud of all of her children, who consistently take on *mitzvot* in their father’s memory, whether it be by learning or donating to charity. “It’s part of them to keep Shaun’s legacy alive,” she says. “They’re so proud of their dad.”

If you would like to make donations, please email [donations@cs0.org.za](mailto:donations@cs0.org.za) for banking details.



Shaun Lipshitz



Tarynne, Dovi, Rachael, and Yoni Lipshitz

# Death of Pi not in vain as pollen awareness gears up

SHELLEY GLASER

The death of Kayli Levitan’s cat, Pi, spurred her to campaign to make sure that nobody else’s pet would be poisoned by plants sold by major retailers and flower distributors.

Levitan, a communication strategist, was devastated when her beloved Pi died after ingesting pollen from a lily that was sold by all major retailers and flower distributors.

She took her campaign to social media, and managed to get big and small retailers to place warnings where necessary.

Eating the pollen caused Pi to go into kidney failure, and Levitan rushed her to the TAH Rosmead veterinary hospital in Cape Town.

If a few particles of toxic pollen are ingested by a cat, kidney failure will result and, “if left untreated for more than 72 hours, there’s no chance of survival”, Levitan says.

Pi was diagnosed within the 72-hour period, and was then hospitalised for two weeks after she ingested the lily pollen. She couldn’t eat or drink, and vomited for days on end. “She needed dialysis and a feeding tube, and lost one third of her body weight.”

She seemed to be recovering to everyone’s excitement, and was given the nickname “Miracle Cat”. However, two months after being back home, Levitan had to take her back to the vet as her kidneys were in bad shape.

Pi – who was seven years old – died from kidney failure on 1 February 2021. Her illness and ultimate death came with a bill of R30 000.

Levitan posted about her and Pi’s story on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, tagging Woolworths, Pick n Pay, Checkers, NetFlorist, and Spar.

She asked that they label their toxic plants – which include daffodils – and change the timid warnings that they did carry, which simply said, “Keep away from pets”, to “Warning: highly toxic to cats and dogs.”

Those who followed Levitan on her platforms helped her cause by sharing and commenting on her story. Levitan was taken seriously.

Within 24 hours, Woolworths replied, saying that it had updated its website immediately by adding, “Warning: highly toxic to cats and dogs,” as Levitan had suggested.

It had done so on the appropriate platforms, and would add the warning on its next run of in-store labels.

NetFlorist responded by saying that it was “in the process of updating its website” and was brainstorming solutions to inform recipients of lilies as gifts. This, it said, could take the form of “a label, a tag, or even a WhatsApp message”. It also sent Levitan a beautiful bunch of roses with a card saying that it would keep Pi’s legacy alive through the changes that it was making.

Checkers gave her a telephone call, and said that it didn’t have any online sales of lilies but would be adjusting the labels in-store.

Pick n Pay messaged her to say that it would change all of its labels as soon as possible.

Levitan also approached some smaller plant and flower retailers such as Petals and Post in Cape Town, which said it had already seen her story on Twitter, and was going to make the



Kayli Levitan with her cat, Pi

changes.

If this isn’t enough, she has also been talking to one of the big shelters in Cape Town to ensure that all new cat parents know the risks of toxic plants. “Once I have all the details clarified, I’ll take this to all the shelters,” she says.

Levitan says she also wants to get international retailers involved. “We’ll get there – one share of this traumatic experience at a time.” Overall, she says all of this “will understandably take time, but they [the retailers and shelters] have all committed to the change, and I believe that they’ll make it”.

“The fact that my sweet girl didn’t suffer in vain and that our loss might save other lives has put a small bandage on my heart,” Levitan tweeted.

## Join the “Jewish Travel Guru” in Lithuania and Poland for an unforgettable experience!

Shabbat in Vilna with Hugh Raichlin

Meet the local community, and enjoy a walking tour of the old city where the Gaon of Vilna lived. Discover the beautiful city of Kaunas (Kovno). After a short flight to Warsaw on Sunday morning, you can visit the famous city of Lublin and then Kraków, where Klezmer music is still played at concerts in this ancient city which has deep Jewish roots.

Explore the roots of Zionism, the enlightenment and Chassidism, and marvel at the massive contribution that Jews have made to Europe and to the world. Gain some perspective on the Holocaust, and walk with pride in the footsteps of our forefathers. Together, we will honour those on whose shoulders we are carried to this day.

27 April-3 May

With Hugh Raichlin

For more information or to book contact +27 83 377 1908 Jerulita Tours (for itinerary): [bit.ly/jerulita2023](https://bit.ly/jerulita2023)



# Teen activist across oceans makes swim school a reality

TALI FEINBERG

Sasha Minsky lives a thousand miles away, yet he has made it his mission to change lives in the township of Alexandra, Johannesburg. This 11th grader from Potomac school in North Virginia in the United States (US), and his father, Jeff Minsky, raised more than \$20 000 (R358 158) in swimming kits for up to 200 disadvantaged children.

Not only that, but Minsky joined hands with King David Linksfeld (KDL), which has granted young boys and girls from Alexandra access to its pool for swimming lessons, coached by Aquatics Gauteng instructors every Sunday in a 12-week programme. And so, on 22 January, the Alexandra Youth Swimming Academy (AYSA) was launched. Minsky came to Johannesburg especially for the event. He was joined by Linda Twala (known as “the father of Alexandra township” or Bab’Twala), KDL, Aquatics Gauteng, and the Alexandra Sea Lions.

So, how did a boy from the US come to create a swim school in South Africa? “My parents moved to South Africa for a few years and fell in love with the country. They gave me Mandela’s tribal name, Madiba, as my middle name to celebrate their time there. When I was looking for a community to help as part of my *mitzvah* project in the 8th grade, my dad suggested Alexandra.”

That *mitzvah* project led him to donate pre-loved baseball equipment to the Alexandra baseball club. “I wanted to continue my project, and was introduced to Linda Twala. He said that his dream was to teach the kids of Alexandra to swim because of the many drownings in the Jukskei River. As a competitive swimmer, I could relate to his vision, and thought it was something I could help realise. All we needed was equipment, a swimming pool, and instructors.”

Minsky spent a lot of time in Alexandra during the week prior to the launch. “We had the best possible tour guide in Bab’Twala, who showed us all the historic landmarks. We also saw parts of town that only a local would know. We went inside shacks, and stood on the bridge overlooking the river, where people had recently drowned. I even attended a day of school at Marlboro High, where 85% of the students come from Alex. All this made me feel that any effort to help the kids of Alex could make a difference in their lives.”

