

# MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends

**Issue 7**  
**Highlighting  
the graduating  
classes of  
2006-2010**

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Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

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Feinstone Yeshiva of the South

## COVER PHOTO: Chanukah in Morah Barbara Kutner's class, 1998.

To the right of Morah Barbara is **Zahava Gersten** (MHA '09, FYOS '13). Next to Zahava is Jack Fargotstein. The little boy on the far right with his finger in his mouth is **Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13). To the left of Morah Barbara is Judah Baum. The gentleman in the center is Mr. Chaim Loterstein z'l, grandfather of many MHA/FYOS alumni. (See feature article on Morah Barbara on page 21 of this issue).



## MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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Dear MHA/FYOS alumni,

Once again, we find ourselves at the festival of Chanukah. Our very [first issue](#) came out at Chanukah time in 2014, so this issue—our seventh—marks the beginning of our third year of publication. We thank all of you who have helped to enhance this publication by sharing your thoughts, ideas, comments and suggestions. We are still a work in progress and always welcome your input.



Chanukah is known as a time of miracles and a time of gift giving. Last month, our small, southern community was given both a gift and a miracle with the establishment of the Memphis Kollel. Four scholars, trained at New York's Chofetz Chaim Yeshiva and Ner Yisroel of Baltimore, have relocated with their families to bring additional Torah growth to Memphis. Best of all, one of these scholars is our own Rabbi **Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04). The kollel families have hit the ground running with a packed schedule of one-on-one learning with MHA/FYOS students and community members and a variety of educational programming. We look forward to the increased personal commitment to Torah these families will bring.

On the topic of increased Torah learning, you will notice that this issue includes two *divrei*

*Torah*, whereas past issues had only one. To this point, we've reserved the *d'var Torah* for a distinguished rabbi from the classes showcased in each issue. However, we are blessed with alumni in all fields who are knowledgeable in Torah; therefore, we will be adding a second *d'var Torah* going forward to allow us to highlight our alumni lay leaders as well. Our cup runneth over with learned Torah scholars, and we hope you are inspired by both.

Speaking of miracles, our capital improvements campaign continues to move forward. I send my deepest gratitude to those of you who saw fit to make a donation. To learn more about the campaign, please see the piece by **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) in our [sixth issue](#), beginning on page 20. No donation is too small, and all gifts are greatly appreciated.

We continue our search for contact information for MHA/FYOS alumni. If you know of anyone not receiving this newsletter, please forward this to them and ask them to send us their contact information for our mailing list.

I hope this season of miracles is as good to you as it has been to our community.

**Joanne Kahane**

*Alumni Committee Chair*

[joannekahane111@gmail.com](mailto:joannekahane111@gmail.com)

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

David Katz (MHA '88)

Dear fellow MHA/FYOS alumni,

Our school year is off and running with great success! The administrative team, teachers, parents and lay leaders have settled in and



are working hard to continue the achievements we have come to appreciate at the MHA/FYOS. Due in large part to the support of our alumni, we had record success with this year's operational campaign and are excited about the programs and events we have in store for the remainder of the year.

One of the lessons we learn from the holiday of Chanukah is leadership. Faced with persecution and an uncertain future, the Maccabees fought for Jewish survival. The few outdueled the many; the weak defeated the strong. Yehuda Maccabee, in what would become a credo of leadership, declared, "*Mi LaHashem Aylai* - Who is for Hashem, join me!" His bravery and the willingness of the Maccabees to stand up for the Jewish cause in such dire conditions are examples to us all of what it means to be a Jewish leader.

We at the MHA/FYOS have a storied history. While other Jewish communities in our area have slowly dissolved, we have thrived. The success of our community is directly related to the success of our school. Without Torah-based education at our core, we have no future. Your support helps to ensure our future. In that regard, you are leaders.

The alumni of our school bring us great pride. Many have become leaders in their respective

communities and fields. Among our ranks are nationally recognized doctors and lawyers, renowned educators and *roshei yeshiva*, and founders of successful global technology firms. Pretty remarkable for our small school.

I am confident that our leadership will continue. The young alumni featured in this issue are well on their way to greatness. We are teaching our current students the importance of leadership and giving them opportunities to display it. Our high school seniors are receiving acceptance letters from the finest colleges, yeshivas and seminaries, and we are nurturing leaders in *chesed* – loving kindness.

Earlier this year, FYOS senior **Ariel (JJ) Kampf** (MHA '13) was named national president of the National Conference of Synagogue Youth (NCSY). He's in good company, as it's a position that Memphians have proudly held at what seems to be a disproportionate rate. Past national presidents of NCSY with Memphis roots include my father **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69), **Morris Goldstein** (MHA '73), **Devorah (Adler) Weiner** (YOS '82), Alec Stone, **Dana (Chafetz) Berlin** (MHA '92, YOS '96), **Sarah (Emerson) Helfand** (MHA '95, YOS '98) and **Denah Emerson** (MHA '01, YOS '05). Amazing for a community of our size!

Our future is bright, thanks to your continued engagement and support. Your leadership is honorable, and your example is appreciated.

Happy Chanukah!

**David Katz (MHA '88)**

President, MHA/FYOS Board of Trustees

[dkatz@terminix.com](mailto:dkatz@terminix.com)

With regard to the holiday of Chanukah, we follow the opinion of Beis Hillel and add a light each night, as opposed to the opinion of Beis Shammai which tells us to start with eight candles and dwindle down to one. The reasoning behind the view of Beis Hillel is *maalin b'kodesh v'ein moridin* (we go up in holiness and do not go down). A deeper look at these opinions can teach us an incredible lesson.

Across the entire Talmud, the arguments of Beis Hillel and Beis Shamai have a common thread: Beis Shammai looks at potential, while Beis Hillel looks at practice. When Beis Shammai sees that something will happen, they consider it done. Beis Hillel, on the other hand, does not see the matter as finished until we actually do it. For this reason, we light the menorah for the days that have already occurred, not the ones which are yet to come.

As students at the MHA, we were reminded many times of our potential, of what we could accomplish if we only tried. Our wonderful teachers spurred us on and made sure we did not settle for our past achievements alone. (The motivating speeches of Rabbi Sheftel Skaist and Mrs. Karin Schmitt still ring in my mind whenever I'm feeling lazy.) However, as we get older, we realize that few people care about what you can do; they want to know what you have done. Education and work ethic seem largely meaningless when a job requires experience that we don't have.

Beis Hillel teaches us this lesson. Yes, potential is huge; we need to know our abilities and be prepared to use them. We are sure that will happen, just as sure as the second night of Chanukah will come. But if we want to illuminate the night, we must act. We must build on our past—our great education and foundation—and light another candle. We can't be satisfied with the knowledge that tomorrow will come; we must take the torch

and light up another soul or do another good deed.

Beis Hillel reminds us that *b'kodesh maalin* – we must elevate in holiness. It is true that on the second night of Chanukah we have twice the amount of light we did on the first night, but by the time the third night comes around, it is not enough. If we become complacent in the dark, we end up missing the details. Yesterday's achievement is only a foundation for today's journey. We must continue to grow and to accomplish more; a full menorah is the goal. A world filled with light is the ultimate, but we must work slowly and diligently to achieve it. By building on our past and investing in our future, we continue to affect those around us as we move around and change through life, making our world brighter.

We must always remember that each of the eight Chanukah candles starts out as one little light. The foundation we received through our education in Memphis can lead us to incredible places and amazing experiences; I know it has for me. It is with great thanks to all of our teachers at the MHA that we as alumni hold our candles high to light up the world.

*Menachem Klein received rabbinic ordination from the Chabad Rabbinical Council of Israel. On Dec. 6, he married Mussie Sasonkin in Akron, Ohio, and the newlyweds live in Brooklyn, New York. Rabbi Klein works as a project manager for the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute, helping to produce adult education class materials used at more than 900 sites worldwide. See page 31 for more on Rabbi Klein.*



'06

# 6

## D'VAR TORAH

Raquel Kampf (MHA '05, FYOS '09)

The Chanukah miracle of the oil has two precursors in *Tanach*, the first of which is in Kings I. After decreeing that no rain shall fall in Israel, Elijah the prophet is instructed by G-d to visit a widow, who is supposed to feed him. When Elijah comes to her with the request for food, she responds that she is getting ready to eat her last meal with her son before they die, since she only has “a handful of flour and a little oil in a jug.”

Elijah tells her not to be afraid and instructs her to instead make a cake out of what she has left, give it to him, and, only afterwards, to make food for herself and her son. In return for her kindness, G-d says, the flour and oil will last until the day that rain is sent again and she and her son are no longer in need.

