

MHA/CYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 34

**Highlighting
the graduating
classes of
1996-2000**

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This issue is dedicated in loving memory of the members of the classes of 1996-2000 who are no longer with us:

Rabbi Yosi Eisen (MHA '94, FYOS '97)

Aaron Gold (FYOS '97)

Sam Goldstein (MHA '99)

May the memory of our departed alumni be a blessing to all who knew them.

MISSED AN ISSUE?

ARCHIVES

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

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

Amara Levine-Reich (MHA '94, FYOS '97), editor

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Noam Davidovics, technology support

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COVER PHOTO



Fifth grader **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97, center) emerged victorious in his bid to be elected reporter of the MHA student council in 1990. He's pictured here with (from left) Cecilia Prouser, **Yakir Levin** (MHA '90), **Rena (Chafetz) Knopf** (FYOS '94) and Moshe Kibel.

MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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Dear MHA/CYOS alumni and friends,



I write this as winter is inching its way into our beautiful city. We're pulling the coats and jackets out of the closet, trying to remember where we put our gloves and earmuffs last year. But our school never slows down. Learning and growth keep going, despite the

chilly temperatures outside.

Our dear friends Dr. Jerry and Shelley Kutliroff, former MHA/CYOS faculty and administrators, have been in Israel since September in order to attend the weddings of three grandchildren. (Mazel tov x3, Kutliroffs!) I regularly receive photos from them of the many places they're visiting. If you know Mrs. Kutliroff, you know she loves to explore historical sites. Unlike most ordinary tourists, she sees the rich history radiating from every site. I love getting her pictures and hearing her stories!

What's even more amazing are the Memphis connections the Kutliroffs find wherever they go in Israel. In addition to making time to meet up with our alumni throughout their visit (see Alumni Reunite, page 30), they've happened upon the children of alumni and people whose grandfathers, sisters-in-law, second cousins and great-uncles grew up in Memphis. With each interaction, they hear positive memories, happy stories and recollections of special people. So as the Kutliroffs are exploring Israel's history, they're also learning more about the history of Jewish Memphis. It's truly remarkable how the influence of our little community extends far and

wide and is known and respected well beyond our borders.

Speaking of Israel, we find ourselves cautiously observing the fragile ceasefire. I was there in early September for my granddaughter's wedding and can't help but marvel at how Israelis adapt with resilience to whatever life throws at them. Amid sirens, bomb shelters and world criticism, our brothers and sisters continue to lead their lives defiantly. Much like the heroes of the Chanukah story, their spirit cannot be broken.

I'm reminded of a wonderful parable I once heard: A Frenchman, an Englishman and an Israeli receive word that another great flood will soon cover the Earth. The Frenchman says, "We must build huge towers that will rise above the water level, so we can move our cities to the top of the towers." The Englishman says, "No, we must build huge boats and move our cities onto the boats." The Israeli says, "Not necessary. We just need to learn how to breathe underwater."

That sums it up. Whatever the world hands the people of Israel, we find a way to keep going. When faced with darkness, we somehow find the light. I'm in awe as I watch my children and grandchildren, and many of our beloved alumni and former faculty members, steadfastly live their lives without being shaken by it all.

To our brave brothers and sisters in Israel: Please know we are continually thinking of you and praying for you. Thank you for building and maintaining our homeland, so all of us have a place to which

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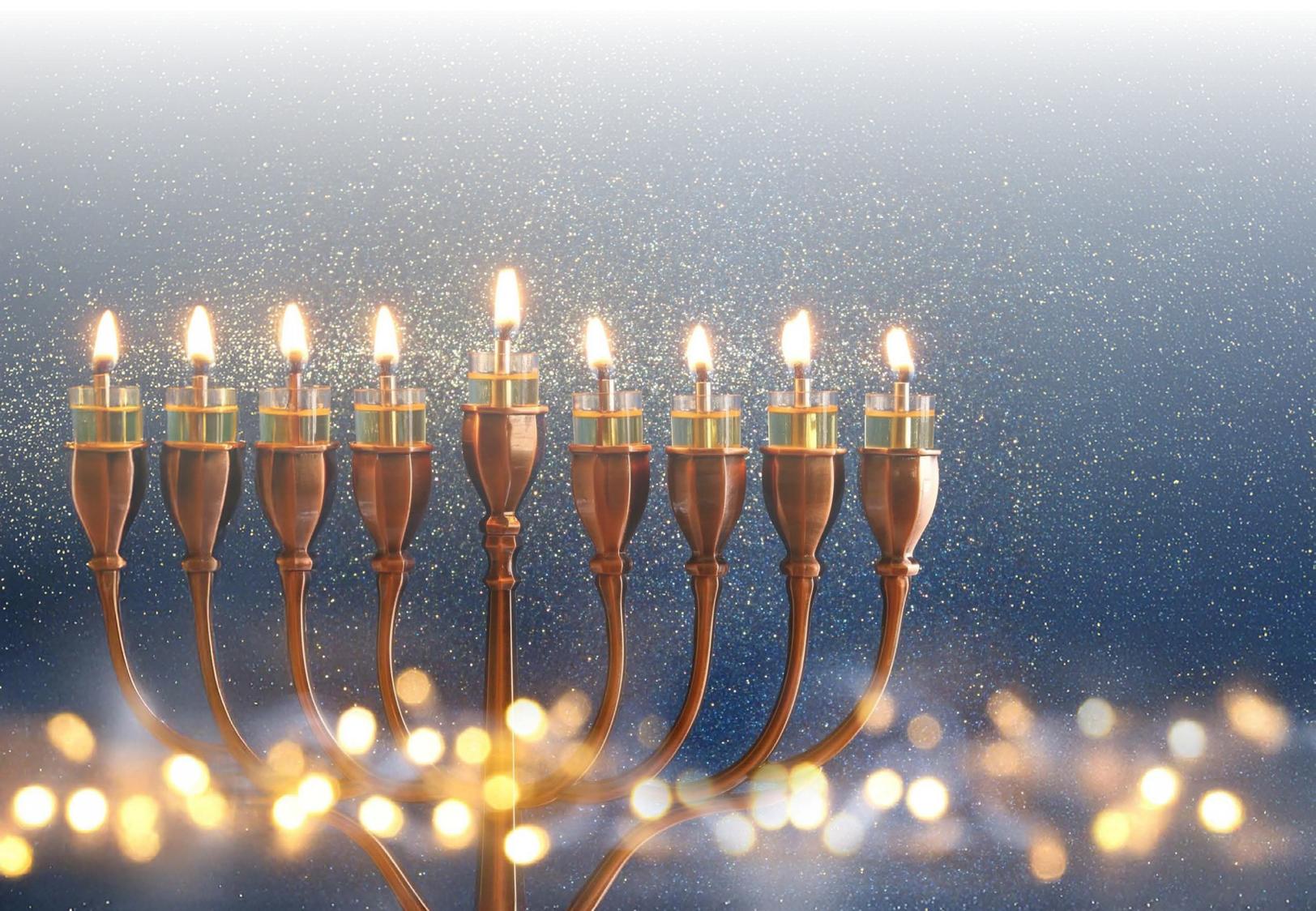
MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

we can return. You are making sure that *Am Yisrael chai* (the nation of Israel lives), and we're eternally grateful! Just as we defeated the powerful Greek army in the Hasmonean days, so may we continue to overcome the threats to our way of life.

