

ORT TECH TALK

Dealing with internet risks

ARIELLAH ROSENBERG

TECH TALK is brought to you by ORT South Africa, the largest international Jewish education and vocational training NGO that has benefited hundreds of thousands of people - Jewish and non-Jewish - in South Africa.

I would like to share with you some guidelines for internet safety for kids. Don't get me wrong, although things can go bad while surfing the net, I do not wish to put you off from giving your children the opportunity to explore and use the wonders of the net.

Some of the risks are

• Exposure to inappropriate material

The web is open to all people. There is no censorship on published material, let alone any control on the type of discussions occurring in forums, chat groups etc.

Some of the material is sexual, hateful or encourages activities that are dangerous or illegal. Children may come across this type of material even if they are not looking for it.

• Harassment and bullying

Bully messages that are aggressive, humiliating or harassing, can be posted on e-mail, instant messaging, chat rooms or on other social networks.

• Viruses and hackers

There's always the possibility of downloading a file that contains a virus that could damage the computer or increase the risk of access by "hackers" to your computer, thereby jeopardising your privacy.

• Legal and financial

Giving out parents' credit card number can result in financial and sometimes legal consequences.

How can parents reduce the risks?

1. *Searching safely:* Most search sites can fil-

ter out most adult-oriented content using SafeSearch.

At Google's main page, click Preferences. Under SafeSearch Filtering, click "Use strict filtering". Click "Save Preferences".

For MSN Search, click "Settings". Under SafeSearch, select "Strict - Filter sexually explicit text and image results". Select "Save".

At Yahoo's preference page, select "Edit" next to SafeSearch. Then select next to "Filter out adult Web, video, and image search results - SafeSearch On". Click "Save".

SafeSearch is helpful, but it's hardly a solution. It is easily disabled. Plus, adult-oriented images are everywhere, including in spam.

2. *Filter program.* Filtering software can block graphic spam. And it is more resistant to tampering.

3. *Sign a contract.* Your best control will be through interaction with your children. I suggest you download a "contract" from <http://safekids.com/kids-rules-for-online-safety>. Sign it with them and place it near the computer.

4. *Talk to your children.* While technological child-protection tools are worth exploring, they're not the solution. Remember, no program is perfect. There is always the possibility that something inappropriate could "slip through" or something that is appropriate will be blocked.

Filtering programs do not necessarily protect children from all dangerous activities. Even though it might block what children can see online, it may not block what they can say.

References sites for kids' safety on the net:

www.safekids.com

www.kimkomando.com

For comments, ideas and feedback,
e-mail ariellah@ortsa.org.za



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We're on your side

Man of the air par excellence, Ivan Tockar, dies

SHELLEY ELK

ONE OF only a small handful top ranking Jewish pilots in South Africa, died on Friday August 31, not in the air, but on the road. Ivan Tockar was still an active pilot at the time of his death at the age of 59.

Tockar, a senior captain at South African Airways and a past vice chairman of the South African Pilots Association, had an illustrious career in aviation and was accorded a flyby in Missing Man Flying Formation by the Flying Lions at his funeral at the West Park Jewish Cemetery in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

Rabbi Gavin Michal of the Baal Shem Tov congregation in

Linsfield West, said Tockar was the only Jewish fighter jet pilot in South Africa, since 1966.

"He flew Mirages at the age of 19. In 1971 he joined South African Airways from the SA Airforce and he flew almost every type of aircraft in the SAA, including 737s and Jumbos and many of his peers saw him as being in the top echelons of pilots in SAA."

He loved all things Americana, cowboys, cowboy boots, and he even flew wearing them; he wore belts, buckles while he flew, and he always wore cowboy shirts.

Tockar rebuilt a Ford Mustang to mint condition.

Rabbi Michal said Tockar loved going to air races in Reno, which is the biggest and fastest piston air-

craft race in the world, and he loved to see, smell and hear the sound of aircraft.

"There were, hundreds of pilots at the funeral and it was the biggest gathering of SAA pilots outside of SAA since the Helderberg crash," Rabbi Michal quoted one of the pilots.

Les Wahl fleet captain of the A3 40s was there, and flew in the Missing Man Formation, and when "all the guys finished flying and got out of their planes, they had tears in their eyes".

At prayers, "about 200 pilots in dress uniform were very respectful and that kind of camaraderie you only see in the movies", said Rabbi Michal.

Tockar was meticulous in his approach to flying and to driving - his vehicles were in top-notch condition, and he was a perfectionist. His standards were uncompromising and he expected this of his crew and friends as well. This is why he was tough at times.

Rabbi Michal said one of the chief pilots in SAA described Tockar as a consummate professional.

Tockar who grew up in Kimberley and later moved to Johannesburg, was a mentor, friend and loving father to Quentin (32) and Julian (30) and "he did not talk... he did", said his brother Trevor (56). Tockar was married to Monica, mother of Quentin and Julian, and he later married Lee-Anne. He is survived by his two sons and his brother.



Ivan Tockar in the cockpit of his Cessna.



The team who did the Missing Man Flying Formation before the funeral service of Ivan Tockar. Back: Gavin Brown, (pilot A3 40s), Ellis Levine (senior first officer of the A3 40s SAA), Les Wahl (fleet captain of the A3 40s with SAA), Paul Quick (pilot training captain SAA) and Arnie Menneghelli (owner of the Flying Lions).

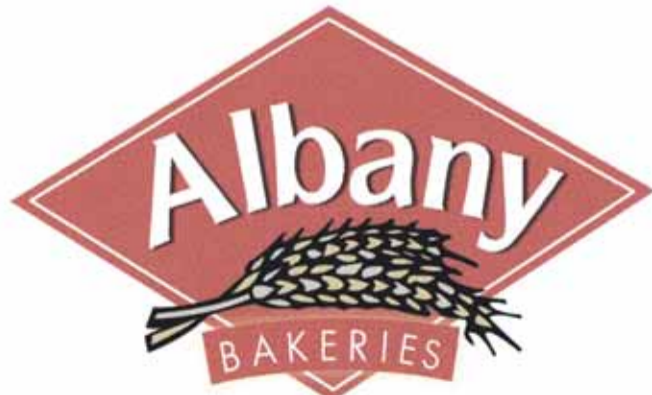
Front: Rabbi Gavin Michal (helicopter pilot, and rabbi of Baal Shem Tov Shul in Linksfield West), Skully Levine (chief training captain for SAA). (PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL QUICK)



Missing Man formation From the Sky (PHOTOGRAPH: PAUL QUICK)

Manna Bakery wishes all their customers and friends a happy New Year and well over the fast

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WHAT'S ON

Shelley Elk carro@global.co.za

NOTE: Deadline for all entries is 12:00 on the Friday prior to publication.

