

CAPE JEWISH CHRONICLE

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October was Sukkot ... and Cape Town celebrated



Top row (l-r): Cape SAJBD's Sukkat Shalom; Learners host a minyan in Herzlia High School's sukkah; In the Sephardi Shul sukkah. Second row: Glendale's sukkah; Highlands House residents in their sukkah; In the Glendale sukkah. Third row: Lillian Gordon (pic1), and Bev Zetler (pic 2) at Marais Road Shul sukkah; Ella Blumenthal at Glendale's sukkah; Cecile Buirski and Joan Sarembok in the Muizenberg Shul sukkah; Temple Israel back in their sukkah. Bottom (l - r): Cape Jewish Seniors celebrate in Marais Road Shul's sukkah; Astra Centre staff in their sukkah; Liv Nudelman with teacher June Hayman in Herzlia Alon Ashel Pre-Primary's sukkah, CJSA's Sybil Castle.

Regular contributors

- Page 3** Des Says...
Shabbat Times
Patrons panel
- Page 4** Telfed
Voluntary subscriptions
- Pages 6 - 9** Cape SA Jewish Board of Deputies
- Page 10** Sinai Academy
- Page 11** SA Zionist Federation (Cape Council)
- Page 12** Highlands House
- Page 13** Mensch Mitzvah Day
- Page 14** Cape Jewish Seniors Association
- Page 15** Temple Israel
- Page 16** Astra Centre
- Page 17** Mensch thought-leader
- Page 20** SA Jewish Museum
- Page 21** Cape Town Holocaust and
Genocide Centre
- Page 24** Jewish Community Services
- Page 25** Simcha Snaps
- Page 26** Chronic ads

Features and Opinions

- Page 16** Deborah Lipstadt to speak in Cape Town
A guide to Jewish Western Cape
- Page 18** Jewish students tertiary education fund
- Page 19** Being a Jewish South African
tree hugger
- Page 21** Book review — *The Netanyahus*
- Page 22** Anton Katz — *The law and green rights*
- Page 23** Koleinu SA launches in Cape Town



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Des says...

By Desrae Saacks, Editor Cape Jewish Chronicle



Good reads

Welcome to the penultimate issue of the Cape Jewish Chronicle for 2022.

As Daniel Bloch writes on page 6, "Where has the time gone?" These pages go some way to answering this question as we look back on the past month's activity in our community. Semigration was the buzzword in our Hatfield Street offices as most of the organisations travelled to Johannesburg to take part in the BOD's semigration expo. As one of my colleagues commented, it even made *her* want to move to Cape Town — and she already lives here! Read all about it on pages 8 and 9.

Sukkot also occupied much of our communal time, as can be seen on the cover page and inside this issue. This past month has seen more holidays than any other this year, and while it has been wonderful to have so much time off, it was tricky to get this issue of the Chronicle together. Two of our regular writers, Craig Nudelman and Julian Resnick have not been available to participate, but both are expected back on our pages next month.

We do have some great reads

though. Inspired by Nigel Savage's visit to Cape Town in September (see CJC October 2022), we have focused on environmental issues. On page 22, Anton Katz writes about *The Law and Green Rights*; and on page 19 Ilana Stein discusses the links between environmentalism and Judaism.

And speaking of good reads, a few weeks ago I purchased a copy of Philip Roth's *The Plot against America*. Unlike many a flea market second-hand book purchase, I actually read it immediately. What a wonderful journey through the Jewish American psyche over the middle part of the twentieth century, told with great skill, imagination and humour. As it happened, by the time I was on the last pages, the Gitlin Library contacted me to say that the book I had been waiting for — *The Netanyahu's* — was available. And so, back to back, I have been immersed in much the same theme. Both are wonderful books, and come highly recommended. See a review of the latter on page 21.

Next month will be our final edition for the year — the December/January Channukah print edition. Until then, happy reading.



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Date	Portion	Candle lighting		Ends
		Earliest	Latest	
4 Nov/11 Cheshvan	<i>Lech Lecha</i>	5.52pm	6.59pm*	7.54pm
11 Nov/18 Cheshvan	<i>Vayera</i>	5.57pm	7.06pm*	8.01pm
18 Nov/25 Cheshvan	<i>Chaye Sara</i>	6.03pm	7.13pm*	8.16pm
25 Nov/2 Kislev	<i>Toldot</i>	6.08pm	7.19pm*	8.16pm

*NB. Please note that the times indicated are the earliest times for candle lighting. Please consult your Rabbi. *Please contact your local shul to determine their Shabbat acceptance time.*

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A first-hand account from a Telfed tenant

By Dean Cohen

We made Aliyah from Johannesburg in November 2021, having first secured a 'stop-gap' rental before moving into our apartment in the Ra'anana Telfed building in January 2022.

Whilst waiting for our container to arrive, we moved into our apartment with just the bare bones — our suitcases and some fresh tuna sandwiches. Over the next few months, living a spartan existence, we experienced first-hand the amazing camaraderie and open-door policy of our fellow Telfed residents, many of whom we now genuinely count as friends.

Late nights of washing cycles in 'strangers' apartments led to the fresh fragrance of meaningful conversation, a sympathetic ear, and comforting words at a time when we needed it most. From being invited to a Telfed tenants' Yom Ha'atzmaut braai to having a resident willing to fit our dishwasher and washing machine, the degree of support, care and concern shown to us has been revelatory.

As the school year drew to a close,



Dean, Shirley, Mia and Eliana Cohen celebrate their first Sukkot in Israel.

As we approach our one-year Aliyah anniversary, we have come to appreciate that our apartment in the Telfed building is more than just a home — it's a unique community and much-needed support network for newcomers, parents and kids alike.

we began to anticipate the two-month *chofesh gadol* (summer holiday) with a degree of trepidation as we had no concrete plans, other than a two-week Chabad Camp. Much to our delight we discovered that Telfed was offering summer activities in the downstairs *Moadon L'Olim* (Olim

clubhouse) with PRAS students*. For two weeks, our daughters enjoyed fun morning activities with other South African Olim children — a welcome respite for parents.

* Telfed scholarship recipients who volunteer in the Olim community.

In addition to the Ra'anana apartments, Telfed has two buildings in Tel Aviv where residents enjoy a community garden, an annual summer picnic and other community get-togethers. While planning a seder with neighbours, Telfed's Tel Aviv tenants decided to extend an invitation to other South African and Australian Olim in Tel Aviv who would be alone for the holiday. Following the success of their communal seder, the initiative was repeated on Rosh Hashanah.

Tenants go about their busy daily lives, bumping into neighbours along the way but seldom getting the opportunity to socialise. Chaggim give us an opportunity to get together — prior to Rosh Hashanah, Telfed arranged a Pizza Party for Ra'anana tenants, where some tenants had the opportunity to meet new neighbours for the first time; and ahead of Sukkot we met to build and decorate a community sukkah together.

As we approach our one-year Aliyah anniversary, we have come to appreciate that our apartment in the Telfed building is more than just a home — it's a unique community and much-needed support network for newcomers, parents and kids alike.

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CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COMMUNITY

Where has the time gone?

By Daniel Bloch, Executive Director, Cape SAJBD

Time flies when you're having fun. We're all familiar with this idiom signifying how much more quickly time moves when we're having a good time.

Lately though — particularly in shul during the recent High holidays — I've been hearing a lot more of another popular refrain: "Where has the time gone?"

On Yom Kippur our rabbi spoke about 'investing in time and not simply spending it', and this got me thinking, What am I doing with MY time?

There's still so much I want to do with my life. Being on the right side of 45, I'm cautiously optimistic that there's (please G-d) enough time to do it all. To play for Manchester United, travel to the moon, eat a ridiculous dish from that crazy American TV series *Man vs Food*...

Daydreams aside, there are more realistic exploits I'd like to spend more time on.

Like travel. Top of my list: The Pyramids, the Statue of Liberty, the Berlin Wall, Mount Everest. My wife's heart is set on Amsterdam, our son would happily swap a month of screen time for 24 hours at a Legoland theme park, and our daughter wants to cook alongside Gordon Ramsay at the MasterChef Junior studio. We all have dreams. When last did you take stock and ask yourself what yours are?

But let's get back to my initial question — the one that everyone's asking: "Where has the time gone?"

In January, our Board sat down and looked at one of our most critical recurring challenges — How to strengthen and future-proof our community.

We read countless articles and discussed the trend of Jewish people from around the world moving to the Western Cape. We interviewed several people and deliberated about how to get more Jews — particularly from Gauteng — to move here. Fast forward nine months and we've just hosted a *Move Down to Cape Town Expo* in Johannesburg. Read more about it and our Semigration campaign on pages 8 and 9.

But still, how did we get from January to November in the blink of an eye? Where HAS the time gone?!

We've launched great initiatives this year, but time has not always been on our side. With our Jewish New Year having just begun, and our regular year starting to wind down, it's an opportune time to pause, reflect and plan ahead for the next twelve months.

Top of our agenda is the continued rollout of our Semigration initiative. We're calling on community members to let us know of friends and family who have either recently relocated to the Cape, or who may be thinking of doing so. It's all about reaching out and making meaningful connections.

Equally important is our continued engagement with families of Jewish students who attend the twenty-plus non-Jewish schools in the Western Cape. From Paarl to Table View, from Tokai to Rondebosch, we'll leave no student behind.

When I decided on the title of this column — CONNECT, COLLABORATE, COMMUNITY — my goal was to do just that. It takes time to connect with everyone, to form partnerships and embark on collaborative projects to grow and strengthen our community. But it's still my ultimate goal.

I may not make it to Manchester United or the moon, but Egypt and Mount Everest are still achievable — as are the dreams I have for this community. Rather than fretting over where the time has gone — or flown to while we've been having fun — I'm reassured by these quotable words by John W. Bergman, "There's never enough time to do it right, but there's always enough time to do it over".



