

MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 19

**Highlighting the
graduating classes
of 1966-1970**

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This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of members of the classes of 1966-70 who are no longer with us:

Lissy Schick (YOS '68)

Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel
(MHA '65, YOS '69)

Robert Feldbaum (MHA '68)

Michael Braunstein (YOS '69)

Sidney Gontownik
(MHA '70, YOS '74)

We mourn with great sadness the recent passing of two alumni from these years:

Michael Parker

(MHA '67, YOS '71), z'l.

We send our sincerest condolences to his wife, Toby; his sons, former MHA students

Ben and Alex; and his siblings, **Jeffrey** (MHA '69, YOS '72), **Julie** (MHA '70), **Drew** (MHA '74) and **Keith Parker** (MHA '76).

Rabbi Abe Sharp (MHA '67), z'l.

We send our sincerest condolences to his wife, Ronna; his children, Joe Sharp, Ahava Feldman, Penina Taub and Meir Sharp; and his sister, **Edie (Ida Sharp) Davis** (MHA '61).

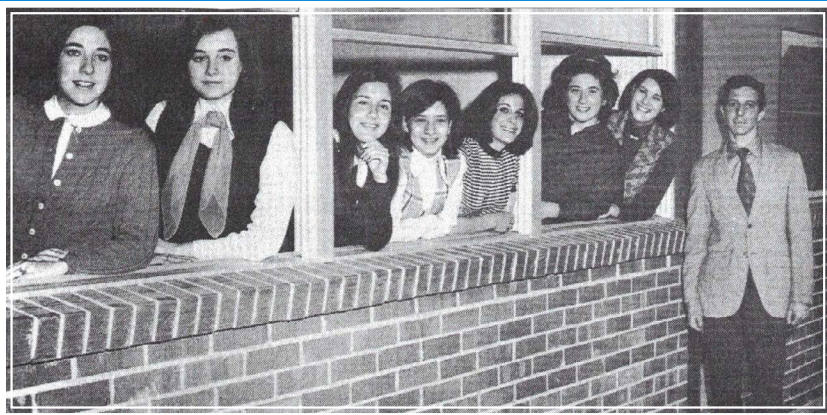
May their memory forever
be a blessing.

**MISSED AN
ISSUE?**

ARCHIVES

All previous issues of our alumni
publication are now conveniently available
at mhafyos.org/alumni.

COVER PHOTO



The YOS class of 1970 (from left): **Marilyn (Silverman) Schwartz** (MHA '66, YOS '70), **Esther (Schwartzman) Braunstein** (YOS '70), **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70), **Harvis (Ellman) Gerber** (YOS '70), **Tina Kabakoff** (MHA '67, YOS '70), **Ranelle (Evensky) Kibel** (MHA '66, YOS '70), **Leah Ann (Lamensdorf) Kirzner** (YOS '70) and **David Gray** (MHA '67, YOS '70, the sole male graduate).

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

Amara Levine-Reich (MHA '94, FYOS '97), editor
Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker, copy editor
Noam Davidovics, technology support
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Feinstone Yeshiva of the South

Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends:



Some day we will look back on these times and remember 2020 as the year the Earth stood still. Like so many others, I am now in my 10th month of isolating at home and greatly miss being with friends and family. I sincerely hope all of you are managing through these trying times.

Thank G-d, our school and community are doing well. This is largely due to the herculean efforts of the school administration, rabbis and teachers; incredible health and safety compliance efforts by our community members; and the gracious kindness of Hashem. We have experienced a few isolated cases of COVID-19 with no significant community spread. We are grateful for this and pray that Hashem should continue to watch over our school, our community, the Jewish people and all citizens of the world.

Because of the ongoing pandemic, we are navigating through this school year without many of the familiar landmarks we have come to know and love, such as the CYHSB Steak Dinner and community-wide Chanukah festivities. (The [Fall Festival](#) was a drive-through event, and Grandparents' Day will be held via Zoom.) Our Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) replaced its annual Sukkah Hop with a neighborhood [ushpizin scavenger hunt](#). Pictures of the *ushpizin* (ancestral

Sukkot visitors) were strategically placed in the windows of homes throughout the community. Families walked around the neighborhood locating our forefathers and collecting cards with the names of each Sukkah guest. Students later traded in their cards for prizes. It was a wonderfully creative and socially distant community event!



And speaking of events we love, there will unfortunately be no Alumni Basketball Game this school year on account of the pandemic. It's an event to which the entire community looks forward—not to mention our alumni players and fans. We sincerely hope to safely reinstate the Alumni Game next school year.

I am pleased to welcome Noam Davidovics to our newsletter team. A parent of five MHA/FYOS students, he has assumed the role of technology support for our publication. As with all those who work on the newsletter, he is volunteering his time



MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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to assist us. Many thanks to Noam for bringing his incredible expertise to our labor of love.



As always, please continue to support our alumni outreach initiatives by sharing them with your schoolmates. If you are in contact with fellow alumni, ask them if they are receiving the newsletter; if not, please send me their information. If you see them in person, please take a picture (even if it's socially distanced) and submit it for our Alumni Reunite feature. Given the current

circumstances, we'll even accept screenshots of online reunions! Other ways to contribute include writing to us at alumni@mhafyos.org with comments, suggestions or corrections; sending us your mazel tov events for the Alumni News section; completing the alumni questionnaire when we highlight your graduation years; and spreading the word to other alumni.

We wish all of you strength and good health as we weather this storm together. May the values imparted to you during your time at our school help to carry you through these difficult times. Please know that you are in our thoughts and prayers.

Take care of yourselves and each other.

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair
joannekahane111@gmail.com



Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



As we continue to face the realities of a global pandemic, along with an uncertain economic future, I am simply in awe at how so many within the Memphis community (and beyond) have continued to step up and ensure our children are receiving the

very best possible general and Judaic education. Our 2020 operational campaign was incredibly successful, especially under the circumstances. A tremendous thank you goes to Dr. Larry Wruble, **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81), **David Cooper** (MHA '78, YOS '82) and **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), who once again coordinated these efforts.

Chanukah is always a special time in so many ways, and I look forward to seeing all of the creative things that **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99), director of recruitment and marketing, coordinates in honor of the occasion. Please follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) to see everything going on in the school, including the highly successful (and safe) [Fall Festival CARnival](#).

