

2014 / 5775 - CHANUKAH

MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 1

**Highlighting the
graduating classes
of 1957-1964**

IN THIS ISSUE

From the Dean

Rochelle Kutliroff

Letter to Alumni

Joanne Kahane

President's Message

Joel Siegel

D'var Torah

Rabbi Nachum (Herbert) Lansky

Where are they now?

Feedback from our survey

Academy Memories

Lynn Katz Mirvis

Flashbacks

From the past

Trivia

Win a tin of Ricki's Cookies

This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of the school's 1957-1964 graduates who are no longer with us.

- **Gerald Kibel (MHA '64)**

- **Teddy Petrovsky (MHA '61)**

- **Jacob Rubenstein (MHA '63)**

May their memories be a blessing.

Amara Levine-Reich (MHA '94, YOS '97), Editor - © 2014 Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South



As we publish this first Alumni Newsletter, we are into our 66th year and still going strong. We continue to offer an outstanding and rigorous general and Torah education from Pre-K 3 through 12th grade. Our hallways are filled with wonderful artwork from all grade levels, individual projects on display and the sounds of happy children and dedicated teachers.

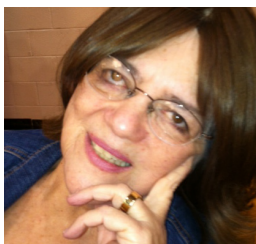
Our classrooms are equipped with smart boards, laptops and iPads for the most up-to-date educational experiences. We have recently been named the 6th best high school in the city of Memphis and the 25th best K-12 school in the state of Tennessee!

Our students participate in a large number of extracurricular activities and are often out in the community doing chesed, leading davening or advocating for Israel. Our seniors continue to be recruited for the top Israeli yeshivot and seminaries, as well as the most prestigious colleges and universities.

I encourage you to pay us a visit and get the royal tour, and please keep in touch. We would love to hear from y'all!

Rochelle Kutliroff

rochelle.kutliroff@mhafyos.org



Dear MHA/FYOS Alumni,

About a year ago, the MHA/FYOS Board of Trustees decided that our school should launch an effort to reconnect with our 1,000-plus alumni.

Thus, the MHA/FYOS Alumni Committee was created. Our group, composed of a wide spectrum of alumni and community members, feels so proud of you, our alumni, and what you have accomplished. We therefore want to share your achievements with others, both in Memphis and beyond. We also thought it would be fun to reconnect all of you with fellow alumni and evoke fond memories of your days at the MHA/FYOS.

When our current president, Dr. Joel Siegel, asked for a volunteer to spearhead this initiative, my hand shot up (although I certainly do not remember consciously raising it). Somehow, my subconscious took over. But why? After all, I am not an alumna. Maybe it is because of my gratitude to the school for having educated my sons, Michael (MHA '91, FYOS '95) and Josh (MHA '93, FYOS '97), who attended K- 12.

During the time that my boys were in school, I volunteered actively and even spent two years as PTA president. Maybe it is because I currently have four grandchildren at the school and am again involved in volunteering there. But really, when I dig deep, maybe it is because I selfishly want to reconnect with all those wonderful young people who passed through my house during the last 30 years: those who studied at my dining room table, worked on science fair projects at my kitchen table, wore Pilgrim hats at my Thanksgiving table and graced our Shabbos table hundreds of times. Maybe the memories of Shakespeare plays, alumni basketball games and camping trips forced my hand to fly

up and volunteer for this exciting, but nonetheless HUGE task.

We are so proud, and extremely excited, to send you the very first ALUMNI NEWSLETTER in the school's history. We have only located about half of the graduates from the past 65 years, but locating all of them is certainly our goal and our ongoing project. If you are in touch with any alumni who did not receive this newsletter, please ask them to email me to be included in future announcements.

For this first alumni newsletter, we have chosen to highlight graduates from the very first classes of our school, 1957-1964. It has been thrilling for us to reach out to these people and see where life has taken them. We know that you, too, will be interested in reading about them. Some of these early alumni will also be highlighted in upcoming issues of the school's weekly newsletter. Those newsletters are posted each week on the [MHA/FYOS website](#).

