

# The Looking Glass

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## Shabbaton 2004!

LEORA NIDERBERG

Even from a freshman's perspective, SKA Shabbaton '04, held at the Swan Lake Hotel in the Catskills, was a major success. The theme of this year's Shabbaton was the five senses: freshmen—sight, sophomores—taste, juniors—smell, and seniors—touch. Although the weekend kicked off to a slightly

ominous start with a fire alarm and a small car accident involving one of the buses, the Shabbaton continued in a fun, upbeat manner. The G.O. and the seniors, who had been in the hotel since Thursday, had set up each grade's decorations and centerpieces early so as to warmly welcome the rest of the school on Friday. Upon our arrival at the

hotel, we were given plenty of time to unpack, enjoy the hotel's many facilities

and of course, prepare for Shabbat. On Friday night, SKA students and faculty

joined in a beautiful *tefilah* to welcome Shabbat. Afterwards, at the Friday night *seudah* we enjoyed **tasting** the delicious food, **listening** to the insightful *divrei torah*, **looking on** as the G.O. presented a cute skit, and joining in spirited *zemirot* and *Bircat Hamazon*. All of the students then separated for individual grade *onegs*, led by our

(Continued on page 7)



## Is Arafat Really Dead?

TZIPORA KUPERMAN

Rahman Abdul Rauf al-Qudwa al-Husseini is dead. To most of us that name is insignificant, just one of the numerous people we hear about daily. Though, if one were to say that Yasser Arafat is dead, most of us would be hit with a myriad of emotions. We are happy for we know that the root of all our troubles as a Jewish nation living in Israel is gone. The issue is that Arafat was simply a root, and now we must worry about the rest of the tree; the multitude of terror organizations, complications and fights that will ensue because of his death.

One question that is troubling many is who his replacement will be. Rawhi Fattouh, the speaker of the Legislative Council, as per law, will be interim president of the Palestinian Authority after Arafat is officially de-

clared to be deceased. Though by law, this can last no longer than 60 days.

There are three possible long-term successors to Arafat; Ahmed Qureia the Palestinian prime minister, Mahmoud Abbas, the PLO deputy chairman, and Nabil Shaath, the foreign minister. Unfortunately for them Arafat's wife, Suha, wishes Farouk Kadoumi, the head of the PLO's political wing, to be his successor.

Suha Arafat herself can be considered part of the problem that the Palestinians are now facing. She is currently living in Paris with her 9-year-old daughter Zahwa in a multimillion-dollar apartment, receiving 100,000 dollars a month from her husband.

French banking officials opened an investigation last year into allegations that 11.4 million dollars was fun-

neled from Palestinian bank accounts in Switzerland to two French bank accounts in Suha Arafat's name in 2002 and 2003. When these accusations were brought to Suha she said, "What is strange about him sending money to his wife overseas, especially when I handle Palestinian matters and interests? What is wrong?"

She has the audacity to ask what is wrong with her receiving such elaborate sums of money when the Palestinian people are living knee deep in poverty. She is asking what is wrong that her husband is turning a blind eye to those who rely upon him for support, to let her live in the lap of luxury?

The next leader of the PLO will face several problems, two of which are: What to do about the 5.7 million Arafat allegedly has hidden and the peace process with

Israel. Arafat has left a big mess for the new leader to face.

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## Letter From the Editors

As many of you know by now, we are your editors-in-chief, Jaclyn Ramras and Elkie Spitzer. We work day after day to bring you the school newspaper, The Looking Glass. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions feel free to tell us or e-mail the newspaper at [news@skahalb.org](mailto:news@skahalb.org).

We always need more people to write for us. The Looking Glass can always use more articles! If you want to contribute, come over to either of us (Elkie Spitzer or Jaclyn Ramras) or speak to our associate editors, Judy Grossman and Beth Stein, or you can even speak to your grade news editor for your specific grade.

If you are interested in a specific topic, tell us. If you have an article that you would like to write, we are open to your suggestions.

Before we get any further, we would like to thank our amazing faculty advisor, Mrs. Martin, for pushing us to get out this edition. Also, a thanks goes out to Dani Lent, our layout editor (who is too good for even adjectives to describe).

We would also like to wish the entire cast of production luck and we hope that The Looking Glass is your newspaper of choice backstage.

On to a more serious note. This past Friday, Mrs. Esther Lasky <sup>z"l</sup> passed away and two of our own lost someone very dear

to them. Rebecca Lasky lost her mother and Jackie Schwab (Rebecca's cousin) lost her aunt. We would like to wish our condolences to the family and we hope that in the future they only have *smachot*.

