

# MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 29

Highlighting the  
graduating classes  
of **2011-2015**

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This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of alumna

## Tova (Samuels) Marizan

(MHA '88, YOS '92)

and alumna and former faculty member

## Chavi (Adler) Greenblatt

(MHA '83)

who were recently taken from us.

We send our sincerest condolences to Tova's parents, Rabbi Yochanan and longtime MHA faculty member **Carol (Smith) Samuels** (MHA '60); her sister, **Ruth (Samuels) Wurzburg** (MHA '86, YOS '90 and current MHA general studies principal); and her children, **Aharon** (FYOS '16), **Efraim** (FYOS '19) and Chaya Sarah Marizan.

We also send our sincerest condolences to Chavi's husband, Rabbi Akeyv Greenblatt, former MHA Judaics principal; her sisters, **Phyllis (Adler) Donat** (YOS '79) and **Devorah (Adler) Weiner** (YOS '82); and her daughters, **Sima (Greenblatt) Levine** (MHA '10) and **Sarah (Greenblatt) Klein** (MHA '10).

May both families be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and 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](http://mhafyos.org/alumni).

## COVER PHOTO



Members of the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys' steak dinner team in December 2011 (clockwise from left): **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Lavi Tsuna** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Ilan Eckhardt** (FYOS '12) and **Avi Kirshtein** (FYOS '12).

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

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

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## MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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Dear MHA/FYOS alumni:



In a manner quite uncharacteristic of me, I have put off writing my message for much longer than usual. I am sure the reason has to do with the sadness we're all feeling due to the painful situation in Israel and some notable losses we've experienced

in our community.

Since our last issue, two special alumnae with deep, multigenerational ties to our school were taken from us far too young.

**Chavi (Adler) Greenblatt** (MHA '83), *z'l*, left us at the end of December. She was not only an alumna but also taught at our school. Her husband, Rabbi Akeyv Greenblatt, served as Judaics principal of our elementary school. Their daughters, **Sarah (Greenblatt) Klein** and **Sima (Greenblatt) Levine** (both MHA '10), are alumnae as well. Chavi was fighting a serious illness for several years and never gave up hope. Those of us who followed her journey will always be inspired by her determination and faith.

One month later, at the end of January, we lost **Tova (Samuels) Marizan** (MHA '88, YOS '92), *z'l*, just six weeks before the wedding of her son, **Aharon Marizan** (FYOS '16). Her other son, **Efraim Marizan** (FYOS '19), also graduated from our school. Tova was the daughter of Rabbi Yochanan and **Carol (Smith) Samuels** (MHA '60), who taught at the MHA for years. The Samuelses lost another daughter, **Heather Samuels** (MHA '90, FYOS '94),

*z'l*, just a few years ago. Like Chavi Greenblatt, Tova bravely battled health issues during her lifetime.

Many times before, we've highlighted in these pages how friendships forged at the MHA/FYOS last a lifetime and sometimes even longer. In the face of these tragic losses, this again proved to be true.

When Chavi became seriously ill several years ago, dozens of alumni and friends joined a WhatsApp group to coordinate the recitation of *Tehillim* (Psalms) in the merit of her recovery. That group functioned for years. I was always amazed at how many familiar MHA/FYOS names popped up on the chat daily. Though her family left Memphis years ago, Chavi remained in so many of our hearts.

While I was helping coordinate shiva meals for the Samuels family, my heart was warmed once again when we heard from a classmate of Tova's that the members of the class wanted to provide food for Shabbos. These schoolmates lived all over the U.S. and in Israel, yet they were united in their grief and desire to provide comfort in honor of their friend.

These acts of loving kindness are, I believe, what distinguish our MHA/FYOS family. Neither time nor distance weakens our connections.

Around this same time, we also lost two patriarchs of our community: Bernard Freiden and Izzy Katz, *z'l*. These men and their unwavering efforts are pillars on which our Jewish community and school were built. They were part of the original dream for thriving Jewish life in Memphis, and they devoted their lives to making that dream a reality. All of us owe them a debt of gratitude.

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## MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

Bernard Freiden served as president of the board of trustees, and his beloved wife, Noreen, *z'l*, served as president of the parent-teacher association (PTA). Both of them worked tirelessly for the school for many years.

When Bernard was president in 1979, he wrote, "I find, suddenly, that after having been an Academy parent for 20 years, come September, I will no longer have a child in the MHA. This thought leaves me feeling more than a little sad and terribly empty. ... I personally thank G-d every day for the Academy's influence on myself and my family."

How gratifying it must have been for the Freidens to watch not only their five children attend and graduate from our school, but also 19 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren! At the time of Bernard's passing, the Freidens had three other great-grandchildren enrolled in the school and one more expected to start next year.

Israel Katz, known affectionately as Izzy, and his beloved wife, Pearl, *z'l* (also a past PTA president), were among the founders of the school. Much like the Freidens, the Katzes devoted their lives to serving our school and community. An accountant by trade, Izzy served as the school's treasurer for decades, never charging for his services. In 2022, he told me there were only a handful of religiously observant families in Memphis when he was growing up. "Everything I knew about Judaism, I learned from my father," Izzy said. "I helped establish the MHA because I wanted my children

to have a real Torah education. Once the Academy opened, *Yiddishkeit* mushroomed in this city."

I know that Izzy had great *nachas* (pride and joy) from watching not only his four children attend and graduate from the MHA/FYOS, but also 11 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren. At the time of his passing, he had one more great-grandson and one great-great-grandson (our first fourth-generation student!) enrolled in our school.

**"Loving kindness is what distinguishes our MHA/FYOS family. Neither time nor distance weakens our connections."**

I have a purpose in dedicating so much space to tracing the generations of these two families. Bernard, Izzy and their wives stand as remarkable examples of lifelong commitment to our school and success in instilling that commitment in their descendants. What extraordinary legacies they leave behind, and what exceptional role models for us to emulate.

We send our deepest condolences to **Jeffrey Freiden** (YOS '72), **Denis Freiden** (MHA '70, YOS '74), **Hugh (Freiden) Gordon** (MHA '72, YOS '76), **Bradley Freiden** (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Melissa (Freiden) Friedman** (MHA '79, YOS '83), as well as to **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69), **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72), **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74) and **Marc Katz** (MHA '75, YOS '79) on the loss of their beloved fathers. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.



## MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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The passing of these two gentlemen marks the end of a vital chapter in the history of our school and community, as we've now lost nearly all members of the amazing generation of pioneers to whom we owe our school's existence. For years, we've looked to their wisdom, creativity and tenacity, which those of us who were not there can barely comprehend. They were eager and unafraid to step into the rushing waters of the history of our city and our people, and with their efforts, they changed its course forever. We are tremendously grateful and will treasure the memories of these great men and women.

As we process the communal losses we've experienced in the past few months and continue to pray for the welfare of our brothers and sisters in Israel, we can take some comfort that spring is upon us again. The flowers and trees are blooming

anew, and we have another opportunity to convey to the next generation during this *Chag HaAviv* (the spring holiday of Passover) the beautiful traditions of our people. The great-grandchildren of our school's founders, along with their classmates, are receiving an excellent general and Torah studies education at the MHA/FYOS, thanks to roots planted by a holy generation of pioneers eight decades ago. May those trees continue to bear fruit for many years to come.

Wishing you all a *chag kasher v'sameach* — happy and kosher Pesach!

Joanne Kahane

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Deena Davidovics

Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends:



On the upcoming holiday of Pesach, we will commemorate the exodus from Egypt, when the Children of Israel were transformed from a group of slaves to **עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל**, the unified nation of Hashem. The Torah tells us of the extraordinary events

(Shemos 6: 6-8):

**לְכֹן אָמַר לְבְנֵי-יִשְׂרָאֵל אֲנִי ה' וְהוֹצֵאתִי אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִצְרַיִם וְהִצַּלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם מֵעַבְדֵיכֶם וְגֵאלְתִּי אֶתְכֶם בְּזְרוּעַ נְטוּיָהּ וּבְשִׁפְטִים גְּדֹלִים:**

*Say, therefore, to the Children of Israel: 'I am Hashem. I will free you from the labors of the Egyptians and deliver you from their bondage. I will redeem you with an outstretched arm and through extraordinary wonders.'*

**וְלִקְחֹתִי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעַם וְהִיִּיתִי לָכֶם לֵאלֹהִים וְיָדַעְתֶּם כִּי אֲנִי ה' אֱלֹהֵיכֶם הַמּוֹצִיא אֶתְכֶם מִמִּצְרַיִם מִמִּצְרַיִם:**

*'And I will take you to be My nation, and I will be your G-d. And you shall know that I, Hashem, am your G-d who freed you from the labors of the Egyptians.'*

**וְהִבֵּאתִי אֶתְכֶם אֶל-הָאָרֶץ אֲשֶׁר נִשְׁאַתִּי אֶת-יְדֵי לְתַת אֲבֹתָהּ לְאַבְרָהָם לְיִצְחָק וְלַיַּעֲקֹב וְנָתַתִּי אֶתְהָ לָכֶם מוֹרְשָׁה אֲנִי ה':**

*'And I will bring you into the land which I swore to give to Avraham, Yitzchak and Yaakov, and I will give it to you for a possession. I am Hashem.'*

As we recall at the Pesach seder each year, Hashem took us out of Egypt – **וְהוֹצֵאתִי**; He saved us from

slavery – **וְהִצַּלְתִּי**; He redeemed us using great might and wonders – **וְגֵאלְתִּי**; and He took us to be His nation – **וְלִקְחֹתִי אֶתְכֶם לִי לְעַם**.

Upon unifying us as His nation, Hashem then brought us to the land of Israel to inherit it – **וְהִבֵּאתִי**. When we consider this transformative event in our history, which galvanized our identity as a nation, it is interesting to note the multifaceted approach. It was not a singular moment but a deliberate process that is defined by the sum of its parts. Similarly, the resulting people, **עַם יִשְׂרָאֵל**, is forged into a unified nation that is anything but uniform — rather, it is enriched by the individual identities of each of its members, households and tribes.

On the night of the exodus, Hashem commanded each household to take a sheep, bring it as a *korban* (sacrifice), and eat it only within their home. In fact, they were not allowed to take even a part of this *korban Pesach* outside of the house or share beyond their individual group. As the Torah says (Shemos 12:46):

**בְּבַיִת אֶחָד יֵאָכַל לֹא-תוֹצִיא מִן-הַבַּיִת מִן-הַבֶּשֶׂר חוּצָה וְעַצְמוֹ לֹא תִשְׁבְּרוּ-בּוֹ:**

*It shall be eaten in one house. You shall not take any of the flesh outside the house, nor shall you break a bone of it.*

While this may seem to promote separatism, the verses that follow directly unify the community by virtue of the fact that all of Israel performed this mitzvah and that we have but one common Torah. In defining our identity as a nation, Hashem demonstrates to us that we can be both a unified group and maintain our personal identity.