First, he set up a website called [www.upliftthrusport.com](http://www.upliftthrusport.com) in partnership with a Virginia-based swimming equipment supplier named SportFair. “The challenge was to drive traffic to this website, where people could donate funds by purchasing equipment. I set targets for each item, and SportFair fulfilled all the orders. I put together a YouTube video that encouraged people to purchase the equipment we needed (<https://youtu.be/jJZkVsBpML4>). I delivered this presentation to my school, and distributed it over email, social media channels, and other networks.”

His swim club “was extraordinarily helpful in promoting my project, and asked me to participate on a panel discussion alongside Olympic swimmer Katie Ledecky. That gave me lots of visibility and attracted donations. I ultimately reached my goal of raising more than \$20 000 (R358 158) to buy swimming equipment.” These swimming kits were awarded to Afrika Tikkun and AYSA beneficiaries.

“Over the years, hundreds of children have drowned in the Jukskei River, which periodically floods its banks after heavy rains,” says Afrika Tikkun Group Chief

Executive Marc Lubner. “Afrika Tikkun has long wished to offer safety instruction as part of our community-focused approach. When asked to participate in this project, we realised



Sasha Minsky and Linda Twala

we could play an important organising role, ensuring the programme’s sustainability. We’re about teaching life skills that enable youngsters to be become competent, courageous members of society. Overcoming

challenges is all a part of that experience.

“We are fortunate to have passionate individuals like Sasha and his dad, and guidance from the best instructors. Together with our on-the-ground ability, we bring the best that’s available to kids who might otherwise be swept away, not just by surging rivers but by the torrid challenges that a life of poverty imposes as well.”

There are “way too many people to mention” that Minsky met on this journey who are making an impact. “So I’ll focus on just one person – Lawrence Ruele, who is Bab’Twala’s protégé. He’s a 30-something-year-old Alexandran who has made it his life’s mission to help the children of his community.

“Lawrence was raised by a Jewish family – I believe his mother was a domestic worker for them – and that naturally oriented him to work with the Jewish community. He made the initial introductions to KDL and Afrika Tikkun. Working through the COVID-19 pandemic and load shedding never seemed to deter Lawrence. I’m indebted to him.”

Meanwhile, “KDL has been amazing,” says Minsky. “I knew it was the ideal partner for this project, considering the school’s history

of working with Alexandra, but I didn’t realise how truly invaluable it would prove to be. Use of its beautiful pool and the provision of much-needed transportation for the kids are key components of the programme.

“But it’s the school’s enthusiasm and kindness, shown by everyone from top administrators through to its incredible student population, that makes the real difference,” he says. “I spent a week at KDL and learned how fortunate we were to have the school as our core partner. I’m grateful to Principal Lorraine Srage, her team, and the students for demonstrating what public service is all about.

“Fatal drownings are unfortunately, a reality in South Africa, and with the Jukskei River running through Alexandra, teaching children to swim is necessary,” says Srage. “Sasha managed to get sponsorship from Speedo, Arena, and Harvard Business School, and donated more than 200 swimming costumes, boards, flippers, and more.

“Facilitated by Anthony Glazer, the chief operating officer of the South African Board of Jewish Education; Director of Sport Kirsty Forssman; and the Outreach and Avirah Committees, 50 children from Alexandra will be bused to the school every Sunday, and will

be taught by professional coaches associated with Aquatics Gauteng.

“Leading up to the launch, spearheaded by Kirsty Forssman, we held a swimathon, which was supported by students, parents, and alumni. More than R100 000 was raised, which will cover the cost of a pool blanket that will keep the water warm well into autumn. I continue to be so proud of our students and staff for their tireless commitment to *tikkun olam* [healing the world].”

“There’s something special about the relationship between the South African Jewish community and the townships, particularly Alexandra,” Minsky says. “While there are too many people to thank, Rabbi Ricky Seeff, Anthony Glazer, and Marc Lubner stand out as key individuals who helped to make this project a reality and serve as role models.”

For Minsky, “This experience made me realise that making a difference in someone’s life is possible if you understand the purpose you’re trying to serve, persevere through roadblocks and discomfort, set achievable goals, and follow through to completion. It has definitely changed my life, and only strengthens my commitment to helping others.”

## In person to in pyjamas and back again – communication comes full circle

GILLIAN KLAWSKY

From WhatsApp and FaceTime to Zoom, Teams, and Slack, digital communication has, in some cases, become our main form of interaction – a process accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Yet, in an increasingly online world, in-person communication is more important than ever.

Human-potential expert, speaker, and author, Nikki Bush, argues that the effects of the isolation that began with COVID-19 have lingered. “We’ve forgotten how to be with each other and how to galvanise ourselves into showing up in-person,” she says.

This means that for many, the world has shrunk, giving way to social anxiety, which is fuelled by avoidance. “It’s time to start breaking down the social and emotional walls we’ve built around ourselves for protection during the pandemic,” Bush says.

For Carla Jacobs\*, who was largely housebound during the pandemic due to comorbidities and resulting anxiety, online communication became her primary connection to the outside world.

“I was able to work completely online, and because my office is about 45 minutes away, it was a blessing to be able to avoid that,” she says. “We would have Zoom meetings twice a week, which was sufficient for me. I actually enjoyed working from home much more than going to the office, but I think the fear of COVID-19 also contributed to my preference.”

“My husband and I were both working from home, so I enjoyed the quality time together,” she says. “I would chat to my friends on the phone, and have Zoom friends and family sessions. Again, I think because my fear of COVID-19 was so great, I was able to rationalise that these online get togethers were good enough.”

Even once the pandemic became less of a threat, Jacobs was reluctant to venture out again. “I wasn’t really looking forward to the first team building session my company hosted after the pandemic,” she admits. “Yet, once I was at the restaurant sitting next to my colleagues without my mask on, wow, did I enjoy the face-to-face communication. I felt free.”

Jacobs’ company has however retained its remote working policy, a move she supports due to the convenience and increased productivity.

Though she still feels one can connect effectively with friends over any platform, Jacobs says meeting in person has been particularly comforting in challenging times. “Sometimes there’s nothing better than a big hug from a friend to make you feel like everything will be alright,” she says.

By avoiding face-to-face interactions, argues Bush, one limits one’s chance for making human connections, stimulating emotional intelligence, and discovering new



opportunities. “At seminars and workshops, networking and mingling is causing fear,” she says, “especially among people who are in the early stages of their careers, and who didn’t have much experience in this area before. People want to work with people they know, like, and trust, which is why people in mid-career onwards were able to work their network of contacts created over time during the pandemic. Younger people struggled with this aspect.”