How does one deal with loss? In Judaism, the mourning process has four stages, *Aninut* (the period between hearing about the death and the burial itself), *shiva* (the seven-day mourning period after the funeral), *Shloshim* (the first 30 days after the burial), and then the first year of *aveilut* after the death, but that is only for close relatives, immediate family. How can close friends and other deal with such a loss? What do they say to the

family? What is there for them to do when they need someone to speak to?

Sometimes there are no right words; there is nothing to say to the family. Sometimes a hug will suffice. Other times the only right thing to say are the words that comes right from your heart. The words that have the deepest impact are the ones that are sincere. If you are at a loss for words, then the Rabbis have given you the perfect phrase to say, *HaMakom yinachem atchem b'toch sh'ar avlei tzion v'yerushalayim*.

Immediate family have the

shiva period to be comforted; it is time set aside for people to come and comfort the mourners. The close friends must seek out comfort on their own. Find a good friend that you can speak to or make your way upstairs to Ms. Keehn, the social worker in school. May we be *zocheh* to only have *smachot* in our lives. We again express our condolences to the Lasky and Schwab families and to all their close friends. We hope that no one will ever have to experience what they have had to go through.

## Letters To the Editors

Dear Editors,

Letters to the editor usually contain complaints or suggestions of ways to change the school. However, this one is different. Although our school is by no means perfect, there are certain characteristics that make our school unique and prepare us for future endeavors.

♦Having the copy machines break before a test is an innovative way of giving students first-hand experience in dealing with stressful situations. Additionally, students may gain technical skills as they try to repair the machines.

♦There is a wide variation of temperatures in the school. Some rooms are con-

stantly hot and humid, others are freezing cold. This is a great way to prepare us for travel to different climates, whether to a basketball competition in Florida or a science fair in Oregon.

♦Our test schedule prepares us for the days in college when we will have difficult finals day after day.

Thank you for giving me an opportunity to express my gratitude to SKA.

- A Satisfied Student

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<p><b>A Member of the Columbia Scholastic Press Association</b></p>		
<p><i>The opinions expressed in this newspaper do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the administration of Stella K. Abraham High School for Girls or the editors of The Looking Glass.</i></p>		

# A Hero Remembered

BATYA HERZBERG

In an era filled with news of aggressive politics, financial scandals, and international warfare, reading about the accomplishments of Christopher Reeve is all the more an inspiring experience. From 1978-1987, Reeve starred in several films "acting" the part of hero, but his genuine and eternal role began later, in 1995, when he shattered two vertebrae in a horseback riding accident, causing severe paralysis. Yet, instead of conceding defeat and remaining

in bed for the rest of his life, Reeve became an activist in science research, establishing grants, and helping to improve others' quality of life. He continued acting from his wheelchair in other television series and films, but his mark was not made by a phenomenal on-stage career alone.

It is noteworthy to remark upon a trip Reeve took to Israel in 2003. He said, "Israel is an extraordinary place...among the world's leaders in scientific research...cutting edge of paralysis research." He traveled through the

country visiting patients including one who had been injured in a Palestinian suicide bombing. Through this endeavor and others



like it, Reeve drew attention to the importance of stem-cell research and to the ramifications it could

have on the physically disabled.

Christopher Reeve created and chaired the Christopher Reeve Paralysis Foundation, which sponsors research to aid those with nervous system related injuries and grants millions to neuroscientists worldwide. They work to improve the health and quality of life of those with spinal cord injuries. According to the foundation's website, 250,000 Americans suffer from such disabilities with 11,000 new injuries occurring per year. This emphasizes the importance of facilitating those who perhaps cannot facilitate themselves.

Unfortunately, Christopher Reeve died on October 10, 2004 after going into cardiac arrest and falling into a coma caused by a bedsore. However, his legacy endures through the

continued work and support of the research he helped fund and through his words of encouragement that ring true in the ears of both the disabled and non-disabled internationally. He was a man of hope who dreamed of walking one day and who lived by his own maxim "So many of our dreams at first seem impossible, then they seem improbable, and then when we summon the will, they soon become inevitable." He represents another kind of hero, not one who wears capes and soars through the air, but one who provides support and goodwill to so many in need.

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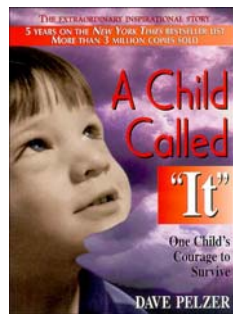
## Book Review

ELISHEVA NELSON

The "necessities" for a basic teenage girl: 22 pairs of shoes, 3 of each color t-shirt, 10 denim skirts, etc. Most of the time, we fail to think about the more important things in our lives such as our studies, family, friends, and religion. Let's face it. 90% of us get mostly everything we want besides everything we need. However, our wants and our needs, as well as our priorities, tend to get mixed up: "My TV show begins at 8:00 sharp so I need to finish visiting with Grandma at exactly 7:56." Do we truly know our priorities? Do we stop to appreciate the small things we take for granted? We should, but we sometimes don't.

