



Chadashot



SOLOMON SCHECHTER DAY SCHOOL OF NASSAU COUNTY • JERICHO, NEW YORK
SOLOMON SCHECHTER HIGH SCHOOL OF LONG ISLAND • GLEN COVE, NEW YORK

First Annual Family Trip to Israel is Great Success



Schechter group gathered at the Western Wall.

SSDS's highly successful, multigenerational Family Trip to Israel, taken by 170 students, family members and professional staff, served as a real-life laboratory to both bond with the Jewish state and establish relationships with lessons taught in the classroom. Our group traveled unique itineraries linked to lessons that preceded the mission. The theme, "Our Ancient and Modern Heroes – and Ourselves," was expressed in virtually every aspect of the trip.

"The trip blended historical sources, Judaic background information and modern Israeli politics to trigger thought and discussion on many levels – intellectual, spiritual and emotional. Add to that the joy of being together in Israel, and the trip was a raging success," says Ben Dachs, Head of School. Alternative itineraries were offered to first-timers and veteran travelers. While those on their inaugural trips to Israel visited Masada and the Dead Sea, veterans participated in an archeological dig at the site where King Herod and his family lived.

The school utilized a source book that provided background information on planned visits to historically and religiously significant places like the Galilee, Mount Carmel and the Western Wall. Students created projects and displays highlighting heroes and events associated with those locations, which became in-person activities in Israel.

"The trip enabled families to compare their anticipated and sometimes inaccurate perceptions of Israel with the reality of the nation," says parent Jeff Canarick, who conceived and helped organize the trip. "Their discoveries helped to overcome this disconnect and to foster moving and emotional experiences among participants."

Guila Marrache, a Solomon Schechter second-grade teacher, parent of three Schechter students and family participant observes: "The feeling of belonging never left us. As much as we thought we knew about Israel, we were amazed at how much was left to discover and how much we simply didn't know. This is a journey that every Jew should make." Ramah Israel Institute's Richard Eisenberg reports that a Schechter father, after touring Akko's Tunisian Synagogue, noted that his children had guided him and his wife through the picturesque adventure in Jewish history and said, "Now I understand why I am paying for my children to have a day school education." ❖



The group gathers to view architectural ruins.

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SAVE THE DATE Monday, June 20, 2005

**Fourth Annual
Edward Kaplan
Memorial Invitational
Golf Outing & Sunset Dinner
to include Tennis, Bridge,
Mah Jongg and much more.**

Sponsored by the Kaplan & Brooks Family

North Shore Country Club
Glen Head, NY

For further information,
please contact
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SCHECHTER SCHOOL NEWS

Message From the President

Dear Friends,

I want to thank you for the privilege of serving as President of our School's Board of Directors. I am very proud to have the opportunity to work with all of you, and our incredibly dedicated Board Members, Administrators, and Faculty, in order to strengthen the future of our children's education.

At the Annual Parent Meeting on May 24th, I offered a presentation on the "State of the School." I was pleased to report our progress this year, which includes:

- Great achievements among our students, including standardized test results in the uppermost percentiles of our region and country, as well as admissions to the finest colleges and universities;
- A three-year Strategic Plan, developed by the Board, addressing every significant issue facing our School, and a first year that saw many of its recommendations accomplished;
- An enhanced student recruitment effort, highlighted by the opening of a third Kindergarten section for the upcoming school year; and
- A successful year of fundraising and development under the leadership of Elissa Broad and Michael Hammerman, which included our Annual Dinner Dance on December 16th and our High School Dinner on May 12th (Chaired by Robin Simonson and Lori Hoch), which together attracted close to 700 people and raised \$440,000.

This is but a "short list" of the many exciting achievements during this past year. The Board is always looking for your involvement and participation. Wishing you all a wonderful summer!