Please let us continue to hear from you. *Chanukah sameach* (a joyous holiday) to all!

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair
joannekahane111@gmail.com



Where the wind meets the flame

Dear MHA/CYOS alumni and friends,



Growing up in Efrat, Israel, our house sat high on the largest hill near the Bezeq cellphone towers — *Rechov HaGoren* in the *Te'ena* neighborhood, to be exact — where the wind always seemed to be in motion 3,000 feet above sea level. On the stone wall

outside our front door, my father hung a glass box for our menorah. It had a little swinging door on the side, the kind that clicked shut only if you got the angle just right.

When Chanukah came, we would stand outside with my father in coats and hats (or sometimes shorts — Israel weather is its own adventure), trying to light quickly before the wind swooped in. Sometimes the flame caught; sometimes it didn't. In my memory, there was always a mix of concentration and patience. We weren't fighting the wind. We were working with it, or around it, or in spite of it. The flame belonged there — not tucked away indoors and not left unprotected outside. Right there, on the edge.

The Gemara in Shabbat 21b tells us:

תנו רבנן: נר חנוכה מצוה להניחה על פתח ביתו מבחוץ. אם היה דר בעלייה — מניחה בחלון הסמוכה לרשות הרבים. ובשעת הסכנה — מניחה על שלחנו ודיו.

The Sages taught: It is a mitzvah to place the Chanukah lamp at the entrance to one's house on the outside, so that all can see it. If he lives upstairs, he places it at the window adjacent to the public domain. And in a time of danger, when the gentiles

issued decrees to prohibit kindling lights, he places it on the table and that is sufficient to fulfill his obligation.

The Rambam writes that the menorah is placed “*al petach beito mi'bachutz*” — at the entrance of the home, facing outward. If circumstances outside are difficult or dangerous, the menorah moves inward, onto the table. The placement is responsive. The boundary adjusts. The mitzvah is about *being attentive to that edge*.

Halacha (Jewish law) continues to carry that sensitivity. Some *poskim*, like Rav Yaakov Emden and Rav Binyamin Zilber, suggested that in safer times we could return to lighting outside. Rav Moshe Feinstein suggested placing the menorah in a window so that the light still faces outward. Yet many earlier authorities — the Or Zarua, the Ittur and the Aruch HaShulchan — record that Jewish communities continued to light inside, by the doorway.

Why didn't we just go back outside?

Some of the halachic discussion focuses on something very practical: wind. The Aruch HaShulchan explains that even when there is no danger outside, the menorah is still brought inside because the wind can easily put the flames out. The *Chachamim* (Sages) never required us to buy a special glass case to protect the candles outside. And without some protection, the flame simply won't last.

The Ritva (Shabbat 21b) adds that a *mitzvah* performed in a way that cannot endure loses its meaning. The light has to be given a real

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MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown

opportunity to stay lit. So the custom remained to place the menorah just inside the doorway — not hidden away, and not fully exposed — sheltered enough to survive, close enough to be seen. Protected, but still facing outward. Not hidden. Not broadcast. Held.

And that boundary is something we work with in schools every day.

A teacher recently came to talk to me about how re-entry from recess just wasn't working. Students were walking in from knockout or a quick three-on-three game, and they were still mid-argument about a foul or who actually won. They were enthusiastic, loud and full of motion. They weren't misbehaving; they just hadn't *crossed over yet*. Their bodies were inside. Their attention was still outside.

We talked about something small: The teacher needed to meet the students at the threshold. Not to stop them. Not to discipline them. Just to *welcome* them.

A greeting. A look. A tiny pause. A reset. Something like, "Okay — we're here now. Take a breath. Come in."

And remarkably, within a couple of days, the tone shifted. The students didn't lose their energy. They learned how to bring it *with them* in a way that worked for learning. Their flame didn't need to be dimmed. It just needed a brief glass casing: a moment to stabilize, before it could burn steadily inside.

Students, like candles, do not benefit from being sheltered too tightly. Nor do they do well when left entirely unprotected against every gust of the hallway, the playground or the world. They need help *crossing the doorway*.

Some students walk in mid-sentence, still in motion. They don't need to be silenced. They need space to slow down enough to hear themselves think.

Other students walk in quietly, with ideas that remain inside. They don't need to be pushed. They need a sign that the room is ready for what they have to bring. The threshold looks different, depending on where you're coming from.

This is exactly why the menorah stays near the doorway. The light begins inside, but it is positioned *toward* the outside. Not hidden away. Not thrown into the open. Protected, but not contained.

The Bnei Yissaschar writes that even when lighting inside, it's best to choose a doorway that can still be seen from outside. A subtle reminder that the goal is not only to preserve light, but to share it carefully, sustainably, in time.

The work of teaching is not high drama. It's not about extinguishing energy or manufacturing calm. It's about moments like the pause at the door — small, almost invisible acts of transition — that help students move between worlds without losing themselves in the process.

Not all at once. Not dramatically. Just enough to let something take hold. And once it takes hold — wind or no wind — it learns how to stand.

Wishing you a wonderful Chanukah,

Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown
Head of school, MHA/CYOS
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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ALUMNI CHAIR

Community Responses

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We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at alumni@mhacyos.org. Here are some of the responses we received to [issue 33](#).

Thank you so much for the article you published about me in the last issue. It was really very special, especially since I do plan to end my career at some point. It was so nice to “hear” from my old students, who brought back many fond memories of my time at the MHA.

-Mrs. Harriet Stein, former faculty member

What a wonderful newsletter! I was so sorry to read about the passing of Rabbi Eliyahu Hartman, z'l. He had a profound influence on the early days of my life. I'm very proud to say he officiated my bar mitzvah in 1965, when he was the rabbi at Etz Chaim Synagogue in Jacksonville, Florida. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, and may his memory be a blessing.

-Jan Starr (MHA '66)

This issue — wow wow wow! I'd already left Memphis by '75 but I do remember some names from this era, especially **Bart Ehrenkranz** (YOS '77). I also knew **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81) a bit. I was surprised to see my good friend **Jonathan Finegold** (YOS '74), z'l, in the memorial tributes; when did he pass away? What a guy!

We've lived in Lakewood, New Jersey, for 10 years now and, *baruch Hashem* (thank G-d), all is well. We recently returned from Eretz Yisrael, where my son lives, to attend his son's wedding. I've got to visit Memphis again one day ... somehow.

-**Rabbi Yitzchok Mitnick** (YOS '73)

Response from the editor and alumni chair:

*Rabbi Mitnick, it's always so nice to hear from you. Mazel tov on your grandson's wedding! Regrettably, we lost **Jonathan Finegold** in 2018 — and yes, he was very special. Please do come to visit us in Memphis. We roll out the red carpet for our alumni.*

Another exceptional alumni newsletter! One small correction to note: The photo of **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80) and the Greenblatt family in Alumni Reunite (page 40) was taken at a 70th birthday celebration for **Menachem Greenblatt** (MHA '69), not **Yitzy Greenblatt** (MHA '75). Yitzy is 64.