Dave Pelzer, now a renowned author, was once a child who thought he had it all- the perfect

life, the perfect family, and everything he wanted... until his worst nightmare began one night. Dave's mischievous behavior combined with his mother's new fixation on alcohol, formed the



start of a childhood of abuse that left Dave scarred physically and emotionally for life. Dave was helpless. He was just a young boy experiencing his drunken mother taking her anger out on his innocent body and mind. She did many unthinkable and horrible things to him. One of these horrors was what Dave's mom liked to call the "gas chamber." She would combine ammonia and Clorox in a pail and

put it in the bathroom. She then locked the door with Dave inside as well. The reaction of the two substances was gaseous. The longer the bathroom door remained locked, the harder it was for Dave to breathe. This was one of the many "games" that Mrs. Pelzer liked to "play" with Dave.

Until Dave's teachers noticed and reported his recurring bruises and tattered clothing, Dave was too afraid to tell anyone about his home life. He knew that if someone called his mother, it would just result in more beatings. If asked about his home life, Dave would just repeat the excuses his mother spoon fed him.

Throughout everything Dave went through, he never gave up hope that one day he would be free from the hole he used to call a home, and out of the hands of the monster he used to call "Mom."

We can learn a great lesson from Dave. For so many years, his only form of comfort was his constant courage. Every night he went to bed on a flat army cot, lacking a blanket and sheets. Very rarely, Dave was granted the "luxury" of food and drink- spoiled pork and a cup of Clorox. Many times he went without food and drink for ten days at a time. However, Dave knew that under no circumstances would he surrender because that would show his mother that she had won- that her treacherous acts of hate towards her own flesh and blood had proven victorious.

A Child Called It is a journey through Dave Pelzer's child-

hood and shows his courage through the unimaginable repulsion of child abuse. Some people are not so fortunate to have the things that we all take advantage of: loving families, warm clothing, and a house we can undoubtedly call "home."

Reading this book really opened my eyes and showed me that I should think twice about the next time I think I need something. Our thoughts should be focused on the key elements in our lives that truly matter--- the things we have taken for granted, without realizing it.

(A Child Called It is the first of three books in the series.)

# AROUND

## Senior Happenings

Yael Haar

We are finally seniors and our year has been filled with outings to places such as Gymnasia, Our Name is Mudd, Dougie's, lunch at Yael Eisenberg's house, and of course, our "lobbying trip." As seniors, we are also being bombarded with college and seminary applications and interviews, which is why some of us have been wearing our Shabbos clothes to school.

Another highlight of the school year has been our grade get togethers out of school. Whether it was the inspiring shiur at Shira Thalheim's house or the amazing *melave malka* at my house – bonding as a grade has been truly enjoyable for us all.

As senior year progresses, however, the big question remains – where are our senior perks? One of the most highly touted of these senior perks currently available is now being curtailed – parking in our lot of hay! Due to the success of Driver's Education (thanks, Mr. Patty) more senior drivers are looking forward to being greeted by Michael each morning in the senior parking lot. Seniors should not be seen on

buses.

On the other hand, this year's Shabbaton was especially *leibedick* for the seniors

Rotenstein and Mrs.

Antman – our extra night at the luxurious Swan Lake Resort was a night to remember. The weekend only got better

once we were finally able to show the school what we had been secretly working on for weeks. While the lower classmen sat through their "sessions," Amanda Pariser suddenly an-

nounced her arrival as

"Moshiach." Everyone was then led to the nightclub and were required to undergo strict security procedures. Once inside, they began

their journey of "*Aliyah L'Regel!*" What would it be like when Moshiach comes? With the aid of display booths and enactments such as "*Chafetz Chashud!*" SKA students got a sense of what living in the time of the Beit Hamikdash would be like.

We look forward to expanding our advantages as seniors, but more importantly, developing our *achdut* as a grade! Freshmen, sophomores, and juniors, hang in there – you're almost here!



SKA Seniors at Gymnasia.

as Mrs. Spirn was kind enough to allow us to get up on Thursday and get an early start setting up our "*Aliyah L'Regel!*" As we were escorted by our favorite pair –Mrs.

# Meet the Freshmen

LEORA HEFTER

Merriam Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines an *apple* as a "fleshy, usually rounded red, yellow, or green edible pome fruit of a tree." The freshmen of SKA added the word "picking" to the word "apple," and gave it their own meaning: a great trip to start off the school year.

Our destination was Wilkow Orchards in Highland, NY. We boarded the buses after *davening*, looking forward to spending time with our classmates (these are freshmen!). We were delighted to welcome several members from Yachad, brought along

by eleventh grader, Sarah Blisko. Also accompanying us were SKA faculty members, who added to the excitement.

