

MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends



Issue 25

**Highlighting the
graduating classes
of 1981-1985**

IN THIS ISSUE

Message to Alumni

Joanne Kahane

President's Message

Deena Davidovics

Head of School's Message

Rabbi Yisroel Weiner

D'var Torah

Devorah (Adler) Weiner (YOS '82)

Letters to the Editor and Chair

Community responses

1957-1965 Trivia Answers

Answers to the questions in Issue No. 24

1981-1985 Trivia Questions

Win a tin of Ricki's Cookies

Alumni News

Mazel Tovs and more

The Classes of 1981-1985

Where are they now?

Spotlight Feature

Mrs. Joyce Casada

Beit Midrash Dedication

Mrs. Regina Belsky, z'l

Fourth Generation @ MHA

Alumni Basketball Game

Jan. 14, 2023

Alumni Reunite

Flashbacks

Photographs from the past

In the Next Issue

This issue is dedicated in loving memory of the school's 1981-1985 graduates who are no longer with us:

Lois (Ostrow) Goldberg

(MHA '77, YOS '81)

Marty LeVine

(MHA '77, YOS '81)

Kimberly (Kimmie Barger) Wilkes

(YOS '84)

David Brown

(MHA '81)

Additionally, we mourn with profound sorrow the recent passing of alumnus **Yaakov (Peter) Wollner** (MHA '59).

We send our condolences to his brother **George Wollner** (MHA '67, YOS '71) and sister **Chaya (Terry) Wollner) Fuchs** (MHA '74, YOS '78), along with their entire family.

May the memory of our departed alumni forever be a blessing.

COVER PHOTO



The sixth grade class of 1978-79 and their teachers (clockwise from left): Moshe Silverman, **Asher Wolmark** (YOS '85), Mrs. Suzanne Friedman, **David Brown, z'l** (MHA '81), **Michelle (Gordon) Wales** (MHA '81), **Michael Kaplan** (MHA '81), Mrs. Joyce Casada, **Lauren Fineberg** (YOS '84), **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84) and **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85).

For more on Mrs. Casada, see the Spotlight feature on page 24.

MISSED AN ISSUE? ARCHIVES

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

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair

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

Shoshana (Yaffe) Cenker, copy editor

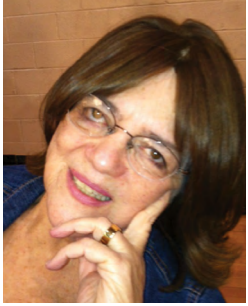
Noam Davidovics, technology support

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To learn more about MHA/FYOS, please contact marketing and recruitment director **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99) at 901-682-2400 or jessica.baum@mhafyos.org.

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Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



I recently heard a *d'var Torah* at the Shabbos table that called to my attention an idea I'd never really thought about.

In *Bereshis* (the book of Genesis), when Hashem created the world, He paused at the end of each day to look at what He had created;

the text tells us that "Hashem saw that it was good." In those few simple words lies a profound life lesson for us: We must regularly pause our work and evaluate our progress. Is it good? Where can we improve? We must be sure that what we are doing is "good."

While I certainly cannot compare our alumni publication to divine creation, it does sometimes feel as if editor **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) and I have produced our own little "world" with this newsletter. As we learn from *Bereshis*, we must take a moment to examine our work. Since this is our 25th issue, it feels like a good time to take stock of where we are.

All of our readers have helped us along, and continue to help us, in so many ways:

- You have spread the word to other alumni who may not be receiving the newsletter, and you have sent us their contact information.
- You have enthusiastically sent in pictures for our Alumni Reunite section (and it brings us great joy to see alumni spending time together).

- You have shared your *simchas* with us for the "mazel tovs" in our Alumni News feature.
- When your classes have been highlighted, you've completed and sent in our questionnaires, along with beautiful pictures of your families.
- You've sent in comments, corrections, suggestions and encouraging words through your letters to us.
- You have generously shared your memories of the MHA/FYOS personalities that we spotlight to help us make those features meaningful for our readership.

Some of your suggestions have been incorporated and improved our publication:

- Dr. Joel Siegel, past president of the board of trustees, suggested the trivia contests to garner additional excitement and participation.
- **Devorah (Nayowitz) Rothenberg** (MHA '58) suggested the Spotlight feature, which brings us up to date on beloved teachers and administrators.
- Former faculty member Mrs. Shari Schwartz proposed that we add "memory statements" to our Flashbacks section to boost the nostalgia factor.
- Rabbi Benjy Owen, former head of school, recommended that we include a "thank you" section to publicly acknowledge those who help with each issue.

MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

4

- Numerous alumni suggested the idea of the Alumni Reunite section by sending in photos of themselves getting together with their classmates.

Of course, our publication has not been flawless. We've made mistakes — and surely will make more. But with the help of our readers, we've done our best to make things right, and we look forward to your continued help.

As we prepare to complete our 25th issue, I think we can look at our effort to engage MHA/FYOS alumni through this publication and see that "it is good." We sincerely hope that you agree.

Wishing you all a joyous and meaningful Chanukah!

Joanne Kahane, alumni chair
joannekahane111@gmail.com



Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



Over the *yomim tovim* (holidays), I was struck by something we do regularly but to which I hadn't previously given much thought.