The word Chanukah literally means “dedication” and is established in the Hebrew word for education, “*chinuch*.” The victory of Chanukah was the preservation of Jewish religious traditions—and its transmission to the next generation, and

from it to future ones. This is the victory of Jewish education. That the Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South continues to flourish is our very own miracle. Thank you to all those who contributed financially to the operational campaign and other fundraisers and to the many lay leaders who volunteer numerous hours in support of the school.

As I reflect on my first few months as president of the MHA/FYOS board of trustees, there is so much to be grateful for. Through the stellar leadership of Rabbi Benjy Owen, supported by Executive Director Brandy Flack and the entire team, our school building has safely remained open. That's not something we take for granted. Additionally, despite the pandemic, our PTA—led by Sarah Bracha Wogan—has coordinated a number of highly successful activities, including the sale of Rosh Hashanah baskets, a modified Sukkah hop with an *ushpizin* scavenger hunt, teacher appreciation efforts and the first PTA [virtual family fun run](#) during Thanksgiving weekend!

In 2017, Rabbi Lord Jonathan Sacks z”l spoke in the House of Lords about the role of education in building a flourishing and skilled society. While I highly recommend reading [Rabbi Sacks' remarks in their entirety](#), in the interest of space, I will highlight just his closing comment here: “Schools are about more than what we know and what we can do. They are about who we are and what we must do to help others become what they might be. The



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Yoel Goldblatt

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world our children will inherit tomorrow is born in the schools we build today.”

It is with this in mind that I would like to express a tremendous sense of *hakarat hatov* (gratitude) to our teachers, who continue to not only educate our children under difficult circumstances, but do so with a smile on their faces and a cheerful greeting every day.

Wishing you all a happy and safe Chanukah!

Yoel Goldblatt

President, MHA/FYOS Board of Trustees

goldblatt.yoel@gmail.com



Crucial Mussar Lessons

The last *pasuk* (verse) in the entire Torah concludes with the phrase, “The strong hand and awesome power that Moshe performed before the eyes of all Israel.” The medieval commentator Rashi explains that “before the eyes of all Israel” refers to Moses’ decision to break the two *luchos* (tablets) he had just received from Hashem in front of the Jewish people. Rashi also states that Hashem told Moshe, “*Yasher koach* [kudos]! You did well in breaking the *luchos*!” The question is asked by our sages: Why is this action by *Moshe Rabbeinu* (Moses, our teacher) seemingly the greatest thing he ever did? After all, Moshe did many fantastic things including playing a critical role in a number of miracles associated with *yetziat mitzrayim* (the exodus from Egypt) and led the Jews out of slavery and through the desert for 40 years!

The Ateres Mordechai offers an incredible explanation. He says that Moshe had invested much time and effort in receiving the Torah to give to the Jewish people, but when he came down from Mount Sinai and saw the golden calf, he decided to smash the *luchos* because he realized it was not the right time to deliver the Torah.

We can learn a valuable lesson from this. When we take a stand or espouse a strong opinion about something in which we have invested significant time and energy, we often refuse to change our minds—even when we’re presented with new facts or information that should lead us to realize we were wrong or made a mistake. Some people unfortunately cannot handle the truth and will never change their minds. Oftentimes, we resist listening

to others’ opinions, as we fear having to admit that our decisions and attitudes were not correct. “Your way or the highway” does not need to be a way of life!

This is why the Torah considers this act of *Moshe Rabbeinu* to be the greatest thing he ever did. Can you imagine? Moshe came down from Mount Sinai to give the Jewish people the Torah but realized it was not the right time to give it to them, so he broke the holy *luchos* that contained the Ten Commandments! It is easier said than done, but there are times when you must admit you were wrong or made a serious mistake, act accordingly and “move on.” If you are wrong, don’t hesitate to admit the truth. The final *pasuk* of the Torah, which we read on Simchas Torah, teaches us this lesson to ensure we never forget it!

This is also a very important principle in maintaining peaceful relationships. As Nachmanides wrote in “*Igeres HaRamban*”, “Speak calmly and gently to everyone at all times, and you will be always saved from the terrible attribute of anger.”

The last *pasuk* in “*Megillas Esther*” emphasizes this idea, too. We learn that Mordechai was second to the king, a leader of his generation, accepted by a majority of his people, helped everyone and sought peace in his family and all his people. Mordechai seemed to “have it all”! However, notice the last four words in particular: “וְדָבָר נְשָׁלוֹם לְכָל-יִצְרָעוּ” —“he sought peace in his family and all his people.”

Though Mordechai had wealth, honor, popularity and wisdom, it was all worthless to him without

'66

We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at alumni@mhafyos.org. Here are some of the responses we received to [Issue No. 18](#).

I would like to thank you for the memorial tribute to my father, Rabbi Benjamin Wolmark, z'l, which you so kindly included in the recent alumni newsletter. I know that **Binyamin Ehrenkranz** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) and others put a great deal of effort into researching and writing the article, and I cannot tell you how much my siblings and I appreciated the thoughtful and meaningful gesture. I always look forward to your publications, as the quality is unique and there is great content in every issue. They bring back wonderful memories, and it is great to be able to stay connected. I wish you and the Hebrew Academy continued success.

-Rabbi Mordechai Wolmark (MHA '72)

The alumni newsletter was, once again, magnificent. Thank you to **Binyamin Ehrenkranz** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) and everyone who helped to put together such a beautiful piece on the life of my father, Rabbi Benjamin Wolmark, z'l. May Hashem bless all of you with good health, happiness, prosperity and sweetness.

-Asher Wolmark (YOS '85)

Once again, you put out a wonderful publication! I had Rabbi Wolmark, z'l, as a teacher in second, fourth and sixth grades. I remember him learning

Gemara in our classroom during recess whenever he wasn't on duty. I learned so much about him in the article that I didn't know before; thank you for a wonderful tribute to a special rebbe!

-David Cooper (MHA '78, YOS '82)

The alumni newsletter was very nice. Thanks for sharing my story. Luckily, my beard has grown back [after I had to shave it off in order to properly secure my personal protective equipment while treating COVID-19 patients].

-Yakov (Daniel) Address (MHA '02, FYOS '06)

What a nice surprise to get a tin of Ricki's cookies in the mail. We are greatly enjoying them! I didn't think I answered so many trivia questions right! Thank you.

-Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer (MHA '88, YOS '92)

Well done on the issue! I especially enjoyed the picture of the high school boys on the bouncy slide and the shout-out from **Isaac Graber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14).

-Gabe Address (MHA '10, FYOS '14)

Thank you for putting out this excellent alumni newsletter, which features outstanding content and format quality.