Although Elijah could have easily brought about this miracle right after she explained her extremely difficult situation, he instead makes a two-pronged demand beforehand: *emunah*, faith in G-d, and *chesed*, an act of kindness. She is asked by a man who represents G-d to make an extra meal, even though she is in dire need herself and has very limited resources. She does as Elijah instructs her, and she then has plenty of food for a long time, as the flour and oil miraculously do not give out.

The second story is in Kings II, when a widow comes to Elisha the prophet explaining her difficult situation. Her creditors want to take her two children into slavery, and she helplessly cries to Elisha for help because the only thing of value she has is a single jar of oil.

Elisha originally asked, “What can I do for you?,” implying that she can’t just have a miracle out of the blue. When he hears that she has a jar of oil, he decides to put her to a test, albeit not as difficult as the test in the first story. He tells her to borrow as many empty containers as she can from her neighbors.

A man of G-d asks her to perform this task, which involves putting herself through the embarrassment of asking for vessels when everyone in the neighborhood knows she is poor and has nothing with which to fill them. In fact, the verses imply that the widow does not end up asking all of her neighbors and instead goes

home to start filling up the jars behind closed doors, while her children stay out asking for the containers.

Naturally, once she sees the miracle at work—that the oil keeps flowing as she pours it into more and more vessels—she would like to fill up more vessels, but it’s too late. She ends up paying the price for her lack of faith. She

**We learn from Chanukah the importance of being active participants in bringing about our own miracles.**

Raquel Kampf (MHA '05, FYOS '09)

would have had more oil had she had the faith to ask for more containers.

Both of these stories involving jugs of oil shed light (pun intended) on a deeper understanding of the miracle of oil: the willingness of humanity to give, sacrifice, and put themselves in danger. Both miracles stem from the characters' strong inner attributes. Neither prophet creates a jug of oil from nothing; rather, the miracles involve the oil lasting beyond what's expected. Only when the characters find the ability to be part of the miracle are they worthy of it.

Many have written that the miracle of the oil on Chanukah wasn't really necessary, since the Jews could have used impure oil in their situation. However, they still searched and found the pure oil, and the miracle followed. When people fulfill their duty to G-d, G-d then acts for them. This is the lesson of the miracle of Chanukah.

In recent generations, many have said that our national redemption demands that we each

make ourselves worthy of being redeemed and become active participants in the process. We have already seen part of G-d's redemption of Israel coming from the nation doing just that.

On a personal level, while we pray to G-d every day to fulfill our needs, we learn from the Chanukah miracle the importance of taking of our own jug of oil and being active participants in bringing about our own miracles. Hopefully, G-d will take the small light in each jug and make it into a large, powerful and long-lasting one.

Happy Chanukah!

*Raquel Kampf studied at Shaalvim for Women and Yeshiva University's Stern College before completing her bachelor's degree in computer science and English literature at Hebrew University. She lives in Jerusalem, Israel, and works as a developer for a startup company in Tel Aviv.*



'05

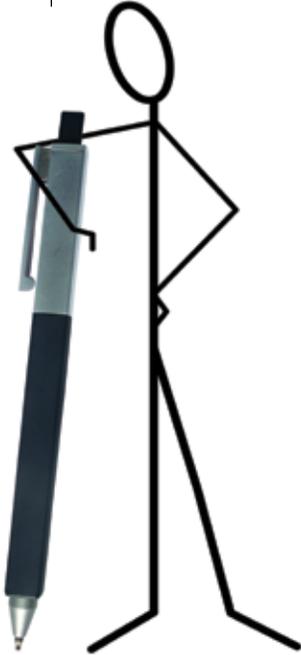
'09



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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ALUMNI CHAIR

### Community Responses



*We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at [alumni@mhafyos.org](mailto:alumni@mhafyos.org). Here are some of the responses we received to [Issue No. 6](#).*

Thank you for the cookies; they arrived today. They taste so fresh that I can't believe they came through the mail. The taste took me right back to my high school days, when we used to buy them from Ricki's Cookie Corner at Gottlieb's. They haven't changed a bit—still amazingly delicious! What a great treat.

**–Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer**

*MHA '88, YOS '92*

Thank you for the tin of Ricki's cookies. They are incredibly yummy and the best I've had in a long time, including homemade. Kudos to you for all the wonderful newsletters you

produce. You have a real talent for collecting and highlighting the happy memories.

**–Basya (Goldfein) Israel**

*MHA '87, YOS '91*

*Note from the editor and chair: The team of Goldfein sisters Basya and Rivka won the trivia contest from our sixth issue. **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70) sends tins of her world-famous cookies to the winners of each contest.*

My daughter **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92) has been sending me copies of the alumni newsletters as they come out. I've enjoyed reading them so much. It's no wonder that everyone thinks the newsletter is the greatest thing – because it is!

**–Sharon Goldfein**

*Note from the editor and chair: As we were putting the finishing touches on our Chanukah issue, we were saddened to learn that Sharon Goldfein passed away on Dec. 9 in Lakewood, New Jersey. Our feature article in the forthcoming Pesach issue will be devoted to her and late husband, Rabbi Yaacov Goldfein, and their years of service to the MHA. We send our sincere condolences to all of Mrs. Goldfein's loved ones; may her memory be a blessing.*

Thank you for your tribute to Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'l. I live in Jerusalem now, but I attended the Memphis Hebrew Academy from kindergarten through eighth grade and remember Rabbi Nayowitz as a caring man.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ALUMNI CHAIR

Community Responses



He tutored me in math one summer, and at the end of our study sessions he would take me along wherever he was going, like one of his own children. He was a wonderful principal and friend.

**–Sherry (Goldman) Luber**

*MHA '62*

*Note from the editor and chair: We were overwhelmed by the response to our request for memories of Rabbi Nayowitz following his passing. Although we weren't able to include all of them in our tribute article, we appreciate everyone who shared their thoughts and reflections about him.*

Thank you so much for the beautiful write-up about me in your last issue. It was interesting to read what students remembered about me. Some said I smiled a lot. I had good reason; I really loved my position and the various people I worked with.

The article about Rabbi Nayowitz, z'l, was excellent and brought back many fond memories. He was the first principal I worked for, and he was truly a wonderful man. I also enjoyed all the articles, letters and pictures of students I remember well. So much fun! It was nice to read the *d'var Torah* written by my son **David** (MHA '75); who would have thought?!

May Hashem bless you with every good thing and give you the health and strength to carry on doing all you do.

**–Naomi Finkelstein**

I absolutely loved the sixth issue, and not just because it featured my year's graduating class. Thanks so much for all of the hard work that you continuously put into this project. I can just imagine all of the detective work and persistence needed to publish each issue, and I appreciate your ongoing and endless dedication. I really enjoy being kept in the loop about what's going on at the MHA/FYOS, and I will definitely give more to the school as a result of your feature on the capital campaign.

**–Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn**

*MHA '75, YOS '79*

What a treat to open my email and walk down memory lane! Thank you for all your hard work.

**–Lisa (Yormark) Neuman**

*MHA '79, YOS '83*

Thanks so much for the amazing alumni magazine that you put together. Great publication, as always. You can see that a lot of hard work went into it.

**–Suri (Samberg) Weiner**

*MHA '99, FYOS '03*

My daughter-in-law **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) sent me a copy of your last issue. The newsletter is absolutely fantastic and very nostalgic. It's wonderful to see pictures and read about so many people that I know.

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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ALUMNI CHAIR

### Community Responses

May you have the strength, understanding, perseverance and commitment to continue spreading the warmth of Memphis around the world. I live in Providence, Rhode Island, and I always tell people that as warm, welcoming and wonderful as Providence is, there is nothing like Memphis warmth and hospitality. You can take me out of the South, but you cannot take the South out of me!

I look forward to seeing the future editions. When you feature the high school class of 1982, please let me know!

**–Devorah (Adler) Weiner**  
YOS 1982

**Jennifer (Whitman) Lehrfield** (MHA '77, YOS '81) shared the newsletter with me, and I can't express how meaningful it is to see and remember. You have done an amazing thing with this, and I look forward to future editions!

**–Rabbi Michael Whitman**  
MHA '72

Amazing, as always!

**–Yonason Gavant**

Marvelous job on the alumni newsletter. It is really beautiful.

**–Allison Sheppard,**  
*MHA/FYOS director of technology*

I received the MHA/FYOS alumni publication for the first time and very much enjoyed the trip down memory lane. Kudos for the great job with the newsletter. Have you already published an issue covering the Yeshiva of the South class of 1971? If so, I would very much like to see it.