In *birkas kohanim* (the priestly blessing), when the *kohanim* are delivering our communal *bracha*, many have a custom to recite a

personal *tefillah* (prayer) for dreams. While I have said this prayer many times, I suddenly became curious about why this *tefillah* appears where it does and why some have the practice to say it at this time. It is especially strange, as we typically do not say personal *tefillas* during a time of communal prayer. The context also seems odd; the *kohanim* are blessing us as a congregation, and in this very awe-inspiring moment, we whisper under our breath about the dream we had last night?

Struck by these oddities, I looked into the background behind this particular practice. The source for mentioning dreams in *birkas kohanim* comes from the *Gemara* in *Berachos* 55b, where the *Gemara* relates that Ameimar, Mar Zutra and Rav Ashi were sitting together. They said, "Let each and every one of us say something that the other has not heard." One of them began and said, "One who saw a dream and does not know what he saw should stand before the *kohanim* when they lift their hands during the priestly blessing and say the following:

רבונו של עולם, אני שלך ונחלומותי שלך, הלוֹם
 חלמתי ואיני יודע מה הוא. בין שחלמתי אני לעצמי
 ובין שחלמו לי חבירי ובין שחלמתי על אחרים, אם
 טובים הם חזקם ואמצם פחלומותי של יוסף. ואם
 צריכים רפואה — רפאם כמי מרה על ידי משה רבינו,
 וכמרים מצרעתה, וכחזקיה מחליו, וכמי יריחו על ידי

אלישע. וכשם שהפכת קללת בלעם הרשע לברכה, כן
 הפוך כל חלומותי עלי לטובה

'Master of the Universe, I am Yours and my dreams are Yours. I dreamed a dream and I do not know what it is. Whether I have dreamed of myself, whether my friends have dreamed of me or whether I have dreamed of others — if the dreams are good, strengthen them and reinforce them like the dreams of Joseph. And if the dreams require healing, heal them like the bitter waters of Mara by our teacher Moses, and like Miriam from her leprosy, and like Hezekiah from his illness, and like the bitter waters of Jericho by Elisha. And just as You transformed the curse of Balaam the wicked into a blessing, so too transform all of my dreams for me for the best.'

This practice is also brought down in the *Zohar*, *Tur* and *Shulchan Aruch* and is included in many *siddurim* and *machzorim* (prayer books), making the practice pretty mainstream.

Rav Elimelech of Liznesk, the *Noam Elimelech*, gives a reason for this practice in his commentary on *Parshas Terumah*. As it says in the *Gemara* in *Berachos* 57b, a dream is 1/60th of prophecy and the *kohanim* achieve full prophecy while performing *birkat kohanim*. It therefore follows that dreams are nullified within *birkat kohanim* according to the principle of *batel b'shishim*, and the prophecy achieved in *birkat kohanim* can nullify a dream, which is a fraction of prophecy.

When the *kohanim* bless the congregation, they are acting as a conduit of Hashem. They say the exact words Hashem commanded, which are composed of 60 letters — lending further support to the potential of this moment to nullify a dream. But I would like to take this a bit further. In the *tefillah*, we ask not only about our own dreams; we ask about dreams we've had about ourselves and others, as well as

6

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Deena Davidovics

dreams that others have dreamt about us. We ask Hashem to make these dreams come true if they could have a positive effect. We ask for healing, but even more so, we ask for transformation.

In the *tefillah*, we reference the examples of Hashem turning the bitter waters of Mara sweet through *Moshe Rabbeinu* and His sweetening of the bitter waters of *Yericho* through Elisha. We talk about the healing achieved by Miriam and *Chizkiyahu* when the prognoses were bleak. We discuss the wicked Balaam transforming his intended curse into a blessing, and we beg Hashem to similarly transform our dreams for good.

When Hashem converted Balaam's intended curse into a blessing, the words he said were, "*Ma tovu ohalecha Yaakov, mishkenosecha Yisrael*" (how good are your tents, Jacob; your dwelling places, Israel). In the *Gemara* in Sanhedrin 105b, Rabbi Yochanan says that what was uttered teaches us what was actually in his heart. Balaam's intended curse was to take away our communal centers of prayer and Torah learning — our synagogues and yeshivas. Our enemies have long understood that Torah institutions are the foundation of our success as a people. So too, here in Memphis, the foundation of our community is the Margolin Hebrew Academy/Feinstone Yeshiva of the South.

The theme of transformation is central to the High Holidays, as we daven to Hashem to help us achieve *teshuvah* (repentance) and transform our very selves. We ask Hashem to not only give us a good year and a good decree, but also to transform the bad decrees into good ones. The keys to achieving this transformation are *teshuvah*, *tefillah* and *tzedakah* (charity).

Each of us can actively harness this power of transformation. *Teshuvah* and *tefillah* are on a personal level, while *tzedakah* is inherently communal. We have the power to change the tide of our collective future by investing in the institution that is most central to our communal continuity, and that is the MHA/FYOS. In working to ensure that our school has the resources needed to be a beacon of success and stability, we can truly say, "*Ma tovu ohalecha Yaakov*" — how great is our community, because our school is secure and thriving!

When we pray to transform our dreams during *birkas kohanim*, perhaps we're really praying for transformation on both an individual and communal level. When the *Gemara* provides the text of the *tefillah*, we are told we should complete this prayer together with the *kohanim*, so the congregation responds *amen* to both the blessing of the *kohanim* and to this individual request. At the moment of *birkas kohanim*, when we are as close to prophecy as we will be in our days, we pray for ourselves and for each other, as we cannot succeed individually unless we all succeed collectively.

