

MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 31

**Highlighting
the graduating
classes of
1986-1990**

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This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of the members of the classes of 1986-1990 who are no longer with us:

Tova (Samuels) Marizan

(MHA '88, YOS '92)

Heather Samuels (MHA '90, FYOS '94)

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

MISSED AN ISSUE?

ARCHIVES

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

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

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COVER PHOTO



On Dec. 6, 1987, the students of the MSG traveled to Washington, D.C. with Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff to attend the Freedom Sunday for Soviet Jews rally. For more on the story, see page 27.

(pictured, clockwise from top-left) **Ilyse Diamond** (MHA '85, YOS '89), **Kendel (Karchmer) Bornstein** (YOS '88), **Dena (Rosenberg) Wruble** (MHA '84, YOS '88), **Simona (Zamuel) Cassius** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Tammi Snyder** (MHA '84, YOS '88), **Shifra (Kutner) Leitman** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Tova Mirvis** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Renata Sadetsky** (MHA '85, YOS '89), **Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman** (MHA '84), **Sheera (Epstein) Sher** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Anna (Fink) Kaminetsky** (MHA '84, YOS '88), **Genya Dorin** (MHA '87, YOS '90) and **Ruth (Samuels) Wurzburg** (MHA '86, YOS '90).

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MHA turns 75!

Our school's 75th birthday celebration is well underway, and we are commemorating the occasion by paying tribute to current and former students, faculty and community leaders. We only wish the visionary founders of the MHA were here today to see the beautiful fruits of the tree they diligently planted 75 years ago.

To celebrate our school's rich 75-year history, MHA director of engagement **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99) has carefully curated displays filled with nostalgic photos and memorabilia from across the decades. For the benefit of those who can't visit the displays in our school building, we've provided some pictures below. If anything here looks familiar, please [let us know](#) what memories these photos evoke for you!

We also want to remind you about the **MHA Memories** video series, which features former students and faculty reflecting on their experiences at the school. Be a part of this wonderful project by creating your own one-minute video clip about your time at the MHA. Recorded segments and any photos you wish to include (optional) can be submitted to jessica.baum@mhafyos.org. The videos that have already been released can be viewed online at mhafyos.org/videos.

Happy birthday, MHA, and congratulations on educating four generations of students in the Memphis Jewish community!



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MHA TURNS 75



Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



Coming off a beautiful *Yom Tov* (High Holiday) season, our community was shaken to its core by the news of the death of Rabbi Captain Avi Goldberg, z'/. Rabbi Goldberg and his amazing wife, Rachel, lived in Memphis from 2008 to 2011, during which time

they had a profound, positive influence on our entire community. They taught at our school and together ran our local Kollel Torah MiTzion. A father of eight beautiful children, Rabbi Goldberg was killed in combat in Lebanon the day after Simchas Torah.

Along with so many people in the Memphis community, I still maintain a very close relationship with the Goldbergs. Whenever I visit my children and grandchildren in Israel, I rarely take time to visit friends there, because I generally want to spend as much time as possible with family. But we've always made time to visit the Goldbergs during our visits to Israel. We call it our "infusion of Goldberg inspiration" — and I know this feeling is not unique to us.

Although we will formally pay tribute to Rabbi Goldberg in our next issue, I want to share one memory that has taken up permanent residence in my mind for the past few weeks. For a while, the Goldbergs lived in a high-rise building in Jerusalem. When anyone came to visit, the first thing Rabbi Goldberg would do is take them out onto the balcony to share the spectacular panoramic view of the city of Jerusalem, including the Temple Mount. I believe this balcony was his favorite spot in the world.

During our visits with the Goldbergs, we'd sit out there for hours, talking and just soaking in the view. When we ate dinner at their home, we'd frequently take our dessert out onto the balcony. Rabbi Goldberg believed wholeheartedly that the rebuilding of this beautiful, holy city was evidence that Hashem was with us and caring for us. For him, it was living proof of Hashem's involvement in our world.

None of us can make sense of this seemingly senseless loss. My daughter-in-law **Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane** (MHA '89, YOS '93) suggested that perhaps Hashem is surrounding Himself with the very best *neshamas* (souls) in preparation for the coming of *Mashiach* (Messiah). If He was looking for the best, He has it in Rabbi Goldberg.

This incredible man will be the subject of the Spotlight feature in our next issue. We ask all of you who knew him to try to put your memories into words and send them to me at joannekahane111@gmail.com. Please help us share with those who did not have the good fortune to know Rabbi Goldberg what a gift he was to our school, Jewish community and world.

In November, we also mourned the passing of Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, wife of former principal Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'/. at the age of 101. She was among the remarkable people, to whom I refer so often, on whose shoulders our community was built. Please see our memorial tribute to Mrs. Nayowitz on page 30.

Amid the losses, there is, of course, so much good news coming out of our MHA/FYOS family. This school year has gotten off to an exciting start under

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MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

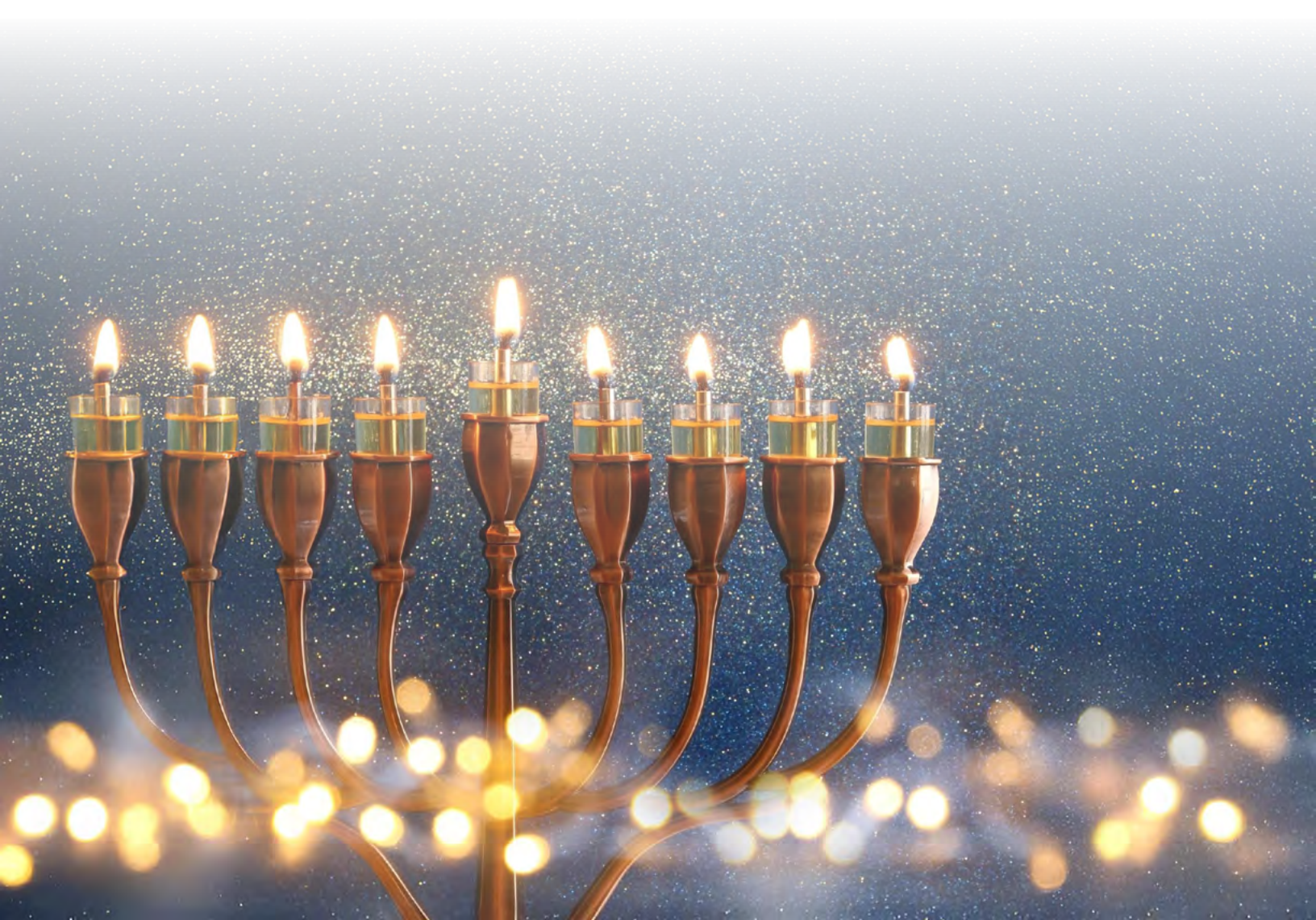
the leadership of Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown and his talented faculty and administration. Our students are learning and thriving! The Mazel Tovs in our Alumni news feature (page 18) testify to the many joyous moments we share with our amazing MHA/ FYOS family far and wide.

Someone once told me that it makes sense for Chanukah to come in the midst of winter, because that's when it is darkest and we most need the lights. Here's hoping this year's Chanukah lights will illuminate some of the darkness of the past months.

May the miracles of Chanukah give birth to miracles now in our lifetime.

We welcome your continued engagement in our humble alumni publication. Wishing you all a *Chanukah Sameach* (Happy Chanukah)!

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair
joannekahane111@gmail.com



Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



I'd like to take this opportunity to share with you some of the remarks I made at our school's operational campaign dinner in the fall. As you may know, the operational campaign is conducted during the days leading up to Yom Kippur and

is the largest annual fundraiser at the MHA/FYOS. This year's campaign raised over 20% of the school's annual budget and culminated in a lovely Oct. 10 dinner for over 120 school supporters at the home of **Josh** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92). While my remarks that evening were geared to the High Holiday season, I believe their theme of spreading light is also fitting for us now as we prepare to celebrate Chanukah.

