



# HAFTR Heritage

Issue: #16

January 2014

## MAZEL TOV!

## ENGAGEMENTS

Toney Richman (HAFTR HS 2006) on her engagement to Matt Marcus

Avery Goro (HAFTR HS 2003) on his engagement to Jessica Berke

David Gad (HAFTR HS 2003) on his engagement to Dina Friedman

## WEDDINGS

Stephanie Goldschmidt (HAFTR HS 2004) on her marriage to David Lugassy

Joey Frucht (HAFTR HS 2003) on his

Welcome back to **HAFTR HERITAGE!**

This is the 16th edition of our newsletter geared toward YOU, our HILI, HILLEL and HAFTR alumni! We wish all of our HAFTR graduates a happy and healthy New Year.

It has been very exciting to hear all of your feedback! We also want to thank you for sending us your updated contact information. This has allowed us to build a stronger alumni database. Please continue to do so. We really appreciate it.

Enjoy this issue and stay connected!

Have a wonderful summer!

Melodie Scharf, Chairperson, HAFTR Alumni Relations and Co-Editor of HAFTR Heritage

Rise (Davidoff) Kaufmann, Hillel Elem. '73, Hillel High School '76, Vice Chair, HAFTR Alumni Relations

Leslie (Reis) Gang, HAFTR Elem. '99, HAFTR High School, '03, Director of Admissions & Communications, Co-Editor of HAFTR Heritage

marriage to  
Miriam Shatzkes

Joanna  
Loewenstein  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on her  
marriage to Leon  
Skornicki

Sondra Scharf  
(HAFTR HS  
2002) on her  
marriage to  
Adam Lesman

Natan Nussbaum  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on his  
marriage to  
Natalie Rozanski

Ariel Lowenstein  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on his  
marriage to  
Hillary Berkowitz

Daniel  
Bondarsky  
(HAFTR HS  
2005) on his  
marriage to  
Shiran Zion

Tani Hochsztein  
(HAFTR HS  
2004) on her  
marriage to Ben  
Gordon

Bonnie  
Cooperberg  
(HAFTR HS  
2007) on her  
marriage to Dan  
Klein

Jodi Cooperberg  
(HAFTR HS  
2009) on her  
marriage to  
Tzachi  
Poppowitz



**HAFTR ALUMNI**  
**FEATURE**  
**YOEL**  
**PREMINGER**  
**HAFTR HS**  
**CLASS OF 2000**

**WHAT YEAR DID YOU GRADUATE HAFTR?**

I graduated in 2000

**WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE SUBJECT WHILE ATTENDING SCHOOL?**

History, specifically AP History with Mrs Remstein and AP Political Science with Mrs Parmet.

**WHAT ACTIVITIES WERE YOU INVOLVED IN? DID YOU PARTICIPATE IN ANY SPORTS?**

I was on mock trial with Mrs Breitman and loved it.

**WHAT SCHOOL(S) DID YOU ATTEND AFTER GRADUATING FROM HAFTR?**

Yeshivat Hakotel (which is now Netiv Aryeh) then Yeshiva University. I continued my education at Tufts School of Dental Medicine

**TELL US ABOUT WHAT YOU ARE DOING TODAY.**

I recently opened my state of the art pediatric dental

Tali Gerut  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on her  
marriage to Matt  
Levine

Davida  
Shubowitz  
(HAFTR HS  
2005) on her  
marriage to  
Zachary  
Schlessel  
(HAFTR HS  
2005)

Desirree Sedgh  
(HAFTR HS  
2002) on her  
marriage to  
Eldad Dror

Alan  
Goldschmidt  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on his  
marriage to  
Zahava  
Levkovitch  
(HAFTR HS  
2005)

Cassie Seinuk  
(HAFTR HS  
2005) on her  
marriage to Mike  
Davidson

Tali Krawirz  
(HAFTR HS  
2005) on her  
marriage to Erik  
Zimerman

## **BIRTHS**

Michael Shapiro  
(HAFTR HS  
2004) & his wife  
Cara on the birth  
of a son

Deena Leibtag  
Silverman  
(HAFTR HS

practice in Cedarhurst in April 2013. I put a lot of thought and detail into my office to make it a fun place.