The apple-picking experience was meant to bond existing friendships and to introduce new ones, especially with members from Yachad who immediately won us over. We were welcomed graciously at the farm and quickly ate our bagged lunches anticipating the activities that awaited us. We boarded a tractor that took us out to the apple orchards. Along the way, our hosts taught us about apple growing, the history of their farm, and the roles bees play in apple

harvesting. With bags in hand, we headed out to find the best apples. Picking was only part of the fun--eating our harvest was equally enjoyable. Together with our new friends from Yachad, we tugged at the twigs, shook the branches, caught the falling fruit, and giggled our way through the day. We stuffed our bags with apples big and small, red and green. Some of the apples were multi-colored, while others had one distinct hue. Each of us searched and hunted for the reddest apples, the unique green ones, and the perfectly round ones. Lucky for us, there were plenty. Excitement filled the

air, as the girls debated whether to replace some of their apples with riper ones. Our Yachad friends wanted to stay longer, as did we, but before we knew it, the teachers were showing us the way back to the tractor. As we jumped on-board, each girl showed off her bounty. We were so exhausted on our return trip that some of us slept on the bus, while others reflected on the day. I thought about turning this experience into a yummy treat--so here it is:

### Apple Pie

- ◆ 6 apples cleaned and sliced (any color)
- ◆ 2 tbsp. flour
- ◆ 1/2 c. sugar

- ◆ Pinch of salt
- ◆ Pinch of cinnamon
- ◆ Pinch of nutmeg

Grease pie plate and put in favorite crust. Dab a few drops of margarine in 4 places around shell. In large bowl, mix apples, sugar, flour, and spices. Pour into shell and cover with strips of dough. Bake at 350 degrees for 40 to 50 minutes until golden.

**Above all, the most important ingredient is ENJOY. Remember, "an apple a day keeps the doctor away!"**

# SCHOOL

## Sophomores Speak

EMILY LEVINE

MICHELLE ZOMBER

On Thursday, the twenty-first of October, ten students were horrifically murdered within the quiet halls of SKA. Expert detectives were on the case immediately. They raced through the building searching for clues to lead them to the culprit. Within half an hour the murderer was apprehended and the halls of SKA

were safe once again. Through working together to decipher clues and search for victims, not only did our school become crime-free, but the sophomore detectives continued their Layl lyun topic of "How to be a Better Friend."

The program started with a delicious meal to

prepare us for the long night of learning, games, and various faculty members, and group discussions led by our very own teachers, all stressing the importance of friendship and better listening skills. Afterwards, everyone



Mrs. Haber, 10th grade advisor, gives a session to sophomores

Wonder Years," a video interviewing various faculty members, and group discussions led by our very own teachers, all stressing the importance of friendship and better listening skills. Afterwards, everyone

changed into pajamas and slippers and got ready for more fun and food. Soccer, machanayim, ice cream, and Human Clue were just some of the exciting activities that filled our late night. Not many sleeping bags were unrolled, and by 8:30 am, a very tired, but united, class shuffled into the library for davening.

# Junior Jottings

LEORA SPERBER

One of the most outstanding acts of kindness is to do for those who can never repay you. On November 4th, the eleventh grade class of SKA traveled to Silver Lake Cemetery in Staten Island to clean up the neglected graves. This cemetery was set up by the Hebrew Free Burial Association for people without money or family to bury them. We all came to school that morning dressed in layers of clothing ready to embark on what we were told would be an inspiring day. At first many were apprehensive to go to this burial site, not understanding the awesomeness of the trip. But even as we were walking up to the

cemetery, each and every one of us began to feel excited. We grabbed rakes and garbage bags and began our work. Not only did we physically help, we also said *brachot* upon our arrival and *Tehillim* by many of the graves. The

time we spent there was surely not enough; many girls asked for just another five minutes. We left the cemetery with a deep feeling

of accomplishment, and in complete agreement with the teachers who told us this would be an inspiring trip.

some fun. We traveled to Boro Park, where we walked the streets in search of restaurants. Many ate at Amnon's Pizza

bell rang. This was an exceptional day, mixing chessed, inspiration and fun.



Avital Shenker and Jenny Deluty cleaning the cemetery

Just as we were leaving the cemetery, it began to rain. However, this didn't stop us from eating and having

and Café Italia; both were delicious. We then loaded the bus for a very long ride, arriving in school with minutes till the

# Summer Experiences

## Yad B'Yad Israel

SARAH BLISKO

This past summer I had the luxury of being in Israel. I have always enjoyed spending time there; it makes me feel a special connection with Am Yisrael and Eretz Yisrael. With each visit I am overwhelmed by the unique aura of holiness and spirituality. Therefore, I chose to spend the summer in Israel on Yad B'Yad.