Another great way to discover what is currently happening at the MHA/FYOS is to "like" the "[Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South](#)" page on Facebook. For information specific to alumni, please "like" the "[MHA/FYOS Alumni](#)" Facebook page.

I would love to hear from you with suggestions, comments or ideas for future newsletters. Just [email me](#). We hope all of you are having a wonderful and inspiring Chanukah, and I look forward to hearing from you very soon.

Sincerely,

Joanne Kahane
joannekahane111@gmail.com



Dear MHA/FYOS Alumni,

It is deeply gratifying to share with you our first ever Alumni Newsletter. I am so proud of the dedicated group of volunteers

who have been working for many months collecting alumni contact information and brainstorming on how to best reconnect with you. But most of all, I'm glad that the MHA/FYOS now possesses a forum for alumni to share memories, thoughts and highlights from their lives with each other.

For 65 years, the MHA/FYOS has been a beacon of education for the Jewish children of Memphis. It has ensured that the children who walked through its doors were provided with the Jewish knowledge necessary to live well-informed, committed Jewish lives. Further, in many cases the children in our school have been able to utilize their knowledge and skills to transform their entire families into living more passionate Jewish lives.

Currently led by our impressive dean, Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff, the MHA/FYOS is an amazing institution. It is the engine that powers the future of the Memphis Orthodox community. If you would like to be inspired, simply visit the school while in session. Nothing else compares to this experience. Walk through the preschool, run by Mrs. Charna Schubert, and hear the most beautiful sounds of kids playing, learning, davening and saying brachot

together. Visit our lower school, under the leadership of Mrs. Sandy Gersten, and watch the students enjoying learning about Native American history, the digestive system or Chumash with Rashi. Stroll through our high schools, led by Rabbi Uriel Lubetski, and sit in on history, psychology, Hebrew or Gemara classes. Feel free to attend any Friday afternoon lower school assembly and listen to the students delivering exceptional divrei Torah on the parsha. Enjoy a preschool holiday program or a high school play, even if you have no children or grandchildren performing.

If you live out-of-town, please "like" the "**Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South**" and "**MHA/FYOS Alumni**" pages on Facebook, where you will find videos and pictures detailing the impressive learning going on at the MHA/FYOS.

On behalf of the MHA/FYOS, it is a pleasure to welcome you back to your school. Please never hesitate to visit your alma mater and take a tour with Mrs. Kutliroff. It is my sincere hope that, regardless of where you live, you'll always stay connected with your classmates, your teachers and the extended MHA/FYOS family.

Look forward to hearing from you soon,

Joel Siegel

Joelsiegel2@gmail.com



I don't personally like the words "Jewish Education"

I don't personally like the words "Jewish Education," because that term connotes giving over facts and knowledge. While that is certainly part of what is involved in the school, it is not the main part.

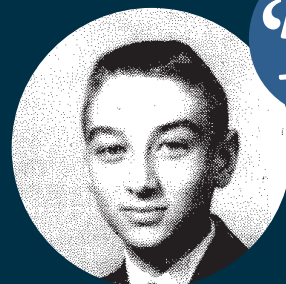
Rather, the school builds bond, that which makes us a nation. What makes us Klal Yisrael is the fact that our connection to Ha'kodesh Baruch Hu is through Torah and Mitzvos.

Chazal say that especially children, the young children. who learn Torah, give the breath of life and give existence to the world. Therefore, when the children are learning and connecting to the Torah, Hashem and our purpose, their breath is what gives us life.

Consequently, the Academy is the breath of life of the Memphis Jewish community because it gives it its very existence. That is what has to be remembered.

The purpose of the school is not to simply impart facts or knowledge, it goes infinitely further than that. We have to see to it that we do whatever is in our capabilities to make sure that this breath does not leave us.