Rav Abraham Isaac Kook, in his *Orot Teshuvah*, teaches that there are two distinct types of *teshuvah* (repentance): a lower form and a higher form. The lower form is the common understanding of *teshuvah*. It is motivated by a consciousness of sin and entails the cataloging of one's misdeeds in an effort to rectify each one by undoing the harm it caused. This is a painful, backward-looking process that requires us to find our flaws through careful introspection, followed by doing the difficult work of rooting out those features of our personality that are themselves misshapen. It leads to a weakening of the individual and diminishment of the ego, as it requires *tzom*, *kol* and *mamon* — the pain of fasting, the self-abnegation of audible crying and the sacrifice of money. Those three diminishments are listed in small print in the *U'netanah Tokef* prayer in our High Holiday *machzorim* (prayer books).

In contrast, the higher form of *teshuvah* starts with an intellectual awareness that inside each of us is a divine spark of light that can reveal our potential for greatness and strength. When we look for this light, we see what we can become; we see how we can grow. We are inspired to look to the future. We see that each of our souls is already connected to the source of all divine light and that we are empowered to tear down the obstacles standing between us and the complete realization of our true, magnificent selves. This drive to flourish and thrive is expressed most forcefully in *U'netanah Tokef* when the congregation calls out in unison that *teshuvah*, *tefillah* (prayer) and *tzedakah* (charity) render us, to borrow a phrase from Rav Yosef Dov Soloveitchik, bearers of a destiny rooted in our connection to Hashem, instead of subject to impersonal fate.

What differentiates the actions that represent the lesser form of *teshuvah* from those of the greater form of *teshuvah*? How is *tzom* different from *teshuvah*, *kol* different from *tefillah*, *mamon* different from *tzedakah*? I think the difference is in the object of those actions. *Tzom*, *kol* and *mamon* come from a place of seeing the negative and tormenting the self with what we are relinquishing. *Teshuvah*, on the other hand, is about joining together to return as one to the true One, the true source of our spiritual light; *tefillah* is about joining together as a *kahal* (congregation) to crown the true King; and *tzedakah* is about joining together to create effective change for the welfare of the community.

For Rav Kook, this last point is especially important. The future-looking, aspirational form of *teshuvah* is ultimately tied to the united destiny of the Jewish people. Even those among us who seem distant from a life of Torah are motivated by an idealistic

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Mark Kaplowitz

yearning for perfection of this world, and that is driven by the divine spark within. Likewise, it is a barrier between our spark of light and the Infinite Light when we hold our Torah too closely within and neglect to use its light to engage with the *tikkun* (repair) of the larger world. The light within us that drives the higher form of *teshuvah* must inspire us and empower us to realize our full potential, so we can make the larger world a better place.

There is a lesson in all of this for us in the MHA/FYOS family. We live in tough times. Since Oct. 7, 2023, there have been many days when it's been hard to see any light at all. Yet, like the light of *teshuvah*, the mission of our school is to inspire and empower students to succeed at Torah learning and Torah living and to make meaningful contributions to society. Our success can be measured by the way we educate our students to proudly carry their Jewish identities and Torah values out into the world. It is present in the academic success and national awards our students and alumni receive. It can be seen in the close connection that our students feel to *Eretz Yisrael*, *Medinat Yisrael* and *Am Yisrael* (the Land, State and Nation of Israel). It is manifested in our school's many alumni who

volunteer to serve in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF), stand up for Israel on hostile college campuses, and carry a commitment to achieving *tikkun olam* (repairing of the world).

As supporters of the MHA/FYOS, we see this light. In this 75th year of our school's rich history, we look ahead toward a bright future and recognize the full potential that we can help this community realize. Dear alumni and friends, I ask you to carry this light from the MHA/FYOS with you and share it wherever you may go.

Over the coming months and years, may we all merit to continue connecting our inner light with our *tzedakah* to foster the growth and renewal of our school in order to strengthen our holy community and make the world a better place.

Wishing you a very Happy Chanukah —

חג אורים שמח!

Mark Kaplowitz

President, MHA/FYOS board of trustees

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Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



Over these next few days, our students are experiencing the convergence of three great, enduring narratives to which they will return many times in their lives.

The first is the **שעבוד מצרים** and **יציאת מצרים**, the descent of the Jews into Egypt and their eventual redemption. Our students are learning about it in their *parsha* classes across our school, whether in Rabbi Ian Lichter's *parsha shiur* on Fridays in the GMSG or the weekly *chavrusa* learning in the CYHSB, and of course throughout each division and grade. This is the foundational story of our people — marked by suffering, enslavement and miraculous liberation through **יד חזקה**, His outstretched arm.

The second narrative is that of Chanukah — a time when Jewish religious practice was repressed by the Greeks, leading to the struggle by the *Maccabim* (Maccabees) to reclaim our freedom and rededicate the **בית המקדש** (Holy Temple). There is, of course, so much excitement about Chanukah across the school for all of the holiday's special *minhagim* (customs), including latkes and *sufganiyot* (donuts). Chanukah is not just a story of military victory — or eight days of presents — but one of spiritual perseverance.

The third great narrative is that of Israel, the modern Jewish state, which continues to struggle to live freely and prosper amid neighbors who, especially now, are intent on destroying her. Our students *daven* (pray) for *Eretz Yisrael* and its army every day, hoping that peace comes at last. The survival and thriving of Israel are themselves modern-day

miracles and testament to the ongoing legacy of Jewish resilience and faith in the face of existential threats.

At first glance, these three stories — about national enslavement, religious persecution and modern geopolitics, respectively — may seem disparate. Yet, upon closer inspection, we see these narratives are bound together by several enduring themes that define the Jewish experience: the role of **השגחה פרטית** (Divine Providence), the persistence of spiritual identity in the face of assimilation, the ultimate triumph of redemption through struggle, and the power of the few to triumph over the many.

It's this last theme I find most resonant these days. We have been reminded this year most viscerally that we are but a small people amid a sea of those who are either indifferent, hostile or outright enemies to us. In each of these stories, a small and seemingly powerless group of Jews faces a larger, dominant force and emerges victorious. This is not just a historical pattern, but a central aspect of the Jewish people's identity: We are few in number, but we possess the strength to overcome forces much larger than ourselves.

No story embodies this theme more vividly than Chanukah. The truly tiny band of *Maccabim* took up arms against the mighty Greek Seleucid Empire, rulers of nearly half the ancient world. In "Antiquities and the Jews," the ancient historian Josephus wrote that King Antiochus IV "not only forbade them to live according to their own laws, but also imposed upon them the observance of the customs of the Greeks." In a cycle all too familiar to anyone who has studied Jewish history, Jews assimilated, hid their identities, or fled.

Rabbi Yitzchak Isaac Halevi in *Doros HaRishonim* argued that the Jews who fled to the caves to keep their Jewish identity had no intention of waging war against the Greeks or their Hellenist Jewish allies. They simply sought to observe *mitzvot* in hiding, assuming the Greeks wouldn't bother pursuing them into the desert. However, when the Greek army caught up with them on Shabbos, they were defenseless. With no way to organize a proper resistance and no natural possibility of survival, they chose not to violate Shabbos, even though it meant certain death. Upon hearing of this tragedy, *Yehuda HaMaccabee* and his brothers understood that the Greeks were not content to merely eradicate Judaism from public life — they sought to eliminate all practicing Jews, even those in hiding. This realization marked a turning point. Instead of simply fleeing, they began organizing a defense, understanding it was no longer about individual survival but about protecting the Jewish nation.

The *Al HaNissim* prayer captures the essence of this turning point, stating:

“מסרת גבורים ביד חלשים, ורבים ביד מעטים”
 “You delivered the mighty into the hands of the weak, and the many into the hands of the few.”

The triumph of the *Maccabim* was not merely a military victory, but a demonstration of Jewish resilience. They were outgunned, outmanned, outnumbered, outplanned (to borrow a line from the musical “Hamilton”). Against overwhelming odds, the *Maccabim* waged a mismatched war to reclaim their freedom and protect our way of life.

Indeed, Rav Abraham Isaac Kook in *Olat Re'iyah* explained that the real battle of the Maccabees was

both spiritual and military. He cites the Rambam in *Hilchos Chanukah* (3:1), who emphasizes that the reason we celebrate Chanukah and say *Hallel* is because of the return of Jewish sovereignty — the restoration of the Kingdom of Israel — which lasted for over 200 years. Yet, Rav Kook goes further to explain that the Maccabean victory was not just over a militarily superior force but over a pervasive cultural and spiritual threat. The Greeks sought to impose Hellenistic values, undermining the Jewish people's connection to Torah and *mitzvot*. The real triumph, therefore, was the small Jewish nation's ability to resist and preserve its unique spiritual identity, values and way of life against the vast cultural and intellectual forces of Greece. This notion of triumph against overwhelming odds speaks to a deep truth about Jewish history: Small groups of Jews have consistently played outsized roles in preserving their values and identity against much larger physical and spiritual forces.

The same theme of triumph against all odds emerges in the story of **שעבוד מצרים**. The Jewish people survived the long enslavement in Egypt by holding onto key aspects of their identity. Famously, according to *Midrash Shemot Rabbah*, they maintained their distinctive language, clothing and names — three key markers of identity. The small, enslaved nation of Jews faced Egypt, the mightiest empire of the ancient world, during **יציאת מצרים**. Though they had no weapons or armies of their own, they had the Ultimate weapon on their side. Their exodus, despite the opposition of Pharaoh and the entire Egyptian military, became the symbol of a small nation's capacity to resist and outlast a seemingly invincible force — because of the hand of Hashem.

