

# SSSQ Alumni News

September 2009

## SSSQ Updates, News & Happenings

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## Tribute to Elliott Goldstein



The Goldstein Family

On June 23, 2009, members of the Board of Trustees, the Board of Education, administrators and alumni gathered together with the Goldstein family, at the school to pay tribute to Elliott Goldstein, a founder who passed away last year. A tuition assistance fund was created in memory of Mr. Goldstein.

Bracha Werber, president of the Board of Trustees and an

alumni parent of three graduates, welcomed everyone in her introductory remarks.

This was indeed a bittersweet celebration peppered with words of endearment from Anne Lupkin, who succeeded Elliott as Chairman of the Board of Education. Anne shared her memories of driving Elliott to Education meetings and how she relied on his expertise and guidance when deciding to choose a Schechter

education for her two children, both alumni of the school. "Elliott was a pillar of wisdom at the meetings and at times, when he would rest his head on his hands appearing to be dozing, suddenly he would interrupt the discussion and contribute – his words were most effective". You could always count on Elliott to bring any controversy to a halt and be the voice of reason.

Doris Goldstein, Elliott's wife, spoke tenderly of her husband and emphasized his passion for Schechter. She recalled how much he looked forward to the meetings and his admiration for the intelligent women with whom he shared so many hours. Doris remembered Elliott's wish that every Jewish child be able to experience a Schechter education. He would be so pleased to know that the newly created Tuition Assistance Fund bears his name. I had an opportunity to meet Steven Goldstein and his sisters Sandy and Janet. Together,

*Continued on page 3*



*Shanah Tovah to you and your family!*

*Elaine and Naomi*

### Upcoming Reunions:

**October 25, 2009**

Classes 1970-1974

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**March 6, 2010**

Classes 1980-1984

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**June 2010 (date to follow)**

Class of 2002/Class of 2006

## Gala Dinner - Honoring the Classes of 1985/1986/1987

It was wonderful to welcome the classes of '85, '86, and '87 at the Schechter dinner on February 28, 2009 at the Forest Hills Jewish Center. Also honored that evening were alumni parents and Board of Trustee members, Denise and Stuart Birbach and Janine Lalande, dedicated faculty member. By joining us as alumni, you showed your

commitment to your alma mater, the community and, mostly, to each other. Many of you haven't been in touch for some years and there was definitely an excitement in the air as you connected. Once again, it proves what I've heard so many times, that Schechter friendships last a lifetime! I was so happy to meet you all

and hope that you remain in contact with one another and Schechter. I warmly thank Rosalie Costa and Ziv Alcalay for their incredible help and continued enthusiasm – without them this reunion would not have been possible and I will miss all the emails and conversations we had together.

*Continued on page 2*

## Gala (cont.)

Remember whether you graduated or left the school before the 8<sup>th</sup> grade in our eyes you are our alumni and we are very proud of you. Stay connected – share your news with us – and come visit when you have a chance.

Below are personal reflections from Rosalie Costa and Ziv Alcalay – enjoy!!

### Words from Ziv Alcalay '86

It has been over two decades since SSSQ 8th grade graduation that I have not seen nor heard from most of my classmates and teachers. On February 28, 2009, I was finally able to reunite in person with many of them in the very same location (FHJC) where we last departed from each other, over 23 years ago. It was a surreal experience not only to see these people as adults who maintain “real jobs” and families but also to learn that apparently, time has not faded our friendship bonds which remained tight as ever!

On one hand, I was regretful for not staying in touch over the years, but on the other hand, I felt super fortunate to be given a second chance to reach out to my long lost friends to come attend this most special and personal event.

After an emotional, heartfelt and festive evening, everyone went home with high spirits and a vow to keep in touch. After all, we spent our most critical developmental years together.

In conclusion, I would like to thank Naomi and Elaine for organizing this night and for



**1987 classmates reunited**

making this all possible. For any alumni reading this ... Don't wait 23 years to reach out to your “SSSQ Family”, as they will always be a vital part of who you are!

### Words from Rosalie Costa '87

On February 27, 2009, we had our class of „87 reunion at the Forest Hills Jewish Center. What a great event it was. After so many years had passed, one can't imagine how exciting it was to see friends that I had spent my childhood years from age 5 to 13. Some I had kept in touch with through the years after graduation, and there were some people I had not seen since 1987. We were so excited to catch up and exchange stories, and find out what each of us had been doing with

our lives since then. And the best part was still feeling such closeness to them, that it's hard to believe it's been over 20 years. Since that night and thanks to facebook as well, I have been able to stay further in touch with people that we reconnected with since that evening. I hope that we plan something small in August as we all enthusiastically discussed. I must say that Naomi Horowitz, the Alumni Coordinator played a huge part in making the event happen and in drawing up enthusiasm, along with one of my good friends Ziv Alcalay, graduate of the class of „86. This Alumni Newsletter is a great way for us to keep each other informed, so I urge other classmates to contact Naomi and share their thoughts and news with her. I wish the best to all of you, and plan to stay in touch!!!