**–George Wollner**  
*MHA '67, YOS '71*

*Note from the editor and chair: The next issue, our eighth, will highlight the eighth and twelfth grade graduating classes of 1971-75. See the back page for more on our next issue.*





## Births: Mazel Tov to...

Rabbi Moshe Eliezer and **Rochel (Roberta Burman) Bomzer** (YOS '68) of Albany, New York, on welcoming three grandchildren this year. (1) Grandson Chaim Zev was born Jan. 20 to Rabbi Jay and Faygie (Bomzer) Hellman of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His older siblings are Shifra, Leah, Tzvi and Laivy Yitzchok. (2) Granddaughter Talya Sora arrived March 31. Her parents are Rabbi Shraga and Leebie Bomzer of Jerusalem, and her siblings are Yael Zipporah and Ariel Tzvi. (3) Granddaughter Chava Sora was born Sept. 9 to Shmulie and Avigaiel (Bomzer) Heifetz of Far Rockaway, New York, making Zehava Chaya a big sister.

Mimi and **Mark Clemons** (MHA '68) of Germantown, Tennessee, on the July 29 arrival of grandson Gabriel Chaim, the first child born to Jonathan and Kathleen Clemons of Chicago.

Dvora and **Sam Finkelstein** (MHA '70) of Baltimore on the Nov. 9 birth of grandson Moshe, the first child for Dovid and Tova Finkelstein of Lakewood, New Jersey. Mazel tov also to great-grandmother Naomi Finkelstein, former administrative assistant in the MHA front office.

Richard and **Judy (Lebovits) Lillien** (MHA '72) of Great Neck, New York, on welcoming two granddaughters born this summer to their children.

Moshe and **David (Dona Eskenazi) Tropper** (MHA '73, YOS '77) and Nachy and **Sara (Finkelstein) Schachter** (MHA '73), all of Baltimore, on the Nov. 23 birth of grandson BenTzion Pinchas to Menachem and Shira (Tropper) Schachter, also of Baltimore. Mazel tov also to siblings Ariella, Azriel and Adira and great-grandmother Naomi Finkelstein.

Pammy and **Glenn Graber** (MHA '74, YOS '78) of Woodmere, New York, on the Oct. 23 birth of granddaughter Sophia Claire, the firstborn child of Jessie and Eitan Graber, also of Woodmere.

Debbie and **Rabbi David Finkelstein** (MHA '75) of Baltimore on the Oct. 19 birth of grandson Yitzchak Shmuel, the first child for Avi and Devorah Finkelstein, also of Baltimore. Mazel tov also to great-grandmother Naomi Finkelstein.

Rabbi Yisroel and **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79) of Baltimore, who welcomed grandson Yehuda Zev on Dec. 14. His parents are Dovid and Chani Roll of Far Rockaway, New York. Mazel tov also to big sister Yael.



**Bart** (YOS '77) and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis on the birth of four grandchildren in recent months! (1) Yossef Yehuda, the son of Meira and **Yaakov Ehrenkranz** (MHA '98) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, arrived Nov. 8. Mazel tov also to siblings Shmuel Mordechai and Miriam Chana. (2) Nossi and **Leba (Ehrenkranz) Friedman** (MHA '03) of Jerusalem welcomed baby girl Tova on Dec. 1. Mazel tov also to siblings Esther Leah, Aharon and Batsheva. (3) Chaya Miriam and **Yitzy Ehrenkranz** (MHA '06) of Jerusalem, Israel, welcomed their first child, son Dovid Dov, on Sept. 27. (4) Baby boy Yosef Shalom was born Oct. 8 to Mordechai and Adina Bayla Ehrenkranz of Richmond Hill, New York. Mazel tov also to siblings Esti, Ezra, Naftali, Batzalel and Yisrael Zev.

Rabbi Menachem and **Debbi (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Jerusalem, who

welcomed granddaughter Chava Ayelah on Sept. 18. Her proud parents are Shira (Nissel) and Yehuda Klein, also of Jerusalem. Mazel tov also to big sister Blooma.

Nancy and **Mordechai (Marty) Wolff** (MHA '80) of Brooklyn on the Sept. 25 birth of granddaughter Rochel to Baruch and Nechama Leah (Wolff) Fogel of Lakewood, New Jersey. Mazel tov also to older sisters Esther and Henny.

Elyse and **Hershel Krupp** (MHA '97) of Bayside, New York, on the Oct. 23 arrival of son Ethan. Mazel tov also to big sister Hannah and grandparents Mike and **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70) of Memphis.

Lolly and **Yudi Moskowitz** (MHA '97) of Phoenix, Arizona, on the birth of daughter Chana Rose on Nov. 30. Mazel tov also to siblings Gavi, Layla and Shuki and grandparents Yaki and **Shir-**

**ley (Loterstein) Moskowitz** (MHA '73) of Memphis.

MHA faculty member Raa-nana and alumnus **Reuven Stein** (MHA '98, FYOS '02) of Memphis on the Oct. 26 birth of a baby girl, Libby. Mazel tov also to big sisters Allie, Dana and Rayli and grandparents Essie and **Mike Stein** (MHA '68, YOS '72) of Memphis.

Leib Tuvia and **Esther (Crystal) Stark** (FYOS '04) of Jerusalem, Israel, on the Sept. 21 birth of daughter Chaya Ita. Mazel tov also to siblings Chana, Nechama, Ben Tzion and Chaim Aharon.

Gabriella and **Charles LaVene** (MHA '05, FYOS '09) of Linden, New Jersey, who welcomed their first child, daughter Shaina, on Oct. 12.

## Engagements/ Weddings: Mazel Tov to...

Becky and **Randy Califf** (MHA '69) of Plantation, Florida, on the Nov. 5 wed-



ding of their son Aaron to Jessica Shiekman in Boca Raton. The couple lives in Fort Lauderdale.

Jay and **Dina (Seiger) Bernstein** (MHA '73) of Baltimore, Maryland, on the Nov. 23 marriage of their son Ezra to Ariella Ram in Baltimore, where the newlyweds are also living.

**Minna and Rabbi Dovid Kipper** (MHA '76) of Brooklyn, New York, on the engagement of their daughter Rivka to Benzi Auman. They will wed Jan. 30, 2017, in Brooklyn, where they will also live.

**Avishai Schlesinger** (MHA '04, FYOS '08), son of David and **Linda (Ostrow) Schlesinger** (MHA '74) of Memphis, on his engagement to Esther Taub. They are planning an April 25 wedding in Givat Brenner, a kibbutz in central Israel. They will make their home in Givat Shmuel in the Holy Land.

**Jonathan Tavin** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) on his engagement to Evie Denmark. They will marry July 3, 2017, in the New York area, where they will also make their home.

**Sima Greenblatt** (MHA '10) on her engagement to Eliezer Levine. The couple is planning to marry June 15, 2017, in Baltimore, where they will also live. Mazel tov also to the bride's parents, Rabbi Akeyv and **Chavi (Adler) Greenblatt** (MHA '83). Rabbi Greenblatt is the former Judaic studies principal of the MHA.

### **Bnei/Bnot Mitzvah: Mazel Tov to...**

Sergio and **Robin (Friedman) Musicante** (MHA '82) of Memphis on their son Jacob celebrating his bar mitzvah Nov. 26 at Baron Hirsch Synagogue.

MHA faculty member Michelle and alumnus **David Katz** (MHA '88 and president of the MHA/FYOS board of

trustees) of Memphis on the Nov. 12 bat mitzvah of their daughter Pesi, a sixth grader at the MHA. Mazel tov also to grandparents Esther and **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69), also of Memphis.

Jordana and **Rafi Epstein** (MHA '90) of Alon Shvut, Israel, on the Oct. 15 celebration of their son Matanya becoming a bar mitzvah.

Rabbi Elie and **Naama (Aviner) Weinstock** (MHA '90, FYOS '94) of New York City, whose son Yona celebrated his bar mitzvah on Oct. 15.

Fraidy and **Elisha Kutliroff** (MHA '93) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, on the Dec. 13 celebration of their daughter Naama becoming a bat mitzvah. Mazel tov also to grandparents Dr. Jerry and Shelley Kutliroff, former MHA/FYOS administrators, who traveled to the Holy Land to be part of this special occasion.



Gershon and **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) of North Woodmere, New York, on the occasion of their son Yonah becoming a bar mitzvah on Nov. 26. Mazel tov also to grandparents Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz of Jerusalem, **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Dallas and Tova and **Yehoshua Yarmush** (YOS '71) of Spring Valley, New York. Yonah is the great-grandson of Libby and Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'l, who served as principal of the MHA.

Aviva and **Rabbi Ben Gonsher** (FYOS '98) of Boca Raton, Florida, on celebrating their daughter Shira Rivka becoming a bat mitzvah Nov. 12.

### Other: Mazel Tov to...

Nineteen-year-old aspiring chef **Avi Katz** (MHA '11), son of Michelle and **David Katz** (MHA '88), who was named the first Kosher Master in the finals of the

Joy of Kosher Competition. The Nov. 16 event was the culmination of a two-month national cooking competition run by noted chef Jamie Geller. Katz's video entry that earned him a spot in the finals can be viewed [here](#).