-**Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80)

Response from the editor and alumni chair:

*Thank you, Cindy. We pride ourselves on accuracy and appreciate you helping us correct this error. Our apologies to **Rabbi Yitzy Greenblatt** (pictured below, far left) for adding years to his age, and our belated happy birthday wishes to **Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt** (pictured far right).*



TRIVIA ANSWERS

1976-1980

Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our [33rd issue](#).

The winner of our trivia contest from that issue was **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80), who got five out of 13 right answers.

She will receive a tin of tasty treats from [Ricki's Cookie Corner](#), owned and operated by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70).

Below are the answers to the trivia questions from issue 33. How many did you know?

1. Which teacher was known as the "artist in residence" during this era?
ANSWER: Rabbi Yosaif Silverman, z'".
2. Who taught music at the MHA in 1974?
ANSWER: Cantor Israel Meller.
3. In what year was the Shifra Kutner Memorial Wing built for the elementary school and dedicated to Mrs. Kutner, z'".
ANSWER: 1974.
4. Which member of the GMSG class of '80 was well known for baking birthday cakes?
ANSWER: **Chasi Silverman** (MHA '76, YOS '80).
5. What's the source for the following lines?
*We know down deep in our hearts
We will never grow apart.
Friends we are and friends we shall stay.
We're together all the way.*
ANSWER: The 1980 Bais Yaakov (GMSG) school song.

6. What was the only kind of beverage the MSG students allowed in their building during this era?
ANSWER: Diet drinks.
7. In the school's 1978 production of "Fiddler on the Roof," which students played Tevye's three daughters?
ANSWERS: **Michele (Eskenazi) Witkin** (MHA '77, YOS '81) was Tzeitel, **Jennifer (Whitman) Lehrfield** (MHA '77, YOS '81) was Hodel and **Lois (Ostrow) Goldberg, z'l** (MHA '77, YOS '81) was Chava.
8. What did the eighth grade graduates of 1978 leave to faculty member **Mrs. Gerry (Margolin Fink) Platsky** (MHA '59) in the "Last Will and Testament" feature in the yearbook?
ANSWERS: A case of Diet Rite, a pair of shoes with 10" heels, membership in the Barry Manilow fan club and an umbrella for her moped.
9. General Studies Principal Mrs. Shirley Grossman, z'l, created a cantata for the MHA graduation in 1977 to commemorate the 10th anniversary of what?
ANSWER: The reunification of Jerusalem.

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 at the MHA/CYOS, most especially Yocheved Naftel, Erica Stoltz, Sara Plotitsa and Rabbi Akiva Males. Additionally, thank you to the alumni and friends who assisted us by supplying photographs, identifying individuals in those pictures and providing historical background, trivia questions and more, including **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63), **Moshe (Morris) Gavant** (YOS '72), **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79), **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81), **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88), **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Elana (Sadetsky) Avis** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Rene (Steinberg) Blitz** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Aaron Gavant** (MHA '97), **Yoni Graber** (MHA '97, FYOS '01), **Brittany (Baum) Lindenfeld** (MHA '04) and Louis Safier.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS 1996-2000

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. What song did **Richard Lewis** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) coordinate at the end of every session in Mr. Bryce Embry's computer lab?
2. When **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) famously said, "We shoulda won," to which basketball game was he referring?
3. Which FYOS teacher is fondly remembered for bringing students kosher Christmas cookies?
4. Who was maintenance man Mr. Marvin Tharnish's assistant during this era? (Hint: A famous book has the same name.)
5. Which student won the school geography bee in 1999?
6. Who directed the MHA's 1999 production of "The Parent Trap"?
7. Which teacher from this era was known for bringing leftovers to school for her students to enjoy?
8. Which students represented candidates George Bush, Bill Clinton and Ross Perot in the school's 1992 mock presidential debate?
9. Which Shakespeare play did the MHA junior high students perform in 1995?
10. Which MHA alumna and parent designed and built a decorative arch (pictured here) in the late 1990s that was used in first grade siddur presentations for many years?



In *Maseches Shabbos* (21b), we find the famous question, “What is Chanukah?” The Gemara answers it by recounting that, after the Greeks defiled the *Beis Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) and all the pure oil, the *Chashmonaim* (Maccabees) prevailed over them. They entered the Temple and found only one small jar of pure oil. The Gemara goes on to explain that the jar had enough oil to light the menorah for one day, but it miraculously burned for eight days.

Rabbi Avigdor Miller, in his commentary on the Gemara, notes that the miracle of the oil lasting eight days was so great that word spread quickly and hundreds of thousands of Jewish people flocked to the *Beis Hamikdash* to witness it with their own eyes. It was so miraculous that, a year later, the rabbis declared the 25th of Kislev to be the start of an eight-day holiday.

The miracles of Chanukah — winning the war over the mighty Greek army and having enough oil to burn (while new pure oil was being prepared) — are rooted in our constant war against immorality. They reflect the strength that lies deep within us to rise above and stay true to the moral Torah, which guides our lives.

The *parshios* (Torah portions) about Yosef are always read around and on the Shabbos of Chanukah. Why Yosef? How is he connected to Chanukah and, in essence, to this constant battle?

Yosef has the *koach* (power/energy) to stand against the immorality of the world. As his story unfolds, it becomes clear he is primarily worried about the honor of G-d.

To connect Yosef to Chanukah, let's first explain the mission of the Greeks. At the core of Greek culture is the belief in a completely secular world, void of a

Creator or any type of holiness. The Greeks wanted to uproot all things related to the G-d of the Jewish people, mainly the *mitzvos* of:

- **Shabbos:** If the world has no Creator, resting because G-d rested after creating the world is unnecessary and pointless.
- **Bris milah:** If the body is profane and you can do with it as you wish, the holy act of circumcision has no purpose.
- **Rosh Chodesh:** If time has no inherent holiness, there's no need to sanctify each new month.

The Jewish people were fighting against a culture and a world that were against everything they stood for.

Yosef understood that there is a Creator. In *Sotah*, the Gemara asks, “Who is Yosef? He came to the house of Potifar to do his work.” The Gemara and various commentaries question what work Yosef came to do. After being sold by his brothers at age 17, Yosef ends up in jail in Egypt. During his ninth year of imprisonment, he is brought before Pharaoh. Thanks to his ability to interpret dreams, he finds himself becoming the viceroy of Egypt. As viceroy, he works in the house of Potifar, who is master of the jail.

During his time there, Yosef struggles to fight off the repeated seductive advances of Potifar's wife. Rashi comments that, in one instance where she was especially forceful, the image of Yosef's father, Yaakov, appeared to him. Yosef understood the meaning of seeing his father's image (some interpret father here to mean G-d) and was able to escape. After an extended period of this woman trying to seduce him with her words, her clothing and even bribing him with money, Yosef proved himself to be a *gibor* (person of strength) and was able to

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D'VAR TORAH

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

overcome his desires. One could say that Potifar's wife was the first "Greek" and Yosef was the first "Maccabee." In a world and in a house of people who were completely immoral, Yosef remained strong.