Spending most of your day online also promotes lethargy, she says. “Some people opt to attend events online because it takes less effort. You can stay in your pyjamas, save petrol, and avoid having to expend energy networking, because it does take effort to introduce yourself, ask questions, and listen to other people.” Yet, even making small talk, which doesn’t happen naturally online, can result in leads and opportunities.

What’s more, exclusive online communication, especially through channels without video which remove certain social cues, can be problematic, says Danielle Goott, a business English coach for non-native English speakers. “Facial expressions, gestures, body language, posture, even eye contact make a huge difference,” says Goott, who has also run communication skills courses. “The haptics, the physical aspects of communication, and all of these cues are delivering messages to the parties involved in that interaction. When we remove them altogether, the margins for misinterpretation and miscommunication get bigger.”

We have to regain our social fitness, says Bush. “Push through your own inertia and be conscious of the need to break a pattern of isolation driven by fear,” she says. Even if you don’t feel like attending an event, say yes anyway, she suggests. If social interaction seems intimidating, start small

with a one-on-one coffee date. “Choosing to become socially fit takes perseverance and practice.”

A healthy balance of online and in-person communication is the ultimate goal, says Goott. “The hybrid work model is here to stay, and that’s a good thing,” she argues. “With anything, balance is important. Constantly working from home and looking at a screen can be tiring, potentially leading to burnout if you don’t give yourself sufficient breaks.” Being available 24/7 online can create unrealistic expectations and also result in burnout. “We don’t have an off switch anymore.”

For some, going into the office all the time feels excessive too, she says. “However, you can’t remove that in-person interaction altogether because chatting to your colleagues face to face isn’t just important for effective communication but also for morale and connection. At its root, the aim of communication is connection.” With the constant deluge of messages from various messaging platforms, it’s also important to practice switching off and being completely present when you’re with someone. “If you’re distracted, you won’t communicate effectively,” she says.

When it comes to creating the ideal remote working policy, weekly check-ins are good online, while in-person meetings may be best for creative brainstorming, strategy sessions, or workshops.

Most teams are made up of a mixture of introverts and extroverts, says Goott. “Introverts would prefer to have a few days where they can take a step back from the social interactions to recharge, and then become productive again, whereas extroverts thrive in in-person settings.”

\* name has been changed



# Orthodox Jewish model struts stuff for disability

JULIA GERGELY – JTA

When disability activist Lily Brasch was asked if she would walk the runway as a model for New York Fashion Week, she didn't know if she would be able to do it.

It wasn't because she has a rare form of muscular dystrophy which weakens muscles and limits her ability to walk. Rather, it was unfortunate timing: the show was set for Friday evening.

But Brasch, who is Orthodox and goes by the stage name Lily B, quickly devised a workaround. She took her turn on the catwalk in midtown at 17:00, and instead of schlepping back uptown to her Morningside Heights apartment, quickly headed to a nearby hotel to welcome Shabbat with her sisters.

And so, on 10 February, Brasch became the first model with muscular dystrophy to walk the runway unassisted at New York Fashion Week, and the second person with the condition ever to appear. (The first was actress and model Jillian Mercado in 2020, who used a wheelchair.)

"It felt really good – it felt freeing," said Brasch, 22, who modelled a gold sari from the brand Randhawa, which specialises in modern South Asian style. "I definitely never thought I would do something like this."

"I prioritise representing disability, and pride, and just bringing joy to that community, but I also prioritise being truthful to my faith," Brasch said. "It was great teamwork to get me on the stage and represent disability, and then come right off to go celebrate Shabbat."

When Brasch was 16, she was diagnosed with centronuclear myopathy, a rare form of non-progressive muscular dystrophy. She was told she would never be able to walk or lift heavy objects unassisted due to her disability. At the time, she was disheartened, but she said she used the diagnosis as motivation to "prove barriers are meant to be broken".

My Jewish identity has inspired me in that we're all put on this earth for a reason. Every single one of us has a purpose, and that's what my religion has helped me find.

Walking in New York Fashion Week, which ran until 15 February, is the latest in a series of triumphs for Brasch, who moved to New York last August to attend Columbia University. Last March, Brasch climbed Camelback Mountain in Scottsdale, Arizona, a feat which she calls "My Everest". She's also competed in body-building competitions, and loves going to gym.

She also founded the Born to Prove foundation, which promotes disability awareness and breaking barriers.

Though the Chicago native hasn't always been outward about her Judaism in her activism – in fact, at first, she was advised by friends and family not to bring attention to it – Brasch has come to realise how much her religion guides her.

"My Jewish identity has inspired me in that we're all put on this earth for a reason. Every single one of us has a purpose, and that's what my religion has helped me find," she said. Her purpose, Brasch said, is to represent strength and beauty for people with disabilities in the next generation.

She hopes to be an inspiration within the Jewish community. "There's a lack of



Lily Brasch at New York Fashion Week

representation in the Jewish community – at least in my Orthodox community – of people with disabilities actually achieving things," she said. "It's not really talked about, and it's looked down upon." Groups like RespectAbility and the Rudin Family Foundation have been working to change that.

She was worried about posting on social media from Fashion Week, knowing that her observant friends might question the timing around Shabbat. But Brasch said she was pleasantly surprised when so many congratulated her on representing disability and Judaism, and staying true to herself on

the runway. "That was one of the best things for me to see, because that was my initial goal: to show that there are people with disabilities in the Jewish community and things are changing."

Brasch is also partnering with Movinglife, an Israeli manufacturer of folding mobility scooters – a deal she inked just before she found out she would walk in Fashion Week. The company partnered with rabbis as well as researchers from the Zomet Institute in Israel to ensure that their scooters could be used on Shabbat even though they are electric, said Brasch, who uses the scooters to get around.

With her modelling debut behind her, Brasch said she would walk in Fashion Week again, but she'd rather see other models with disabilities on the runway. "I hope that next time it's not me, it's the next girl," she said.

"The feeling of overcoming something and being put out there and cheered on is something everyone should feel," Brasch said. "Often, with a disability, I hear, 'Poor you!' It can't be like that anymore."

# NO MORE TEARS!

With The School Lunchbox Project of Yad Aharon & Michael!

**DONATE NOW**

**YAD AHARON & MICHAEL**

**#Yadjoinin**

**YADAHARON.CO.ZA**

Call: 011 485-2076    [info@yadaharon.co.za](mailto:info@yadaharon.co.za)

DANLEE.CO.ZA 3485/2022-12-27

PROVIDING FOOD FOR CHILDREN



# Home is where the heart is for miracle survivor

TALI FEINBERG

When Chanti Martin (23) noticed tingling in her fingers in 2021, she didn’t think much of it. But this symptom would send her into a confusing, frightening, and desperate search around the world for a specialist who would know what was wrong and how to heal her.