כָּל־עַדַּת יִשְׂרָאֵל יַעֲשֶׂה אִתּוֹ:

*The whole community of Israel shall offer it.  
(Shemos 12:47)*

תּוֹרַה אַחַת יְהִי לְאֶזְרַח וְלִגֵּר הַגֵּר בְּתוֹכְכֶם:

*There shall be one law for the citizen and for the  
stranger who dwells among you. (Shemos 12:49)*

Of the miraculous splitting of the sea that enabled our escape from Egypt's pursuit, the Midrash says that the sea split into 12 paths to allow each tribe to cross in their respective groups. According to this teaching, we did not abandon our individual identities at the most defining moments of our collective salvation. Yet, when we came out on the other side of the sea, we united in our belief in Hashem and sang His praise in unison. We entered the sea as a people who traveled with our tribes, but emerged as one עם, one nation, joined in faith.

וַיֵּרָא יִשְׂרָאֵל אֶת־הַיָּד הַגְּדֹלָה אֲשֶׁר עָשָׂה ה' בְּמִצְרַיִם וַיִּירָאוּ  
הָעָם אֶת־ה' וַיֹּאמְרוּ בְּה' וּבְמֹשֶׁה עַבְדּוֹ:

*And when Israel saw the wondrous power which  
Hashem had wielded against the Egyptians, the  
nation feared Hashem; they had faith in Hashem  
and in His servant Moses. (Shemos 14:31)*

As we approached Mount Sinai to receive the Torah, we find in the verse a curious mix of plural and singular tenses describing our encampment. Rashi famously explains that while it says they (in plural) camped in the desert, the verse states that they (in the singular) camped next to Mount Sinai because we were like one man with one heart, כאיש אחד בלב, to receive the Torah.

וַיִּסְעוּ מִרְפִּידִים וַיָּבֹאוּ מִדְבַר סִינַי וַיַּחֲנוּ בַּמִּדְבָּר וַיַּחֲנֶה יְהוָה אֶת־יִשְׂרָאֵל נֶגֶד הַהָר:

*Having journeyed from Rephidim, they entered the  
wilderness of Sinai and encamped in the wilderness.  
Israel encamped there in front of the mountain.  
(Shemos 19:2)*

Upon receiving the Torah, the entire nation answered in unison, committing fully to follow the word of Hashem and the law that binds us together as one.

וַיַּעֲנוּ כָל־הָעָם יַחְדָּו וַיֹּאמְרוּ כָּל אֲשֶׁר־דִּבֶּר ה' נַעֲשֶׂה וְנִשְׁמָע  
מִשְׁמַע אֶת־דְּבַר יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ:

*All those assembled answered as one, saying, 'All  
that Hashem has spoken we will do!' And Moses  
brought back the people's words to Hashem.  
(Shemos 19:8)*

While we accepted the Torah as one, we did not meld into one uniform group. As our newly formed nation traveled in the desert, we once again exerted our individualism. We camped in formation around the Mishkan (Tabernacle), with each tribe in their own camp. Not only did we maintain our divisions; we flew our flags proudly to represent each tribe's unique identity.

וַיַּחֲנוּ בְנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל אִישׁ עַל־מַחֲנֵהוּ וְאִישׁ עַל־דִּגְלוֹ לְצַבָּאוֹתָם:

*The Israelites shall encamp troop by troop, each man  
with his division and each under his flag. (Bamidbar  
1:52)*

The Hebrew word for nation, עם, inherently encompasses this dichotomy. While the word עם most often denotes nationhood, it also at times



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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Deena Davidovics

refers to kinship or familial ties. Sharing a root with the word **עם**, and using the very same letters, is the word **עם**, meaning "with." Nationhood is defined as the joining together of disparate parts to create one whole. Yet in the creation of our nation, we do not become one; we join with. We are stronger as a nation when we recognize that we are enriched by our individual identities. While we are united by the Torah as one nation, we are unified but not uniform.

As we entered the land of Israel, **וְהִבְאֵתִי**, in Hashem's fulfillment of his promise to our forefathers, we once again inherited and inhabited the land in a tribal distribution. While we each lived with our families in the land of our respective *shevet* (tribe), the entire nation lived under **תּוֹרַה אֶת**, one Torah. We are indeed a nation of individuals united in our collective faith.

This message is especially poignant to us here in Memphis. Our small community is made up of many unique individuals whose divergent perspectives

challenge us at times to find our commonality. The Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South is the cornerstone of our Jewish community, bringing us all together in Torah learning and living. May we merit to always celebrate the individual qualities that enrich our community and our nation, while pursuing peace and unity for ourselves and the Jewish people as a whole.

Wishing you all a *chag kasher v'sameach* – joyous and kosher Pesach holiday!

Deena Davidovics  
President, MHA/FYOS board of trustees  
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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR AND ALUMNI CHAIR

Community Responses

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**We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at [alumni@mhafyos.org](mailto:alumni@mhafyos.org). Here are some of the responses we received to [Issue No. 28](#).**

As has been the case since you started the alumni newsletter, the Chanukah edition did not disappoint! I'm amazed at your attention to detail and the precision on every paragraph throughout. It's full of fun things and covers so many touchpoints that make us appreciate the kaleidoscope of personalities that have been through the halls of our school.

I especially enjoyed your features on Rabbi Hillel Belsky, z'l and Rabbi Jay Salid — two giants among our many historic faculty greats.

Aileen and I so appreciate the effort that you and your able editing team put into sending out this informative and fun newsletter. Looking forward to each edition to come!

**-Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, FYOS '81)

Thank you for the heartwarming and beautiful tribute to my father, Rabbi Hillel Belsky, z'l. It was an honor and pleasure to work with you. We deeply appreciate your sensitivity and *kavod* (honor) for our father. Wishing you much success in all you do for Jewish education and beyond.

**-Tamar (Belsky) Sokol** (MHA '82, YOS '85)

The story about my father brought tears to my eyes and a smile to my face at the same time. You did an awesome job.

**-Adina (Belsky) Maryles**

The article you featured about my father was excellent. What a beautiful and honest portrayal! Your tribute to him brought me much comfort.

It was wonderful to see the names of many students and friends in the article. I remember them from my childhood and know these connections were genuine and lasting.

I'm so grateful for your hard work. May you continue to inspire and bring honor to Hashem's name.

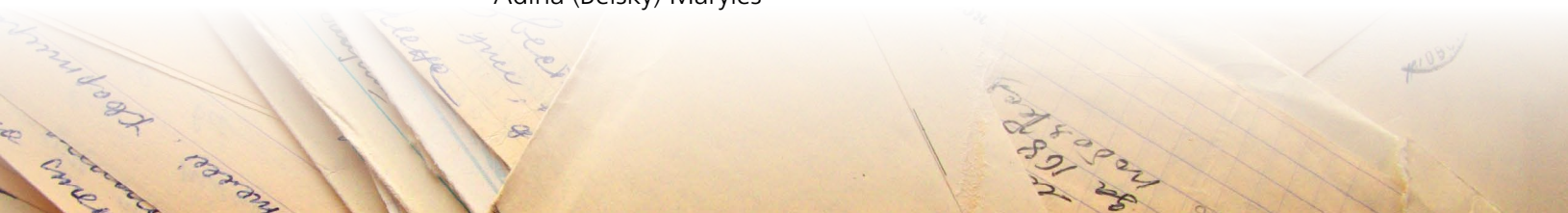
**-Miryam (Belsky) Biala**

Just a little note to thank you once again for your huge efforts on behalf of the school, alumni coordination and the entire Jewish community of Memphis. This publication ties in people that have been distant in many ways over the years; just a glance can bring one close once again. May Hashem bless you with the ability to always bring Jews closer to one another and to Hashem.

**-Beryl Thomas** (MHA '77, YOS '81)

Another masterful newsletter! The amount of work you put in is incredible. It's so nice to see when my friends — specifically, **Sandra (Loterstein) Osdoba** (MHA '76, YOS '80) and **David Finkelstein** (MHA '75) — have simchas in the family. Thank you!

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



# TRIVIA ANSWERS

# 1991-1995

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Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our [28th issue](#).

The winner of our trivia contest from that issue is **Sarah (Harris) Bauer** (FYOS '96), who correctly answered six of the 12 questions.

Shortly after Pesach, Bauer will receive her tin of cookies from [Ricki's Cookie Corner](#), owned and operated by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70).

*Below are the answers to the trivia questions from issue 28. How many did you know?*

1. Which alumna was in charge of the school's Moreh/Morah teacher resource center in this era?  
ANSWER: **Lynnie (Katz) Mirvis** (MHA '62).
2. During these years, our school had a gym teacher whose name sounded very similar to that of a popular beverage. What was her name?  
ANSWER: Mrs. Cherry Koehler (pronounced much like "cherry cola").
3. Who served as the school's crossing guard during these years?  
ANSWER: Mrs. Bookman.
4. Which school rabbi during this era was an Eagle Scout, which came in very handy on camping trips?  
ANSWER: Rabbi Baruch Perton.
5. Which alumnus from this period got a jumpstart on his career by cooking breakfast each day for the CYHSB?  
ANSWER: **Phillip Klitzner** (MHA '92, FYOS '96).
6. During this era, our school participated in the annual Math-a-thon benefiting which charity?  
ANSWER: St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.
7. What did the letters TASCPT stand for in Mrs. Abby Johnson's English class assignments?  
ANSWER: **Title, Author, Setting, Characters, Plot and Theme.**

8. In 1993, the junior high put on a production of Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream." (a) Who played the role of mischievous sprite Puck? (b) What unusual part of his costume was a source of great amusement for his fellow students? (c) Where did he obtain this piece of the costume?

ANSWERS: (a) **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97). (b) Purple tights. (c) He borrowed them from classmate **Ariel (Groverman) Weiner** (MHA '93).

9. (a) What play did the junior high perform in 1991? (b) Who played the character Time?

ANSWERS: (a) "The Winter's Tale." (b) **Josh Miller** (MHA '91).



# TRIVIA QUESTIONS 2011-2015

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. Who is the blue mascot pictured here (at left) with **Jake Pollack** (FYOS '14)?
2. What was the name of the comic strip by **Noah Rapp** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) that ran in the Cooper Chronicle?
3. Who played Feste the jester in the CYHSB's 2010 production of Shakespeare's "Twelfth Night"?
4. At the FYOS graduation in 2012, one member of the class sang a song. Who was it, and which song did he remake for this performance?
5. What was the name of the trusted handyman who dedicated 30 years of service to the MHA?
6. Which member of the FYOS class of 2013 sang a personalized Sephardic *pizmon* during his graduation speech?
7. When the Cooper Macs won the Tier II championship at Yeshiva University's Sarachek basketball tournament in 2012, which student athlete won the Tier II Most Valuable Player trophy?
8. Which dorm student originally from St. Louis was instrumental in creating the CYHSB Weekly and served as the paper's first editor-in-chief?



9. In 2013, what did a can of soda from the school's vending machine cost?
10. During this era, what was the latest time a student could arrive at morning davening without being marked tardy?