There is an interesting connection between Yosef and his great-grandfather Avraham Avinu that further explains how Yosef acquired his incredible strength. When we're introduced to Avraham, he is called *Ivri*. We loosely translate this word to mean Jewish or Hebrew, but as Rashi tells us, the actual meaning is "other side." Avraham had come from the other side of the river, or the land of Mesopotamia, into Canaan.

Rabbi Joseph B. Soloveitchik has a beautiful explanation of why the term *Ivri* was given to Avraham. An *Ivri*, he says, is a charismatic personality who must dissociate themselves from their natural connections. Avraham had to completely free himself from the culture in which he was raised. His physical journey was secondary to his spiritual journey.

Just three generations later, we see the *koach* of the word *Ivri* in Yosef — except that his journey is the opposite of his great-grandfather's. Yosef's destiny is to leave Canaan and go toward the immorality. How can one spiritually survive immersed in the most immoral society of antiquity?! Only by embracing the Torah and the power of *Ivri*.

Potifar's wife calls Yosef an *ish Ivri*, a man from the other side. There are other sources in Parshas Miketz where Yosef is referred to as an *Ivri*. A separate table was always set for him, even though he was the second in command in Egypt. Even after so many years, Yosef is clearly different; he's the embodiment of his great-grandfather, Avraham.

Rabbi Soloveitchik highlights several aspects of Yosef's fragility: He was sold as a teenage slave, held in an Egyptian jail and ridiculed by the wife of Potifar. Despite it all, Yosef maintains an attachment to his family and his clan. He remains a Jew.

Three generations after Avraham, Yosef understands that his descendants will be leaving Egypt and finally returning to the land of Israel. His final wish to his children is, "When Hashem will indeed remember you, then you must bring my bones up out of here" (Bereishis 50:25). We can't ever forget to take with us the essence — the bones — of what it means to be a Jew.

Today, we're still fighting the war against immorality. We need the *kochos* — the strengths of Avraham, Yosef and the Maccabees — to remain true Torah Jews. We must always be aware: I do not belong here; I belong over there.

I was lucky to grow up in a community and school that truly recognized the meaning of being an *Ivri*. I had a strong foundation for understanding and appreciating where I come from, both as a Jew and with regard to my family. All four of my grandparents, Rabbi Joseph and Libby Nayowitz, z'l, and Izzy and Pearl Katz, z'l, were incredibly strong *Ivrim*. They knew what it meant to be from the other side. They took that strength and used it to build the Memphis Jewish community.

I wish the Margolin Hebrew Academy/Cooper Yeshiva of the South continued success in educating and guiding Jewish children in the *Ivri* path of Torah.

Wishing everyone a happy and meaningful Chanukah!

D'VAR TORAH

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

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A daughter of **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74) and former MHA student and faculty member **Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz**, **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) is a preschool teacher living in Boca Raton, Florida. She and her husband, Gershon (a son of **Rabbi Yehoshua** (YOS '71) and **Tova (Therese Hochdorf) Yarmush** (YOS '73)) are the proud parents of five children.





ENGAGEMENTS/ WEDDINGS:

Mazel tov to:

Shaindy and **Rabbi Yitzchok Mitnick** (YOS '73) of Lakewood, New Jersey, on the Aug. 24 marriage of their grandson Avrohom Mordechai Mitnick to Rina Minkus in Israel. The newlyweds live in Neve Yaakov in the Holy Land.

Miriam and **Rabbi Yitzy Greenblatt** (MHA '75) of Far Rockaway, New York, on the engagement of their son Moshe to Shira Frechter. They are planning a Feb. 24 wedding in New York and hope to live in Israel. A photo from the engagement party can be found in Alumni Reunite, page 32.

Rachel Kaplan (MHA '88) of Highland Park, New Jersey, on the engagement of her daughter Adinah to Zishy Greenberg. The couple will wed in February.

Rabbi Larry and **Nehama (Kutliroff) Teitelman** (MHA '91) of Queens, New York, who on Nov. 30 celebrated the marriage of their daughter Atara to Josh Hyman in Netanya, Israel. The happy couple lives in Jerusalem. Mazel tov also to the bride's grandparents, former MHA/CYOS

teachers and administrators Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff.

Gabe Goldstein (MHA '10, FYOS '14) on his Nov. 22 wedding to Regan Bolotin in Hudson, New York. The couple lives in Brooklyn Heights. Mazel tov also to the groom's father, **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64) of Memphis. Photos from the wedding are featured in Alumni Reunite, page 30.

Chani Vayavodkina (FYOS '24) on her Nov. 20 wedding to Naftali Klein in Passaic, New Jersey. The couple lives in Brooklyn. A photo from their joyous celebration is featured in Alumni Reunite, page 31.

BIRTHS:

Mazel tov to:

Bart (YOS '77) and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis on the recent arrival of two grandchildren. On Sept. 30, baby girl Malka was born to parents Adina Bayla and Mordechai Ehrenkranz of Queens, New York. Mazel tov also to siblings Esti, Ezra, Naftali, Betzalel, Yisrael Zev, Yosef Shalom, Dovid, Meir and Goldie. Then, Oct. 11 marked the birth of their grandson Moshe Zev, to Chaya Miriam and **Rabbi Yitzy Ehrenkranz** (MHA '06)

of Houston, Texas. Mazel tov to siblings Dovid, Ezra, Shlomo and Yehuda.

Rabbi Uri and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Har Nof in Jerusalem on the Nov. 29 arrival of granddaughter Malka Rosa, born to Yitzi and Ahuva Ostrow of Lakewood, New Jersey.

Rena and **Ephraim Kutner** (MHA '85) of Lawrence, New York, who welcomed grandson Meyer on Sept. 29. Mazel tov to parents Rayzee and Yitzchak Brecher and big sisters Aliza Tamar and Leah Gittel of Far Rockaway, New York. The baby is a great-grandson of **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '65, YOS '68), also of Lawrence, and the late **Alan Kutner, z'l** (MHA '62).

Rachel and **Yoni Kutner** (MHA '88), also of Lawrence, on the Oct. 27 birth of granddaughter Elisheva Rivka. Her parents are Shifra and Yitzi From of Jerusalem, and she is a great-granddaughter of **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '65, YOS '68) and **Alan Kutner, z'l** (MHA '62).

Shira and **Shlomo Gersten** (MHA '01, FYOS '05) of Dallas, Texas, on the Sept. 12 birth of daughter Emily Gabriella. Mazel tov to

big sisters Lily and Kaylee and grandparents and longtime MHA/CYOS faculty members Rabbi Yonason and Sandy Gersten.

Daniel and **Cheftzi (Ben-Yishai) Ohana** (FYOS '06) of Jerusalem, Israel, on the Sept. 3 birth of their first child, daughter Doria.