VIEW FROM THE CHAIR

Continuing a leadership legacy

By Adrienne Jacobson, Chairperson, Cape SAJBD

I'm honoured to take up the baton of leadership for this term at the Board, and for the challenge and responsibility to our community that comes with it.

Together with the executive committee, director, professional team and lay leadership, we have a wonderful energy around the table and are looking forward to a meaningful and growth-filled term.



By way of professional introduction, I'm a counselling psychologist in private practice focusing on family and relationship, couple and individual therapy, and I also have a background in Organisational Psychology, consulting in leadership development, training, group process and organisational strategy.

The outstanding leadership of our past two chairpersons has allowed me to build my vision for this coming term. Simply put, I'd like us to make a difference and to deepen the work we do at the Cape SAJBD on three levels.

Firstly, within the organisation, to ensure our lay leadership around the table have a meaningful, productive and growth-filled term, where we get to engage, participate and give of our skills and talents in subcommittees, projects and events that make a difference, together with our outstanding director and professional team.

Secondly, that we make a difference according to our internal mandate — a deepening of our relationships and work with our affiliate organisations. Not just support in the issues that face us, but collaborative projects whose success strengthens all of our mandates. To see a thriving community engaged in all aspects of Jewish life across our diverse spectrum.

Thirdly, to strengthen our external mandate. Creating platforms of engagement, stakeholder and political networking to fight antisemitism, lobby for civil rights and contribute to the Western Cape community. It is our responsibility to stand up against prejudice, discrimination, hate and gender-based violence, not just in our community but wherever we may encounter it.

Post-Covid we have a community that has been through a stressful time of isolation and economic hardship. We're living in an environment of loadshedding, crime, unemployment, homelessness and gender-based violence. We're fighting over scarcity of resources. Anger, racism and prejudice is boiling over along with hopelessness and depression.

The deep leadership question is: How do we, with our Jewish values, leadership, ethics and moral compass steer our community through these murky waters; and how do we contribute as a community to the broader South Africa?

The challenge for our community during these turbulent times is to rebuild a strong, proudly Jewish, engaged and thriving community where shuls and youth movements are filling up, and we can find the points of connection to include and engage people across a diverse spectrum of our community in all aspects of Jewish life.

As we start our new term, I borrow two blessings.

The first, as we start a new seven-year cycle of agriculture and planting in Israel after the last rest period (*shemita*) has come to an end: may the projects, goals and efforts that we start now bear fruit for the next seven years.

The second, from *parshat Korach* on community issues: may we be blessed with robust debate in abundance around our Board table. That our debates should be only to serve the nation and not over money or riches and thus considered *L'shem le shamayim*, altruistic or holy.

I also bless the positions of leadership and responsibility to our community that we hold, that we have *kaiyach* and passion for the task ahead, that we leave our titles and egos at the door, that we show up to do good in our community, and that together we make a difference.

By Benita Zive

A sukkah for the city

On Thursday 13 October, the fourth day of Sukkot, the Cape SAJBD welcomed around forty local religious and community leaders to a *Sukkat Shalom* luncheon in the Gardens Shul sukkah.

Guests included the likes of H.E. German Ambassador Andreas Peschke, Honorary Consul General for Peru Mark Norwitz, Consul General for Germany Tanja Werheit, Political Officer for the US Consul General Emily Shaffer, ward councillor Nicola Jowell and other representatives from the City of Cape Town, and representatives from the local Lithuanian Jewish community and Congolese Civil Society.

Cape SAJBD Director Daniel Bloch welcomed guests, before handing over to Rabbi Osher Feldman who explained the basics of Sukkot and reiterated that the festival — and particularly gathering together with all types of people in the sukkah — encourages us to celebrate unity and diversity.

“If we were completely unlike we would be unable to communicate, but if we were completely alike we

would have nothing to say”, said Rabbi Feldman, quoting Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z”l.

Rabbi Feldman explained the spiritual significance and symbolism of the four species, blessed the gathering, and volunteered Board member Dawn Nathan-Jones to shake the lulav.

Cape SAJBD Chair Adrienne Jacobson said a few words, elaborating on the themes of the day and contextualising them in light of the work that the Board does in partnership with many of the individuals and organisations that were in attendance. Guests were invited to tuck into a hearty lunch prepared by Norrie Caterers and enjoy the tranquility of the sukkah — a welcome respite from a busy weekday.

The four species, bound and shaken together, symbolise that we are all one despite our differences, but the ultimate expression of unity transcending all differences and distinctions is the sukkah.

It was a blessing to witness this unity in action, as people from diverse backgrounds and communities shared conversation, connection, food and a bit of a schmooze under the fragrant sukkah *schach*.



City of Cape Town Ward Councillors Francine Higham and Nicola Jowell, Cape SAJBD Chair Adrienne Jacobson, Cape Town Central City Improvement District (CCID) Muneeb Hendriks



Consul General for Germany Tanja Werheit, Cape SAJBD Chair Adrienne Jacobson, H.E. German Ambassador Andreas Peschke



Gardens Shul Rabbi Osher Feldman



Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch, Cape SAJBD Office and Admin Coordinator Mika Abramowitz-Visagie, Cape SAJBD Board Member David King



Ryan Rudy from Community Cares with Cape SAJBD Board Members Adrienne Jacobson and Dawn Nathan-Jones



Members of Congolese Civil Society Diana Bongongo and Laurent Musansina.



Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch, US Consul General Political Officer Emily Shaffer, Adrienne Jacobson, Honorary Consul General for Peru Mark Norwitz



Cross-cultural diversity and connection in action the Gardens Shul sukkah.



Ralph Bouwers and Erin Isaacs of the Lavender Hill Sports and Recreation Project outside the sukkah.

Why emigrate when you can semigrate?

By Daniel Bloch

Over the past few years we've been increasingly aware of news items and articles relating to semigration (moving from one part of a country to another, as opposed to migrating to another country).

There's always been a steady trickle of Gautengers making the move to the Western Cape, but with numbers having risen steadily since the Covid pandemic, semigration has evolved from a trend to a phenomenon.



Executive Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis (left) and Premier Alan Winde field questions from the audience



Rabbi Oshy Deren, Shul of Blouberg assists a visitor with tefillin



Premier Alan Winde



Knight Frank discussing property options with visitors

Several Jewish families and individuals have indeed arrived in the Cape to join our community over the past few months. One of our Cape SAJBD objectives is to enhance the quality of Jewish life in the Western Cape, so it goes without saying that our semigration subcommittee (formed in January this year) has been working consistently towards the vision of strengthening Western Cape Jewry and creating a sustainable community for all. It's not our intention to draw or poach community members from other major centres around South Africa, but rather to actively encourage those contemplating leaving the country altogether, to consider the Western Cape as a viable alternative.

Phase One of our long-term semigration strategy came to fruition on Sunday 23 October as we hosted our first *Move Down to Cape Town Expo* at the Wanderers Club in Johannesburg. An event that wouldn't have been possible without the support of the David Sussman Community Foundation, and our amazing Cape SAJBD community affiliates, including The United Jewish Campaign (UJC), Community Security Organisation (CSO), United Herzlia Schools (UHS), Cape Town Torah High, Phyllis Jowell Jewish Day School, Sinai Academy, Union of Orthodox Synagogues (UOS), Marais Road Shul, Ohr Somayach, The Hermanus Hebrew Congregation, The Shul of Blouberg, The Cape Town Progressive Jewish Community, Temple Israel, Orhsom Student, Chabad on Campus, Moishe House, Habonim, Netzer, Bnei Akiva, Staffwise, Melton, and the Eliot Osrin Leadership Institute (EOLI).

It was heartwarming to see our communal organisations unite under one banner with one objective in mind. The primary purpose of this event may have been to showcase our community, but seeing more than 40 leaders from our community, young and old, and some of whom had never even met, connecting, putting on tefillin, sharing a drink and forming partnerships, was very special. We were also joined by local property and real estate experts Blok, Rawson Properties, Knight Frank and Firzt Realty who helped to create an amazing buzz and experience for the 100-plus families and individuals who attended.

Exhibitors were kept busy engaging one-on-one with attendees on hot topics like property, education, religious life and employment. Many brochures, pens and stress balls were distributed — while little visitors were kept busy with sweet treats and other distractions. Our school affiliates reported significant interest across different grades, while many attendees were parents of students already studying at tertiary institutions in and around Cape Town. Religiously observant visitors expressed concerns about safety and security — particularly regarding walking to and from shul on Shabbat — but representatives from CSO and the various shuls were on hand to allay their fears.

Continues on page 9



UOS Executive Director Eric Berger (right) connecting with expo attendees



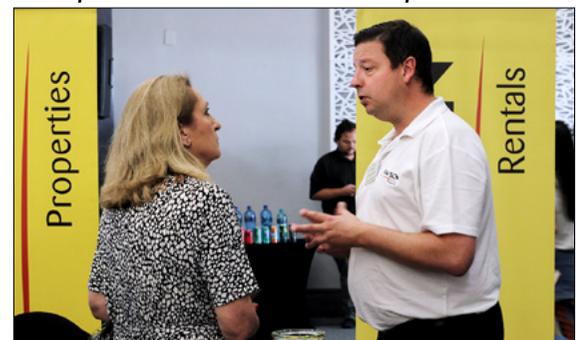
Chair Cape SAJBD Adrienne Jacobson addresses the crowd



An estate agent signing up a customer



The Expo attracted an audience of 100-plus visitors



Property was the flavour of the day and Rawson Properties were in their element

Continues from page 8

Our workshop programme comprised three well-attended sessions. The first included an overview of the Jewish community from Cape SAJBD Executive Director Daniel Bloch, with CSO's Dani Janks fielding questions related to antisemitism, safety and security. UJC Executive Director Barry Levitt also weighed in, providing insight into community numbers.

The second workshop was an interactive property-focused session hosted by Daniel Bloch along with two representatives from Knight Frank who flew up from Cape Town to be part of the expo. There were many questions from the audience pertaining

to lifestyle, property costs, safety, proximity to schools and synagogues, and loadshedding. United Herzlia Schools Executive Director Andries van Renssen (who happens to be a semigrant) shared many valuable tips and anecdotes despite not being part of the panel.