## THANK YOU

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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 **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72), **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99), Amanda Davidson and Erica Stoltz. Second, 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 **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Dylan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Yehudit (Fleischhacker) Lyons** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Ezra Cooper** (MHA '15, FYOS '19), Mrs. Sandy Gersten, Morah Anat Kampf, Emily Lennon, Rebbetzin Fruma Rosenthal, Rabbi Pinchas Rosenthal and Mrs. Talya Tsuna.

## The unaccompanied blessing of Sefiras HaOmer

The *bracha* (blessing) of *Shehecheyanu* is traditionally recited at the commencement of holidays and significant moments, serving as an expression of gratitude for reaching these special occasions. Its application during *Sefiras HaOmer* (counting the 49 days between Pesach and Shavuos) sparks a fascinating debate. My aim here is to deepen our appreciation for both the *Shehecheyanu* blessing and the practice of *Sefiras HaOmer*, which represents a staggering one-seventh of the Jewish calendar year.

*Tosafos* (Sukkah 46a) queries why *Shehecheyanu* is recited for certain commandments but not for others. For instance, it is said when building a *sukkah* and taking the *lulav*, but not when making *tzitzis* or *tefillin*. The deciding factor seems to be the presence of *simcha* (joy) or a significant deviation from routine.

Rambam (*Hilchos Berachos* 11:9) suggests that *Shehecheyanu* is said for time-bound commandments, like blowing the *shofar* or dwelling in a *sukkah*, and for *mitzvos* not regularly performed, such as *pidyon ha'ben* (redemption of the firstborn). The distinction lies between daily rituals and those that occur sporadically or annually.

Given these criteria, one might expect *Shehecheyanu* to be recited on the second night of Pesach, marking the start of *Sefiras HaOmer*. According to *Tosafos*, the joy of the holiday should extend to *Sefiras HaOmer*, as they are all mentioned in *Parashas HaMoados* in Vayikra 23. Following Rambam, since *Sefiras HaOmer* is a seasonal *mitzvah*

(as noted by *Sefer HaChinuch*, *mitzvah* 306), it would seemingly qualify.

Yet, the prevailing *halacha* (law) does not include reciting *Shehecheyanu* for *Sefiras HaOmer*. There are three primary explanations among the *Rishonim*:

1. The act of fulfilling the *mitzvah* may lack an inherent component.
2. *Sefiras HaOmer* represents a period devoid of joy.
3. There is no suitable moment to recite *Shehecheyanu*.

The first group of commentators suggests that *Shehecheyanu* requires a *mitzvah* with a tangible action. *Ba'al Maor* and *Rokeach* note that *Shehecheyanu* is not said for *Sefiras HaOmer* because it is merely a remembrance and lacks a unique, daily action. *Sefer HaManhig* clarifies that merely counting "today is day X" does not constitute a distinguishable action akin to blowing the *shofar* or sitting in a *sukkah*.

The second group, echoing *Tosafos*, highlights the absence of joy necessary for *Shehecheyanu*. The *Ran* elaborates that *Sefiras HaOmer* lacks the physical joy or pleasure present in other holidays, reminiscent of the sorrow of losing the *Beis HaMikdash* (Holy Temple) and rendering *Shehecheyanu* inappropriate. Others suggest that since the Omer count originally related to the Temple offering, its current observance, without the Temple, does not warrant *Shehecheyanu*.



The third perspective is particularly thought-provoking. These commentators acknowledge the inherent reason for *Shehecheyanu* during *Sefiras HaOmer* but find no suitable occasion for its recitation. *Shibbolei HaLeket* notes that since *Sefiras HaOmer's* timing is dependent on Pesach, it does not receive its own *Shehecheyanu*. *Sefer Avudraham* points to Shavuos, arguing that since *Sefiras HaOmer* counts down to the offering of the *bikkurim* (season's first fruits) on Shavuos, the *Shehecheyanu* recited on the bookend holidays suffices.

*Radvaz* offers a simple yet profound answer: How can one say *Shehecheyanu* for a count that never reaches a complete 50 days? This suggests that *Sefiras HaOmer* is a period of anticipation and introspection leading up to Shavuos, rather than a direct celebration. Some moments are overtly joyous and call for immediate gratitude, while others, like the Omer, are about reflective preparation, guiding us toward a deeper, more mature appreciation of the moments to come.

I encourage my fellow MHA/FYOS alumni to embrace the *Radvaz's* approach to *Sefiras HaOmer* — and life in general. Not every moment calls for a *Shehecheyanu* or an immediate celebration. The

Torah includes *Sefiras HaOmer* in its list of holidays as a non-holiday, emphasizing it as a period of anticipation and introspection.

May each of us appreciate our non-accomplishments and non-milestones. May we find value in the quieter transitions of life, cherishing the moments that might otherwise be overlooked. In doing so, may we remember to count every day, for that is the true blessing of the Omer.

**Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), son of Aileen and **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81), attended *Yeshivat Har Etzion* and is a graduate of *Columbia University*. He works as chief investment officer for the *Sydell Group*, which develops and manages the *NoMad* brand of luxury-lifestyle hotels. He and his wife, *Ellin Mitchell Cooper*, live on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with their two young children.





## ENGAGEMENTS/ WEDDINGS:

Mazel tov to:

Paul and **Jill (Wender) Friedman** (MHA '73, YOS '77) of Riverdale, New York, who celebrated the weddings of two children in recent months. On Dec. 3, Zoe Goldstein married Joshua Block at Baron Hirsch Congregation in Memphis, and on March 17, Aaron Goldstein tied the knot with Shelly Calderon in Mexico City. Both newlywed couples live in New York City.

Rabbi Uri and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of the Har Nof neighborhood in Jerusalem on the March 7 marriage of their daughter, Ahuva, to Yitzy Ostrow in Tarrytown, New York. The newlyweds reside in Lakewood, New Jersey. Photos from the family celebrations are featured in Alumni Reunite on pages 44-45.

Rina and Rabbi **Dov Emerson** (MHA '91) of Bergenfield, New Jersey, on the engagement of their son Yitzchak to Atara Frances. The couple is planning a June 2 wedding in Tarrytown, New York, and will make their home in New York City. Mazel tov also to grandparents Donny

Emerson and **Laurie Cooper** (MHA '65) of Memphis.

Yitz and **Shuli (Kutliroff) Singer** (MHA '93) of Elizabeth, New Jersey, on the engagement of her son Yitz Taragin to Ariella Merrill. The couple will wed May 27 in Israel at Ma'ale Hachamisha (overlooking Abu Ghosh) and plan to live in Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel. Mazel tov also to grandparents Dr. Jerry and Shelley Kutliroff, former teachers and administrators at our school.

**Atara Thomas** (MHA '97) on her Jan. 23 wedding to Jeromy Kalishenko in Toronto, Canada, which is where they are living. Mazel tov to the bride's parents, **Stuart** (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Pam (Blotner) Thomas** (YOS '79) of Livingston, New Jersey.

**Avi Kirshtein** (FYOS '12) on his engagement to Rena Weinberg. The couple plans to wed Aug. 25 in Boston, Massachusetts, and will live in Brooklyn, New York.

**Shira Osdoba** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) on her engagement to Ashi Schwartz. They are planning a June 18 wedding in Atlantic Beach, New York, and will make their home in New York City. Mazel tov also to mother of the bride **Sandra (Loterstein)**

**Osdoba** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis.

**Motti Klein** (MHA '11) on his engagement to Estie Ravnay. They will get married near Los Angeles, California, on June 17 and plan to live in New York City.

**Alyssa Wruble** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) on her engagement to Etan Bardash. The couple will marry June 2 in Memphis and plan to live in New York City. Mazel tov to the bride's parents, **Gary** (MHA '77, YOS '81) and **Dena (Rosenberg) Wruble** (MHA '84, YOS '88), and grandparents, longtime MHA supporters Diane and Larry Wruble and Frances and **Hershel Rosenberg** (MHA '60), all of Memphis.

**Aharon Marizan** (FYOS '16), son of **Tova (Samuels) Marizan** (MHA '88, YOS '92), z'l, on his March 13 wedding to Rikki Levitin in Chicago, Illinois, which is where the couple lives. Mazel tov also to the groom's grandparents, Rabbi Yochanan and **Carol (Smith) Samuels** (MHA '60) of Memphis. (See page Alumni Reunite, page 43, for a photo from the couple's engagement party.)

**Jeffrey Owen** (FYOS '17) on his engagement to Jenny Aghavian. The couple will wed May 29 in

Paterson, New Jersey, and plan to live in New York City. Mazel tov also to the groom's parents, Jodylyn and former MHA/FYOS head of school Rabbi Benji Owen. Photos from the engagement party are featured in Alumni Reunite on page 42.

**Yishai Berendt** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) on his engagement to Rachel Sassoon. They will get married June 1 just outside of Jerusalem and will live in Efrat, Israel.

**Edya Finkelstein** (MHA '15) on her Nov. 23 wedding to Ari Ershler in Jerusalem, which is also where the couple make their home. Mazel tov also to the parents of the bride, former faculty members and Kollel Torah Mitzion leaders Rabbi Shai and Bilha Finkelstein.

**Asher Kirshtein** (FYOS '19) on his engagement to Rena Rush. The couple will wed June 7 in Cleveland, Ohio, and plan to live in New York City.

**Shayna Kahane** (MHA '16, FYOS '20) on her engagement to Zanny Lesnoy. They will get married Aug. 21 in Rockleigh, New Jersey. The couple plans to live in New York City for one year and then will move to Philadelphia, where she will attend law school at Penn. Mazel tov also to the bride's

parents, **Josh** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92), and grandparents, Michael and **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70), and Joel and Joanne Kahane (alumni committee chair).

## BIRTHS:

Mazel tov to:

Bill and **Annette (Silber) Eisenberg** (YOS '74) of Memphis on the Nov. 25 arrival of grandson Elliott Parker, born to Jackie and Alex Evans of Memphis. Mazel tov also to big brothers Ethan and Miles.

Rabbi Zvi and **Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn** (MHA '75, YOS '79) of Boca Raton, Florida, on the Dec. 11 arrival of their first grandchild, baby boy Yair Binyamin, born to Avi and Hadassa Kahn of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel. The remarkable story of how the new father got from the front lines of the war in Gaza to Jerusalem for the birth of his son was published in the [Jerusalem Post](#). A photo from the baby's bris is featured in Alumni Reunite on page 41.

Eliyahu and **Devorah (Sharon Wolff) Herbst** (YOS '80) of Lakewood, New Jersey, on the Nov. 29 arrival of grandson Dovid Mordechai. Mazel tov to parents

Avraham Yitzchak and Chani Orlowek and big brother Chaim Pinchas, also of Lakewood.

Nancy and **Mordechai (Marty) Wolff** (MHA '80) of Brooklyn, New York, who welcomed granddaughter Leah on Jan. 12. Mazel tov to parents Yisroel and Miriam Shechet and brother Aryeh Leib of Lakewood, New Jersey.