Until then, she was healthy, and had fulfilled her dream of making aliya after growing up in Cape Town and London, now studying neuroscience and psychology at Bar-Ilan University.

When she mentioned the symptom to her doctor, he examined her and couldn’t find a pulse in her right arm. After searching the globe, she miraculously found the doctor she needed right in her home city of Cape Town.

But her health challenges began

as a mystery. “My doctor initially thought his equipment was faulty,” says Martin. “He sent me to the emergency room, and I spent 12 hours going from doctor to doctor. I came back the following day for an ultrasound. They seemed shocked at the results, saying something was terribly wrong.”

From there, she was hospitalised for a week. “Doctors and students treated me as an enigma. They did every test under the sun, all leading to the great discovery of ... nothing! I was released from the hospital with aspirin, but doctors carried out more investigations. I had no understanding of the severity of my case until the moment I had my first serious stroke.”

At the beginning of the second year of her degree, she was diagnosed with suspected Takayasu Arteritis (TAK), a rare autoimmune disease that causes blood-vessel inflammation. Also known as “pulseless disease”,

the inflammation damages the arteries, making parts of them weak, stretched, narrowed, or blocked. This can lead to strokes or aneurysm. It mostly affects women aged 20 to 40.

The first time she was hospitalised, Martin was told that her case was serious and potentially life threatening. “This sent shivers through my body. My whole life, I was known as ‘the healthy one’. I always prioritised exercise and a healthy diet. At first I resisted my situation, and wanted my normal life back. I was in shock at being surrounded by doctors and hooked up to machinery. But I realised that the only way to move forward was to surrender to G-d, and accept the situation.”

She was told she had no blood flow in key areas to her brain and restrictions in other areas. “Other blood vessels had compensated, but I was sparking off dangerous emboli. By the end



Chanti Martin and Holocaust survivor Ella Blumenthal celebrating miracles together

Photo: Rabbi Levi Silman

## When home affairs and a midlife crisis collide, it’s a drama

The frustration of trying to get something sorted out at the department of home affairs embodies the stress that South Africans live with. Actor **Lawrence Joffe** will be performing in *Home Affairs* at the Theatre on the Square in Sandton. The *SA Jewish Report* spoke to him in the run up to the show.

### How would you describe yourself?

A 56-year-old Jewish man who was too busy to take the time off to have a midlife crisis.

### What inspired Home Affairs?

The initial idea was proposed by Neil Urmson, to create a show dealing with having a midlife crisis in a South African context. It’s impossible to create anything South African without taking into account the political context of the country, and of course, nothing symbolises the state of the nation better than the department of home affairs. There’s also the obvious dual meaning of the words “home affairs”. In fact, it would be fair to say that South Africa is going through its very own midlife crisis, and so, the concept plays out on both a personal and a state-of-the-nation level.

### Some would say our home affairs department and load shedding aren’t funny. How do you get people to laugh at them?

Luckily, South Africans default to humour whenever they are faced with adversity. We’ve all been through government departments, and recognise the inefficiency and often the sheer ridiculousness of the system. In hindsight, those situations become funny and hopefully, the audience will recognise them.

### How do you perceive home affairs and load shedding?

Home affairs is hell on earth, and load shedding its evil little minion.

### Describe your character.

I play the role of Michael Goldsmith, a 56-year-old Jewish man who has hit the ceiling in both his marriage and his career, and to counter a sense of hopelessness, believes immigration will provide a new life and opportunities.

### How would you describe the relationship between you and the character played by Sello Ramolahloane?

It’s a relationship that begins with politeness and a certain camaraderie, the shared experience of having to deal with the system, which evolves, not into a black-white situation, but an us-versus-them situation.

having been directed by her, it was a joy to see her process. She’s a thorough, tough director who takes no prisoners but supports the actors throughout. I received no special treatment from her. Honest!

### What are the main themes of the play?

Hope, with sub themes of immigration, load shedding, helplessness, as well as our common humanity.

### What’s your sense of where our country is at right now?

We’re in a bad place, but the potential to recover is ever present.

### What do you believe needs to happen to put our country, including government departments, back on track?

Efficient, competent administrators with the good of the country uppermost in their minds need to be voted into government. Corruption needs to be put on the same level as treason, and harsh sentencing needs to be meted out to those found guilty. We still have the potential to be the finest country in the world.

### What do you want the audience to take home from this play?

I would like the audience, the silent majority, to leave feeling that they have been heard, that their fears and concerns are the same as the majority of people in the country, and that there’s still the possibility of hope.

• Lawrence Joffe and Sello Ramolahloane will be performing “Home Affairs”, directed by Michelle Douglas, at the Theatre on the Square in Sandton from 21 February to 11 March.

### Your partner, Michelle Douglas, wrote and directed the play. What did she base it on?

It’s based on her recent interaction with the home affairs department and the political and economic situation the country finds itself in. The play reflects the mood of citizens across the country.

### What was it like being directed by your life partner?

Having watched her direct other productions through the years but never



Sello Ramolahloane and Lawrence Joffe in Home Affairs



Chanti Martin on Camps Bay beach recently

thanks celebrating the miracle, and a highlight was when Martin danced with close family friend, Holocaust survivor Ella Blumenthal. “I felt an overwhelming sense of awe at Hashem’s loving kindness. Having Ella there was a huge merit. It was such an honour to celebrate with someone who feels so much gratitude towards Hashem in spite of having experienced some of the greatest challenges. Ella has always been my role model.”

Martin and her family are deeply grateful to the Cape Town community and family and friends, “who cared for me as if I was their own child or sister”.

of the year, I had had three major strokes and many small strokes. I had an allergic reaction to an infusion which dissolves clots. Thankfully, I recovered, but the stakes were much higher.”

To make things even more challenging, her diagnosis was made during the COVID-19 pandemic, and her family wasn’t allowed to visit her.

In July 2022, top rheumatologists in Israel discussed her case, and the majority opinion was to operate. “I had always been told that undergoing surgery was worst-case scenario. As Israel didn’t have the expertise, we were instructed to look overseas. My mother searched worldwide. It felt like a maze.”

Meanwhile, Martin returned to Cape Town, taking a break from her degree and hoping to spend a year “self-healing”.

