



FELDER FOCUS



Senator Simcha Felder with Paul Mak, CEO of Brooklyn Chinese-American Association at their Annual Summer Celebration Fair where several thousand people enjoyed free rides, entertainment and snacks.

Spotlight on McDonald Avenue



See story on page 3

A Sign of the Times



An important safety message from Senator Simcha Felder

See story on page 4

Securing Our Schools



See story on page 5

A MATCH MADE IN HEAVEN

Our summer intern, Benjamin, sat down to speak with Senator Felder about his recent donation of 100 new schoolbags to the "Backpacks for Ghana" project at the St. Joan of Arc church in Jackson Heights.

BENJAMIN: Senator Felder, would you please describe how this fascinating connection between a Catholic congregation in Queens and an Orthodox Jewish senator in Brooklyn came to be?

SEN. FELDER: A few years ago, a local business gave my office several hundred backpacks for a local community event. About 100 backpacks were left over and were placed in storage and forgotten. In early July, we "found" them, which led to a conversation about how we might be able to put them to good use. Later that afternoon, my aide, Judah, walked into my office holding a letter. The letter was from Mr. John Fitzgerald, who is a member of the St. Joan of Arc church in Jackson Heights, Queens, asking if we would be willing to donate one backpack to impoverished students in Ghana.

BENJAMIN: If Mr. Fitzgerald is a member of a church in Jackson Heights, which is not in your district, what made him write to you? How did he know you had these extra backpacks?

SEN. FELDER: That's what makes this all so interesting. Mr. Fitzgerald and his wife, Noemi, were collecting backpacks for underprivileged students in Ghana. He had no idea that I had these backpacks. He just mailed a letter to every single elected official in Brooklyn and Queens asking if they would donate one backpack. He said I was the only person on the list who responded.

BENJAMIN: It's a great story and an incredible coincidence. Has this ever happened to you before?

SEN. FELDER: "Coincidences" like these happen to everyone all the time. Sometimes they're obvious, sometimes not, but I don't believe anything happens by accident. The Yiddish word for "destiny" is *bashert*, and this backpack episode is a textbook example of *bashert*. What are the chances that I would receive a request for one backpack on the same day I was trying to figure out the best way to use 100? In this case, all I can say is that it's a match made in heaven.

BENJAMIN: You mentioned that of all the

people who received Mr. Fitzgerald's letter, you were the only one who responded. What would you say to urge others to contribute to charitable causes?

SEN. FELDER: I'm uncomfortable telling people what to do, but speaking for myself, I responded because the example my parents set was always to be on the lookout for opportunities to give whatever we could. They taught me to appreciate how fortunate we are to live in the United States, the most wonderful country in the world, where we are blessed with such abundance. I consider it a gift that I can do something small that would mean so much to an underprivileged child.



Noemi and John Fitzgerald receiving donated knapsacks from Senator Felder.

PROFILE: Kensington Library

Senator Simcha Felder has made it a priority to assist local libraries. One of these libraries is the Kensington Library, located at 4207 18th Avenue.

The Kensington Library branch was established in 1908, beginning with just 400 books located in the back of a retail store on McDonald Avenue.

Before moving to its current, state-of-the-art home in 2012, the Kensington Library spent over half a century in a converted catering hall on Ditmas Avenue. When the newly renovated building first opened in 1960, the Kensington Library attracted national media attention for being Brooklyn's first air-conditioned library and for its specially designed children's furniture.

Today, Senator Felder is keeping things interesting at the Kensington Library. This year alone, he provided funding for automated doors making it easier for seniors, children, wheelchair users, and anyone with an armful of books to enter or exit the building. He also funded the purchase of a new movie projector and motorized screen, new shelving for the "New Books" section, additional tables and chairs, and special outdoor lighting to illuminate the American flag.



(L-R) Gladys Russo; Deborah Cudjoe; Matthew Cole; Chelsy Melvin; Danielle Winter, Children's Librarian; William Lewnes, Branch Supervisor; Senator Simcha Felder; Joseph Seabrook; Charles Moran, Information Supervisor; Sydul Islam; Nataliya Shulga; Kevser Cetman

Senator Felder's commitment to the knowledge and enrichment of every resident in his district is made clear by the care he gives to our local libraries. But don't take his word for it. Go visit the Kensington Library today and see it for yourself.