Rivka and **Benjamin Rubenstein** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, on the March 5 birth of baby girl Penina Zisa. Mazel tov also to siblings Aliza, Rafi and Tzvia and grandparents Marvin and **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72) of Memphis.

Chaim and **Emma (Kaplan) Rapps** (MHA '01, FYOS '05) of Teaneck, New Jersey, on the Feb. 28 birth of son Moshe Jack Robert (named for his great-grandfather, Jack Bisno, z'l). Mazel tov to siblings Brielle and Bryan and grandparents Michael and **Diane (Bisno) Kaplan** (MHA '72) of Memphis.

Eric and **Brittany (Baum) Lindenfeld** (MHA '04) of New York City on the Dec. 13 birth of their first child, son Abe Theodore. Mazel tov also to grandparents **Lee** (MHA '74) and **Shelby**



**(Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77) of Memphis.

Ariel and **Eliana (Graber)**

**Abittan** (MHA '05, FYOS '09) of Lawrence, New York, on the March 5 birth of their son, Asher Moshe. Mazel tov also to big sisters Rebecca, Gabrielle and Yael and grandparents Tova and **Roy Graber** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis.

Gary and **Elaina (Kaufman)**

**Mittelman** (MHA '05, FYOS '09) of Memphis on the March 20 arrival of baby girl Adira Maayan, making Amalia a big sister. Mazel tov also to grandparents Seth and **Lisa (Wruble) Kaufman** (MHA '73) of Memphis.

Eli and **Chana (Joffre) Goldstone** (MHA '08) of Cleveland, Ohio, on the Jan. 17 birth of son Moshe Menachem. Mazel tov also to big sisters Devorah and Adina and grandfather **Michael Joffre** (MHA '69), also of Cleveland.

Marnie and **Aaron Rubenstein**

(MHA '08, FYOS '12) of Cherry Hill, New Jersey, on the Nov. 22 birth of their daughter Leora Sylvie, making Maya a big sister. Mazel tov also to grandparents Marvin and **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS '72) of Memphis.

Eliezer and **Sima (Greenblatt)**

**Levine** (MHA '10) of Baltimore, Maryland, on the March 4 birth of their daughter, Emunah Chava. She was named in honor of her maternal grandmother, **Chavi (Adler) Greenblatt** (MHA '83), z"l. Mazel tov also to siblings Ephraim and Rochel Leah and grandfather Rabbi Akev Greenblatt, former MHA Judaic studies principal.

Channah and **Ahron Braverman**

(MHA '13, FYOS '17) of Teaneck, New Jersey, who became parents with the Jan. 5 arrival of son Simon Victor. 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.

Hila and **Shmuel Perl** (MHA '14)

of Rehovot, Israel, on the Dec. 11 birth of their first child, daughter Amalya Kayla. Mazel tov also to former MHA/FYOS administrators and first-time grandparents Rabbi Dr. Gil and Melissa Perl.

Avi and **Rebecca (Brown)**

**Eisenstadter** (FYOS '18) of Memphis, who became parents with the Dec. 16 arrival of their daughter, Nechama Devorah.

## BNEI/BNOT MITZVAH:

Mazel tov to:

Pat and **Sherwin "Butch" Yaffe**

(MHA '62) of Memphis, whose twin grandsons, MHA seventh graders Aiden and Kivi, became bnei mitzvah Feb. 10. Mazel tov also to parents Dovid Cenker and Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker, copy editor of this publication.

**Bart** (YOS '77) and **Cindy**

**(Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis, on the Feb. 26 bar mitzvah of their grandson Betzalel, son of Adina Bayla and Mordechai Ehrenkranz of Queens, New York.

Jean and **Phillip Paley** (YOS '93)

of Atlanta, Georgia, on the Feb. 17 bat mitzvah of their daughter Ahuva Bella.

Rebecca Fishman Lipsey and **Jay**

**Lipsey** (MHA '93) of Miami, Florida, who celebrated their son Andrew's bar mitzvah with family and friends in Memphis Dec. 23.

Baruch and **Elana (Sadetsky)**

**Avis** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, on their daughter Shayna becoming a bat mitzvah Feb. 18.

Michael and **Rene (Steinberg) Blitz** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) of Potomac, Maryland, on the March 9 bar mitzvah of their son Alex. Mazel tov also to grandparents Alvin and **Emily (Evensky) Steinberg** (MHA '63) of Memphis.

Leah and **Josh Graber** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) of Chicago, Illinois, who celebrated their daughter Adella's bat mitzvah Feb. 18. Mazel tov also to grandparents Pammy and **Glenn Graber** (MHA '74, YOS '78) of Hollywood, Florida.

# MAZEL TOV!

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ISSUE AT [ALUMNI@MHAFYOS.ORG](mailto:ALUMNI@MHAFYOS.ORG).



# THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 2011-2015

## Where are they now?

'07

'11

**Jonathan Tavin** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) is an accountant. He and his wife, Evie, live in Migdal Haemek in northern Israel.

"Thank G-d, we are in a green zone (low risk of rockets), but it's still difficult at times," Tavin said. "We have a lot of friends who are or were doing reserve duty in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF)."

He has fond memories of cooking together with his teachers and classmates on shabbatons in Gatlinburg, Tennessee. Among the many teachers who left a lasting impression on him is Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff.

**Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) lives on the Upper West Side of Manhattan with his wife, Ellin, and their two children.

"Our son Ariel is a rising star at Gan Aliya, Manhattan's first *frum* Montessori school. Our newborn daughter's name, Lielle ('Hashem is for me'), was inspired by my *bubbie* Bernice Cooper's name, Batya ('Daughter of Hashem')."

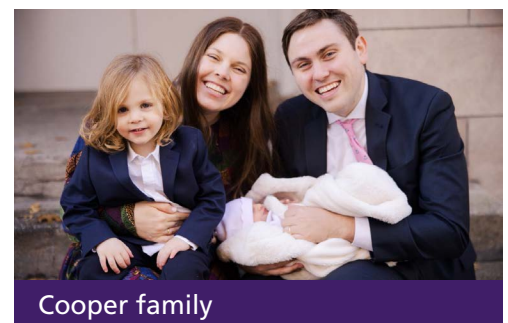
Cooper works as chief investment officer for the Sydell Group. He is responsible for the growth and development of NoMad, which is positioned to become the world's premier luxury-lifestyle hotel brand.

Reflecting on his experience at the MHA/FYOS, Cooper said, "I firmly believe that I couldn't have gotten a better education anywhere else in the country. The level of personalized learning in both *limudei kodesh* (Judaic) and general studies allowed me to feel confident in the top *shiur* at Gush (Yeshivat Har Etzion) and in the most advanced seminars at Columbia. I hope this elevated level of personalization in learning remains a focus of our school forever."

Teachers who left a lasting impact on him include Morah Anat Kampf, Rabbi David Kaplan, Rabbi Reuven Kolton, Rabbi Avi Goldberg, Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff, Mrs. Talya Tsuna, Dr. Whitney Kennon, Rabbi Yonasan Gersten, Rabbi Dr. Gil Perl, Mr. Dana Vaughn, Mrs. Abby Johnson, Mrs. Karin Schmitt, of blessed memory, and many members of the Kollel Torah Mitzion.

'08

'12



Cooper family



'08

'12

**Leah Rose Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) lives in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City.

After studying studio art and graphic design at Stern College, she completed a couple of graphic design internships but ultimately followed in her parents' footsteps in pursuing Jewish communal service. She now works as an administrative assistant at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck, New Jersey.

"One of my favorite things about the job is that we currently have many initiatives to help Israel," Fleischhacker said. "It is truly amazing to witness a community come together in this time of need! From raising money to packing bags of toys and warm clothes for those who had to evacuate and even stitching *mezuzah* covers for those who lost their homes in the south — to watch everyone come together as one is something I am truly proud to be a part of."

Her parents, David (former executive director of Baron Hirsch Congregation) and Morah Chany Fleischhacker (former MHA art teacher) and her sister **Yehudit** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) made *aliyah* to Israel. Her brother **Nachi** (MHA '12, FYOS '16) lives near her, and she sees him often. The family recently reunited in Israel to celebrate Yehudit's wedding to Coby Lyons. (See Alumni Reunite, page 46, for pictures.)

"One of my favorite memories from the MHA is spending my lunch period going back and forth between the art room and the library, which were conveniently across the hall from each other," Fleischhacker said. "I was quite the artsy bookworm and loved to spend my lunchtime reading and working on my latest project. I also got to spend time with my favorite teacher: obviously, my mother, art teacher Morah Chany.



**Leah Fleischhacker** (second from left) with (from left) brother **Nachi** (MHA '12, FYOS '16), sister **Yehudit** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) and then-fiancé Coby Lyons, and parents David and Chany Fleischhacker.

"I also loved our school plays. I really put my all into those. I still have a love for theater. I love attending Broadway shows with my friends or my brother. A while back, I joined a livestream theater group with some friends. We don't perform as much anymore, but it was fun while it lasted."



**Leah Fleischhacker** at a performance of "Six" on Broadway.

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## THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 2011-2015

Where are they now?

**Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and his wife, Marnie, live in Cherry Hill, New Jersey, with their two daughters and family dog. He works as a physician assistant in pulmonology and sleep medicine.



Rubenstein will never forget being kitchen head for the CYHSB steak dinner during his senior year, as shown in this issue's cover photo. His favorite teacher was Mr. Dana Vaughn.

He looks forward to opportunities to catch up with his classmates.



(from left) Marnie and **Aaron Rubenstein** (center) with their older daughter, Maya, and Rubenstein's grandfather, Izzy Katz, z'l.



The Rubensteins' younger daughter, Leora.



**Dylan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) lives in New York City with his wife, Anna, and is a fourth-year medical student at the Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/Northwell Health.

"One of my favorite memories is of playing the role of Pyotr Ivanovich Dobchinsky in the CYHSB's 2011 rendition of Gogol's 'The Government Inspector,'" Cooper said. "Silly and misguided, Bobchinsky and Dobchinsky rush to tell the small Russian town's governor that a government inspector has arrived, sparking a case of mistaken identity that propels the entire play. My twin brother **Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) played the role of Pyotr Ivanovich Bobchinsky, and I vividly remember Dr. Jerry Kutliroff pushing us to our limits of silliness in portraying our characters." (For a photo, see Flashbacks, page 51.)

**Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) and his wife, Elisheva, live in New York City, where he works in private equity for Neuberger Berman.

He has fond memories of the CYHSB shabbatons in Gatlinburg. "The combination of being with so many friends, skiing and the amazing Shabbos experience is hard to beat," Cooper said.



Among his favorite teachers were Mrs. Shelley Kutliroff and Dr. Whitney Kennon. “Mrs. Kutliroff was so invested in her students and always pushed us to reach our fullest potential, while Dr. Kennon did such a terrific job mastering and teaching so many different courses, from art history to U.S. history and a number of others,” he said.