MESSAGE FROM HEAD OF SCHOOL

Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown

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The most recent example of the few overcoming the many is the story of *Medinat Yisrael*. Since its founding in 1948 (and to those Jews living in the land before the state), Israel has faced existential threats from far larger and more powerful neighbors. Every war seems to follow the same terrifying formula: Huge forces backed by countries and armies are nevertheless defeated or pushed back. Despite attempts in legacy and social media to frame the latest conflict as “defenseless Gaza” or “poor Lebanon,” we know they are simply the end of the tentacles of a much larger and dangerous octopus. We are back to this same theme: **רבים ביד מעטים**. On college campuses and online, we are reminded daily that **רבים ביד מעטים**.

As recently noted in the Orthodox Union magazine, *Jewish Action*, one of this past year’s great wake-up calls was the Jews recognizing that, no matter our attempts to make inroads with allies, political friends or activist connections, the winds change and tides turn. We are reminded that we stand alone.

So, what do we do now, especially in schools? The message of **רבים ביד מעטים** must be instilled in the next generation. We must teach our students that being a small minority does not mean weakness; rather, it is an opportunity for immense strength and

influence. In a world where Jews, especially young ones, are isolated on college campuses and in social media spaces and public discourse, the stories of Chanukah, the exodus from Egypt and the modern state of Israel show us the power of standing firm in our values.

We in Memphis have a special mission to cultivate an environment where students feel proud of their Jewish identity, knowledgeable in Torah and confident in expressing their beliefs. We must teach them to be resilient, embrace the weight of Jewish history, and understand they are part of a legacy of Jews who have always stood against larger forces and emerged victorious — not just through military might but through **התמדה ותרבותית רוחנית**, religious and cultural perseverance.

Wishing you a Happy Chanukah,

Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown
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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. Here are some of the responses we received to [issue 30](#).

What a great newsletter filled with many wonderful flashbacks! Fantastic job. Thank you for taking the time.

-Jan Starr (MHA '66)

Issue 30 is totally professional and beautifully done. Thank you!

-Steve Katz (MHA '64)

Thank you for putting out the newsletter year after year. I can only imagine the amount of hard work you put into it.

-Esther (Yaselman) Gurovich (MHA '94, FYOS '98)

I really enjoyed reading the Rosh Hashanah edition of the MHA alumni newsletter. A masterful job once again! I'm sure many people's *Yom Tov* (holiday) experience was enhanced by what is clearly a labor of love. *Yasher koach* (kudos)!

-Rabbi Akiva Males (Young Israel of Memphis and FYOS faculty member)

Thank you for this newsletter! I know it must be incredibly hard work, but it provides such a wonderful way to keep people connected to the school.

I wanted to share with my fellow alumni that I now host a weekly video series on the *parsha* (Torah portion) based on really good material from Rabbi Yitzchok Meir Goodman's "[Torah Giants on Chumash](#)" anthology. The series can be viewed online at youtube.com/@torahgiants. If you have five minutes, please check it out and enjoy.

-Steven Geller (YOS '79)

*Reply from the editor and alumni chair:
Steven, thank you for letting us know. Certainly, many of our alumni will gladly listen to what you have to share about the parsha.
Keep up the great work!*

I am looking for a set of *Rivevos Efraim*, the *seforim* (books) written by our beloved Rabbi Efraim Greenblatt, z'l. It seems they are no longer available commercially. I figured reaching out to MHA/FYOS alumni might be a good place to start. If anyone has a set they'd be willing to give away or sell, please contact me at 917-863-5846 or andgoldstein@gmail.com. Thank you so much.

-Dawn (Posner) Goldstein (MHA '77, YOS '81)



TRIVIA ANSWERS

1966-1970

Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our [30th issue](#).

The winner of our trivia contest from that issue is **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72), who answered five of the 10 questions correctly.

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

Below are the answers to the trivia questions from issue 30. How many did you know?

1. (a) Who provided bread and rolls to the MHA/YOS for many years (before the days of Ricki's Cookie Corner)? (b) What was unusual about their sliced breads?
ANSWERS: Meyer's Bakery, run by "Uncle" Meyer Rosenberg. Their bread slicer was missing a blade, so one slice in each loaf was twice as thick as the others.
2. Who was the third grade Hebrew teacher for the MHA class of 1970?
ANSWER: Rabbi Guri.
3. What name was given to the pinball machine that for several years resided in the attic of the boys' dorm prior to the building being renovated?
ANSWER: Queen of Diamonds.
4. When Georgia Thomas was the school's main cook, what was the standard dessert served to the dorm students at Shabbat meals?
ANSWER: Peach cobbler.
5. How often were school assemblies held during this era?
ANSWER: Monthly.
6. During these years, what were MHA students required to do after lunch that is no longer a requirement?
ANSWER: Brush their teeth.

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TRIVIA ANSWERS

Questions from Issue 30

7. Name two married couples who taught at the school during these years.

ANSWER: Rabbi Efraim, z'l, and Mrs. Miriam Greenblatt, z'l, and Rabbi Yosef and Mrs. Maxine Rottenberg.

8. In addition to Hebrew, which foreign language did students learn during this era?

ANSWER: Spanish

9. In which after-school activity (no longer offered at the MHA) were the girls pictured below participating?

ANSWER: Cheerleading.



(from left) Eileen (Thomas) Exelbierd, **Trudy (Hanover) Klugman** (MHA '70, YOS '74), **Judy Rosenberg** (MHA '70), Karen (Clemons) Mintz, z'l, **Leah Malka Cheruff** (MHA '70, YOS '73), Marilyn (Katz) Magnus and **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72).

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1986-1990

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

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



1. Which extracurricular program was run by Ms. Jan Horn?
2. Where did the seniors take the freshmen on "kidnap day" in 1988?
3. During the MSG trip to Washington, D.C. to demonstrate on behalf of Soviet Jewry, kosher food was difficult to get. What did the students eat for three days?
4. What was the name of the MHA basketball team in 1988?
5. Which fourth grade general studies teacher initiated the World's Fair program during this period?
6. In 1985, what special pre-Pesach activity did Rabbi Mordechai Kruger undertake with his fourth grade students?
7. Which country was honored during the Memphis in May festival in 1984?
8. At the science fair awards night in 1987, the sixth grade presented an original play written by which faculty member?
9. Which student portrayed Lady Macbeth in the middle school's Shakespearean production in 1987?

The essence of the miracle of Chanukah

Is the miracle of Chanukah the miracle of the oil or the miracle of the military victory? In *Masechet Shabbat* 21b, the Talmud famously asks, "What is Chanukah?" What is the true essence of the Chanukah holiday?

The *Gemara* answers that after the Greeks defiled the *Beit HaMikdash* (Holy Temple) and all the oil, and then the *Chashmonaim* (Hasmoneans) prevailed over them, they entered the Temple and found only one small jar of pure oil. That jar was naturally only enough to last for one day's lighting. Miraculously, it was enough to keep the *Menorah* lit for eight days. The *Gemara* states, "For the next year, we will establish good days of praise and thanksgiving." From these words in the *Gemara*, we learn that the essence of the holiday is preserving the memory of the miracle of the oil.

In contrast, the wording of the *Al HaNissim* prayer makes no mention of the miracle of the oil; it focuses instead on the miracle of the military victory. It says at the end of *Al HaNissim*, "And light the candles in the courts of your sanctuaries and set these eight days of Chanukah." There is no mention of the miracle of the oil.

In addressing this question, Rabbi Yitzchak Mirsky asks two clarifying questions in his book *Hegyonei Halacha*. First, how do we recite *Hallel* over the miracle of oil, since we normally only say *Hallel* on holidays marking a miraculous, collective salvation of the Jewish people? The miracle of the oil enabled the *Chashmonaim* to perform the miracle of lighting the *Menorah*, but it did not involve a national salvation. Second, why did the Jews need the miracle of the oil when the Temple and the people

were impure? They could have lit the *Menorah* with impure oil until they were naturally able to get pure oil.

Now we have three questions to answer:

1. How do we reconcile the seeming contradiction between the *Gemara* in *Masechet Shabbat* and the words of *Al HaNissim*?
2. Why do we recite the *Hallel* and *Al HaNissim* prayers on account of the miracle of the oil, which was not a general salvation of the people?
3. Why was the miracle of the oil even needed?

Rabbi Mirsky answers as follows: Indeed, the Jews winning the war over the Greeks is the main miracle, and for that we recite *Hallel* and *Al HaNissim*. But some people may posit that the victory was not a miracle, just the Jews winning on their own military merits. The miracle of the oil shows Hashem's miraculous hand in the victory and ability to properly light the *Menorah* with pure oil. It is therefore proper that we recite *Hallel* and *Al HaNissim* and give thanks to Hashem.

In considering both miracles, we see a common thread: the few rising up against the many. We see the small Jewish army fighting against the grand Greek army and a small amount of oil lasting for longer than it ordinarily should. In both cases, we are blessed to have Divine miracles performed on our behalf. For that, we are thankful to Hashem and able to recite *Hallel* and *Al HaNissim*.

In our daily lives, we must take the time to appreciate all the miracles. Every day we wake up and have an opportunity to start our day is a *bracha* (blessing) from Hashem. We have to thank Him for all we have and all we are.

Here in Memphis, we are a small but thriving Jewish community. We've been blessed to have the MHA/ FYOS educating generations of Jewish children in our community for the past 75 years. Students from our small (but mighty!) school participate in all sorts of national events, including Yeshiva University National Model United Nations, prestigious mock trial competitions, *Chidon HaTanach* (International Bible Contest), sports tournaments and many more. Our students go on to become world-class doctors, lawyers, accountants, educators and professionals in every industry. For such a small community and school, our students and alumni make a significant impact everywhere they go.