May Hashem hear our *tefillos*, see our actions, and not merely nullify the bad and uphold the good, but rather transform us and our futures, ensuring our personal and collective success. May we continue to dream together, pray together, strive together, and work together for years to come to assure the future of our school and community.

Deena Davidovics

President, MHA/FYOS board of trustees

deenamd@gmail.com



Dear MHA/FYOS alumni and friends,



Our esteemed alumni are essential to the fabric of our school family, and I am excited to have this opportunity to reach out and introduce myself. The MHA/FYOS is committed to an endless pursuit of new and innovative ways to enhance our academic excellence in both Judaic and general

studies; our development of the whole child in the realms of *middos* (character) and social-emotional growth; and our pervasive atmosphere of love for Hashem, His Torah and His way of life. The reason for this commitment is simple.

Among the many messages we can learn from Chanukah, the one that might be key to the proper way to approach almost anything we do, is the notion that “good enough” isn’t good enough. There is a famous question: Why did the *Chashmonaim* (Hasmoneans) face a shortage of oil after retaking the Temple from their Greek foes? While it’s true there wasn’t sufficient pure oil to keep the *menorah* lit until more could be pressed and delivered, it’s clear from the *halacha* (Jewish law) that impure oil was perfectly permissible! What, then, was the need for a miracle to make the small bit of pure oil last all eight days until more could be obtained?

The *Chashmonaim* certainly knew that they could use the impure oil. However, they had just fought a long and dangerous campaign against the mightiest army of that time, and they sought more than the

right to merely compromise and get by. If that were the goal, they could simply have thrown up their hands and relegated themselves to doing what they could under Greek rule until such time as the situation would improve. However, they’d risked everything and fought the war to earn the right to proudly serve Hashem in the best way — free from Hellenistic rule and influence.

When the time finally came to do so in the precious *Beis Hamikdash* (Holy Temple) once again, they were determined to make good on their pledge. Come what may, only the best would suffice in their service of Hashem. As a demonstration of His approval, Hashem reciprocated with a miracle, allowing the pure oil to last and their ideals to remain uncompromised. The lesson of Chanukah is clear: We must strive for excellence in all we do.

I look forward to getting to know you, and I encourage you to reach out with your ideas, thoughts and nostalgic memories, as we seek nothing short of excellence for our precious institution. Together, we can achieve our goals!

Chanukah sameach,

Rabbi Yisroel Weiner
MHA/FYOS head of school
isroel.weiner@mhafyos.org



The *Gemara* in Tractate *Taanis*, *daf* (page) 7a, states:

הרבה למדתי מרבותי ומחבירי יותר מרבותי,
ומתלמידי יותר מכולן

This translates as, "I have learned a lot from my teachers, even more from my friends, and most of all from my students."

What is meant by "most of all from my students"? We can all agree that we learned a lot from our teachers, and we have possibly learned even more from our friends. But have *rabbeim* (rabbis) and teachers really learned the most from those whom they taught?

The *Gemara* in *Avodah Zarah*, *daf* 35b, explains the *pasuk* (verse) in *Shir HaShirim* (Song of Songs 3:1), which says: "Like poured oil is your name, therefore maidens have loved you," to mean that just as a beautiful aroma pours out when a jug of fragrant oil is opened, so too are Hashem's name and reputation spread. When a good *rebbe* or teacher puts forth the effort, care, patience and nurturing needed to successfully teach their *talmidim* (students), their pleasant fragrance — their reputation, teaching style and concern — is spread.

The letters in the Hebrew word for maiden, **עלמות** can, with different *nekudos* (Hebrew vowels), also spell the word for "hidden." Added into the verse above, it changes the meaning to "hidden things will love you." When a teacher puts forth all the effort, sincerity, care and devotion it takes to properly and lovingly teach, Hashem reveals hidden *meforshim* (commentaries) and ideas to them so they can do their jobs more effectively and their students will love them even more.

However, the medieval commentaries of *Tosafos* have a different understanding of "hidden things

will love you." It is commonplace for one who needs advice to seek guidance and *daas Torah* (authoritative Torah wisdom) from a trusted *rav* (rabbi). In the course of asking for advice, the person reveals to their *rav* certain hidden things — their innermost thoughts and fears and circumstances that are not public knowledge. The *rav* is then able to counsel and advise properly.

Similarly, when a teacher makes themselves available to their students in the course of teaching, the students become comfortable enough to open up to the teacher. When students share their "hidden things," there is greater potential for the teacher to make an indelible impact. The stated job of a teacher is to convey facts, figures, ideas and knowledge; their "hidden" job is to mentor students in such a way that they will always walk *al derech Hashem* — on the path of Hashem — throughout their lives.

It brings great pride and joy to our family that our dear son Rabbi Yisroel Weiner now serves as head of school at my alma mater! May Hashem give you and your *aishes chayil* (woman of valor) **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) the ability, energy, knowledge, understanding, love, health and perseverance to provide leadership that enables the entire MHA/FYOS to accomplish and achieve. With the help of your school *rabbeim*, teachers, lay leaders, parents and donors, may you be *zoche* (merit) to spread your fragrant oil — your name, your reputation, your love of teaching — to inspire and encourage your students. May all of the hidden *meforshim*, suggestions and opinions blossom and become clear, so that the MHA/FYOS can continue to grow, serve as a *makom Torah* (place of Torah), maintain unparalleled general studies, and provide love and care to each and every student.