Key to organisations, venues, contact details and cost:

- The Jewish National Fund (JNF) Choir, Beyachad, 2 Elray St, Raedene. Contact Crystal Kaplan. 083-376-5999.
- The Jewish Women's Benevolent Society (JWBS) - Sandringham Gardens, 85 George Avenue Sandringham 2192. Contact Carolyn Sabbagh. (011) 485-5232.
- The Jewish Outlook Team. Contact Ryan Cane, Support line: 27 76 215 8600; e-mail info@jewishoutlook.org.za; website http://www.jewishoutlook.org.za
- Nechama Bereavement Counselling Centre - Room A304, 3rd Floor, hospital wing, Sandringham Gardens, 85 George Avenue, Sandringham, 2192. Contact (011) 640-1322.
- New Friendship Ladies Group - A group for single women - contact Lucille (011) 791-5226 or 082-927-5786.
- ORT South Africa - 44 Central Street, Cnr 10th Ave, Houghton. Contact (011) 728-7154.
- Rabbi Cyril Harris Community Centre (RCHCC) and Great Park Shul, Johannesburg. Contact Hazel, (011) 728-8088 or Rene Sidley (011) 728-8378. Cost usually R50, including refreshments.
- Second Innings, Johannesburg - Jewish Community Services - Donald Gordon Centre, 85 George Avenue Sandringham. Contact Grecia Gabriel, (011) 532-9616.
- The Simcha Friendship and Cultural Circle (SFCC), Johannesburg - Sandton Shul. Contact Sylvia Shull, (011) 783-5600.
- The United Sisterhood, 38 Oxford Road Parktown. Contact Helen (011) 646-2409. website: http://www.unitedsisterhood.co.za
- South African Zionist Federation (SAZF), Johannesburg - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street, Raedene. Contact Froma, (011) 645-2505.
- South African Jewish Board of Deputies (Jhb) - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street, Raedene. Contact (011) 645-2500.
- United Zionist Luncheon Club (UZLC), Johannesburg - Our Parents Home. Contact Gloria, (011) 485-4851 or 072-127-9421.
- Union of Jewish Women (UJW), Johannesburg - 1 Oak Street Houghton. Contact (011) 648-1053. Cost R10 for the Friendship Luncheon Club.
- WIZO Johannesburg - Beyachad, 2 Elray Street Raedene. Contact Joyce Chodos (011) 645-2548 or Sandy Kramer (011) 645-2515.
- Bikkur Cholim - Jewish Society for Visiting the Sick, 7A Chester Road, Greenside East, Johannesburg. Joy Gafin (011) 447-6689.
- Tiyulim (Jewish Outdoor Club) - Contact Greg 082-959-9026 or Martin 082-965-7419

Please note that all contact and venue details can be found in the key.

Today Friday (September 7)

- **UZLA** will be hosting Zara Jackson speaking on "Cohen at Klondyke".

Saturday evening (September 8)

- **WIZO Tzabar** is hosting "Jutro" at Sandton Square. (Liberty Theatre On The Square). Tickets R120 each. Secure parking. Proceeds to WIZO's charities. Bookings: Naomi 082-496-1111. Credit card payments: Sheila Levine (011) 645-2517.

Sunday (September 9)

- **WIZO Tzabar** is hosting "Jutro" at the Liberty Theatre-on-the-Square at 21:00. Tickets R120. To book phone Naomi 082-496-1111 or Sandy (011) 645-2515.

- **Second Innings** is hosting Alan Abel speaking on "The Wonderful World of Orchids" at the Floreum, Emmarentia Botanical Gardens at 10:00.

- **RCHCC** - "The Magic Flute" Mozart and Kentridge - an audiovisual presentation by Professor Mary Rorich (Musicology at Wits) at 19:30. Cost R80 including refreshments. Booking: Hazel or Rene (011) 728-8088/8378 After hours (011) 728-8378 hazelc@greatpark.co.za or renes@greatpark.co.za

- **SAUJS Ball** at 20:00 at The Capri Hotel, Savoy (next to kosher Nandos) (011) 645-2595/6.

- **Sandringham Gardens** will be hosting a concert at 13:00 by Ezra Silosky accompanied by Evelyn Green. Concert will be in Hebrew, English, Yiddish and French. Contact: 076-529-2678.

Monday (September 10)

- **UJW adult education centre** is hosting Dr Jocelyn

Hellig on "Interfaith Rivalry" with reference to the Arab-Israeli conflict, at 09:30 at 1 Oak Street, Houghton. Cost R15. Tel (011) 648-1053. info@ujw.co.za

- **Beit Midrash** - Kaplan Centre UCT, is hosting a talk "Zionism and the Messianic Idea: The Challenge of Israel" at 13:00. Contact Janine Blumberg (021) 650-3062.

Tuesday (September 11)

- **Second Innings** - Men's Not Out Club will be hosting Jack Bloom, "Chip off the DA" on "September 11, Six Years After: What Lessons To Be Learnt?" at 14:30 at Our Parents Home. Ladies welcome. Contact Lionel, (011) 728-5225.

Monday (September 17)

- **The King David High School Linksfield class of 1976** is celebrating their 30 year "Joburg Joll" reunion, at 17:30 at Metzuyan - on the square restaurant. Visit www.kdhs76.com for more information.

- **Chabad House of Savoy** - Rabbi Ari Shishler's weekly Young Adult Shiur at 20:00. Call (011) 440-6600.

Wednesday (September 19)

- **SFCC** is hosting a tea at the Skala Jazz Club in Alexandra. Transport cost R25, refreshments not included. Meet at Sandton Shul at 10:00. Booking essential.

- **Cape Town UJW Adult Education** is hosting Lila Bruk on "Your Health - What You Need to be Aware of" at Stonehaven, 7 Albany Road, Sea Point. Tel: (021) 434-9555. Entrance: R12.

Sunday (September 23)

- **Second Innings** is hosting Jacques Roos speaking on "The Piano Man" at the Gerald Horwitz Lounge Golden Acres at 10:00.

Sunday (September 30)

- **Second Innings** is hosting Prof Jocelyn Hellig speaking on "Remembering the Holocaust" at the Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres at 10:00.

Tuesday (October 2)

- **RCHCC** in association with The Viktor Frankl Institute of SA presents a series of talks by a variety of experts in the field of logotherapy and existential analysis, "What is Life Expecting Of Us?" Mark Durstan on "Absentee and Permissive Parenting Styles and the Moral Decay of Our Youth". Cost R130 and R95 for students and pensioners. RSVP essential.

Sunday (October 7)

- **WIZO** is selling tickets for the musical "Hairspray" which will perform at 14:00 at Gold Reef City. Tickets are R285 to R330. Call Betty 082-600-6221.

