

One-on-One With Rabbi Herrnson

By Josh Rubin
Senior Editor-in-Chief

Seeking answers to questions about Schechter's current state and its future, Paw Print recently sat down with Solomon Schechter's Head of School, Rabbi Lev Herrnson.

The Economy

The economic recession has certainly had its impact on Schechter in the past 18 months. This year, 59% of Schechter students, from elementary through high school, are on some sort of financial assistance program. This represents a significant increase from previous years, when "about 40% of our families received some degree of assistance," according to Herrnson, who took over as Head of School in March 2007. Schechter has been taking measures to prevent the financial climate from deterring its families from sending kids to our school; one such initiative is the 'Short Form' option for financial aid offered for the first time this past year. The new program "allows families to submit a one page application ... for awards up to \$5,000."

Enrollment

Rabbi Herrnson and Ms. Adele Spickler, who now serves as the Director of Admissions, are determined to reverse the 25% decrease in enrollment that Schechter has seen over the past decade. Herrnson believes that Schechter's combination of rigorous secular and Judaic educations gives Schechter a strong case "against any other school." In addition, Herrnson said that by sending their children to Schechter, parents are "making an investment in the Jewish future."

Many in the Schechter community are concerned that there is only one kindergarten class this year. "This is an anomaly," said Herrnson. "For the 2010-2011 school year, we

have over twenty kids, who are siblings of current students, who have indicated that they are likely to be entering [the kindergarten class] next year." Herrnson expects that Schechter will have at least two kindergarten classes next September.

To augment enrollment, Schechter has increased its outreach to local JCCs, synagogues and even public schools. Schechter is also relying more on student and parent ambassadors to advocate and recruit potential new families to the school community. Herrnson said that he is willing to meet with "every prospective family, whenever possible."

Fundraising

Given that tuition only covers approximately 70-75% of Schechter's total expenses, the remainder must be fundraised or collected from grants. In Herrnson's first year, Schechter raised about \$1.25 million, a \$300,000 increase from the previous year. Last year, fundraising was significantly affected by the economic recession, and it decreased to \$1.15 million. Yet as the economy begins to rebound, Herrnson is bullish about Schechter's fundraising goal for this year: \$1.37 million. To achieve this goal, Schechter will "solicit parents, grandparents, community leaders and foundations." Herrnson believes the Board of Directors approved this ambitious goal "because of their high level of confidence." The \$1.9 million distributed to families for financial assistance this year was largely collected through fundraising. "We fundraise so that we can educate as many students as possible," Herrnson said.

A New Home?

Finally, Herrnson acknowledged Schechter's need of a new home. In five years, Herrnson hopes that Schechter will be "more centrally located, in its own home and re-named after a significant donor family." In terms of religious



E. Goldberg

Rabbi Lev Herrnson has been Solomon Schechter's Head of School since March 2007.

affiliation, Herrnson emphasized the importance of making our school "more attractive to Jews of varied denominations." The Board of Directors is currently looking into ways to actualize this goal.

"While we all understand that the economy and demographics have impacted our school ... [Schechter] has experienced its ups and downs

for 40 years," noted Herrnson. Recalling Schechter's "long history of educating children [and] providing a rigorous program in general and Judaic studies," Herrnson said, "I have every hope that we will continue to do so for the grandchildren of our current students."

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New Bridges Program: Bridge to the Future?

By Ari Weiss

Despite difficult economic times, Schechter has managed to find a potential path to a brighter future that could allow the school to thrive: the Bridges Program. The Bridges Program, which just began this year, is a program that welcomes former public school students to Schechter and provides them with a separate curriculum of Hebrew, Bible and Judaism. This is the first time in Schechter's history that it has had a wide-scale program directed towards students with little or no Jewish background.

Taking part in this new initiative are

four freshmen who transferred from public middle schools on Long Island. Unlike the conventional 10-15 student classes at Solomon Schechter, the classes provided for the Bridges students offer a unique, small setting with special individual attention from their teachers, particularly the program's adviser and Solomon Schechter's Director of Jewish Life, Rabbi Moshe Schwartz. Rabbi Schwartz also teaches a special course designed for them called Intro to Judaism, which serves as the students' Rabbinitics course. In addition to this class, the students take beginners' Hebrew and Bible classes.

Although the Bridges Program is only a month-and-a-half old, the administration and faculty both have high hopes for it.

"The program is off to the right start," commented Rabbi Schwartz. "There are wonderful students who show a commitment to serious learning and Jewish life. The Bridges Program has potential for growth." Schechter students also see the program as constructive for our school. "I think it is a good program as it can help Schechter expand," stated Lianne Canarick, a junior. "Now instead of just students from Schechter schools and the like coming, we also have new students from public schools."

Most importantly, the students participating in the Bridges Program have given it positive reviews and are enjoying the benefits of joining our Schechter family.

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Kesher Club + Social Action Club = ?

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New Languages: German and Italian

By Mikey Weiss

With a rising interest in new, diverse languages, Solomon Schechter High School of Long Island recently incorporated both Italian and German as additional electives for juniors and seniors. After students responded positively to Italian I last year, it was clear that they had a thirst for new languages. However, with limited teachers and time, it is difficult to offer more than just Spanish. Fortunately, Se'ora Susan Schmitz is fluent in English and Spanish as well as Italian and German, giving Schechter students an opportunity to master two more languages.

Taking Italian or German in addition to

English, Hebrew and Spanish looks great for college. However, it comes with a heavy burden: more work. Schechter students strive to reach their highest potential and aim to receive the best possible grades, but with Schechter's double curriculum and strenuous classes, taking electives is clearly burdensome. The question then arises: Do students take electives out of their own interest or out of pressure in the race for colleges?

"They are electives, and the pressure is placed on themselves," stated Principal Allan Dalfen. "Any additional electives are pressuring; however, students take them because they are interested."

Max Silverman, a senior at Schechter who has taken all five of the languages offered at Schechter at some point, further ex-

plained, "Although there is a lot of work on the students' shoulders, students take electives because they want to, and because they have a language interest."

Only juniors and seniors are allowed to take electives, raising the question of whether or not freshmen and sophomores should also be allowed to do so. "There is simply no time available in their schedules to offer additional courses," stated Dalfen. Schmitz added, "With just beginning Spanish, there would be too much pressure and work, and it would simply be too confusing."