The main feature of the third (and most well-attended) workshop was an address by Executive Mayor of Cape Town, Geordin Hill-Lewis, and Premier of the Western Cape, Alan Winde, who flew up on the day and spent time speaking to expo visitors before and after their presentation. The session kicked off with a (now viral) reel put together for us by comedian Nik Rabinowitz, followed by a moment of darkness (thank you loadshedding!). Tzvi Brivik, chair of our semigration subcommittee, welcomed everyone and explained the greater purpose of our project, before handing over to our Mayor, who shared a presentation outlining the City of Cape Town's plans to address loadshedding, unemployment and homelessness, and establish Cape Town as the top travel destination in Africa. He didn't shy away from discussing challenges that plague our city — instead he provided several long- and short-term plans to address the problems, and even mentioned the Jewish concept of *aleinu* (it is on us), which was well-received by all.

Cape SAJBD Chair Adrienne Jacobson further elaborated on the theme of the expo — to showcase the Western Cape Jewish community and the work of its communal organisations. Premier Alan Winde spoke about the strategy to grow and make the Western Cape a leading destination for business, residential development and tourism. He explained that our Provincial Government sees the Jewish community as a partner in the semigration project, and expressed delight at having been included in the expo. Some challenging questions were posed by the audience, but the answers were well-received by all, and attendee feedback has been incredibly positive.

The day concluded with a prize draw (with lucky attendees winning tickets to see Nik Rabinowitz's Sandton show, and two weekend stays at both the Protea Hotel Fire & Ice! by Marriott® Cape Town, and the Protea Hotel by Marriott® Sea Point) and networking/schmoozing over wine and canapes.

The Cape SAJBD thanks the David Sussman Community Foundation for supporting this initiative wholeheartedly, as well as all the Jewish communal organisations that united to make the expo a reality. We also thank our travel partners — the Protea Hotel by Marriott®, Johannesburg Wanderers, and Lift Airlines — for their generous support.



The Nik Rabinowitz Semigration reel had the audience in stitches.

The *Move Down to Cape Town Expo* may be over but our semigration project has only just begun — and we invite our entire community to get involved in it.

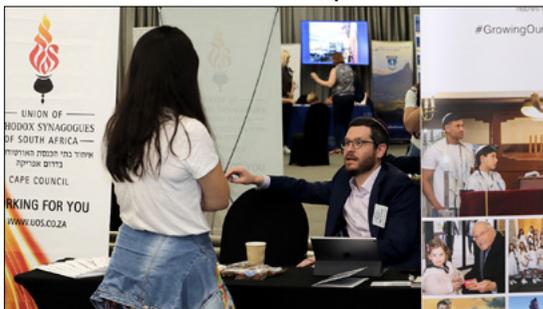
To participate in future semigration events, and most importantly, if you know of anyone who has moved to the Cape in the past three years or if you personally have recently relocated — please reach out to us!

We're here to help you make meaningful connections, to answer your questions, and most importantly, to welcome you to our incredible community.

For more information contact sajbd2@ctjc.co.za.



Tzvi Brivik, past chair Cape SAJBD, Premier Alan Winde and Adrienne Jacobson, Chair Cape SAJBD



Rabbi Pini Hecht of the Green & Sea Point Hebrew Congregation (Marais Road Shul) discussed life on the Atlantic Seaboard.



Adrienne Jacobson, Premier Alan Winde and Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis



Katherine Henning and Julian Gordon of Netzer (in green) chat with Marc Nathanson of Moishe House



CSO's Dani Janks (right)



Premier of the Western Cape Alan Winde addresses the crowd



Rabbi Sean Cannon of Orhsom Students chats to a young couple



Daniel Bloch hosted a property panel discussion with Frank Knight



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Diller welcomes cohort 8

Diller Teen Fellows Cape Town is proud to introduce the 20 Teens of Cohort 8. This year we had a record number of applicants to participate in this once-in-a-lifetime experience, and we are very privileged to welcome a full cohort of dynamic teens into the Diller family. Mazaltov to each teen who was carefully selected, based on their outstanding leadership potential. We are looking forward to a year filled with learning, engagement and connection. One year to impact a lifetime!



In alphabetical order: Aaron Lustig, Adam Merris, Amy Vogelmann, Anna Lieberman, Daniel Chaskalson, Danielle Munitz, Ella Rosmarin, Ethan Werb, Feigie Shaman, Jarred Zolty, Jonah Lustig, Judd Jocum, Kira Labe, Matt Whitesman, Mia Bernham, Mika Behrman, Mikey Hendler, Noah Zive, Sarah Allardice and Sienna Meyerson. Staff: Martine Kawalsky Katz, Shay-Lee Geva and Taya Allardice

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Highlands House
Aged Residential Care for Our Community

The Highlands House art exhibition

By Mathilde Myburgh

The Green and Sea Point (Marais Road) Shul graciously lent their space to the Highlands House Art Exhibition for two exclusive events.

The opening, night which took place on Monday evening 12 September, was followed by an auction the next morning, which included a wonderful tea for the artists and the residents who came to support. There was a lovely atmosphere on both occasions, with the room filled with artwork and chatter, where attendees could interact with the artists while admiring their work.

Artists whose work was exhibited included our residents Tony Leuw, Arnold Wallach, Rhoda Gordon, Judith Myers, Carol Kruger, David Myers and Elton Joffe, and the late Monty Tepersen. Their artwork

included portraits of Holocaust survivors, as well as other pieces. Many people from the community attended to show their support, and a good number of pieces were sold.

Haim Menashehoff, who has been involved in mentoring and guiding the budding artists at Highlands House for the past six years, gave generously of his time to facilitate the arrangements, market and coordinate the event with Kerry Miller, and organise the auction. He expressed his sincere appreciation to the shul for the part they played, saying, "They did a magnificent job! Kerry promoted the show with such expertise and love."

We thank Marais Road Shul, and in particular Kerry and our board member Sara-Lee Jackson for making this project happen.



Artist and resident Arnold Wallach



Portraits of Holocaust survivors



Adele Saven and David Myers



Professional artist and volunteer teacher at Highlands House, Haim Menashehoff



Pat Sapire (left) is one of the residents who attended the tea party and auction morning, seen here with another visitor to the exhibition

Photos by Yolande Kretzmer-Keys

We're so proud!



Dr Leon Geffen, Executive Director at Highlands House

On 22 September Executive Director Dr Leon Geffen was recognised by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UN Decade of Healthy Ageing as one of the Healthy Ageing 50: Leaders Transforming the World to Be a Better Place to Grow Older.

"I have the pleasure of recognising these world-changing leaders who — often with limited resources — show what can be done, and how, to improve health and well-being for older persons," Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, Director-General of the WHO said in a statement.

"We recognise these inspirational champions who showcase what is already possible in the area of healthy ageing, at local, national, regional, or global levels. From combating ageism and developing age-friendly environments, to implementing integrated care and ensuring access to long-term care, the Healthy Ageing 50 demonstrates that actions taken across sectors can transform our world to meet the needs and aspirations of current and future generations of older people."

Leon was honoured as the Director of the Samson Institute for Ageing Research (SIFAR), which provides an engine for research and innovation to improve the health and wellbeing of older persons in the African region. He recently worked with the WHO Regional Office for Africa to develop a guide and roadmap to implement the UN Decade of Ageing in the African region, connecting local and regional contexts to a global framework.

Leon has worked as a General Practitioner since 1990, and became involved in aged care in the mid-90s. He's done work with multiple local community-based organisations and continues a strong relationship with the Department of Health, developing public-private partnerships for the delivery of primary care services to older persons. Last year, with the Highlands House medical team, he rolled out vaccinations for DoH at multiple care facilities, providing over 2000 vaccinations. He was mentored by Dr Mossie Silbert for many years. Leon thanks his daughters Shayni and Hayli and his partner, Dr Ferial Abdurahman for their continued support. When not working, he enjoys experimenting in the kitchen, listening to music and occasionally walking on the mountain.


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Cape Jewish Seniors Association

DIRECTOR: Diana Sochen 021 434 9691 director@cjsa.org.za ADMIN: Amanda 021 434 9691 admin@cjsa.org.za search CJSA on Facebook

New year, new beginnings and planning for the big move

The last couple of weeks have been extremely busy with all the celebrations of the High Holy Days.

How wonderful to be able to celebrate together once again as a community; and for each community to have the opportunity to be back in shul, many seeing each other for the first time in two years. I found it an emotional experience as I welcomed our congregation on the first evening of Rosh Hashanah and wondered at the enormity of what we have all been through. At each event, it felt as though we were butterflies emerging from cocoons. There is a definite *new* way of celebrating, and I believe that we are all very grateful to be able to celebrate together. I hope that each of us has emerged kinder, more patient and mindful of the importance of good health, good

friends and the preciousness of life.

The renovations to the UJW house in Albany Road Sea Point are well under way with our builders working hard and sticking to the time schedule. We have a tight budget and are endeavouring to keep strictly to it while ensuring that the venue is going to be fabulous, with warm, inviting rooms available to enable us to host different events to suit everyone's taste. The plan is for the building to be completed by the end of November so that we can move over and be ready to commence activities when we reopen in January 2023. We hope that the community will share in our excitement and participate in the activities we are planning. Please watch this space.

Many of you will remember the wonderful annual get-aways we enjoyed at Goudini Spa. Our last

break was only days before Covid-19 hit the world. Since we reopened the branch, we have had numerous requests to reinstate this special activity. Happily, we have been able to book for 2023. It was not an easy feat, as the spa is already almost fully booked for the year. We have provisionally booked the accommodation for October 2023 which sounds ridiculously far ahead, but the reality is that it is the only time that is suitable and available. We would like to have an indication of who might want to join us, so please let your social worker know if you are interested.