**Yishai Berendt** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) came to our school as a dorm student hailing from Charlotte, North Carolina. He has since moved to Israel and is currently serving in the IDF.



“I have always felt that Rabbi Yonasan Gersten and all the educators at the CYHSB instilling in us the sense that we were adults with responsibility is what made me into who I am today,” Berendt said. “It’s the reason I went on to serve in the IDF and had what I needed to be an effective commander.”

Of the current situation in Israel, Berendt said: “We have a long and difficult war ahead of us in the North. Hezbollah is going to be an enormous challenge. As much as we’ve come together, we need to rally even more — on both sides of the world — if we’re going to be successful. American Jews need to push the U.S. government to supply us with munitions, and Israelis need to do all they can to support the troops and keep morale high. There isn’t anything we can’t do, and I have no doubt that we will win and come back stronger than ever.”

Berendt is grateful to the Memphis community for what he considers “some of the best years of my life” and has fond memories of the CYHSB steak dinners and school trips. His favorite teachers were Rabbi Gersten and Mr. Dana Vaughn.

As noted in Alumni News (page 17), Berendt recently became engaged to Rachel Sassoon. He hopes he and his classmates will stay better connected in the future.

**Ezra Cooper** (MHA '15, FYOS '19) lives in the Washington Heights neighborhood of New York City and is completing his final semester at Yeshiva University.

His favorite MHA memories include playing basketball with Rabbi Ezra Baldinger (one of his favorite teachers, along with Rabbi Refael Azugi) on Friday mornings and his eighth grade trip — with classmates **Akiva Finkelstein** (MHA '15), **Ethan Morris** (MHA '15, FYOS '19),

**Simcha Osdoba** (MHA '15, FYOS '19) and **Yisrael Weiner** (MHA '15, FYOS '19) — led by Rabbi Gersten and Rabbi Baldinger.



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## THE MHA/FYOS CLASSES OF 2011-2015

Where are they now?

“As I’ve become exposed to the broader Jewish community and made friends with those who attended high schools in New York and New Jersey, I’ve seen what they have to offer but also come to appreciate what is so special about our school in Memphis,” Cooper said. “There’s something unique about having one school around which the community is centered, and I hope that our school can continue to challenge people academically and instill in them a meaningful and loving relationship with our Torah and the Jewish people.”

Want to connect with other MHA/FYOS alumni?

**JOIN US ON FACEBOOK!** 



## CYHSB Macs victorious over alumni at the 2024 Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game



The 2024 alumni basketball team included (standing from left) **Avi Katz** (MHA '11, FYOS '15), **David Silbermann** (MHA '12, FYOS '16), **Asher Silbermann** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Simcha Osdoba** (MHA '15, FYOS '19), **Richard Lewis** (MHA '99, FYOS '03), **Avi Klein** (MHA '18, FYOS '22), **Jason Schubert** (MHA '17, FYOS '21), **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Justin Wruble** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81) as coach; (kneeling, from left) **Moshe Davidovics** (MHA '17, FYOS '21), **Hershel Krupp** (MHA '97), **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and **Benjamin Wachtel** (FYOS '13).

Temperatures may have been frigid outside, but the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys' Macs varsity basketball team brought the heat to the MHA Moss Gym in their face-off against a team of alumni players on Saturday night, Jan. 13, at the 32nd annual Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game. Fans were not deterred by the cold weather, as a standing-room-only crowd cheered on both teams during the exciting game.

The Macs held the lead for most of the game, except for about five minutes in the third quarter. The matchup remained close throughout, with never more than a few points separating the two teams. Ultimately, the Macs achieved a hard-fought 87-79 victory over the alumni team.



This year's event featured two father/son pairs on opposing teams. Freshman **Daniel Kahane** (MHA '23) competed against his father, **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), and sophomore **Benny Freiden** (MHA '22) faced off against his dad, **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00).



The Macs had special warm-up shirts for the occasion, purchased by **Yoni Freiden** in memory of his grandfather, Bernard Freiden, z'l. "My grandfather loved the school, and I wanted to honor him in some way," he said. "He loved our basketball team — his sons, grandsons and now great-grandson have played for the Macs. When **Benny** told me the team needed new warm-up shirts, I decided it would please my grandfather to have them dedicated in his honor." (For more on the MHA/FYOS legacy of Bernard Freiden, see Message from the alumni chair in this issue, page 3.)

Coach Kobi Pinto, who recently joined the MHA/FYOS faculty as athletic director, planned special, fun activities to engage spectators of all ages between quarters and at halftime.

After the first quarter, several middle school students participated in a dribble-and-shoot competition involving an obstacle course. The winner of that competition was seventh grader Aiden Cenker — son of our copy editor, Shoshana Cenker, and grandson of alumnus **Sherwin "Butch" Yaffe** (MHA '62). The Macs are looking forward to having Aiden eligible to join their team in two years!

During halftime, teams comprising one member of the Macs and one alumnus competed in a time-based "shooting stars" competition. Players had to make shots of increasing

difficulty from different locations on the court (layup, jump shot, foul line, three-point shot, etc.), with the final shot from the half-court line. The father-son duo of **Daniel** and **Josh Kahane** were the winners.

Between the third and fourth quarters, members of the Macs and alumni teams competed in a three-point shootout. Alumnus **Richard Lewis** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) came out on top, demonstrating he has not lost the amazing shooting ability he brought to the Macs during his days on the varsity team.

The 2024 Irby and Bernice Alumni Basketball Game is in the books. We look forward to seeing even more alumni back on campus for the Alumni Game in January 2025!



*Macs' new warm-up jerseys donated by **Yoni Freiden**.*



*Aiden Cenker, winner of the dribble-and-shoot competition.*





*Daniel and Josh Kahane, winners of the shooting stars competition.*



*Richard Lewis, winner of the three-point shootout, with sons Joseph and Jacob.*



*The alumni power duo of brothers Asher and David Silberman.*





# MHA/FYOS annual banquet dedicated to Israel, honors IDF service of our alumni

In light of the ongoing war in Israel, this year's banquet — scheduled for Sunday, June 9, at Baron Hirsch Synagogue — will serve as a public fortification of our school's support for the Jewish homeland and for our brave alumni who are serving in the Israel Defense Forces (IDF).

The banquet will be chaired by Benji and **Shoshana (Somer) Mehler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) and Michal and **Benjamin Wachtel** (FYOS '13). Both alumni chairs have siblings on active duty in the IDF.



The banquet program will honor MHA/FYOS alumni currently serving in the IDF to defend our homeland and *Klal Yisrael* (the Jewish people). We continue to overflow with pride for our graduates' dedicated service:

**Yair Ben-Ishai** (FYOS '05)  
**Yossi Berendt** (FYOS '16)  
**Yishai Berendt** (MHA '14, FYOS '18)  
**Noam Cahana** (FYOS '22)  
**Aharon Cooper** (FYOS '10)  
**Pinchas Cooperman** (MHA '19)  
**Rafi Epstein** (MHA '90)  
**Nadav Goldkin** (MHA '18, FYOS '22)  
**Avi Goldstein** (MHA '07, FYOS '11)  
**Ben Goldstein** (MHA '91, FYOS '95)

**Bryan Itkowitz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14)  
**Yaakov Kaplan** (MHA '09, FYOS '13)  
**Lily Morris** (MHA '12, FYOS '16)  
**Sarah Rapp** (MHA '12)  
**Ariav Schlesinger** (MHA '06, FYOS '10)  
**Benjamin Siegel** (MHA '18, FYOS '22)  
**Ezra Somer** (FYOS '21)  
**Shmuel Somer** (MHA '09)  
**Asher Stein** (MHA '13)  
**Ben Wexler** (FYOS '20)

(If you know of other alumni serving in the IDF who we have inadvertently omitted, please let us know immediately so we can be sure to include them. Thank you!)

Receiving the Eishet Chesed Award will be Rashki Osina Kaplan (wife of **Zac Kaplan**, MHA '01). She is being recognized for her tireless volunteer efforts on behalf of the school, as well as for her work supporting mental health in the community through Jewish Family Service as we in Memphis continue to process the events in Israel.

The 2024 banquet will also include a memorial tribute to Rose Lubin, z'l, an IDF soldier and member of the Border Police who was killed in the line of duty in November at the

# 30 | SCHOLARSHIP BANQUET

age of 20. Although Rose grew up in Atlanta, Georgia, her Memphis roots run deep. Rose's great-grandparents, Milton z'l and Esther Lubin, were part of the great generation that built our community following World War II. Her grandparents, Nathan and Alla Lubin, have followed in their footsteps as Jewish communal leaders. Rose's father, David Lubin, was raised in Memphis and attended the MHA during his early elementary school years. He ultimately moved to Atlanta and raised his family there. After high school, Rose volunteered to join the IDF to help defend our beloved homeland. She and her family are very much a part of our extended MHA/FYOS family, and together we will salute her courage on behalf of Israel.

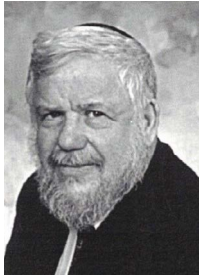


*Sgt. Rose Lubin, z'l (right) with her cousin, **Yedida Lubin** (MHA '91, FYOS '95).*

We expect this year's banquet to be a bittersweet and incredibly inspiring evening that attendees won't soon forget. All alumni are invited to participate.

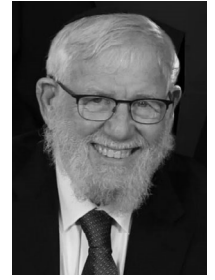
Whether or not you can attend, please consider placing an ad in our tribute journal, the proceeds of which will help to fund educational scholarships. You can show your support for the sacrifices of our alumni in the IDF by placing an ad in their honor. Friends can get together and jointly place an ad for a classmate who is currently serving. Ads in honor of our alumni in the IDF will serve as a tangible demonstration of our pride and respect for their service.

To make reservations for the June 9 banquet or to reserve an ad in the journal, please go to [mhafyos.org/journal](http://mhafyos.org/journal). We look forward to robust participation from our alumni at this critical time in the history of Israel and our school. Thank you in advance for your generous support.



# IN LOVING MEMORY OF

## Rabbi Daniel Rosenthal, z'l



In January 2024, the MHA/FYOS family mourned the passing of Rabbi Daniel Rosenthal, z'l, who served as dean of our school from 1997 to 2000. Those who knew Rabbi Rosenthal remember him as a sweet man with a warm smile who truly loved all of his students.

A few years before coming to Memphis, Rabbi Rosenthal started a Jewish school in Long Island. Once that school was up and running, he and his wife, Fruma, decided to take a sabbatical in Israel. Part of the agreement for this sabbatical, which was funded by a Bar Ilan University and Jewish Agency program for senior educators, was that he return to the U.S. afterwards to teach and foster Zionism among American students.

At that time, the MHA/FYOS was looking for a dean, so it was a perfect match. Additionally, the GMSG was in need of an administrator, so Mrs. Rosenthal — a nurse by training — served in that role on an interim basis.