9

D'VAR TORAH

Devorah (Adler) Weiner (YOS '82)

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my *rabbeim* and teachers, as well as the lay leadership and supporters of the Goldie Margolin School for Girls (which I attended from 1978 through 1982), for all of their time, love, care, concern and help. Their fragrant aroma poured forth and revealed to me so much Torah, secular knowledge and a love of Hashem, Torah and *mitzvos*. Your ability to care and teach helped in making me who I am and, with G-d's help, to have children who, along with their spouses and children, are all *yirei shamayaim* (G-d fearing Jews).

Devorah (Adler) Weiner (YOS '82) works as a bio safety coordinator in the environmental health and safety department at Brown University in Providence, Rhode Island, where she lives with her husband, Mordechai. They have five sons and 17

*grandchildren. Very proud of each of them, she has a deep feeling of love and nostalgia knowing that her oldest son, Rabbi Yisroel Weiner, is head of school at the MHA/FYOS, which both she and daughter-in-law **Suri (Samberg) Weiner** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) attended. Even after living in the north for 40 years, Weiner still considers herself a "Southerner at heart." She takes great pride in telling stories about her years at the YOS, which provided the foundation for the person she is today.*



We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at alumni@mhafyos.org. Here are some of the responses we received to [Issue No. 24](#).

The last issue of the newsletter brought back a lot of very fond memories for me. Thank you! I didn't graduate from the Academy because my family moved to Israel when I was in eighth grade, but my father, Rabbi Joseph Nayowitz, z'l, was an early principal of the school.

You asked about the identity of the first grade students featured in the cover photo (reprinted below). The girl in the back-right corner looks like Linda (Epstein) Singer, and I believe the boy in front of **Lester Lit** (MHA '57, center) is **Samuel "Brooksie" Gold** (MHA '57). Those boys were a few years ahead of me but spent a lot of time at my house for bar mitzvah lessons with my father. That was the school's first graduating class, and by eighth grade it had trickled down to three: Lester, Brooksie and **Rabbi Nachum (Herbert) Lansky** (MHA '57).

-Rivki (Nayowitz) Aderet



I am deeply grateful for the tremendous honor you gave to me — and, consequently, to my parents, MHA cofounders Rabbi Alfred and Rebbetzin Jeannette Fruchter, z'l — in this issue. I especially appreciate that you printed the historic photographs, two of which include me.

-Debbie (Fruchter) Robinson

Along with three other boys from Jacksonville, Florida, I attended the MHA right after my 1965 bar mitzvah on a Hebrew scholarship from my synagogue. What an experience! I lived across the street from Baron Hirsch with a rabbi and his family. My memories from 1965-66 are so clear. To this day, I still talk about my time in Memphis.

I really enjoyed looking through the latest edition of the newsletter. I saw several names that looked familiar to me, including **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70) and **Abbe (Seiger) Kaplan** (MHA '71).

-Jan Starr (MHA '66)

Thank you so much for the memories! I was entranced by all the great pictures and articles. Nice job!

-Rabbi Joel Yormark (MHA '66)

I waited until Shabbos to read the newsletter, so it would be a calm and relaxing time and I could savor every word. This issue was worth the wait — so wonderful! Thank you for all your hard work in putting it together.

-Esther (Schwartzman) Braunstein (MHA '67, YOS '70)

I really enjoy these newsletters. They are full of such warm memories. Thank you.

-Prof. Noson Yanofsky (YOS '85)

I am in much awe of what you do with the newsletters. It is really an amazing, wonderful and important part of keeping the school's graduates connected. I worked for many years on the yearbook and ad journal — collecting pictures of each student, special pages for the eighth and 12th grade graduates, student writings, administrator messages, ads and more — so I have a sense of how much work must go into this project. I am pretty sure you don't get thanked for it often enough, so I am saying, "Thank you!"

-Devorah (Adler) Weiner (YOS '82)

Baruch Hashem (thank G-d), I'm pleased to announce the publication of a second volume of compiled *shiurim* (classes) by my father, alumnus and former faculty member **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel**, z'l (MHA '65, YOS '69). "Divrei Nechemiah: Volume II" contains *shiurim* on the books of *Yehoshua*, *Shoftim* and *Shmuel* (Joshua, Judges and Samuel), as well as the transcript of a class he gave at a 1992 Torah Umesorah convention that outlined his incredible approach to *chinuch* (Jewish education). Paperback and hardcover editions are available for purchase on [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com).

-Yaakov Kibel

I question the choice to include a photo of Elvis Presley in the last issue. It's not a very flattering association with our school.

-Rabbi Yitzchok Mitnick (YOS '73)

Response from the editor and alumni chair:

Thank you for sharing your thoughts with us. We understand your concerns and appreciate the feedback.

Our decision to include the photo (see page 3) was meant not as a tribute to Elvis but rather to highlight the incredible chesed [kindness] of his neighbors, the Fruchters. It is our understanding that the Fruchter family showed great kindness to the Presleys at a time when they were quite poor, and in return, Elvis helped with household chores and played with the Fruchter children.

While Elvis is not someone we wish to hold up as an example of Torah values, he did contribute toward the construction of the MHA building and supported other Memphis Jewish organizations. We will give careful consideration to the photos we choose to include in future issues.