A few years ago, Schechter offered Arabic as an elective. However, when the teacher left, so did the Arabic elective. Is it acceptable for a Jewish Day School to offer such a language class? "I do not see any

problem with opening the students' horizons from just Hebrew and Israel," asserted Silverman. Rabbi Chesler, a Rabbinics teacher at Schechter, stated, "It is acceptable, and it is a great asset." He further explained, "[Arabic] is important for understanding the modern Middle East and Jewish culture under Muslim rule."

Se'ora Bonnie Cahn, the Spanish Department Coordinator, said, "I hope in the future, the language department continues to expand and spread."

Jeffrey Richards, a freshman, stated, "I am very interested in learning new languages in the future, because the more languages you know, the more opportunities you will have in life."

Iran Rally at the UN

By Netta-Lee Lax

On September 24, 2009, the Schechter senior class ventured to the United Nations headquarters in Manhattan. The seniors, clad in matching tie-dyed shirts, came prepared to rally against a nuclear proliferated Iran and President Ahmadinejad Everywhere there were signs speaking out against the current Iranian regime. However, the scene quickly expanded to be a stage for all political statements. The signs ranged from condemnations of President Obama to "Paris Hilton for President." One sign read "human rights for Iran," while another showed a picture of the Iranian president dressed as a Nazi officer.

The issues addressed by the speakers at the rally ranged from the political uprising that took place in Iran a few months earlier to the threat that a nuclear proliferated Iran poses to Israel. Among these speakers was Elie Wiesel, the famed author. Wiesel, a Holocaust survivor, has won a Nobel Peace Prize and is a well known human rights advocate. Wiesel called Ahmadinejad "an enemy of humanity" and "a disgrace to all those who want peace in the world." Another speaker called the current Iranian regime "inhumane."

Amidst all the cries and pleas to bring Ahmadinejad to his knees, the shofar sounded. The rally took place during the ten days of awe between Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah - a period of reflection and repentance. By blowing the shofar, the crowd, in a sense, asked Ahmadinejad to repent and reform his ways.

The Solomon Schechter class of 2010 could be spotted from anywhere in the crowd, as their bright shirts stood out. The seniors let their voices be heard on an issue evidently close to their hearts.

Polls: Schechter in Statistics

By Sharon Reshef

Many Schechter students cite the sense of community as one of their favorite things about Solomon Schechter. Whether this is their thirteenth year at Schechter, their first, or something in between, students often feel as though they are in the know about their school and their peers. But do they know what ice cream flavor the student body prefers? Are they aware of what percent of their peers have a Facebook account? Do they know if the Yankees are more popular than the Mets? Probably not. Paw Print conducted a school-wide survey to help students get to know their fellow classmates' opinions and lifestyles on a larger scale.

To answer the previous questions, the student body prefers chocolate over vanilla (38% to 34%, with 24% liking both flavors and 4% liking neither), 95% of Schechter students have a Facebook account, and the Yankees are favored by 38% of students, while the Mets are only favored by 30%.

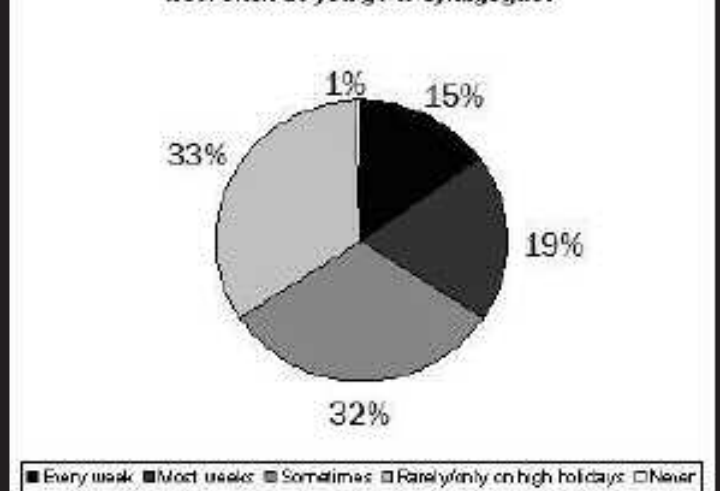
The more personal survey questions also yielded interesting responses. Although Schechter is a Conservative Jewish Day School, many students do not identify themselves as Conservative Jews. In fact, eight percent of students reported that they were Orthodox, ten percent said that they were reform, four percent said that they were a combination of either Orthodox and Conservative or Conservative and Reform, and seven percent were unsure of which category they should place themselves in. Students may also be surprised to learn how many of their peers actually go to synagogue either every Saturday or on most Saturdays (34%). The other 66% either goes sometimes, only on high holidays, or never at all. The student body may seem pretty homogeneous, but from a Jewish perspective, it is actually quite diverse.

Students' political views are also more varied than some may expect, or perhaps less varied: A whopping 42% said that they are unsure of where they stand, while 27% reported being liberals, 13% said that they are moderates, and 19% identified themselves as conservatives. For a school that so overwhelmingly supported Senator Obama for president over Senator McCain in last year's Paw Print poll, it is quite surprising that 42% of its students do not know which side of the political spectrum they are on. It is also interesting to note that of the 19% of students who reported being conservative, 89% of them were male.

On a different note, juniors and seniors seem to be taking on rigorous course loads, as evidenced by the amounts of AP classes they reported to be taking: An average junior is taking 1.2 APs, and an average senior is taking 4 APs. Schechter has a reputation for challenging its students academically, but clearly, students are also taking the initiative and challenging themselves by taking so many college-level courses.

The 77% of Solomon Schechter Middle School graduates who make up the student population at Solomon Schechter High School have known each other since eighth grade or before, but it is unlikely that they knew these statistics about their peers as a group. It may be surprising to some that for such a small school, there are so many routines, ideas and feelings circulating, but that is the very essence of Schechter; students tend to be chocolate-loving, Yankee-supporting and Facebook-checking, but more importantly, they are also diverse and tolerant of others' opinions--at least, as diverse as Day School students can get.

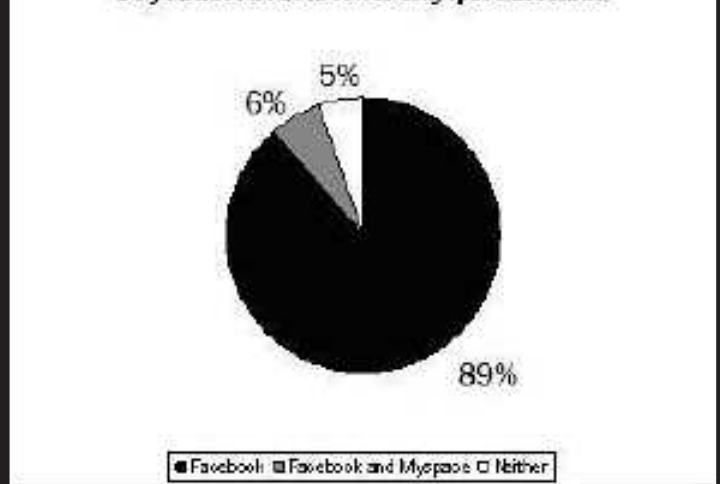
How often do you go to synagogue?