**Sharing a smile for the camera**

with Steven's wife and sons, everyone reminisced about their father and grandfather and the career he had at Schechter. Immediately following this article are some beautiful words written by Sandy describing her feelings about the dedication.

Though Elliott Goldstein never received a penny throughout his involvement with Schechter as a founder, Education Chairman, Trustee and alumni parent, he gained immeasurable respect from his peers and received personal satisfaction being associated with the school.

On a personal note, two years ago, my son had the privilege of interviewing Elliott for the school's 50th anniversary. Elliott was so happy to be interviewed and his remarks which appeared in the journal were most humble. His easy going style made this assignment most enjoyable for Benjamin. The recipients of the Elliott Goldstein Scholarship Fund are truly the lucky ones

because behind any monetary award they may receive is an emotional connection to Elliott that will forever be treasured. May his life be a blessing.

Naomi R. Horowitz

#### Words from Sandy Goldstein '64:

On Tuesday evening June 23, my family and I were moved and honored to participate in the dedication of the Elliott Goldstein Tuition Assistance Fund. To be in the Solomon Schechter School of Queens a year after his death, amongst the dedicated people who knew him and worked with him over many years, was precious beyond words.

Several attendees asked how it felt to be back at the school, but I was the only one of my siblings who did not attend in the current building. I graduated eighth grade in 1964, the second graduating class of the Solomon Schechter School of Queens. My memories

are of shared space in the Rego Park Jewish Center, and of a sense of energy and enthusiasm for the new venture ahead – a

Conservative day school. My parents' excitement was apparent even to a young first grader, and many evening meetings evidenced their dedication and involvement! Looking back at many years of schooling, I felt connected to Solomon Schechter over many years through my father's continued participation on the Board of Education. I was proud of him and amazed that he could remain so devoted and involved, but then again Solomon Schechter is a very special place. Steve, Janet and I have never taken those early years at Solomon Schechter School for granted. We were embraced by a pioneering and innovative approach to education, and we consider ourselves fortunate to have had the opportunity to be a part of Solomon Schechter School of Queens early days. There is no better way to honor our father than to ensure through tuition assistance that generations of students will continue to benefit from the gifts of a Solomon Schechter School education.

## Making a Difference



- The Hebrew Language Enhancement Program, established by Norton Spiel, alumni parent and current grandparent, is now entering the 2nd year of the 3-year project. In addition to curriculum enhancement, teacher training, and equipment purchases, Hebrew signs are now posted in the building, which will help students in strengthening their Hebrew language skills.
- A project to digitalize our library catalog is in the works to be completed this fall. This gift is made possible by Cara and Michael Trager, alumni parents of two graduates.
- Through a generous grant, The Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York has provided our computer lab with 25 laptops.
- The Metro NY/NJ Solomon Schechter School Consortium has formed as a result of a 3 year project initiated by Elaine Suchow and the Solomon Schechter School of Queens to help strengthen and advance the profile of Day School Education and the affiliated Conservative movement institutions including the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism and The Jewish Theological Seminary. Our shared voices will result in new models of collaborative leadership that will benefit our mutual interests that include, but are not limited to, marketing, sustainability and growth and fundraising. The lead gift of \$14,000 was announced by Schechter Queens during the second meeting of the group which took place at the Jewish Theological Seminary in May.
- The Elliott Goldstein Tuition Assistance Fund is a newly created fund established in memory of Elliott Goldstein z"l, a founding parent and Board of Education Chairman who remained actively involved on the Board of Trustees until his death in 2008.

If you would like to make a difference in your alma mater, please contact Elaine Suchow who would be happy to discuss giving opportunities at the school.