Warmest Regards,

Les Stern

Les Stern
President, Board of Directors



Keynote Speaker,
Rabbi Perry R. Rank,
President of the
International
Rabbinical Assembly

11th Annual High School Tribute Dinner

This May 12th, on *Yom HaAtzmaut*, close to 400 people attended our High School's 11th Annual Tribute Dinner honoring Parents of the Year, Martha and Mark Perlson, and Community Service Awardees, Reva and Paul Gajer. Guests

Message From the Head of School

Dear Parents,

As we look forward to sunshine and warmth after this year's long, tedious winter a glance back on the past several months in our schools provides not dreariness, but a view of excitement, achievement and activity.

Our kids have excelled academically, athletically and in the arts. Elsewhere in this issue of *Chadashot* you can read about their extraordinary performances on stage, as well as their accomplishments in the classroom. And, our clubs and sports teams at all ages have also done exceptionally well in their competitions.

I don't have enough room in this column to note all the wonderful things that have gone on this winter... it was surely cold and snowy outside, but in our schools, growth, learning and enthusiasm created the warmest season of all!

Ben Dachs

G. Ben Dachs
Head of School

continued

were treated to a stirring address by Keynote Speaker, Rabbi Perry Raphael Rank, and a lovely musical presentation sung by Mark Perlson and Cantor Israel Goldstein, accompanied by Schechter alumnus, Mark Fridman. Robin Simonson and Lori Hoch, dinner committee co-chairs, hosted this event. Other program participants included Rabbi Arthur D. Rulnick, Board President Les Stern, Head of School G. Ben Dachs, Executive Director Sam Nussbaum, and Irwin Scharf of United Synagogue's METNY Region, plus

students Irina Abramova, David Gajer, Benji Perlson, Jordan Hoch, Oren Hoffman, and Lee Nussbaum. 🌱



Tribute Dinner
Honorees:
Parents of the Year,
Martha and Mark
Perlson (above);
Community Service
Awardees,
Reva and Paul Gajer
(right).



SCHECHTER VOLUNTEERISM FLOURISHES WITH ART ENRICHMENT PROGRAM

Elementary Students Learn Art History and Skills through New Program



Students played both model and artist, creating their own Mary Cassatt "hat" art.

"Learning to Look," an art appreciation course in our elementary school, is teaching children art history and skills. The program, which gives K-5 students a perspective not only in the world of art, but also the world in general, teaches through visuals, history and interaction.

Impressionism was the inaugural year's focus, introducing the works of Monet, Renoir, Degas, Cézanne and Manet. Contrasting types of impressionist art were displayed to reveal similarities and differences.

When studying Mary Cassatt, an American-born painter of French ancestry who exhibited with the Impressionists in Paris, Schechter students played the roles of both model and artist, trying on hats and painting each other. The interaction exercise taught the students about portraits, perspective, light and much more.

Classes are taught by a dedicated team of 35 parent volunteers, specially trained in the curriculum tailored and overseen by Vivi Nassim, a local art center curator and Schechter parent. Elementary school mother Julie Levi notes that "Learning to Look" is an addition to our already amazing art program. Understanding art enrichment reinforces SSDS' standing as a complete, not just Jewish, school."

The program culminates with May visits to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in Manhattan. ♣

Fourth Graders Welcome Shabbat with Song and Dance

Fourth graders filled the elementary school auditorium with song and dance to welcome the Sabbath on March 18, with a special production, "Kabbalat Shabbat in Jerusalem."

The performance was based on an imagined class visit to Jerusalem and a return from the past by King David to check the status of his beloved city. The king was pleased by the warmth, spirituality and enthusiasm that he witnessed.

Songs included "At Your Gates, Jerusalem," "From the Top of Mt. Scopus," "Jerusalem of Gold" and "Ten Shabbat." Choreographed numbers featured Hassidic and Israeli dances and concluded with a religious "rock" performance.

The program was developed and taught by the fourth grade teaching team with the support of music teacher Ety Roizen and art teacher Teri Fields. The performance was followed by a *Kabbalat Shabbat* celebration specially prepared by the fourth grade students for their family in the gym, with each creating a personalized, traditional *Shabbat* table setting. ♣



Scenes from "Kabbalat Shabbat in Jerusalem."