-George Wollner (MHA '67, YOS '71)

It's so nice that you undertake this huge project. We so enjoy catching up on all the news from our fellow Memphians.

-Marilyn (Silverman) Schwartz (YOS '70)

This wonderful newsletter always brings me back to my roots and makes me miss Memphis all over again. I am so proud to be part of such a tight-knit community that continues to keep all alumni connected. It is really unique and very special.

Thanks to the entire committee for all of your hard work.

-Deena (Katz) Yarmush (MHA '94, FYOS '97)

I cannot imagine a single thing that has done more than your newsletter to keep an institution's memories alive as a foundation upon which to build its future.

-Shari Schwartz, former Memphian and MHA faculty member

Corrections

Issue No. 18 included some errors that we wish to correct here:

- On page 18, we meant to say that **Moshe Blockman's** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) favorite teacher was Mrs. Ashley Brown.
- On page 41, the photos should have been listed as flashbacks to the years 2011-2015.
- **Gabe Address** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) was kind enough to let us know that on page 41, we misidentified **Sendy Gross** (FYOS '14) as a member of the Kollel Torah MiTzion, rather than as a student at the CYHSB. The photo is reprinted below with the correct caption.

We sincerely regret these errors, as we always strive for accuracy. Please continue to let us know of any inaccuracies so we can set the record straight.



Three high school students enjoying lunch with three of the Bat Ami girls (from left): Michal, **Sendy Gross** (FYOS '14), **Leib Wiener** (MHA '11, FYOS '15), **Chaya Ross** (FYOS '15), Lital Vatin and Einat Katan.

TRIVIA ANSWERS 2011-2015

Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our [18th issue](#).

Dylan Cooper (MHA '09, FYOS '13) correctly answered 6 out of 11 questions and is the winner of our last trivia contest.

Just before Chanukah, he will receive a tin of cookies from [Ricki's Cookie Corner](#)—owned and operated by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70).

Here are the correct answers to the trivia questions from issue No. 18. How did you do?

1. **Seth Goldstein** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) was featured in a "Commercial Appeal" [article](#) by Geoff Calkins in response to what event that occurred during an athletic gathering?
*ANSWER: At a cross-country meet, Goldstein stopped running in the middle of a race to aid a competitor from another school who had collapsed and was bleeding. According to **Gabe Address** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), Goldstein was also invited to be interviewed on the "Ellen DeGeneres Show," but he declined the offer because the episode would have aired on Shabbos (though filming would have occurred on a weekday).*
2. During the CYHSB's exciting run to win Tier 2 at the Red Sarachek Basketball Tournament, which assistant coach delivered this impassioned speech just before our Macs met Maimonides on the court: "We're from Memphis; we play basketball. They're from Boston; they play hockey"?
ANSWER: Craig Wiener
3. In what year did the Macs win the Cooper Invitational Tournament, and who won the MVP award that year?
*ANSWERS: 2008, and **Isaac Krupp** (MHA '06, FYOS '10)*

4. Whose son's bris did the boys' high school miss due to issues with the bus on the Gatlinburg trip?

ANSWER: Rabbi Noam Stein

5. Which 2014 MHA graduate was known for being "obsessed with steak"?

*ANSWER: **Shlomo Bosin** (MHA '14, FYOS '18)*

6. Which middle school rabbi was known for saying, "Gentlemen, this is your time, not mine"?

ANSWER: Rabbi Reuven Kolton

7. Who said, "Although the odds were against them, it seems my parents were the only ones to have a girl in 1994." What was the occasion, and why did the person say this?

*ANSWER: **Zahava Gersten** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), the only girl among Rabbi Yonason and Sandy Gersten's six children, said this at her 2013 high school graduation as the only GMSG graduate that year.*

8. Which teacher was (and probably still is) the most frequently "impersonated"?

ANSWER: Rabbi Yonason Gersten

9. What was the hottest fashion item in the GMSG during the '12-'13 school year?

ANSWER: Fuzzy socks

10. On the GMSG back-to-school trip in 2011, the girls spent a day in Birmingham, Alabama. What was the purpose of this stop?

ANSWER: Helping Habitat for Humanity rebuild houses destroyed by devastating tornados

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1966-1970

Regardless of when you graduated, have some fun with these trivia questions!

Send your answers to joannekahane111@gmail.com. The person who gets the most answers correct (or in the case of a tie, the earliest respondent) will win a tin of Ricki's Cookies, made by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70). Good luck!



1. On a class trip to Shiloh National Military Park, Mr. Effie Bluestein taught his students that Civil War soldiers were required to have two front teeth. What was the reason for that requirement?
2. Which two entrepreneurial YOS students operated the candy machine in the MHA gym during this period?
3. Where did the girls' high school hold classes before the Goldie Margolin School for Girls building was built on Conwell?
4. This photo, taken at a 1967 NCSY convention in Savannah, Georgia, depicts a female student from our school who went on to marry the young man seated next to her and raise a beautiful family. They now live in the Har Nof neighborhood of Jerusalem, Israel. Who is this alumna and her future husband?



5. What famous comedian performed at the school's 18th Annual Scholarship Banquet in 1968?



6. In the spring of 1970, the four men shown in this picture got together to review the final plans for a special project that was completed in September 1970. Who are these four community leaders (left to right)? And what was the special project?

THANK YOU

We express our deepest appreciation to all those who gave of their time to help us publish this issue. First, thank you to the staff of the MHA/FYOS, most especially Erica Stoltz, Amanda Minner and Laura Timmons.

Second, thank you to the alumni and friends who assisted us by supplying photographs, identifying the individuals in those pictures, providing historical background, trivia questions and more, including: **Marilyn (Silverman) Schwartz** (MHA '66), **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68), **David Kutner** (MHA '67), **Louis Chapman** (MHA '70, YOS '74), **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72), **Leah Ann (Lamesdorf) Kirzner** (YOS '70), **Izzy Rubenstein** (MHA '66), **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70), **Barry Yaffe** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt** (MHA '69), **Judy (Lebovits) Lillien** (MHA '72), **Elaine (Riesenberg) Mael** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Larry Katz** (MHA '67), **Faye Kilstein** (MHA '67, YOS '71), Eileen Itkowitz, **Bryan Itkowitz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Sam Epstein** (YOS '71), **Linda (Ostrow) Schlesinger** (MHA '74), Cheri (Wener) Rubenstein and **Aaron Thomas** (MHA '68).