JUSTICE, NOW SERVED DAILY



Going to court to resolve a personal dispute is slow and costly. Arbitration or mediation courts offer a legally binding outcome for far less money and at a much faster pace.

This is especially helpful to small business owners, low-income families, those who settle civil disputes in a Bais Din, and seniors. However, New York State's judiciary law prohibits conducting any judicial business in arbitration or mediation courts on Saturdays and Sundays. This outdated law effectively deprives anyone with limited time or an inflexible schedule the benefit of a faster, less expensive way to resolve conflicts.

Thanks to a new law sponsored by Senator Simcha Felder and Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz (D-Flushing), arbitration and mediation courts are now permitted to operate on Saturdays and Sundays, providing that all parties to the dispute submit their consent in writing.

"Amending this outdated law gives everyone the opportunity to resolve personal disputes in the way they feel is most beneficial," said Senator Felder. "By eliminating this injustice, countless New Yorkers are now free to have their day in court, on any day they choose."

Felder Shines the Spotlight on McDonald Avenue



For generations, long stretches of elevated subway track kept McDonald Avenue covered in shadows, endangering drivers, pedestrians, local business owners, and nearby residents. With the continued population growth of the Boro Park, Kensington, and Midwood communities, more people use McDonald Avenue for a major pedestrian walkway, increasing the danger.

Earlier this year, Senator Felder allocated nearly \$500,000 to improve safety and security along McDonald Avenue by dramatically increasing the number of streetlights, and upgrading all the new and existing light poles with a unique double-arm feature that illuminates the roadway and sidewalk alike.

The street lighting upgrade began in early spring; the first phase, from Ditmas Avenue to Bay Parkway, was completed in time for the new school year.

"With this grant," said Senator Felder, "school children can walk in safety, families can cross streets without fear, and business owners can go home at night confident that newly, well-lit streets will keep their stores more secure."

"Thanks to the de Blasio administration's DOT Commissioner, Polly Trottenberg, we can finally see the light on McDonald Avenue," concluded Felder.



Senator Simcha Felder and NYC DOT Commissioner Polly Trottenberg share the spotlight at a recent press conference to unveil more than 100 new light poles, each with a dual illumination arm, lighting up McDonald Avenue's roadway and sidewalks from sundown to sunrise.

REMEMBERING: Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz



I join thousands of New Yorkers in mourning the untimely passing of my dear colleague and friend, Assemblyman Michael Simanowitz. He was a role model for public service and was well known and admired for his unyielding integrity and relentless advocacy for constituents.

Assemblyman Simanowitz and I frequently joined forces to sponsor important bills such as the newly passed Arbitration law, which will improve the quality of life and legal protections of New Yorkers today and for many generations to come. Michael was my good friend, and I will miss him dearly.

FELDER: DID YOU BRING THE BABY?

During the warmer months, it takes less than 10 minutes for the temperature inside a parked car to reach over 150 degrees. It takes even less time for a child left inside to suffocate.

Sadly, these tragedies are becoming more common in our distraction-plagued society.

“Leaving a child in a hot car is a nightmare that takes place in broad daylight,” says Senator Simcha Felder. “But it’s a nightmare we can avoid.”

To combat this shocking trend, Senator Felder enlisted the help of several hundred local retailers, who displayed a sign in their

storefront windows of an adorable smiling baby and a simple, lifesaving reminder: “**You Parked the Car Did You Bring the Baby?**”



“We may never know how many tragedies these responsible store owners prevented,” said Senator Felder. “But what we know for sure is that every one of these signs can potentially save a life.”

“The signs are easy to remember and impossible to ignore,” said Aaron Yitzchok Kohn, founder of the Chaveirim Volunteer Assistance Organization of Brooklyn. “Senator Felder protects children by keeping people focused.”