Initially, when I first looked into summer programs, I saw Yad B'Yad as a wonderful opportunity to see Israel in a new and different light. Touring with Yachad members would provide me with an unbelievable opportunity to develop a deeper and

stronger connection to my Jewish homeland

and to acquire strong, everlasting relationships with people who have various disabilities. At first I was frightened and anxious. I wondered how I was going to spend a full summer with individuals who have disabilities, with whom I had little experience. Peo-

ple who had previously attended Yachad summer programs told me not to worry and that by the end of the summer, I would not look at any Yachad member differently than I would look at a regular high school student.

July sixteenth, the first day of camp, finally arrived. We had an orientation Shabbaton the weekend before we would join Yachad and depart

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Sarah Blisko with a Yachad member, Debbi Gross.

## Mach Hach B'Aretz

JACLYN RAMRAS

After spending the last six summers at Camp Mesorah in Guilford, New York, I decided that it was time for a change. I needed to meet new people and be in a different environment. What could be a better place than the holy land of Israel?

Since I have only been to Israel one time, not only did I want to tour Israel, but I also wanted to learn there. Therefore, I chose to go on Bnei Akiva's Mach Hach Hesder B'aretz Program. I went on Mach Hach knowing their motto of "make *aliya*" but I did not expect by the end of the summer to indeed want to make *aliyah* along with the rest of the participants. Mach Hach instilled in me a love for the land of Israel.

Throughout the summer we traveled all over Israel; we did and saw everything there was to see and do in Israel. We went on hikes which were a lot of fun. The hikes allowed all of us to bond and it made us aware of Mach Hach (bus 7) girls are ready for *shabbat*. other people's strengths and weaknesses. We also had the opportunity to ride donkeys and camels. One time we even had to dress up as if we were wandering the desert. We wore sashes on our heads and a four corner garment tied by a rope at our waists. Then when we went to ride the donkeys, one person would ride the donkey while the other

would lead it. One night we also had the experience of sleeping in Bedouin tents and

learned about *tefila*. We then went to learn at Midreshet Ha Rova. We had stayed there the week before *Tisha B'av*. That week was very inspiring along with the day of *Tisha B'av* itself. During that week, we went down to the Kotel to join the end of the "human chain" which was formed from the Gaza Strip all the way to the Kotel. There we stood in the square of the Kotel singing united as Jewish people with people I had never met before. I actually saw how much Israel means to the Jewish people that day with men, women and children and even babies

coming and connecting hands to protest the proposed withdrawal from the Gaza Strip. On *Tisha B'av* members of each bus read the book of *Eicha* right by the Kotel overlooking the City of David. While we were reading the *megillah* we heard gun shots in the Arab village. In that moment, I realized how fortunate we were but at the same time how unfortunate. We were fortunate in that unlike generations before us we are able to sit in the middle of Jerusalem reading the *megillah* but sadly, we are still without our long awaited *Beit Hamikdash*.

This experience showed me the true meaning of *Ahavat Yisrael*. I accomplished my two goals of meeting unbelievable people and being in an unbelievable atmosphere.



Mach Hach (bus 7) girls are ready for *shabbat*.

the next morning we had the privilege of hiking up Masada at sunrise. We also had the opportunity of staying in Jerusalem a couple of times and praying at the Kotel many times.

During our six weeks of traveling we spent a week and a half learning. The first stop we made was in Ain Hanitziv where we

# SKA Teshuvathon

AVIVA SCHIFFMILLER

The annual SKA Teshuvathon proved to be an unbelievable success once again. The program began with the eleventh and twelfth graders splitting up into individual workshops while the ninth and tenth graders enjoyed an inspiring speaker, Brielle Stark-Adler, as well as a thought-evoking film, "Clay Feet." Subsequently, the younger grades had their own private workshops while the older grades filed into the auditorium to hear Mrs. Stark-Adler speak and to watch the illuminat-

ing video.

The ninth grade workshop consisted of a lesson in appreciating what one has been given. The girls temporarily handicapped some part of their bodies and attempted to do a project, which proved difficult due to their impairments. Meanwhile, the tenth graders filled out paper dolls with important information about themselves. Downstairs in room OO2, the eleventh graders, under the guidance of Ms. Fragin, split up into small groups to discuss their strengths and how they could be effectively utilized. Finally,

the twelfth graders took part in a very unique activity where different girls from the grade spoke about trials that they faced in their lives and how they overcame them and performed teshuvah.

