

Ruth and Stuart Smith

Ruth and Stuart's commitment to Jewish life began with their parents and grandparents. Ruth's family belonged to the Elmhurst Jewish Center in Elmhurst, New York and then Congregation Shaarey Tfiloh when they moved to Rockland County. Stuart's family worshipped at Congregation Ohav Shalom in Albany, New York and The Rockwood Park Jewish Center upon their move to Queens.

Stuart and his late sister Francine were born and raised in Albany, New York until he was nine years old, when their family moved to Howard Beach, New York. His parents, the late Thelma and Ray Smith, were proprietors of a curtain and drapery store. They were always active members of their synagogues. Stuart and Francine took note of their parents' synagogue involvement which inspired them to become involved in synagogue life when they raised their own children.

Stuart attended Stuyvesant High School and graduated from Lehigh University with a Bachelor of Science degree. Stuart is a CPA in both New York and New Jersey, and after graduation began practicing accounting with a large public accounting firm. Over the years, Stuart served as Chief Financial Officer for several corporations in the apparel, shoe, and mobile DJ industries. Looking for more of a challenge, Stuart returned to public accounting in 1999. In 2004 Stuart joined an accounting firm whose specialty was auditing companies in the Alternative Investment Management Industry (Hedge Fund, Private Equity and Venture Capital). In 2014 his firm was acquired by KPMG LLP where Stuart is now a Managing Director. Stuart is a contributing author to the Alternative Investment Illustrative Financial Statement guide, published by KPMG LLP.

Ruth and her sister Carol were born in New York City and moved to Monsey, New York in their early years. Their parents, Miriam and Milton Rosenstock are now retired and live in Suffern, New York where they are active members of the Orangetown Jewish Center. They are very happy to see their children honored by the JCCP/CBT. Before retirement Ruth's mother was a teacher and her father was an international freight forwarder. Like Stuart and his sister, Ruth and Carol both realized the significant role the synagogue held in their family's life and continued this tradition with their own children. Their parents instilled in their daughters a love of Judaism as well as the importance of family and community. Ruth attended Spring Valley High School and graduated from SUNY Albany, with a Bachelor of Science degree. Her first position was at West Point Pepperell, a textile manufacturer, where she remained until her oldest child Joanna was born. Ruth later worked for several psychology practices, an Australian based communications firm and a printing company. Several years ago she joined the Paramus Board of Education, where she is the Benefits Coordinator in the Human Resources Department. Ruth continued her United Synagogue involvement as a USY leader for many years, also serving on inter-synagogue youth committees. The inter-synagogue youth committee meetings were held in Paramus, at the home

of Vivian and Arnold Spiegel, longtime JCCP members and the parents of our member David Spiegel.

Stuart and Ruth met on a blind date. Ruth was introduced to Stuart by a friend who told her “he is just not for me, but you might like him.” Stuart knew immediately that he was going to marry Ruth and it didn’t take Ruth too much longer to fall in love too. They were engaged within five months and married the following year. They have been married for 33 years. Joanna was born three years later, followed by Michael, three years after that. The Smiths lived briefly in Jamaica Estates in Queens, New York before moving to Teaneck, where they were members of the Teaneck Jewish Center, and eventually to Paramus. They have lived in Paramus for 20 years and they joined the JCCP/CBT immediately. Both their children, Joanna (29) and Michael (27), were students in the Hebrew School and celebrated their B’nai Mitzvot at the Center. Joanna and Michael were members of the temple’s USY group and participated in the basketball program. Synagogue has always been a significant part of their life here in Paramus.

Joanna earned her Undergraduate Degree at SUNY Albany and her Master’s Degree at American University. Michael earned both his Undergraduate and Master’s Degrees at Syracuse University. They both enjoy working and living in New York City and they love the exciting atmosphere of Manhattan.

Ruth and Stuart were active in their children’s schools and activities. However, it was at shul, especially the JCCP/CBT, that they felt they were at home and part of a strong and nurturing community. Ruth still fondly recalls when Claire Beslow visited their family with a Shabbat welcome gift as the beginning of their connection to our synagogue. Another connection for Ruth is her long friendship with our member, Alan Jay. She attended Hebrew School, Public School, USY and College with Alan. Their families reconnected and their children are still close to this day.

Ruth has always been active in the JCCP/CBT and was a member of the Board of Trustees while serving as APT, Youth and Sisterhood co-chairperson and has also been involved in fundraising efforts for the synagogue. Ruth has been involved in Nominating and Search committees and derives particular enjoyment from her community service involvement.

Stuart has served the Synagogue in many capacities, Board of Trustees, Financial Secretary and currently Treasurer. He is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board.

Ruth and Stuart are excited and honored to be recognized with Lori and Harlan Cohen, two very dedicated JCCP/CBT members. The Smiths are happy to be part of the JCCP/CBT “home” and look forward to sharing many additional simchas with their family, friends and this special community.