The JCC AGM was held on Monday 31 October. This important event — held each year for the seven welfare organisations who fall under the Jewish Welfare umbrella — was an opportunity to showcase their work to the community. Those who joined

the meeting, in person or on Zoom, could feel pride and respect for our Cape Town Community which is truly unique and caring.

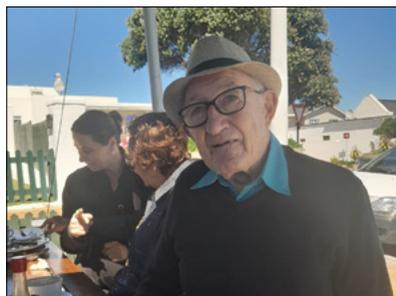
My family and I were enveloped with love by our incredible caring community last week when the matriach of our family, our beloved mom, granny and great-granny passed away. Each and every one, including the incredible chevra, rabbis, caring teams from the shuls and the community showed such compassion and ensured that we were held at all times throughout the week of Shiva — we are so grateful to all those who made contact with us and showered us with so much love.

Diana Sochen, Executive Director

Recent outings and activities



Marge Lee with the Lulav and Etrog at the Sukkot tea



Happy Birthday to Harold enjoying a morning in Blouberg



Ageless Grace with Cathy



Edie Schneider, Keilie Gross and Miriam Kleineibst enjoying the Sukkot Tea



Southern Suburbs members enjoying a day in Darling



Yiddish Group in Sea Point

Social and Personal

We congratulate our members who have had joyous occasions during the last month.

Births: Marcia Cirota — granddaughter, Ruth Katzeff — great-grandson

Engagement: Helene Gorin — grandson

Marriage: Golda Sher — granddaughter

Special birthday wishes to: Ettey Yamey — 90, Ruth Goldberg — 80

Welcome to new members: Martha Michael, Andrea Herr

Well wishes to those who have been under the weather: Hymie Becker

Our wishes of strength to the family of members who have recently passed away.

Diana Sochen — mom Denise Bernstein
Lilian Sheldon — sister Fanny Chernel

Consider This

The Power of the Word

By Rabbi Malcolm Matitiani

Every morning we Jews recite the following blessing: *Baruch she-amar ve-haya ha-olam, baruch hu, baruch oseh vereishit, baruch omer ve-oseh, baruch gozer u-me-kayeim...* (Blessed is the One who spoke and the world came to be, blessed is the One, blessed be the One who maintains creation, blessed is the One who speaks and does, blessed is the One who decrees and establishes...).

This blessing acknowledges the power of the spoken word. Referring to the first chapter of Genesis which portrays God as articulating the divine intention of creating each stage of the world through speech, the blessing praises the Almighty whose words and decrees become reality. This ability of creating realities through verbal communication was bestowed on human beings who, like God, can articulate the abstract and thereby transform ideas and thoughts into concrete reality. Thus *Targum Onkelos* (the officially recognised Aramaic translation of the Torah) understands the verse, 'the Eternal God formed the Human from the dust of the earth. God blew into his nostrils the breath of life, and the Human became a living being' (Genesis 2:7) to mean that on blowing the breath of life into Adam's nostrils, God gave Adam 'the spirit of speech' (*va-ha-vat be-adam leru'ach memalla*). *Onkelos* recognised that the gift of language distinguishes humanity from the other animals of the earth. Indeed according to the Torah, God asked Adam to name the other animals, thus illustrating the point that human beings are god-like in the sense that we have the ability to create through language.

It is no accident that Judaism is a text-based religion and culture. The destruction of the Second Temple

in 70CE led to the transformation of Judaism from a religion based on animal sacrifices to one based on Torah study, prayer and the performance of mitzvot; from a faith dependant on a fixed sacred space to one based on the portable 'sanctuary' of books. The reliance on text rather than on a Temple enabled the Jews to survive persecution and expulsion and allowed them to set up communities and live meaningful, God-fearing lives wherever they relocated. Unlike material wealth and possessions, knowledge and the ability to express ideas and debate opinions can never be taken away by the persecutor as is illustrated by the examples of Rabbis Akiva (*Berachot* 61b) and Yehudah ben Bava (*Sanhedrin* 14a).



While language has the potential to create and promote life, it also has the potential to create negativity, hatred and destruction. Torah and rabbinic teaching counsel care in the use of language and especially the spoken word which is often used in anger and impetuously. *Lashon ha-ra* (evil speech) or slander is considered by the sages as a transgression akin to murder (*Bava Metzia* 58b) and punishable by the loss of a share in the world to come (*Avot* 3:12).

Jewish history teaches the danger of hate-speech and slander. Thousands of Jews were murdered as a direct result of false accusations about Jewish practice and behaviour. The blood libels of medieval and even

Temple Israel had a fabulous High Holiday season.

We celebrated being back together in person for the first time in three years, as well as continuing our innovative and ground-breaking hybrid model to ensure that our online and in-person communities could worship together throughout the chaggim. Along with engaging family

programming and inspiring shiurim, we joined over 200 communities around the world in a new tradition called Reverse Tashlich, pulling our sins out of the sea by cleaning up our beaches together. And how incredible to be back together in our communal sukkot and to be dancing together with the Torah on Simchat Torah! A great way to kick off 5783!



Reverse Tashlich at Milneron Beach

twentieth century Europe testify to the destructive capabilities of language. Of course the most tragic and evil result of the misuse of language was the *Shoah* which led to the physical murder of six million Jews and the destruction of Jewish European culture, a loss that has not been regained more than seventy years after the end of WWII. This mass genocide was the direct result of the anti-Semitism, xenophobia and paranoia of ruthless madmen who used the power of language to express their noxious ideas. Joseph Goebbels, Minister of 'Public Enlightenment and Propaganda' used the spoken and written word to

convince the people of Europe that the Jews and other 'undesirables' needed to be exterminated; spreading vicious lies about the Jews' part in the defeat of the Axis powers during WWI and accusing us of plotting to take over the world.

Today the State of Israel faces a similar propaganda campaign launched by extremists who wish to see the eradication of the Jewish State and a second genocide of the Jews. The most despicable slur is the statement that the *Shoah* is a figment of the Jews' imagination, designed to gain sympathy for the Israeli cause.

continues on page 23

Mazaltov to last month's Bnei Mitzvah!



Jemma Nelson
15 October



Erez Prochnik
29 October



Temple Israel Cape Town is keeping the city clean with Mayor Geordin Hill-Lewis

SUNDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2022
12PM VENUE TBC






The Consul General to the United States, Todd Haskell, in partnership with the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies and the South African Jewish Museum, invites members of the community to a talk by renowned historian:

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As Special Envoy, Lipstadt leads efforts to advance U.S. foreign policy to counter antisemitism throughout the world.

Please join us for this is a unique opportunity to hear from, and engage with Ambassador Lipstadt on the challenge of rising global antisemitism.

Venue details will be provided upon registration.

Tuesday, 8 November 2022 | 2pm – 3:30pm

Seating limited, RSVP essential.

[Click here to RSVP](#)



Astra Centre celebrates Sukkot

Last month, Astra workers celebrated Sukkot in the sukkah at Coffee Time during Chol HaMoed.

They enjoyed snacks and drinks while Executive Committee member Selwyn Furman explained the meaning of Sukkot and made the appropriate blessings for the Sukkah.

The sukkah was put up by staff at the Centre and decorated with artwork created by the Astra workers.



Executive Committee member Selwyn Furman explained the meaning of Sukkot and made the appropriate blessings for the Sukkah.



Astra workers enjoyed their time in the Coffee Time Sukkah.

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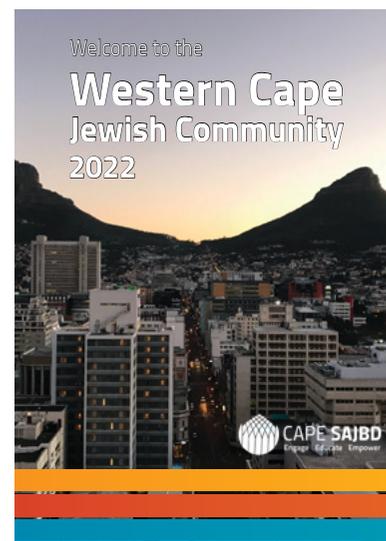
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Download your guide to Jewish Western Cape

The Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies has created an updated guide to all things Jewish in the Western Cape.



Brought to you by the Cape South African Jewish Board of Deputies



Working to eliminate maternal and infant HIV in South Africa

By Dr Dvora Joseph Davey

Adolescent girls and women in South Africa continue to experience significant risk of HIV, especially when pregnant or breastfeeding.

If women acquire HIV during this time, they are at increased risk of transmitting HIV to their infant during pregnancy, labour or breastfeeding.

Thankfully, we have seen significant declines in new infant infections in the last two decades, decreasing from over 400 000 in 2000 to 152 000 in 2020. But the pace of the decline has slowed in recent years. At the current rate, there is growing concern that progress towards the elimination of mother-to-child HIV transmission (EMTCT) has stalled. The targets for 2020 — fewer than 20 000 new child HIV infections — were missed by a substantial margin. Despite this, I remain confident that we can *eliminate* infant HIV in the coming decade. To do so, we need continued research, funding and most of all understanding to enable this change. This is my story of how I became involved in this field.

I share this writing with you so that we can build more knowledge and understanding of this health and human rights issue that affects so many people around us. As a Jew, I feel strongly about my role in repairing the world (*Tikkun Olam*) and working with my community of women, around the world,

to strengthen and empower us all to live healthy, fulfilling lives.

When I started working with pregnant women as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Gabon, Central Africa, I was 22 years old and fresh out of University from Colorado (USA). I was trained to counsel pregnant and postpartum women about HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Most women were my age or younger, and some had several children already. I did not yet have children, but I lived in their community where I learned from them and with them about their stories and their vulnerability.