Mrs. Brielle Stark-Adler's speech was perhaps the most moving part of the program. She told in great detail of the experiences that led her to become an Orthodox Jew and the challenges that followed. As a child, she first became interested in Judaism after her parents informed her that she would not be allowed

to date non-Jews. She ultimately came in contact with a Rabbi who studied Torah with her, answered all of her many questions, and ultimately helped her enroll in a Jewish high school that is presently known as TALI. Following her graduation from high school, she attended the prestigious Vassar College, where she studied psychology intensely. She is now married to a man studying in Cardozo law school. This tale of her long and hard journey that resulted in enormous happiness and satisfaction touched each and every student immensely.

The film "Clay Feet," which succeeded the speaker, contained a new perspective on teshuvah. In the video, a teenager in college is forced to choose between his integrity and the perfect future that he had planned for himself. Clearly, the activities of the day made Yom Kippur more meaningful for each and every SKA student.

## SKA Talent Show

LISA GOLOMBECK

The talent show was a hit!!! There have even been rumors around school that this has been the best talent show yet. There was a mixture of intellectual acts with the graceful piano playing of Sheva Odzer as well as humorous acts such as the Eleventh Grade version of the song "Ain't No Mountain High Enough." The talent show also had a few surprises: the G.O. video, the alumni act, and the administration's song as well. The most shocking surprise though was what was under those buckets; Mrs. Block is probably still jumping out of her seat after that outrageous surprise. Another hit of the show was seeing Mrs. Spirn joining in with the 11<sup>th</sup> graders dance to "Twist and

Shout!" From this talent show everyone learned who has talent and who is really good at being un-talented. Either way, everyone who performed helped make the talent show truly memorable. This year's show would not have been complete without the help of the excellent talent show heads and Ms. Blisko. The talent show would also not have been a success without the people who helped out tremendously behind the scenes. The freshman that were brave enough to come up in front of the entire school and perform also contributed to the amazing talent show. Not only were they brave, their act had the audience's attention. We would like to congratulate everyone who performed in the show and everyone who helped out; you all did great!

## Shabbaton 2004!

(Continued from page 1)

*mechanchot*, and then for short group discussions on the coming of *Moshiach*. We were even given the opportunity to act on our knowledge and fulfill the obligations of *Aliyah l'Regel* in a fun and exciting game put on by the seniors!

Never fear—although we may have gone to sleep late on Friday night, Mrs. Spirn made sure we were all present at *tefilah* bright and early Shabbat morning, where Rabbi Eisenbach shared helpful *parsha*-related questions to guide us through Torah Reading. We were then invited to eat at a quick *kiddush* before

settling down to a wonderful *shiur* entitled, "Making Your *Tefilot* More Effective," given by Rabbi Yerachmiel Milstein of Aish HaTorah. Lunch followed, in conjunction with more *divrei torah* and lively *zemirot*, then *mincha*, followed by a short but relaxing *menucha*.

Exciting Shabbaton activities resumed with *seudat shlishit*, many *divrei torah*, and a "slow song" session. But the **real** excitement didn't begin until after *Ma'ariv* and *Havdala*, when we returned to our rooms to prepare for the fun-filled night ahead. The anticipation was building as the Swan Lake Resort Nightclub filled for the Talent Show, with each girl wearing her own grade shirt. Dur-

ing the show, many girls displayed their acting, dancing, singing or videotaping abilities.

After the show, we relocated to the ballroom for dinner, heavy dancing, a musical presentation composed by Mrs. Isseroff, and Rabbi Rothman's slideshow presentation. The evening concluded in an optional *kumsitz*, complete with candles. Afterwards, everyone enjoyed the hotel's facilities or returned to their rooms to "sleep." Everyone had a blast, despite the 7:30 wakeup the following morning. We can't wait for Shabbaton 2005!

# Overcoming Struggles

LEAH BLACK

The month of Elul is very hard and nerve wracking. We stand before G-d knowing He is looking at all the good and bad that we have done throughout the year, how we have improved as a person or if we have fallen off the right path.

We all have struggles that we try to overcome and to grow from. One of my personal struggles is with *tznius*. Growing up in Rochester, I went to a very modern orthodox school. The dress code there was nothing like it is in SKA. There, we were not allowed to wear cap sleeves or short shorts, but we could wear pants. All throughout my years there, I always wore pants with a skirt on occasion.

In Rochester, I had my Jewish friends

and my non-Jewish friends. Whenever I would go hang out with my non-Jewish friends, there was never a question in my mind of what to wear; I would always grab shorts and a t-shirt. However, when I was with my Jewish friends there was never any question either—I would just grab any skirt. I would just dress like everyone else whom I was going out with and feel very comfortable. One Shabbos in Rochester I was going to one of my non-Jewish friends who lived just around the block. Right before I was about to leave, all of my Jewish friends came and stopped by. I suddenly felt very uncomfortable in my shorts and t-shirt. I felt that I was doing something wrong because they were looking at me funny. But dressing

this way was something I liked; it was something I was used to.