## **WHY DID YOU DECIDE TO OPEN A PRACTICE IN THE 5 TOWNS?**

I grew up here in the five towns in Lawrence. My parents moved here in 1985 and it's amazing to see how b"h the Jewish community continues to grow. Since I was young, I always wanted to open my own practice in the area. There are so many young families moving into our area and there is a need for more pediatric dentists.

## **DOES BEING AN ORTHODOX JEW AFFECT YOUR CAREER?**

It definitely does. When I was in dental school in Boston, I faced anti-Semitism. My first round of exams my first year of dental school fell out over Yom Kippur and Succos. The administration told me that any exam I miss I would be docked 15% from the final grade. This was after speaking to them and was granted a make-up exam. In the end I stood my ground and was not docked any points. Some less observant classmates came over to me after and thanked me for paving the way for them as well. Because of my actions they were able to observe Yom Kippur without any penalties as well. I believe that it's important to be firm in our beliefs. As an orthodox Jew many of my classmates never met an orthodox Jew. I realized that to them I was representing our religion.

## **WHAT IS THE MOST EXCITING PART OF YOUR CAREER?**

Seeing the smiles of the children each day. There is nothing more rewarding to turning any negative or painful past dental experience into an enjoyable one. My patients cannot wait to come back to me. I strive

2003) and her husband Spencer on the birth of a daughter

Stefanie Markowitz Kris (HAFTR HS 2005) and Adam (HAFTR HS 2005) on the birth of a son

Dahlia Honigsfeld (HAFTR HS 2009) and her husband Jakey Berman on the birth of a son

Aliza Myers Elberger (HAFTR HS 2003) and her husband Ruven on the birth of a daughter

Jessica Schlussek Small (HAFTR HS 2004) and Evan Small (HAFTR HS 2002) on the birth of a son

Aviva Todfeld Epstein (HAFTR HS 2008) and her husband Michael on the birth of a daughter

Danielle Gleitman Renov (HAFTR HS 2004) and her husband Eli on the birth of a daughter

to make their experience memorable from prizes to tattoos to apple TVs and iPads!

### **WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES OF YOUR CAREER?**

My biggest challenge is owning your own business. Sounds cliché but the dentistry is the easy part now. Managing staff and a busy office is difficult but I wouldn't change it for the world. I love what I do.

### **WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO PRACTICE DENTISTRY?**

I grew up in a family of physicians. My grandfather, father, sister, and brother-in-law are all physicians. Medicine and healthcare is all I knew. I originally was leaning towards medicine but wanted a career that I could work with my hands. That left surgery or dentistry. Personally, I didn't want the crazy hours and lack of sleep that surgery came with. So, I chose dentistry.

### **TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.**

My wife, Esther and I have b"n 4 children, 2 boys and 2 girls.

### **DO YOU KEEP IN TOUCH WITH THE CHILDHOOD FRIENDS THAT YOU MADE WHILE YOU WERE A STUDENT AT HAFTR?**

Some of the friends I made in HAFTR are still my close friends today. Even though our paths diverged in life we still manage to stay close.

### **IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD?**

My new pediatric dental office is located in Cedarhurst, behind Jildor Shoes and I can be reached at [\(516\)-239-1200](tel:516-239-1200) or at [DrPreminger@PremingerPediatricDentistry.com](mailto:DrPreminger@PremingerPediatricDentistry.com)

Debbie Fromm Rifkin (HAFTR HS 2002) and her husband David on the birth of a son

Elana Soleimani Aminoff (HAFTR HS 1998) and her husband David on the birth of a son

Rachel Weinrib Miller (HAFTR HS 2000) and her husband Uri on the birth of a son

Kevin Weiler (HAFTR HS 2006) and his wife Stacy on the birth of a daughter

Oobie Bernstein Farbman (HAFTR HS 2005) and her husband Brian (HAFTR HS 2005) on the birth of a daughter

Tamar Stern Freundlich (HAFTR HS 1998) and her husband Avi on the birth of a son

Aliza Weg Gluck (HAFTR ES 1999) and her husband Danny on the birth of a daughter

Kenny Sicklick (HAFTR HS 1996) and his

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**Thank you to everyone who joined us at our 2nd Annual Alumni Day.**