- **King David Linksfield High School Class of 1987** is celebrating 20 years out of school, with a fun filled family day at King David High School Linksfield, and dining and dancing at the Sandton Sun. Visit www.kdsf.org/kdl87 for more information.

- **Second Innings** presents "Satire Schmatire" with Meryl Hendler at 10:00. Cost R10 members, R15 non-members. Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Monday (October 8)

- **Chabad House of Savoy** - Rabbi Ari Shishler's weekly Young Adult Shiur at 20:00. Call (011) 440-6600.

Wednesday (October 10)

- **Second Innings** is going on an outing to Linda Muller's Iris farm on the Vaal River banks. Bus departs at 08:45 from Oxford Shul parking area. Cost R75 including lunch. Annette Bergman (011) 485-1640 before 18:00 please.

Thursday (October 11)

- **Larry Benjamin** is hosting a "Team Quiz Evening" at the Culinary Productions Company, 199 Oxford Road, Dunkeld. R150 per person. 082-888-5355.

Sunday (October 14)

- **Second Innings** hosts Ezra Sher (cantor of Pine

Street Shul) - "The Three Chazonim". Tea at 09:45, concert at 10:30. Cost R45 members. Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718. Booking essential. Fay Smaller (011) 640 5839.

Sunday (October 21)

- **Second Innings** is hosting a Dance Therapy Workshop, with Tracey Farber (clinical psychologist) and Louis Fourie a professional ballroom dancing teacher. Venue: Greenside Shul, 7a Chester Road, Greenside East. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Sunday (October 28)

- **Second Innings** is hosting Phyllis Berger and Solange Cziernicwicz - "Pain in Women - And The Men Ought to Know About This Too!" Venue: Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Sunday (November 4)

- **Second Innings** hosts A kaleidoscope of song with Evelyn Green and Professor Russel Lurie (choirmaster of Waverley Shul) at the Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718

Monday (November 5)

- **Israel Philately Society** is meeting in the boardroom of Waverley Shul from 19:30 where senior members will exhibit material from their collections. Contact Maurice Daniels (011) 485-2293.

- **Chabad House of Savoy** - Rabbi Ari Shishler's weekly Young Adult Shiur at 20:00. Call (011) 440-6600.

Tuesday (November 6)

- **RCHCC** in association with The Viktor Frankl Institute of SA presents a series of talks by a variety of experts in the field of logotherapy and existential analysis, "What is Life Expecting Of Us?" Raymond Ackerman on "How I have Used Viktor Frankl's Teachings in my Business Career". Cost R130 and R95 for students and pensioners. RSVP essential.

Sunday (November 11)

- **Second Innings** hosts speaker Julienne Sackstein, psychotherapist - "Living an Authentic Life". The Floreum, Emmarentia Botanical Gardens. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

- **Second Innings** invites you to join them for "Africa Umoja" a matinee at the Victory Theatre in Houghton, Johannesburg. Cost R90. Information: Ros Berman (011) 880-6864 before 18:00. Own transport required.

Wednesday (November 21)

- **Second Innings** presents "Shades of Ngwenya" - watch glass blowers and buy glassware. Cost R60 (incl lunch, bus, glassblowing demo). Bus leaves from Oxford parking area. Main Road, Riviera at 08:45. Enquiries: Annette Bergman (011) 485-1640 before 18:00.

Sunday (November 25)

- **Second Innings** presents Professor Hussein Solomon on "Islam and Tolerance" at The Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718.

Sunday (December 2)

- **Second Innings** presents Roni Lea and Avi Kanar "Dancing Through the Decades" at 09:45. Cost R50. At the Gerald Horwitz Lounge, Golden Acres. Booking: Helen Wolfson (011) 440-8236 before 18:00.

- **WIZO Diepsloot project** desperately needs clothes, tinned foods, games, books for the children. Parcels can be delivered to the WIZO Office at Beyachad, or phone Sandy (011) 645-2515 for collections.

- **Bnoth Zion Association WIZO** is collecting anything of value for its Yomtov store. Contact (021) 464-6729 or Linda Saban 072-245-3225 or Cherna Kredo 084-589-8588.

- **Johannesburg Children's Home** is appealing for shoes and takkies for children and teenagers. Contact Edna or Hylton Segal (011) 970-4266.

- **WIZO Elise Gift Shop, Balfour Park** (next to Clicks), for new and innovative ideas. A wide variety of Yomtov gifts at affordable prices are now available. Contact (011) 885-3939 for deliveries. Hours: Mon-Thurs 09:00 - 17:00, Friday 09:00 - 13:30, Sunday 10:00 - 13:00.

- **Intimate Antiques Fair** held on last Sunday of every month in the Firs in Rosebank, alongside Hyatt Hotel from 09:00 - 16:00. Contact Robyn 083-311-4768.

- **The Selwyn Segal Shop** has a huge selection of gifts ranging in price from R30 upwards. Visit them from Sunday to Friday, 09:00 to 16:00. Phone (011) 485-1344 or (011) 640-5171. All proceeds to The Selwyn Segal Foundation for the Mentally Handicap.

- **Benarc Gifts** of the Jewish Women's Benevolent has stunning gifts. Free deliveries to all suburbs. Contact (011) 485-5232.

- **Israeli Folkdance** - Health and Fun, every Wednesday at 20:00 at Jabula Recreation Centre, corner Ann St and Athlone Ave, Sandringham. Beginners welcome. Contact Anat 083-326-7095, Miri 082-773-8248 or Ora 083-288-7202.

- **Stellenbosch Hebrew Congregation** has a Friday evening service every week in shul, starting at 18:45. Contact (021) 886-5257.

- **UJW urgently** needs donations of good quality warm clothing, blankets and basic foodstuffs for our Kosher Mobile Meals recipients and for our outreach projects in Soweto, Tembisa and Alexandra. Deliver if possible to UJW offices, 1 Oak Street, Houghton or phone (011) 648-1053.

- On a Tuesday evening at the **Europa** in Melrose Arch, from 17:45 to about 22:00, a new scrabble club. Play as many games as you like. Players of all standards and ages welcome. Often some nice prizes on offer and Europa offers all scrabble players a 10 per cent discount. Bring own scrabble set if you have one. Call Larry Benjamin on 082-888-5355.

- **The Yiddish Academy** offers weekly basic, intermediate and advanced classes on Monday evenings at 19:30, Tuesday mornings at 10:30 and Thursday evenings at 19:30 at the RCHCC, Glenhove Road, Houghton. Conversational groups are planned for this year. Further details: e-mail yiddishacademy@gmail.com or call Hazel Cohen on (011) 728-8088.

- **Beis Medrash Chofetz Chaim** is offering a new second Ma'ariv Minyan every weekday evening (Monday - Friday) at 21:00, cnr Elray and Michel Streets, Raedene. Open to broader community. Don't fret if you need a later minyan. Secure parking provided.