ENGAGEMENTS/ WEDDINGS:

Mazel tov to:

Rabbi Yisroel and **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79) of Baltimore, Maryland, on the engagement of their son Yehuda to Sara Fink. They plan to get married Jan. 20, 2021, in Miami and will live in Baltimore.

Ilene (Brown) Kravetsky (MHA '78, YOS '82) of Kitchener, Ontario, Canada, on the Aug. 30 marriage of her son Tuvia to Shoshana Rozencrantz in Englewood, New Jersey. The happy couple lives in Edison, New Jersey.

Rena and **Ephraim Kutner** (MHA '85) of Lawrence, New York, on the engagement of their son Moshe Leib (Momo) to Talia Schlesinger. The couple will marry this winter. Mazel tov also to grandparents **Alan** (MHA '62) and **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68) of Memphis.

Marcus Moss (MHA '00) on his engagement to Molly Abrams. They are planning a Nov. 14, 2021, wedding at Baron Hirsch in Memphis. The couple will live in Memphis.

Rabbi Binyamin Ehrenkranz (MHA '00, FYOS '04) on his engagement to Nina Leblanc. The couple is planning to wed this winter in Europe and will make their home in London. Mazel tov also to the groom's parents, **Bart** (YOS '77) and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis.

Rivka Cherney (FYOS '04) on her engagement to Shaked Raibi. They are planning a June 14, 2021, wedding in Israel and will live in Herzliya.

Meir Gersten (MHA '03, FYOS '07) on his Nov. 29 wedding to Rachel Kaufman in Eatontown, New Jersey. The newlyweds live in Far Rockaway, New York. Mazel tov also to the groom's parents, longtime MHA/FYOS faculty members and administrators Rabbi Yonason and Sandy Gersten.

Leib Wiener (MHA '11, FYOS '15) on his engagement to Rachel Meyer. They will get married June 22, 2021, in New Jersey and plan to live on the Upper West Side of Manhattan. Mazel tov to the groom's parents, Dr. Hillel and MHA faculty member Rivki Wiener.

Gary Goldmeier (FYOS '17) on his engagement to Danielle Deutsch. The couple is planning a Jan. 11 wedding in St. Louis, Missouri, and will live in Queens, New York.

Shmuel Perl (MHA '14) on his engagement to Hila Karol. The wedding will take place in Israel, which is where they will make their home. Mazel tov to the groom's parents, former MHA/FYOS administrators Rabbi Gil and Melissa Perl.

BIRTHS:

Mazel tov to:

Mendy and **Marilyn (Weinreich) Schachter** (MHA '71, YOS '75) of Cleveland, Ohio, who on Oct. 21 welcomed grandson Avraham (Avi) Ephraim. Avi's parents, Aryeh and Esti Schachter of Queens, New York, chose their son's middle name in memory of Rabbi Efraim Greenblatt, z'l, with whom Aryeh was very close. Mazel tov also to big sisters Shira Ayelet and Shoshana Sorah.

Lee (MHA '74) and **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77) of Memphis, who recently celebrated the arrival of two grandchildren. On Nov. 9,

Shelley and **Josh Baum** (MHA '02, FYOS '06) of Woodbridge, Connecticut, welcomed son David, making Pearl a big sister. On Nov. 30, Alex and **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and the school's marketing and recruitment director) of Memphis welcomed daughter Talya Sydney/Bracha; mazel tov to siblings Benjamin and Eliana.

Rabbi Eliyahu and **Devorah (Sharon Wolff) Herbst** (YOS '80) of Lakewood, New Jersey, on the Sept. 3 birth of grandson Menachem Elimelech to parents Dovid and Tova Bracha Zagelbaum. Mazel tov also to big sister Esther.

Nancy and **Mordechai (Marty) Wolff** (MHA '80) of Brooklyn, New York, on the Sept. 8 birth of grandson Aryeh Leib to Baruch and Nechama Leah (Wolff) Fogel of Lakewood, New Jersey. Mazel tov also to older sisters Rivka, Esther, Henny and Racheli.

Hilly and Rabbi **Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04 and

current FYOS faculty member) of Memphis on the Oct. 6 birth of son Yonah. Mazel tov also to siblings Avigail, Shmuel and Hadassah.

Tehila and **Meir Samberg** (MHA '03) of Jerusalem, Israel, on the Oct. 18 birth of son Yonah, making Hadassah a big sister. Mazel tov also to the grandparents, former MHA faculty members Cantor Aryeh and Adina Samberg.

Chaim and **Tova (Safier) Frenkel** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) of Atlanta, Georgia, who welcomed their first child, daughter Adira Rae, on Sept. 14.

Talia and **Luky Guigui** (FYOS '10) of Akko, Israel, on becoming parents with the June 22 birth of daughter Tzafona Tova.

BNEI/BNOT MITZVAH:
Mazel tov to:

Roslyn and **Lester Lit** (MHA '57) of Memphis on the Nov. 21 bat mitzvah celebration for their

granddaughter Natalie Wertheimer, daughter of Memphians Illysa and Michael Wertheimer.

Susan and **Ted Friedman** (MHA '87) of Memphis on the Nov. 28 bnei mitzvah for their children, Abraham and Mia.

Aviva and **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) of Memphis on their son Benny becoming a bar mitzvah Oct. 31. Mazel tov also to grandparents Debbie and **Hugh Freiden** (MHA '72, YOS '76), also of Memphis.

Rabbi Yisroel and **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) of Phoenix, Arizona, on their daughter Malka becoming a bat mitzvah on Yom Kippur. They celebrated the occasion Oct. 6 during Chol Hamoed Sukkot. Mazel tov to grandparents and former MHA faculty members Cantor Aryeh and Adina Samberg of Memphis.

MAZEL TOV!

SEND US YOUR ALUMNI NEWS FOR THE NEXT
ISSUE AT ALUMNI@MHAFYOS.ORG.



THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1966-1970

Where are they now?

'68

Avraham David (Barry) Nelkin (YOS '68) lived in the boys' dorm while attending our high school but called New Orleans, Louisiana, home. Now retired from his career as a cancer researcher, he is professor emeritus of oncology at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine and is engaged in Torah study. He lives in Baltimore, Maryland, with his wife, with whom he shares children between the ages of 26 and 44 and grandchildren ranging from 0 to 19 years old.

"Thank you all for your warm friendship and for inspiring me to go to yeshiva (at Ner Israel) after high school," Nelkin said. His favorite YOS teachers were Rabbi Meir Belsky, z'l, and Rabbi Yosef Rottenberg.