Corrections:

In our last issue, we inadvertently made a couple of omissions:

- In the dedication, we left off the name of departed alumnus **Sheldon Skopp** (MHA '62).
- In "Where are they now," we neglected to include the photo provided by **Sherry (Goldman) Luber** (MHA '62) of her beautiful family. The photo is shown below.

We thank the Skopp and Luber families for bringing these errors to our attention, and we take full responsibility for the omissions.



TRIVIA ANSWERS

1957-1965

Thanks to everyone who sent in responses to the trivia questions featured in our [24th issue](#).

The winner of our trivia contest from that issue is Rivki (Nayowitz) Aderet.

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

Below are the correct answers to the trivia questions from Issue 24. How many did you know?

1. What was the name of the MHA school bus driver?
ANSWER: Sam.
2. What game was regularly played on the MHA school bus?
ANSWER: Chess.
3. What game was regularly played at recess during this era?
ANSWER: Kickball. (Some things never change.)
4. Which student played the Wicked Witch of the West in the school production of "The Wizard of Oz"?
ANSWER: **Ira Machefsky** (MHA '61). Legend has it that, during his death scene, he jumped off the stage (in the Belz Auditorium at Baron Hirsch on Vollentine) and into the audience — providing a scary moment for spectators.
5. Which student from this era was the son of someone in the liquor business?
ANSWER: **Teddy Petrovsky** (MHA '61).
6. What kind of special booth did the MHA ladies run at the Memphis Cotton Carnival each year?
ANSWER: They sold kosher food.
7. What was the job of Miss Verna Vickery, who joined the MHA staff in 1952?
ANSWER: She was the school's first general studies principal.

8. An MHA special event took place for the first time in 1952, and it remains a staple on our school calendar to this day. What is this annual event?

ANSWER: *Chag Ha'Chumash*, when the students receive their first copy of the Five Books of Moses to study.

9. Which two original staff members of the MHA worked for years for no pay?

ANSWER: Rabbi Alfred Fruchter, z'l, and Rav Nota Greenblatt, z'l.

10. In the early 1950s, there was a strong movement away from the after-school model of American Jewish education in favor of a new model that was represented by the MHA. What was this new model called?

ANSWER: Hebrew all-day school (later shortened to Hebrew day school).

11. What show, pictured below, did the students perform in 1957?

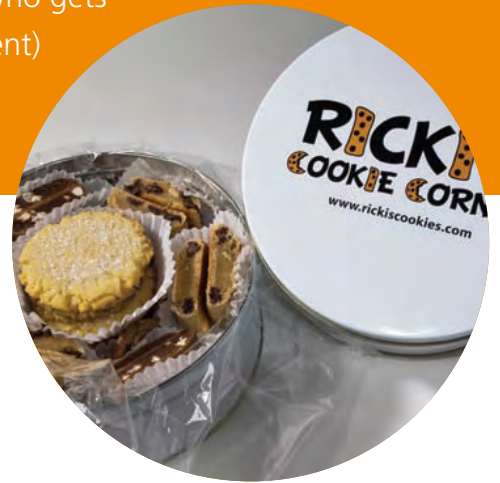
ANSWER: "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs."



TRIVIA QUESTIONS 1981-1985

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

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



1. Who taught advanced biology in the high school in 1984?
2. At the 1983 Purim shpiel, the GMSG students dressed up as teachers in the school. Which faculty member did **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84, pictured here) dress as (see photo on page 39)?
3. In that Purim shpiel, who did **Dawn (Pries) Smith** (MHA '80, YOS '84) dress as?
4. Which longtime MHA staff member celebrated her 30th anniversary at the school in 1983?
5. Which MHA sixth grader won the 1981 citywide read-a-thon benefiting a multiple sclerosis charity?
6. Which two MHA seventh graders won the Memphis and Shelby County Science and Energy Fair in 1981?
7. What was Rabbi Herbert Russ known for doing when he passed students in the hall?



8. In the 1980s, the MHA participated in a program for schools that was sponsored by the Memphis Arts Council. What was the name of this program, and what was it about?
9. The MHA took first prize among local schools in the Memphis in May presentation competition in 1983. What country was honored that year?
10. Who coached the MHA boys' basketball team in 1984?

THANK YOU

We express our deepest appreciation to all those who gave of their time to help us publish this issue. First, thank you to the staff at the MHA/FYOS, most especially **Francie Schneider** (MHA '68, YOS '72), **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99), Erica Stoltz, Amanda Davidson and Laura Timmons. 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 **Ira Machefsky** (MHA '61), **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84), **Lauren Fineberg** (YOS '84), **Noson Yanofsky** (YOS '85), **Asher Wolmark** (YOS '85), **Howard Pries** (MHA '82), **Lauren (Chafetz) Roth** (MHA '84, YOS '88) and Max Casada.



ENGAGEMENTS/ WEDDINGS:

Mazel tov to:

David and **Judy (Baum) Green** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, on the occasion of their son Yakov's Sept. 14 wedding to Noah Elsner in Moshav Ora, Israel. The newlyweds live in Jerusalem.

Jill and **Aaron Katz** (MHA '78, YOS '82) on the Nov. 6 marriage of their son Josh to Isabelle Davis.

Bob and **Tami (Vogel) Eiseman** (MHA '79) of Memphis on the engagement of their son Monte to Baylee Less. They are planning a Dec. 30, 2023, wedding in Memphis, which is where the couple plans to reside.