**Development office: 718-591-9800 ext. 321 or [esuchow@sssq.org](mailto:esuchow@sssq.org)**

## Class Notes

### *Congratulations to:*

**Sean Liebowitz '97** and Meredith on their engagement. A wedding is planned for October 2009.

Enbal and **Roy Moussaieff '96** on being honored by the Hebrew Academy of Nassau County as Alumni of the Year and on the birth of their daughter Aylea, born June 28,

**Navon Somekh '97** and his wife, Sharon, on the birth of their son, Segev who was born on Navon's 25th birthday.

**Neda Melamed, Esq., '85** for organizing the Brandeis Association first career panel at Cardozo Law School.

**Yonit Shoshana Golub** (SSSQ '96, SSDS of Essex and Union 2000) and Yosef Mordechai Serkin (Solomon Schechter Day School Manhattan 2000), who were married on December 21, 2008. Yonit received both her bachelor and master degrees from Johns

Hopkins University and is a policy advisor in the Mayor's Office focusing on Economic Development. Yosef, known as Joe, graduated from Brandeis University and is a police officer. Yonit's best friend since her first day at SSSQ, Eliza Stein, was a bridesmaid.

**Leora Skolnik '98** on her engagement to Yoni Warren, a Rabbinical student at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York City. Yoni is from Hampton, Virginia. A wedding is planned for November 2009.

**Danna Goldman Soliecki '85** on the birth of her third daughter, Tori Alyssa, born February 12, 2009.

**Michael Goldman '86** and his wife, Ruth, on the birth of a baby boy.

**Jonah Rubin '98** and Michal Ran who were married on May 24, 2009. They will be living in Chicago where they are both Ph.D. candidates in the anthropology department of the University of Chicago.

**Hillel Skolnik '96** and his wife, Sharon, on the birth of their daughter, Dafna who was born on March 9, 2009.

**Josh Blumenfeld '91**, his wife, Michelle, and proud daughter, Shayna, on the birth of their second child Keren Eliana, born May 28, 2009. Grandfather, Joel, has a harem now!

**Ziv Alcalay '86** and his wife, Meredith, on the birth of their third child Emma Hanna who was born on July 21, 2009.

**Seth Wolkofsky '98** and Adeena Gabriel of Philadelphia on their engagement. Seth is currently a law clerk at Buchman Law Firm, LLP and is attending Seton Hall University, School of Law.

Robyn and **Joseph Reich '91** had a son on Wednesday, August 19, 2009.

**Steven Seiden '95** and his wife Aviva Queen Seiden on the birth of their daughter Jordan Ariella, born April 22, 2009. Uncle Zach '97, Aunt Jill '01, Grandma & Grandpa Debby '67 and Mike and Great Grandma Ruth Danis (PTA President 59-60) welcome her to the family.

## Where Are They Now?

**Yadin Kaufmann '72** has been living in Ra'anana, Israel with his wife Lori and four terrific kids since 1985, just after finishing grad school. He is in the venture capital business, investing in high-tech startups in Israel, and in other types of operations, including a non-profit organization and a publishing business he started.

**Ivan Menchell '74** is a writer/producer on several TV series, including "The Nanny", "Time Of Your Life", "Phil Of The Future". His film credits include "The Cemetery Club", he serves as a writer on "Curious George" (Universal 2006). His theatre credits include "The Cemetery Club" (Broadway), additional material for "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang" (Broadway), several Off-Broadway shows and, believe it or not, the current tour of Ringling Bros. "Boom-A-Ring" tour. He is currently co-executive producer and head writer on "Jonas", a series airing on the Disney Channel, starring the Jonas Bros. He has a

screenplay called "Blended" that was recently bought by Warner Bros. and is in the process of getting put together. He has completed a new Broadway musical, "Bonnie & Clyde", that had its first reading at the Roundabout Theatre in February. He is currently working on several other film scripts in various states of development. Ivan is married to a girl he went to college with, they live in Los Angeles with their two children; Olivia, 6 and Lou, 2.

**Danit Ben-Zvi '87** (Ratzabi) lives in Newport Beach, California, with her husband and three children. Besides raising her children, Danit manages her own catering business, Chickpea, which is now adding Chickpea Kids, a healthy kid's meal program marketed to schools, camps and other venues for children.

**Hila Ratzabi '95** received her BA from Barnard College and the Jewish Theological

Seminary (Double Degree Program) and an MFA in Poetry Writing from Sarah Lawrence College. Her poetry book, *The Apparatus of Visible Things*, will be published by Finishing Line Press July 24, 2009. This is a limited edition collection. She lives in Brooklyn and works as a freelance editor.

### Contact us with your info!

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## Alumni Come Back for a Visit

"It was great to be back at SSSQ after 35(!) years – Naomi Horowitz was kind enough to give me a guided tour that got me reacquainted with "our" classrooms, lunchroom, gym, etc. brought back lots of fun memories."