- **Sunday Scrabble Club** meets every Sunday at 15:00 at Jabula Recreation Centre, Sandringham. Players of all strengths welcome. Contact Gill at 084-307-4410.

- **Orchid Florist**, a project of WIZO Johannesburg, offers beautiful arrangements of flowers and fruit for every occasion. No occasion too large or too small. Contact Annette (011) 728-4513.

- **JWBS Johannesburg**, urgently requires second-hand clothing, kitchenware, household goods, books and bric-a-brac for its secondhand shop. Contact (011) 485-5232.

- **WIZO Johannesburg** is asking for any clothing, crockery or other bric-a-brac in good condition that you would like to get rid of. Contact Sandy (011) 645-2515.

- Celebrating a bar/batmitzvah? Why not give a donation to **WIZO's bar/batmitzvah project** in Israel? You get a beautiful certificate to give to the bar/batmitzvah child here. Certificates are available from WIZO tel (011) 645-2548.

- **WIZO Johannesburg** has a selection of gift cards in lieu of gifts for all occasions. Contact Sandy at (011) 645-2515.

- **Second Innings** runs a series of workshops and courses on sculpture, preventing falling, and organises regular activities such as bowls, scrabble, friendship forum for Holocaust survivors, bridge, discussion groups, play reading groups, symphony concert rehearsals, and volunteer opportunities, and senior fitness programmes. Contact Grecia Gabriel (011) 532-9718 for information.

Chance to look at humanity's treatment of the earth

PAUL STEINBERG
DALLAS

ROSH HASHANAH is a time of rebirth. However, this autumn holiday brings a different sort of rebirth than springtime: After months of heat and decay, the earth is refreshed with kernels of September green.

In Israel, palm trees blossom with honey-sweet dates during autumn, providing the flavour of our celebration of the birthday of the universe. Yet, while the earth renews itself physically, we renew ourselves spiritually.

For this reason, Rosh Hashanah, also known as the Day of Remembrance, is the traditional time of year for heshbon nefesh, "taking stock of the soul".

As I take stock of this past year, I find myself thinking more than ever before about Judaism's view of the earth. I recall a G-8 summit to discuss governmental responses to global warming and gas emissions. I remember the UN scientific panel declaring that it is "very likely" that human activity is the cause of "unequivocal" warming and climate change.

I also recollect the stir over the Oscar-winning documentary "An Inconvenient Truth". I am reminded again and again that the earth and, in turn, humanity are in potential crisis.

Will this Rosh Hashanah bring more awareness of this crisis and teshuvah, meaningful change, than the passed one?

Consider this past March, before his death, when Jerry Falwell, founder of the Moral Majority, one of the largest evangelical political lobby groups, launched into a fiery tirade in which he derided environmentalists, opposing anyone who accepts the possibility of global warming.

Rather than scientific proofs, Falwell offered interpretations of biblical verses as evidence, concluding: "I agree every Christian ought to be an environmentalist of reasonable sort. We should certainly pick up trash. We ought to beautify the earth as best we can."

But, he also said: "We shouldn't be hugging trees and worshipping the creation more than we worship the Creator, and that is what global warming is all about."

Although Falwell offered one religious perspective on the earth and the environment (one, likely, not shared by all evangelicals), it is antithetical to the Jewish perspective. After all, every Jewish holiday born out of the Torah is associated with honouring the earth and the cycle of the seasons. Furthermore, Maimonides taught that we come to love, appreciate and know G-d when we "contemplate G-d's wondrous and great deeds and creations".

True, the first chapter of Genesis says that mankind "shall rule" the creatures of the earth and expresses that mankind is the apex of G-d's creation, but in no way does it indicate that everything that precedes mankind is unimportant.

After man was created, the other creatures feared him, worshipping him as their creator. Yet, he humbled himself and used his power over them to make common cause with them, by leading them to "make G-d King, the one who created us all."

Rosh Hashanah is a time to remember the moral of the creation account, acknowledging our unique status as masters of the earth, while stressing Judaism's core theological assertion: G-d is the creator of the universe and it belongs to Him. We remind ourselves of this when we ask G-d for yearly blessings, echoed by the poet's supplication in our High Holiday prayer book:

"In Your lovingkindness and faithfulness, O L-rd, support Your world that is judged at the four seasons of each year... When You visit the earth on this Rosh Hashanah, invest it with righteousness, with fruits and dew, with rains and warmth..."

The fundamental lesson of Rosh Hashanah and the autumn holidays is twofold: that we human beings have incredible power for which we must be grateful and that we must set limits upon this power.

Throughout the autumn holidays, we confess our transgressions, our acts of selfishness, self-importance, and entitlement. Indeed, Falwell had it exactly backwards: By loving the earth and protecting its supreme value, we are in fact serving and showing reverence to G-d as the Creator.

We are the chief custodians of the earth, "placed in the garden to till and tend it" (Genesis 2:15).

The scientific disciplines teach us that the earth and its ecosystems live in a delicate balance. Our Torah teaches us that we are supposed to preserve and keep that balance, respecting the trees, plants, and animals by how we grow, reap, yoke, and even slaughter them.

If we learn anything during the holiday season, it is that what we do in the world matters. Our actions have an impact and it is the intent behind those actions, as well as our commitment to tikkun olam, repairing an imperfect world, that marks our sacred pact with G-d. (JTA)

Rabbi Paul Steinberg is the author of *Celebrating the Jewish Year* (Jewish Publication Society, 2007)

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We wish you all a
Happy, Peaceful New Year
And well over the Fast

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1st artificial coral reef set up in Red Sea

NICKY BLACKBURN
JERUSALEM

TAKE A dive off the coast of Eilat these days and you're liable to find yourself swimming around a huge yellow concrete and wire construction that stretches roughly four metres up from the seabed, is roughly four metres wide, and is full of holes.

No, this isn't some strange new structure left behind by an alien race, or cargo dropped from a sinking container ship, this is the first artificial coral reef in the Red Sea.

The reef, which was developed by the Israel Nature Parks Authority and a team of academics from the National Centre for Mariculture at the Eilat campus of Ben-Gurion University, the Inter-University Institute for Marine Sciences in Eilat, the Hebrew University, and the Marine Science Station in Aqaba, is a unique new approach to conservation in the Red Sea and part of a joint co-operative project between Israel and Jordan

Coral reefs are one of the most varied forms of life on the planet, and the range and richness of the species found there are comparable to that of the tropical rain forests.

In recent years, underwater diving has become an increasingly popular sport and the breathtaking reefs of the Red Sea area, which are different from any other reefs around the world, have suffered dreadfully as a result.

"The number of visitors is large and the size of the reefs is limited and too small," explains Dr Nadav Shashar, the supervisor of the research project, and a marine biologist at the National Centre for Mariculture.