Most pregnant women were already married and had never used condoms. Most women in rural Gabon had never seen a condom. How to get a young, pregnant woman to start using condoms was a challenge. My work quickly changed from working on 'behaviour change' to listening with compassion and empathy. It was there that I found my love for public health. Working to empower young women became my passion.

I have continued this role in my current work as Associate Professor of Epidemiology at UCLA (USA) and UCT, where I conduct HIV and reproductive health studies among pregnant and breastfeeding women. I implement research on how best to improve maternal HIV care and prevention to empower mothers to prevent HIV infection and protect their infants as well.

PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is the use of ARV drugs by HIV-negative individuals to reduce the acquisition of HIV infection. The results from randomised trials and other demonstration projects, including our own, found oral PrEP containing tenofovir to be safe and protective against HIV infection across populations, including pregnant and breastfeeding women.



However, some women report facing challenges to taking daily oral PrEP. These include the need to take a pill every day, opposition from partners, and potential side-effects during the first month of use. These concerns suggest that additional options are needed for PrEP delivery.

Expanding PrEP to include different consumption options will become key in the near future. For now we continue to counsel pregnant women on methods to treat and prevent HIV and to protect their infant.

I remain passionate about my work improving the integration of HIV prevention and reproductive health options for pregnant and breastfeeding women in South Africa. I am also confident that we can and will ELIMINATE infant HIV in the coming decade.

Dr. Dvora Joseph Davey is a member of [The Mensch Network](#). Click here to learn more about her work at [UCLA](#); and [UCT](#); or follow her on twitter at [@dvora_davey](#)

SA JEWS OF LITHUANIAN & POLISH HERITAGE ARE ELIGIBLE TO OBTAIN EUROPEAN CITIZENSHIP & EU PASSPORT



I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself.

With only a 4 hour flight to Warsaw and Vilnius this enables me to arrive quickly and safely to Poland and Lithuania, where I closely collaborate with local professionals in assisting me trace required documents for your successful applications to reinstate you as an European citizen.

"Having lived in Poland for 7 years I have great in-depth understanding of European immigration laws."

I have been operating in the South African market with our Jewish communities since March 2018, and visit every 3-4 months which will allow us to meet in-person.

I will be in South Africa from 6-20 November 2022.
6-13 November – JHB
13-20 November – CT

YOU CAN REACH ME ON:

☎ +48 783 953 223,
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A common misconception people have is that European citizenship and EU Passport can only be obtained if one has documents proving lineage. The fact is that not having documents proving lineage, does not lead to your disqualification of eligibility.

In many cases the required documents can be obtained in the European country of origin!



Having European citizenship offers more than one benefit, besides the fact that it makes traveling far easier than with a South African passport...

As we are all fully aware of the current situation in South Africa where we face many uncertainties not just for today but for our children's future too.

While we are still having it relatively good here. We know that the time will come where as Jews we will look for alternative options. **Then having a**

The most important thing to take into consideration is understanding that prior to the end of WWII, the European map was very different from the one we know today.

Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and till 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/countries of the Great Russia Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe.

Until 1918 residents of these territories were of Russian citizenship – as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships did not exist. Therefore applications

European citizenship will be that tool we are looking for.

As we know, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore you are now entitled to reinstate it and obtain your EU passport.

for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on if one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen.

However, a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 – will not be eligible.

In addition, since borders in Europe were shifted during and after WWII, one's eligibility for a Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the City from which his/her ancestor lived in. Where borders shifted and cities changed nationalities Jews who left Vilnius and its region will be declined where as a similar application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship could be approved.



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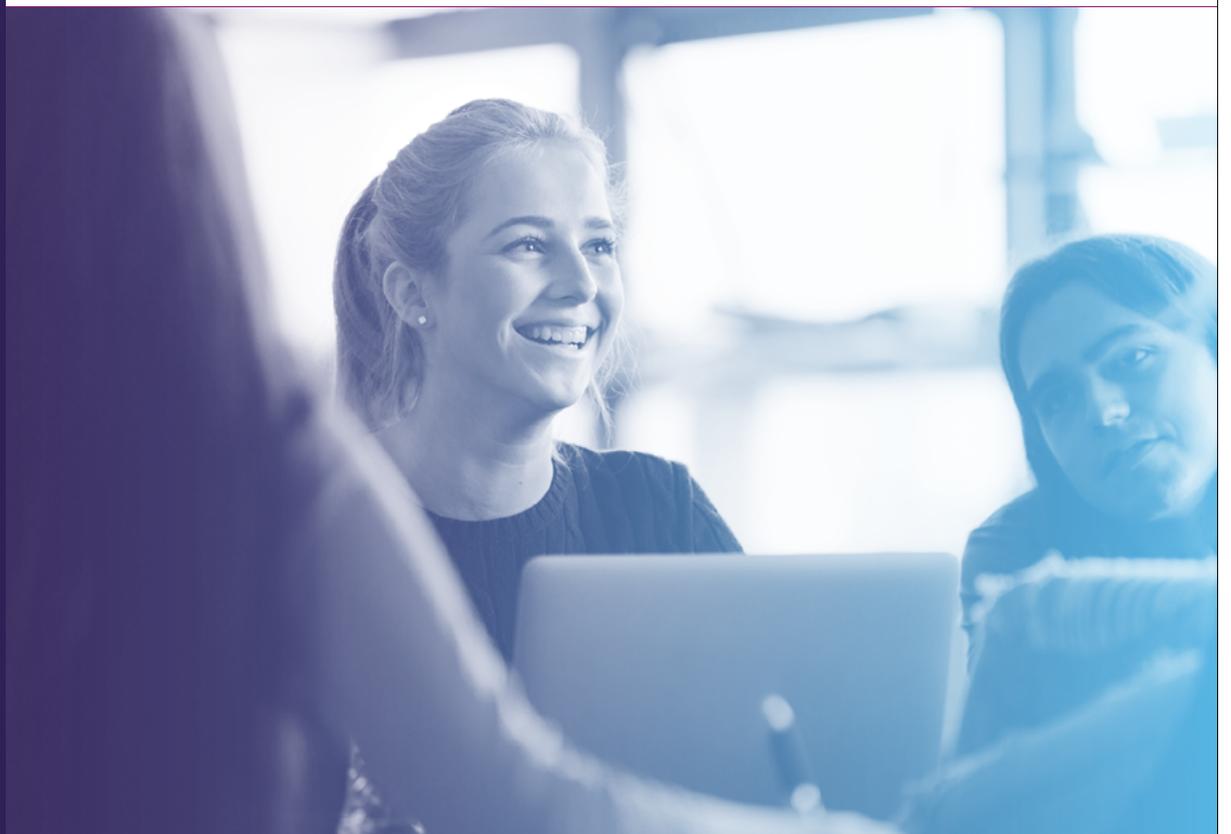
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Observance and environmentalism: being a Jewish South African tree hugger

By Ilana Stein (First published in Dafkadotcom June 2022)

I always wanted to be a game ranger. When I began working in conservation tourism, I discovered a world filled with people who discussed rhino numbers and elephant footprints with an intensity that inspired me.

I was thrilled to be part of this group of people who, when faced with habitat destruction, extinction of species and environmental degradation, would unequivocally declare “not on our watch.” But as a practicing Jew I found myself asking whether Judaism explicitly cares about the environment.

It was only with the advent of the Internet in the late 1990s that I found there were other Jews who were not only committed to protecting the environment, but who saw such action as a Jewish value. I discovered the ‘Zoo Rabbi’, Natan Sliifkin, for example, who wrote about the “mitzvah of conservation”. This encouraged me to delve further into the Torah, where I found that there was plenty that spoke to care for the earth.

Religion and environment

In *Environmental Education and Education for Sustainability*, a South African textbook on environmental education, Johann Dreyer argues that all world religions have environmental ethics embedded within their creeds or commands. Yet, as Dreyer points out, adherents do not necessarily follow or live by these decrees. This includes Judaism.

Just as in the case of other religious groups, in Judaism there are many comprehensive stipulations concerning the utilisation of and disposition towards the environment. The question is why these stipulations are apparently not observed by all its adherents (p.114).

Garden of Eden — philosophy and laws

The idea of care for and guardianship of the earth is found explicitly in Genesis 2:15: ‘And the Lord God took the human and placed the human in the Garden [of Eden], to work it and to guard it (*le’ovdah uleshomrah*)’. It is this balanced view, of benefiting from the world’s abundance

the disposal of dangerous waste materials in the public domain (*Talmud Baba Kama 3a*), against air pollution (*Mishna Baba Batra 2:9*) and even littering (Maimonides, *Hilkhot Tmidin U’Musafin 2:15*).

There’s a law regarding environmental planning, possibly the first in history: *Command the children of Israel... open land around the cities shall be given to the Levites... And the open land shall be for their cattle and for their possessions and for all their animals* (Numbers 35:2-5). This idea, that there be greenery around a city is similar to today’s concept of creating parks as ‘green lungs’ within an urban environment.

Jews are halachically commanded to live lighter on the earth. *Shmita* — the sabbatical year — is a law mentioned first in Exodus 23:10-11: (10) *And six years thou shalt sow thy land, and gather in the increase thereof; (11) but the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie fallow, that the poor of thy people may eat; and what they leave the beast of the field shall eat.*

As can be seen in this text, what seems to be an agricultural event is in fact also a societal imperative: the beneficiaries of the *Shmita* are the poor. *Shmita* is seen as a resetting of values, of disconnecting us from the race for more things, more money; it resets the haves and the have-nots. It encourages us to live more mindfully and less materialistically.

As Rabbi A h a r o n Lichtenstein states, “*S h m i t a* detaches man from his material property and from that almost crazy idea that overcomes him the other six years of the sabbatical cycle, namely, that he must hold for

with disdain, and the major faith traditions typically either saw environmentalists as the enemy of faith and God, or tended to start the conversation on the back foot — in a defensive mode. This was true across religions, and only in the US were ‘green Jews’ beginning to emerge: *Canfei Nesharim* (On the Wings of Eagles), *Hazon* and *COEJL*.