Yadin Kaufmann „72

"As a former student of Schechter Queens, I recently returned to visit the school and presented a program to the students. Even though I often think about my time there, the fast pace of modern life and the clutter of living always seemed to keep me from visiting. All the rooms seemed so large when I was so small, but the experience of the visit was larger than even my memory of the past. I felt a sense of comfort and completion. The familiar building and friendly way the staff



Ziv Alcalay '86 gets warm welcome from Mrs. Parshan

treated me made me feel so welcome. And at least one teacher actually remembered me! Somehow it made my accomplishments in life seem sweeter, and more complete. The students are so smart and well behaved. Going back made me proud I went there, and I'm so glad I got the opportunity to return."

Denny Levy „80

"Visiting Schechter brought back a lot of good memories. Remembering all the mischievous things we did and the fun times we had. It was nice to step back in time for a bit."

Brett Halpern „81

## June Reunions Class of 2001 and 2005



SSSQ „05 reunion was enjoyable. I remember graduating with promises to stay in touch and keep close to the friends I made during my 9 years at SSSQ. The high school years passed quickly, friendships dwindled and faded, and memories were stored away and forgotten. The reunion brought most of the class back together, along with the

memories and even some teachers who stopped to say hello. Over snacks, pictures, and phone calls to teachers and friends who could not make it ... in one of the most "memorable" rooms, the library .... 26 of us reminisced about the halls, walls, stairs, and stories we shared for 9 years. During our 3 hour „glitch in time" lost friendships were renewed and

memories brought back to life. I'm so appreciative of my time spent as a student and as a visiting alumnus in SSSQ, and will always remember my time spent there. Good luck Schechter graduates of 2005, high school graduates of 2009, let the memories live on!

Jasmine Patihi „05





**Solomon Schechter School of Queens Annual Campaign 2009-2010**

**Tomchei Hataf**

The Tomchei Hataf (Supporters of Children) Annual Campaign is part of our school's largest and most important fundraising campaign to provide the best in Secular and Jewish Education for current and future students. These unrestricted funds provide new and advanced technology, professional development for the faculty, enrichment opportunities for students and when necessary are part of the capital to run our school at a balanced budget.

**Special Opportunity**

For donors who give at the Tomchei Hataf Society level with a gift of \$1000 and above, there will be a special Dessert Reception in their honor.

**Double the impact of your gift!**

Donations are often eligible to be matched by employers' corporate matching gifts program. Please check with your Human Resources department.

Your annual gift of any amount is crucial in helping the Solomon Schechter School of Queens meet our commitment to *Jewish Life for Jewish Children* each and every day. Join us to ensure a successful campaign in support of excellence in education.



**Please circle one of the following gift categories:**

- SSSQ Builders                      \$18,000 and above
- Advisory Council                 \$10,000-17,999
- Presidents Circle                 \$ 5,000-9,999
- Partners                             \$ 1,800-4,999
- Tomchei Hataf                     \$ 1,000-1,799
- Other Amount                     \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Full Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

I/we are proud to support the Tomchei Hataf campaign of The Solomon Schechter School of Queens. My check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ is enclosed (payable by December 31, 2009).

Please bill my Visa/Mastercard/AmEx # \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. \_\_\_\_ security code \_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

- Please call me about a stock/IRA rollover gift
- Please call me about including Schechter in my will or other planned giving

***Payments are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law***

**Schechter Affiliation - please circle one of the following:**

Parent    Past Parent    Grandparent    Friend    Alumni (yr. graduated)    Staff Bd. Member

**For further information, contact Elaine L. Suchow, Director of Development**

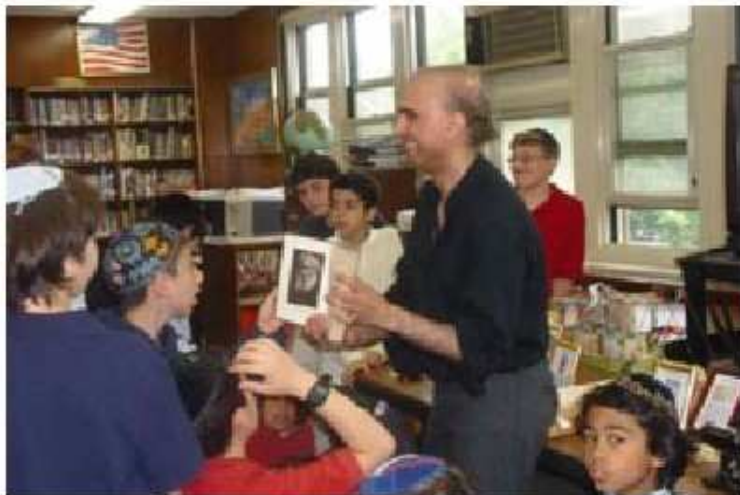
**Solomon Schechter School of Queens 718.591.9800, Ext. 321 or email [esuchow@sssq.org](mailto:esuchow@sssq.org)**