We must take this *bracha* and continue to be a light unto the nations for, with G-d's help, the next 75 years and well beyond.

Ronit (Sauer) Brakha (MHA '83, YOS '87) lives in Memphis with her husband, Menashe. They have three grown children — **Molly (Brakha) Hagler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Natanel** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) and **Racheli** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) — and four grandchildren (and counting, please G-d). She is proud to be an early childhood educator and to provide Hebrew reading support to students at her alma mater, the MHA/FYOS.





ENGAGEMENTS/ WEDDINGS:

Mazel tov to:

Ranelle (Evensky) Kibel (MHA '66, YOS '70) of Baltimore, Maryland, on the Nov. 25 wedding of her granddaughter Tehilla Kibel, daughter of Moshe and Leila Kibel of Cincinnati, Ohio, to Danny Weiss. The couple got married in Lakewood, New Jersey, which is also where they are living. The bride is also a granddaughter of **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l. Photos from the couple's engagement party and wedding are featured in Alumni Reunite, pages 42-43.

Rabbi Yisroel and **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79) of Baltimore on the Nov. 7 marriage of their daughter Channah to Doniel Eisenberg in Baltimore. The newlyweds live in Jerusalem.

Rabbi Yaakov and **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85) of Jerusalem, whose son Yehuda Goodman married Elisheva Twersky on Oct. 30. The wedding was held in Jerusalem, and the couple is living in the city's French Hill neighborhood. A picture from the wedding can be found in Alumni Reunite, page 43.

Dayna and **Phillip Klitzner** (MHA '92, FYOS '96) of Baltimore, Maryland, who will soon celebrate the weddings of two of their daughters. On Jan. 8, Miriam Klitzner will marry Yehoshua Braunshweiger in Baltimore, which is also where the couple will live. Then, on Feb. 5, Naomi Klitzner weds Mordechai Quinn in Lakewood, New Jersey. The couple will live in Jerusalem.

Shlomo Bosin (MHA '14, FYOS '18) on his engagement to Michal Ambinder. They are getting married Jan. 1 in Monsey, New York, and will live in Mevaseret Tzion in Israel. Mazel tov also to the groom's parents, Silha and **Slava Bosin** (MHA '80, YOS '84) of Memphis.

Mark Fertel (FYOS '17) and **Rena Mashinsky** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) on their engagement. They have not yet set a wedding date and plan to live in New York City. Mazel tov also to the bride's mother, **Deena Thomas** (MHA '76, YOS '80).

Ezra Somer (FYOS '21) on his engagement to Nomi Spindel. They plan to wed Jan. 5 in Neve Ilan, Israel, and to make their home in Nof Ayalon.

BIRTHS:

Mazel tov to:

Mendy and **Marilyn (Weinreich) Schachter** (MHA '71, YOS '75) of Cleveland, Ohio, on the Nov. 12 arrival of grandson Shabsai Baruch Yitzchok, born to Aryeh and Esti Schachter of Fair Lawn, New Jersey. Mazel tov also to siblings Shira Ayelet, Shoshana Sora and Avraham Ephraim.

Dinah and **Gary Makowsky** (MHA '74) of Memphis on the Nov. 19 arrival of grandson Judah Meyer, born to Sharon Makowsky and Steven Flug of New York City. Mazel tov also to big brother Murray.

Debbie Freiden and **Hugh (Freiden) Gordon** (MHA '72, YOS '76) of Memphis on the birth of a granddaughter in November.

Rena and **Ephraim Kutner** (MHA '85) of Lawrence, New York, on the Oct. 7 arrival of grandson Kalev Yehoshua. Mazel tov also to parents Talia and Momo Kutner and big sister Naama Sasha. He is a great-grandson of **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '65, YOS '68), now also living in Lawrence, and **Alan Kutner** (MHA '62), z'l.

Chayim and **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92) of

Lakewood, New Jersey, on the Oct. 30 arrival of granddaughter Shayna Leeba, born to Azi and Chani Wiesel of Queens, New York. The baby is named for her great-grandmother, Mrs. Sharon Goldfein, z'l.

Rabbi Larry and **Nehama (Kutliroff) Teitelman** (MHA '91) of Queens, New York, on the Nov. 11 birth of their first grandchild, baby boy Asher Binyamin. His parents are Sara and Dovid Braverman, also of Queens. Mazel tov also to the great-grandparents, former MHA/FYOS teachers and administrators Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff.

Dayna and **Phillip Klitzner** (MHA '92, FYOS '96) of Baltimore, who became grandparents with the Dec. 5 arrival of Yehuda Elimelech, born to their children Ezra and Shani Simon, also of Baltimore.

Ben Sanders and **Lea Epstein** (FYOS '07) of Teaneck, New Jersey, on the Oct. 16 birth of son Theodore (Teddy). Mazel tov also to siblings Jamie and Sofia and grandparents Eileen Segal and **Sam Epstein** (YOS '71) of Memphis.

Suzie and **Kevin Wender** (MHA '06) of Atlanta, Georgia, who became parents Nov. 16 with the

birth of son Micah Jay. The baby boy is a grandson of longtime MHA library volunteer Sally Wender of Memphis and the late **Mark Wender** (MHA '70, YOS '74), z'l.

Benji and **Shoshana (Somer) Mehler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) of Memphis on the Sept. 27 birth of son Dovi. Mazel tov also to big brothers Gedalia and Isaac, who are students at MHA.

Paul and **Sarah (Belz) Hess** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) of Miami, Florida, who became parents Sept. 18 with the arrival of son Sidney.

Ruvi and **Jamie (Epstein) Gibber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) of Memphis on the Oct. 1 arrival of baby boy Aharon Yosef (Ari). Mazel tov also to siblings Shaindy, Yoel Chaim and Dovid and to grandparents **Mike** (MHA '68, YOS '71) and **Amy (Thomas) Epstein** (MHA '71, YOS '75), also of Memphis.

Ilana and **Efraim Wiener** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) of Queens, New York, on the Sept. 12 birth of their first child, son Ori Yehoshua. Mazel tov also to grandparents Hillel and MHA faculty member Morah Rivki Weiner.

Avi and **Meira (Braverman) Rubin** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) of

Far Rockaway, New York, who became parents with the Sept. 24 arrival of son Yisroel (Izzy) Yechezkel. The baby was named for his great-great-grandfather, Izzy Katz, z'l, who played a pivotal role in the establishment of our school. Mazel tov also to grandparents Kevin and **Rivka (Katz) Braverman** (MHA '89, YOS '93) and great-grandparents Esther and **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69), all of Memphis.

Shimmy and **Esti (Samberg) Klaus** (MHA '16, FYOS '20) of Passaic, New Jersey, on the Oct. 12 birth of their first child, son Yonah Naftali. Mazel tov also to grandparents and former MHA faculty members Cantor Aryeh and Adina Samberg of Memphis.

BNEI/BNOT MITZVAH:

Mazel tov to:

Pat and **Sherwin "Butch" Yaffe** (MHA '62) of Memphis, whose granddaughter Lyla Cenker, a sixth grader at MHA, became a bat mitzvah Nov. 30. Mazel tov also to parents Dovid Cenker and Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker, copy editor of this publication.

Raffie (FYOS '94) and **Sarah Leah (Stein) Freiden** (MHA '91) of Boca Raton, Florida, on the Nov. 9 celebration of their son

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ALUMNI NEWS

Mazel Tovs & More

Judah's bar mitzvah. Mazel tov also to grandparents Pam and **Jeffrey Freiden** (YOS '72) of Boynton Beach, Florida, and Essie and **Mike Stein** (MHA '68, YOS '72) of Memphis.

Yehudit and **Aaron Gavant** (MHA '97) of Skokie, Illinois, on the Aug. 15 bar mitzvah of their son, Matan Shalom (Tani), which the family celebrated in Israel. Mazel tov also to grandparents **Moshe (Morris) Gavant** (YOS '72) and **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA '70) of Baltimore, Maryland.

Avi and **Barbara (Plotitsa) Satt** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) of Far Rockaway, New York, on their daughter Elana becoming a bat mitzvah. The celebration was held Dec. 1 in Woodmere, New York.

MAZEL TOV!

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



THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1986-1990

Where are they now?

Jonathan Epstein (MHA '82, YOS '86) lives in Memphis with his wife of 20 years and their two high-school-aged children. He serves as president and CEO of Running Pony, a prominent mid-South digital agency and video production company.

"My education and experience at the MHA/YOS prepared me for the world in ways I could not fully appreciate at the time," Epstein said. "I consider myself lucky to have been exposed to the variety of talented educators and rabbis I learned from."

Among his favorite teachers were Mr. Jack Baxter, who fostered his love of writing, as well as Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Abby Johnson, Mr. Thomas Berman, Rabbi Ephraim Weingot and **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l.

'82

'86

'83

'87

Ronit (Sauer) Brakha (MHA '83, YOS '87) lives in Memphis with her husband, Menashe (a former FYOS faculty member). They have three children — **Molly (Brakha) Hagler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Natanel** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) and **Racheli** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) — and four grandchildren (and counting, please G-d). She is proud to be an early childhood educator and to provide Hebrew reading support to students at the MHA/FYOS.

Rabbi Josh Friedman (MHA '87) lives in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, and is a father of seven sons and one daughter. He teaches at a yeshiva and runs the Israel Select Charity Fund, a nonprofit organization that helps donors direct their charitable giving to effectively address areas of greatest need.