Poll Conducted by S. Reshef on 10/08/09

Of the 115 Schechter students polled, only 15% said they go to synagogue every week.

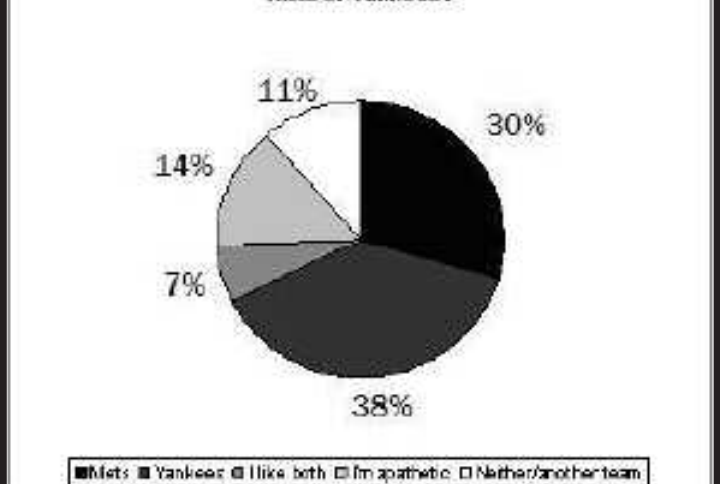
Do you have a Facebook or a Myspace account?



Poll Conducted by S. Reshef on 10/08/09

Of the 115 Schechter students polled, 95% have a Facebook account.

Mets or Yankees?



Poll Conducted by S. Reshef on 10/08/09

Of the 115 Schechter students polled, 38% are Yankee fans, while just 30% are Mets fans.

Peer Connectors & Peer Educators

By Danielle Truglio

Peer Educators and Peer Connectors are two great programs that we have in our school. Run by our Director of Guidance, Señora Bonnie Cahn, these programs allow middle school students and ninth graders to connect with and befriend upperclassmen.

The Peer Educators program is run exclusively for middle school students. Tenth and eleventh graders volunteer during lunch periods to talk with middle school students about different issues or concerns that they might have. Peer Educator Rachel Cahn, a junior, said, "I think it's good to have someone to look up to and to trust.

Kids can come up to high school students if they have an issue that needs to be resolved or can just say hi in the hallway." Many of the students involved in the program said that they benefited greatly from having Peer Educators while they were in middle school. "Peer Educators made the transition to high school a little easier. I think they should continue the program for years to come," said freshman Ben Broad.

Peer Connectors is the other esteemed program that gives freshmen the opportunity to create a buddy system of sorts with seniors. Freshman Daniel Meyerson said, "Peer Connectors are like best friends that you always

want to hang out with."

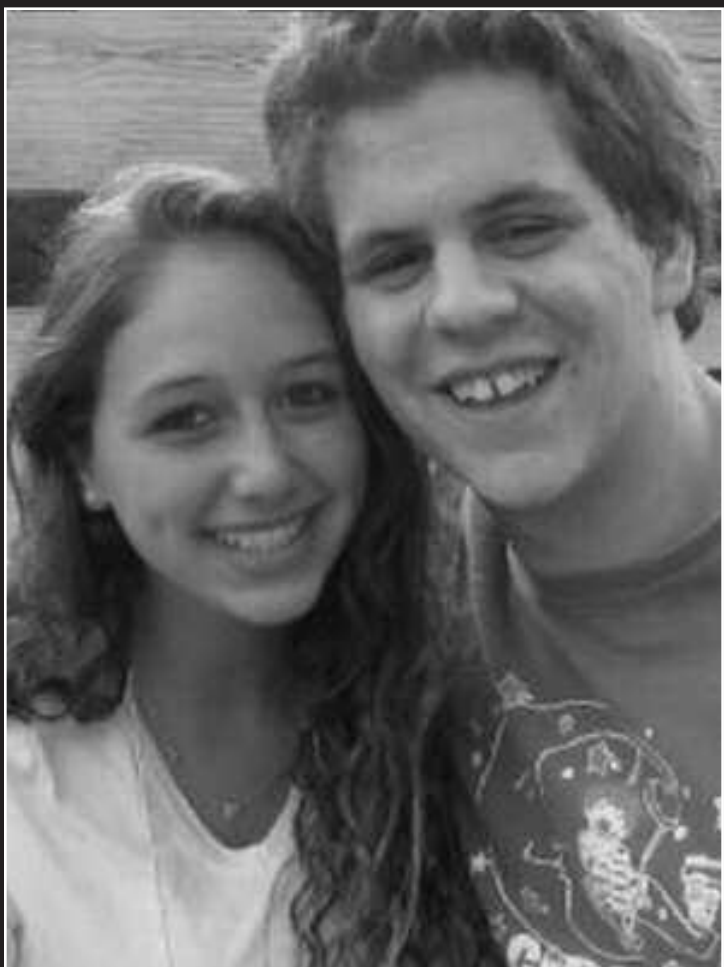
The freshmen and their Peer Connectors are the first to go on the school-wide Shabbaton so that they have a chance to get to know one another. "As a freshman, I really enjoyed the benefits of having a Peer Connector that I was close with, said Peer Connector Marc Canarick. "Also, I was on the baseball team my freshman year and it was a sort of tough year for me as a player, and it was always really helpful to have my Peer Connector on the team." Canarick cited his experience as a freshman as the reason he applied to become a Peer Connector.

The Peer Connectors program also gives freshmen the opportunity to ask any questions regarding the high school's teachers, clubs, workload and even sports. "My Peer Connectors helped me know how much work I get per class and told me what to expect from certain teachers," stated freshman Liron Goldring.

These two programs show how much of a community our school really is. By having them, we bring our middle school and high school students together to share thoughts and create friendships. Hopefully, we will continue these programs for many years to come, so students in future years can benefit from and enjoy them as much as our current students do.

"Peer Connectors are like best friends that you always want to hang out with."

- Daniel Meyerson



S. Brotons

Seniors Grace Southworth (left) and Ayal Prouser are two of the ten Peer Connectors.