"Because of the increase in the number of visitors, the coral reefs are unable



The artificial reefs in Eilat. "Our task is to understand which factors bring about the development and proliferation of coral reefs."

to overcome the damage caused and are beginning to die out. If we don't act quickly, it's only a question of time before the excellent breeding conditions in the north bay become barren. Many bodies are aware of the problem and are seeking a way to solve it."

Part of the problem is novice divers. "They kick up the sand, or damage the corals by accident. Multiply that by 100 000 people and that's considerable damage," says Shashar. "These people don't mean to harm the reefs, but they

just don't know how to dive properly."

The developers hope that the artificial reef will create a new attraction for these divers, steering them away from the natural reefs, reducing the pressure there and enabling them to recover from some of the damage inflicted on them over the last few years.

At the same time, the Tamar reef which is located near Coral Beach also provides the researchers with a unique underwater laboratory, enabling them to observe and unravel the development



and growth of this unique and complex ecosystem.

"Our task is to understand which factors bring about the development and proliferation of coral reefs, to understand the growing processes of the coral and fish populations and to put this into practice in establishing artificial coral reefs that will attract tourists," Shashar tells Israel21c.

Shashar and his team, which includes Prof Zvi Abramski, from the Department of Life Sciences, Dr Ariel Diamant of the National Centre for Mariculture, student Omer Pollack and the Israel Nature Parks Authority, are funded by the United States USAID-MERC programme and the British Whitely Fund for Nature.

The reef was first installed in May this year and has already attracted a great deal of marine life. There are now 32 species of fish swimming through or living on the reef - half the number normally found in the reefs of the Red Sea. These include bass, sea goldfish and butterfly fish. Sea urchins, fan worms, tunicates, and tubeworms can also be found there.



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At present, no coral has been planted on the reef, and that's why some of the fish are still missing. If the scientists were to let nature take its course, it would take between 80-100 years for the corals to flourish. Shashar does not want to wait that long so the team has a nursery in Haifa where they are growing 13 different types of coral.

These corals will be planted in the specially prepared holes in the reef structure and the work begins in the autumn. There are 1 000 colonies to plant, and this will be the first time in history that a team has tried to do this. Shashar is very excited at the prospect.

"This gives us a very unique opportunity to understand what makes a reef and how the corals interact with each other," he explains. "In the natural world corals grow in a certain order, replacing one another in a specific sequence until they reach the climax community, which you find in mature reefs. We want to discover if we have to plant the corals in that order or whether we can go straight to the climax community."

The team plan to plant a good variety of corals. "There's a general acceptance that to get a high diversity of fish, you need a high diversity of corals. We will be checking this," says Shashar.

The idea of creating artificial reefs in the Red Sea was first mooted some years ago, but it took time for the project to find its feet. Work on building the reef began in December last year. The Israeli company, Ocean Brick System (OBS), was founded specifically to deal with the engineering side of the project, carrying out a range of simulations.

This is the largest artificial reef ever built. The maximum height of past reefs, which are used mainly for fisheries, is 1.8 yards. As a result, there was much to organise and arrange. Building the mould itself was problematic, as was finding the right type of concrete that would be suitable for the development of oceanic invertebrates.

Then 1 000 holes had to be drilled in the rough surface so that coral can be planted and marine life can attach easily to the structure.

"The whole structure has to be extremely strong because it will last for decades and is constantly exposed to sea water," says Shashar.

"We have to ensure that it won't erode, and also make sure that it will be safe. We can't have a kid being trapped in there."

The openings of the reef have bars to prevent divers and swimmers from entering into unsafe areas, and to preserve the reef.

In six months another artificial reef is to be added on the Jordanian side of the Red Sea, it will be followed by four more - one in Eilat and three more in Jordan. Improvements and modifications are planned for the next reefs. "We are trying to improve all the time," says Shashar.

Since the reef was put in, diver interest has been high. Shashar says that about 100 divers have been visiting the reef daily, almost double the number of divers who visit nearby natural reefs. "People like to dive here, especially novice divers, because they feel more comfortable in an artificial environment," says Shashar, a world-renowned expert in the field of polarised sight, who discovered that polarised vision in locusts enables them to avoid flying over large bodies of water.

Shashar, who got his PhD at the University of Maryland and has spent most of his life studying marine life, is eager to discover how many divers visit the site. "We need to know from an economic point of view how attractive a reef like this is, and whether it will be more appealing when we add the coral," he explains.

Interest in the artificial reef has already been expressed from various countries around the world. For some it's a question of necessity. In the Pacific, for instance, there are many islands that have been protected from storms for years by their coral reefs.

With global warming, these coral reefs are now being damaged and destroyed leaving the islands wide open to the sea.

In other cases, it's a question of tourism. A hotel in Hawaii, for instance, may want to ensure a steady stream of visitors by adding an artificial reef to the sea nearby. (Israel21c)

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S African-born woman gets Rwandan youth village going

JUSTIN SULSKY
NEW YORK

ANNE HEYMAN heard a statistic nearly two years ago that would change her life: Fifteen per cent of Rwandan children are orphans due to the 1994 genocide that murdered 800 000 people in 100 days.

"I couldn't let go of this notion," Heyman said. "There was really no future for Rwanda."

Heyman, a non-practising attorney born in South Africa, has spent the past two years pushing for the creation of a Jewish-sponsored institution in Rwanda to help tackle the dire situation.

Her determination is paying off - she attended a groundbreaking ceremony on Friday in Rwamagana, Rwanda, for the Agahozo Shalom Youth Village, which will serve 500 impoverished orphans.

Agahozo - Kinyarwanda for "the place where tears are dried" - is modelled after the Youth Aliyah Village of Yemin Orde, which was founded in 1953 and initially housed Holocaust orphans.

To help realise her vision, Heyman turned to the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. Israeli officials, including many Ethiopian Israelis, have been involved in the formulation of the youth village.

"We will strive to the extent that it's possible to create a normal environment," Heyman told JTA in a phone interview from her hotel room in Rwanda. "As far as I know it's unprecedented."

The JDC is promising that the village will provide Rwandan orphans, many of them infected with HIV and suffering from Aids, with a "safe, structured environment with a rich community life where children are exposed to all elements of parental and familial normalcy, thereby providing wholeness in the wake of destruction".

"(Jews) have a collective experience with

the Rwandans, having come through genocide," said Will Recant, the JDC's assistant executive vice president. "We're very much invested in the long-term sustainable commitment to make this happen."

Heyman said she hoped students from all over Rwanda would come to the village and impart what they had learned to their home communities when they graduated.

"The effect of this project will be felt over the country," Heyman said.

Recant said numerous high-ranking political and business leaders were supportive of the school, which is slated to open in 2009.

"We've been received at the highest levels of the Rwandan government," he said.