*Kosher Master Avi Katz (center) with Joy of Kosher Competition judges (from left) Naomi Nachman, Jamie Geller, Naftali Hanau and Elan Kornblum.*

# Mazel tov!

Send us your alumni news for the next issue at [alumni@mhafyos.org](mailto:alumni@mhafyos.org).



# TRIVIA ANSWERS

FROM  
ISSUE 6

# 1976-1980

Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our sixth newsletter.

**Jeff Dlugach** (MHA '80) won our last trivia quiz. He will receive his tin of Ricki's Cookies in time for Chanukah.

Jeff got  
**9 out of 17**  
correct answers.

*Here are the answers so you can see how you did.*

1. Chemistry teacher Mr. Bob Smith had a nickname; what was it, and why was he called that?

ANSWER: "Killer" Smith, because almost no one survived his class.

2. In what year did the MHA have its largest-ever graduating class?

ANSWER: 1977, with 33 graduates.

3. What did the Herskowitzes do in their bathtub?

ANSWER: Pasteurize their *chalav yisrael* milk.

4. What food did Rabbi Shraga Herskowitz's wife prepare every time he held a *siyum* (celebration of completing a unit of study) for his class?

ANSWER: Pizza.

5. In what city were the girls snowed in at the Bais Yaakov convention of 1975?

ANSWER: Detroit.

# 16

## TRIVIA ANSWERS

Classes of 1976-1980

6. Who was known for making the best peanut butter balls for parties?

ANSWER: **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80).

7. What color were the couches and chairs in the girls' lounge during these years?

ANSWER: **Green and yellow.**

8. Who was the only male YOS graduate in 1980?

ANSWER: **Roy Graber** (MHA '76, YOS '80).

9. Who "got married" in a pretend wedding ceremony during recess?

ANSWER: **David Kaplan and Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn** (MHA '75, YOS '79).

10. Which teacher gave *siddurim* to students who learned to recite the *shemonah esrei* prayer by heart?

ANSWER: **Rabbi Joseph Silverman.**

11. Who played Tevye in the eighth grade production of "Fiddler on the Roof"? Who played the fiddler?

ANSWER: **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81, pictured at right) played Tevye. **Victor Shine** (MHA '79, YOS '83) played the fiddler—and he was, in fact, a talented violinist!



12. Which Judaic studies teacher was known as the school's "resident artist"?

ANSWER: **Rabbi Joseph Silverman.**

13. Which general studies teacher rode to school on a moped?

ANSWER: **Mrs. Gerry (Margolin) Fink** (MHA '59).

14. What was the name of the school's crossing guard?

ANSWER: Mrs. Booker.

15. Which well-known alumna taught language arts during these years and ran the poetry club?

ANSWER: Mrs. Gerry (Margolin) Fink (MHA '59).

16. Why did Mrs. Miriam Cheruff, z'l, take the sixth and seventh grade classes to the supermarket?

ANSWER: To teach them about kosher meat.

17. What was unusual about the eighth grade valedictorian of 1980?

ANSWER: There was a three-way tie for valedictorian that year, between Ruth (Goldfein) Vesnefsky (MHA '80), Maxine Spiegler (MHA '80, YOS '83) and Robin Kimmelman (MHA '80).

# *Alumni pay tribute to* **RABBI NATA AND** **MIRIAM GREENBLATT**

Nearly 150 current and former Memphians gathered in Brooklyn, New York, on Sunday, Sept. 25, to honor Rabbi Nathan “Nota” Greenblatt and his wife, Miriam, for their almost 70 years of dedicated service to the MHA/FYOS and the Jewish community at large. The tribute evening, which turned into an informal Memphis reunion, was the brainchild of **Rabbi David Finkelstein** (MHA ‘75), who led the organizing committee that included his siblings **Sam Finkelstein** (MHA ‘70) and **Sara (Finkelstein) Schachter** (MHA ‘73) and fellow alumni **Rabbi Yehuda (Jeffrey) Kaplan** (MHA ‘67), **Elaine (Riesenberg) Mael** (MHA ‘67, YOS ‘71), **Rabbi Berish Kipper** (MHA ‘70), **Beth (Kipper)**

**Pasternak** (MHA ‘75, YOS ‘79) and **Ephraim Kutner** (MHA ‘85).

Knowing the Greenblatts would resist being honored publicly, the committee told the couple their presence and *divrei chizuk* (confidence-building messages) were greatly needed at an event in New York. By the time the Greenblatts learned the gathering was in their honor, they had already arrived in the Big Apple.

At the event, the Greenblatts’ son **Dovid** (MHA ‘65) publicly thanked the community for forging relationships with his parents in the years since their 1949 arrival in Memphis. “I don’t know how many cities in the United States the size of Memphis, or even a little



## Alumni pay tribute to Rabbi Nota and Miriam Greenblatt

larger, could assemble so many beautiful *bnei Torah* [people committed to Torah]," Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt said. "Families that have their priorities straight, that see responsibility and a mission in their lives, can look up to another Jew, to a *rav* [rabbi] and say, 'What can we take from here? How can we make our lives better?' It's a privilege for my family to be a part of your family, and it's a privilege for all of us to be here tonight."

Among the evening's other speakers were Rabbi Finkelstein; the Greenblatts' great-nephew, **Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt** (MHA '69), spiritual leader of Agudas Israel of St. Louis; and **Rabbi Nachum Lansky** (MHA '57), a member of the Academy's first graduating class and a *rosh yeshiva* at Ner Yisroel Rabbinical College in Baltimore.

Rabbi Nota Greenblatt graciously accepted the tribute of behalf of himself and his wife. He also shared inspiring *divrei Torah* (words of To-

rah) including timely insights from the *siddur* (prayer book) and *chumash* (five books of the Torah) on the topic of *teshuvah* (repentance) for the then-forthcoming High Holidays. Additionally, Rabbi Greenblatt reminisced about the beginnings of the school, which he helped to establish just months after arriving in Memphis.

Attendees of the Greenblatts' tribute (pictured below) spanned the generations of the MHA, from the school's earliest classes to those who graduated only a few years ago. Alumni and friends of all ages enjoyed dinner and joyous dancing together following the program.

"There was such a close feeling in the air," said **Rabbi Dovid Kipper** (MHA '76) of the event. "There was a magnetic pull connecting everyone together with so much warmth and happiness. Everyone came for the same reasons—to reconnect and to show our gratitude to our beloved *rav* and his *rebbetzin*."



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## TRIBUTE EVENING

Alumni pay tribute to Rabbi Nota and Miriam Greenblatt

"Highlights of the beautiful evening honoring Rabbi and Mrs. Greenblatt included hearing from Rabbi Menachem Greenblatt and Rabbi Nachum Lansky, as well as watching Rav Nota dance with Rabbi Binyamin Kamenetzky [founder of Yeshiva of the South Shore]," said **Dawn (Posner) Goldstein** (MHA '77, YOS '81). "It was nice to catch up with friends and see multiple 'generations,' and it was interesting to me how many people I didn't know. I am so grateful to the organizers of this event."

The Greenblatts' great-niece, **Masha (Greenblatt) Langsam** (MHA '73), lives in Israel and was unable to attend the event in honor of her "Uncle Nota and Aunt Miriam." However, she was able to view a video of the event. "Hearing the words of my brother Menachem [Greenblatt] brought me to laughter and to tears," Langsam said. "We all had such a special childhood growing up together with our cous-



Rabbi Nathan "Nota" Greenblatt

ins in Memphis. It was so meaningful to see in the video all those who gathered to pay tribute to a couple who have given of themselves for years in such a special way."

"The long overdue event honoring Rabbi and Rebbetzin Greenblatt was well attended, excellently catered and, most importantly, an example of proper *kavod haTorah* [respect for the Torah]," said **Anshel Kaplan** (MHA '98, FYOS '02). "Memphians of today and those from yesteryear made the trek to Brooklyn to honor the Greenblatts. It was quite the Memphis reunion; old classmates, former teachers, family and friends came together for an event I will not soon forget. Those who could not attend missed a genuinely special occasion. May the Greenblatts be blessed with good health and the energy to continue their *avodas Hashem* [service of G-d]."

*The video of the tribute to the Greenblatts is available [here](#).*

*More photos of the Sept. 25 event are posted [here](#).*

# MORAH BARBARA KUTNER:

## *A teacher par excellence*



Few individuals have been witness to as much MHA/FYOS history as **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68). Earlier this year "Morah Barbara," as she is affectionately known, retired after 36 years on the MHA faculty.

Additionally, she spent 12 years as a student at the school, a member of both its first 1st grade class and first high school class.



*Morah Barbara at Easy Way, where she took her students to teach them about fruits and vegetables.*

at the school, a member of both its first 1st grade class and first high school class.