Rabbi Nachum (Herbert) Lansky



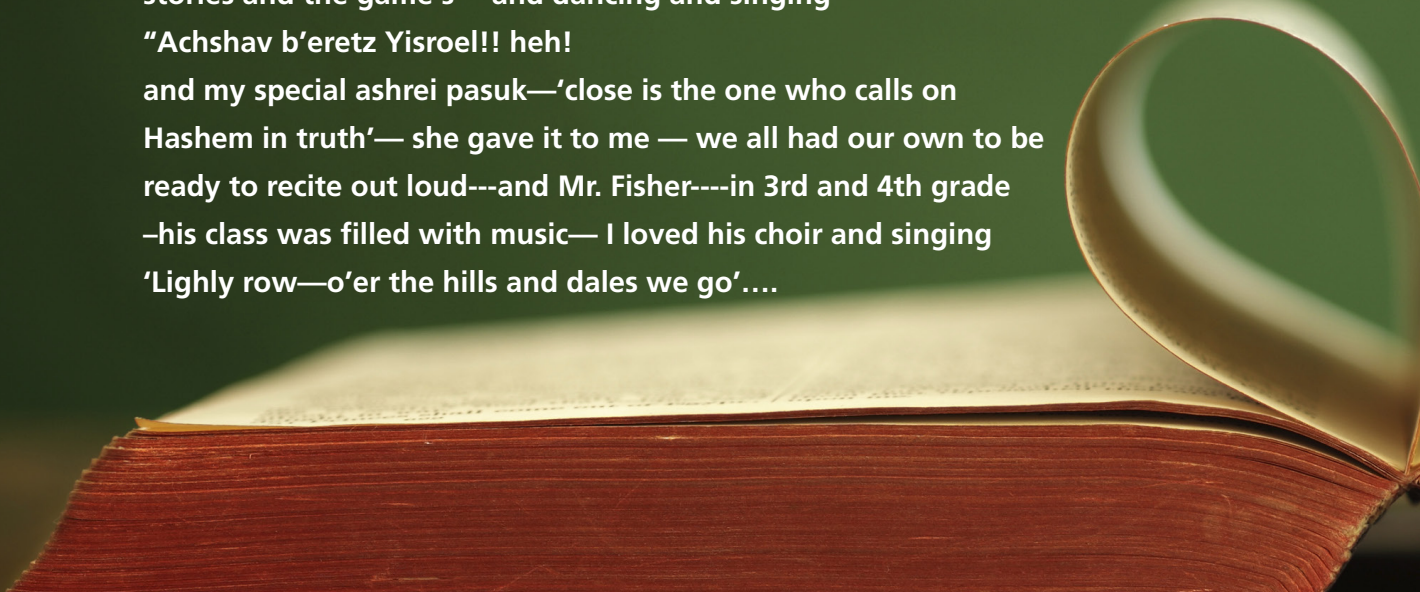
'57

6

ACADEMY MEMORIES

A Poem by Linnie (Arlynn Shara) Katz Mirvis (MHA '62)

Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz was our principal—
young, enthusiastic—so many ideas—learning as he went—
asking us questions, making us think-----
growing a day school—a new experience in an America that
valued the melting pot---
and he walked around and smiled at us
and did jumping jacks with us when we moved out East--
every morning in the front , we'd raise the Israeli and the
American flag—
the old building was like a cavern and my mother
made curtains for my first grade class—a bright spot.
In Sheila Abraham's kindergarten class –I colored and colored
and colored big murals with my friends—she would smile
and then Miriam Ross (Cheruff) made the Shabbos parties
—soft little challah rolls, candles and grape juice—and
we'd lie on the floor--and listen to records—stories—I
remember Aladdin and the Magic Lamp..
Open Sesame—
and my first grade teachers, Celia Lefkowitz, who took us to
her house and we picked pecans from her trees and had hot
cocoa and Libby Nayowitz who spoke and
wrote Hebrew sentences on the board and I was thrilled I
could read them...
and Miriam Greenblatt my second grade teacher – oh the
stories and the game s— and dancing and singing —
"Achshav b'eret Yisroel!! heh!
and my special ashrei pasuk—'close is the one who calls on
Hashem in truth'— she gave it to me — we all had our own to be
ready to recite out loud---and Mr. Fisher---in 3rd and 4th grade
—his class was filled with music— I loved his choir and singing
'Lighly row—o'er the hills and dales we go'....