A BLESSING FOR NEW PARENTS

“New York State’s 5-day post-delivery deadline to apply for a birth certificate has long been a source of aggravation for new parents scrambling to make the cutoff.

“Thanks to a new bill I sponsored along with Assemblywoman Stacey Pheffer Amato, new parents get an additional 10 days to apply for a birth certificate.

“This commonsense legislation is a genuine benefit for new parents and improves the quality of life of all New Yorkers... even those who are just a few days old.”

- Senator Simcha Felder

Dear Senator Felder,
Thank you! I am so happy that you sponsored legislation to extend the time parents have to apply for a birth certificate from 5 days to 15.

My wife gave birth to our new baby a few weeks ago and while childbirth is a joyous occasion, it’s still a physically and emotionally taxing experience for the mother, and even the father!

Five days to file the birth certificate isn’t as much time as it sounds like. The hospital is rushing to make the 5-day deadline so they need paperwork from us within 24-hours. It can be difficult, especially since the naming process in our community often takes a few days.

Naming aside, there are so many things to take care of when a wife and mother is in the hospital (and her husband is left in charge) while preparations are underway for the baby’s homecoming. Knowing that now we can come back to the hospital in a few days after things quiet down and the baby has been given a name will help decrease the stress level for all new mothers and fathers in a significant way.

As our Senator, you do many wonderful things; this legislation, though, will positively affect every growing family in your district. Thank you for bringing real and meaningful change for your constituents.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Labin

OPINION: We Demand Safety and Security for Every City School



By Simcha Felder

From the UK to France, and free societies around the world, terrorism is now a daily intrusion into the lives of all people. Recent events indicate that terrorists are raising evil to new heights by purposely targeting children.

Look no further than last May, when suicide bombers in Manchester murdered and maimed dozens of children enjoying a concert. Pre-school students in Paris were gunned down in front of their school, and an American teen studying in Israel was shot point-blank through a school bus window. On a busy Stockholm street in April, an infant in a baby carriage was crushed by a terrorist driving a stolen truck, who witnesses say was

intentionally swerving to hit children.

In this age of active shooters and terrorist threats, we cannot expect parents to send their children to schools that lack adequate security.

The solution begins at the front door. At best, most school entrances are monitored by unarmed security personnel trained to raise an alert should they encounter a suspicious person or package. While the NYPD School Safety Division has done a good job keeping public schools safe in the past, we now face new threats that require a different response.

Armed police officers guarding schools are the most effective way to detect, deter, and, if needed,

neutralize an attacker. When I co-sponsored this legislation during the Senate session, it attracted a lot of interest and support. Without armed security, schools become soft targets that invite tragedy. We've been fortunate so far, thankfully, but parents are not reassured that what worked in the past, will work in the future.

If banks have two armed guards protecting their money, why are our children worth any less? We might not want to face this fact, but having an armed New York City police officer at the entrance of every single school in New York City is the only solution. To do anything less is a failure we can no longer afford.

Felder Responds to Active Shooter Threat

According to the Associated Press, between 2000 and 2013, there were 25 shootings at U.S. elementary and secondary schools. The number since then has continued to rise, making the threat of a deranged individual entering a school to inflict harm seem more likely than ever. It's time for schools to be prepared.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office reports that while 97% of school districts perform fire drills, just 67% conduct active shooter drills. A new bill sponsored by Senator Simcha Felder aims to change that.

Public and private schools in New York State are already required to conduct 12 emergency drills each school year. Felder's Active Shooter bill will require every public and private school to dedicate four of those drills to active shooter response training.

"Should a worst-case scenario occur," said Senator Felder, "students and teachers must know exactly how to respond in the shortest amount of time, with the least confusion possible."





Country Yossi and Senator Felder with a local family



Senator Felder and Larry Spiwak, VP, COJO (Council of Jewish Organizations)

A colorful promotional poster for a COJO event. At the top, it says "COJO Help starts here." and "PRESENT FREE CHOL HAMOTZOT EXTRAVA...". Below the text are illustrations of a Ferris wheel, a slide, and a soft play area. Text on the poster includes "Soft Play Area", "Free Balloons & More", and "FREE he drinks & Lots of FR rid".