Nina (Atlas) Mermelstein (YOS '69), originally from Little Rock, Arkansas, attended our high school as a dorm student. Now a registered nurse, she lives in Monsey, New York, with her husband; they plan to retire to Boynton Beach, Florida, very soon. They have six married children, all of whom have children of their own. She can be reached at ninaraye18@gmail.com.

'69

'66

Rabbi Joel Yormark (MHA '66) and his wife have seven children and live in South Bend, Indiana, where he teaches at the South Bend Hebrew Day School and works as an independent insurance agent.

He has "very fond memories," he said, of his time at our school, calling his experiences "unforgettable." His favorite teacher was Rabbi Eliyahu Hartman, who taught him in 10th grade.

Yormark also clearly remembers his father, MHA faculty member Rabbi Mordechai Yormark, z'l, leading the youth groups on Shabbos mornings at Baron Hirsch Congregation on Vollentine with beautiful davening and King David stories.

"Thank you for the greatest teachers and students and all the wonderful memories," he said. He would welcome the opportunity for a class reunion, whether in person or via Zoom.

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THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1966-1970

Where are they now?

'66

Israel (Izzy) Rubenstein (MHA '66) is a clinical and consulting psychologist. He lives in Los Angeles with his artist wife, and they have five married children and more than 20 grandchildren.

"While I left the Memphis area many decades ago, I have many fond memories of my childhood years at the Academy," Rubenstein said. "I send my warmest regards to my former classmates and to the Memphis Jewish community of today. The leadership and *chinuch* (education) efforts of the rabbis and teachers, and the philanthropic and dedicated parent body, are a testimony to Memphis Jewry and its perpetuation of love for Torah and Judaism. That is quite obviously seen in the paths the school's graduates take. May it continue with *bracha* and *hatzlacha* (blessing and success)."



Rubenstein Family

Marilyn (Silverman) Schwartz (MHA '66, YOS '70) is a retired social worker now living in Pomona, New York.

'66
'70

"My classmates in high school became my lifelong friends," Schwartz said. "We had the most amazing class!" Her favorite teacher was Mrs. Phyllis Wahl, who was "the toughest, but I learned so much from her," she said. "My English grammar and punctuation are top-notch because of her."

Esther (Schwartzman) Braunstein (MHA '67, YOS '70) came to our school as a dormer from Houston, Texas. She is currently a nurse living in Brooklyn, New York.

"I would like to thank all of the wonderful people of Memphis who so graciously took in my brothers [**Dr. Michael** (MHA '69) and **Jesse Schwartzman** (MHA '72)] and me and treated us like we were a part of the family," Braunstein said.



Leah Ann (Lamensdorf Kleinfeldt) Kirzner (YOS '70), originally from Shelby, Mississippi, now lives in Southfield, Michigan, near two of her three grown children. She works as a consultant in the area of development and philanthropy and is involved in her local Jewish federation, day school and Chabad.

"Our oldest grandson is serving in the Israel army, and all of our other grandchildren attend Jewish schools, which we are so thankful for," she said. "I am eternally grateful to the Memphis community for opening their homes to the out-of-town kids for Shabbat and for supporting the high school," Kirzner said.

In particular, she is grateful to Rabbis Meir Belsky and Chaim Seiger, z'l, for reaching out to out-of-town students. She was further inspired by teachers Rabbi Hillel and Mrs. Judy Belsky and Mrs. Regina Belsky, who taught her a lasting lesson: "She always said, 'It is G-d's job to judge.'" Kirzner also remembers that her class dedicated their yearbook to Mrs. Phyllis Wahl.

"One of my best memories is of being asked to speak at graduation," she said. "I am proud to say I had the opportunity to pay it forward when I was asked to serve as president of my local modern Orthodox day school.

"My friends from the Yeshiva of the South are my forever friends, and the Jewish education I received has served as a foundation for my life. Memphis gave me forever memories."



Kirzner Family

'68
'72

Francie Schneider (MHA '68, YOS '72) lives in Memphis and works in the front office at the MHA/FYOS. She is the school's longest-tenured employee and will be featured in the spotlight article of the next issue of this publication as she approaches 50 years of dedicated service! "During this time of COVID-19, it is so wonderful to see the children attending school safely," she said.

She loved making new friends and celebrating the Jewish holidays during her time as a student. Her favorite teacher was Mrs. Eva Loskove, whose kindergarten classroom was "always a happy place, and she treated the children with kindness," Schneider said.

She hopes her classmates are living happy lives and urges them to always be kind to others. Her email address is pandab53@yahoo.com.



Chapman family

Louis B. Chapman (MHA '70, YOS '74) came to our school as a dorm student from Houston, Texas. He now lives in Passaic, New Jersey, and works as an attorney. He and his wife have four children and four grandchildren, and he is grateful they all live close to him.

"From time to time, I think of my classmates and all the wonderful experiences we shared," Chapman

said. "I am still in touch with some of them, sharing jokes and good memories. Thank you for welcoming me into your lives with friendship and warmth. I had a very positive experience at the MHA and YOS because of the reception I received and relationships that were forged. We had good times in school, including some great rabbis and teachers who were well suited for our group. They knew how to deal with us and got a lot of productivity out of our class."

His favorite teacher was Mr. Effie Bluestein. "He used to tell us that, when we would later go through college, we would look back at his classes and be grateful to him for what he imparted to us. G-d bless Mr. Bluestein, and thank you."

'70
'74

ALUMNI REUNITE

We continue to be impressed by the submissions to the “**Alumni Reunite**” even during the pandemic!

Any time two or more alumni get together for any reason—whether a *simcha* (celebration) or otherwise—we would love to get a photo. Our thanks to those who provided these pictures, especially those who took time out during a *simcha* to assemble a group of MHA/FYOS alumni and friends. *Yasher koach* (kudos)!



In September, **Yoni Graber** (MHA '97, FYOS '01, left) had a socially distant, outdoor visit with classmate **Lee Braverman** (MHA '97, FYOS '01, right) in Woodmere, New York, while visiting his parents, Pammy and **Glenn Graber** (MHA '74, YOS '78).



In June, **Bryan Itkowitz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) and his then-fiance Tamar (pictured at left) had an outdoor visit with **Efroni Schlesinger** (MHA '09) and his then-fiance Avigail (pictured at right) in the Itkowitzes' backyard in Memphis. Both couples returned to Israel shortly thereafter and were married in October.