'87

Since the horrific events of Oct. 7, 2023, Rabbi Friedman and his nonprofit have made it their mission to provide *tefillin* to members of the Israel Defense Forces (IDF). Recipients say having their own pair enhances their spiritual protection and boosts their morale as they defend the Jewish people, and many have accepted upon themselves to fulfill this mitzvah for the rest of their lives. With the support of leading rabbis and public figures and many generous donors, Rabbi Friedman and the Israel Select Charity Fund have already procured *tefillin* for 8,100 courageous IDF soldiers! Their noble work continues, as more than 400 additional members

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THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1986-1990

Where are they now?

of the IDF stationed near the border with Lebanon are interested in receiving *tefillin*. Each pair costs \$500. Anyone interested in learning more about or contributing to Rabbi Friedman's efforts may visit [the campaign website](#).

Before making *aliyah* to Israel, Rabbi Friedman worked as an actuary on Wall Street, so it's little surprise that math instructor Mrs. Joyce Casada was his favorite teacher at the MHA.



Rabbi Josh Friedman helping a member of the IDF put on tefillin.

'88

Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson (MHA '88) lives in Memphis with her husband and their daughters **Brooke** (MHA '21) and **Rachel** (MHA '23), who attend the GMSG. She works as a senior tax accountant for Gerber & Co.

"The Memphis community is a very special one, and I'm so happy to have the chance to live here as an adult," she said. "There are people here I've known my entire life, as well as transplants who have moved to town and become like family. It truly is a unique and extraordinary place to call home. And I've learned that almost everyone is only six degrees of separation from someone who has lived here, and often it's even fewer."



The Zalowitz/Sanderson family: parents Carol and Stuart Zalowitz (center), **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88) and her family (right) and **Daniel Zalowitz** (FYOS '94) and his family (left).

Each year, she looks forward to the MHA Sweepstakes fundraiser, when **David Katz** (MHA '88) sends a group email to their whole class and it sparks renewed connections. "We should plan a reunion in Memphis for the next alumni weekend — I would love to show everyone how our school has changed since we were students!"

She has fond memories of her class doing math quizzes on the board in Mrs. Joyce Casada's class. "No one could beat David Friedman at addition," she recalled. Mrs. Casada and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff were two of Sanderson's favorite teachers. "Both knew how to handle our class of jokesters well," she said.

'88

'92

Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer (MHA '88, YOS '92) is a mother and grandmother living with her husband in Lakewood, New Jersey.

"I have very warm memories of my years at MHA/YOS," she said. "Turning 50 was a big milestone for me this year; where did the years go? I wish all my classmates much *mazel* and *bracha* (luck and blessings)."



Kramer family

Rivka (Katz) Braverman (MHA '89, YOS '93) is the daughter of alumnus **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69) and the mother of five alumni: **Shani (Braverman) Winter** (MHA '12, FYOS '16), **Ahron** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Meira (Braverman) Rubin** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Akiva** (MHA '17, FYOS '21) and **Eitan** (MHA '24 and current FYOS freshman). She and her husband also have four grandchildren, three of whom were born in the past year. They live in Memphis, where she works as a nurse at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

'89

'93

"I love living in Memphis and being able to raise my family in the place where I grew up," Braverman said. She encourages her classmates to come back and see what a great place Memphis still is, and she hopes they will be in touch.

Her favorite teacher was the late Mrs. Ann Ivins. "She taught science and was really dedicated to her students," Braverman said. "She made me feel as if I could accomplish anything."

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THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 1986-1990

Where are they now?

'90

'94

Naama (Aviner) Weinstock (MHA '90, FYOS '94) works as a dentist and lives in Atlantic Beach, New York, where her husband serves as a synagogue rabbi. They have four children, ages 16 to 24.

Her favorite MHA/FYOS memories are of school canoe and hiking trips and GMSG shabbatons. Many wonderful teachers impacted her life, and among her favorites were the late Mrs. Karin Schmitt and the late Mrs. Ann Ivins.

She would welcome the opportunity to connect with her classmates, who can reach her at naamaa@aol.com.



Weinstock family

Want to connect with other MHA/FYOS alumni?

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK! 

ALUMNI BASKETBALL GAME

Save the Date

25

Join us Jan. 18 for the 33rd Annual Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game

Mark your calendar and make plans to attend the 33rd Annual Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game on Saturday night, Jan. 18, 2025 (during MLK Day weekend) in the MHA's beautifully refurbished Moss Gym.

In honor of the school's 75th birthday, the event will have a nostalgia theme and showcase photos and memorabilia from the early years of the Alumni Game. Whether you'll be playing or spectating, we look forward to welcoming many alumni back to campus.

Admission is free, and food will be available for purchase. During halftime, attendees can participate in a three-point shooting contest and basketball skills competition.

CYHSB alumni interested in playing in the Alumni Game are invited to register [online](#); alumni team members will receive special throwback T-shirts. Event sponsorships can be reserved [here](#). If you have questions about the Alumni Game, please contact MHA Athletic Director Kobi Pinto at kobi.pinto@mhafyos.org.

Alumni traveling from out of town who would like assistance with accommodations or meals should contact Alumni Chair Joanne Kahane at joannekahane111@gmail.com.

We sincerely hope to see you in January; be sure to bring your school spirit, and come ready for a great night of basketball and a fun walk down MHA/FYOS memory lane.





MHA-FYOS PRESENTS
THE 33rd ANNUAL
IRBY AND BERNICE COOPER
ALUMNI
GAME
MOTZEI SHABBAT, JANUARY 18

ALUMNI VS GYHSB
8:00 PM
MHA MOSS GYM
TO SPONSOR OR ADVERTISE, EMAIL KOBI PINTO AT
KOBI.PINTO@MHAFYOS.ORG

COVER PHOTO STORY

GMSG journeys to 1987 Freedom Sunday for Soviet Jewry in Washington

On Sunday, Dec. 6, 1987 — the eve of the Washington, D.C. summit between Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and U.S. President Ronald Reagan — an estimated 250,000 people demonstrated on the National Mall in an unprecedented display of solidarity for Soviet Jewry. The mass mobilization, organized by a broad-based coalition, brought activists from across the United States to demand that Gorbachev extend his policy of glasnost (openness) to Soviet Jews — thereby putting an end to their forced assimilation and allowing them to emigrate from the USSR.



As shown (above) in the 1987 clipping from Memphis' Jewish newspaper, *The Hebrew Watchman*, the students of the GMSG traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in the rally. The story of how students from our school came to attend the event began earlier that fall, when then-school administrators Dr. Jerry and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff attended an Educators Council of America (ECA) convention at Yeshiva University in New York. They were told repeatedly throughout Shabbat that a special guest would join the convention Saturday

night. There was much anticipation of who this might be, but nothing compared to the crowd's emotional outburst when Natan Sharansky entered the room.

By way of background, Sharansky was a Soviet citizen who was denied an exit visa to Israel in 1973. The reason given was that he had access at some point in his career to information vital to Soviet national security and thus could not be allowed to leave. Sharansky became a human rights activist and leader for the rights of refuseniks. On March 15, 1977, Sharansky was arrested by the KGB on multiple charges, including high treason (which carried the death penalty) and spying for the Americans. The following year, he was sentenced to 13 years of forced labor.

Sharansky spent time in several Soviet prisons and was in solitary confinement for multiple intervals. He embarked on hunger strikes to protest confiscation of his mail, and he was force-fed at least 35 times. His health significantly deteriorated during his imprisonment. Following an international campaign led by his wife, Avital, he was released Feb. 11, 1986, as part of a larger exchange of detainees. Sharansky was the first political prisoner released by Gorbachev.

Seeing Sharansky in person was an emotional experience for everyone present at the convention. "I've met many famous people in my life: I shook John F. Kennedy's hand, sat next to economist and diplomat John Kenneth Galbraith at dinner, and met with pediatrician Dr. Benjamin Spock. But nothing was as moving as meeting Natan Sharansky," Mrs. Kutliroff said. She recalled Sharansky looking

very thin and frail following his post-release hospitalization.

He announced to convention attendees he was planning a march for Soviet Jewry in Washington and emphasized how important it was for everyone to attend. “He told us, ‘You don’t know how meaningful it is when we in the Soviet Union hear that Americans are coming out in our favor,’” Mrs. Kutliroff said. “I immediately turned to my husband and told him I was going to take the Girls’ School to that march, whenever it is.”

Many logistics had to come together to make this happen. Because the rally was on a Sunday morning, students and chaperones had to spend the prior Shabbat somewhere near D.C.; this was complicated by the thousands of people from across the U.S. who were also seeking weekend hospitality in order to attend the rally. Somehow, the Kutliroffs worked things out and the trip was set.

Sunday’s rally was a once-in-a-lifetime display of Jewish unity. “By 1987, we had lived in many cities across America and been involved in the Jewish communities in all of those cities,” Mrs. Kutliroff said. “When we got to the staging area in Lafayette Park that morning and I saw the placards from all the different groups in attendance, it was as if my Jewish life was reappearing before me. I saw a banner from the synagogue I grew up with. I saw friends I’d known from Young Judea and from college. I saw community members and students from every city we had lived in. It was like my whole life was opening up again, and the memories kept flooding in.”

When it came time to start the march, attendees walked together down the National Mall to the

U.S. Capitol building, where a platform was set up for speakers. The most inspiring speakers were the Soviet refuseniks who shared inspiring stories of grit and determination. “There was an overwhelming feeling of being part of a crowd of 250,000 Jews coming together, including people from every stage of my life,” Mrs. Kutliroff said.