"Barbara was my very close childhood friend," said **Sherry (Goldman) Luber** (MHA '62). "We lived just a street apart growing up, she on Hawthorne and I on Evergreen. We met when I was about five years old, and I always

knew her to be a wonderful and kind friend."

Following her graduation from the newly minted Yeshiva of the South in 1968, Barbara moved to New York City, studying at the Breuer's seminary in Washington Heights for two years. She then came back to Memphis and married **Alan Kutner** (MHA '62), a schoolmate two years her senior.

Their marriage brought together two large MHA families, and their wedding was attended by nearly 600 friends and relatives. With so many connections in town, Memphis was the natural place for the Kutners to settle down. "I don't think we ever thought of living anywhere else," she said.

Growing up, Kutner never questioned her career aspirations. "I always wanted to be a teacher," she said. "I used to 'play school' as a child and pretend to be the teacher."

When **Ephraim** (MHA '85), **Shifra (Kutner) Leitman** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Yoni** (MHA '88) and **Eli** (MHA '92) were little, Kutner worked as a Talmud Torah Sunday school teacher at the Baron Hirsch and Anshei Sphard synagogues and as a substitute teacher at the MHA, which allowed her to be at home with her children during their early years. When Eli was two years old, she was ready to pursue a full-time career as an educator.



*Morah Barbara in her early days of teaching.*

# 22

## MORAH BARBARA KUTNER

A teacher par excellence

“Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z’l, was the principal in 1979, and he hired me to teach Pre-K 4,” she said. “I didn’t think I’d teach preschool, but it ended up being the right fit for me.”

Throughout her career teaching Pre-K 3 and 4, Kutner worked hard to dispel the myth that early childhood education is comparable



Morah Barbara teaching her granddaughter, Shira Kutner.

to babysitting. She constantly sought creative ways to engage her young students while teaching a curriculum that included letter and number recognition, themes from the *parsha* (weekly Torah portion) and Jewish holidays, Hebrew words and songs. “I put a lot of emphasis

on social development and how to be a *mensch* [person of character],” she said.

The parents of the hundreds of preschoolers who came through Kutner’s classroom, as well as her many colleagues over the years, are thankful for her decades of devoted service.

“Morah Barbara is creative, organized, enthusiastic, insightful and caring – a teacher par excellence,” said Adina Samberg, who taught in the early childhood department with Kutner for 18 years. “She was a role model and mentor for me and a wonderful Pre-K teacher for our children. Morah Barbara and her class-

room truly epitomized the expression, ‘It looks like play, but we are learning.’”

“Morah Barbara was one of those rare teachers who loved your child as much as you did,” said **Sarah (Fink) Wachtel** (MHA ’88, YOS ’92). “Four of my boys were lucky enough to have Barbara as a teacher. It did not matter if she saw one of them at the grocery store or at *shul*; she always made a point to come over and give them a big hug and tell them how excited she was to see them. When our family moved to Israel, among the few things we took with us were the projects Morah Barbara did with our boys. These projects are filled with great pictures and wonderful quotes from our children that really capture their essence. We are grateful to Morah Barbara for giving our children a positive beginning to their educational journeys.”



Morah Barbara and her class at one of her annual trips to the fire station.

**Abbe (Seiger) Kaplan** (MHA ’71) had a similar experience. “Morah Barbara taught and helped my four children understand the Jew-

ish and secular world around them with love and kindness," Kaplan said. "The projects she did for each *chag* (Jewish holiday) and *parsha* and on number and letter readiness were all excellent."

In addition to her tenure in the early childhood department, Kutner spent several years teaching third grade Judaic studies at the MHA, a testament to her agility as a teacher.

"I remember Morah Barbara's gentleness and patience, even with those (like myself) who had trouble not calling out in class," said **Josh Gavant** (MHA '94) of his third grade teacher. "She handed out 'happy grams' at the

end of each week, noting something special about each one of us. One student would also get a special prize, often a Milk Munch bar. I might have been the last in my class to get one of those, but I finally did!"

Kutner's special efforts did not go unnoticed. In 2005, the MHA/FYOS administration recognized her with a special service award "for her many years of providing our students with a loving and Torah-rich foundation for life." Three years later, she received the Outstanding Jewish Educator Award from Hadassah. In 2013, Kutner was named Teacher of the Year at the annual MHA/FYOS scholarship banquet.

Reflecting on her career at the MHA, Kutner feels a deep sense of personal fulfillment. "I loved going to work every day and watching the kids learn and grow," she said. "Teaching made me feel excited about the *parsha* each week and the holidays each year. Watching the enthusiasm of the children while they were learning made me appreciate it all even

more." Among her favorite memories are the yearly model Passover *seders* she arranged and class field trips to the local fire station.

With her new-found spare time, Kutner is focused on caring for her family in Memphis,



Morah Barbara and her class at one of her annual model seders.

traveling to visit her children and grandchildren in New York and Toronto, and enjoying hobbies like reading and making jewelry.

"Now that she's retired from the MHA, Morah Barbara will be missed by everyone whose children she influenced and inspired, and even by those parents who will no longer be able to anticipate with excitement placing their children in her most capable care," Kaplan said. "I'm happy for her and have tremendous *hakarot ha'tov* [gratitude] for everything she accomplished for my children, the school and our community."

# Parker Mantell

## A clear message on confidence



It's not every day that one of our alumni becomes an internet sensation. In May 2014, the [video](#) of **Parker Mantell** (MHA '06) delivering an inspirational commencement address at his graduation from Indiana University went viral. Media outlets like [People](#) magazine, the [Today show](#), [Huffington Post](#) and [Fox News](#) reported on Mantell, and the [Los Angeles Times](#) included his speech on its list of best commencement addresses of 2014.

"I applied for it on a whim," Mantell said of his decision to be considered for the role of student commencement speaker. "I felt I had an important message to share."

His message is that "confidence is the antidote of doubt," as Mantell told his audience of nearly 17,000 in a packed Indiana University arena, and it's rooted in his personal struggles with stuttering, a speech disorder he's had since the age of 4. Through hard work and years of intensive speech therapy, Mantell has learned to manage the symptoms of his speech impediment. He certainly hasn't let his disability hold him back, securing internships in some of the most high-profile political offices in the nation.

"Despite my speech disorder, I've answered thousands of phone calls in the office of Eric Cantor, [then] majority leader of the U.S. House," Mantell said in his speech. "I've conducted tours of the U.S. Capitol on behalf of Florida Sen. Marco Rubio, and I've made

thousands of outreach calls for New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie. ... Someone who is barely able to talk for himself can dream big enough to talk for public servants who represent local, statewide and national constituencies."

Mantell was pleasantly surprised by the overwhelming response to his speech. "My message resonated with a lot of people, especially those with disabilities," he said. "People were able to see a place for themselves within the message, as well as in the messenger. Everyone has their own set of unique challenges; people could see themselves in me when a word tripped me up."

The process of gaining media attention was organic, Mantell said. "In this day and age, all it takes is a share [on social media], and I'm grateful to those who shared it. If anyone was inspired or touched by it, that's all that I really care about." The video of his speech has been viewed nearly 300,000 times on [YouTube](#).

Mantell now lives in Washington, D.C., where he works for the National Republican Senatorial Committee, an organization that promotes Republican candidates for the U.S. Senate. In this election year, Mantell has been busy supporting the NRSC's media campaign efforts.

He credits the MHA for igniting his love of politics. "In 2004, when I was in junior high, Mrs. [Shelley] Kutliroff conducted a mock elec-

tion at the school. That's when my interest in the electoral process began."

Mantell is also appreciative for the support he received at the MHA.

"In 2014, I spoke at the annual conference of the National Stuttering Association," he said.

"An eight-year-old boy came up to me afterwards to tell me that he didn't previously think he could go on to attend high school [because of his speech disorder], but my story gave him hope for the future. Contrasting his experiences with mine, I never had a shred of doubt that I could go on to high school, college or whatever I wanted to do."

Mantell has a long and storied connection to the school. Ben Margolin, z'l, one of the three brothers for whom the Hebrew Academy is



named, is his maternal great-grandfather.

Mantell's mother **Julie Parker** (MHA '70) is an alumna, too; she lives in New York City,

only a few blocks away from daughter **Shannon**

**(Mantell) Nagrodzki**

(MHA '00), who works as a first grade teacher.

Mantell's sister **Alexis**

(MHA '11, FYOS '15) is a student at Goucher College in Baltimore. The

extended family will be together in Chicago in August, when brother

Justin, also a graduate of Indiana University and

now a law student at the

University of Memphis, marries Jenna Witkowski.

"I am very grateful for the wonderful teachers, family and classmates I had at the MHA, many of whom I still keep in touch with today," Mantell said. "My speech was, in many ways, inspired by them."