Esti Samberg (MHA '16, FYOS '20, second from left) is currently learning at Bnot Torah Institute in Israel, where she is surrounded by alumni of our school. Her teachers there include **Rabbi Michael Kahane** (MHA '91, FYOS '95, far right) and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80, second from right); Samberg is also in daily contact with **Debbi (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80, far left), who works as BTI's administrative assistant.



Recent alumnae (from left) **Esti Samberg** (MHA '16, FYOS '20), **Shayna Kahane** (MHA '16, FYOS '20) and **Yehudis Tova Samuels** (MHA '16, FYOS '20) caught up over frozen yogurt in Israel, where they're studying this year. "This is the first time since Pre-K that we are not in class together," Kahane noted.



Although weddings during the era of COVID-19 include few guests and even fewer alumni, **Julie (Goldstein) Brown** (MHA '76, YOS '80, center) took time at her son's Nov. 3 wedding in Israel to snap a photo with her sister **Elaine (Goldstein) Stryker** (MHA '61, far right) for our Alumni Reunite section. They were joined by their mother, former Memphian **Leah Goldstein** (far left), who is the mom of four alumni, grandmother of six alumni and unofficial mom/grandma to countless others.



Efroni Schlesinger (MHA '09, second from left) and his bride Avigail celebrated their Oct. 25 wedding in Israel with his school friends, **Yaakov Kaplan** (MHA '09, FYOS '13, second from right) and **Bryan Itkowitz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14, far right).

Frances Epstein

First president of the MHA PTA, turns 100

On Sept. 17, 2020, a resident of the Memphis Jewish Home and Rehab celebrated her 100th birthday. While such an occasion is always cause for celebration, this particular birthday held special significance for the MHA family. The celebrant was Mrs. Frances Epstein, who served as the inaugural president of the MHA parent-teacher association (PTA) in 1949-50—the year our school opened its doors.

Stepping up to the plate, Epstein accepted the challenge to lead the small parent body of our fledgling school. That first year, the school had only a kindergarten and first grade class (another grade was added each year for the next several years). Epstein and other members of her family were



The Epstein family, circa 1978 (clockwise from top-left): **Linda (Epstein) Singer** z'l (MHA '57), **Sherry (Epstein) Lune** z'l, **Jerry Epstein** (MHA '61), Frances, Sol and **Carole (Epstein) Follette** (MHA '68).

instrumental in the school's early success; her brother-in-law Louis Epstein was the first president of the board of trustees, and her sister-in-law Rozzy Epstein served as PTA president a couple of years after she did.

Frances Epstein's oldest child, Sherry



The MHA's first PTA in 1949-50. President Frances Epstein is seated at the far left.

(Epstein) Lune z'l, was too far along in school to be able to attend the MHA. But her second child, **Linda (Epstein) Singer** z'l (MHA '57), was in the inaugural first grade class. It was for her daughter and for the future of Jewish education in Memphis that she shouldered the responsibility of the PTA presidency. Within a few years, her two younger children, **Jerry Epstein** (MHA '61) and **Carole (Epstein) Follette** (MHA '68), also began attending the MHA. She remained an active PTA volunteer throughout her children's time at the school.

The MHA PTA has had 55 presidents in its history. We are proud to pay tribute to all of those women on whose shoulders we stand—especially the woman who started it all, Mrs. Frances Epstein. We send her our sincerest thanks for her service to our school and our best wishes for many more birthdays in good health!

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FRANCES EPSTEIN

first president of the MHA PTA, turns 100



Frances Epstein, a few years ago



Frances Epstein on the occasion of her 100th birthday at the Memphis Jewish Home and Rehab



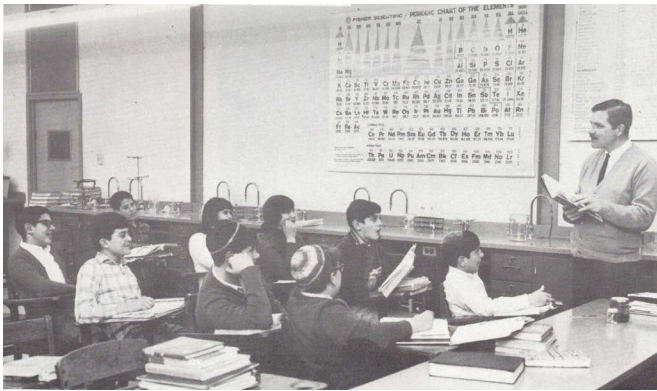
SPOTLIGHT FEATURE

Rabbi Eliyahu Hartman

Building a new tomorrow through Jewish education



In 1967, an incomparably dynamic force by the name of Rabbi Eliyahu Hartman joined the MHA and YOS faculty. After two years of teaching, he served as dean of the MHA for seven years, leaving an indelible mark on our school and the lives of so many individuals.



Rabbi Hartman teaching at our school in 1969.

Hartman was born in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, New York, and spent his entire youth there. At age 20, he moved to St. Louis, Missouri, to become the assistant rabbi of Tpheris Israel Congregation, where his brother (of blessed memory) was the rabbi. In 1963-64, his brother took a sabbatical leave from the pulpit, and Rabbi Hartman became the congregation's interim rabbi.

Upon his brother's return in 1964, Rabbi Hartman moved to Jacksonville, Florida, where he served as rabbi of the Etz Chaim Synagogue for three years. Then, in 1967, he was guided to Memphis,

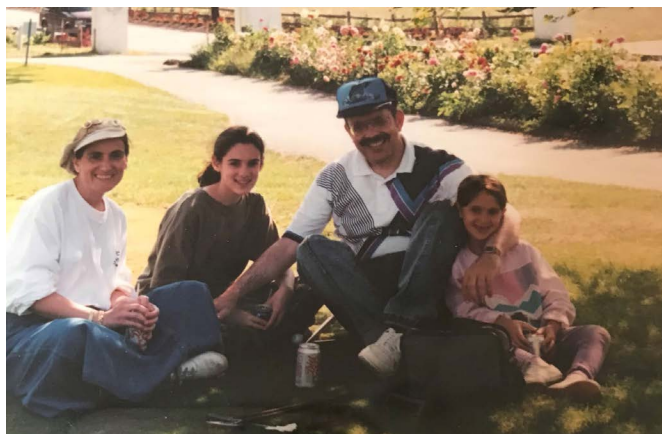
Tennessee, to help fuel the growth of our developing school.

Shortly after arriving in Memphis, he entered into a remarkable friendship that endures to this day. He was having some stomach issues and was referred to "an outstanding young gastroenterologist" named Dr. Larry Wruble; the two became fast friends. "We hit it off immediately," Rabbi Hartman said.