However when I got to SKA, it was a real shock for me. You were **only** allowed to wear skirts. The dress code was so strict and it was very hard for me to adjust to. I thought that pants were so much more comfortable and they were so much easier to run around in. Why only skirts?

As time went on, I learned that there is a reason for it, that *tznius* is so important. *Tznius* is not just for others who see me, but it's for myself. I realized that I didn't want to be viewed as that kind of person anymore. I no longer wanted to be wearing what everyone around me was; I did not want to dress differently depending on whom I was with. I wanted to

be myself in every situation, no matter whom I was with.

However, realizing what you want to be and actually doing it is very hard. It's a constant struggle. Just this past week were tennis tryouts. Normally, I would always wear pants to play tennis; they are more comfortable and easier to play in. It would never have occurred to me to wear anything but pants. However, this time I didn't. I wore a skirt, though I happened to be the only one on the team that wore one. I felt extremely proud of myself that I didn't wear pants, that I didn't wear what everyone else was wearing. I felt a sense of accomplishment. I was happy that I finally started to be the person I was striving to be and I know that every time I have to think about

what to wear and I make the right choice, it will only get easier to make.

It's similar to what my mom told me about covering her hair. How when she first started, it was so difficult for her. It was always hot; the wind would blow and completely ruin her *sheitel*. Once, even at work when she wore a hat, someone said to her, "Why are you wearing that? It looks a shower cap!" As you can imagine, she hated covering her hair. However, she always did; she always over-came her struggle and it only got easier. Now she would never even think of walking out of the house without something on her head. She has grown to love the *mitzvah*, just as I have begun to love and appreciate *tznius* and the way it helps me express my

# Chessed Fair

REBECCA  
EICHENBAUM

With much thanks for the great efforts of Mrs. Storch, SKA's new Chessed director, the freshmen chessed fair was an enjoyable and successful event. It began with a delicious dinner catered by Pizza Pious. We enjoyed baked ziti, garlic knots, salad, and of course, cookies. With filled stomachs, we went to room 110, where we enjoyed a comical yet meaningful episode of the TV sitcom "Taxi." It nicely illustrated the importance of giving and the incredible feeling the giver is left with afterward.

With high spirits we sprinted to the library, eager to find out what would be the next part of the chessed fair. To our surprise, we were lucky enough to hear from Rebbetzin Yudin, who came all the way from Fairlawn, New Jersey to speak to us. Her awe inspiring stories depicted to us the true meaning of chessed, and made clear to us how greatly acts of kindness can influence our lives. Rebbetzen Yudin's stories also portrayed just how rewarding being involved in chessed can be.

With an even greater understanding

of the word "chessed," we were more than ready to continue the chessed fair with its final component of the evening. From classroom to classroom, we jogged hastily as to not miss a word of what our upperclassmen had to say about the chas-sadim they have taken upon themselves to be involved in. With each short session running according to a strict ring of bells, there was almost not enough time for us to absorb all the information about chessed that was coming our way. We also had the chance to sign up for various chessed opportunities that we wished to be involved

in throughout the course of this year. Such acts of kindness included toy and clothing drives, giving tzedakah, visits to soup kitchens, intergenerational days, Kulanu, Yachad homework helpers, JEP, and various programs to help Israel. Mrs. Storch says she is "amazed at how much of their own time these girls are willing to devote to pursue chessed." Mrs. Storch has previously been program director at both Camp Mesorah and Camp Morasha, and she can't wait to initiate some new chessed programs here at SKA. She is open to any new ideas any stu-

dent may have regarding chessed, and she is available to help students and discuss their chessed commitments.

The chessed fair concluded soon after this and we all returned home enthusiastic about chessed, and with a deeper understanding of the word itself. Clearly, the chessed fair proved to be a fun-filled yet meaningful evening. Tired from a busy evening of learning about chessed, we tried our best to do ourselves a chessed by going to bed early that night!

# Yad B'Yad Israel

(Continued from page 6)

America. On this Shabbat I had the opportunity to meet some of my counselors and found out what to expect on Yad b'Yad. It also gave my fellow high school students and me a chance to meet one another before the Yachad members arrived. That Sunday, Yad b'Yad Israel really started when Yachad met us at the airport.