Opinion: Website Needs Reboot

As products of the Digital Age, students are becoming increasingly dependent upon the Internet for school information and assistance. Accordingly, the Schechter website is quickly becoming popular among the students. However, there are some aspects of the website that are outdated and need to be changed.

Students seem to enjoy the teacher websites. As freshman Natalie Jamnik said, they are "really helpful because they give me all my homework." If a student is absent, he or she can simply check online to see what homework he or she missed. The teacher websites seem to be pointing Schechter in right direction.

On the Schechter website, there is very little information regarding weekly school-wide news. Sabrina Brotons, a senior, believes that the school website

needs to be updated so that "we could hear all the new topics in school." News on the school website might include high school daily announcements, Student Government proposals and upcoming holidays or events such as theater productions, grade trips or Mitzvah Days. These additions would help keep students up to date with what is going on around the school.

The areas that seem to need the greatest amount of updating are the photo galleries. While some pictures are relatively current, most of the pictures are from several years ago and include students who have already graduated and teachers who no longer work at Schechter. For example, none of the students in the photo on website's homepage header still attend Schechter. According to senior Katherine Appelbaum, "Parents and future

students need [the website] so they can look at current photos." They should be able to see what student life is like on a regular basis.

Other old things need updating, such as the outdated list of clubs that Schechter offers. Rebecca Silverman, a senior, believes that there should be "updated lists of activities, and pictures and descriptions of clubs." Students should be able to be notified about the extracurricular activities that are offered and what each club's mission is.

Website improvement might not happen instantly, but with the support of the student body, the website can gradually change. Hopefully, future students of Solomon Schechter will be able to utilize the website more than current students are able to now.

-By Ariella Jamnik and Rachel Multz

Keshet Club's Big Merge



Keshet Club's recent merge with Social Action Club has left its members optimistic about the future.

Keshet Club, one of Schechter's most renowned clubs, is back and looking forward to another great year. This year, Keshet Club and Social Action Club have merged to become one of the most altruistic clubs in school.

As Keshet means "connection" in Hebrew, Keshet Club strives to connect with as many people as possible, often meaning the rest of the Glen Cove community. Many students participated in the carnival that Keshet Club hosted two years ago for Glen Cove Elementary School stu-

dents. This year, Keshet Club plans to continue connecting Schechter to the community at large by making peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for the local soup kitchen, delivering Purim baskets to the local senior center and raising money for breast cancer research through a volleyball tournament.

Ms. Laury Kassell, the club's adviser for the last two years, is excited about the merge with Social Action Club, which she believes will "really allow Keshet Club to broaden [its] connections on a much

larger level." She is also looking forward to the club's "strong leadership this year," because the officers "really drive the club."

Senior Carly Rubinfeld, the club's president, stated that Keshet Club is all about "commitment, being responsible and wanting to bring out the good to the community and beyond the community."

Keshet Club meets every D-day and is always looking for new members to come help do great things for the surrounding community.

-By Rebecca Silverman

10th Annual Shabbaton in Review

By Dani Kristal and Lindsay Stern

"I thought this year's Shabbaton was amazing, and truthfully, I liked it better than last year's," said junior Falen Rauchwerger. Year after year, more and more students are hopping on buses and heading towards Camp Ramah in the Berkshires for the annual Schechter Shabbaton. Each year, the students come back smiling, tired and filled with food (even though it



Mike Hirsch
Student Life
Coordinator

may not be the best) and memories. What is it that makes this trip so special? What happens between the time we depart from the school and the time our parents come pick us up to return us to our regular lives? Is it the ubiquitous gnats hovering about our heads as we step off the bus, the

close quarters of the Berkshires bunks, the sleeping bags that we can never tie back up or seeing our teachers in casual clothes? Or perhaps it may be the singing after meals, the battling of the classes, the cameras flashing or the welcoming of Shabbat.

"The Shabbaton was better than I expected," said freshman Philip Roth. "I think that it is a great way for new students coming into the school to connect with the students coming back from [Schechter] Middle School." Philip was one of the 49 freshmen who went up a day early with the ten Peer Connectors. Senior and Peer Connector Eliana Goodman said, "I think it's a great idea for the Peer Connectors to come up early with the freshmen so they can help the students adjust to their new grade and prepare them for the rest of the high school to come."

After the rest of the students stepped off the buses and the whole school was together at Camp Ramah, Battle of the Classes began. The weekend started off with a competitive yet exciting game show, and the battle continued on Friday when students wrote songs, painted banners and dressed up in their designated col-



A. Cooper

From left to right: Seniors Jamie Adges, Shoshana Klayman, Adina Cooper and Katherine Appelbaum enjoy S'mores at Shabbaton.

ors. Rauchwerger commented, "It was definitely quite an experience competing against the other three grades for the number one spot, but it was really all fun and games."

After the battle was over, each grade put its competitiveness aside to come together as a school to celebrate Shabbat. One of the most special aspects of the Shabbaton is that it is a time when everyone in the Schechter community can put their fast-paced lives aside and enjoy one restful weekend together. Regardless of students' observance at home, for those 25 hours on the Shabbaton, the whole school observes the holiday as a kehila, a community. This provides the students with a great oppor-

tunity to spend time with their peers. "Shabbat was a typical Shabbaton Shabbat," said Mr. Levine, the Math Department Coordinator. "It was nice to have a really quiet Shabbat since I don't always get to have that. It is good to have a Shabbat with Schechter, a Shabbat with the students."

While people had very few complaints about the Shabbaton, there is always room for improvement. Goodman said, "I wish there would be more inter-grade activities, so we could bond more as a class and as a school." Rauchwerger added, "I liked the Saturday afternoon free time that we had, but I wish we had more activities on Friday."

Overall, however, it was a great weekend. The Shabbaton is a nice opportunity to catch up with your friends after the summer. The camp atmosphere, mixed with that of school, makes the Shabbaton a great segue from the summer into the school year. Despite the clouds and rain, everyone had a great time. "It was wetter," said Mr. Levine. "The rain affected the Shabbaton, but not in a negative way. There were just different activities, but the planners were well prepared." Good job to everyone who assisted in planning the Shabbaton for yet another fabulous weekend!

Schechter Responds to Hate Group On LI

By Adina Cooper

On Wednesday, September 23, North Hempstead Town Supervisor Jon Kaiman spoke at Schechter. He informed the students about the Westboro Baptist Church, a hate group from Kansas that would be protesting in Great Neck that Friday.

The Westboro Baptist Church, Kaiman explained, is a small church that consists of one family: the Phelps. The Phelps family is

headed by its 78-year-old patriarch, Fred Phelps, who teaches his children and grandchildren that God hates homosexuals, Jews and America.