Recant and Heyman both said they hoped eventually to replicate the villages in other parts of Africa.

Heyman said in order to provide the greatest benefit, the JDC was trying to hire as many qualified Rwandan people and companies as possible. But due to the shortage of qualified Rwandan teachers, she said, some positions would be filled from outside the country.

Recant, who has extensive experience leading the JDC's non-sectarian humanitarian programmes, said those not often exposed to Jews and Israelis gained a great appreciation for them when they saw the work being done by Jewish organisations.

"The work itself speaks volumes," he said. "They see we have no horns."

Added Heyman: "I've never felt more warmly welcomed as a Jew" than at any other time while doing humanitarian work. There's a tremendous sense of admiration and respect toward Israel" as they see how much the Jewish state achieved in so little time.

"This project," she said, "really brings back Israel as being a light unto the nations."

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Safed hopes Madonna visit will boost its economy

LARRY LUXNER
SAFED, ISRAEL

WHEN IT comes to spirituality, Safed lacks nothing. But the Israeli mountain town has been struggling economically since last year's war with Hezbollah and authorities are hoping a Rosh Hashanah visit by the Material Girl will bring real material benefits to its 30 000 residents.

Madonna, returning to Israel for the first time since September 2004, plans to visit Safed - the world centre of Jewish mysticism - along with Jerusalem, the Golan Heights and other points of interest as part of a tour being organised by the Los Angeles-based Kabbalah Centre.

The pop icon is expected to bring along celebrity friends Demi Moore, Donna Karan and about 3 000 Kabbalah Centre students from around the world who are participating in a 10-day pilgrimage to Israel that is set to end on Yom Kippur.

"From a business point of view, anything that brings people into Safed is desirable," said Laurie Rappaport, who has lived here for 24 years and runs the visitor's centre for Livnot U'Lehibanot, a volunteer organisation.

"A lot of people are looking for spiritual fulfilment and making themselves better. Once they get here, they're curious to learn more," said Rappaport, a Detroit native, adding that "this is a stop on almost every group tour, and a lot of shops try to bring people in using Kabbalah. If they don't buy a Kabbalah necklace, they'll buy something else."

Yet not everyone is seeing the Madonna visit as a shot in the arm for Safed, one of Israel's four biblical "holy cities" and the site of historic 16th-century synagogues dedicated to Isaac Luria, Joseph Caro and other Jewish luminaries.

"The phenomenon of Madonna is not mainstream, it's just silliness," said Eyal Riess, the former director of the visitors' centre at Ascent, a Jewish studies programme in the centre of town. "The way she acts and behaves is shtuyot," or nonsense, he said. "She is not a role model."

Ya'acov Kaszemaicher, a bearded, 66-year-old Orthodox Jewish artist who incorporates mystical themes into the watercolours he



A rabbi hits up tourists for hand-outs in front of the Joseph Karo Synagogue in Zefat (Safed).
(SOURCE: LARRY LUXNER)

sells to tourists, also complained. "Kabbalah is too holy to be put into the hands of everybody," Kaszemaicher said. "Even me, I'm a Jewish artist and I live in Safed, but I'm not a kabbalist because I'm not at that level."

Yet as more and more Jews - and gentiles - follow Madonna's example and take up interest in Kabbalah, Safed officials see a unique chance to revive an economy that's still recovering from the destruction caused last summer by Katyusha rockets fired from nearby Lebanon.

"We have a very beautiful and interesting city," said Amos Lotan, director of tourism for Israel's Tzahar region, which encompasses Safed and the adjacent towns of Rosh Pina and Hatzor Haglilit.

"Here there's magic in the air. This could be the best place to create a world centre for Kabbalah."

That's exactly what a Florida Jewish federation has in mind.

Since 1995, the Jewish Federation of Palm Beach County has donated more than \$8 million to fund development projects throughout the Tzahar region. Its latest project is the construction of an international Kabbalah centre that would boost tourism revenues for Safed, which has few hotels compared to the nearby town of Tiberias.

The federation has donated \$100 000 in seed money to get the centre started. Several millions more will probably be earmarked in years to come, with other donors being sought, including some from Europe.

"Madonna's interest in Kabbalah has certainly helped focus a lot of attention on Safed internationally, but the project we have in mind is very different from the Kabbalah Centre with which

Madonna is affiliated," said Sharon Levin, the Palm Beach federation's representative in Safed.

"We are a public organisation dedicated to developing a pluralistic centre for anyone, regardless of background or religious affiliation, whereas the Kabbalah Centre is a private enterprise with a very clear profit motive."

Levin said that while the structure still does not exist, it will include a visitors' centre with audiovisual presentations, an auditorium capable of seating 100 or more for lectures and seminars, and smaller rooms that can be used for classrooms or workshops.

Jeffrey Klein, the federation's CEO, said Safed had not fully recognised its potential either as a centre of tourism or as a centre of spirituality.

"In response to the terrible trauma that Safed suffered during the war, one of the things we can do is bring people to the region," he told JTA. "We're very concerned with the vitality of the Galilee. This is critical to the future of Israel. We want this region to be a tourist destination and not a two-hour stop on a tour bus."

The director of the new project is Riess, 41, who was with Ascent for 13 years before being selected from among 200 applicants by the federation. At Ascent, Riess supervised a \$2 million-a-year organisation run by Chabad with programmes in English, Hebrew, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Dutch and Russian.

"There is already mass tourism to Israel from America and Europe," said Riess, a Tel Aviv native.

"A lot of this is Christian tourism, and I know for a fact that those Christian pilgrims are very much interested in Jewish culture and mysticism. So if we can draw these crowds to Safed, it will help us a lot. Those people do spend nights in hotels, so instead of sleeping in Tiberias, like they do, they can sleep here."

Madonna reportedly is thinking well into the future.

"The valley of Rosh Pina is the entrance to where the Messiah will come to Safed," said Lotan, the Tzahar region's tourism director, "and Madonna is negotiating to purchase a house there not far from where we are." (JTA)

Looking in the sea or an alternative to oil

"ONE OF the main goals of the new School for Marine Sciences at the University of Haifa is to evaluate the possibility of turning gas, lying near the sea floor, into a valuable economic resource," said Leon Charney, whose \$8 million donation enabled the establishment of the school.

The University of Haifa, in co-operation with Stanford University in the US, is embarking on a unique, wide-ranging research effort to investigate energy production, using a gas lying just below the sea floor, as an alternative to oil.

"One of the primary goals of the school is to evaluate the possibility of turning gas lying at the sea floor into a valuable economic resource in order to eliminate dependence on oil and change the geo-political reality in the world," said Charney.

He envisions turning this

school into a world leader in research in this field.