“A close family friend, Andy Blecher, was concerned about my health. I had a few mini strokes in shul, and she believed another major stroke was imminent and we had to act soon. Andy is in the medical field, and when she discovered Dr James Tunncliffe, she intuitively knew he was the surgeon we had been looking for – an endovascular surgeon specialising in TAK. We would never have found him as his experience in TAK wasn’t in his medical biography.”

Blecher’s discovery happened just as Martin and her mother, Nicole, drove five hours into the Karoo for a healing retreat. “On the second day, Andy called. She had managed to get us an appointment with Dr Tunncliffe the next day, and wouldn’t take no for an answer.”

Dr Tunncliffe said Martin would need open heart and triple bypass surgery immediately. “The risk of not having the operation was greater than having it. He said a stroke causing death or extensive neurological damage was imminent. If successful, my life expectancy would be as good as any healthy person.”

He went on to have two weeks of sleepless nights, redesigning the solution to create a new network of



# Mass protest in Jerusalem as Knesset moves on judicial reforms

PHILISSA CRAMER – JTA

An Israeli parliamentary committee voted to advance parts of the government’s proposed judicial reform on Monday, 13 February, as tens of thousands of Israelis protested in Jerusalem and opposition legislators attempted to disrupt the vote.

But following an address on Sunday by President Isaac Herzog begging for negotiations over the reforms, the coalition said it would delay a milestone vote that would have advanced the legislation further. That vote won’t take place until later in the week or next week, Justice Minister Yariv Levin confirmed on Monday.

Herzog wants the coalition to compromise on its demands, which include giving the governing coalition veto power over the Supreme Court as well as control over the appointment of judges. Criticism of the proposed legislation has come not just from the Israeli political opposition but from business leaders, legal scholars, and even, over the weekend, United States President Joe Biden.



The crowds in Jerusalem, estimated at close to 100 000 people, snarled traffic and packed public transportation as people gathered in the capital to protest the vote. Others planned to participate in a general strike on Monday. The protests follow weekly Saturday night protests of the reforms, which have drawn hundreds of thousands of Israelis into the streets nationwide.



The heads of Hebrew University urged students and faculty members to participate in the protest, saying that “the Jewish-democratic state is in danger of a kind we have never experienced before”. Meanwhile, the minister of education said students and teachers in elementary and secondary schools who attended the protest would be penalised, with teachers losing out on salaries and students being marked absent.

The initial vote took place amid sharp



Photos: Ittay Flescher



not delay action on the reforms. Yair Lapid, the leader of the parliamentary opposition, warned that the reforms were “a tearing apart of the people of Israel”. Opposition legislators shouted and, in one case, jumped over a table during the committee proceedings. Several were ejected from the chambers.

Opposition Knesset members also sang *I Have No Other Country*, a traditional Israeli song of patriotism and protest that was also cited by former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi in the aftermath of the attack on the US Capitol on 6 January 2021.

tension within the Knesset, where the chairperson of the Constitution, Law and Justice Committee, from the right-wing

Religious Zionism party, praised Herzog’s





# ONLY FULL TUMMIES & SMILES

## TOGETHER WE FILL LUNCH BOXES!

**Our “happiness in a box” hampers, bring joy to 220 school children in need, as we fill their lunchboxes with nutritious foods and healthy snacks.**

**Your generosity ensures that Jewish children in our community, have lunch to take with them to school.**





YAD AHARON & MICHAEL

דא הארן

PROVIDING FOOD FOR CHILDREN

#Yadjoinin

**YADAHARON.CO.ZA**

Call: 011 485-2076    [info@yadaharon.co.za](mailto:info@yadaharon.co.za)

DANLEE.CO.ZA 3485/2022-12-27



# Strong women, extraordinary stories – feminist fiction comes of age

Acclaimed British fictionalised biography writer **Louisa Treger** recently released her fourth book, *Madwoman, on the life of iconic investigative reporter Nellie Bly*. The SA Jewish Report spoke to her before her visit to South Africa in March as a guest of the Jewish Literary Festival.

### What drew you from classical musician to author?

My career as a violinist came to an end when I was in my early twenties because I caught a virus, which turned into the debilitating condition of ME (myalgic encephalomyelitis). But the enforced rest gave me an opportunity to rethink my life, and I realised that I wanted to work with words, not music. Nothing in life is wasted. Music was fantastic training for being a writer, not least because it taught me the discipline of sitting down and spending hours alone every day, honing my craft. Also, music training is all about precision. It sharpens the perception of minute acoustic differences that distinguish sounds, and this heightens one's attention to the nuances of language.

### How would you describe yourself?

I'm family orientated and devoted to my friends. I love dogs. South Africa was my late mom's homeland, and it's the country of my heart.

### How do you choose the topic/ subjects of your books?

I seem to stumble on them by chance. For example, a friend asked if I'd heard of Nellie Bly and suggested that I look her up. I did so, and was instantly hooked. As I write more books, it's apparent that a theme has emerged. I'm drawn to writing about strong women who refuse to conform, and struggle to find their place in the world; women who are ground breakers and pioneers.

### Why did you choose the fictionalised biography genre for your books?

I love fictionalised biography because the lives of my subjects give me a framework of interesting facts on which to hang the story. At the same time, the genre allows enough wiggle room to gain emotional access to the past. It gives me licence to imagine myself into the characters' private thoughts, to invent conversations and details which animate their conflicts and draw out themes I find interesting. The outline of the plot is already there. Within that framework, I'm trying to create my own image of real people.

### Your books focus on women (or one woman in particular in each book) fighting for their rights in some form of another. Why do you choose such characters?

I feel like they choose me! They are all extraordinary women, boundary-breakers, and trailblazers who paved the way for the women of today.

### What drew you to write about Nellie Bly?

Nellie Bly was America's first female investigative journalist. To get her first big scoop, she faked madness and got herself committed to a notorious lunatic asylum off the coast of New York in order to expose the terrible conditions. What got me, what really gripped my imagination, was wondering what kind of woman could do that, especially at the end of the 19th century when women were supposed to be ladylike and reticent. I discovered that Nellie had empathy as well as courage. She changed America's mental hospitals for the better, and pioneered a path for women in journalism, launching the era of stunt or detective reporting, the acknowledged forerunner of investigative journalism. I found this so inspiring, I couldn't not write about her. Nellie literally and in every other way allowed women to exist in new places. She stepped into the

lives of others, fighting for justice, understanding that what mattered most to the marginalised was being seen and understood. She not only spoke truth to power, but also exposed the truth for all to see. Now, 135 years later, we still need her kind of advocacy.