When Kaiman spoke to us, he "was trying to be calming," said Director of Guidance Señora Cahn. He emphasized that the church was only practicing freedom of speech and that they would not turn violent. Kaiman stressed that as a community, we should not counter-protest or give the group attention, since the church members' goal is to make money through publicity and lawsuits that they file

against people who fight back.

Cahn explained that she asked Kaiman to come because she "wanted to raise awareness." Cahn said that even though the group would not immediately affect a large percentage of our student body, she knew "that realistically they could organize a march in any community and [she] wanted the students to know how to react to this hate group." She further explained, "With this group, the police and local officials instructed us to 'ignore the bully.'"

Before Kaiman's presentation, many students had heard of the hate group but did not know very much about it. Cahn said that all the students she spoke to after the presentation "were relieved; they felt safer and better."

Still, for many people, not reacting to the church was difficult. At Solomon Schechter, we have been taught never to stand by and allow prejudice. We have learned about mistakes made before the Holocaust by people who did not fight back, yet now we were being told not to retaliate.

Some students felt that ignoring the protesters was not an option. When asked what we should do about the church, senior Sabrina Brotons said, "I think we should protest on our own and speak out about how their views are immoral."

Other students felt it necessary to counter-protest in Great Neck. Senior Arik Adhami and sophomore Omri Ambalo and Zach Kardisch were among those students. Kardisch said that even though Kaiman requested that they not go, they "wanted to see if there would be anyone else counter-protesting." Ambalo added

"We [should] spread the word about how to react to this group and learn ways to teach and spread tolerance."

- Señora Cahn

that he felt "a moral obligation to be there."

The boys recalled that when they arrived, there were about three hundred Jews and people of other religions and races counter-protesting. Kardisch said that on the counter-protest side, "People were singing songs and yelling...and on the other side they were singing hate songs. It was scary at first, but then we became more comfortable with all the people around us."

The correct way to deal with the Phelps family remains unknown. Kardisch explained, "They're practicing freedom of speech, so the best thing we can do is stay calm, protest or ignore them, but don't fight back because then they accomplish their goal."

On the other hand, senior Eliana Goodman said, "We should come together as Jews and talk about it, just as Kaiman said." Cahn also suggested that "we spread the word about how to react to this group and learn ways to teach and spread tolerance."



E. Goldberg

Members of the Westboro Baptist Church (left), a hate group from Kansas, protested in Great Neck. Some Jews and others turned out to counter-protest (right).

New Team: Girls Soccer



Sabrina Brotons
Founder, Captain

This September, Schechter's first Girls Soccer team was created. The Lady Lions recently competed in their first game against Portledge and are off to a great start of the season. They played with true dedication, with goals scored by junior Melanie Eisenberg and freshman Cayla Rosenblum in the first half of the game. Portledge tied the score early in the second half, but the Lions retaliated with two more goals scored by Rosenblum and freshman Aliza Chesler. The final score was four to four.

Created by senior Sabrina Brotons, the team's official captain and coach, the team is the first girls soccer team in Schechter's history. Brotons, who has been playing soccer from a young age, said, "I wanted to take an initiative. There was no girls soccer team, so I set out to create one." Although practices have been few and far between, the athletes have grown and connected as a team. As Eisenberg put it, "We had fun; we bonded and realized that we have a lot of potential."

The result of the first game filled the team with excitement and hope for years to come. "We didn't even know we were capable of what we accomplished," said Eisenberg. Hopefully, in upcoming years, the Schechter Girls Soccer team will continue to grow and succeed.

-By Daniel Koas

Girls Volleyball Makes Playoffs after 4-3 Season

Senior Leadership and New Freshmen: A Recipe For Success

By Daniel Goldberg
and Zach Kardisch

Throughout Solomon Schechter's existence, Girls Volleyball has been one of the school's most successful teams. The team has always consisted of hard-working and committed athletes who have created a great reputation for the team. Making it to the semi-finals in years past has been one of the team's greatest accomplishments.

However, this year, the girls hit a bump along the road: the loss of last year's seniors has meant the loss of valuable and talented players. With only two seniors currently playing on the team, junior Lianne Canarick posed the question, "Will the team be able to fulfill expectations with the addition of new freshman?" She then added, "I think we are trying our hardest and our best to do well, and for the most part, we are succeeding." Senior and team captain Emily Goldberg added, "The team is already having a strong season, and we have a lot of rookies, so it has taken time for them to learn." A 4-3 record proves that learning is not one of the team's biggest concerns.

The hard-working freshmen deserve credit for the contributions they have made since September. Their efforts have made a huge impact on the team's success. "I love all the new players, and many of them are contributing positively to the team. One of them is even a



The Yearbook Club

Senior Eliana Goodman (right) hits a nice shot as her teammates look on.

starter," Canarick said.

With the playoffs approaching, the team needs to prepare. When freshman Katherine Saed was asked what the team was doing to get ready for the post-season, she said, "We're taking it one game at a time, but our main focus is not only to get

to the playoffs, but it's also to work hard and to leave the court knowing that we did our best." Goldberg optimistically added, "We hope to make it to the championship."

Going far in the playoffs is certainly a possibility for the Schechter Girls Volleyball team, especially

because each player is making an equal contribution. We will have to wait and see just how successful the team can be in the playoffs, and if the girls will be able to handle the pressure that comes with post-season play.

Boys Soccer

By Brian Chavkin and Dov Stern

This season has been a step up for the Schechter Lions Boys Soccer team. The team, led by seniors David Mendelowitz, Max Geller and Josh Schwartz, has improved upon its 1-9 record last year, going 2-5 with two ties and one game left to go against Lawrence Woodmere Academy in this season. The team has seen significant change, including the addition of new coach Kerry Dalton, Solomon Schechter High School's Athletic Director.

The most surprising part of the season has been the strong play of freshman Jordan Abrahamson. Abrahamson, who has scored seven goals this season, is second on the team in goals scored, trailing only team leader and star player David Mendelowitz, who has nine goals. "Last year, we didn't actually have experienced players," Abrahamson



The Yearbook Club

Junior Daniel Stecker (center) makes a great defensive play for the Schechter soccer team.

said. "This year, with the players we have, we've been able to move the ball more, take more shots, and keep the ball out of the net." The season began with two games--Schechter had leads in both games but had to settle for two ties. Coach Dalton named an additional difficulty faced by the team during a game: "We had to forfeit because of no referees."