Tehila and **Meir Samberg** (MHA '03) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, on the Sept. 14 birth of daughter Ahuva. Mazel tov to siblings Hadassah, Yonah, Yosef Yitzchok and Devorah and grandparents and former MHA faculty members Cantor Aryeh and Adina Samberg of Memphis.

Yaakov and **Gabby (Harkavy) Berger** (MHA '06) of Tekoa, Israel, on the Oct. 2 arrival of baby boy Siloh Nachal Roni. Mazel tov also to siblings Levana and Shachar and grandparents Diane and **Alan Harkavy** (MHA '77) of Jerusalem.

Robby and **Jordana (Wender) Rubin** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) of Memphis on the Sept. 17 arrival of daughter Sunny Rebecca. Mazel tov also to big brother Teddy and grandparents Penina (former MHA faculty member and

administrator) and **Elliot Wender** (MHA '79, YOS '83) of Memphis.

Ovadyah and **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) of Kohav Yaakov, Israel, on the Oct. 30 birth of daughter Leeba. She was named after her great-grandmother, former MHA faculty member Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l, on the occasion of Mrs. Nayowitz's first *yahrzeit*. Mazel tov also to siblings Hadassah, Yosef and Yehuda and to grandparents Davida and **Eliyahu Fink** (YOS '81) of Cleveland, Ohio, **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Netanya, Israel, and former MHA faculty member Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz of Jerusalem.

Avigayil and **Rabbi Asher Finkelstein** (MHA '11) of New York City on the Nov. 4 arrival of their first child, daughter Penina Bracha. Mazel tov also to grandparents Rabbi Joel Finkelstein and former CYOS faculty member Mrs. Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein of Memphis.

Hila and **Shmuel Perl** (MHA '14) of Rechovot, Israel, on the Sept. 16 birth of daughter Livia Tovah,

making Amalya a big sister. Mazel tov also to grandparents and former MHA administrators Rabbi Dr. Gil and Melissa Perl of Boca Raton, Florida.

Ari and **Edya (Finkelstein) Ershler** (MHA '15) of Jerusalem, who became parents with the Nov. 13 arrival of son Itai Dov. Mazel tov also to first-time grandparents, former faculty members and Kollel Torah Mitzion leaders Rabbi Shai and Bilha Finkelstein, also of Jerusalem.

Rabbi Matan and **Rakhel (Finkelstein) Friedman** (MHA '17, FYOS '21) of New York City on the Nov. 10 birth of their first child, son Chaim Yisrael. Mazel tov also to grandparents Rabbi Joel Finkelstein and Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein.

BNEI/BNOT MITZVAH:

Mazel tov to:

Julie and **Nathan Thomas** (MHA '95) of Skokie, Illinois, on the Oct. 30 bat mitzvah of their daughter, Layla Bette. Mazel tov also to grandparents Wendy and **Ira Thomas** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Far Rockaway, New York.

MAZEL TOV!

Send us your alumni news for the next issue at alumni@mhacyos.org.



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ALUMNI BASKETBALL GAME

Save the date for the 34rd Annual Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game!

Mark your calendar and make plans to join us for the Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game on Saturday night, Jan. 17, 2026 (during MLK Day Weekend) in the MHA's beautiful Moss Gym. Whether you'll be playing or spectating, it promises to be a fun and exciting event for all. We look forward to welcoming many alumni back to campus!

- CYHSB alumni interested in playing in the Alumni Game should contact MHA Athletic Director Kobi Pinto at kobi.pinto@mhacyos.org.
- Alumni traveling from out of town who would like assistance with accommodations or meals should contact Alumni Chair Joanne Kahane at joannekahane111@gmail.com.

We hope to see you in January. Be sure to bring your school spirit, and come prepared for a great evening of basketball and camaraderie!



THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1996-2000

Where are they now?

'93

'97

Elana (Sadetsky) Avis (MHA '93, FYOS '97) lives in Lower Merion, Pennsylvania, where she owns a [wig salon](#). She and her husband, Baruch, have six children, ranging from age 7 to 20.

"I'm so grateful for the school and all the amazing teachers who inspired me to become better," she said. Among her favorite teachers were Rabbi Menachem Nissel and **Mrs. Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80). Her best memories from school are of enjoying GMSG Purim parties and Shabbatons with her friends.

"I have only super fun memories of everyone and I miss you all," she said. "I'm still hoping for some kind of reunion, which we've been talking about forever but haven't done."



Avis family



Avis children with their grandmother, former Memphian Tsilya Sadetsky

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THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1996-2000

Where are they now?



Blitz family

Rene (Steinberg) Blitz (MHA '93, FYOS '97), a daughter of Alvin and **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63), lives in Potomac, Maryland, and works as a reading intervention teacher at an elementary school. She and her husband, Michael, stay busy with their three active boys, ages 11, 14 and 16.

"I have so many fond memories of being in school with my classmates and can't believe it's been 28 years since we graduated from high school," she said.

'93

'97

'94
'97

Deena (Katz) Yarmush (MHA '94, FYOS '97), a daughter of **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74) and Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz, is married to Gershon Yarmush, a son of **Rabbi Yehoshua** (YOS '71) and **Tova (Therese Hochdorf) Yarmush** (YOS '73). They live in Boca Raton, Florida, where she works as a preschool teacher, and they have five children — two sons pursuing post-high school studies in New York City and three daughters in middle and high school at home.

One of Yarmush's most salient MHA memories is of going to Dr. Jerry Kutliroff's office each day for math enrichment in elementary school. "We loved the jokes he made and marveled at his tiny yet perfect handwriting," she recalled.

"There were so many teachers I truly loved but my favorite would have to be the late Mrs. Ann Ivins, who taught high school science," she said. "We bonded during my sophomore year, and she will always have a special place in my heart."

Yarmush is grateful to remain in touch with many of her friends from high school. "Growing up in Memphis, we were a small group and made connections for life," she said. "I cherish the times when we get to see each other."



Yarmush family

'94

'97

Amara Levine-Reich (MHA '94, FYOS '97 and alumni newsletter editor) lives in Memphis with her husband, Eli, and their 13-year-old son, who celebrated his bar mitzvah earlier this year. She works as a senior marketing advisor for Sedgwick, a global risk management and claims administration provider.

"I'll always be grateful for the excellent general and Judaic studies education I received; now that I'm helping my son with his middle school homework, it's coming in extra handy," she said. "I'm glad to be able to give back to the school by offering my writing and editing skills to this publication."

Her favorite memories of the MHA/FYOS include color war and the annual GMSG canoe trip.



Levine-Reich family



Goldberg family

Dov Goldberg (FYOS '98), who came to our school as a dorm student from Overland Park, Kansas, is now a medical AI software engineer living in Ariel in Israel's Shomron hills. He and his wife, Mindy, have five children.

'98

Goldberg's favorite teacher was Rabbi Ari Katz. "His delightful class on the history of modern-day Zionism put me solidly on track to move to Israel right after I graduated from the FYOS," he said.

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THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1996-2000

Where are they now?