"At a time when the entire world is concerned about the future of the planet, the University of Haifa is spearheading new research on the subjects of water and energy, where all of our futures lie. Our research will focus on producing alternative energy from water instead of oil - a revolution in the field.

"We are pleased that Stanford University is co-operating with us in this important research," added Charney, who stressed that this source of energy existed all over the planet and its production would eliminate the dependence on oil that was concentrated in a number of Middle Eastern countries.

Heading the Stanford research team will be Prof Amos Nur, renowned as a leading re-

searcher in the field of energy studies. Stanford University said they would provide access to all of their laboratories to the research team, which included the University of Haifa faculty, in order to advance the joint research project.

The University of Haifa will focus on interdisciplinary research on a variety of subjects in the field of marine studies - from geology, geophysics and biology to marine strategy and archaeology. The school will include a course for naval officers studying for a BA at the university.

President of the University of Haifa, Prof Aaron Ben-Ze'ev, said: "This new school embodies the two main focuses of the University of Haifa - interdisciplinary research and international co-operation with academic institutions worldwide."

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A long journey to rediscover her roots

STORY AND PHOTOGRAPH BY
SHELLEY ELK

"YOU ARE playing with fire... leave it alone," the principal in the Christian theological seminary in Nottingham, England, told Tova Mordechai, when the latter was drawn to discover her Jewish roots and a deeper connection to G-d.

But this advice was not heeded by Mordechai. She told her audience at Chabad Savoy in Johannesburg recently how events pulled at her psyche and led her on a journey to rediscover - and reconnect - with her roots.

Author of *To Play With Fire*, Mordechai, the daughter of a Sephardic Jewess who had converted to Christianity and a father who was a Pentacostal preacher, Mordechai was raised as a Christian. Her journey took her through nine years in a Christian seminary before she discovered her Jewish roots.

Mordechai who is an international guest speaker, was brought out to South Africa by Chabad "because there are so many people who are also lost and looking, and here is someone who has come from knowing nothing about her roots, to being where she is today," said Rabbi Dovid Masinter, director of Chabad.

Mordechai recounted how she had been inspired by Christian missionaries from Ghana and India and the stories she "begged them to tell me" as a child. Mordechai decided her purpose in life was to serve G-d. Rigorous rules in the college she entered at the age of 16 were going to make her "a better person, more holy, closer to G-d". She threw herself into the programme, she told the audience.

An ordained minister, after nine years in the seminary, she decided one morning to run away. Her "pintile yid" had been "striving" and "trying to wake up from its slumber and was not satisfied", and would only be satisfied once it had made the connection with Hakodesh B'H.

Key events drew her closer to her roots and woke up her Jewish neshomah. Her talk gave her audience a clear sense of the conflict and confusion that she experienced through the process of discovery.

Her moments of sneaking out of the seminary, to go to the synagogue, began after Margaret, her sister had joined the ministry. Margaret told Mordechai that "on Yom Kippur all the Jews go to synagogue" and that she (Mordechai) should "go and look".

Mordechai recalled: "All I could think was that it was Yom Kippur and all the Jews were in synagogue and I wasn't there. A

deep sadness overwhelmed me and I thought: 'So what if they were there; I wasn't supposed to be there.' I tried hard to push the feelings and words away... and the more I pushed the harder they hammered."

Her Uncle Sam who had visited the seminary, sent her a mezuzah, which she kept next to her bed, in her bedside table. "Each night when I slept it would be near my head."

Her uncle had offered her a ticket to Israel, and asked what she was doing "behind high, dark walls". He told her to cheer up, enjoy her life and laugh "which was considered immodest and frivolous" by the ministry, she said.

Her uncle told her stories about life in Israel, katyushas and challenges, and the mezuzot on every door with its holy parchment.

Mordechai declined the ticket offer (on her principal's instructions) telling her uncle that she had "given her life to G-d". He asked her if he could give her anything. "A mezuzah," Mordechai requested.

A mezuzah from her uncle with full instructions how and where to place it arrived a few weeks later. She wanted to nail it onto the door of her room.

But permission to affix the mezuzah was

refused to her by the principal who called it "a silly Jewish superstition". She placed her mezuzah in, a bedside table drawer, her only possession.

After coming across a Passover pamphlet, and the name and contact details of a rabbi from Birnam Shul in London, her journey towards her Jewish roots was hastened. This rabbi found her a job as an au pair, with Sandy and Bunim Weindown.

Mordechai said she had been her father's "cherry on the cake" and wanted to serve G-d and give her life to Him, but she realised that so many years in the ministry had not fulfilled her. It had "filled my mind, my thoughts", she said.

It was when Tova first lit the Shabbat candles on her first ever Shabbat with the Weindown family, that she realised the peace, and the presence of Hashem. She said "she felt it", in the room, in the whole house".

Mordechai's Uncle Sam sent her a ticket to Israel where she entered a Chabad seminary in Safed and shortly thereafter met her husband, a rabbi who had converted to Judaism.

"Tova Mordechai is a prominent rebbetzin in Israel, and lectures in our programme in the Chabad seminary in Safed," Rabbi Masinter told *Jewish Report*.



Tova Mordechai

AROUND THE WORLD NEWS IN BRIEF

REPORT: ISRAEL PLANS BLITZ ON OUTPOSTS

JERUSALEM - Israel reportedly plans to remove more than 1 000 settlers from illegal West Bank outposts after the High Holy Days.

Defence Minister Ehud Barak has drawn up a list of 26 outposts to be dismantled early in the new Jewish year, *Ma'ariv* reported last Sunday - a move that would entail evacuating some 1 200 settlers.

Israeli officials had no immediate comment. Vice Premier Haim Ramon convened a ministerial committee last Sunday to discuss the outposts that Israel, under the US-led peace "road map", is obligated to remove.

A crackdown on outposts ahead of the fall peace conference planned by the Bush administration could be perceived as a good-faith gesture by Israel.

According to independent reports, there are at least 80 outposts in the West Bank. Some are hilltop shacks and others full-fledged communities with roads and electricity.

Palestinians, who want all the land for a state, see the outposts as a veiled bid to expand the jurisdiction of settlements recognised by the Israeli government. (JTA)

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Israeli pros plan to finance US sports

JACOB BERKMAN
NEW YORK

IN THE philanthropic equivalent of a return volley, two top Israeli tennis players who have received the support of American Jews, want to raise money for disadvantaged American Jewish children.

Andy Ram and Jonathan Erlich, a doubles pair ranked sixth in the world, are trying to start a foundation that would provide grants to young American Jews for their athletic training.

The Jewish Sports Foundation would award grants based on financial need, athletic acumen, positive character traits and community service.

Ram, 27, and Erlich, 30, in New York this week for the US Open, told JTA they wanted to give back to American Jews who have financially supported athletic training programmes in Israel and opened their homes to them.