In Israel, we went on various tiyulim just like any other Israel summer program. Some of these tours included Jerusalem, the Bar Ko-

chva caves and Nachal Yehuda. We went on most of the tours with Yachad. However, on some we separated from the Yachad members and they went to a place that was geared more to their speed. When they separated from us, it felt as though we were lacking something; the tour did not feel the same. In addition to touring with Yachad, I also had the opportunity to just hang out and talk with the individuals and really get to know who they were. I realized that I had a lot in common with them and

that in most cases, they were just like everyone else. After two weeks of camp I felt like I really knew who they were. A bond had been made that would last a lifetime. I started looking at the Yachad members as I did any of my other friends. They were no different. I realized that in life we all have our weaknesses and strengths and so did they. I have learned so much from each Yachad member; each and every one had some amazing character trait, "whether it was being more apprecia-

tive, very friendly or being a person who has a more positive/better perspective/attitude and takes advantage of life," said Liz Jarret, Rosh of Yad B'Yad Israel.

Working with Yachad members was a truly amazing experience. While the Yachad members that I was privileged to work with were people who appreciated what I did for them, it is what they taught me and what I was able to learn from them that has left an everlasting impression on me. Each time I saw them smiling, a smile was

put on my own face because I knew I made a difference in their lives, as they too have impacted mine tremendously.

Aside from having the opportunity to spend the summer with Yachad, I also had the privilege to spend the summer with nine amazing counselors. I have learned so much from them, whether it was their passion for Israel, Am Yisrael, or the Torah.

# SKAmics

BY: Gittel Klein



# Play or Pray?

JACLYN RAMRAS

On Yom Kippur 2004, Shawn Green of the Los Angeles Dodgers anguished whether to play or to pray. Green was conflicted over whether he should miss two critical games of the baseball season to sit out for the Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur. Would Green be criticized one way or the other? Of course he would. However, the only person he must answer to is himself. Green struggled over choosing the “right thing,” not knowing exactly what the thing was at the time. Finally, the Thursday before Yom Kippur he decided to play Friday night and to sit out Saturday’s

game and pray. Sandy Koufax and Hank Greenberg won the affection of American Jews, as well as the respect of many non-Jews, by observing Yom Kippur rather than playing in crucial games; Koufax in the 1965 World Series as the pitching ace for the Dodgers and Greenberg in the 1934 pennant race as the slugger for the Detroit Tigers. Ron Bloomberg was another baseball player who sat out on Yom Kippur and later was known as “the Sundown Kid.”



Shawn Green

Rabbi David Fine stated, “It’s not quite a profile of courage, but it’s still a courageous stand. It’s when baseball players really become heroes in the eyes of those of us who watch them. It’s when they go beyond being a good player to being real examples and role models.”

Sandy Koufax did not pitch the first game of the World Series, instead Don Drysdale did. When the manager came to take Drysdale out after giving up seven runs, Drysdale said, “I bet right now you wish I was Jewish too.”

When Greenberg was wrestling whether to play on Rosh Hashanah, he asked his Rabbi and was told it was fine. Greenberg ended up hitting two home runs that game, and across the scoreboard in Hebrew, it read, “Happy New Year, Hank.”

The world has changed in 70 years—Green has to face less anti-Semitism than Greenberg did. However, the issues are the same—a man examining his principles. Greenberg’s actions made him a role model for the generations after him.

This was one of the hardest decisions that Green had to make in his life. Having great passion for

the game of baseball, it was extremely difficult for him to make this decision. Baseball, like most sports, is a team sport. When a player does not succeed or causes the team’s downfall, it hurts the player so much that he failed and brought the rest of the team down with him. Since it was a big game, Green did not want to let his team down and not play but at the same time, he did not want to let G-d down.

The hardest thing to do in life is to give up something you love. Whether it is for a family reason, friends, or in this case, religion—we must always follow our heart.

# Sonics Start the Season!

ELKIE SPITZER

The SKA Sonics are, of course, on their way to another championship. The team is back and stronger than ever. Being in the skirt league, we can not expect anything less.

The first game of the season kicked off strongly at Shulamith. The final score was 57-25. It was led by juniors Lisa Ogorek scoring 11 points, and Jaclyn Ramras scoring 11 points. It was a strong game both defensively and offensively.

The second game was no different

than the first. However, the SKA Sonics were missing their key

nervous without their star, but still managed to open up the game

Ramras with 15 points and Rachel Genuth with 15 points. The

feet tall! The game was very close at the beginning but slowly, the Sonics pulled away. The Sonics played their hearts out and pulled out another win. The final score was 44-18. Once again, the juniors led the way with Deena Klein scoring 15 points, and Naomi Kramer scoring 12.

The Sonics are on their way to another great season. They will continue to play their best individually and as a team. Remember, there is no “I” in team!



player, Lisa Ogorek, along with two other great players. Ilan traveled a very long way to play the game. Going into the game, the Sonics were a little

strongly with brilliant defense. At half time, the Sonics were winning 23-0. The Sonics continued their excellent playing and were lead by Juniors Jaclyn

final score was 49-19.

The third game was played against Ezra. It was a very competitive game—especially since there was a girl who was six