### What do you want readers to take home about her?

I hope they'll be fascinated and inspired by Nellie, who started off as an underprivileged girl and became a woman far ahead of her time. She left the world vastly improved.

### What has the response been to *Madwoman*?

The response from readers and critics has been lovely. I'm grateful and relieved. The *Cape Argus* called *Madwoman* "magnetic", and it was a Historical Fiction Book of the Year in *The Times* and *The Sunday Times* in London.

### Are women 100% emancipated today, or do we still have a feminist struggle?

Nellie's preoccupations and struggles against the constraints of society to some extent mirror the position of women today. In certain ways, things have changed, and in others, not at all. Look at countries like Iran, where women are brutally suppressed. Issues women – and men – are still up against include freedom of speech, the pay gap between the sexes, attitudes to mental health, and the underrepresentation of the marginalised. All of this brings home to me why I write historical fiction. History isn't a series of dry facts in the past. It's a narrative that we live and relive in the present.

### Who are the other unsung heroines, like Nellie, we should be paying homage to and haven't?

There are so many amazing women who've been forgotten by history. I've picked just three: Mary McLeod Bethune, who served on Franklin Roosevelt's "black cabinet", working as an activist for education and civil rights. Freddie and Truus Oversteegen, who joined the resistance as teenagers during World War II, and were tasked with seducing Nazi men by inviting them for walks in nearby woods, where the men would be shot by resistance fighters. Amani al-Khatahtbeh, who started a pioneering publication by and for Muslim women.

### You're working on your fourth novel. What can we expect?

It's about Dora Maar, Picasso's lover and muse. She's mainly remembered as Picasso's *Weeping Woman*, as if tears were the only interesting thing about her. But the epithet obscures a talented photographer and a woman of passion and conviction. I think the world should know more about her.

### What's your experience of South Africa and the book reading audience here?

South Africa has a vibrant, diverse community of readers, writers, and booksellers. My experience has been stimulating and wonderful.

### What are you looking forward to when coming to South Africa?

To name a few things: a sense of homecoming, family and friends, the sunlight, the impossibly high skies, the beaches and mountains, bobotie, bunny chow, malva pudding ... I could go on.

- Louisa Treger will be addressing historical fiction at the Jewish Literary Festival on 21 March. To book or find out more, go to [www.jewishliteraryfestival.co.za](http://www.jewishliteraryfestival.co.za) or call Beryl on 082 490 6652.



Louisa Treger

# SA's 'imminent' greylisting will batter investment and earnings

ALISTAIR ANDERSON

As South Africans fear that their country is about to be greylisted, the reality is that we've been facing international scrutiny for years, and our businesses and financial asset managers have had to jump through all kinds of hoops when doing work with offshore entities.

David Shapiro, a veteran stockbroker and financial analyst, says South Africa's image from a financial security point of view has been under threat for years.

"We have experienced greylisting in other forms for some time. Foreign banks regard us as friends of the Guptas until we can prove otherwise. These institutions have treated us with caution for years. We must go to great lengths to open accounts for clients at some of the larger global banks. The interrogation is intense," he says.

Nevertheless, greylisting is inevitable for South Africa, and businesses and organisations have to live with the stark reality of the country being scrutinised even further.

When a country is put on the grey list, it's under increased monitoring by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The FATF is a global watchdog, based in Paris. In October 2021, the FATF published an evaluation of South Africa's anti-money laundering measures which found exceptions in the country's policies and efforts to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, highlighting areas where the financial system was highly susceptible to these crimes.

The FATF defines greylisting as a global attempt to prevent illicit funds from being channelled towards terrorism. Greylisting is an indication of the risk that the rest of the world attaches to a country's companies and individuals as counterparties to transactions, according to the FATF.

The FATF oversees compliance for anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing measures.



South Africa was unfortunately found to be partly compliant with 20 of the FATF's 40 recommendations for a sound country. For years, South Africa was a shining example of excellent financial checks and controls. But conditions have waned tremendously in the past decade. Corruption is rife, and the government's response has been slow, weak, and frustrating.

South Africa has a well-regulated financial system which plays its part in domestic and global transactions, and yet it's under severe pressure. The recommendations by the FATF follow an evaluation of South Africa, which found significant flaws, mostly related to state capture and the country's inability to bring criminals to justice as a result of laundering. The global body will decide whether or not to greylist South Africa at its conference in February 2023. This greylisting is imminent, experts say.

Greylisting will necessitate greater due diligence on South African individuals and businesses alike, as well as more frequent and intrusive evaluations for anti-money laundering and terrorism funding risk.

This would put a massive dent in South Africa's gross domestic product – by about 1% to 3% – because foreign investors would be discouraged from doing business with companies in South Africa.

South African clients' risk rating will be elevated at many international institutions, especially those in the European Union and United Kingdom. South African banks will have to fork out more to manage correspondent banking relationships and relationships with global infrastructure providers, making costs higher.

On average, it takes countries five to 10 years to get themselves removed from the list. But it's possible to reverse the decision in a shorter time. Mauritius was removed after less than two years on the grey list.

## King David guides Galilee Dreamers on SA tour

King David high schools recently hosted The Galilee Dreamers, a group of 20 Israeli school children representing Jewish and Arab communities, who visited the schools as part of a unity programme co-ordinated by their high schools in the Galilee region of Israel.

The Galilee Dreamers' vision is to build long-lasting connections between Jewish and Arab communities in the Galilee and to share this message of hope, tolerance, and respect for diversity with young people around the world. The group arrived in Johannesburg on 1 February, and spent the morning at King David High School Victory Park (KDVP), where they enjoyed a special assembly.

"In a school as diverse as ours, it's important for our students to be able to meet and mix with a community of students from such different backgrounds in Israel. The message of coexistence and understanding of each other is a most powerful one, and we can all learn from their example," said Andrew Baker, the head of school at KDVP.

The students were hosted by various KDVP families, giving them a chance to experience the South African Jewish community.

The group was welcomed to King David High

School Linksfield (KDL) on 2 February, where they joined a group of 15 KDL history students on a tour of Constitution Hill, giving the Dreamers a brief insight into the apartheid era and its end.



The Galilee Dreamers group with King David students

Jocelyn Angel, a senior history teacher at KDL who is passionate about taking education out of the classroom, accompanied the group. "Visiting Constitution Hill with The Galilee Dreamers presented a unique opportunity for our history students to 'see' apartheid first hand and gave them the opportunity to teach our visitors. The explanations I heard our students giving the Galilee Dreamers – of whom none spoke English as their first language – were priceless and informative," she said.