On June 11, 2009, The Museum of Interesting Things, a traveling, interactive demonstration/exhibition of over 300 antiques and inventions ranging from 19th century telephones and phonographs to butter churns from the 50s to wind-up toys, made its way to our school. Denny Daniel, an alumni of SSSQ and founder of the Museum demonstrated how objects of the past can inspire creativity. His point is to introduce people to inventions of the past so they'll learn from this and be able to come up with ideas to create a better future. Denny set up in the library and provided a hands-on experience for our students that they will never forget. He began with a

demonstration of an Edison cylindrical phonograph and invited a 5th grader to step up and wind the Victrola up and challenged her to lower the sound. Of course, there was no volume control and Denny asked her to remove her sock and place it in the large brass horn. This made the sound disappear and she was amazed at how sound was controlled without any modern-day buttons to push or knobs to turn. Denny continued to demonstrate other inventions and the students asked questions and seemed to be very engrossed in his presentation. Denny said it's normal for children to get excited about the Museum of Interesting Things because it's "a Barnum and Bailey type of

show" which brings the past to life.

The Museum wasn't Denny's first choice of career. He too traveled many roads before the idea became a reality. He studied economics, politics, literature, history and theatre at NYU and Oxford. He also worked in his father's shoe design business for some time and filed documentaries, designed websites and taught at NYU. He told me that he had a great career but was really unhappy. He then started buying antiques and as his collection grew, people started coming over to his apartment to admire the toys and other items. That's when he decided to start the museum. I met Denny in a roundabout way – he emailed me a year ago wanting to arrange for a reunion for his class. One word led to another and I found out about his wonderful Museum of Interesting Things. I really wanted our students at Schechter to be enriched by his knowledge and Denny nicely tied together a message of who we are Jewishly by presenting an 1800 year old Bible scroll from ancient Israel and allowing the children to touch the piece – they were fascinated. We are still working on the reunion part of our conversation and hope to accomplish getting several classes together this March. Stay tuned .....



Denny with some interesting things

## Gary Strumeyer '75 – Addresses the SSSQ class of 2009 at graduation

It was truly a pleasure to have Gary Strumeyer '75 speak at this year's graduation for the class of 2009. Gary is the President at BNY Mellon Capital Markets and he was most receptive when asked to speak to our students. He is a source of inspiration to any Schechter student and a wonderful example of what can be accomplished when you study and take yourself seriously. On behalf of the school, we want to thank Gary for his loyalty to Schechter. Below are some

words expressing how Gary felt to be a part of this occasion:

"Speaking at SSSQ was an exciting and rewarding experience. In preparing the remarks, I got to revisit some of my fondest childhood memories. As I said at the ceremony, students of Schechter Queens, are so lucky that their parents chose to invest in their futures. Sending them to SSSQ is arguably the most important and correct decision they could have made".



Gary Strumeyer '75



Solomon Schechter School of Queens 4th Annual Golf & Tennis Outing was held at the North Shore Towers golf club on June 2, 2009. Coordinated by alumni parent Barry Seidel, it was a fun event where old friends got together and new friends were made. Great food, great fun, great golf and tennis...all for a good cause - SSSQ! Consider joining us next June!!



**Solomon Schechter School  
of Queens**

76-16 Parsons Boulevard  
Flushing, NY 11366

Check out our website  
**www.sssq.org**  
Come see what's going on at SSSQ

**What have you been doing?**



**GET IN TOUCH WITH US!**

Please take a moment to fill out and send to Naomi R. Horowitz, Alumni Coordinator

SSSQ, 76-16 Parsons Blvd., Flushing, NY 11366 or fax (718) 591-3946 or E-mail to **nhorowitz@sssq.org**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Class \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (home) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

(business) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to be a class representative \_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to help plan special events for my class

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I want to participate in the mentor program

I can attend alumni events in \_\_\_\_\_ NY \_\_\_\_\_ NJ \_\_\_\_\_ at school \_\_\_\_\_ other location

\_\_\_\_\_ I/We would like to contribute \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to the SSSQ Alumni Fund for continuing Excellence in Education

\_\_\_\_\_ Matching gift option from my company \_\_\_\_\_ (My form is enclosed)