FREE

MOED GANZA

Thursday, April 13, 2017
12:00 - 5:00 PM
 Registration Begins At 11:30 AM

Chestnut Street
East 15th & East 17th Streets

Healthy snacks,
cotton candy

FREE entertainment,
games and fun!

SHIRCI ACHIM PRODUCTIONS
S&P
 www.shirci.org | 855.5.SHIRCI
 MC: Yaakov Radin

THE EXTREME MAGIC OF ERIC WILZKO
 Opening Act
 12PM Sharp

**Concert Performances
By Jewish Music Stars**

Benny Friedman
 Live In Concert
 12:30-1PM

Mendy J

Dudi Knopfler

CME Chaim Meir Erps



(L-R): Country Yossi, Larry Spiewak, and Louis Welz, CEO, COJO



Felder staffer, Judah Wohlgelemerter, hands out copies of Senator Felder's Bicycle Safety and Health & Fitness activity books.



Internationally renowned music recording artist, Benny Friedman, performing live before a packed crowd of enthusiastic local families who came out to enjoy the free rides and entertainment at Senator Felder's annual extravaganza.

HeartShare: Warming Homes and Hearts

For many people, when the weather starts getting cooler, warm memories of summer's balmy days quickly turn to worries about the cost of heating a home during winter's freezing nights.

To ease those concerns, Senator Felder has once again partnered with the HeartShare Energy Assistance program, which gives a \$200 credit to low-income households on their National Grid heating bill.

Last year, through the HeartShare

program, Senator Felder's office helped people save nearly \$30,000 in heating costs, and is prepared to do the same this winter.

"When it's cold outside, a warm home is the place to be," said Senator Felder. "HeartShare's help makes it a bit more comfortable."

The HeartShare program is scheduled to begin in mid-December. For more information, please call Senator Felder's office at (718) 253-2015.



Felder and Met Council Lend A Helping Hand



Senator Simcha Felder

Free Home Repairs For Seniors

- Services include installing and repairing:
- Bathtub grab bars / Sinks and faucets
 - Smoke and carbon monoxide detectors
 - Door locks and chains
 - Window locks and screens
 - Wood railings / Broken tiles
 - Electrical outlets and switches
 - Doorbells / Light bulbs
 - Handheld showers / Sink and tub drains
 - Holes, cracks and dents in walls
 - Waterproofing tubs and showers
 - Winterizing windows, doors and A/C units



- Eligibility Requirements:
- ✓ Be 60 years or older
 - ✓ Reside in New York City
 - ✓ Show financial need

For an application and more information, please call Senator Felder's office at:

718-253-2015

Project Metropair, a program administered by the Met Council and partially funded by Senator Simcha Felder, promotes senior safety at home by installing and repairing bathroom grab bars, railings, smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, upgrading window and door locks, replacing broken tiles, changing lightbulbs, and much more.

"I'm proud to partner with Project Metropair to provide independence to seniors and peace of mind to their loved ones," said Senator Felder. "It wasn't so long ago that today's seniors were taking care of us, and it's a privilege to return the kindness."



Saving Enhanced STAR Saves Seniors \$\$\$

Senator Felder helped defeat a recent proposal to reduce funding for your Enhanced STAR exemption. This could have meant far less money for eligible property owners. Thanks to Senator Felder's efforts, the Enhanced STAR program is fully funded and ready to ensure maximum tax relief for seniors.

Great Saving. Less Re-Filling.

Current law prohibits pharmacies from dispensing more than a 30-day supply of any prescription. Refilling the same prescription with the same dosage month after month is expensive and inconvenient. It may also lead to missed doses and less effective treatment. Senator Felder introduced a law, now awaiting the Governor's signature, that would allow you to get a 90-day supply.



Expanded Tax Exemption for Seniors and Disabled Homeowners



New York State's Senior Citizen Homeowners Exemption (SCHE) or Disabled Homeowners Exemption (DHE) programs have long been a welcome break for tens of thousands of senior citizens and people with disabilities who own a home but struggle with finances.