Photo Courtesy of Adam Levy, SSDS Parent



The food, personal items and money was presented to Mr. Danny LaRosa of INN at an April 1 ceremony in the elementary school gymnasium.

Students Support Nutrition Network for Purim

In keeping with the *mitzvah* of giving food baskets during *Purim*, elementary school students brought in food and toiletry items from home to donate to the Hempstead based Interfaith Nutritional Network. Children also were asked to bring in 50-cent donations toward the purchase of additional food. A substantial donation by the Parents Association of money received for the *misloach manot* baskets augmented the *mitzvah*. ♣

MIDDLE SCHOOL WELCOMES FIFTH GRADE CLASSES

Fifth Grade Introduced to Middle School

Each year, in advance of the fifth graders moving up to the middle school, programs are held to pave the way for a smooth transition from Jericho to Glen Cove. This year was no exception for the fifth grade classes as they get ready to make the transition.

In January, students and their parents came to an evening session at the Middle School for a festive dinner, building tour and question-and-answer session. Selected seventh and eighth grade students made presentations to the guests. The visit helped to establish a comfort level for the fifth grade students in advance of their moving up.

Furthering the process, in March, a group of Middle School teachers visited the Elementary School to teach several classes in English, math, social studies and science. Shortly thereafter, fifth graders spent a morning in the Middle School meeting additional teachers, attending music and Jewish studies classes with the current sixth graders and then joined them for lunch. The next step in the process is a welcoming barbecue and field day to be held on the Glen Cove campus in advance of the fall semester. ♣

Battle of the Grades Builds School Spirit with Field Day

Why were those Middle School students sprawled out on the gymnasium floor, their bodies contorted into unusual shapes? It was the second annual Battle of the Grades and they were participating in the “body art” competition. That could have been an “SSMS” they spelled out with trunks and limbs.



Grades compete in fun events for trophy.

The Battle, which also included events like a tug-of-war and three-legged race, was won by the eighth grade, which will be honored with a perpetual trophy to be kept in the school’s display case.

Principal, Allan Dalfen, explains that the event “exemplifies the school’s special Friday spirit days by enhancing cooperation, communication, cohesiveness and camaraderie as a grade.” ♣

Purim Celebrated

The annual *Purim* celebration became a week-long, multi-faceted event at the Middle School, beginning with a *Purim* circus. Two experienced circus performers performed



Clowning Around on Purim.

as clowns and jugglers, running juggling workshops and animal balloon classes, by grade. During the week, the eighth grade class took its annual trip to New York City, where it saw the IMAX film at the Museum of Natural History and the Broadway show, “Brooklyn: The Musical.” The day was capped off by a meal at Dougie’s BBQ & Grill, on West 72nd Street. The week culminated with a *Megillah* reading and carnival for the entire school. ♣

The Halls are Alive... ... with the Sound of Music

Thanks to the fine efforts of music teacher Melanie Linker, in less than two academic years, she has revamped the curriculum and enhanced the school’s music program – going well beyond traditional music appreciation and general music. We have seen the debut of Middle School and High School choirs as well as a combined band in their first concert performance. ♣



Students participate in school’s first Band and Choir Concert.

SENIOR CLASS TRIP TO ISRAEL AND DEFERRING COLLEGE

Israel on Their Minds

Thirty-two high school seniors will cap off their Jewish Day School experience with a trip to Israel. Members of the eighth graduating class departed on May 15 for an extended trip, which returns on June 6.

In addition to visiting the sites, other varied components will include a seminar on Jewish identity; a program on Israel advocacy; *tefillot* in different Jerusalem synagogues; the study of social justice in Jewish times; volunteer projects at a local school, children's hospital and zoo; planting trees at the JNF forest and participation in an archeological dig.