ACADEMY MEMORIES

A Poem by Lynn timer (Arlynn Shara) Katz Mirvis (MHA '62)

7

and he chose me to be the Statue of Liberty—'Give me your
tired --your poor'----and Rabbi Ephraim Greenblatt—6th grade-
his stories—oh his stories of fighting for Israel during the War
of Independence—we were there---with him --all the way--
and Rabbi David Rebibo—4th -9th—Ani Maamin, Ha Palmach,
Kinneret, oh the Jewish music he taught us --in the choir—
Shabbos at the school—we all spent the night together—
giggles, food, davening—walks and talks---
the love for Hebrew—for Torah---he made us
keep a journal
and answer two questions every day--
'What is the most important thing you learned today? How will
you apply it to your life?----I still have mine---
and his brother came from France and taught us French and
Algebra—we all had French accents from then on—and
Rabbi Nata Greenblatt taught us Talmud---ancient texts---within reach--
and Joyce Shankman --
she read Shakespeare to us out loud---the whole play—'Much
Ado about Nothing" she was every character—we saw
ourselves—we learned about the world --we had been
together for so many years---read Exodus—my class—many
children of Holocaust Survivors—never spoken about until
that year—and then in slant--
and we had to write and write
and read and read and speak and listen--
and we were in plays every year—operettas--
music, color, costumes, words, and pictures and the light of
Torah.

Lynn timer (Arlynn Shara) Katz Mirvis

'64

The MHA/FYOS classes of 1957-1964: Where are they now?

The boy once known as **Herbert Lansky (MHA '57)** now goes by Rabbi Nachum Lansky and teaches at Yeshivas Ner Israel in Baltimore, Maryland. He and his wife Shifra (nee Shemanowitz) have five married children, many grandchildren (including three who are married) and several great-grandchildren. Three of his children live in Lakewood, New Jersey with their spouses and families and learn at the Lakewood Yeshiva. One child lives in Los Angeles and another is nearby in Baltimore.



"I had only two classmates at the MHA: Lester Lit and Samuel 'Brooksey' Gold," he said. "It has been a long time, but I think of them both often. Looking back, my gratitude to the founders of the school, my teachers and rabbeim, and the entire Memphis community goes beyond words. My life is different for the better because of their dedication, commitment, struggles and self-sacrifice. I can never thank them enough. I hope that the school continues to grow, to transmit Torah to our children, and to produce young adults who are dedicated to Torah and Yiddishkeit."

Lester Lit (MHA '57) is an attorney and president emeritus of Lit Refrigeration Co. in Memphis, where he still works part-time. He has two daughters, Margot and Illysa; each is married and has two children of her own. His favorite teacher at the school was Mrs. Verna Vickery. "I hope my MHA classmates are doing well," he said. Lester can be reached at llit@att.net.





George Conroy (MHA '58) is now retired from a career as a writer and consultant and lives in Memphis. He has two children: Rebekah Conroy Langer, a litigation attorney licensed in New York and New Jersey; and Grant, a systems architect for Microsoft Professional Services. His favorite memories from the MHA include playing the role of Captain Hook in the junior high school performance of *Peter Pan* in 1958 and attending Joyce Shankman's American History class. He congratulates the entire MHA/FYOS community on the school's recent designation among the top 25 in Tennessee. Alumni can reach George at george@balagan.net.

Gerry Margolin Fink (MHA '59) and her husband, Dr. Robert Fink, have four daughters: Peninah (MHA '82, YOS '85), who is married to Rabbi Jay Salid, has eight children, and teaches Jewish studies full-time at a day school in Boca Raton, Florida; Deena (MHA '83), who has a law degree from Cardozo, is married to Rabbi Nissim Tagger, the rosh yeshiva of Bircas Hatorah in Jerusalem, and has eight children; Anna (MHA '84), who is married to Shimon Kaminetzky, works in human resources and has five children; and Sarah (MHA '88, YOS '92), who has seven children with her husband, Memphis native Jonathan Wachtel, lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh and is a professional doula. Gerry now splits her time between Memphis and Israel.



Her favorite memories from the MHA include the plays performed by her class at the annual banquet and participating in the choir. The teachers she remembers most fondly include "Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, who told us about his adventures as a kid; Joyce Shankman, who inspired me to become an English teacher; and Mr. Bob Fischer, whom we begged to read us the poems 'Lil Orphan Annie' (which never failed to scare us) and 'The Lady Who Swallowed the Fly' (which never failed to make us laugh)," she said.