The Wruble children did not attend the MHA at the time; Rabbi Hartman was among the family's first exposure to Orthodox Judaism. "He enrolled his children at the school, and then he took the school by storm," Hartman said of Dr. Wruble. The two of them made a powerful fundraising team. "We could write a book of our funny stories from raising money for the school," Hartman said.



Rabbi Hartman (far right) leading a class for adults at the Yavneh Institute, which met every day.



In the classroom, Rabbi Hartman strove to create excitement for his students, with the goal of making each day different than the one before. **Izzy Rubenstein** (MHA '66) remembers Rabbi Hartman as a “warm and personable” teacher, and **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72) said he was a “nice person who showed respect to each student.”

“Rabbi Hartman brought an enthusiasm and love of Torah to our eighth grade class that caused me to pay attention—which, believe me, was no easy task,” said **Mike Stein** (MHA '68, YOS '72). “He made learning exciting by challenging us to think and participate, while teaching us that Torah belongs to each of us.”

In the early 1970s, enrollment at the MHA grew by leaps and bounds, in large part due to citywide busing policies and other changes occurring in the Memphis public school system. As dean of the school at the time, Rabbi Hartman was responsible for accommodating this influx of students. No task could have given him more joy or purpose. “I am convinced that *Moshiach* [Messiah] is coming by bus,” he said then. Additionally, Rabbi Hartman instituted special programs for students who came to the MHA with limited Jewish knowledge and Hebrew backgrounds.

To Rabbi Hartman, Jewish education is not just a job; it’s a spiritual calling. “We want to create a bond, wherein each student is not a number but a person,” he said. “Twenty-five students represent 25 worlds coming together in the same room. You must have an impact on each world. The students must



Dr. Larry Wruble (left) and Rabbi Hartman in 2012.

know that their growth means something to you personally.”

Rabbi Hartman’s students most certainly felt his impact and sincere interest in their growth. “I have wonderful memories of Rabbi Hartman as my 10th grade *rebbe*,” said **Rabbi Joel Yormark** (MHA ’66). “He inspired me to love learning Gemara!”

“The Hartmans played a major role in our religious life during those high school years,” said **Leah Ann (Lamensdorf) Kirzner** (YOS ’70). “Their home was the place to be on Friday nights, and they may have been our first exposure to a modern Orthodox couple.”

Rabbi Hartman’s approach to meaningful education requires teachers to live in the world of their students. He recalled a day when he played ball with his class in the field behind the MHA and made a particularly athletic slide into second base. At the conclusion of recess, he went into the restroom to clean himself up; upon returning to the classroom,

his students gave him a standing ovation. “I remember thinking to myself, ‘I’ve got them!’ You can only reach students by speaking their language and living in their lives. The challenge of teaching is to build a new tomorrow.”

Nowadays, Rabbi Hartman lives in Queens, New York, with his wife of 40 years. They have six children (five of whom are married) and a number of grandchildren. Since 1992, he has worked as vice president of international affairs for the [Jaffa Institute](#) in Israel, which aims to create a community in which children are nourished, educated and supported so they can become strong contributors to Israeli society. He also works in adult education and lectures for [TorahAnytime](#), a popular website making Torah classes and lectures available to Jews all over the world, on their schedules. Most of all, the Hartmans thoroughly enjoy being doting grandparents, as depicted in the accompanying family photos.

“I am thankful to have the opportunity to express my gratitude to Rabbi Hartman and to the school here,” Stein said. “Rabbi Hartman has been a role model for me and countless others, which attests to the power of a Torah education.”

FLASHBACKS

1966 - 1970

Photographs from the past

The Belz Memorial Building of the Yeshiva of the South was dedicated in May 1966 with great celebration. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, z'l, the *gadol ha'dor* (rabbinic giant of the generation), came to Memphis to help dedicate the Belz Beis Medrash in the new yeshiva building under the leadership of Rabbi Meir Belsky, z'l.



"Benefactor Philip Belz held the Torah as it was marched to the Beis Medrash, along with Al Thomas and Joseph Nelkin, a dorm parent from New Orleans. Behind them are M.C. Kleinfeldt, Ben Margolin and Jacob Belz. I recall that enthusiastic crowds welcomed Rabbi Feinstein with signs at the airport. When he arrived, the crowd marched and burst out singing "Or Zoruah L'Tzaddik" as he was escorted to his waiting car." -Allan Katz (MHA '65, YOS '69)

*Note from alumni chair: During the shiva for Rabbi Seymour Kutner, z'l, I had the occasion to chat with his son, **David Kutner** (MHA '67). The topic of his eighth grade graduation came up, and he explained to me that it took place during the Six Day War in Israel. The more we talked, the more I knew we had to document this significant moment in our newsletter. Thank you to the members of the MHA class of 1967 who helped me collect this material. -JK*

(Front row, from left) **Ezra Belsky** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **David Gray** (MHA '67, YOS '70), **Elaine (Riesenberg) Mael** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Faye Kilstein** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Tina Kabakoff** (MHA '67, YOS '70), **Nina (Gross) Lubart** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **David Kutner** (MHA '67) and **Barry Yaffe** (MHA '67, YOS '71).

(Back row, from left) **Harris Schwartz** (MHA '67), **David Goodfriend** (MHA '67), **George Wollner** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Norman Badrian** (MHA '67), **Alan Olswing** (MHA '67), **Michael Parker, z'l** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Mark Cohen** (MHA '67), **Larry Katz** (MHA '67), **Abe Sharp, z'l** (MHA '67) and **Yehuda (Jeffrey) Kaplan** (MHA '67).