Going beyond a three-week school trip, a number of seniors have opted to defer the start of their college educations to spend a year in Israel, participating in a number of different programs. This represents a new trend among Conservative Jewish students in an area dominated by Modern Orthodox students. Solomon Schechter seniors planning to delay college are Yoni Dolgin, Maya Dolgin, Mordy Greenspan, Daniel Hochbaum, Zach Roseman, Josh Pusateri, Ari Zolin, Amit Bob, Lev Horowitz, Allison Adges, David Gajer, Shira Prouser, Shira Klayman and Ben Rotstein. ♣



Students who have deferred their college acceptance for a year of study in Israel.

Science Research

The High School inaugurated a new program this spring to introduce select students to the techniques of science research so that they will be able to investigate topics and enter competitions such as the Long Island Congress, Long Island Science and Engineering Fair and Intel Science Talent Search.

The Intel Program is the most prestigious competition for high school seniors throughout the United States. Students typically do research in a university laboratory during the summer after their junior year and write an extensive report at the beginning of their senior year for entry in the competition. Although most entries are in the biological and physical sciences, topics in mathematics and behavioral sciences are not excluded. Winners are awarded very substantial and prestigious college scholarships.

Recognizing the difficulty in preparing students for such a rigorous competition, SSHS has hired an experienced researcher, Dr. Michael Lake, to head the research training program. Dr. Lake holds a doctorate in biochemistry, has done post-doctoral research at Brookhaven National Laboratory, and has ties to the university research community. He teaches biology at our school. He and Mr. Leonard Itzkowitz, our science coordinator, have served as judges in regional competitions.

SSHS is pleased to announce that Jordan Hoch and Brian Albert have been accepted into Stony Brook's summer program for potential Intel Westinghouse projects. Stony Brook University only accepts 25 students in total for this program; that two of our students were accepted speaks volumes. ♣

Pirates of Penzance: Perfect for Purim



Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operetta, "The Pirates of Penzance," is about pirates, beautiful maidens and a sense of duty – perfect for the SSHS spring musical presented at Purim! Audiences were enchanted at the March performances.

Director Joan Cohen acknowledges the students' special inspiration. In January, they attended a professional Manhattan performance and were encouraged by its famed star Hal Linden.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Junior Varsity Basketball Team won the IPPSAL championship for the second consecutive year. By defeating Upper Room Christian School, the Schechter Lions have earned the crown for each year of the JV league's existence.

Congratulations to Barry Scharfman (\$1500), Elliot Gordon (\$500) and Ari Zolin (\$500) who were recently awarded scholarships for Academic Excellence sponsored by NY State.



Congratulations to Merit Scholarship Finalists, Elliot Gordon and Zachary Roseman.

7th Graders Sharon Reshef & David Smith, placed



17th out of 112 school teams at Newsday's sixth annual SCRABBLE® competition winning 4 out of 5 games they played on March 7 at the Cradle of Aviation in Garden City.

The "Slammers," the elementary school's intramural basketball program, has concluded another successful season. The Wizards won the lower division title and the Sixers took the upper division championship.

Kudos to the high school's Mathletes Team for placing in the "Top Thirty" in the Nassau County Interscholastic Mathematics League competition for the second straight year. Senior Brian Albert placed 33rd on the Nassau County "Top 50 Individuals Honor Roll."



New Web Site Opens the World of Solomon Schechter



The world of our Solomon Schechter Schools is just a mouse click away at the newly redesigned web site, www.ssdnassau.org.

The site's refreshing new design makes navigation an easier and more rewarding experience. Content has been revised along functional lines in seven key categories: About SSDS, Admissions, Our Schools, Parents' Association, Alumni & Friends, Calendars and Contact information. Using the individual school event calendar is a great way for parents, students and the public to see what's happening at the elementary, middle and high school levels. Please be sure to visit the web site regularly for ongoing news and upcoming event listings.

Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County (K-5)

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Solomon Schechter Day School of Nassau County (6-8)

Solomon Schechter High School of Long Island (9-12)

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