"It is with a great deal of warmth and fondness that I recall our time together at the Academy," Gerry said. "Although we have not kept in close touch, I think of you often and hope your lives have reflected the values so lovingly offered by our dean and rabbeim. May the ties that bind us become strengthened through our children and grandchildren in an ever-increasing commitment to lives of Torah and ahavas Yisroel."

'62

Arlynn (Lynnie) Katz Mirvis (MHA '62) is a renowned Jewish storyteller who continues to reside in Memphis with her husband, Dr. David Mirvis. They have three children. Rabbi Simcha (Simmy) Mirvis (MHA '85) is founding director of the Tzfat Legacy Center; he and his wife, Elisheva Kagan, have eight children and live in the old city of Tzfat, Israel. Tova Mirvis (MHA '86, YOS '90) is a fiction writer whose third book, *Visible City*, was published this past spring. She has three children, lives in Newton, Massachusetts, and will marry Dr. Bruce Cohen after Chanukah. Dr. Shoshana (Shoni) Mirvis (MHA '89, YOS '93) is a psychologist with a private practice in New York City. She recently married CBS Sports journalist Larry Hartstein in Israel, and they live on the Upper West Side of Manhattan.

'64

'68

'62

Lynnie's sister, **Barbara Katz Kutner (MHA '64)**, also lives in Memphis with her husband, **Judah (Alan) Kutner (MHA '62)**. They have four married children. Barbara teaches Pre-K 3 at the Academy.

'64

After attending the school through ninth grade, **Sandra Kilstein (MHA '64)** went on to complete high school and college, and then embarked on a 22-year career as director of outreach and informal education for the Board of Jewish Education of Greater New York. She continues to reside in New York City and now serves as dean of students at The Academy for Jewish Religion.

"The Academy provided a feeling of extended family," she said. "It was such a warm and intimate environment for children and parents alike." Her favorite memory is "spending a Shabbaton at the school, sleeping in the classroom and eating Georgia's potato kugel – the best ever!" She has never forgotten her favorite teachers: Mrs. Wahl, Mrs. Levine, Rabbi Rebibo and kindergarten teacher Mrs. Shemano. Sandra welcomes the opportunity to reconnect with fellow alumni and can be reached at skilstein@rcn.com.

Entire student body in 1956, when the school was housed at the Baron Hirsch Synagogue on Vollentine.



1956, the students decorating Baron Hirsch for Chanukah.

Lunch time in the first 1st grade class in the little house on N. Parkway, our first home. The teacher is Sheila Abraham, and the man is Rabbi Fruchter.