King David high schools are proud to be part of this initiative to promote unity and respect among different communities, which aligns with their core values.

**Sunday 19 February**

- Women's International Zionist Organization Cape Town hosts a talk by Rabbi Selwyn Franklin. Time: 09:30. Contact: [bnothz@ctjc.co.za](mailto:bnothz@ctjc.co.za) or 021 464 6756
- New Beginnings hosts a talk by Devorah Shore on *Handling Life's Knocks with Resilience*. Time: 10:00. Cost: R50. Venue: UJW House, 77 Sandler Road, Percelia. Contact: [lynarch@worldonline.co.za](mailto:lynarch@worldonline.co.za)
- The Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre hosts a re-screening of documentary *J'Accuse*. Time: 18:00. Cost: R100 (R70 members). Contact: 087 188 1815 or [hazel@rchcc.org.za](mailto:hazel@rchcc.org.za)

**Thursday 23 February**

- ORT SA hosts a talk by David Zidal on *Finance*

**Sunday 26 February**

- Second Innings hosts a talk by Tali Nates on *Addressing the Austrian Parliament and Reflections on visits to Poland, Germany, Austria, and Bosnia*. Venue: Golden Acres. Cost: R40 (R20 members). Contact: 082 561 3228 or [greiciagabriel1@gmail.com](mailto:greiciagabriel1@gmail.com)

**Made Simple.**  
Time: 08:30.  
Cost: R200 (R100 members). Contact: [admin@ortjet.org.za](mailto:admin@ortjet.org.za) or 011 728 7154

**WHAT'S ON**



# A Shabbos meal invitation felt for generations

The conversation will often begin with the sentence, “You know who we have to invite back...?” And invariably, I won’t. I won’t know who she’s thinking of because the family in her mind had us for a Shabbat meal in the late 1990s. There has been no contact at all for 24 years, but when they bump into each other at KosherWorld, my wife is sure that something is a bit off. Hours later, thankfully, she works out what it is.

We owe them an invitation. Even though it most likely had nothing to do with it.

Shabbat meals might seem simple, but they are anything but. They are a game of ping-pong that once started, never ends. So much so, that couples still invite people they knew in the 1990s that they had little in common with even then.

A virgin invitation might be tempting and even a good idea at the time, but can trap the unsuspecting into an ugly loop of back and forth that can persist for generations.

Then there’s the challenge of time compatibility. Whereas some families consider a successful meal to be one that ends on Friday night at about 21:30, others would consider it a failure unless the guests stumble out at close to midnight, and only after having spent at least 30 minutes prior to departure at the front door begging to be set free. So that they may get home, traumatised, and rock themselves to sleep in a foetal position.

Or maybe that’s just me. There are those who serve tea and cake after grace after meals, and there are those who hand you your jackets before the prayer



**INNER VOICE**  
Howard Feldman

books are closed. But worse than anything are the meal non-starters. They are the ones who remember that a salad still needs to be made, or insist on showing you their third son’s wedding album before the meal can get going. They walk this earth as though time is limitless, and with the arrogance of those who don’t for a moment even consider that G-d might call them or their guests to “home” before they have had time for a whisky with two cubes of ice. Let alone a glass of tap water. Shabbat lunches present their own challenges. A sudden afternoon thunder shower might mean guests who never leave and who will stay until three stars brighten the evening sky. And maybe then will stay for a quick bite before being wedged out of the front door and into the now idling car. There but for the grace of G-d go any of us. Hospitality is a good thing. Abraham and Sarah taught us this. But considering the fact that he entertained three days after his circumcision, it should be a reminder to us that the pain can be real. I have no idea if the woman in KosherWorld is expecting an invitation. What I do know is that she’s likely to receive one. And for generations, our children’s children will be wondering why they have to keep inviting her children’s children to their son’s Barmitzvah.

A column of the SA Jewish Board of Deputies

# SARU in the firing line

The South African Rugby Union (SARU) continues to come under heavy fire locally and internationally for its decision to withdraw an invitation to the Tel Aviv Heat to participate in an upcoming tournament as a result of threats from the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions) lobby. By capitulating so readily to BDS pressure, SARU probably thought that taking the line of least resistance would be the easiest option, but that has certainly not been the case. The strong and ongoing backlash to the decision demonstrates the depth of opposition at all levels to discrimination in sport, whether politically motivated or otherwise. One of the roles of the South African Jewish Board of Deputies (SAJBD) is to combat unfair discrimination against Jews, which includes discriminating against the Jewish state. Our position was eloquently stated by National Vice-President Zev Krengel in a number of television interviews last week. Since my last column on the subject, we note that a formal complaint has been lodged against SARU with World Rugby. As much as SARU wishes it, therefore, the issue isn’t going away any time soon

**St Valentine’s Day gift to Vaalbank community** Water security is one of the major challenges that many communities around the country confront, particularly in rural areas. Together with our partners, The Angel Network, and working closely with Dr Lesley Bradburn and other local activists, the Board has been able to come to the assistance of the community of Vaalbank in Mpumalanga by constructing a new borehole in the centre of the village. The decision to construct the borehole was made after the local dam dried up, as well as criminal sabotage that damaged the municipal water supply. On 14 February, the Board’s professional staff attended the official



**ABOVE BOARD**  
Karen Milner

handover of the facility. It was an uplifting occasion, one celebrating a relatively small yet practical and meaningful contribution by our community to improving the lives of our fellow citizens.

**Turkey earthquake** We were much saddened to learn that two leaders in the Turkish Jewish community, Saul and Fortuna Cenudioglu, were among the many thousands who lost their lives in the horrific earthquake that struck the country last week. Their bodies were recovered by the Israeli rescue team, which was one of the first international aid groups to arrive in the country. The SAJBD wrote to express its condolences to the family and the Jewish community. For details on how to contribute to the relief work, see our Facebook page.

**Ukraine war one year on** On 24 February, we will mark the first anniversary of the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Throughout the year, the SAJBD engaged with the Ukrainian ambassador, participating in efforts to raise funds for humanitarian relief in the country. Funds collected from the community have periodically been handed over to the Ukrainian Ambassador’s Fund as well as the Joint Distribution Committee, which continues to work on the ground to assist those affected by the conflict, Jewish or otherwise. On the first anniversary of the war, we will be handing over the residue of the funds collected to both those organisations.

• 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

AUDIT • ADVISORY • TAX



## CLARITY. ORDER. DIRECTION.

Our team of over 1 400 professionals, operating from 7 offices in South Africa, offers a unique combination of local market knowledge coupled with an international network, personal service and a professional approach. We shine a unique lens on clients' businesses to see the people beyond the numbers and establish where they are going.

www.bdo.co.za



© 2019 BDO South Africa Services (Pty) Ltd.