*Rabbi Rosenthal with (from left) **Mathew Cherny** (MHA '99, FYOS '03), **Sam Goldstein** (MHA '99), z'l, and **Richard Lewis** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) at the 1997 MHA science derby.*

Rabbi Rosenthal was known for his unique way of fostering loyalty among the school's faculty. He never dictated policy, instead encouraging teachers to work as a team.



*Rabbi Rosenthal and Morah Miriam Greenblatt, z'l, presenting the first graders with their siddurim (first prayer books) in 1998.*

"He always knew 'where the kids were at,'" Mrs. Rosenthal said of her husband. In other words, he knew what was needed to support each student's individual needs.

The crowning achievement of Rabbi Rosenthal's tenure at our school was establishing the Gan Ivrit program with Mrs. Talya Tsuna. Understanding there is a critical period for language learning in early childhood, he felt strongly that the youngest MHA students should become fluent in Hebrew. The dynamic duo of Rabbi Rosenthal and Morah Talya shaped the Gan Ivrit program — which lasted until 2002 — into a huge success and something for which he will long be remembered by participating students and their parents.



After his first full year in Memphis, Rabbi Rosenthal wrote, "I am taken by the dedication and intensity of purpose of the members of the school's board and of our dear parents and supporters to assure that the education we deliver is the finest Jewish and general studies education possible."

The Rosenthals left Memphis in 2000 and went back to New York, where he spearheaded the new middle school at the Torah Academy of Suffolk County. In 2002, once that program was on solid footing, Rabbi and Mrs. Rosenthal made *aliyah* to Israel.

There, he taught at a high school for one year. Rabbi Rosenthal then decided to engage in full-time Torah study, learning for three years at Yeshivat Har Etzion (also known as "Gush") alongside post-high school students.



*Rabbi Rosenthal learning Torah in the Gush.*

From 2006 until his passing earlier this year, he occupied himself with three or four *chavrusas* (Torah study partners) a day and traveling back and forth to America to see his children and grandchildren.



*The Rosenthals at the 2014 wedding of their youngest daughter, Tehilla.*

The Rosenthals were blessed with four children, 11 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter, born in Israel in August 2023. Rabbi Rosenthal was there for her arrival and had the opportunity to hold her frequently in the final months of his life.



*Rabbi Rosenthal holding his great-granddaughter, Rena Devora, in August 2023.*



In 2000 — Rabbi Rosenthal's last year in Memphis — he found himself in the position of presiding over our school's 50th anniversary celebrations. At that time, he wrote, "It is my blessing and prayer that the image of the devotion, faith and sheer doggedness of the Academy pioneers be constantly before the eyes of our present and future leadership. May our leaders, as well as our parents and supporters, be as successful in supporting and transmitting our Torah heritage to the present and future generations as those pioneers have so remarkably succeeded in doing to former generations of young Jewish boys and girls."

We extend our deepest condolences to Mrs. Fruma Rosenthal and to their children: Rabbi Pinny Rosenthal, Chana Baron, Sarah Rosenthal and Tehilla Miller. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may Rabbi Rosenthal's memory be a blessing to us all.



*Rabbi and Mrs. Rosenthal in 2021.*

## SPOTLIGHT FEATURE

# Morah Michelle Katz

Role model to students and the community



In his 1986 book “All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten,” author Robert Fulghum posited that the world would be a better place if people simply followed the rules conveyed to them in kindergarten: things like sharing, playing fair and being willing to apologize. Few individuals are as well suited to impart such important life lessons as Morah Michelle Katz, who has taught at the MHA for 28 years, including 23 years in kindergarten.

### **Pennsylvania to Memphis, via New York**

Katz grew up in Scranton, where her family was very involved in their local synagogue, day school and Jewish federation. Throughout her schooling, she struggled with paying attention in class. Katz channeled her frustration into a passion for pursuing a career in education, in the hopes of making school more fun, engaging and inclusive for others.

She left home for her final two years of high school to attend Torah Academy for Girls in Far Rockaway, New York. While studying there, she regularly babysat for the children of **Dawn (Posner) Goldstein** (MHA '81, YOS '85).

“Perhaps I was Michelle’s first Memphis connection,” Goldstein said. “She was one of our favorite babysitters!”

Following high school, Katz stayed in the New York area, earning a degree in early childhood education from Yeshiva University’s Stern College for Women. Mutual friends set her up on a blind date with **David Katz** (MHA '88), who at the time was studying in yeshiva in Monsey, New York. They got married in June 1996.



*Michelle and **David Katz** at their wedding in 1996.*

“David had his heart set on living in Memphis,” she said. “He wanted to come back and help build the community, following in the footsteps of his parents [Esther and **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69)] and grandparents [Pearl and Izzy Katz, z’l].”

### **Embarking on an MHA career**

The couple quickly settled in Memphis, and she began working at the MHA in August 1996. Though her background was in early childhood education, Katz’s first assignment was teaching fifth and sixth grade girls.

“Mrs. Michelle Katz was my teacher the first year she moved to Memphis,” said **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and the school’s director of engagement). “One memory of her class that stands out is doing group projects on *Pirkei Avot* [Chapters of our Fathers]. **Shirli (Freiden) Gotlib** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) and I were assigned the principle of ‘Make a fence around the Torah.’ We wrote and performed a song about it to the tune of an Elvis

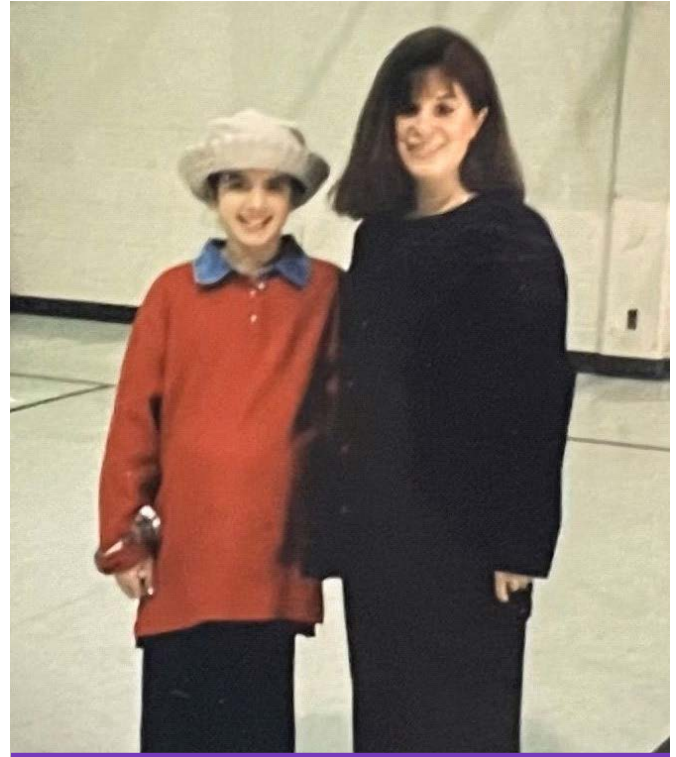
song! We had a great year, and I feel very lucky to now have her as my MHA colleague.”

For the next few years, Katz bounced between a variety of assignments — including teaching junior high and high school girls, staffing the Judaics resource room, and supporting a short-lived program for two-and-a-half-year-olds — and excelled at each. After five years on the MHA faculty, she returned to her roots and found her true calling as Morah Michelle in kindergarten.

“I just love their insights and questions and those ‘aha’ moments when they start reading,” she said of her kindergarten students. “I get so excited when a student figures out they can do something they initially thought they couldn’t. I work hard at finding each child’s strengths and helping them overcome challenges.”

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair, recalls watching her first grandchild, **Shayna Kahane** (MHA ’16, FYOS ’20), reap the benefits of having Morah Michelle as her kindergarten teacher.

“One day, Shayna came home from school and told me Morah Michelle had gone around the classroom and asked each student to share something about themselves that was special,” Kahane said. “As a professional educator myself, I was taken aback by the depth and significance of this seemingly simple activity. Morah Michelle doesn’t only teach the ABCs, aleph-bet and numbers; she works to instill in each child a sense of self-worth and establishes the groundwork for the self-esteem they will need as they venture into the world. I watched four of my grandchildren pass through Morah Michelle’s kindergarten class, and I am so thankful they had those experiences with her.”



“During spirit week, most of our sixth-grade class dressed as Mrs. Katz (then pregnant with **Avi**) on Dress Up as Your Favorite Teacher Day,” said **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (left).



Morah Michelle celebrating the 100th day of school in 2024 with Shana Schwartzberg, who continues to stop by the kindergarten classroom to get hugs from her beloved former teacher.





Morah Michelle Katz with kindergarten graduate **Sarah Kahane** (MHA '21) in 2013.

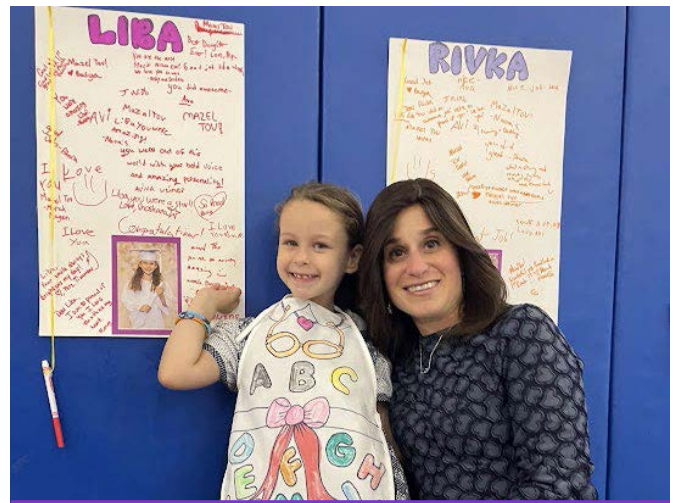
Many of Morah Michelle's students also remember her warmth and dedication, years after being in her classroom.

"Morah Michelle always made me and all the students feel so comfortable and cared for," said **Rakhel Finkelstein** (MHA '17, FYOS '21). "She has a special way of connecting with each child and making them feel valued and respected. She knows how to help every child and meet their needs. Morah Michelle is such a warm and kind teacher, person and role model. I'm so inspired by her care, connection and devotion to her students and how passionate she is about what she does."

"Morah Michelle Katz was my first teacher at the MHA," said **Benjamin Siegel** (MHA '18, FYOS '22). "She always brought her A-game to class and made

learning fun for everyone. 'Scientist of the week' is my favorite memory from kindergarten."

"I loved having Morah Michelle as my kindergarten teacher," said **Rena Wogan** (MHA '18, FYOS '22). "She really knows how to encourage each student. Her classroom is always fun and filled with energy. She's taught me so much about how to teach children and inspired me to go into education. Morah Michelle is an amazing role model who is passionate and determined to contribute to the community. She is the best!"