Are South African Jews green?

Despite the growth of the green movement in global Jewish circles, the South African Jewish community has lagged behind. In an attempt to instill greater environmental awareness in the South African Jewish community, I began teaching courses called Ethics of Eden through the *Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning*. The aim was to show that environmental ethics can not only be found in Judaism but are central values. While those who attended seemed to enjoy and learn from it, I felt that I needed to evaluate better the South African Jewish community’s approach and commitment to the environment.

In 2020, for my Master’s thesis, I investigated whether combining environmental adult education and Jewish education could inspire Jewish adults in South Africa to connect with the natural world, and encourage them to live more sustainably. My findings suggested the following were impediments to living a more green and sustainable life:

Lack of knowledge about the Torah’s views on environment:

This is primarily because it is not taught currently in any of the Jewish day schools in Jewish Studies.

In the ultra-orthodox communities, environmentalism is seen as the preserve of the liberal left. Further, grappling with certain concepts, such as evolution, is seen as dangerous to belief.

All interviewees mentioned the novelty of bringing Jewish thought into a contemporary subject and seeing the environment as expressed as a Jewish value. The responses included:

They had no idea that Judaism had any environmental concepts.

The respondent knew that nature was mentioned in the *Tanakh*, as in agricultural law or the creation narrative etc, but had never seen these being connected to contemporary environmental issues.

The interviewees had not learned about the environment from religious leaders (rabbis).

Consumerism: In the many sectors of the community, consumerism is rife and the view of limiting oneself for the good of the planet is not seen as important, let alone a Jewish value.

A disconnect with nature — Cape Town vs Johannesburg Jewry:

Amongst Johannesburg Jewry, the disconnect from nature was most prevalent.

continues on page 20



and property.”

Religion vs. environment — or religion and environment?

While the theory suggests that the two meld together seamlessly, historically this has not been the case. Religion and environmentalism have been seen to be at odds. In an article in the journal *Science* in 1967, Charles Lynn White famously blamed the state of the world, with its rapacious greed for development and fossil fuels, on the Judeo-Christian tradition. From the 1970s onwards, environmentalists often viewed religion

[back to contents](#)

yet understanding that it is precious and precarious, something to be protected, and therefore to be used mindfully and cautiously, that should be a guiding light not only to those who connect to Torah but to the world in which we live.

The Torah and Talmud have numerous laws that, if kept to their full extent, speak explicitly to this. These include not destroying anything needlessly (Deuteronomy 20:19); not being cruel to animals (Exodus 23:5); and laws forbidding

dear life to his property and possessions. During the sabbatical year, we are inculcated with the idea of yielding and waiver, of detachment from the world of money



The SAJM's unforgettable visitor

Not a person in the room was left unmoved on Tuesday 25 October when hearing the deafblind priest-rabbi Cyril Axelrod OBE telling the story of his life.

If the story had been only about overcoming immense obstacles, learning to communicate with disability and changing thousands of lives, *dayenu*, it would still have been enough to touch every heart. But this story was all those things and also something more profound. Through his great friend and interpreter, Larry Kaufman, the 82-year-old revealed a life with more than average liability, frustration and fear, but also tremendous achievement, trust, friendship and love.

With hilarious anecdotes showing his wicked sense of humour, Cyril explained what it felt like to live every day without sound or sight, how he was encouraged by teachers as a boy to stay strong, how he communicates through touch, how he grew up in an Orthodox Jewish home, became a Catholic priest but never lost his Jewish identity, how he met the Queen and received an OBE and how he worked with deaf communities in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland and China. Without planning to, Cyril showed us that his unique combination of determination, fighting spirit, generosity, humour and humility is why he has managed to do more in his life than many people who can see and hear.

Two moments stood out during the evening. The first came when Cyril and Larry, in answer to a question about their decades-long friendship, spoke about the depth of their connection and made us laugh at the description of how they argue! The second lump-in-throat moment was when Cyril presented to SAJM director Gavin Morris the beautiful stole that he received over fifty years ago when he was ordained as a priest, embroidered with Jewish symbols by a nun who knew his background.

After signing his books and meeting most of the audience, Cyril Axelrod rubbed his face and yawned. At the end of another busy day, the deafblind painter, writer, gardener and aromatherapist who has climbed Macchu Picchu and travelled all over the world was ready for a good night's sleep.



Cyril presented SAJM director Gavin Morris with a beautiful stole.



Pippa Raphaely-Walls and SAJM director Gavin Morris with Cyril Axelrod



Deafblind priest-rabbi Cyril Axelrod OBE tells his story.



Larry Kaufmann with Cyril Axelrod talking with a guest

continues from page 19

Observance and environmentalism: being a Jewish South African tree hugger

Paradoxically, many are enthusiastic about going to the Kruger Park but do not see a connection between nature and a need to protect the environment. Further, most do not connect nature to a spiritual identity.

Amongst respondents in Cape Town, there was a greater connection to and concern for the environment.

Having said this, there are limitations to the findings. Firstly, the sample size of my study was extremely small. Secondly, since I was approaching those who had already taken this course, the sample was self-selecting.

Conclusion

The concept of humanity being inherently connected to and dependent on the earth should be part of all Jewish schools' curricula. Indeed, this is more vital now than ever, not only from an environmental point of view, but from a moral one in the face of the 21st century's drive for mindless consumption.

Two concepts may help the South African Jewish community rethink its current approach. One is broad, the other, basic:

Shmita is not kept outside of Israel, but its inherent idea of 'reset' should

be. As Avi Sagi and Yedidya Stern write, "[Shmita is] a call to set apart a bubble in time, which slows economic activity down, and which fosters care, compassion and even partnership between all those who share the earth, including animals. The race will resume in the eighth year, because humanity needs it, but the idea and its memory will linger beyond the confines of the sabbatical year, to the other six years of feverish productivity."

Perhaps more importantly is the concept of *mitzvah* — the idea that individual actions can and do change the world. If we can get past the headlines, the denials and the apathy, and see the blue-green planet as the home that the Creator saw as 'very good' (Genesis 1:31) and understand that the power of one act, regardless of whether one wants to do it, whether big or small, can in a very real sense bring about *Tikkun Olam* — the healing of the world.

Ilana Stein combines her degrees in Nature Conservation and English, and an MA in Jewish Education in her work as a writer for conservation and ecotourism in Africa and as a Head of Education of The Academy of Jewish Thought and Learning in Johannesburg.

"I AM SEEKING. I AM STRIVING. I AM IN IT WITH ALL MY HEART."
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BOOKS

The Netanyahus by Joshua Cohen

The sober royal-blue cover of the *The Netanyahus* by Joshua Cohen suggests a straightforward historical account of the life and times of Israel's ninth prime minister.

The full title that appears on the title page of the 2022 Pulitzer prize-winning book is, *The Netanyahus — An account of a Minor and Ultimately Even Negligible Episode in the History of a Very Famous Family*. It is anything but a dry and factual homage to Benjamin Netanyahu.

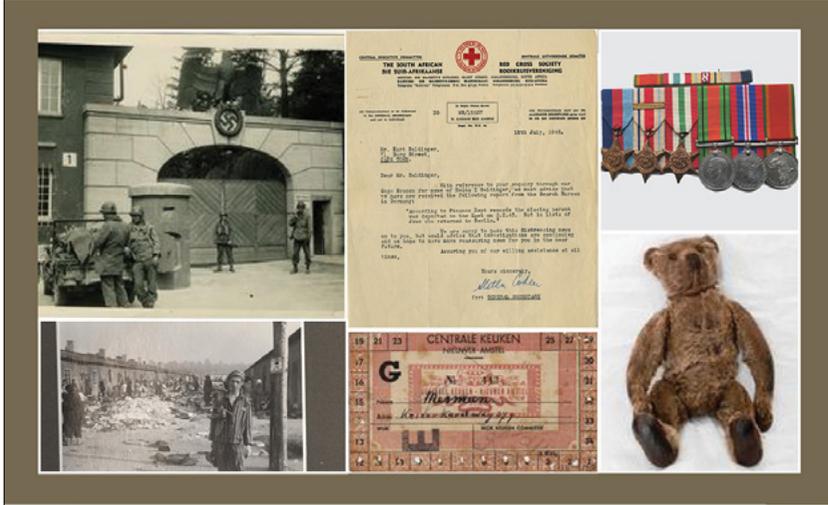
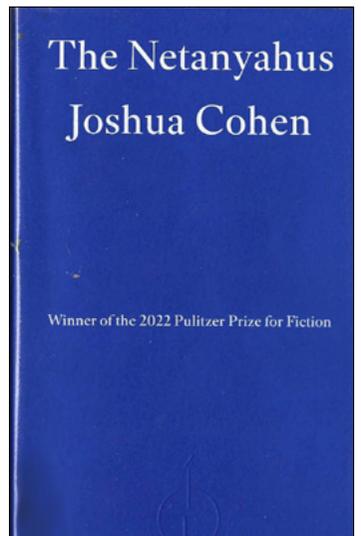
The 'minor and ultimately even negligible episode in the history of [this] very famous family' takes the form of a highly fictionalised and hilarious escapade, inspired by an account of an actual visit by the Netanyahu family to Cornell University in the late 1950s, as related to the author by acclaimed critic and Yale professor Harold Bloom. Benzion Netanyahu — Bibi's father — was an academic whose field of study focused on Jewish history in Medieval Spain. He was also a committed and active member of the Revisionist movement.