'98

Amanda (Mack) Gurock (FYOS '98), who was a GMSG dorm student from Omaha, Nebraska, is now living in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and working as assistant director of mental health services for the county jail. She and her husband, Josh, are the parents of four children in their teens and 20s; the oldest, Leah, is engaged to Nossou Yarmush, a grandson of **Rabbi Yehoshua** (YOS '71) and **Tova (Therese Hochdorf) Yarmush** (YOS '73).

"I am thankful to the Memphis Jewish community for everything," Gurock said. "High school really gave me a much-needed foundation to move forward in life — and Senior Skip Day was a lot of fun!" Her favorite teachers were Mr. Thomas Johnson and Rabbi Ari Katz.



Gurock family



Magid family

Maren (Harrison) Magid (MHA '96) and her husband, David, are raising their three children — ages 9, 12 and 16 — in West Orange, New Jersey.

To this day, she remains grateful to Morah Anat Kampf. "She worked tirelessly and creatively to help me catch up in Hebrew and Judaic studies after I came to the MHA in third grade with no prior formal Jewish education," she said.

Magid will also never forget the events of Jan. 23, 1991, when an electrical fire broke out at the school. "I remember we all walked over to the church down the street, fearing that our school was burning down," she said. (Thankfully, the damage was limited to the boys' high school wing and everyone escaped safely.)

'96

THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1996-2000

Where are they now?

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Gavant family

Aaron Gavant (MHA '97), a son of **Morris** (YOS '72) and **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA '70), is a bankruptcy attorney living in Skokie, Illinois. He and his wife, Yehudit, are the parents of five children, ages 7 to 19.

'96

"One of my favorite memories is of our annual *Yom Ha'atzmaut* marches from the school to Baron Hirsch," he said. "I loved showing our pride in our religion and our country on Israeli Independence Day."

He is grateful to his many wonderful teachers at the MHA, including Mrs. Lisa Carter, Mrs. Mary Gossett, Morah Miriam Greenblatt, z'l, Morah Anat Kampf, Mrs. Anne Wallace, Mrs. Sandy Gersten, Mrs. Karen Davis, Rabbi Jay Salid and Mrs. Lisa Frisch.

'97
'01

Yoni Graber (MHA '97, FYOS '01), a son of Pammy and **Glenn Graber** (MHA '74, YOS '78), lives in Atlanta, Georgia, with his wife, Davida, and their three children (ages 6, 11 and 16). He works as the head of talent for Gynger, an accounts receivable and embedded financing platform.

He has wonderful memories of what he called "the craziness of day-to-day life" at the MHA and of learning from outstanding teachers like Mr. Thomas Johnson, Rabbi Yonason Gersten and the late Mrs. Karin Schmitt.



Graber family

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THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1996-2000

Where are they now?



Braverman-Schneiderman family

Heather (Braverman) Schneiderman

(MHA '98, FYOS '02) is the mother of two boys and director of a childcare center in Richmond, Virginia.



She has wonderful memories of Pi Day, freshman kidnap and class outings to TCBY. Her favorite teacher was **Mrs. Peninah (Fink) Salid** (MHA '82, YOS '85).

"I miss the school and Memphis Jewish community so much," she said, and hopes she and her classmates will keep in touch.



Benjamin Rubenstein (MHA '00, FYOS '04), a son of Marvin and **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72), lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, and works as an IT enterprise architect for a hospital. He and his wife, Rivka, have four children, who range in age from 1 to 9.



Rubenstein family

Want to connect with other MHA/FYOS alumni?

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK! 

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE



Morah Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz

Excelling at the family business of Jewish education



While Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz's life and career have taken some unexpected twists and turns, she spent nearly 20 meaningful years right where she was meant to be — teaching at the MHA, where her story began. And though she moved to Israel over a decade ago, Morah Chavi's impact on the school, Memphis community and her students continues to be felt.

Chavi's parents, Rabbi Joseph and Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l, came to Memphis in the 1950s to grow and enhance our Hebrew Academy, which had opened a few years earlier. (For more on Rabbi and Mrs. Nayowitz and their contributions to the school, see our memorial tributes to him in [issue 6](#) and to her in [issue 31](#).) She was born in Memphis during their (first) tenure at the MHA. When Chavi was 7, the Nayowitzes pursued their dream of moving to Israel. "But it was very hard financially, especially before the Six Day War," she said.

After three years in Israel, the family returned to the U.S. in 1965 and Rabbi Nayowitz became principal of New Jersey's Yavneh Academy for 10 years. During this time, Chavi completed school in New Jersey and then studied at Machon Gold in Jerusalem, where she earned her teaching certificate. "I wasn't sure what field I wanted to go into," she said, "but my father was on me for years to go into education."

The Nayowitz family was sorely missed in Memphis, and community members worked on convincing them to come back. They ultimately did return to Memphis in 1976, and Rabbi Nayowitz resumed his

role as MHA principal. Having completed her studies in Israel, Chavi joined her parents in moving back to Memphis.



Chavi and her father, former MHA principal Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'l.

"My father had promised me a teaching job at the MHA, but there wasn't a suitable position available at the time," she said. In the interim, she started working in the front office under the guidance of receptionist Mrs. Naomi Finkelstein and with the assistance of **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72).

During that time, she reconnected with family friend **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74), to whom she would be married for more than 30 years. Rather than pursuing a full-time career right away, Chavi devoted her time to raising five children — **Deena**

(Katz) Yarmush (MHA '94, FYOS '97), **Shira (Katz) Nathan** (MHA '95, FYOS '99), **Daniel** (MHA '98, FYOS '02), **Noam** (MHA '01, FYOS '05) and **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) — and serving the community through volunteer work. During her three-year tenure as president of the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA), she raised much-needed funds for the school by organizing popular community events like the annual auction and package party and weekly Sunday suppers.



Chavi (back row, far left) with fellow MHA PTA officers (back row, from left) **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80), Phylis Levine, Sharon Goldfein z'l; (front row, from left) Sue Ann Lipsey, Esther Katz, **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA '70) and Malkie Katz in the early 1990s.

“My family grew very close with the Katzes, and I have the sweetest memories of Chavi,” said **Elana (Sadetsky) Avis** (MHA '93, FYOS '97). “She always invited us over for yom tov and Shabbos meals and kept in touch even after we moved away. She was warm, friendly and always had a smile on her face — and, of course, so put together and beautiful! My parents [Gregory z'l and Tsilya Sadetsky] and I absolutely adored her.”

By 1993, Chavi was exploring opportunities to rejoin the workforce. After trying her hand at a few different things, she found herself drawn back to her parents' chosen profession: education. She returned to the MHA in a professional capacity, starting as the Judaics teacher for kindergarten and filling in as needed in the fifth and sixth grade classrooms.

“The minute I started teaching, I fell into it very naturally,” she said. “I loved being in early education and found it so fun and rewarding to see the kids growing up and absorbing everything like sponges. I truly liked getting up every morning and going to work at the MHA because it was such a warm family environment. I also had wonderful support from mentors like Sandy Gersten and Rabbi Akeyv Greenblatt.”



Morah Chavi (second from left) with two of her daughters (from left), **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), and her mother, Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l (former MHA faculty member) in the school gym.