**Additional photos can be seen on our HAFTR Alumnus Facebook page.**

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wife Bonnie on  
the birth of a son

Alyssa Kowalski  
Schechter  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) and her  
husband Josh on  
the birth of a  
daughter

Adina Zellner  
Bienstock  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) and Daniel  
Bienstock  
(HAFTR HS  
2003) on the  
birth of twin boys

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**Become a  
Class  
Ambassador!**

**Class of 1975  
(Hillel)**

[Jonathan Alter](#)

**Class of 1976  
(Hillel)**

[Rise Davidoff  
Kaufmann](#)

**Class of 1977  
(Hillel)**

[Suzanne  
Berkowitz  
Gurvitch](#)

**Class of 1978  
(Hillel)**

[Karen Schiffman  
Baker  
Alyssa Davidoff  
Sterba](#)

**Class of 1983  
[Felicia Feder](#)**

## **HAFTR FACULTY FEATURE**

**PERRI  
SENDERS  
KAYE  
(HAFTR HS  
CLASS OF  
2002)**



### **WHAT YEARS DID YOU ATTEND HAFTR?**

I attended HAFTR from nursery through High School from 1988-2002

### **WHAT DO YOU TEACH AT HAFTR?**

I teach a 4 year old nursery class.

### **WHICH HAFTR TEACHER INSPIRED YOU?**

Mrs. Beigulman my fourth grade teacher. She was really amazing

### **WHEN DID YOU KNOW YOU WANTED TO**

[Bernstein](#)

Class of 1984

[Aleeza Steinhorn](#)  
[Lauer](#)

### **TEACH?**

Sophomore Year in College

Class of 1985

[Simona Vogel](#)  
[Lumerman](#)

### **HOW DID YOUR HAFTR EXPERIENCE HELP SHAPE YOUR CAREER?**

It definitely helped me expect the unexpected

Class of 1986

[Estee Berman](#)  
[Stein](#)  
[Carolyn](#)  
[WallachRosenbe](#)  
[rg](#)

### **WHERE DID YOU ATTEND COLLEGE AND GRADUATE SCHOOL?**

I received my undergraduate degree at Queens College and I continued at Hunter College where I received my Masters degree.

Class of 1987

[Royce Feld](#)  
[Maron](#)  
[Michelle](#)  
[Golub Shari](#)  
[Haim Kaufman](#)

### **IF YOU COULD COME BACK AND VISIT ANY OF YOUR TEACHERS, WHO WOULD IT BE?**

Definitely Rabbi Zychik

Class of 1988

[Stephen Wallach](#)  
[Jennifer Wiessen](#)  
[Zwiebel](#)

### **WHERE DID YOU GROW UP?**

Woodmere

Class of 1989

[Wendy](#)  
[AusternOttensos](#)  
[et](#)  
[Nicole Beck](#)  
[Spivak](#)

### **ARE YOU STILL IN TOUCH WITH ANY OF YOUR CLASSMATES?**

Many of my HAFTR peers are still my good friends today.

Class of 1991

[Steven](#)  
[Ackerman](#)

### **IF SOMEONE OPENED YOUR LOCKER WHAT WOULD THEY FIND?**

Not much. I shared a locker on each floor (thank you Daniella Weber and Matt Kotler)

Class of 1993

[Elyse Dorkin](#)  
[Sharon](#)

Class of 1994

[Ari Zoldan](#)

Class of 1995

[Chani Schwartz](#)  
[Herman](#)

### **WHAT ARE SOME OF YOUR HOBBIES AND INTERESTS?**

I like reading, watching television and snowboarding.