"A mordant, linguistically deft historical novel about the ambiguities of the Jewish-American experience, presenting ideas and disputes as volatile as its tightly-wound plot."
<https://www.pulitzer.org/winners/joshua-cohen>

Like the non-fictional Bloom at the non-fictional Cornell University, the narrator of this story — the fictitious Ruben Blum — is an academic at the fictitious Corbin College in upstate New York. By virtue of their shared roots, Blum is assumed by his colleagues to be best qualified to host fellow Jewish academic, Benzion Netanyahu when he visits the college to interview for tenure. Benzion arrives mid-winter (and mid-novel) with his wife and three young sons in tow, and the five turn out to be the world's worst house-guests. But before that, the first half of the book is spent in Ruben's highly entertaining and ironic mind as he grapples with both the mundane and the profound implications that come with his identity as a middle-aged, middle-class Jewish-American intellectual, living in a small very un-Jewish university town.

Joshua Cohen uses his exceptional way with words to build a raucous and entertaining read on the foundation of this true-life event, while deftly unpacking the complex identity politics that come with being a Jewish American (or American Jew). He offers a lense through which to gain insight into Benjamin Netanyahu the man, and politician, all while entertaining the reader with many laugh-out-loud moments.

The Netanyahus can be borrowed from the Gitlin Library, or purchased at The Book Lounge.



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Please contact us by emailing archives@holocaust.org.za



Transportation of patients of the sanatorium in Liebenau, Photograph, August 1940

EUTHANASIA AS PRELUDE TO THE HOLOCAUST:

Jewish Patients in the Operation T4

After 1933, Jewish psychiatric patients faced a double threat: firstly from the anti-Semitic persecution of the Nazi state, and secondly from the hereditary hygiene and "racial hygiene measures" of the health administration.

In "Operation T4" they were treated differently from non-Jewish patients. Jewish patients – regardless of their illness or their ability to work – were killed solely because of their Jewish origin. The handful of Jewish patients that survived "Operation T4" were later killed in the extermination camps.



Astrid Ley, PhD, deputy head of Sachsenhausen Memorial and Museum (Brandenburg Memorials Foundation), Oranienburg, Germany, is an historian and an historian of medicine. She is working as senior historian and exhibition curator at Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp Memorial. Her main research interest is medicine under National Socialism and, in particular, medical care in concentration camps.



Wednesday 16 November, 7pm
 Cape Town Holocaust & Genocide Centre,
 88 Hatfield St, Gardens

Light refreshments will be served. Booking essential: 021 462 5553 or admin@holocaust.org.za

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The law and green rights

By Anton Katz SC

In my travels in South Africa and other parts of Africa, what always strikes me is the immense poverty of so many people. And I think, if only there could be development, poverty would diminish and hopefully be eradicated.

Improved roads and transport nodes with better infrastructure such as hospitals, housing and schools would be a good start to improve lives.

Without development, poverty will increase. Food may become scarce and health crises will continue. So is development the panacea? Development means — at least at some level — digging holes in the ground and pouring concrete as a foundation to the building to be constructed. It means moving communities from the rural land they live on, to make way for solid hospitals, decent school buildings and transport hubs. It means blasting under the sea to explore possible oil and gas deposits. It can result in the disruption of animal and plant life, some of which may be needed for the survival of human life. There can be no doubt that climate change — and in particular global warming — are having a profound effect on the way humans live and interact with planet earth.

Where, if anywhere, does the law fit in the green issues that arise in human activity? Does environmental justice even exist?

After World War II, the Cold War between the West and the Soviet Union began. A key feature of the Cold War was the differing philosophies concerning human rights. The West placed a premium on first generation rights — the right not to be tortured, civil and political rights, freedom of expression and religion. The Soviet bloc on the other hand believed that socio-economic rights took precedence. Those, such as the right to education, health care and housing are called second generation rights. Green rights, part of so-called third generation rights were seen as soft and not enforceable. No country took the right to a clean healthy environment seriously. At best, they were lofty aspirations. As the 1970s and 1980s progressed, the ozone layer started to become depleted and the spectre of global warming raised its head.

So, fast forward to 1994 and the enactment of the South African Constitution.

Green rights are expressly recognised in the Constitution. Section 24 states, 'Environment: Everyone has the right (a) to an environment that is not harmful to their health or well-being, and (b) to have the environment protected for the benefit of present and future generations, through reasonable legislative and other measures that (i) prevent pollution and ecological degradation; (ii) promote conservation; and (iii) secure ecologically sustainable development and use of natural resources while promoting justifiable economic and social development.'

Thus, Parliament must enact environmental laws that protect human health and wellbeing, and protect the environment. And the government must take measures to give effect to those laws. Courts must protect the green rights when they are asserted, and when they are violated by government or private parties. The national Parliament and provincial and local authorities have made many laws, ordinances and by-laws concerning the environment. The kinds of human activity raised by these laws range from mining activities, building developments, the construction of golf courses and estates, the use and pollution of the ocean, river and dam water and the air and forests. More exotic topics, such as the use of biogas energy plants, the requirements for dealing with hazardous waste and photovoltaic power plants are all covered.

Almost every human activity that impacts natural resources is covered and regulated. Most authorities try to ensure that the law is complied with. So when a developer seeks permission to build a shopping centre, it must satisfy the local and provincial authorities that the building of the new centre will not harm the environment. An environmental impact study (EIA) must be produced in order to obtain permission to build. And EIAs must include a large range of items. They must include a basic assessment of any impact on the environment, and a scoping

report. Objectors may challenge the report and ultimately the competent authority decides whether or not to approve the development. If approval is granted, it may be subject to a raft of environmental conditions.

Earlier this year, the Pretoria High Court decided a case involving a challenge to air pollution in the Highveld Priority area. The government accepted that the high levels of ambient air pollution in the Highveld Priority Area is, in general, harmful to human health and wellbeing. The minister accepted that, "[I]n general... poor quality at the hotspots in the Highveld Priority Area has adverse consequences and impacts upon human health and well-being."

But the government argued that problem was the minister's responsibility, and that the Court could not issue any orders against the government. It was the government's role and responsibility to allocate state resources as it saw fit, and there were other more important challenges that they were confronted with. The High Court rejected the minister's defence, and in so doing, accepted the Constitutional Court's comment that sustainable development requires an appreciation that economic development cannot occur without environmental protection. "[D]evelopment cannot subsist upon a deteriorating environmental base. Unlimited development is detrimental to the environment, and the destruction of the environment is detrimental to development... Yet the environment cannot be protected if development does not pay attention to the costs of environmental destruction. The environment and development are thus inexorably linked." Sustainable development is integrally linked with the principle of 'intergenerational justice'. This is a rejection of short-termism as it requires the state to consider the long-term impact of pollution on future generations.

In a similar vein, the Supreme Court of Appeal has accepted, "As we continue to reset our

environmental sensitivity barometer, we would do well to have regard to what was said about planet Earth by Al Gore, a former vice-president of the United States and an internationally recognised environmental activist engaged in educating the public about the dangers of global warming and those steps to be taken in response, to reduce carbon emissions (for which he was a joint recipient of the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize).

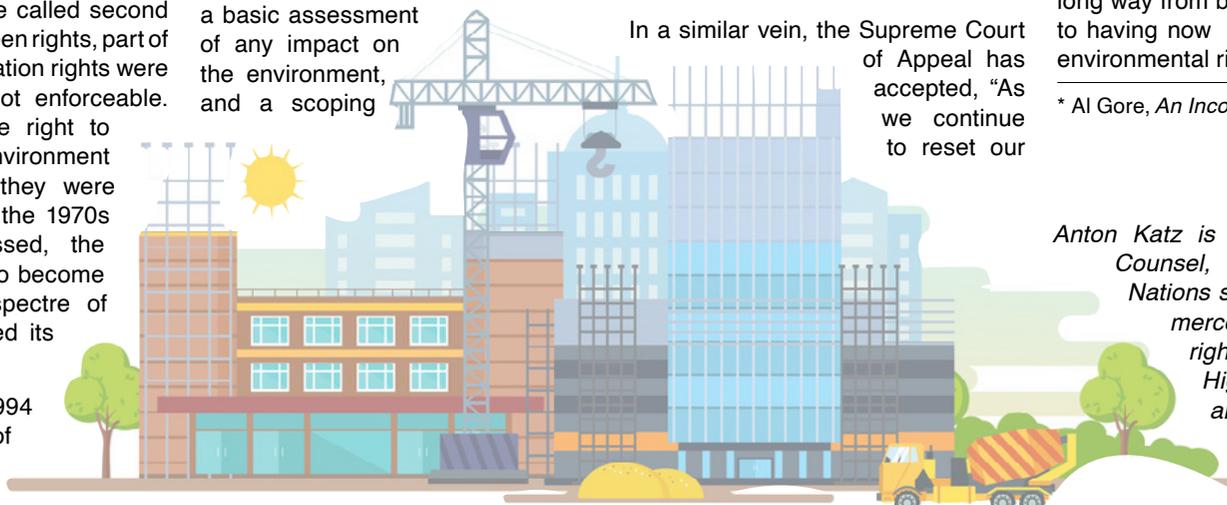
"You see that pale, blue dot? That's us. Every-thing that has ever happened in all of human history, has happened on that pixel. All the triumphs and all the tragedies, all the wars, all the famines, all the major advances... It's our only home. And that is what is at stake, our ability to live on planet Earth, to have a future as a civilization. I believe this is a moral issue, it is your time to seize this issue, it is our time to rise again to secure our future."*

On the importance of developing a greater sensitivity in relation to the protection and preservation of the environment for future generations, Gore had the following to say: "Future generations may well have occasion to ask themselves, 'What were our parents thinking? Why didn't they wake up when they had a chance?' We have to hear that question from them, now."*As a country, we would, do well to heed that warning.

The Pretoria High Court, in heeding these words, declared the poor air quality to be a violation of constitutional rights. And effectively ordered the minister to put in place regulations within twelve months to deal with the air pollution in the Highveld Priority area. Third generation green rights have come a long way from being lofty aspirations to having now become enforceable environmental rights.

* Al Gore, *An Inconvenient Truth*

Anton Katz is a practising Senior Counsel, former United Nations special rapporteur on mercenaries and human rights, former Acting High Court Judge, and an admitted attorney in New York. He was born and raised in Sea Point.



continues from page 15

The Power of the Word

It is a sad indictment on humanity that thousands of people believe these and other examples of hate speech, and are motivated by these untruths to murder innocent men, women and children.