Their goal is to create a greater avenue for cultivating athletes in the Jewish community, which typically focuses more on academic and cultural pursuits.

"The foundation is a pretty new idea," Erlich said. "You don't see too many Jewish athletes around. We think this will give

American Jews a way to find athletes and to give them something different."

Not that Jews shouldn't be doctors and lawyers, the athletes said, but both fare well monetarily on the tennis court rather than in the courtroom. Each won nearly \$250 000 in 2006 and boast more than \$1 million in career earnings.

Plus there is potential income from endorsements in Israel: Ram and Erlich say they cannot walk the streets without being recognised.

Longtime friends, they became doubles partners in 2001. Ram sat out 2002 with back and knee injuries, but they have been Israel's most successful sports duo since they reunited.

In 2005, they reached the Wimbledon semi-finals. The pair have won 10 titles together; this month they won the Western & Southern Financial Group Masters in Cincinnati.

Ram has achieved success without Erlich, too. He became Israel's first grand slam champion when he captured the Wimbledon mixed doubles title last year with Vera Zvonareva, a Russian. This year he paired with a French player, Nathalie Dechy, to take the French Open mixed doubles crown.

Noting the support they receive from the

American Jewish community, Ram and Erlich say they rarely stay in hotels while playing eight to nine months a year in the United States. Rather they spend most of their time with host families.

"We just want to give back to the American Jews," Ram said.

Their foundation is inspired in part by the Israel Tennis Centres, a network of 14 not-for-profit facilities that teaches tennis and life lessons through the game. Some 350 000 Israeli children, including Ram, have passed through the centres since they opened in 1976.

The centres are funded primarily by American donors - the direction that charity dollars typically flow between Israel and American Jews.

Ram and Erlich are attempting to change the course. Their foundation is in its early



Andy Ram (right) and Jonathan Erlich.



Andy Ram (left) and Jonathan Erlich.

stages, according to Leslie Bernstein, a political and public relations strategist who is doing most of the legwork in starting the operation, including trying to attain 501(c)3 status.

The tennis pros plan on approaching several prominent American Jewish athletes for funding.

The Israelis say they want to challenge two stereotypes: that all Jews are wealthy and no Jews are athletes.

"When you talk to a lot of Americans and ask about Jewish athletes, the only name you really hear is Sandy Koufax - and that was 40 years ago," Bernstein said. (JTA)

Peer creates US Open history

JACK MILNER

PLAYING IN her third US Open, 18th seed Shahar Peer became the first Israeli woman tennis player in tournament history to reach the quarter-finals and is truly becoming a force to reckon with on the court. In addition, while making steady progress up the tennis rankings, she is also making a strong impression on the hearts and minds of tennis fans.

In a highly-charged fourth-round match against 30th seeded Agnieszka Radwanska, in a filled-to-the rafters Louis Armstrong Stadium at Flushing Meadows in New York, Peer had a strong rooting section - something that has been building since her exciting fourth-round match in 2006 when she ultimately lost to Justine Henin.

Working her way through this year's competition, she has taken out Meilen Tu of the United States in round one, Bethanie Mattek of the United States in round two, and upset 13th seed Nicole Pietrangola of the Czech Republic, which went to a three-set tiebreaker in front of a packed night crowd in Arthur Ashe Stadium, in round three.

"The 20-year-old Peer, who is also in the second year of her mandatory Israeli military service, displays an on-court tenacity that equals that of any of the other top players. Her focus during matches is unwavering and she is all business on each and every point," was a comment made on the US Open website after Peer was made Player Of The Day on Monday.

Peer did double-duty on Monday, going from her singles match, directly to her third round women's doubles match with partner Tathiana Garbin of Italy, which they lost to the seventh seeded team of Nathalie Dechy of France and Dinara Safina of Russia.

Peer defeated Radwanska 6-4 6-1 in double quick time and this could be the big breakthrough tournament Peer has been waiting for. She no doubt had a little bit of good fortune when Radwanska put out second seed Maria Sharapova at the weekend but the art is to ride the wave of good fortune and that is exactly what Peer is doing right now.

The bottom half of the draw has opened right up and her next match is against sixth seeded Anna Chakvetadze of Russia who is

by no means unbeatable.

Svetlana Kuznetsova, winner here two years ago, at four, is the highest seed in that half of the draw, while the top half comprises top seed Justine Henin and both Williams sisters, Serena and Venus.

"I think I'm playing better and better every match," said Peer in her post-match press conference. "I'm happy I have reached the quarter-finals here. I just want to keep on."

Asked whether she enjoyed the volume of support from the crowd Peer replied: "Yeah, definitely. I don't have any relatives here but I was staying with a family before the Open, like the week of the practice. They come every time to support me. But there are so many Jewish people here, so many Israelis, that I have huge support here."

"I go on the court and I feel like I'm playing in Israel or something. It's so much fun. It's really nice to play when you have so much support."

She was asked if she heard a lot of Hebrew being shouted around the stadium and what was being said to her. "Yeah, a lot. They're saying things like 'c'mon', 'go all the way to the final', those kind of things."

At this stage, though, Peer said she was uncertain about the reaction in Israel to her performance. "I know it was on Eurosport, so they were following the match. Usually I prefer not to get involved with the media in Israel when I'm in the tournament because it's too much. I prefer to stay really focused in the tournament."

"But I know they support me a lot in Israel. Whenever I do well, they're always there for me. I don't know actually what is the reaction. Probably you can ask my family. I don't really know. I don't actually look at that."

"If I'm going to start with one newspaper, so the next one wants me, then the radio wants me. I cannot be all day on the phone with those things. I prefer to stay focused whenever I'm in the tournament. After the tournament, I have no problem to be interviewed."

Asked about whether she gets special treatment in the army because of her success Peer responded: "I hope not. I mean, they are trying to help me, to let me do my career as normal as the other players. You see it doesn't affect anything."

We Salute the Steel in our Stars



In sport there is a split second between being famous and being forgotten, between finding the courage to perform at your best or collapsing under the weight as this nation's hopes press on your shoulders. That's why we at the Macsteel Maestros programme applaud Stars who show their Steel, who come home bearing medals and the title Champion. We watch many of you grow in our Macsteel Maestros programme for elite athletes from disadvantaged circumstances. We help competitors understand the pressures of sporting life through our Macsteel Lifeskills programme. We celebrate when you find the courage to take on your toughest opponent, yourself, and we cheer as you take on the world.



The Macsteel Maestros and Macsteel Lifeskills programmes are managed by the Sports Science Institute of South Africa and run at regional centres in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, Bloemfontein and Port Elizabeth. The Macsteel programmes work in close consultation with recognised sports bodies, including: Sport and Recreation South Africa, the SA Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee, the SA Students Sports Union and the United Schools Sports Association of South Africa.



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