*"We did indeed graduate during the Six Day War. There was definitely discussion about canceling graduation, but as you can see from the attached picture, the ceremony was held as planned. However, the dinner we were supposed to have in conjunction with the graduation was canceled. Everyone was very anxious about the situation in Israel, and our davening was focused on it. We were also encouraged to fast for part of the day in light of the gravity of the situation." -**Elaine (Riesenberg) Mael***

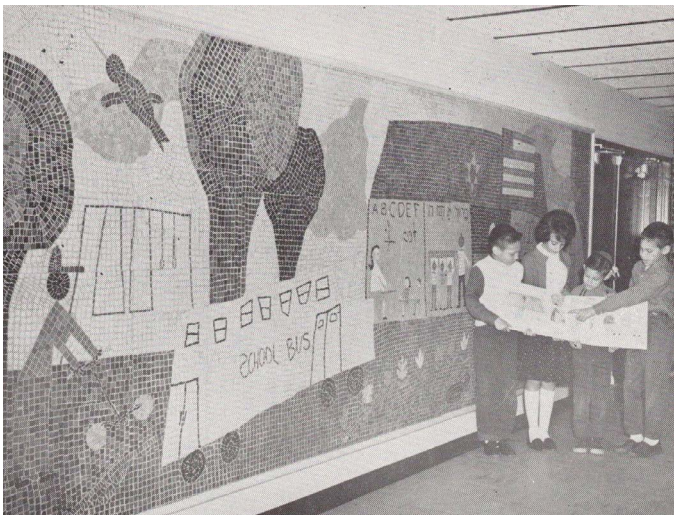
*"Our graduation was on a Thursday night during the Six Day War. The war started Monday, and that Wednesday we recaptured the Old City and the Kotel—now celebrated as Yom Yerushalayim. The rabbis declared a fast day for Thursday, which presented an issue for the graduates, since the ceremony was to start before sunset and continue into the night. Rabbi Moshe Feinstein, z'l, ruled that the graduates were allowed to break their fast before the graduation started." -**Larry Katz***

*"The morning of our graduation, we were davening in one of the classrooms. I looked over at my father (Rabbi Seymour Kutner, z'l), and he was crying. We all felt the gravity of the situation." -**David Kutner***

*"Did we really graduate during the Six Day War? I had no idea. Shows you how clueless I was as a teenager." -**Barry Yaffe***

All members of the MHA family fondly remember the beautiful mosaic mural that adorns the hallway leading to the lunchroom and gym. The mosaic was created by Barbara Shankman, z'l, and Marilyn Califf in 1965. As inspiration for the piece, elementary schoolers drew pictures illustrating concepts of student life at the Academy. Four winners were chosen by the Memphis Academy of Arts; the mosaic mural depicts a composite of these four pictures. Pictured in front of the mural with their original drawings are contest winners (from left) **Izzy Rubenstein** (MHA '66), **Cheri (Wener) Rubenstein** (MHA '63), **Aaron Thomas** (MHA '68, YOS '71) and **Sam Epstein** (YOS '71).

During building renovations several years ago, great care was taken to preserve this mural, which is an iconic part of MHA history.



*"For the mural contest, I drew a boy pledging allegiance to the flag, as we often went outside the school building to do that. My drawing was one of the ones selected." -**Izzy Rubenstein***

*"I remember how artist Marilyn Califf took elements from our pictures to create the mural. I 'contributed' the roof and center-door section. I'm the little guy photographed here." -**Aaron Thomas***



*"On Sept. 3, 2020, we had a very special visitor at school! After dismissal, Rabbi Benjy Owen, our head of school (far left), and Yoel Goldblatt, board president (far right), had the opportunity to safely chat with Marilyn Califf, the artist behind the beautiful mosaic artwork in the main hallway and the bracha mosaic in the gym. Mrs. Califf shared with us that the mosaic was designed by students and created by her and Mrs. Barbara Shankman, z'l, in 1965. The students based their designs on people who studied and worked at the MHA at the time. It was such a pleasure to meet Mrs. Califf and to learn the history of our beautiful mosaics!" -**Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and the school's marketing and recruitment director)*

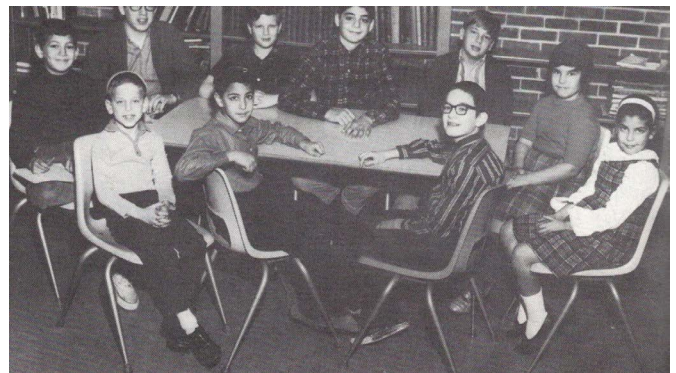
This article appeared in the "Hebrew Watchman" around 1965. Four MHA students formed a quartet to sing at davening at Congregation Anshei Sphard (from left): **Menachem Greenblatt** (MHA '69), **Yehuda (Jeffrey) Kaplan** (MHA '67), **Izzy Rubenstein** (MHA '66) and Ike Nahon.



"This innovation—to conclude Shabbos mussaf with children leading the singing—may very well have started with our quartet. It brought vitality to the davening, and the adults looked forward to it."
-Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt

"This is a blast from the past. Some of us would meet with Anshei's Cantor Max Shimansky, and he coached us on using our voices. One prayer that stands out in my mind was practicing and singing 'Haben Yakir Li' in the mussaf for Rosh Hashanah. I don't recall many children in the shul on Shabbos at that time, nor how we organized and ultimately became the quartet, but we practiced well and had a good time. We all look very happy here, and it was a childhood highlight for me."
-Izzy Rubenstein

The MHA student council of 1967 (counter-clockwise from center, top): **Larry Katz** (MHA '67), president; **David Kutner** (MHA '67), vice president; **Alan Olswing** (MHA '67), secretary; **Sidney Gontownik, z"l** (MHA '70, YOS '74), fifth grade representative; **Michael Schneider** (MHA '72), third grade representative; **Beresh Kipper** (MHA '70), fifth grade representative; **Menachem Greenblatt** (MHA '69), sixth grade representative; **Sheryl (Kipper) Levy** (MHA '71), fourth grade representative; **Judy (Lebovits) Lillien** (MHA '72), third grade representative; and **Randy Fishman** (MHA '68), seventh grade representative.



"I don't know how much we accomplished, but I looked forward to these meetings if for no other reason than to miss class!"
-Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 20th issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication around Pesach. In it, we will highlight the **eighth and 12th grade graduates from the years 1986-1990**. Members of those classes will receive questionnaires by email (or regular mail) sometime in February. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

Our feature story in that issue will spotlight **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72), who will soon celebrate her 50th year of working in our school office. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Francie that you'd like to share, please send them to Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at joannekahane111@gmail.com or to her attention at the school's mailing address below.

Also, be sure to submit your "Mazel Tov" events and photos for the "Alumni Reunite" feature so we can include them in our next issue. Thank you!



Rabbi Benjy Owen, head of school
Yoel Goldblatt, president, board of trustees
Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky (MHA '99),
marketing and recruitment director