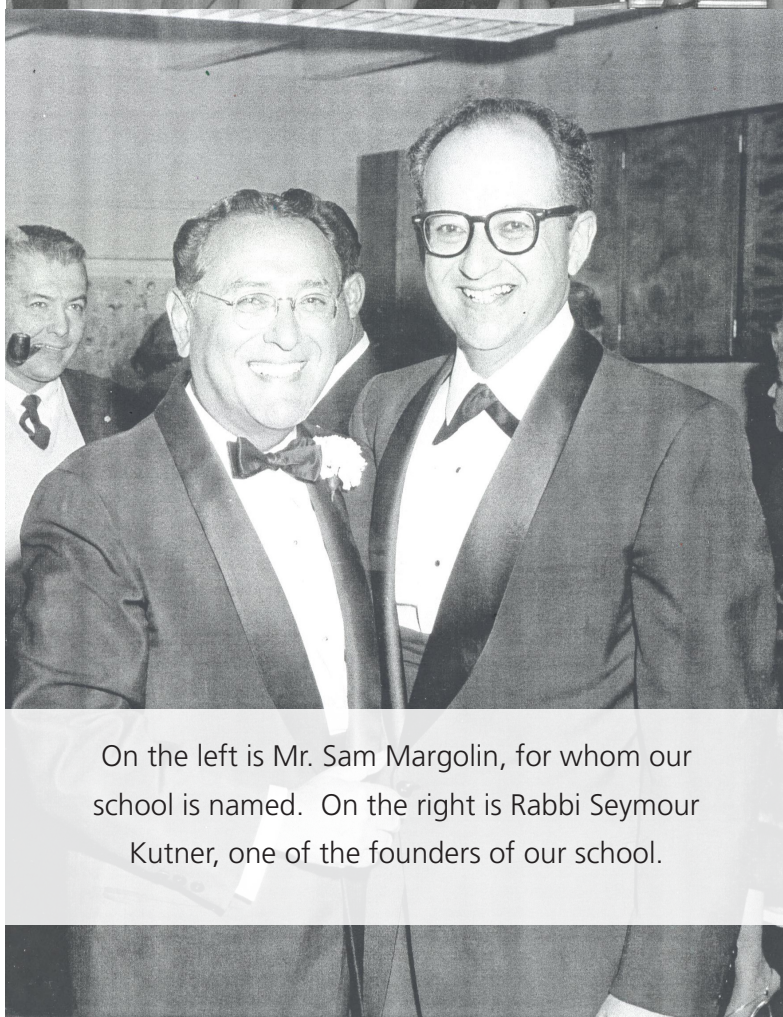


Groundbreaking ceremony for the White Station Rd. campus.

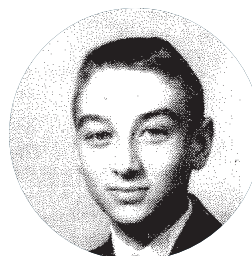




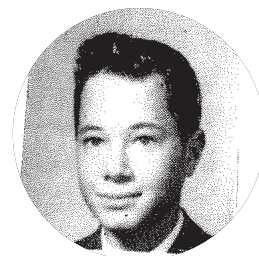
MHA's first PTA



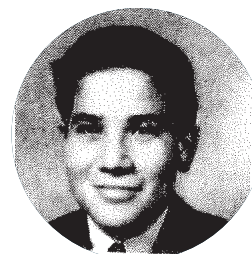
On the left is Mr. Sam Margolin, for whom our school is named. On the right is Rabbi Seymour Kutner, one of the founders of our school.



Herbert (Nachum) Lansky



Lester Lit



Samuel Brooks (Brooksey) Gold

The very first 8th grade graduating class of the MHA, 1957

1949-1964

TRIVIA

Regardless of when you graduated, have some fun with these trivia questions from the 1949-1964 years. Send your answers to joannekahanel11@gmail.com. The person who gets the most answers correct, or in case of a tie, the earliest respondent, will win a tin of Ricki's Cookies (made by Ricki Thomas Krupp, MHA '66).



Watch for our spring newsletter, in which we will reveal the answers to the questions and the name of the winner.

1. Who was the cook who made the best BBQ beef sandwiches this side of the Mississippi?
2. Who taught Tennessee history and said she was there when it all began?
3. What did the ladies of the early PTA do one Sunday a month at the school?
4. What were the names (colors) of the teams for the first Color War for Yom Ha'atzmaut?
5. Who was the Academy leader who rode atop a bulldozer during ground breaking for the White Station campus?
6. Name two different places where the Academy was housed before the White Station campus.
7. Who was the Academy student who played Dorothy in *The Wizard of Oz*?
8. Who played Peter Pan, Captain Hook and Wendy?
9. What was the name of the first Academy basketball team?
10. Who was the first PTA President?
11. Who was the first principal?
12. How old was Rabbi Nayowitz when he became principal?
13. Who directed the play *Johnnie Appleseed*?
14. (*see photo on next page*) In what year did this 8th grade class graduate?
15. (*see photos on next page*) For each of the following three photos, identify the occasion and the people in the picture.

14



15



IN THE NEXT ISSUE

We are planning to send out our second newsletter sometime around Pesach. That issue will highlight 8th and 12th grade graduates from the years 1991-1996. If you were in those classes, you should be receiving a questionnaire sometime in February 2015. Please fill it out and return it to us promptly, so that you can be included in that newsletter. We will also be including a section entitled "Mazal Tov!". Regardless of when you graduated, if you have a "Mazal Tov" event between now and Pesach, please email Joanne Kahane at joannekahane111@gmail.com and share the information so that we may include your simcha in our publication.