The most remarkable and memorable part of her day took place later that afternoon. The GMSG delegation had arranged to meet at a specific place at 4 p.m. On her way to the meeting spot, Mrs. Kutliroff saw a group of boys, who she assumed were from Yeshiva University, gathering to daven *mincha* (afternoon prayers). She watched them remove pocket-sized *siddurim* (prayer books) from their backpacks and begin to daven. One of the boys walked over to an elderly man who was watching from nearby, put his arm around him, and brought him into the *minyán*. “It was such a powerful sight,” Mrs. Kutliroff said. “When I think about it even today, it brings tears to my eyes. Here in America, these college-aged kids had no compunction about davening publicly and reaching out to include somebody in their group.”

The next morning, the GMSG joined the girls from Yeshiva of Greater Washington for davening and breakfast — after which they got to experience another inspiring moment. For the past year, the GMSG had been reciting *Tehillim* (Psalms) for the refuseniks, including noted personality Tanya Edelshtein. At the end of davening, the lead teacher brought Edelshtein, who had recently been released, into the room. “To have her present at that point in time and thank them for remembering her and her husband and davening for them was such an incredible and powerful wrap-up to the entire experience.”

As Mrs. Kutliroff summarized the experience, “We stood shoulder to shoulder with our fellow Jews for the cause of freeing Soviet Jews, and there was living proof that saying *Tehillim* helped the whole thing transpire.”

Shifra (Kutner) Leitman (MHA '86, YOS '90) was among the GMSG students who attended the rally with her peers. “I wish I had more clear memories of the trip,” she said, “But I remember tons of people

being there. We had a real sense of purpose, and we were so proud to support the Jewish people of the Soviet Union.”

THANK YOU

We express our deepest appreciation to all those who gave of their time to help us publish this issue. First, thank you to the staff at the MHA/FYOS, most especially **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and director of engagement), Amanda Davidson and Erica Stoltz. Additionally, thank you to the alumni and friends who assisted us by supplying photographs, identifying individuals in those pictures, and providing historical background, trivia questions and more, including **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63), **Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman** (MHA '84), **Ilyse Diamond** (MHA '85, YOS '89), **Renata Sadetsky** (MHA '85, YOS '89), **Shifra (Kutner) Leitman** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Ruth (Samuels) Wurzburg** (MHA '86, YOS '90 and elementary general studies principal), **Aliza (Levin) Segal** (MHA '87), **Dovid Krupp** (MHA '88), **Lee Lieberman** (MHA '88), **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88), **Sarah (Fink) Wachtel** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Rivka (Katz) Braverman** (MHA '89, YOS '93), **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), JJ Stein (anticipated FYOS '25), Rivki (Nayowitz) Aderet and Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l



All of us in the MHA/FYOS family were saddened to learn of the passing of Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l, wife of former MHA Principal Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'l, in early November. Mrs. Nayowitz was 101 years old, and many of those years were spent in service to the MHA.

Born in Romania, Libby (nee Lerner) Nayowitz moved to America in 1929, taking up residence on the Lower East Side of Manhattan. It was there she met her husband, who was learning at Yeshivas Rabbeinu Chaim Berlin. They married in 1944.

The head of Rabbi Nayowitz's yeshiva encouraged his students to leave New York to help build new Jewish communities. So, the Nayowitzes left their family and the comfort of a large Jewish community to spread Torah where it was most needed. They started in Detroit, Michigan, and then went on to South Bend, Indiana. While living there, they heard about a new day school being established in Memphis.

At that time, Rabbi Alfred Fruchter, z'l, served as principal of the nascent MHA, while simultaneously leading the Anshei Sphard Congregation. The Nayowitzes came to the rescue, relieving Rabbi Fruchter of the school principal job.

Rabbi Nayowitz served as principal of the MHA from 1952 to 1962. (For more on Rabbi Nayowitz's tenure, see the feature in [Issue No. 6](#), beginning on page 16.) During that time, Mrs. Nayowitz served in various capacities at the school — teacher, office



Mrs. Nayowitz with the MHA kindergarten graduates of 1954.

staff, kitchen help and more — wherever she was needed.

She was also very active in the Parent-Teacher Association (PTA). During that era, the school regularly held "Sunday supper" events to raise money and bring the community together. Mrs. Nayowitz was one of the primary cooks for those dinners — a responsibility she loved and enjoyed.

In 1962, the Nayowitzes moved to Israel for a short time, returning to the U.S. in 1965. They then lived in New Jersey for 10 years and in 1975 came "home" to Memphis.

During the 1980s, Mrs. Nayowitz taught many different Torah studies classes at the MHA. She had a particular love for all aspects of linguistics — vocabulary, grammar, syntax and semantics. She thoroughly enjoyed transmitting this love of language to her students while teaching them Hebrew.



*Rabbi and Mrs. Nayowitz with their grandson **Daniel Katz** (MHA '98, FYOS '02) at his bar mitzvah in 1997.*

Throughout her life, health and fitness were very important to her — a factor that no doubt contributed to her longevity. Like clockwork, Mrs. Nayowitz could be seen taking her spirited daily walks throughout the neighborhoods of East Memphis.

In 2007, the Nayowitzes again left Memphis in order to be closer to their children and grandchildren in the New York City area. Rabbi Nayowitz passed away in 2016, and Mrs. Nayowitz lived the final years of her life in Great Neck, New York, with her daughter.

Libby Nayowitz was one of the few remaining members of the “pioneers” generation that envisioned what the MHA could be and then set out to make it happen. May we all continue to be inspired by their sacrifices and unshakable faith.

“She was always such a loving grandmother, making each grandchild feel as though they were the most special,” said Mrs. Nayowitz’s granddaughter, **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '94). “I was lucky to grow up with her nearby in Memphis and have very fond memories of being at her house throughout my childhood and beyond. Even after I got married and moved back to Memphis with small children, my grandmother was there, being just as loving to my kids as she was to me and my siblings. I will miss her smile, her hugs, her true interest in everything I did, her delicious challah and brownies, and her love.”



*Mrs. Nayowitz with her granddaughter **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** in 2019.*

Mrs. Libby Nayowitz, z'l

On behalf of the MHA/FYOS, we send our sincerest condolences to the extended Nayowitz family, most especially her children: **Devora (Nayowitz) Rothenberg** (MHA '58), **Reuven Nayowitz** (MHA '60), Rivky (Nayowitz) Aderet, Fraidy (Nayowitz)

Lampert and Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may the memory of their wonderful mother always be a blessing to all who knew her.



*Mrs. Nayowitz (third from left) celebrated her 99th birthday in 2022 with all of her children: (from left) **Devora Rothenberg**, Rivky Aderet, Chavi Katz, Fraidy Lampert and **Reuven Nayowitz**.*

TORAH DEDICATION

Alumni lead effort to dedicate new MHA/FYOS Torah scroll in memory of Rav Nota Greenblatt, z'l



The area surrounding the MHA/FYOS campus was filled with joy and excitement on the chilly afternoon of Tuesday, Dec. 3, as the community celebrated the completion and dedication of a new *sefer Torah* (Torah scroll) in memory of MHA founder Rabbi Nota (Nathan) Greenblatt, z'l.



The initiative was spearheaded by alumnus **Jon Wogan** (MHA '94) and his wife, Sarah Bracha, who had been discussing since Rav Nota's passing in April 2022 that the school should do something very special in his memory. The Wogan family has long had interest in investing in a *sefer Torah*, and with this year marking the 75th anniversary of the founding of the MHA, the opportunity to commission a Torah dedicated to Rav Nota seemed just right. Fellow alumni **Sandy Blockman** (MHA '71, YOS '74) and **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81), along with Rabbi Yosef Braha of the Memphis Kollel, joined Wogan as co-chairs of the campaign.



*The Wogan family in front of the parade float at the Dec. 3 Torah dedication (clockwise from left): **Akiva** (MHA '22), Sarah Bracha, **Jon** (MHA '94), **Rena** (MHA '18, FYOS '22), **Dovid Reuven** (MHA '19, FYOS 23) and Avi (MHA third grader).*

The collective effort to make this vision a reality took nearly a year. The *sofer* (scribe) began the painstaking work of writing the Torah scroll in February. On Nov. 20, Rav Nota's son **Rabbi Dovid Greenblatt** (MHA '65) and his wife Debbie officially launched the campaign with an event at their

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home in Lawrence, New York, where people shared inspiring memorial tributes to Rav Nota and had the opportunity to participate in the writing of the Torah. (A recording of the event can be viewed [online](#).)



Avi Goldstein (left), husband of alumna **Dawn (Posner) Goldstein** (MHA '77, YOS '81), writing a letter in the new Torah under the guidance of the sofer at the Nov. 20 campaign event in Lawrence, New York.

The writing was completed in Memphis on the morning of Dec. 3, and a number of alumni were part of the milestone achievement.



(clockwise, from left) **Joey Greenblatt** (MHA '74), **Rabbi Jacob Greenblatt** (MHA '72), **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77), **Rebecca (Winestone) Gerber** (MHA '75), the sofer and **David Winestone** (MHA '74).



Abbe (Seiger) Kaplan (MHA '71), her husband **Jonathan** and the sofer.



David Katz (MHA '88) and the sofer.

At the dedication that afternoon, MHA/FYOS Head of School Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown kicked off the celebration by addressing attendees (including the full student body) from atop a float decorated especially for the occasion. Behind the float was a beautiful *chupah* (canopy) on wheels that accompanied the *sefer Torah* to its new home at the MHA/FYOS.



David Reuven (MHA '19, FYOS '23) and **Jon Wogan** (MHA '94) under the *chupah* with the new Torah.

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Rav Nota's son, **Rabbi Jacob Greenblatt** (MHA '72), also shared some remarks with the attentive crowd. He explained that writing a Torah scroll is the Torah's 613th commandment and that the mitzvah can be fulfilled in many ways.