**Beethoven was deaf; imagine if he had never listened to his calling to compose music.**

**Ray Charles was blind; imagine if he had never dared to envision that he could touch the keys of a piano.**

**Albert Einstein was dyslexic; imagine if he had never dared to embrace seeing things differently by formulating equations.**

**FDR couldn't walk; imagine if he had never dared to run.**

**Imagine what you are depriving our world of if you never dare to achieve your purpose.**

# Alumni enjoy Cooper Invitational

The 10th Annual Cooper Invitational basketball tournament, held Nov. 3-6, brought more than 400 student athletes, chaperones



**Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81) and his son, senior **Elan Cooper** (MHA '13). Pace Cooper not only played on the varsity basketball team, but also volunteered as coach of the Cooper Macs for many years.

and fans to Memphis. The tournament was founded by varsity alumnus **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and includes 16 teams from

Jewish high schools across North America. Over the past decade, the Cooper Invitational has brought thousands of guests to Memphis for a weekend of great basketball, a warm Shabbaton atmosphere and an unparalleled experience of Southern hospitality.

It's worth noting that the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys' (CYHSB) varsity team, the Cooper Macs, includes six players who are sons of MHA/FYOS alumni. Several of the alumni dads (and one grandfather)



**Slava Bosin** (MHA '80, YOS '84) and his son, junior **Shlomo Bosin** (MHA '14).

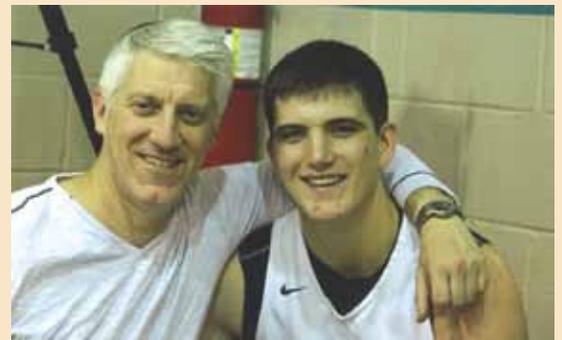


**Sandra (Loterstein) Osdoba** (MHA '76, YOS '80), who played for the GMSG, and her son, sophomore **Simcha Osdoba** (MHA '15).

also played for the varsity team during their high school years.

Three players on other teams participating in this year's tournament are the sons of alumni. Their parents came to Memphis to watch their sons compete and to relive their days at the MHA/FYOS.

**Jeff Baum** (MHA '80, YOS '84) and his son, senior **Sammy**



**Jeff Baum** (MHA '80, YOS '84) and his son, senior **Sammy Baum**

Baum, travelled to Memphis from Boca Raton, where Sammy plays for the Katz Yeshiva High School of South Florida. This was the second year that the father and son attended the

Cooper Invitational.

Jeff Baum played for the YOS basketball team throughout his high school

years, serving as team captain. "It



Three generations of alumni: **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69), his son **David Katz** (MHA '88) and his grandson, senior **Daniel Katz** (MHA '13).

# Basketball Tournament



Allan Katz's daughter **Rivka (Katz) Braverman** (MHA '89, YOS '93) played basketball for the Goldie Margolin School for Girls' (GMSG) varsity team; her son, senior **Ahron Braverman** (MHA '13) is a member of the Cooper Macs.

was such a pleasure to come back to the Memphis Jewish Community Center [where the tournament games are played] and the MHA/FYOS, two places where I spent the majority of my time (outside of my own home) during my childhood years," he said. "To see my son learning and competing in

the same facilities in which I grew up doing those very same things was very heartwarming and somewhat surreal. This annual event is wonderful, and I wish I had more sons, just so we could continue to participate for many years to come!"

**Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn** (MHA '75, YOS '79), who played for the GMSG basketball team, came to cheer on her son, senior Shmuel Kahn, a member of the team from the Gross Hebrew Academy in Miami Beach, Florida.



**Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn** (MHA '75, YOS '79), with her son, senior **Shmuel Kahn**

"How exhilarating it was for me to walk through the doors of the JCC gym and watch my son play basketball, with many of my long-time friends in the crowd," Sara Beth Kahn said. "At that moment, I understood what my parents must have felt like every time they came to watch me play there in that same gym. I really kvelled, as my parents were once again by my side cheering—only this time, for their grandson."



**Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman** (MHA '84) and her son, senior **Zach Tuchman**

**Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman** (MHA '84) and her son, senior Zach Tuchman, traveled from New Jersey, where he plays for the Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School in Livingston.

"It was so much fun watching my son Zach play on the same courts that we played on growing up," Elyse Tuchman said. "An extra bonus was sharing this experience, in real time, with my family in Israel,

who watched all the games via live stream!”

While she did not play for the GMSG varsity



**Ira Morris** (MHA '84) and his son, sophomore **Ethan Morris** (MHA '15).

team, her

brother

**Rafi**

**Epstein**

(MHA '90)

is a leg-

end in our

school's

basketball

history;

he served as team captain and led the Cooper

Macs to their first Tier II Championship at the

Yeshiva University Sarachek Tournament in

1994.

“You have no idea how jealous I was of Elyse

this past weekend,” Rafi Epstein said after

watching his nephew compete. “I watched

more high school basketball this weekend

than I have in the past 23 years! The whole

event brought back such good memories.”

Not to be outdone, **Rabbi Dov Emerson**

(MHA '91), who played for the Cooper Macs

from 1991 to 1994, brought an entire team to

the tournament. Emerson is head of school of

the Yeshiva University High School of Los An-

geles (YULA) in southern California. This is the

seventh year he has travel ed to his hometown

with the YULA team.



**Rabbi Dov Emerson** (MHA '91) is pictured (third from right) with his four-year-old daughter Atara and the YULA basketball team



# *HOMECOMING WEEKEND*

*January 13-15, 2017*

Last year's inaugural homecoming was such a success that we're doing it a second time! Please join us in Memphis Jan. 13-15, 2017, to reconnect with old friends and escape the northern winter for a few days. (Note that Monday, Jan. 16, is Martin Luther King, Jr. Day.)

Marquee homecoming events include the Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game on Saturday night and the Steak Dinner, presented by the Cooper Yeshiva High School for

Boys (CYHSB), on Sunday night. We will gladly arrange home hospitality and Shabbat meals for you and your family upon request.

For more information, email Joanne Kahane ([joannekahane111@gmail.com](mailto:joannekahane111@gmail.com)) or Coach James Nokes ([james.nokes@mhafyos.org](mailto:james.nokes@mhafyos.org)) or contact them by phone through the school office at 901-682-2400.

Please let us know if you plan to attend. We looking forward to seeing old friends and making new ones.

**Want to relive the excitement of  
our 2016 homecoming?**

**See page 26 and onward in  
our fifth issue.**

# 2006-2010

## TRIVIA



Regardless of when you graduated, have some fun with these trivia questions. Send your answers to [joannekahane111@gmail.com](mailto: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. During this era, the price of a can of soda from the boys' high school lounge soda machine went from \$\_\_\_\_ to \$\_\_\_\_?
2. What was the signature catchphrase of Mrs. Karin Schmitt, of blessed memory?
3. Which student brought a shocking stapler to Hebrew class?
4. What was Rabbi Sheftel Skaist's favorite game?
5. Who acted as Barack Obama, Joe Biden, John McCain and Sarah Palin in the mock presidential debate held in the gym in 2008?
6. How did Coach Jake (Robert Jacobson) begin every gym class?
7. Where did Mr. Dana Vaughn say that he lived?
8. What's the only basketball shot that **Meir Gersten** (MHA '03, FYOS '07) could make?
9. What famous Dr. Seuss story did Rabbi Josh Spodek use in his introductory speech to the students?
10. Why did a number of students pile into the small computer room during a fire drill?
11. From which Caribbean island does **Jamie Langer** (FYOS '09) hail?

# The MHA/YOS Classes of 2006-2010

## *Where Are They Now?*

**Yonadav Tsuna** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) lives in San Francisco, California, where he works as a business operations and strategy analyst for Twitter.

'04

The Tsunas moved to Memphis when Yonadav was 7, and the MHA/FYOS has been an integral part of their lives ever since. His siblings **Lavi** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Racheli** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) are also alumni; his mother, Mrs. Talya Tsuna, taught at the school for many years and is now director of student advancement and college counseling at the FYOS.

'08

"Since it was such a small school, I have great memories of strong bonds with my teachers," he said. His favorite teachers include Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff, Rabbi Yonasan Gersten and Mr. Dana Vaughn. He can be reached at [yonadav.tsuna@gmail.com](mailto:yonadav.tsuna@gmail.com).