Despite the obstacles they faced throughout the season, the players

and the coach remained optimistic. However, on Thursday, October 8, the team suffered a heartbreaking loss against Long Island Lutheran, diminishing the likelihood of a playoff berth. Despite the circumstances, Coach Dalton was proud of his team. "All the players played hard this year," he said. "[The team] didn't catch some of the breaks, but everybody worked hard."

X-Country

Rough Start to Season

By Adam Jannik and Ilan Jannik

The Schechter Cross Country team has trained hard since September, but training is mostly all it has done so far. The team has many talented runners, but none of them were able to show off their skills until late October, a full month into the season. The first scheduled meet was at Knox, but the team mistakenly showed up at Portledge. The second meet had a scheduled start time of 4:30 PM, but the team was a little too late, arriving at Eisenhower Park only to see other runners starting the race. Captain Arik Adhami, a senior, said, "What can I say? Stuff happens; we have to be on time." Finally, though, at the third meet, the team arrived on time and ready to race. Although no team members placed in the race, they were just happy to have successfully participated in a race.

Most of the team members, especial-

ly the leaders, are trying to maintain positive attitudes despite missing their first two meets. "What's meant to be is meant to be; [this gave] us more time to practice," said captain Ari Derman, a senior. Freshman Adam Shalem had a different take on their misfortunes. When asked whether or not these missed meets would affect the team, he said, "It could. We're scared that it's going to happen again." But the success of the third meet has definitely raised the team's spirits.

The Cross Country team has seen its ups and downs and always manages to bounce back. The team stays hopeful and continues to work hard during the grueling practices of Coach Dennis Pettas. These practices have allowed the team to stay sharp and prepare for their upcoming meets.

Opinion: Summer Assignments Helpful

By Doug Hoch

Each summer brings such joy and excitement that for students, school becomes a distant memory. Backpacks, binders and pencils are thrust aside in the wake of a summer adventure. Summertime is the pinnacle of the year during which the instinctual part of us can reign free, and we can completely leave behind any notion of school and the work involved with it. Well, almost completely.

About a week or two into the summer, students receive a letter containing their summer assignments that forces them to come to their senses. Camp, teen tours, and other summer getaways only delay the inevitable awakening that summer assignments thrust upon us. From the unanimous reaction of students to these letters, which is an irritated groan of anger and discontent, the question arises: Are summer assignments truly necessary?

From a student's perspective, the answer is a resounding no. "Summer is supposed to be a break from school, a time for relaxation," argued junior Jay Canarick. Indeed, this view is shared by many who look to the summer as an opportunity to shrug off the responsibility demanded throughout the school year. Rather than solve equations or write essays, students look to play sports and go on trips as ways to detach themselves from school. Most would be even more content with a complete abandonment of schoolwork during the summer.

Although summer assignments may be time-consuming and aggravating to complete, they do benefit students in ways that are often not considered. The benefits of summer assignments become clear when

one examines the difference between English and Math at Schechter. While some sort of summer reading and writing is required of all English classes, students are not required to review math equations during the summer. As a result, when school comes around, many students find it difficult to recall the math they learned during the past year, and several classes are spent reviewing the most important topics from the previous year. English assignments, however bothersome they may be, do obligate us to keep our minds sharp and prepare us for the upcoming year.

Summer assignments provide an opportunity...to maintain a degree of intellectual activity throughout the summer.

However, this line of reasoning possesses a major flaw; the majority of students leave summer assignments to the last few weeks, or even days, of summer. How can it be said that summer assignments keep our minds functioning when, in reality, we end up jumpstarting our brains at the last minute? This unfortunate fact is at-

tributable to the nature of the assignments themselves. They tend to lack an appealing aspect—something to help students view them not as imposed upon them, but as valuable opportunities. More students might take advantage of these opportunities if the assignments were looked upon as beneficial rather than completed in a begrudging manner simply because a grade is pending.

Ideally, summer assignments would present a regimented yet manageable amount of work that would serve to keep the most important ideas of the previous school year fresh in our minds. Although it may be difficult for some to admit, summer assignments provide an opportunity, for those who approach them properly, to maintain a degree of intellectual activity throughout the summer.



E. Goldberg

Some teachers give out summer assignments, but are they really necessary?

Spickler in New Position

By Amelia Bayroff

Everyone at Schechter knows Ms. Adele Spickler, and most people know that in previous years Spickler occupied the smallest room in the main office, acting as Assistant Principal of the Upper School. However, what many people might not know is that this year, Spickler holds a new position. Now, those looking for Spickler are no longer going to the main office, but to the offices in the old gym, where Spickler works as Schechter's new Director of Admissions.

Though her new position is definitely a change, Spickler is eager to do what she can to help the school. When asked why the switch was made, she said that the current state of the economy played an important role in her and the school's decision. "In this economic downturn, it is harder to have families commit to a Jewish Day School education," she admitted.



M. Dominguez

Ms. Adele Spickler has assumed the role of Director of Admissions.

Most students already enrolled in Schechter have little interaction with Spickler in her new position. Therefore, many may be surprised to find out exactly what her position as Director of Admissions entails. In addition to bringing candidates to the high school, the position also involves "enrolling

appropriate candidates for our kindergarten program," and "transitioning students from our elementary school to our middle school."

Spickler felt that she needed to assume this position, saying, "I hope to help our school grow to the numbers that we once enjoyed and to see our classrooms filled with students who are going to go on to be the future leaders of the Jewish community." Furthermore, Spickler would like to

tell everyone at Schechter that if they know any families that are potentially interested in our school, they should point them in her direction.

Feature: Ms. Pitschi

By Sarah Epstein

This year, Solomon Schechter welcomes Ms. Jaime Pitschi, the new Global History teacher for the ninth grade. Pitschi has worked as a history teacher for many years. Her most recent teaching position was at Roslyn High School, where she taught as a leave replacement for two years. Earlier, she had taught in Arizona, Pennsylvania and in other areas of New York, teaching seventh, eighth and ninth grade history courses.

Pitschi found out about Solomon Schechter through Director of Guidance Señora Bonnie Cahn while teaching Cahn's niece at Roslyn High School. "[Schechter is] a special place," Pitschi said. "I love it. I'm amazed at how wonderful the students are. They're respectful, smart and enthusiastic."

Along with teaching ninth grade Global History, Pitschi also teaches the seventh and eighth graders American History. In fact, seventh and eighth grade students are generally Pitschi's favorite to teach. "It's a lot of fun. [The students] do so much growing up," she said. Her favorite part is "working with kids and teaching them history."