Hundreds of students and community members then proudly paraded the *sefer Torah* through the streets with joyful singing and dancing. The procession, which started in the MHA parking lot, turned left onto White Station, left onto Laurie Lane, left onto Conwell and finally left onto Meadowcrest. From there, the Torah was accompanied to the *aron kodesh* (holy ark) in the CYHSB's Cooper Beit Midrash.



David Cooper (MHA '78, YOS '82) celebrating the arrival of the *sefer Torah* at its new home in the beit midrash dedicated in memory of his parents.

A number of community members questioned why the dedication was scheduled on a weekday afternoon, rather than on a Sunday, when attendance would be higher. To that, Wogan

responded, "In Rav Nota's mind and heart, it was always all about the children. I knew he would want it to be at a time when every child in the school could be a part of it. The students were always Rav Nota's priority."

As Wogan explained in a feature story in Memphis' Hebrew Watchman, "Given Rav Nota's lifelong commitment to guiding and teaching our generation, we chose to inscribe on the Torah covering a passage from Devarim (32:7) that highlights this idea: '*Ask your father and he will teach you, the elders of your generation and they will instruct you.*' Rav Nota was certainly faithful to this directive."

With Hashem's help, many generations of Memphis children will grow and learn from this Torah, thus continuing the fulfillment of Rav Nota's dream for the MHA.



Rav Nota's sons **Rabbi David Greenblatt** (MHA '65, left) and **Joey Greenblatt** (MHA '74) carrying the new Torah under the chupah.

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Alumnae (and sisters-in-law) **Dena (Rosenberg) Wruble** (MHA '84, YOS '88, left) and **Lisa (Wruble) Kaufman** (MHA '73).



David Katz (MHA '88) giving a ride to his grandson Ahron, who is in kindergarten and the MHA's first fourth-generation student.



(from left) **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77), **Jon Wogan** (MHA '94), **Lee Baum** (MHA '74) and **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and director of engagement) in the Cooper Beit Midrash.



Abbe (Seiger) Kaplan (MHA '71, left) and **Lisa (Wruble) Kaufman** (MHA '73).



Faculty member **Rabbi Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) and his son, pre-K 3 student Yonah.



(from left) Yonina Lichter (GMSG 11th grader), **Brooke Sanderson** (MHA '21), **Rena Wogan** (MHA '18, FYOS '22) and **Pesi Katz** (MHA '19, FYOS '23).

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Hershel Krupp (MHA '97) and his son, MHA second grader Ethan.



Fellow faculty members and sisters-in-law **Ronit (Sauer) Brakha** (MHA '83, YOS '87, left) and Morah Hanielle Sauer, wife of **Ari Sauer** (MHA '90, FYOS '94).



Richard Lewis (MHA '99, FYOS '03) and his son Aaron, who is in pre-K 3.



Rav Nota's daughter **Rochel (Greenblatt) Lapidus** (MHA '68, left) and granddaughter Shayna Glick.

More photos from the Dec. 3 event are posted on the [MHA Facebook page](#).

If you would like to be a part of the Torah dedication in memory of Rav Nota, available sponsorship opportunities are listed on the [campaign website](#).

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE



Morah Carol Samuels

A legacy of service



In the early 1970s, an MHA administrator reached out to the home economics department at Memphis State University (now called University of Memphis) for assistance in finding a qualified instructor for the home ec classes they were mandated to offer. The head of the department recommended **Carol (Smith) Samuels** (MHA '60) as the right woman for the job. She was not only completing a dual degree in education and home economics, but also an MHA alumna and well-versed in keeping a kosher kitchen. What that department head couldn't have foreseen was that Morah Carol, as she came to be known, would go on to teach pre-K 3 at our school for 20 years, receive national recognition as a professional service coordinator, and devote countless volunteer hours to serving the Memphis Jewish community.

Born in Memphis, Carol (Smith) Samuels was raised in a close-knit family. Her parents, Rose and David L. Smith, owned a grocery store in south Memphis, and she's never forgotten her father's generosity toward his customers. "He didn't want anyone to have to wait for their paycheck to get food," she said. "He offered free credit to anyone who needed it. He also put extra little gifts in people's bags without charging them if he knew they couldn't afford enough for their next meal."

"My mother learned from an early age the importance of giving back," said **Ruth (Samuels) Wurzburg** (MHA '86, YOS '90). "She carries those values forward each day, inspiring those around her through her example."

While there was no Jewish day school around for Samuels' older brothers, she had the opportunity to attend the newly established Memphis Hebrew Academy — first at the Menorah Institute adjacent to Baron Hirsch Congregation at Fourth and Washington, then at Anshei Sphard Congregation on North Parkway at Bellevue, and ultimately in the current location on White Station. She remembers taking field trips to watch progress being made on the construction of the "new" campus, including the draining of the swampy area before the school building could be erected.

In 1960, Samuels was a member of the MHA's fourth graduating class but says they didn't hold a graduation ceremony that year, as they were trying to introduce high school grades and simply advanced her and her classmates to the ninth grade. Attending the MHA, Samuels said, "started me and my family on a more traditional path."

While finishing at Central High School, Samuels shared the Jewish knowledge she gained at the MHA with students at the Talmud Torah at Beth Sholom Congregation. That experience inspired her to embark on a career in education. Teaching home economics at the MHA gave her an opportunity to return to her alma mater and instill in students a love for the kitchen, which she gained from her grandmother. "Some of the teachers from my days as a student were still at MHA when I joined the faculty," Samuels said. "Fellow teachers, like Mrs. Miriam Cheruff, z'l, and Mrs. Miriam Greenblatt,

z'l, reminded me not to let people treat me like a student anymore."



Morah Carol Samuels with her home economics class in the early 1970s.

When Tennessee's requirements for home economics education changed in the mid-1970s, MHA discontinued the program and offered Samuels the role of teaching pre-K 3. While her degree in early childhood education prepared her well for the position, transitioning to three-year-olds was an adjustment. "Most of my students were just getting out of the toddler phase and it was their first time in a classroom," Samuels said. She remained in the role of Morah Carol for more than 20 years, with talented assistants like Morah Julie Williams and Morah Avigail Wolmark, z'l, at her side for much of her tenure.

"Kids that age are sponges — they absorb everything, but they'll also believe anything you say," Samuels said. "I loved that the kids were eager to learn, and it was wonderful to watch them grow throughout the year. We had a lot of fun in pre-K 3."

"I was never in Mrs. Samuels' class, but I remember her classroom as a warm and happy place," said **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92). "I was good friends with her daughter, **Tova**

(Samuels) Marizan (MHA '88, YOS '92), z'l, and she, **Rachel Kaplan** (MHA '88) and I would come by almost every day during recess to get crackers and peanut butter for snack. Mrs. Samuels is a lovely and caring person who always welcomed me into her home and her classroom."

Many former students still remember the yellow chair in her pre-K 3 classroom. A captain's chair donated to the MHA that was later painted bright yellow, it served double duty as the designated place for students in time-out and where Morah Carol sat with any child needing special attention on account of a scraped knee or emotional outburst.



Morah Carol Samuels and **Morah Avigail Wolmark, z'l**, leading an art project in pre-K 3 in 1985.

"My mother served as a beloved teacher at the MHA, guiding students for many years," said Wurzburg, who now works as general studies principal for the elementary school. "To this day, former students fondly refer to my mother as 'Morah Carol,' which is a testament to the lasting impact she's had on their lives. Her dedication to educating and nurturing the next generation remains one of her proudest accomplishments. Her

commitment to teaching at the MHA inspired me to become an educator and to eventually return to the school.”



Morah Carol Samuels (standing, left) and **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72, seated at right) helping with the extended day program in 1983.

The Samuels family bid farewell to Memphis in 1994 so Rabbi Yochanan Samuels could pursue career opportunities elsewhere. In 2004, after sojourns in Maine, upstate New York and eastern Canada, they returned to the city that always felt like home. In addition to tending to family responsibilities in Memphis, Carol Samuels poured herself into serving the community. She volunteered in various capacities, including helping in the kitchen and serving as the mikvah lady at the former Anshei Sphard-Beth El Emeth (ASBEE) Congregation for many years. “My mother exemplifies what it means to live a life of dedication, hard work and service,” Wurzburg said.

“I got to know Carol Samuels and her family well at ASBEE,” said **Jonathan Epstein** (MHA '82, YOS '85), who served as president of the congregation. “She is an amazing woman who lets her action

speak louder than her words. Her care for her family is evident, as is her care for others.”

Her caregiving role included tending to daughter **Heather** (MHA '90, FYOS '94), z'l, through pancreatic cancer in 2014, and to **Tova**, z'l, who battled health issues for years until her passing in January 2024. (In this publication, we previously paid tribute to Heather, z'l, in [Issue No. 2](#), page 17, and to Tova, z'l, in [Issue No. 29](#), page 3). Rabbi Yochanan and Carol Samuels remain a strong source of support for their grandchildren, Chaya Sarah, **Aharon** (FYOS '16) and **Efriam Marizan** (FYOS '19).

Carol Samuels' return to Memphis also saw her take on a fulfilling new job as service coordinator at Plough Towers, an apartment community that offers safe, affordable and independent housing and other critical services to qualifying seniors and individuals with disabilities. She took courses and passed a rigorous exam to become Tennessee's first certified professional service coordinator. She also joined the State Health Insurance Assistance Program (SHIP) so she could help Plough Towers residents and others in the community navigate the complexities of Medicare and Medicaid.

“My mother is adored by all the residents at Plough Towers,” Wurzburg said. “With compassion and warmth, she strives to be a vital source of comfort and stability and to ensure each person feels valued, supported and cared for. Her ability to connect with the residents and make everyone feel special speaks to her caring nature.”