**Rabbi Menachem Klein** (MHA '06) and his wife of one month, Mussie, live in Brooklyn, New York, where he works as a project manager for the Rohr Jewish Learning Institute. He oversees the production of adult education class materials used at more than 900 sites worldwide.

Among the most memorable moments from his time at the MHA was when a mouse scurried through his seventh grade English classroom and teacher Mrs. J-Jaye Hurley jumped onto her desk.



Rabbi Sheftel Skaist, who taught Klein from fifth through eighth grade, also left a lasting impression. "He really cared about us learning and gaining; he managed to make us have a good time, too," Klein said. "His incredible hands-on learning methods taught me skills I carried all the way through my yeshiva years."

'06

**Ariel Cooper** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) and his wife of six months, Aliza, met while attending New York University. They now live on the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Cooper works at BlackRock, where his team advises banks, governments and other institutions about the financial markets.



"I frequently revisit memories of my junior year of high school, playing in the Sarachek [basketball] tournament [at Yeshiva University]," Cooper said. "More than finishing in second place, the camaraderie we had under Coaches **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and **Jon Wogan** (MHA '94) was unparalleled. It was one of many special opportunities, albeit on a much grander scale, to participate in something much bigger than myself." Among his other favorite memories from high school are classes taught by Dr. Whitney Kennon, Mrs. Abby Johnson and Rabbi Yonason Gersten.

"The MHA family is unique, sitting amidst an interdependent Orthodox community and the broader Memphis community," Cooper observed. "In the years since I graduated, I have yet to come across peers from comparable communities that fostered the same range of opportunities and personalities. While undoubtedly difficult to sustain, I sincerely hope we collectively remain committed to preserving the splendor of our community for many years to come by continuing to embrace our authenticity." He can be reached at [arielcooper1@gmail.com](mailto:arielcooper1@gmail.com).



**Eliana Silbermann** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) lives near her grandmother and other U.K. relatives in London and is currently looking for work as a technical writer. She completed her bachelor's degree at the University of Memphis and, in addition to working as an artificial intelligence researcher and manager at a nursing home/long-term care facility, has helped to create a small business. Her favorite teacher at the MHA/FYOS was Mr. Dana Vaughn.

Silbermann encourages fellow alumni to consider "lesser-known" career paths. "Robotics, machine learning and human-robot/computer interaction will continue to be big fields," she said. "We need more than programmers. Cognitive psychologists and scientists, screenplay and fiction writers, engineers, general psychologists and user experience designers all have a place. Technology is big right now, and it's very exciting."

"I'm glad to see all your successes and wish you more and greater achievements," Silbermann said of her classmates. Her email address is [esilbermann@gmail.com](mailto:esilbermann@gmail.com).



**David Gleiberman** (FYOS '10) earned a bachelor's degree in business from Fairleigh Dickinson University in New Jersey and is finishing an additional degree in mechatronic engineering, a multidisciplinary field that combines mechanical and electrical engineering, computer control and information technology. He hopes to work in the field of engineering upon completing his degree.

Hailing from Charlotte, North Carolina, Gleiberman lived in the boys' dorm during his days at the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys. He is grateful to his first dorm counselor, master Halo player Tzvi Friedman, who made what Gleiberman considers the best dorm page in the FYOS yearbook. "Tzvi helped us feel comfortable during what was the longest period we'd ever been away from home," he said. He also fondly remembers his "dorm father" Rabbi Avi Wittlin, who was "always there for the dormers, taking us to and from the airport and inviting us all over for Shabbos. He even allowed me to stay at his house for a week after the school year ended," Gleiberman said.



Many other FYOS teachers and administrators left a lasting impact on him. "Rabbi Yonason Gersten struck the perfect balance between being a friend to his students and being their principal," he said. "He taught us how to ski and was the first to jump into the ice cold rivers and waterfalls on our hikes.

"When we studied the Middle Ages with Dr. Whitney Kennon in ninth grade, she closed the book and asked us what we wanted to know. We gave her a list, and she spent the next two weeks teaching straight from memory. When it came to Mr. Dana Vaughn, I don't think there was a single question we asked that he didn't know how to answer, and I loved how he was able to explain things multiple ways.

"Mrs. Linda George was one of the few teachers who could command absolute respect and obedience from any student who passed through her lab, and she was always ready to help any student however she could. I can't forget my dedicated geometry teacher, Mrs. Karin Schmitt, may she rest in peace. She was always there to help students, even during her lunch hour. I also loved her extra credit homework.

"My Gemara teacher Rabbi Yitzchok Kolsky and his wife prepared homemade desserts for students who read the *parsha* each week in Hebrew and English; I will never forget those! Without the help and tutoring of Mrs. Talya Tsuna, I would have had a much harder time getting through high school. I am still using the 1" binder method she taught us.

"I also can't forget about Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff's Jewish history class and Dr. Jerry Kutliroff being the only person who could command the students from beginning to end to put on the annual play. I was always amazed by his breadth of knowledge about so many things; one year, on the canoe trip, he was able to identify a bird just by its chirp!

"I had an amazing time at the CYHSB and loved all of it," Gleiberman said. He can be reached at [davidgleibs@gmail.com](mailto:davidgleibs@gmail.com).

**Sam Guigi** (FYOS '10), formerly known as Luky, lives in Tel Aviv, Israel, where he works as chief operating officer of Draft Fantasy, the largest draft-style fantasy soccer platform for the English Premier League.

"My family is a bit spread out now," he said. "My brother Jesse [Blumenthal] lives in Tzfat with his wife, and my brother Charles [Blumenthal] is in Chicago. My parents are currently in Poughkeepsie, New York, but will hopefully be joining Jesse and me in Israel in the coming year or two.

'10

"I have many amazing memories from the MHA/FYOS," Guigi said. "From blowing the blue *shofar* (which I still have) at basketball games around Memphis to the Gatlinburg and canoe trips and the YU [Yeshiva University] tournament, we had so many fun times! If I had to choose one favorite memory though, it would have to be graduation. There's nothing better than when **Isaac Krupp** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) and I rapped our graduation speeches and then celebrated with all of our friends." A photo of that graduation rap is featured in the Flashback on page 34.

His favorite MHA/FYOS teacher was Mrs. Abby Johnson. "There's a very special place in my heart for her because she put up with me and taught me the most out of any teacher I have ever had," he said.

"I take Memphis and the MHA/FYOS with me everywhere I go," Guigi said. "I know my roots, and I couldn't be more proud and thankful for growing up in such a loving and beautiful community. I also love how so many of us have made it to Israel. Above being part of *Am Yisrael* in *Eretz Yisrael* (the nation of Israel in the land of Israel), Memphians in Israel have a really special bond and connection that is truly unique. If you come to visit or make *aliyah*, please reach out because we love seeing fellow Memphians in Israel!" Guigi can be reached at [sguigui224@gmail.com](mailto:sguigui224@gmail.com).

**Jonathan Tavin** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) is completing his bachelor's degree at Yeshiva University in New York City and studying for the exams to become a Certified Public Accountant. He is engaged to be married to Evie Denmark of Dallas, Texas.

'07

His favorite teacher at the MHA/FYOS was Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff. A particularly meaningful and memorable experience from his school days

'11

was when his ninth grade class learned about the

Holocaust and shared their knowledge with students at White Station Middle School. "Some of them were

hearing about it for the first time, and it was important for them to receive accurate information," he said.



Tavin urges his classmates to "dream big" and remember that "you don't have to plan out your life to a T. If you are flexible, you will see all the amazing opportunities you hadn't thought about."

To the Memphians and alumni near and far, he says, "Talk to your friends about the Memphis community and support the MHA/FYOS so it can continue to educate our future leaders."

**Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) is a senior at Barnard College in New York City.

"My favorite memories of the MHA/FYOS are Box-Mania with Rabbi Sheftel Skaist, Horizons with Mrs. Becky Walker, Mrs. Amy Winestone's chocolate chip cookie dough pie, the annual award ceremonies on the last day of school and the GMSG Shabbatons," she said. Her email address is [scooper794@gmail.com](mailto:scooper794@gmail.com).

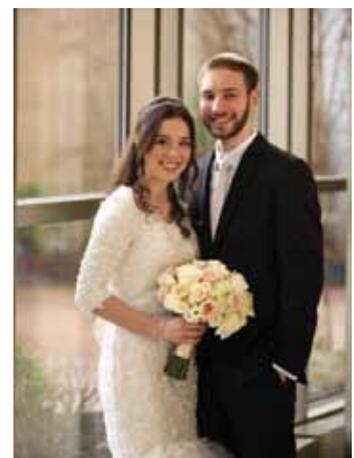
'08

'12

**Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) lives in New York City, where he is in his last semester studying biology at Yeshiva University. Rubenstein hopes to attend graduate school to become a physician assistant. He and his wife Marnie will celebrate their one-year wedding anniversary in January 2017.