“For much of my childhood and well into my adult years, my mother was beloved as a teacher, and she

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE

Morah Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz

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was extremely dedicated,” **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** said. “Teaching seemed to come easily to her, but I know she put a lot of hard work into her job. She cared deeply for all her students and made sure to adjust her curriculum and teaching styles to accommodate their needs.”

In 2001, tragedy struck when beloved first grade teacher Morah Miriam Greenblatt z’l was hit by a car. After months in a coma, Morah Greenblatt succumbed to her injuries in 2002 — leaving a gaping hole in the MHA faculty and very big shoes to fill.

Because Morah Chavi had been so successful in the kindergarten classroom, administrators approached her about taking over as the first grade Judaics teacher. She was honored by their trust in her but waited another year before changing roles because **Aviva** was entering first grade.



Morah Chavi and her daughter, **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12).

For the next 10 years, Morah Chavi (who also became known as Morah Katz when Morah **Chavi (Adler) Greenblatt**, z’l (MHA '83) joined the faculty) played the pivotal role of teaching MHA first graders the *aleph-bet*, the weekly *parsha* (Torah

portion) and how to *daven* (pray) — the building blocks of Jewish life and learning. Many alumni have lifelong memories of receiving their first *siddur* (prayer book) in her class and cherish their pictures from the presentation ceremony.



Morah Chavi and her son, **Noam Katz** (MHA '01, FYOS '05).

“The highlight of first grade was definitely our *siddur* play,” said **Chaya Klein** (MHA '14, FYOS '18). “I still have the *siddur* my mom decorated for me and remember all the songs from our performance. Morah Chavi was so caring and engaging, and she brought such joy and excitement to our learning.”

“I remember getting very excited for davening with Morah Katz,” said **Chaim Gersten** (MHA '13, FYOS '17). “Especially when we each got to recite our own *pasuk* (verse) of *Ashrei!*”

“Over the years, parents told me their children became enthusiastic about davening because of my class, and I’m proud of that,” Chavi said.

In addition to her exceptional teaching abilities, Morah Chavi also became known at the MHA for another invaluable skill: pulling out students’ loose teeth!

“Morah Chavi Katz was the master tooth puller in the school,” said **Rakhel (Finkelstein) Friedman** (MHA '17, FYOS '21). “Students from other grades would knock on our classroom door to ask her to pull their teeth out.”

“When you needed a tooth pulled out, Morah Chavi was the person you went to,” recalled **Jason Schubert** (MHA '17, FYOS '21).

Having pulled many teeth and inspired hundreds of students throughout her 20-year MHA tenure, Morah Chavi decided to leave Memphis in 2013. Bringing her story full circle, she made *aliyah* to Israel. There, she taught English for seven years and now works part-time as a tutor in Jerusalem. She’s also a proud and doting grandmother.



Morah Chavi (second from right) with her daughter, **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97, far right), and son-in-law, Gershon Yarmush (second from left), and their children (from left), Ezra, Margalit, Hadar, Yonah and Yael.

“Yerushalayim is truly the place to be,” Chavi said. “One of my favorite things about living here is that everyone who visits Israel comes through here, so I get to see people often. I run into MHA alumni

around town, and when they make the connection that I was their first grade teacher, they often start singing Hebrew *Ariyot* songs from the Tal Am curriculum we studied.

“Having grown up with both my parents loving their jobs in education, teaching was a part of my makeup,” Chavi reflected. “Even though I kind of fell into being a teacher, I ended up loving it. It’s part of my life that I so enjoyed. I hope my students carry with them the warm feelings about Hebrew, Israel and Jewish knowledge that I tried to convey to them.”



Morah Chavi with several of her grandchildren (clockwise from top-left): Ezra, Yonah, Yehuda, Yosef and Hadassah.

ALUMNI REUNITE

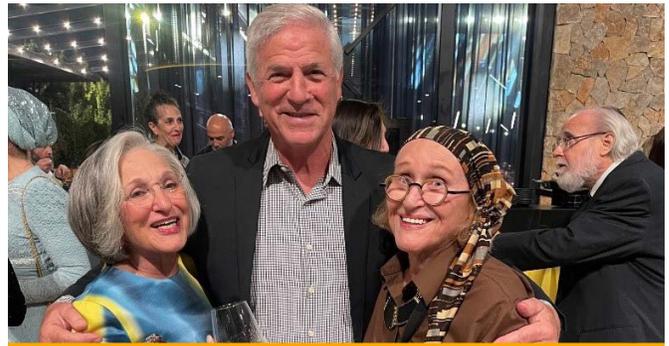
We continue to be impressed by the submissions to our “Alumni Reunite” feature.

Any time two or more alumni get together — whether for a simcha (celebration) or otherwise — we would love to get a photo. Submissions can be sent to alumni@mhacyos.org. Our thanks to those who provided these pictures, especially those who took time out during meaningful family occasions to assemble MHA/CYOS alumni and friends. *Yasher koach* (kudos)!

On Nov. 2, Miriam Thomas, daughter of Naava and **Beryl Thomas** (MHA '77, YOS '81) of Beit Shemesh, Israel, married Benny Green, son of David and **Judy (Baum) Green** (MHA '76, YOS '80), also of Beit Shemesh, in a beautiful ceremony in Ramat Beit Shemesh. Former classmates and multiple generations of alumni were on hand to celebrate the joining of two deeply rooted Memphis families.



(from left) **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79), **Judy (Baum) Green** (MHA '76, YOS '80) and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80).



(from left) **Gerry (Margolin Fink) Platsky** (MHA '59), **Lee Baum** (MHA '74) and Sylvia (Margolin) Weissman.



Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08).



(from left) **Yaakov Ehrenkranz** (MHA '98), **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81) and **Beryl Thomas** (MHA '77, YOS '81).



Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver (MHA '76, YOS '80) and her former GSMG student, **Tami (Thomas) Radinsky** (MHA '92, YOS '96).



In November, **Ethan** (left) and **Dylan Cooper** (both MHA '09, FYOS '13) ran into **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79) in New York City. Thanks for taking a picture, guys!



In October, the community in Miami Beach, Florida, celebrated the dedication of a Torah in honor of several individuals, including **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel, z'l** (MHA '65, YOS '69). The memorial dedication was made by his daughter and son-in-law, Deena (Kibel) and Eziel Dzialoszynski. Present for the ceremony were (from left) **Peninah (Rebecca Steinberg) Simon** (MHA '91), **Ranelle (Evensky) Kibel** (MHA '66, YOS '70), **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63) and Emily's husband, Alvin.



While visiting Israel, former MHA/CYOS administrators Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff dined out with Evie and **Jonathan Tavin** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) and their son, Tuvia, in November.

Gabe Goldstein (MHA '10, FYOS '14), son of **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64), married Regan Bolotin on Nov. 22 in Hudson, New York. Memphis family and friends shared in the celebration.



(from left) **Shira (Osdoba) Schwartz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), groom **Gabe**, **Hannah Morris** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) and **Seth Goldstein** (MHA '09, FYOS '13 and brother of the groom).