INCOME ELIGIBILITY	
OLD LAW:	\$0 -- \$37,400
NEW LAW:	\$0 -- \$58,400

A new law sponsored by Senator Felder and his Senate and Assembly colleagues is expected to extend this valuable tax benefit to at least 30,000 additional households by increasing the annual income cap to \$58,400. The highest possible exemption is a 50% reduction off the real estate tax bill.

"It's our responsibility to make sure seniors or people with disabilities live with dignity and minimal financial stress," said Senator Felder. "Making these valuable tax exemptions available to as many people as possible demonstrates the priorities and principles of New York State lawmakers to all citizens."

Since the expanded program was announced, Senator Felder's office has mailed close to 500 applications in response to requests from newly eligible homeowners. The final cutoff date to apply for 2017/2018 is January 16, 2018.

To request an application, please call Senator Felder's office at (718) 253-2015.



The Boro Park Bikers



By Country Yossi

Normally, this bearded, helmeted biker draws scant attention as he casually pedals his way down Ocean Parkway. However, on Friday afternoons, drivers and pedestrians alike crane their necks as approximately 50 boys follow him on bikes in a line stretching back almost three Parkway blocks. This unique, orderly procession sets out weekly, on an 8 mile, 3 hour excursion to the bicycle paths in Prospect Park.

“For 15 years this program has remained unique and exciting,” said Moshe, one of the coordinators. “We’ve had hundreds of kids joining us for the fresh air, freedom and exercise it provides. Parents love it as well, since it gets the kids out of the house for 3 hours,” he smiles.

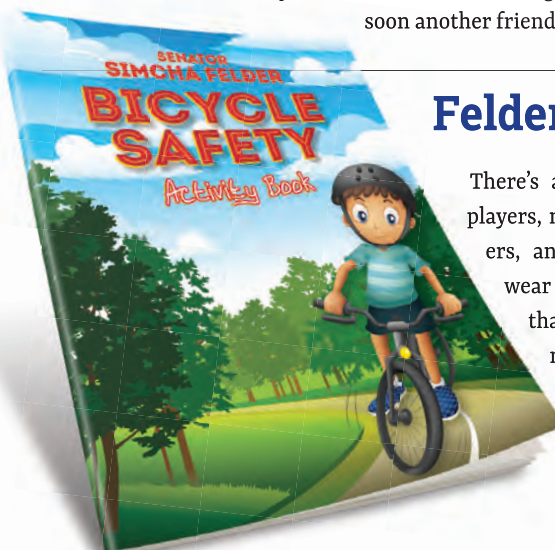
I asked him how this whole idea began and he explained that he used to bike to work when one day a friend asked to ride alongside him. He agreed and soon another friend, then a neighbor joined

in. Before long, a whole cavalcade of bikers were pedaling to work every day. Inevitably, the kids started getting interested as well.

At its peak, 85 boys were having the time of their lives riding around the park. “Obviously, with such a large group we take safety very seriously. Assistants help with the logistics of keeping everybody together, accounted for and safe.”

And that’s where Senator Felder comes into the picture. He has been a vocal advocate for bicycle safety for years and has distributed hundreds of free helmets and bicycle safety booklets.

“Simcha’s sincere concern and regard for children are legendary. We have tremendous gratitude to the Senator for his generosity. When we approached him and explained what we do, he immediately took an interest. With his help, we soon obtained bright orange and black safety vests with fluorescent stripes. Now, besides being safe we’re also at the cutting edge of fashion,” he chuckles.



Felder Helmet Law Promotes Safer Cycling

There’s a good reason football players, motorcyclists, firefighters, and many bicycle riders wear helmets. They know that a helmet is fundamental safety equipment that may one day save their life or prevent a traumatic brain injury (TBI).

A recent study found that bicyclists who wear a properly fitted bicycle helmet can reduce their risk of TBI by 88%. So it’s surprising that New York City only requires children 15-years and younger to wear a lifesaving helmet while riding a bicycle.