Morah Michelle with Liba Shapiro at kindergarten graduation in 2023.

### Camp Shemesh

As her family grew — **Avi's** arrival was followed by **Shaya** (MHA '12, FYOS '16), **Daniel** (FYOS '17), Ezra and **Pesi** (MHA '19, FYOS '23) — Katz recognized that Memphis didn't have an Orthodox day camp where children could have fun and continue their Jewish growth during the summer. In 2002, she and then-faculty member Mrs. Mimi David opened Camp Shemesh at the MHA, so their children and others in the community could enjoy enriching summer experiences in a safe and



nurturing environment. “We simply saw a need and worked to fill it,” Katz said.

While most kids want nothing to do with teachers or school during their summer break, Morah Michelle and her creative programming for preschoolers and elementary students drew about 50 campers the first year. Enrollment has been as high as 80 campers in the years since.

“Many of my memories of Morah Michelle are now shaped by years of attending Camp Shemesh as a camper and, later, as a counselor,” Finkelstein said. “Working alongside her at camp and as a substitute teacher in her classroom gave me the opportunity to once again experience the care and comfort I felt in kindergarten so many years ago.”

Morah Michelle ran Camp Shemesh for 20 years, stepping down from her “summer job” in 2022. Under her direction and care, and thanks to her hard work and imagination, hundreds of children have enjoyed wonderful summers at the MHA. And the number continues to grow, as plans are underway for the 22nd season of Camp Shemesh in 2024.

### **A passion for volunteering**

Inspired by her family’s tireless efforts in Scranton, and by the dedication of the extended Katz family to

sustaining Jewish life in Memphis, Morah Michelle has devoted immeasurable time and energy to volunteering in the community. Upon her arrival in Memphis, she joined the MHA parent-teacher association (PTA). She has been heavily involved in fundraising events like the auction and candy sale for years and even served a two-year term as PTA president. Additionally, Katz serves on multiple shul committees at Young Israel of Memphis and on the board of Jewish Community Partners (JCP) at Memphis Jewish Federation.

“David and I came to Memphis to be a part of something,” she said. “Both our families have a strong tradition of giving back to the community. I truly love volunteering when and where I can.”

In June 2023, Katz was honored at the MHA scholarship banquet with the Eishet Chesed Award for her unwavering commitment to the school inside and out of the classroom and to the broader Memphis Jewish community. In presenting the award, MHA board member Emily Lennon said of Katz:

Michelle gives back to our community in ways both visible and behind the scenes. From her dedication to each kindergarten class, her leadership in early childhood, her



*Morah Michelle (second from right) with Shemesh campers and staff on a field trip in downtown Memphis in 2021.*

conceiving of and energetically running Camp Shemesh for 20 years, to serving on Young Israel shul committees and on the JCP board, to coordinating the dorm logistics, to organizing kosher co-op deliveries, to bringing meals to new parents. She is a role model to many of the women in our community. She has raised children and students with a variety of strengths and has helped them hone in on those strengths and work through their challenges.

Michelle moved to Memphis into a large and well-known family and made it her own, and she continues to help define our community — at the MHA and beyond. Just like with her students, she sees avenues of potential and puts in her own efforts and energies to help our school and community improve as a warm place of unity and with firm footing in Torah and Jewish values.

### Reflections

Morah Michelle has been on the MHA faculty for nearly 30 years, but she shows no signs of slowing down. She is eager to teach her grandson Ahron, the MHA's first fourth-generation student, in kindergarten next year. She is also dedicated as ever to volunteering for organizations that are meaningful to her.

Looking back on her career achievements to date, she is grateful to the mentors and cheerleaders who encouraged her growth and development — including former MHA principal Mrs. Penina Wender, former pre-K teacher Morah **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68), former head of school Rabbi Benjy Owen, current early childhood director Ms. Katie Minner and the supportive



Morah Michelle and **David Katz** (fourth and fifth from right) with their children at the 2023 MHA banquet: (from left) Rachel and **Avi**, **Daniel** and Meira, **Pesi**, Ezra, and **Shaya** and Tehilla.



Morah Michelle with Ahron, her first grandchild, on the MHA playground.



Morah Michelle presenting **Rafi Davidovics** (MHA '22) with his kindergarten diploma in 2014.

parents of many students along the way. “The relationships I develop with students and their families are everything to me,” Katz said.

She hopes the hundreds of students who have passed through her classroom look back and have

happy memories of their time with her. “I want them to remember that someone was there for them, cared for them and loved them,” Katz said. “My goal was to give each student the social and emotional skills to be an independent thinker and learner. I’ve never given up on any of my students.”



Michelle and **David Katz** with their two grandsons: Ariel (left), son of **Daniel** and Meira, and Ahron, son of **Avi** and Rachel.



Michelle and **David Katz** in Scottsdale, Arizona, in 2023.



# 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](mailto: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)!

Tzvi Kahane, son of Rabbi **Michael** (MHA '91, FYOS '95) and **Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane** (MHA '89, YOS '93), celebrated his bar mitzvah Nov. 23 in Jerusalem. (The Israeli government was kind enough to call a cease-fire for the occasion.) Many alumni stopped by to offer their mazel tov wishes.



Rabbi **Michael Kahane** (left) with his brother-in-law and former classmate, **Ben Goldstein** (MHA '91, FYOS '95).



(from left) Rabbi David Goldstein, Rabbi **Michael Kahane** and **Noam Cahana** (FYOS '22).



(from left) **Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane**, **Shifra Smith** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) and **Elisheva Valeriano** (FYOS '23).



Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane (right) and Elaine (Goldstein) Strajcher (MHA '61).



Miriam (Amy Goldstein) Kahane (right) and Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver (MHA '76, YOS '80).



Cousins and classmates (from left) **Aaron Leach** (FYOS '06), **Daniel Wruble** (FYOS '06), **Jonah Kaufman** (MHA '02, FYOS '06) and **Josh Baum** (MHA '02, FYOS '06) reunited in Memphis for Thanksgiving.



In December, Rabbi Zvi and **Sara Beth (Frager) Kahn** (MHA '75, YOS '79, center), celebrated the arrival of their first grandchild in Israel. Joining her at the *bris* in Ramat Bet Shemesh were classmates **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80, far left) and **Jennifer (Whitman) Lehrfield** (MHA '77, YOS '81).



Also in December, alumni and friends came together in New York City to toast the engagement of **Jeffrey Owen** (FYOS '17) and Jenny Aghavian.



(from left) Annie and **Yosef Goldblatt** (FYOS '17), **Jeffrey Owen** and fiancée Jenny Aghavian, **Rena Mashinsky** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Brooke Winestone** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) and **Mark Fertel** (FYOS '17).



(from left) Rabbi Benjy Owen (father of the groom and former MHA/FYOS head of school), **Elan Cooper** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) and **Ezra Cooper** (MHA '15, FYOS '19).



School friends **Ezra Kaplan** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) and **Jenny (Steinberg) Sved** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) bumped into one another at the Inbal Hotel in Jerusalem in December. Kaplan was there for a nephew's bar mitzvah, and Sved was there for Shabbat before staffing a Jewish National Fund (JNF) volunteer mission.



**Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79, far right) was proud to see her son, Dovid, honored at Yeshiva Darchei Torah's tribute dinner in Brooklyn, New York, in January. Sharing in her *nachas* were (from left) **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Lisa (Yormark) Neuman** (MHA '79, YOS '83).



In January, friends came together in Chicago to celebrate the engagement of **Aharon Marizan** (FYOS '16) and Rikki Levitin (fourth and fifth from left). Enhancing their simcha were friends (from left) **Mark Fertel** (FYOS '17), **Mordechai Gersten** (MHA '00), **Chaim Gersten** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Jered Weinstein** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) and **Gary Goldmeier** (FYOS '17). The groom is a son of **Tova (Samuels) Marizan** (MHA '88, YOS '92), z'l, and grandson of Rabbi Yochanan and **Carol (Smith) Samuels** (MHA '60).



On Jan. 15, **Gila Miriam Karasik** (FYOS '18, fourth from left) married Mordechai Twersky in New York. On hand to dance with the bride were (from left) **Magen Sauer** (FYOS '21), **Helena Peiser** (FYOS '18), **Meira (Braverman) Rubin** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), sister **Chani Karasik** (MHA '16, FYOS '20) and **Rakhel Finkelstein** (MHA '17, FYOS '21).



Alumni (from left) **Moshe Davidovics** (MHA '17, FYOS '21), **Reuben Stein** (FYOS '20), **Aidan Kahane** (MHA '19), **Zevi Kirshtein** (FYOS '22) and **Jason Schubert** (MHA '17, FYOS '21) came to cheer on the CYHSB Macs at Yeshiva University's Sarachek basketball tournament in March. Our school's varsity team achieved a second-place finish in Tier 3!



Late last year, Ahuva Silver, daughter of Rabbi Uri and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80), announced her engagement to Yitzky Ostrow. Many alumni and friends joined the family in celebrating this wonderful simcha.



Mother of the bride **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (center) with former students (from left) **Dana (Chafetz) Berlin** and **Masha (Marcia Wogan) Ginian** (both MHA '92, FYOS '96) at the December engagement party in New York.



**Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (second from left) with friends (from left) **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79), **Sherry (Rosenberg) Gans** (MHA '69, YOS '72) and Miriam and **Yitzky Greenblatt** (MHA '75).

Many more friends came to the wedding in Tarrytown, New York, in March.



(from left) Faigy Kutner (wife of **Eli Kutner**, MHA '92), **Dana (Chafetz) Berlin** (MHA '92, FYOS '96), another friend, **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68), **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver**, Malkie Katz (former MHA faculty member and wife of **Larry Katz**, MHA '67), **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79), **Masha (Marcia Wogan) Ginian** (MHA '92, FYOS '96), **Debbie (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80) and **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79).



(standing, from left) **Elana (Sadetsky) Avis** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Shifra (Kutner) Leitman** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68), Malkie Katz, **Dana (Chafetz) Berlin** (MHA '92, FYOS '96) and Dayna Klitzner (wife of **Phillip Klitzner**, MHA '92, FYOS '96); (seated, from left) **Masha (Marcia Wogan) Ginian** (MHA '92, FYOS '96), **Debbie (Brown) Nissel** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79).



(from left) **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79), **Yitzy Greenblatt** (MHA '75) and **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79).



The festivities continued with *sheva brachos* in the days following the wedding. Family and friends gathered at the home of Rabbi Ilan and **Masha (Marcia Wogan) Ginian** (MHA '92, YOS '96) to toast the newlyweds. Joining Rabbi Uri and **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (at right) for *sheva brachos* were Ephraim and **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79).



In December, **Tami (Vogel) Eiseman** (MHA '79, YOS '83, fourth from left) and her husband Bob (far right) celebrated the marriage of their son, Monty, to Baylee Less in Memphis. Also in attendance were (from left) **Roy Graber** (MHA '76, YOS '80) and wife Tova, **Ilene (Brown) Kravetsky** (MHA '78, YOS '82) and Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker (copy editor of this publication).