Pitschi has known that she wanted to be a teacher from the time she was in high school, when she decided to pursue a career

in education rather than going to law school, which was another consideration of hers at that time. She realized that she could do something she loved while still accommodating her friends and family. Now it seems as though she made a great decision. Every day, Pitschi brings the same excitement and passion she herself feels about her subject to her classroom. Pitschi said that the profession "just feels natural. It fits my personality." We hope Pitschi continues to enjoy her time here at Schechter.



E. Goldberg

Ms. Jaime Pitschi is the new Global History teacher.

Bridges (Cont. from p. 1)

By Ari Weiss

"I came from public school in Hicksville for a better Jewish life and education," said freshman Jacob Scheiner, a student in the Bridges Program, who had been in public school since kindergarten. "I have gotten a lot out of the program and Rabbi Schwartz is great."

Freshman Cayla Rosenblum, a student from Massapequa, has also been enjoying the Bridges Program. "I wanted to come to Schechter so I [could] learn in smaller classes and learn more about my religion on a daily basis," stated Rosenblum. "The Bridges Pro-

gram makes me feel really accepted to a place where I don't know as much as everyone else."

Rabbi Schwartz believes that the success of the program is most related to the fact that "the students have a desire to learn." Scheiner agreed, stating, "The entire school is interested in the success of the program." This is only the program's first year, and Rabbi Schwartz, along with the rest of the school, hopes that its success will continue. "If everyone told their friends in public school about this program," Rabbi Schwartz noted, "it has potential to build up." This sort of program truly gives students from all Jewish backgrounds the opportunity to join our Schechter family.

IPPSAL vs. Yeshiva League

Where does Schechter belong?

By Jordan Katz

The fact that Schechter is both a private school and a Jewish Day School shouldn't lead to any problems, right? Surprisingly, it actually does cause conflict. There is a big debate going on about whether our school's sports teams should be in IPPSAL, the Independent Private and Parochial Schools Athletic League, or the Yeshiva League, the league for Jewish Day Schools. This debate has long been a subject of controversy at Solomon Schechter, and it has affected a majority of the student athletes.

In our school, most sports teams play in IPPSAL, but the Junior Varsity and the Varsity Hockey teams are in the Yeshiva League. There are many different reasons why people play sports, whether it is to relieve stress or even to be challenged in

some way. Some play sports in order to confront their fears in a way that they cannot outside of the playing field. This distinction must be taken into account in regards to the issue of which league Schechter should be part of.

Also, our school is not as religious as the other schools in the Yeshiva League. Other than the kippot on the boys' heads and a few other revealing signs, our school is like many other private schools. Only when looking further into our daily routines and class schedules does it become apparent that we are a Jewish Day School. People dress "normally" and act the way any other teenagers would act in any other school.

There are many Judaic Studies classes offered at Schechter, such as

Bible, Rabbinics, Hebrew and Jewish History. But when compared to the Yeshivot in the area, Schechter is one of the least "observant" schools. Yes, we pray every day in Minyan, and yes, we learn Jewish subjects, but we are not so observant that we pray twice a day every day and have a large amount of Judaic Studies classes like schools such as North Shore Hebrew Academy do. We have three Judaic Studies classes that are offered throughout the four years of high school, as opposed to having over five.

Schechter belongs in IPPSAL not only to receive enough of a challenge, but also because of the fact that our school is more of a private school that happens to be Jewish than a Jewish school that happens to be private.

We Need to Send More Troops

America must win in Afghanistan; a pullout means failure

By Ethan Jamnik
Junior Editor-in-Chief

Despite the presence of an international combat force in Afghanistan over the last eight years, the Taliban insurgency is stronger than ever. The situation in Afghanistan is deteriorating rapidly, and the number of American and NATO troops that are killed each day is increasing. The Afghans and the Pakistanis are losing faith in America's commitment to stabilize the region, and the possibility of an increased Al-Qaeda presence seems far more likely. The only solution to Afghanistan's complex and pressing problems is the installment of additional troops in Afghanistan.

The presence of additional American troops will provide Afghans with increased security, and that security will help foster nation-building. An increased American task force will help train the Afghan military. Moreover, additional American forces will also



E. Goldberg

Should America send more troops to Afghanistan? Or should we pull out?

save the lives of combat troops already fighting in Afghanistan. Maintaining the existing force without augmenting it is possibly the most dangerous and least effective action possible. The size of the existing force, which is around 40,000 combat soldiers, endangers American lives and ensures that the Taliban will win the hearts of the Afghan people.

Pakistan has, in many ways, succeeded Afghanistan as the epicenter of terrorism in the world. A destabilized Afghanistan will not only encourage the proliferation of terrorism in Pakistan, but will also fuel the power of the

Taliban around the world. The Taliban will be able to characterize any American failure as a victory, and this will aid it in its quest to increase fundraising and recruit additional terrorists. A commitment of more troops to Afghanistan will demonstrate America's intent to remain in the region, and that will provide the Pakistani government with the incentive it needs to combat terrorism and curtail Taliban recruitment efforts.

Nesiya: An Israel Journey

Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor,

In "Summer Programs in Israel" (Paw Print Volume IV, Issue I), student summer trips were described. I spent the summer in Israel on a program which was not mentioned and want to share my experiences with the readers.

My program was called Nesiya. We camped in the Negev, hiked in the Galil, volunteered with disadvantaged youth, and visited Tel Aviv and Jerusalem. Through group

meetings we discussed religion, Israel and Zionism. Trip participants came from North America and Israel, creating interesting dialogues. The program presents its participants with different options and opinions, and lets each individual decide what view they identify with. This is especially seen in the diversity of the program's population and the nature of the communities that were visited.

The trip to Israel was incredible,

but did not stop there. Nesiya empowers the participants to make a difference in the world. It instills an urge to make your community a better place and by making your place better, you are making the world better. I encourage people who want a more diverse Israel experience and who are interested in exploring more than the usual Israel sites to go on this Nesiya.

- Liza David

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Time to Withdraw from Afghanistan

By Josh Berman

Afghanistan is known as the "graveyard of empires." It was the equivalent of Vietnam for the former Soviet Union in the late 1970s, and now it is causing the United States many troubles. America has been occupying Afghanistan for almost nine years, and yet there has been little press about it up until now because it was overshadowed by the War in Iraq. When President Obama came into office, he ordered a review of the state of the war. General McChrystal, the commander of the US forces in Afghanistan, said that the situation in Afghanistan is "serious."

Everybody agrees that the situation in Afghanistan can remain as it is now. There is a lack of funding for the soldiers, whose mission is unclear. These are complicated issues, and therefore, there is no perfect solution. The only wrong answer is to stick to the status quo. We need a change in direction.