Class of 2000

[Tamar Ausubel](#)  
[Scharf](#)

Class of 2001  
[Anella Schulman Weitzman](#)  
[Craig Weitzman](#)

Class of 2002  
[Jamie Rohde Scharaga](#)  
[Sondra Scharf](#)

Class of 2003  
[Leslie Reis Gang](#)

Class of 2004  
[Allison Rohde Rahmani](#)

Class of 2005  
[Hannah Steinblatt Topiel](#)  
[Esther Dubow](#)

Class of 2009  
[Jennifer Lauer](#)  
[Jessica Shapiro](#)

Class of 2010  
[Alana Warhit](#)

Class of 2011  
[Aleza Kleinworm](#)

Class of 2012  
-volunteers  
needed

Class of 2013  
-volunteers  
needed

## ARE THERE ANY PROGRAMS AT HAFTR YOU WISH YOU HAD WHEN YOU WERE A STUDENT?

We have this amazing Hebrew immersion program that begins in Nursery 4's called Chalav U'Dvash. Morah Sheila and Morah Debbie (who teaches our Kindergarten students) teach the children very basic Hebrew by introduce simple Hebrew words that the children will hear daily as they get older. It's such a unique and wonderful way to introduce the language.

## NOT ONLY ARE YOU A TEACHER IN THE SCHOOL, YOU ARE NOW A PARENT OF HAFTR. TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY.

All of my siblings have attended HAFTR and i'm now a proud HAFTR parent. In addition, my son will be joining the HAFTR family next year in the toddler program.

Friend us on  
Facebook!



Like the Official  
HAFTR Page  
on Facebook!

We had a wonderful time at our  
Class of 2003 High School  
Reunion





Follow us on  
Twitter!



**We are now planning the Class of  
1989 reunion and the Class of  
2004 reunion.**

**If you would like to join our  
planning committees, please e-  
mail us at [hafralumni@hafr.org](mailto:hafralumni@hafr.org)**

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**HAFTR**  
**ALUMNI**  
**COUPLE**  
**REBECCA**  
**HYMAN**  
**KATZ**  
(HAFTR HS  
Class of  
2004)  
**JONATHAN**  
**KATZ**  
(HAFTR HS

Class of 2001)

#### **WHAT YEARS DID YOU GO TO HAFTR?**

**Jonathan:**  
1997-2001

**Rebecca:**  
2000-2004

#### **HOW DID YOU BECOME A COUPLE?**

**Jonathan:** Rebecca and I both went to NYU after HAFTR. She was a freshman when I was a senior. We actually met for the first time in the Kiddish room in the 6th Street Synagogue, where

NYU held its Simchat Torah celebration, on Shemini Atzeret 2004 . We ended up in a conversation with a group of people, but somehow both of us only remember each other. Meeting on this day was very special as I was Chatan Bereshit the next day and everyone was joking with me that it meant I would get married in the coming year. Little did I know, the day before I had met my wife.

**Rebecca:** It was Jonathan's 21st birthday and he was having a party in his apartment for which I baked him a birthday cake. I was not feeling well, so I apologized to him and left early before the cake I baked was served. By the time I got back to my dorm room, which was only two buildings away, he was calling me to ask me out on our first date with the noise from the party in the background.

### **WHEN DID YOU KNOW HE/SHE WAS THE ONE?**

**Rebecca:** We started dating in October and for winter break we both had plans to go to Israel. We were both going to be in Israel for two weeks, but it turned out we would only overlap for one week. Jonathan left before I did and I remember my sisters making fun of me about how miserable I was because Jonathan was not there to make me smile. They also surmised from the long and frequent phone calls from Israel, that he must have missed me terribly as well.

**Jonathan:** From the first time we met, there was an instant connection and after the first date I knew she was the one. Our first date was unforgettable. We were so engrossed in our conversation that unbeknownst to us, the waiter at My Most Favorite Dessert took away our desserts before we even finished because we had been tying up their table for

3 hours. We then went to ESPN Zone which was a blast. She beat me at basketball with a buzzer shot and I schooled her in racecar driving. I remember walking home that night after dropping her off and it was impossible to deny that we were meant to be.

### **WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE HAFTR MEMORY TOGETHER?**

**Jonathan:** I do not have any memories of Rebecca in HAFTR as I did not know she existed at that time. I was a senior boy and she a freshman girl.

**Rebecca:** While Jonathan did not know I existed, it was pretty common for freshman girls to know who the senior boys were. Jonathan was an editor of the weekly Torah newsletter called HAFTORAH, and every Friday he would come into our Navi class with Mrs. Leff to distribute the newsletter. Mrs. Leff was notorious for hating when boys came into our class to make announcements, but she loved how polite and sweet Jonathan was and many times when he left she would say "Eze Chamood." When I saw Jonathan in the Kiddish room at NYU, I thought to myself, "Wow that is Mrs. Leff's Eze Chamood!!"