(from left) **Avi Goldstein** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Shifra Goldstein Smith** (MHA '04), Terry Miller, bride Regan and groom **Gabe**, **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64) and **Seth Goldstein** (MHA '09, FYOS '13).



(from left) **Avi Goldstein** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), groom **Gabe**, **Seth Goldstein** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64), **Shifra Goldstein Smith** (MHA '04), **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77), **Brittany (Baum) Lindenfeld** (MHA '04) and **Lee Baum** (MHA '74).



On Nov. 3, Faigy and **Eli Kutner** (MHA '92) celebrated the marriage of their daughter Rena to Hillel Ganchrow in Atlantic Beach, New York. Present at the wedding were (from left) **Rabbi Yitzy Greenblatt** (MHA '75), **Rabbi Larry Katz** (MHA '67), **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '65, YOS '68 and grandmother of the bride), Malkie Katz (former MHA faculty member) and **David Kutner** (MHA '67).

On Nov. 20, **Chani Vayavodkina** (FYOS '24) — who came to Memphis from Belarus as a high school sophomore and now attends Touro's Lander College for Women — married Naftali Klein in New Jersey. The bride's parents were unfortunately unable to obtain visas to attend the wedding, but many members of her MHA/CYOS family were there to celebrate with her.



Bride **Chani** and groom Naftali (seated) with (back row, from left) **Emma Wruble** (MHA '20, FYOS '24), **Margalit Goldkin** (MHA '22), **Natalie Mashinsky** (FYOS '23), **Pesi Katz** (MHA '19, FYOS '23), FYOS administrator Mrs. Sara Plotitsa, Rebbetzin Layala Males, **Rebecca (Brown) Eisenstadter** (MHA '14, YOS '18), **Elisheva Valeriano** (FYOS '23), Sarit and Rabbi Ilai Grunwald of the Kollel Torah Mitzion, and CYOS faculty Rabbi Akiva Males and Rabbi Yonason Gersten.



On her gap year in Israel, **Brooke Sanderson** (MHA '21, FYOS '25, second from right) got a visit from her grandfather, **Stuart Zalowitz** (far left), and her mother, **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88, second from left) in October. Tour guide **Alan Harkavy** (MHA '77, far right) showed them the sites, including the 9/11 Living Memorial in Jerusalem.



Rabbi Yitzzy Greenblatt (MHA '75, far left) and his wife **Miriam** (far right) celebrated their son **Moshe's** engagement with **Ephraim** and **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79, center).



During a visit to Chicago this fall, **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00, far left) joined **Reuven Stein** (MHA '98, FYOS '02, center) and **Aaron Gavant** (MHA '97) for a game of pick-up basketball for old times' sake.



Recent alumnae (from left) **Shayna Klein** (MHA '21, FYOS '25), **Shoshana Marvin** (FYOS '25), **Sarah Kahane** (MHA '21, FYOS '25), **Brooke Sanderson** (MHA '21, FYOS '25) and **Atara Segal** (FYOS '25) met up in Israel to enjoy sushi together during Sukkot.

FLASHBACKS

1996-2000

Photographs from the past

(Clockwise from top-left) Louis Safier, **Moshe (Morris) Gavant** (YOS '72), **Sandy Blockman** (MHA '71, YOS '74), **Tova (Safier) Frenkel** (MHA '04, FYOS '08), **Josh Gavant** (MHA '94), Hilda Safier z'l, Nina Blockman, **Aliza Blockman** (FYOS '08), Asher and Joyce Blockman z'l, **Aaron Gavant** (MHA '97), **Yosef Blockman** (MHA '02), **Rabbi Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04 and CYOS faculty member) and **Chaim Eli Safier** (MHA '02, FYOS '06).



"The Blockmans and Gavants celebrated the Safier family's dedication of the mezuzah on the door of the Beis Midrash at the Yeshiva. The year was 1992."

-Moshe (Morris) Gavant

In 1988, third graders **Chaim Lubin** (left) and **Josh Kahane** (both MHA '93, FYOS '97) won the grand prize in the primary division (grades 1-8) at the Shelby County Science Fair with their project on conserving topsoil. They're pictured here with their project display, trophy and science teacher Mrs. Deanna Schadeberg. The award also came with a local TV appearance for both boys.



"That's an amazing photo, and it's certainly a shock to the system to see it. Looking at this photo elicits a sense of pride and accomplishment in what my friend Joshie and I did to win the Shelby County Science Fair. This was one of the first instances I remember where I got to see the true payoff of effort and hard work. While not every pursuit we had at the Academy ended up with this level of success, these memories certainly help me appreciate all that the school and community did for me to help with these small, yet significant, successes." -Chaim Lubin

The MHA student council in 1993: (back row, from left) **Jay Lipsey** (MHA '93), parliamentarian; **Josh Gavant** (MHA '94), vice president; **Ariel (Grovelman) Weiner** (MHA '93), president; **Aliza (Katz) Shapiro** (MHA '96), reporter; **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), secretary; (front row, from left) Roman Borochin, publicity chairman; and **Chaim Lubin** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), treasurer.



"This picture reminds me of the excitement of being part of the student council. Brainstorming fundraisers and planning carnivals were some of the highlights. I was the youngest in the group and looked up to my older cousin, Deena."

-Aliza (Katz) Shapiro

The alumni basketball game against the CYHSB varsity in 1999 featured two father/son matchups: (left) **Aaron Gavant** (MHA '97) and **Moshe (Morris) Gavant** (YOS '72), and **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and **Hugh (Freiden) Gordon** (MHA '72, YOS '76).



"The main thing I remember about the Gavant boys' basketball talents (and certainly their father's) is that they spent more playing time in a horizontal position while diving for loose balls and much less time in the vertical position in the air attempting jump shots!" **-Moshe (Morris) Gavant**

CYHSB winter break trip to Israel in 1998: (back row, from left) Jeff Davis, **Ronen Bass** (FYOS '00), Daniel Levy, **Michael Friedman** (MHA '97), Josh Cenker; (front row, from left) **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Jesse Fox** (FYOS '99), **Yoni Graber** (MHA '97, FYOS '01), **Lee Braverman** (MHA '97, FYOS '01), **Yudi Moskowitz** (MHA '97) and former FYOS faculty member Rabbi Ari Katz.



"This was the L'eilah Ul'eilah program, which was meant to help high schoolers seek out gap-year yeshivas and seminaries in Israel. It may only have run for a year or two. There were also kids on the trip from Boston, Chicago and other places. Rabbi Leonard Matanky from Chicago was one of the chaperones." -Yoni Graber

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 35th issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication around Pesach. In it, we will once again highlight the eighth and 12th grade graduates from the years 2016-2020. Members of these classes will receive questionnaires by email (or regular mail) sometime in February. Please return your completed survey promptly so you can be included.

Our feature story in that issue will spotlight **Moreh Shimshon Soleman**, who taught at our school from 2008 to 2025. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Moreh Shimshon that you would 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.

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



Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown, head of school
Mark Kaplowitz, president, board of trustees