(from left) **Aidan Kahane** (MHA '19), **Zevi Kirshtein** (FYOS '22) and **Ruthie Kaplowitz** (MHA '17, FYOS '21) worked together in staffing Yeshiva University's National Model United Nations (YUNMUN) event for high school students in February. Also serving on the event team were **Shayna Kahane** (MHA '16, FYOS '20, who was secretary-general!), **Ezra Cooper** (MHA '15, FYOS '19) and **Sophie Wruble** (MHA '16, FYOS '20). We had more alumni on the YUNMUN staff than any other high school.



On March 12, **Yehudit Fleischhacker** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) married Coby Lyons in Israel. Many alumni and former Memphians were there to celebrate with the happy couple.



**Chaya Klein** (MHA '14, FYOS '18, left) and **Eliana (Schlesinger) Hornstein** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) wore GMSG shirts while dancing before the bride and groom.



Among the guests in attendance were (from left) **Chaya Klein** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Noga Finkelstein** (MHA '12, FYOS '16) and **Tamar Serman** (MHA '13, FYOS '17).



Also on hand to toast the happy couple were (clockwise from top left) Yaron Weiss, Netanel Aronson (former Torah Mitzion fellow), **Gavi Peiser** (MHA '19, FYOS '23), Rabbi Yisrael Wende (former MHA/FYOS faculty and *rosh kollel* of Torah Mitzion in Memphis), **Nadav Weiss** (FYOS '22), **Zev Bosin** (MHA '18, FYOS '22), **Elisha Serman** (MHA '19, FYOS '23), Rabbi Avi Goldberg (former MHA/FYOS faculty and *rosh kollel* of Torah Mitzion), **Ezra Somer** (FYOS '21) and **Benjamin Siegel** (MHA '18, FYOS '22).



Celebrating with **Yehudit** and Coby (standing, second and third from left) were (standing, from left) David Fleischhacker (father of the bride and former executive director of Baron Hirsch), Rabbi Uriel (former FYOS general studies principal) and Shani Lubetski; (seated, from left) Rabbi Avi Kannai and Rabbi Avi Goldberg (both former MHA/FYOS faculty members and *roshei kollel* of Torah Mitzion in Memphis) and Yael and Rabbi Emanuel Elstein (former scholars in residence at Baron Hirsch).

# Alumni at MHA Grandparents Day

On Dec. 11, the MHA welcomed nearly 100 bubbies, zaydies, sabas, savtas and other special guests for its annual Grandparents Day program. Visitors participated in special classroom activities, enjoyed a musical presentation from grades 3 and 4, and ate a Chanukah-themed lunch with their favorite MHA students.

A number of alumni were among the special visitors on Grandparents Day. It was wonderful to see so many multigenerational MHA families!



**Amy (Thomas) Epstein** (MHA '71, YOS '75) and granddaughter **Shaindy**, whose mother is **Jamie (Epstein) Gibber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14).



**Devorah (Adler) Weiner** (YOS '82) and her husband **Mordechai** (top row, left) and former MHA faculty members **Adina** and **Cantor Aryeh Samberg** (top row, right) with their grandchildren (from left) **Shoshana**, **Dena**, **Chana Leah**, **Gila** and **Aviva**, daughters of **Rabbi Yisroel Weiner** (MHA head of school) and **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03).



**Menashe** and **Ronit (Sauer) Brakha** (MHA '83, YOS '87) with her mother, **Nili Sauer**, and their granddaughter **Allie**, daughter of **Molly (Brakha) Hagler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11).



(clockwise from top left) **David Katz** (MHA '88), his nephew **Eitan Braverman** (son of **Rivka (Katz) Braverman**, MHA '89, YOS '93), wife **Morah Braverman**, mother **Esther Katz** and grandson **Ahron Katz**, son of **Avi Katz** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) and the MHA's first fourth-generation student.





Pat and **Sherwin "Butch" Yaffe** (MHA '62) with grandchildren Aiden, Kivi and Lyla, whose parents are Dovid Cenker and Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker, copy editor of this publication.



**Lee Baum** (MHA '74) and **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77) with grandchildren Eliana and Benjamin Sukhodolsky (children of **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and director of engagement) and Avi Wogan (son of **Jonathan Wogan**, MHA '94)).



**Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70) with grandsons **Daniel Kahane** (MHA '23), son of **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92) and **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), and Ethan Krupp, son of **Hershel Krupp** (MHA '97).



**Hugh (Freiden) Gordon** (MHA '72, YOS '76) and **Debbie Freiden** with granddaughter Margalit, daughter of **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00).

# New MHA/FYOS giving society promotes legacy gifts

We are pleased to announce to alumni that our school has established a new legacy giving society, **Moreshet MHA**. This developing group comprises individuals and families who have designated MHA/FYOS as a beneficiary of their will or estate plan. The team has worked closely and collaboratively with the [Jewish Foundation of Memphis](#) and [Grinspoon Life and Legacy Program](#) to formalize this group and position Moreshet MHA to welcome many more benefactors.

The founding members of Moreshet MHA, who are listed below, received a Chanukah gift thoughtfully curated by **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99 and director of engagement) and student 3-D print artists from our junior high school. We look forward to toasting the members of Moreshet MHA at the school's annual banquet on June 9 and further engaging with alumni, parents, friends and community stakeholders at future events.

Michelle and **David Katz** (MHA '88) are among the founding members of Moreshet MHA. "It is important to us to make sure there is a vibrant Torah day school educating the children of Memphis well after we are gone," David Katz said. "The school has been the foundation of the Memphis Jewish community for over 70 years, and we want to do our part to make sure it continues to be for years to come."

Also among the founding members are alumni **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92) and **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97). "It gives us such a great sense of purpose and pride to be able to play a part in ensuring that the institutions we have worked so hard to help build will continue to thrive, even when we are no longer here," Josh Kahane said.

Legacy gifts can be made to MHA/FYOS through the Jewish Foundation of Memphis using various vehicles, including stocks, bonds, real estate, retirement assets and insurance policies. For more information about Moreshet MHA, please contact Emily Lennon, our school's board liaison to the Jewish Foundation of Memphis, at [emily.lennon@gmail.com](mailto:emily.lennon@gmail.com) or 901-596-6897.

## **Moreshet MHA members (in development)**

Patricia and Sam Chafetz

Aileen and **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81)

Leslie and **Jonathan Epstein** (MHA '82, YOS '86)

Bluma Zuckerbrot-Finkelstein and Rabbi Joel Finkelstein

Chany and David Fleischhacker



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## LEGACY GIVING

Natalie (z'l) and Jerome Frager

**Sheri (Greenberg) Gadberry** (MHA '83) and Tom (z'l) Gadberry

Evelyn (z'l) and Marlin (z'l) Graber

Monique and Charles Jalenak

**Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92) and **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97)

Anat and Cantor Ricky Kampf

Michelle and **David Katz** (MHA '88)

Julie and Marshall Levy

Betsy and Steve Libby

Sue Ann and Bernard Lipsey

Barbara and Earl Magdovitz

Eileen Posner

Ellen and Ellis Tavin

Razelle and Stanley (z'l) Wender

Cindi and Joseph Weinstein

Debby and Ira (z'l) Weinstein

**Dena (Rosenberg) Wruble** (MHA '84, YOS '88) and **Gary Wruble** (MHA '77, YOS '81)

Diane and Larry Wruble

Anonymous x 6



# FLASHBACKS

# 2011-2015

## Photographs from the past

The CYHSB's 2011 production of "The Government Inspector" (from left): **Dylan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) as Dobchinsky, **Josh Mamiye** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) as the police constable, **Isaac Graber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) as police superintendent and **Ethan Cooper** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) as Bobchinsky.



*"This photo conjures up recollections of shared laughter, inside jokes and enjoyable moments during playtime. I have wonderful memories of working together with friends toward common goals. Being in the play gave me a feeling of belonging, as it fostered a sense of camaraderie and community. There was such a simple joy in being together with my classmates. I have great nostalgia for specific locations within the school where these experiences took place. Overall, I have positive memories of educational experiences, lasting friendships and a sense of connection to the school. I often reflect on the lessons I learned."* -**Josh Mamiye**

(from left) **Aaron Rubenstein** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Efroni Schlesinger** (MHA '09) and **Noah Rapp** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) in the MHA kitchen preparing for the CYHSB steak dinner in 2011.



*"Steak dinner was always a highlight for me. My two older brothers who ran the kitchen before me made sure I was on the grill and not scrubbing potatoes. The steaks may have come out a bit rare those couple of years!"*  
-**Efroni Schlesinger**

**Zahava (Gersten) Majowka** (MHA '09, FYOS '13) was the only graduate of the GMSG in 2013. Here she is in her senior class picture, with Mrs. Sara Plotitsa and Dr. Whitney Kennon. The statement she made at graduation has become legendary: "Although the odds were against them, it seems my parents were the only ones to have a girl in 1994."



*"Hm, who let me pose like that? Haha. Fond memories of going to a small school!"*

**-Zahava (Gersten) Majowka**

(from left) **Ethan Morris, Ezra Cooper** and **Simcha Osdoba** (all MHA '15, FYOS '19) at their eighth grade advancement ceremony in 2015.



*"This memory brings back joy, as I was so lucky to be with Ethan and Ezra, two of my dearest friends, from Pre-K3 all the way through 12th grade. I still remember eighth grade graduation today. It's just one of the great memories I have from being with some of my best friends over the years."* **-Simcha Osdoba**

*"It's amazing how time has flown by. Seeing this picture instantly makes me smile. While this is a photo of us at eighth grade graduation, I think back even further and appreciate the lifelong friendships I formed at the Hebrew Academy. Love those guys!"* **-Ethan Morris**



On the MSG trip to Gatlinburg, Tennessee, in 2011, students (from left) **Molly (Brakha) Hagler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11), **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Shira Osdoba** (MHA '10, FYOS '14) hid in the back of a van during an impromptu game of hide-and-seek.



The MSG Gatlinburg trip in 2012 (from left): **Leah Fleischhacker** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Alexa (Wender) Futter** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Zahava (Gersten) Majowka** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Sade Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Sima (Greenblatt) Levine** (MHA '10).



*"School shabbatons were always a blast and filled with lots of bonding time with friends and teachers alike. I am very grateful for the amazing programming the school provided!"*  
**-Alexa (Wender) Futter**



# IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 30th issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication just before Rosh Hashanah. In it, we will once again highlight the eighth and 12th grade graduates from the years 1966-1970. Members of these classes will receive questionnaires by email (or regular mail) sometime in July. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

Our feature story in that issue will spotlight **Rabbi Yosef and Rebbetzin Maxine Rottenberg**, who taught at our school in the late '60s. If you have any stories, photos or memories of the Rottenbergs that you would like to share, please send them to Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at [joannekahane111@gmail.com](mailto: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 Yisroel Weiner, head of school  
Deena Davidovics, president, board of trustees  
**Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99),  
director of engagement