### **IF YOU COULD HAVE LUNCH WITH ONE TEACHER TODAY, WHO WOULD IT BE AND WHY?**

**Rebecca:** I would have to say Mrs. Leff so that I could thank her for pointing out the "Chamood" Jonathan was, so I would know that when I met him years later.

**Jonathan:** Rabbi Brisman and Mrs. Remstein. I really appreciate the time Rabbi Brisman spent before school learning mishna berura with me and a

group of his talmidim. It would definitely be nice to sit down and have a shiur with him today. I would also like to meet Mrs. Remstein, who I recall being an excellent and kind teacher.

### **WHAT ITEM WAS ALWAYS IN YOUR LOCKER/BACKPACK?**

**Rebecca:** My CD player which I listened to on the bus from/to Great Neck.

**Jonathan:** Too much. I am sure today the HAFTR student backpack is much lighter with tablets and other handheld electronics.

### **IF YOUR FRIENDS FROM HAFTR COULD DESCRIBE YOU IN ONE WORD, WHAT WOULD IT BE?**

**Rebecca:** Driven

**Jonathan:** Smiley

### **WHAT IS YOUR MOST MEMORABLE CLASSROOM MOMENT?**

**Rebecca:** When I was a Junior, I had surgery on my wrist. The doctor had created this foam contraption to wear around the cast which forced me to keep my elbow bent with my arm straight up, to help keep the swelling down. It was so large that my friends drew on it and called it SpongeBob. My first day back after surgery I was in Mr. Yerushalmi's class and my desk was to the right of his desk. He starts to take attendance and marks about half the class absent. He is muttering to himself, "why are so many people not here?" when he realizes that they were all hidden behind SpongeBob. Mr. Yeushalmi started screaming at me that my hand made half the class disappear and how could he teach if none of them could see him?! My friends loved SpongeBob because they always got away with everything as Mr.

Yerushalmi couldn't see them. After about a week most of the class was trying to sit behind me so SpongeBob could shield them.

**Jonathan:** I will always remember "minchas chinuch" chaburah, gemara shiur, and mishmar with Rabbi Bajnon. Who can forget his announcements over the loudspeaker "im ein kemach ein torah." He definitely inspired me to always keep up with my Torah learning no matter how many hours of school work or medical training I had on my plate. While I was not in HAFTR at the time, I also remember Rebecca telling me what a wonderful leader he was on the terrible day of 9/11/2001.

### **WHERE DID YOU GO TO SCHOOL ONCE YOU GRADUATED?**

**Rebecca:** NYU Stern School of Business

**Jonathan:** NYU College of Arts and Sciences

### **TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY AND YOUR LIVES TODAY?**

We live in Teaneck New Jersey with our 15 month old twin boys name Aharon Tzvi (the one with the straight hair) and Aryeh Shlomo (the one with curly hair). Jonathan went to Tel Aviv University Sackler School of Medicine and then did his Shomer Shabbos Internal Medicine Residency at Beth Israel Medical Center in Manhattan, where he is also currently in his second year of Cardiology Fellowship. Rebecca started her career at Ernst & Young in Tel Aviv and is now a senior associate in expatriate tax at Ernst & Young in New Jersey.

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**Refuah Shelaima: Former HAFTR**

## Teacher

Word has reached us that Victor Ackerman, a teacher at HILI in the fifties, sixties, and seventies is battling cancer and might benefit from words of encouragement and remembrances from former colleagues and students.

Letters and notes should be addressed to him at:  
100 Centre Street,  
Apt. 309  
Brookline, MA 02446

### **HAFTR Heritage is all about you!**

Tell us about your latest news and update your personal information so we can keep you posted about your classmates and their journey since graduating from HAFTR. You can do this by friending us on Facebook or by emailing us at [haftralumni@haftr.org](mailto:haftralumni@haftr.org).

Send us your recommendations of people you know whom we might want to profile for Alumni Features, Alumni Teachers and Alumni Couples, along with other interesting alumni story suggestions.