These examples from history point to the profundity of the Talmudic statement that there is not much of a leap from hate speech and slander to physical murder.

Of course the dangers of misusing language are not always as dramatic. Speaking about another in their absence can lead to dire social consequences by destroying that person's standing in the community, and diminishing his or her spiritual and emotional self-worth. While a physical wound eventually heals, emotional scarring caused by the written or spoken word can often fester through generations. The Talmud (*Ta'anit* 20a-b) relates a story about Rabbi Eleazar ben Rabbi Shimeon who replied to a man's greeting by insulting his physical appearance. After realising his transgression and attaining forgiveness, Rabbi Eleazar entered the *Bet Hamidrash* and taught, "A man should always be gentle as the reed and let him never be unyielding as the cedar. And for this reason the reed merited, that of it should be made a pen for the writing of the *Torah*, *Tefillin* and *Mezuzot*." It is the gentle and forgiving reed that is used to write the words of the *sefer Torah*, the *tefillin* and the *mezuzah*, the very symbols of our covenant with God and of our life-affirming values and traditions. May all that we say and write be gentle and yielding as the reed. Then we shall create positive realities that promote the sanctity of life, thus using the power of language as God intended.



Koleinu SA launches in Cape Town

By Jaime Uranovsky

In October, Koleinu, which translates to 'Hear Our Voices', officially launched in Cape Town.

In 2014, the helpline was started by Wendy Hendler and Rozanne Sack in Johannesburg, after both women were sexually abused by the same medical doctor. The founders struggled to find adequate support for abuse survivors in the Jewish community and vowed that no future survivor would have to navigate the process toward healing and justice alone. Over the years, the founders have attended various conferences and training workshops and have assembled a team that has a thorough understanding of different forms of abuse. Koleinu's aims are two-fold: to educate the community regarding how to respond to abuse, thereby fostering an environment in which survivors feel they can come forward safely; and to provide support to victims — whether they want to proceed with legal action or not.

Although the hotline has been run in Cape Town by Melanie Uranovsky since 2020; Koleinu Cape Town was officially launched by directors Wendy Hendler and Rozanne Sack at a function on 25 November at Marais Road Shul. All three addressed members of the public, Cape Town Torah High teachers and students, rabbis and rebbetzins in the community and therapists at Herzlia. Rozanne was also one of five speakers at *Women of Courage*, a Union of Jewish Women event held two days later.

Cape Town callers can contact Melanie on 074 180 5687. For more information, visit www.koleinu.co.za or email koleinusa@gmail.com.



Melanie Uranovsky (Koleinu Cape Town), and Rozanne Sack and Wendy Hendler (Koleinu Directors Johannesburg)

While Koleinu was designed to spotlight abuse in the Jewish community, anybody can use the helpline – Jewish or not, secular and ultra-orthodox, adults and children and regardless of sex or gender. The hotline covers all abuse: verbal, emotional, sexual, financial and/or religious. Importantly, callers need not provide their names. The volunteer will listen to the caller's experience while providing a safe space. The caller and the volunteer will then decide how to proceed and the latter will direct the caller to the right channels while remaining a source of support throughout the entire process.

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"Having lived in Poland for 7 years I have great in-depth understanding of European immigration laws."

I have been operating in the South African market with our Jewish communities since March 2018, and visit every 3-4 months which will allow us to meet in-person.

I will be in South Africa from 6-20 November 2022.
6-13 November – JHB
13-20 November – CT

YOU CAN REACH ME ON:
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A common misconception people have is that European citizenship and EU Passport can only be obtained if one has documents proving lineage. The fact is that not having documents proving lineage, does not lead to your disqualification of eligibility.

In many cases the required documents can be obtained in the European country of origin!



Having European citizenship offers more than one benefit, besides the fact that it makes traveling far easier than with a South African passport...

As we are all fully aware of the current situation in South Africa where we face many uncertainties not just for today but for our children's future too.

While we are still having it relatively good here. We know that the time will come where as Jews we will look for alternative options. **Then having a**

European citizenship will be that tool we are looking for.

As we know, the majority of South African Jews are descendants of Jews whose European citizenship was illegally deprived, and therefore you are now entitled to reinstate it and obtain your EU passport.

The most important thing to take into consideration is understanding that prior to the end of WWII, the European map was very different from the one we know today.

Countries like Poland and Lithuania did not exist as independent countries, and till 1918 these territories were only known as Lithuanian or Polish regions/countries of the Great Russia Empire who ruled all of north eastern Europe.

Until 1918 residents of these territories were of Russian citizenship – as Polish and Lithuanian citizenships did not exist. Therefore applications

for reinstatement of these citizenships can only be based on if one's ancestor was a Polish or Lithuanian citizen.

However, a descendant of an ancestor who left Europe prior to 1918 – will not be eligible.

In addition, since borders in Europe were shifted during and after WWII, one's eligibility for a Polish or Lithuanian citizenship depends on the City from which his/her ancestor lived in. Where borders shifted and cities changed nationalities Jews who left Vilnius and its region will be declined where as a similar application for reinstatement of Polish citizenship could be approved.



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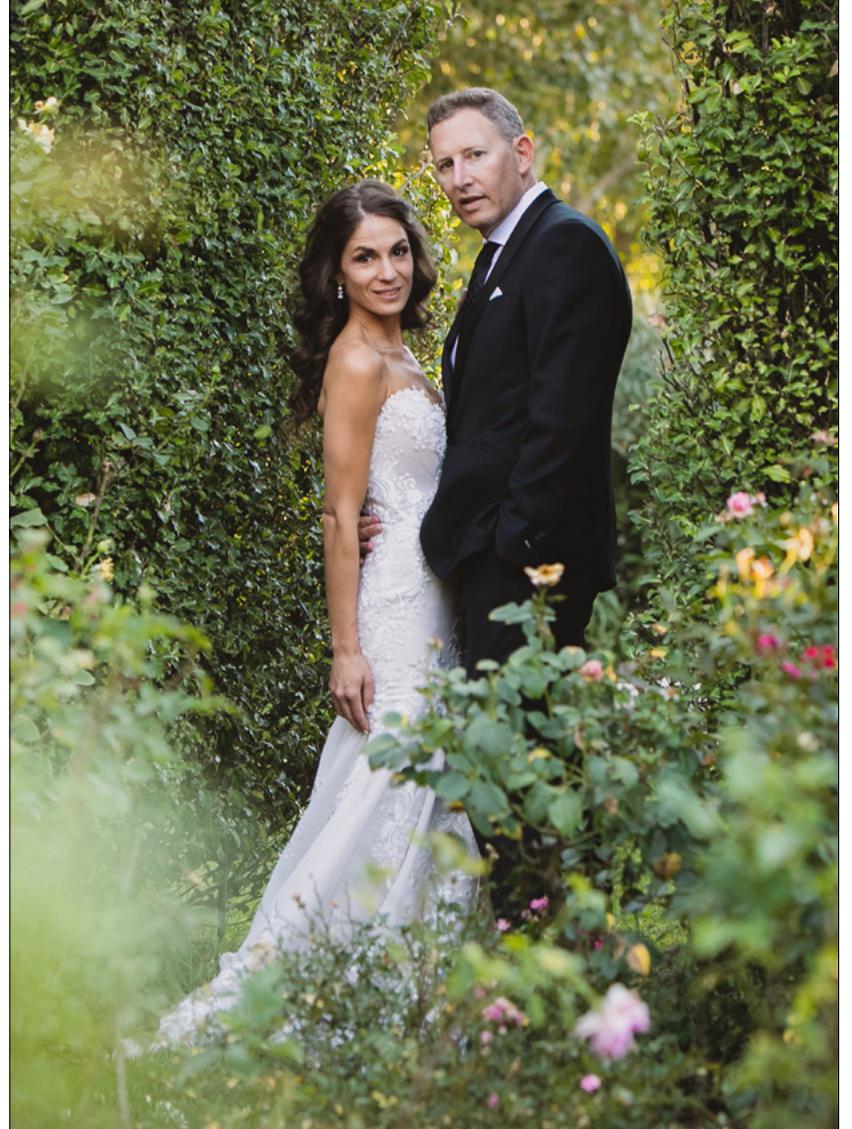


SIMCHA SNAPS



Alix Reingold and Jared Epstein

Photographer: Nikki Van Diermen



Orli Isaacs and Steven Liptz

Photographer: Gavin Casey

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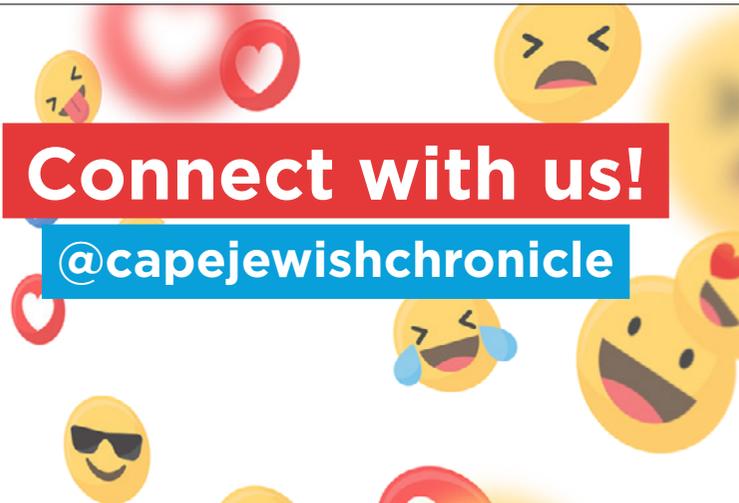
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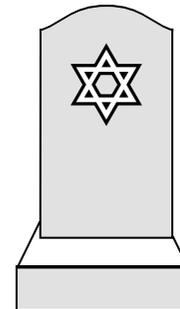
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