Tova Mirvis (MHA '86, YOS '90) on the engagement of her son Eitan Galper to Shana Lowenstein. The couple is planning a summer wedding in Maryland. Mazel tov also to grandparents David and **Lynnie (Katz) Mirvis** (MHA '62) of Memphis.

Shmuel Kaplan and **Chani Aviner** (MHA '88) of Moshav Massuot Yitzhak, Israel, on the Oct. 25

marriage of her daughter Tzlil to Noam Kadmon. The wedding took place on the Moshav, which is also where the newlyweds are living.

BIRTHS:

Mazel tov to:

Rabbi Sholom and **Elaine (Goldstein) Strajcher** (MHA '61) of Har Nof, Israel, on the recent arrival of two great-grandsons in Jerusalem: Akiva, born to Shanshan and David Weinberg, and Yehuda, born to Menachem and Shira Strajcher.

Teri and **Larry Graber** (MHA '71, YOS '75) of Memphis on the Oct. 10 birth of granddaughter Lola Rose to Jessica and Joel Graber of Atlanta, Georgia. Mazel tov also to big sister Marlowe.

Bart (YOS '77) and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis on the birth of three grandchildren. On Oct. 4, Barr and **Elana (Ehrenkranz) Solnik** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) of Tel Aviv, Israel, welcomed son Shiloh Eitan, making Noa a big sister. On Sept. 19, Chaya Miriam and

Yitzy Ehrenkranz (MHA '06) of Jerusalem, Israel, celebrated the arrival of son Yehuda. Mazel tov to older brothers Dov, Ezra and Shlomo. Nov. 6 marked the birth of baby girl Racheli Golda to Yitzhak and **Shifra (Ehrenkranz) Barer** (MHA '10) of Columbus, Ohio. Mazel tov to siblings Yosef Yehuda and Faiga Leah.

Avi and **Dawn (Posner) Goldstein** (MHA '77, YOS '81) of Far Rockaway, New York, on the Oct. 21 birth of grandson Ezra Yosef. Mazel tov to parents Shayna and Akiva Friedman and big sister Rus, also of Far Rockaway.

Rena and **Ephraim Kutner** (MHA '85) of Lawrence, New York, on the Oct. 26 arrival of granddaughter Naama Sasha. Mazel tov to parents Talia and Momo Kutner of Far Rockaway, New York, and great-grandparents **Alan** (MHA '62) and **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68), now also living in Lawrence.

Jessica and **Brian Wender** (MHA '96) of Scarsdale, New York, who on Nov. 1 welcomed a son. Mazel tov also to grandparents Sally and **Mark Wender** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Memphis.

Alex and **Naomi (Samberg) Vainer** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) of Brooklyn, New York, on the Dec. 4 birth of daughter Malka. Mazel tov also to big brothers Yehuda, Yosef Chaim and Meir Eliyahu and to grandparents (and former MHA faculty members) Cantor Aryeh and Adina Samberg of Memphis.

BNEI/BNOT MITZVAH: Mazel tov to:

Elaine and **Irvin Skopp** (MHA '69) of Memphis and Alan and **Harvis (Ellman) Gerber** (YOS '70) of Wesley Chapel, Florida, on their grandsons Max and Rex becoming bnei mitzvah Nov. 25. Mazel tov to parents Shira Skopp Levy and Alan Levy of Memphis.

Magda and **Ben Goldstein** (MHA '91, FYOS '95) of Elazar, Israel, on celebrating their son David's bar mitzvah at the Kotel in Jerusalem Nov. 24. Mazel tov also to grandfather **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64) of Memphis.

Talia and **Ethan Eisen** (MHA '96) of Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel, on the Oct. 13 celebration of the bat mitzvah of their daughter Naama.

Aviva and **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) of Memphis on the Dec. 17 bat mitzvah of their daughter Dahlia, an MHA sixth grader. Mazel tov also to grandparents Debbie and **Hugh (Freiden) Gordon** (MHA '72, YOS '76), also of Memphis.

Yudi and **Roni (Epstein) Berkovits** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) of

Chicago on their daughter Ruchie becoming a bat mitzvah Oct. 23. Mazel tov also to grandparents Eileen Segal and **Sam Epstein** (YOS '71) of Memphis.

Hilly and **Rabbi Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04 and Judaic studies faculty member) of Memphis on celebrating the Nov. 27 bat mitzvah of their daughter Avigayil, an MHA sixth grader.

MAZEL TOV!

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THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1981-1985

Where are they now?

'77
'81

Pace Cooper (MHA '77, YOS '81) and his wife Aileen live in Memphis. They are the parents of six alumni: **Jeremy** (MHA '08, FYOS '12), **Dylan** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Ethan** (MHA '09, FYOS '13), **Elan** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Serena** (MHA '18, FYOS '22) and **Yael** (MHA '18, FYOS '22). Their four sons are married, their twin daughters are studying in Israel on a gap year, and they became grandparents last year. He works in developing and managing hotels.

"I loved so many things about the Academy/Yeshiva," Cooper said. "Here is one memory I'll share: As a first grader, I brought MHA cook Georgia Thomas home with me on the bus so she could attend my birthday party! We had pony rides and played Nerf ball, and she enjoyed some cake. When I eventually married Aileen and moved back to Memphis, Georgia had just retired from the MHA; we hired her to come cook with us every week for the rest of her life. Her home cooking was even better than her school cooking."