In October, Samuels traveled to the national conference of the American Association of Service Coordinators (AASC) in Indianapolis to receive the

Legacy Service Coordinator Award. She is only the second person to be honored with this prestigious award.



Carol Samuels (left) accepting her Legacy Service Coordinator Award at the AASC national conference.

“Through every role she has taken on, my mother has displayed unwavering responsibility and compassion, qualities that have earned her the admiration and respect of all who know her,” Wurzburg said.

Samuels shows no signs of slowing down. She dedicates extra hours each week to helping Plough Towers residents with whatever they may need, and she serves as the dedicated attendant for the Memphis Mikvah at Baron Hirsch. Samuels attributes her high level of energy to genetics — citing the examples of her aunt, Annie Prager, z’l, who worked in the ASBEE office until age 90, and her grandmother, who she said cooked meals for their extended family until she was 93.

While it’s been 30 years since Samuels was a member of the MHA faculty, she still feels a strong connection to her students. “I hope those



Rabbi Yochanan and **Carol Samuels** at a recent family simcha.

who passed through my classroom as three-year-olds learned valuable life lessons about sharing, responsibility and treating others fairly,” she said. “I also hope they grew up loving learning and *Yiddishkeit* (Judaism). Many of my former students are now giving back to the community in various ways, and that brings me a great sense of pride.”

ALUMNI REUNITE

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

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

On Sept. 15, friends, family and fellow alumni gathered in Brooklyn, New York, to help **Ranelle (Evensky) Kibel** (MHA '66, YOS '70) celebrate the engagement of her granddaughter Tehilla Kibel, daughter of Moshe and Leila Kibel, to Danny Weiss. (The bride is also a granddaughter of **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l.)



Ranelle (left) and **Sherry (Rosenberg) Ganz** (MHA '60).



Ranelle (left) and **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79).



(from left) Former Memphian and MHA faculty member Mrs. Shari Schwartz, **Ranelle** and **Victor Shine** (MHA '79, YOS '83).



At the Nov. 26 Kibel wedding in Baltimore, Ranelle's sister **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63) ran into **Tuvia (Evan) Greenberg** (MHA '94, FYOS '98).



In October, **Chaya (Russ) Feigenbaum** (MHA '85, second from right) traveled from her home in Dallas, Texas, to Jerusalem to attend a wedding. There, she encountered her former teacher, **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80, far left) and fellow alumnae **Debbi (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80, second from left) and **Mashie (Greenblatt) Langsam** (MHA '73, YOS '77, far right).



Old friends reunited in Jerusalem Oct. 30 to celebrate the marriage of Yehuda Goodman and Elisheva Twersky: (from left) **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80 and former faculty member), **Mashie (Greenblatt) Langsam** (MHA '73, YOS '77), **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85 and mother of the groom) and **Debbi (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80).



While visiting her parents in Memphis for Sukkot, **Shuli (Kutliroff) Singer** (MHA '93, far left) bumped into old friends (from left) **Sarah (Harris) Bauer** (FYOS '96) and **Dvora (Stein) Weisfogel** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) at Urban Air Adventure & Trampoline Park during Chol Hamoed.



In November, friends gathered to show support for our alumni in the Israel Defense Forces: (from left) **Shachar Cahana** (FYOS '22), **Rafi Somer** (MHA '20, FYOS '24), **Benjamin Siegel** (MHA '18, FYOS '22), **Dovid Reuven Wogan** (MHA '19, FYOS '23), **Yosef VanderWalde** (FYOS '24), **Noam Cahana** (FYOS '22), **Nadav Weiss** (FYOS '22) and **Ezra Wiener** (MHA '19, FYOS '23). The reunion took place at the IDF Kfir Brigade *Tekes Kumta* (beret ceremony) marking the completion of advanced military training.



While attending her grandson's bar mitzvah at the Kotel in Jerusalem in August, **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA '70, left) met up with former MHA first grade teacher Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz.



In November, alumnae (from left) **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03), **Chana (Joffre) Goldstone** (MHA '08) and **Sarah (Harris) Bauer** (FYOS '96) met up at the bat mitzvah of Basya Fromowitz (daughter of Ety and Rabbi Shmuel Fromowitz, former Rosh Kollel of the Memphis Kollel), in Cleveland, Ohio.



Longtime friends (from left) Chavi (Nayowitz) Katz (former MHA first grade teacher), **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85) and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) made up for lost time during a get-together in Jerusalem.

This fall, **Brittany (Baum) Lindenfeld** (MHA '04) received visits from two former classmates now living in Israel.



Brittany (right) with son Abe and **Shifra Smith** (MHA '04, FYOS '08).



Brittany (right) and **Annie Harkavy** (MHA '04).

FLASHBACKS

1986-1990

Photographs from the past

The MHA first grade class in 1980: (front row, from left) **David Katz** (MHA '88), Eugene Terk, **Tova (Samuels) Marizan z'l** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Chaya (Kleinfeldt) Selesny** (MHA '88), **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88), Shawn Binkowitz, Anne Shippel; (second row, from left) **Renee (Levine) Cohen** (MHA '88), **Yoni Kutner** (MHA '88), Meena Cantor, Moshe Leib Gold, David Schwartz, **Dovid Krupp** (MHA '88), David Friedman, **Lee Lieberman** (MHA '88); (third row, from left) Dovid Meir Stein, Jennifer Wieder, **Rachel Kaplan** (MHA '88), Anna Levinson, **Sarah (Fink) Wachtel** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Adam Loskove** (MHA '88), Nechama Belsky; Jeremy Cassius; (back row, from left) Mrs. Dave Kaiser, Ruslam Demchenko, **Amy (Rosenberg) Gibber** (MHA '88, YOS '92), Hadassah Belsky z'l, **Sarah (Finegold) Newton** (MHA '88, YOS '92), Wendy Saks, Shaindel Belsky, Felix Glukhovsky, **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92) and Mrs. Suzanne Friedman, z'l.



"I can identify only about 75% of my classmates here. We were a large grade for the MHA (although this is now a typical class size in my kids' schools), so we were split into two classes. The women pictured were our first grade general studies teachers. The one on the right, Mrs. Friedman, taught first grade at MHA for a while. The one on the left, Mrs. Kaiser, was new that year to accommodate our large grade. For Judaic studies, my class was taught by Mrs. Malka Kutner and the other class had Mrs. Miriam Greenblatt, z'l.

*My kids had a lot of fun trying to figure out which student in the photo was me! My son-in-law was the first in the family to guess correctly." -**Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer***

*"Our first grade teacher, Mrs. Friedman, was a character. She had the ability to invoke fear, but at the same time we all loved her kooky personality. I remember watching President Ronald Reagan's inauguration while eating jellybeans in her class. Many of our first teeth were pulled out by Mrs. Friedman, and her love of Dr. Seuss permeated the classroom." -**Sarah (Fink) Wachtel***

(Note from the editor and alumni chair: For more on Mrs. Suzanne Friedman, who passed away in December 2024, see the Spotlight feature in our [22nd issue](#), beginning on page 34.)

In March 1987, the MHA middle school put on a production of Shakespeare's "Macbeth" and performed at the Memphis Jewish Community Center.

(from left) **Genya Dorin** (MHA '87, YOS '90), **Dovid Krupp** (MHA '88), **Tova (Samuels) Marizan z'l** (MHA '88, YOS '92) and **Jason Lurie** (MHA '87).



"I played the guitar in this production. I remember having stage fright and actually playing from behind a tree. Oh well, I missed my chance at Broadway!" -Dovid Krupp

(from left) **Lee Lieberman** (MHA '88), **Stacy (Zalowitz) Sanderson** (MHA '88), **Sarah (Fink) Wachtel** (MHA '88, YOS '92) and **Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer** (MHA '88, YOS '92).



"This is from our seventh and eighth grade Shakespeare play. We put on 'Macbeth.' I was the third apparition (in the cauldron). Sarah was Hecate, Stacy was the third witch and Lee played Macbeth." -Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer

GMSG students (clockwise from left) **Rivka (Katz) Braverman** (MHA '89, YOS '93), **Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane** (MHA '89, YOS '93), **Rachel (Epstein) Wolf** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Rachel Kaplan** (MHA '88), **Shoni Mirvis** (MHA '89, YOS '93), **Sarah (Fink) Wachtel** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Sarah (Finegold) Newton** (MHA '88, YOS '92) and **Galina (Rutoiz) Ziegler** (YOS '93) on a school trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in 1990.



"I do have a recollection of going skiing on this trip. It was really warm out, and it was my first time on the slopes." -**Sarah (Finegold) Newton**

(from left) **Amy (Rosenberg) Gibber** (MHA '88, YOS '92), **Shaena Levin** (MHA '87), **Tova (Samuels) Marizan z'** (MHA '88, YOS '92) and **Jason Lurie** (MHA '87) participating in the MHA's model sukkah building contest in 1984.



IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 32nd issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication just before Pesach. In it, we will once again highlight the eighth and 12th grade graduates from the years 2006-2010. Members of these classes will receive questionnaires by email (or regular mail) sometime in February. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

Our feature story in that issue will spotlight IDF Captain **Rabbi Avi Goldberg**, z'l, who taught at our school and served as Rosh Kollel of the Kollel Torah MiTzion in Memphis from 2008 to 2011. Tragically, Rabbi Goldberg was killed in combat in Lebanon this October. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Rabbi Goldberg that you would like to share, please send them to Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at joannekahane111@gmail.com or to her attention at the school's mailing address below.

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



Rabbi Dr. Gavriel Brown, head of school
Mark Kaplowitz, president, board of trustees
Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky (MHA '99),
director of engagement