'08

'12



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## WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Graduates of 2006-2010

"I gained a substantial amount from all of my teachers at the MHA/FYOS, skills and traits that have helped shape me into who I am," Rubenstein said. "If I had to pick one favorite teacher, it would be Mr. Dana Vaughn. His ability to relate to students and understand their struggles made him an invaluable mentor. He was also capable of taking dense subjects, such as math and chemistry, and making them relatable and understandable."

Being part of the annual CYHSB Steak Dinner, under the leadership of Rabbi Yonason Gersten, is among his favorite memories from the school. "I was the head of kitchen my senior year; it was a really proud moment that has stuck with me since graduating," he said. Rubenstein's email address is [rubenstein4@gmail.com](mailto:rubenstein4@gmail.com).

**Dylan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) is a junior at Columbia University in New York City, studying neuroscience and behavior. He plans to continue doing research at the New York State Psychiatric Institute and to apply to medical school in the coming year. With him on campus are his brothers **Jeremy** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Ethan** (MHA '09, FYOS '13).



"I love coming back to visit Memphis as frequently as I can," he said. "I took for granted how convenient life is in our small little Orthodox Jewish community." As for his favorite memory from the MHA/FYOS, "nothing beats that moment when Rabbi [Yonason] Gersten publicly smears sunscreen all over his body, including his scalp," he said. Cooper's email address is [dylanjcoop@gmail.com](mailto:dylanjcoop@gmail.com).

**Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) lives in New York City, where he is pursuing a bachelor's degree at Columbia University.

His fondest memories from the MHA/FYOS are "the high school trips, which were always memorable. I especially enjoyed the big winter trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee." Cooper's favorite teacher was Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff. His email address is [ethanjcoop@gmail.com](mailto:ethanjcoop@gmail.com).



*Want to connect with other MHA/FYOS alumni?*

**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!** 

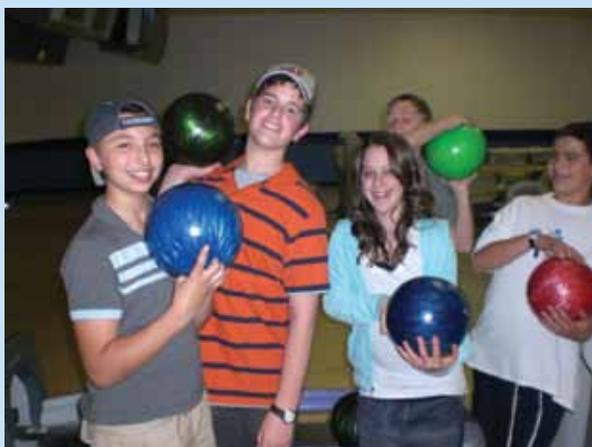


The MHA eighth grade graduates of 2008 on their class trip. Pictured are (back row, from left) **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Chana (Joffre) Goldstone** (MHA '08), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Uzi Milevsky** (MHA '08), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Sammy Mamiye** (MHA '08, FYOS '13), **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08), **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Yoshi Goldstein** (MHA '08), **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Yossi Klein** (MHA '08); (front row, from left) **Charlotte Harkavy** (MHA '08), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and chaperones Avichai Cohen and Chaim Gelber from the Torah MiTzion Kollel.



Members of the MHA class of 2008 pose with Rabbi Reuven Kolton (center) at graduation, including (from left) **Sammy Mamiye** (MHA '08, FYOS '13), **Yossi Klein** (MHA '08), **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08); (front row, from left) **Uzi Milevsky** (MHA '08) and **Yoshi Goldstein** (MHA '08).

# *flashbacks*



The MHA class of 2008 celebrated their eighth grade graduation with a bowling party. Pictured are (from left) **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Yossi Klein** (MHA '08), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Yoshi Goldstein** (MHA '08) and **Uzi Milevsky** (MHA '08).



The MHA class of 2008 on their class trip. Pictured in the foreground are (from left) **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Sammy Mamiye** (MHA '08, FYOS '13), **Yoshi Goldstein** (MHA '08), **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Yossi Klein** (MHA '08). In the background are (from left) **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Charlotte Harkavy** (MHA '08), **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Chana (Joffre) Goldstone** (MHA '08), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12).



The kindergarten class of 2000 wearing T-shirts designed for them by Morah Talya Tsuna. Pictured (from left) are **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), Steven Freiden, **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), Rayzee Kutner, Eliana Leibowitz, **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12).

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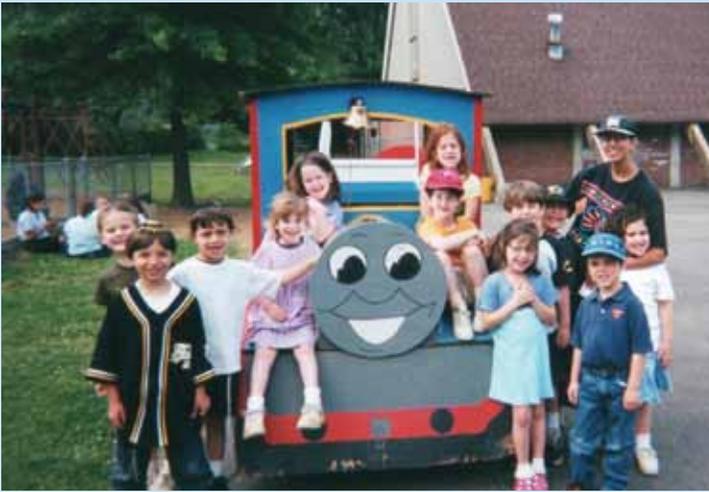


The kindergarten graduates of 2000 include (front row, from left) **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08); (middle row, from left) **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12); (back row, from left) **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12). The boy sneaking into the picture (bottom right) is **Yonatan Cooper** (MHA '11, FYOS '15).



The Goldie Margolin School for Girls senior class of 2012. Pictured are (front row, from left) Principal Anat Kampf, **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), FYOS Director of Student Life Rabbi Noam Stein; (back row, from left) **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Carmit Soleman** (FYOS '12) and **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12).

*hbacks*



Among those enjoying a field day and petting zoo in honor of Lag B'Omer in 2000 are (from left) **Aviva (Katz) Fink** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Eli Ehrenkranz** (MHA '08), Eliana Leibowitz, **Ariana Kaufman** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), Steven Freiden, **Alexa Wender** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Benjamin Wachtel** (FYOS '12), Morah Talya Tsuna and Rayzee Kutner.



Juniors (from left) **Aharon Cooper** (FYOS '10), **Ilya Kats** (FYOS '10) and **Sam (Luky) Guigui** (FYOS '10) prepare for the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys' annual steak dinner in 2009.



**Isaac Krupp** (MHA '06, FYOS '10, standing at left) and **Sam (Luky) Guigui** (FYOS '10) "rapping" their commencement speeches at the 2010 FYOS graduation at Baron Hirsch Synagogue.

*flashback*



The team representing the FYOS at Yeshiva University's National Model United Nations (YUNMUN) event in 2010 includes (from left) **Jordana Wender** (MHA 06, FYOS '10), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Sam (Luky) Guigui** (FYOS '10), **Dylan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Maddie (Tavin) Zimilover** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Molly (Brakha) Hagler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Ariel Cooper** (MHA '06, FYOS '10), **Shoshana (Somer) Mahler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Ethan Address** (MHA '06, FYOS '10).



Seniors (from left) **Ilya Kats** (FYOS '10), **Sam (Luky) Guigui** (FYOS '10) and **Isaac Krupp** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) at the CYHSB steak dinner in 2010.



Seniors (from left) **Ilya Kats** (FYOS '10), **Sam (Luky) Guigui** (FYOS '10), **Mendel Lazaros** (FYOS '10) and **Isaac Krupp** (MHA '06, FYOS '10) enjoy the CYHSB trip to Gatlinburg in 2010.

*backs*

## IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The eighth issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication around Pesach. In it, we will highlight the 8th and 12th grade graduates from the years 1971-1975. If you were in those classes, you should be receiving a questionnaire by email (or regular mail) in February. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

In that issue, we planned to feature a story about Rabbi Yaacov Goldfein, z'l, who taught at the school for more than a quarter-century. Regrettably, his beloved wife, Sharon Goldfein, passed away on Dec. 9 as the current issue was going to press. She, too, worked at the school for many years and was a dedicated volunteer for the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). Therefore, we have decided to devote the feature article in our next issue to the Goldfeins as a couple. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Rabbi and/or Mrs. Goldfein, please email them to Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at [joannekahane111@gmail.com](mailto:joannekahane111@gmail.com), or send them to her by mail at the school address listed below.

Also, be sure to submit your "Mazel Tov" events so we can include them in the Alumni News section of our next issue. Thank you!