Cooper had several favorite teachers from his days at the MHA/YOS. "Mr. Jack Baxter inspired me to think broadly and to love reading and writing — enough that I became an English major in college. **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l, was my ninth grade *rebbe*. He knew kids and related to kids, and it was easy to spend time with him and be inspired by his family in and outside of school. The lineup of Rabbi Kibel for ninth grade, Rabbi Zvi Belsky for 10th grade, Rabbi Hillel Belsky for 11th grade and Rabbi Meir Belsky, z'l, for 12th grade was a pretty intense Torah indoctrination! If only I had focused more on what was in front of me, I'd know so much more than I do now. But I appreciated their passion and consistent message of love for learning.

"The school is one of our community's most precious resources and makes a difference in creating a Jewish future," Cooper said. "I spend a lot of time raising money for the MHA/FYOS to ensure its success. Rather than always chasing everyone to give, I would love for alumni to seek me out to say they want to give to their alma mater. If you want to help, please reach out. Many thanks!"

William Scheer (YOS '82), originally from Savannah, Georgia, now lives in Charleston, South Carolina. After retiring from a 21-year career in the U.S. Navy as a military police officer, Scheer is now a civil service employee for Joint Base Charleston, where he serves as an operations

'82

20

THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1981-1985

Where are they now?

officer. He is a proud father of four, with two grown children from his first marriage and a 12-year-old and a 15-year old with his wife, Sophia.

"I am so grateful for my time at the YOS," Scheer said, "They were some of the most amazing memories and life experiences, which truly molded who I am as a man and a Torah Jew. The Yeshiva of the South was and is a very special place. The lessons I learned years ago regularly pay dividends in my life today.

"The selfless devotion of the teachers, rabbis and entire staff to not only educate but also prepare young men and women for the challenges of living in a secular society — coupled with the unwavering commitment, dedication and hospitality of the Memphis Jewish community — create a unique, safe and loving environment that is second to none. It is to be cherished and cared for with deliberate intention, so generations of kids now and in the future can benefit from the total yeshiva experience. Thank you, Memphis!"

Scheer's memories from the YOS include life in the boys' dorm, playing basketball at the JCC, spending Shabbos with wonderful families in the Memphis community and lively Purim celebrations at the Belskys' home. His favorite teacher was Mr. Jack Baxter. "I enjoyed the way he taught. He was more concerned with the quality of work, instead of quantity," Scheer said. "He always gave students the freedom to explore new ideas and challenged us to develop them. He believed effective communication is a benchmark skill needed in life; years later, I came to understand how true that is!"

He misses his classmates and often wonders what they're doing these days. He tries to keep up on social media and would love to reconnect with more alumni in the future.

'84

Lauren Fineberg (YOS '84) lives in Jerusalem, Israel. She is the mother of three grown children and has three grandchildren. She serves as the floor manager at [Pantry Packers](#), a charity that distributes food to poor families in Israel.

She invites friends and alumni visiting Jerusalem to stop by Pantry Packers and assist the organization in packing food staples for those in need.



Fineberg with her three grandchildren

'81

'84

Laurie Wieder (MHA '81, YOS '84) is now living in New York City, after spending a number of years in London. She is the mother of four children.

"The MHA and Memphis community are one of a kind! There's always a Memphis connection, no matter where I go," Wieder said. "I love following the school on social media and seeing you grow from strength to strength."

Her favorite school memory is of the 1983 Purim shpiel, in which she and her high school friends dressed up as their teachers. She also remembers her class sneaking off to the lounge in the trailer to watch the highly anticipated wedding of characters Luke and Laura on the TV soap opera "General Hospital" — until Rabbi Zvi Belsky busted them! Her favorite teacher was **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l.



Wieder family

"Thankfully I keep in touch with a lot of my schoolmates," Wieder said. "Reminiscing never gets old! I hope everyone is doing well."

People can connect with her on Instagram @ldw2305.



Wolmark family

Asher Wolmark (YOS '85) lives in Chicago, Illinois, where he works as CEO of Kingsbury Capital, an investment management firm. He has six children (two of whom are married) and two grandchildren.

'85

"You can take the boy out of Memphis, but you can't take Memphis out of the boy," Wolmark said. "I have so many wonderful and beautiful memories of growing up in Memphis and, more importantly, in the Academy/Yeshiva. My upbringing is woven into my everyday life, and for that I am eternally grateful. My graduating class was small, and I remain in touch with just about everyone."

'85

Noson Yanofsky (YOS '85), a native of Brooklyn, New York, attended our high school for three years. He currently resides in the Flatbush neighborhood of Brooklyn and is a professor of computer and

22

THE MHA/YOS CLASSES OF 1981-1985

Where are they now?

information science at Brooklyn College. He is the author of three books. Yanofsky and his wife have four children.

"I feel like I never left Memphis," he said. "I met my three best friends — **Reb Michoel (David) Coleman** (YOS '84), **Reb Issar (Edward) Fuchs** (YOS '75) and **Reb Reuven (Ron) Topper** (MHA '72) — in Memphis and am still in touch with them on a daily basis." He fondly remembers "the fun, the laughter, the learning and the friendships" from his days at the YOS.

Among his favorite teachers were Rabbi Zvi Belsky, **Rabbi Josh Yarmush** (YOS '71), **Rabbi Nechemiah (Harry) Kibel** (MHA '65, YOS '69), z'l, Mr. Jack Baxter and Mrs. Abby Johnson.