Senator Simcha Felder introduced a bill requiring protective headgear for all bicyclists, regardless of age. The proposed bill accomplishes more than protecting cyclists from a life-altering head injury or death. It models safe cycling habits for our children.

“When children see adults wearing bicycle helmets, they, too, will adopt smart habits that may one day save their lives,” said Senator Felder.

WOMAN OF DISTINCTION: Ms. Haney Ho

“Each year presents a new opportunity to highlight the achievements of another outstanding ‘Woman of Distinction’ living in our district,” said Senator Felder about his choice to nominate Ms. Haney Ho for the 2017 “Women of Distinction” award.

Born in Hong Kong, Ms. Ho arrived in New York City as a new immigrant in 1992 and soon joined the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association (BCA) where she now serves as Vice President. She has earned two Masters Degrees in Education from the University of California at Los Angeles and the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

Ms. Ho started the first Asian adult education program in southwest Brooklyn and has since expanded BCA’s adult education services to assist over 1,200 immigrant adults yearly. In 1995, when she initiated BCA’s first day care center, it enrolled only 15 children. In the current school year, BCA’s fully funded full day early childhood education programs include Head Start, UPK and ACS Early Learn Programs and serve more than 650 children at eight day care centers.

“I commend Ms. Ho for her great work in helping new arrivals become better citizens through education and stronger communities,” said Sen. Felder. “We thank her for contributions to our community that will improve lives for generations to come.”



Ms. Ho (center) with Paul Mak, President of the Brooklyn Chinese-American Association (L), Senator Felder (R) and family members.

IN MEMORIAM:

The brave men and women of the NYPD risk their lives every day to keep our families and city safe. When a member of the force loses his or her life in the line of duty, the pain is deep and the loss is everlasting. Over the past year, New York lost four of its finest:

Detective Miosotis Familia succumbed to her wounds after a deranged gunman shot her through the window of a mobile command vehicle stationed in the Bronx.

Detective Steven McDonald was shot and paralyzed while questioning a suspect in 1986. He passed away this past January due to his injuries, but lived to see his son grow up to become a member of the NYPD.

Deputy Chief James Molloy and **Police Officer Michael Hance** were heroic NYPD veterans and among the first responders after the collapse of the World Trade towers on September 11th, 2001, and died earlier this year from 9/11 related illnesses.

May their families find comfort and peace. May their service and sacrifice never be forgotten.



Detective Miosotis Familia



Detective Steven McDonald



Deputy Chief James Molloy



Police Officer Michael Hance



Senator Simcha Felder
 1412 Avenue J, Suite 2E
 Brooklyn, NY 11230

PRSRT STD
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 New York Senate

OCTOBER

FREE FLU SHOTS

Wednesday, October 18 • 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Flatbush • Appointments Necessary

ALL METROCARD SERVICES

Monday, October 30 • 10:00 am - 12:00 pm • Flatbush
 Monday, October 30 • 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm • Boro Park

NOVEMBER

FREE FLU SHOTS

Wednesday, November 1 • 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Flatbush • Appointments Necessary

DECEMBER

FREE CHOLESTEROL/GLUCOSE SCREENING

Thursday, December 7 • 10:00 am - 1:00 pm
 Flatbush • Appointments Necessary

NO COST PSA SCREENING

Wednesday, December 27 • 10:00 am - 2:00 pm
 Flatbush • Appointments Necessary

ARE YOU TURNING 65 IN 2018?

LEARN ALL YOU NEED TO
 KNOW ABOUT MEDICARE

MEDICARE ELIGIBILITY SEMINAR

FLATBUSH OFFICE

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15

5:30 PM - 6:30 PM

APPOINTMENTS NECESSARY

CALL 718-253-2015

SENATOR

SIMCHA FELDER

FLATBUSH
 1412 Ave J #2E
 718-253-2015

BORO PARK
 4623 16th Ave
 718-484-3216

OCTOBER - DECEMBER

FREE LEGAL ASSISTANCE

APPOINTMENTS NECESSARY

Tuesday, October 3 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, October 25 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, November 1 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, November 22 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, December 6 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Wednesday, December 27 • 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

WE ARE HERE TO HELP YOU!