A recent CBS/New York Times poll found that 32% of Americans support a decrease in troops to the 29% that call for an increase in troops. Another telling statistic is that 51% of the Americans polled

believe that there has been no change in the threat of terrorism since America invaded Afghanistan. America is war weary.

The second thing to take into consideration is the budget. According to the Congressional Research Service, the war costs an estimated 2.6 billion dollars per month on Pentagon expenses alone. This report was published before the 20,000 troops that Obama ordered this year were sent to Afghanistan. Many conservatives are against healthcare reform because it could add to the deficit, and yet they are the same war hawks that want to waste billions of dollars to send more troops to a failed country.

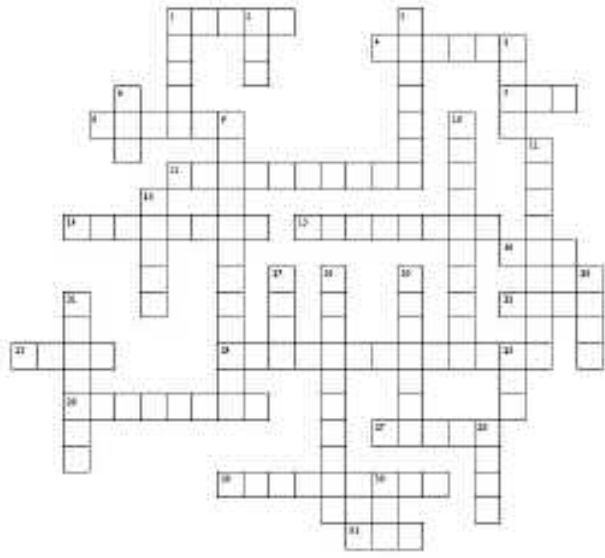
The situation has not improved. Al-Qaeda has fled to Pakistan. The government in Afghanistan is accused of fixing an election. We are wasting our resources on a lost cause. It is about time to pull out the troops from this disastrous mission and to give the army a well-deserved rest after eight years of work.



L. David

Senior Liza David (left) and a friend in Israel this past summer.

States



ACROSS

- 1 Porcupine's defense
- 4 A stringed instrument
- 7 "The State" network
- 8 Uralic language spoken by a Samoyed people of northern Siberia
- 12 A visit to a place of significance
- 14 State leader
- 15 Michigan governor Granholm
- 16 An accountant certified by the state
- 22 Small wingless insect
- 23 Royal Crescent locale
- 24 Sox state
- 26 Cause to feel sure
- 27 Sleep activity
- 29 The "Volunteer State"
- 31 Friend

DOWN

- 1 Bedding
- 2 Used in soap making
- 3 Novelist Salman
- 5 Quarterback Tony
- 6 Gibson of film
- 9 Alabama state bird
- 10 Simplified conception of a group
- 11 Maryland capital
- 13 Beef _____
- 17 Throw
- 18 California's largest city (2 words)
- 19 _____ Sovereignty
- 20 Simple
- 21 1980 Science fiction film "_____ States"
- 25 Activity intended to accomplish something
- 28 State of Mind
- 30 _____ salt



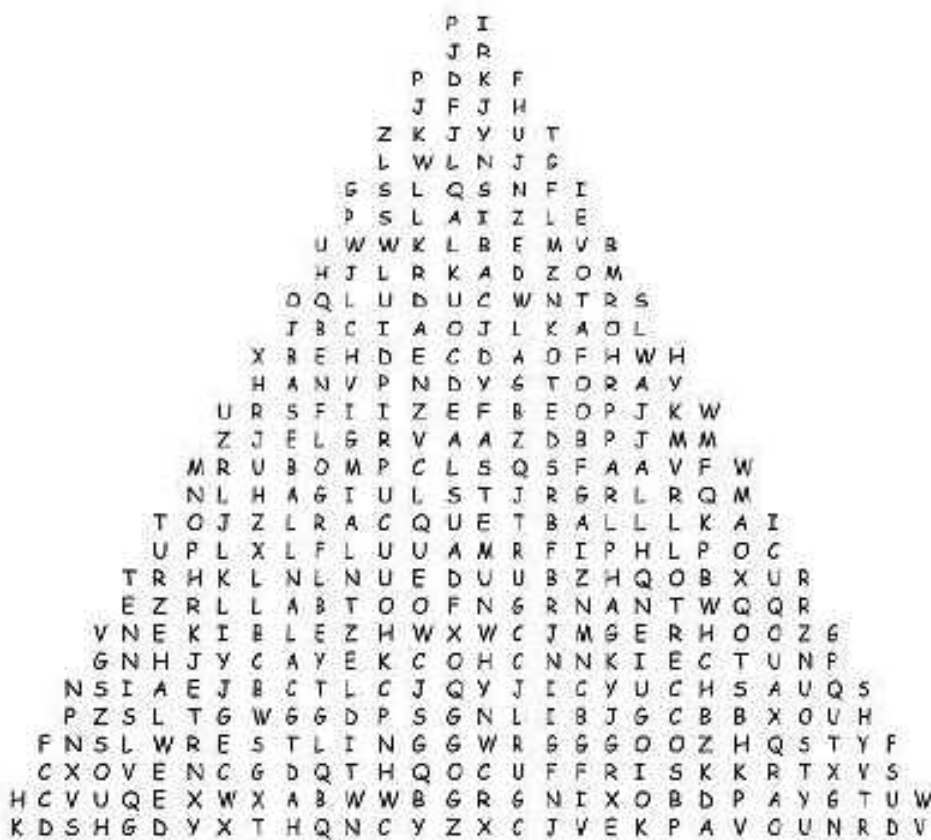
Sudoku

		4					2	
5	3						9	8
		6	1			4	5	
8				1	7		4	
				6				
	4		9	8				7
	2	3			9	8		
4	7						1	9
	6					5		

Fill all the blank squares with the correct numbers. In a 9 by 9 square Sudoku game:

- * Every row of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order
- * Every column of 9 numbers must include all digits 1 through 9 in any order
- * Every 3 by 3 subsection of the 9 by 9 square must include all digits 1 through 9

word | Search



Sports

- | | | |
|----------|------------|-------------|
| Rugby | Volleyball | Wrestling |
| Football | Golf | Handball |
| Baseball | Bowling | Hockey |
| Curling | Pool | Racquetball |
| Soccer | Boxing | Cricket |
| Softball | Parkour | Tennis |
| Squash | Dodgeball | |

Mazemania