## KING DAVID SCHOOLS TERTIARY EDUCATION EVENING



**DATE: MONDAY 20TH FEBRUARY 2023**  
**TIME: 18:30 - 21:00 (POP IN ANY TIME)**  
**VENUE: SANDTON SHUL HALL**

**MEET WITH LOCAL AND GLOBAL UNIVERSITIES,  
COLLEGES, GAP YEAR PROGRAMMES AND OTHER  
ORGANISATIONS TO FIND OUT MORE ABOUT  
OPTIONS & ENTRANCE REQUIREMENTS**

**OPEN TO GRADE 11 AND 12 STUDENTS & PARENTS  
FROM ALL SCHOOLS IN OUR COMMUNITY**



Rugby legends inspire KDVP

King David High School Victory Park (KDVP) hosted a rugby clinic on 5 February attended by Springbok legends Jean de Villiers and Schalk Brits as special guests. Students from KDVP Primary School, King David Ariel, and King David Sandton were also invited.

Rugby has immense benefits for students as it helps build fitness, endurance, and strength in the upper and lower body, as well as agility and speed. The clinic kicked off with an introduction of the former Boks to the students, followed by a general meet and greet with De Villiers and Brits. Several stations were set up on the field, and students were split into three groups. Brits took one group, focusing on how to scrum properly and what to do when you're in a ruck, while De Villiers focused on passing, catching, and other tactics.



Schalk Brits, George Morfis, Thulani Ndlovu (Director of Sport), and Jean de Villiers

With rugby season coming up, the clinic was beneficial for the players as they gained knowledge and learned new tricks from the Boks players that they can use on their journey. The clinic was also a powerful motivator for students, who left inspired to work even harder at their game.

Hirsch Lyons Grade 6s brighten up school



Pupils in Hirsch Lyons' Grade 6 class received their monitor badges at an assembly on 10 February. Their first project was to brighten up the school, and each group had a great time painting different areas of the campus.

UJW starts programme for sufferers of cognitive impairment

More and more people suffer from memory loss as our community ages, largely due to cognitive impairment, mainly dementia, resulting in isolation, anxiety, and depression for the sufferer. In response to the needs of the community, the Union of Jewish Women has started a once weekly activity programme, run by committed volunteers, known as Brain Boost for those presenting with mild to moderate memory loss.

Mina Lopato does mezuzahs

Children at Mina Lopato Nursery School gathered on 13 February to learn about the school's new mezuzahs and see them being placed on the doorposts of their classrooms.



Mina Lopato Principal Marissa Koffler explaining the importance of a mezuzah to the children

Midmar magic



Jamie (11), Zach (14) and Noa (16) Nerwich with Kai (6) in front after successfully completing the Midmar Mile

Letters

BDS NOT VICTORIOUS, IT'S CRIMINAL

The irony never ceases to amaze me. On the cover of last week's SA Jewish Report: one story reporting that the South African Rugby Union (SARU) had cancelled its invitation to Israel's rugby team, robbing the players of a fantastic South African experience as well as the income that they relied upon. And then, the story in the insert of Israel sending aid and rescue missions to Turkey after its earthquake disaster.

I'm not sure if I missed it, but is the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions (BDS) coalition sending any aid to its brothers in Turkey and Syria? I looked it up, just to give them the benefit of the doubt, and couldn't find anything.

They are cowards, which makes SARU's bowing to them all the more reprehensible. BDS will claim this as a victory. But is it really? When you send death threats to people who just want to play a friendly ball game and they succumb to the threats, is it really a victory for your cause?

No. There's no victory here. There's no camaraderie or sharing of a "mutual" cause. After all, SARU voluntarily invited the Israeli team to play in the local Mzansi challenge next month. To reiterate: They were invited!

The only reason it cancelled the invitation was because of underhanded, immoral intimidation in the form of death threats from BDS. That's not a victory, it's a crime! – Michele Engelberg - Johannesburg

MANY MORE SPECIALS IN-STORE

KosherWorld TRULY KOSHER

211<sup>99</sup>

NOAH JOSHUA PETIT SIRAH SEMI DRY & CABERNET SEMI DRY 750ML EACH

55<sup>99</sup>

CAPE JEWEL GRAPE JUICE 750ML

43<sup>99</sup>

FRY'S VEGAN SPICY SAUSAGES 380G

82<sup>99</sup>

I&J YANKEE CLIPPERS 800G

30<sup>99</sup>

SERENA PASTA LINGUINE & MACARONI 500G EACH

30<sup>99</sup>

SERENA PASTA LINGUINE & MACARONI 500G EACH

5<sup>99</sup>

CEREBOS INSTANT NOODLES ASSTD FLAVOURS 70G EACH

106<sup>99</sup>

OSEM CONSUMME PARVE SOUP 400G

15<sup>99</sup>

OK TOMATO PUREE 410G

29<sup>99</sup>

CIAO TOMATO PASSATA 680G

72<sup>99</sup>

OSEM SOUP MINI CROUTONS 400G

37<sup>99</sup>

BOKOMO CONDENSED MILK & FUDGE RUSKS 450G

15<sup>99</sup>

POT O' GOLD HEARTY BEAN SOUP 410G

202<sup>99</sup>

MONTAGU MANGO STRIPS 500G

72<sup>99</sup>

OSEM CROUTONS THE ORIGINAL SOUP "MANDEL" 400G

42<sup>99</sup>

ALBEX BLEACH SPRAY ASSTD SCENTS 750ML EACH

66<sup>99</sup>

MONTAGU PITTED PRUNES 250G

72<sup>99</sup>

CLOVER CHEDDAR CHEESE 400G

72<sup>99</sup>

CHEDDAR FULL CREAM CHEESE 400G

106<sup>99</sup>

OSEM CONSUMME PARVE SOUP 400G

**Hometown** Pharmacy

For Relief of Baby Distress, such as when Journeying

59<sup>99</sup>

NATURA BABY RESCUE MELTS 50'S

087-803-4000 082-711-4342

HOMETOWNPHARMACY@PROPHARM.CO.ZA

**Feigels** Est. 1968

Yummy!

Curry Fish Balls, Tub of 8

79<sup>99</sup>

**Mobile Putt Putt for Hire**

Come and experience our very own 9 hole PUTT PUTT – 1st Floor KW Centre

School fundraiser	Birthday parties
Special events	Corporate team building

Rushka 079 176 2716

rushka@mobileputtputt.co.za