"I would like to thank the entire Memphis community for three wonderful years," Yanofsky said. "Everyone was so warm and welcoming."

He can be reached at noson.yanofsky@gmail.com.



Noson Yanofsky and his wife,
Shayna Leah



Yanofsky family



Yanofsky was in Memphis in 2009 and paid a visit to Meir and Eva Rosenberg, z'l, who were fondly known to generations of YOS dormers as Uncle Meir and Aunt Eva. "In my day, they were the center of the Yeshiva," Yanofsky said.



Yanofsky visited Rabbi Meir and Mrs. Regina Belsky, z'l, during the summer of 2012. "Look at the simcha in their faces when I brought them to my wife," Yanofsky said.

'83

Rochel (Goldfein) Rosenberg (MHA '83) and her husband live in Brooklyn, New York. They are the parents of nine children (four of whom are married); their youngest, a 17-year-old daughter, has Down Syndrome. They are also blessed with many grandchildren. She has worked for 30 years as a second grade general studies teacher in Brooklyn yeshivas.

"I have wonderful memories of the MHA's many star rabbis and teachers," Rosenberg said. "Of course, my father [Rabbi Yaacov Goldfein, z'l] was one of them. When I started teaching, he enjoyed giving me many tips and ideas for my own classroom.

"Mrs. Joyce Casada was another amazing educator. She really set the bar high and had confidence that we could reach it. We learned an incredible amount in her class, and of course the importance of 'putting our money where our mouth is.'"



Two of Rosenberg's grandchildren: Ahuva, named for her great-grandmother, Mrs. Sharon Goldfein, z'l; and Yaakov, named for his great-grandfather, Rabbi Yaacov Goldfein, z'l.

She hopes friends and classmates will reach out to her at mamarochel9@gmail.com.

Chaya (Russ) Feigenbaum (MHA '85) lives in Dallas, Texas, with her husband, who serves as a synagogue rabbi; they have seven children, four of whom are married. Following in the footsteps of her father, former MHA dean Rabbi Herbert Russ, she pursued a career in Jewish education. She works as a kindergarten Judaic studies teacher and directs LINKS, an after-school program for Jewish boys with learning differences who are unable to attend Jewish day schools.

'85

She fondly remembers Mrs. Joyce Casada giving her MHA class math assignments and instructing them, "Get your pencils smokin' like a house on fire!"

Want to connect with other MHA/FYOS alumni?

JOIN US ON FACEBOOK! 

SPOTLIGHT FEATURE

Mrs. Joyce Casada

A firm and caring master teacher



In July 2022, Mrs. Joyce Casada — a member of the MHA faculty from 1967 to 1992 — celebrated her 90th birthday. Her son Max reached out to the school in advance of the occasion to see if former students might be willing to send good wishes to his mother in honor of her milestone birthday.

"I'm so honored and humbled that these students took time from their busy lives to write a note to a teacher they had 30 or 40 years ago," Mrs. Casada said. "I was completely blown away and am thankful they remember the good parts of being in my class."

Born to be a teacher

Joyce (Roy) Casada grew up in a small farming town in southwest Missouri, the oldest of seven children. She and her siblings (two of whom also became educators) walked three miles to school every day.



Mrs. Casada (with her great-grandson) blowing out the candles on her 90th birthday cake



Joyce (Roy) Casada as a college student at Southwest Missouri State University.

The alumni response was overwhelming. Dozens of people who benefitted from Mrs. Casada's quarter-century of service at the MHA wrote heartfelt letters filled with memories and gratitude for her lasting impact on their lives. (A few also requested forgiveness for their classroom misbehavior.) The letters, coupled with photos of the students from their MHA days and today, were lovingly compiled into a book and presented to Mrs. Casada at her 90th birthday party. It's a gift she cherishes.

"I always knew I was going to be a teacher," she said. "I love working with kids and often took care of my younger siblings. I taught my younger sister to read. We played school a lot in my family, and I was always the teacher because I was the oldest. It was meant to be."

After earning a degree, her first professional teaching job was in a one-room schoolhouse for grades 1-8. When her husband, Richard Casada (to whom she was married for 51 years), got a

Memphis-based job with one of the major railroads, they left Missouri and relocated. She began teaching at South Park Elementary, a Memphis public school.



Richard and Joyce Casada (pictured here in 1986) were married for 51 years.

Mrs. Casada spent a few years away from the classroom while Max and daughter Lynn were little. When Lynn was about to start first grade, Mrs. Casada was ready to resume teaching and sought a part-time position. A friend told her the Memphis Hebrew Academy was looking for a sixth grade teacher.

"Because of the dual curriculum at the Academy, I only had to teach general studies half a day," she said. "The schedule was perfect for me. I could get my children off to school in the mornings and be home when they needed me."

She interviewed with Principal Phyllis Wahl, z'l, and got the job. What began as a short stint to accommodate Mrs. Casada's busy family life ultimately turned into a 25-year tenure at the MHA and a lasting legacy in the history of our school and the lives of many alumni.

A quarter-century of motivating MHA students

Over the course of her tenure, Mrs. Casada — "Like Canada but with an s," she told students on the first day of each school year — taught science, math and social studies to MHA sixth, seventh and eighth graders. "I taught whatever they needed me to teach," she said. "After my earlier experiences having all the grades in one room and students bringing knives to school, the Hebrew Academy was nothing I couldn't handle! My favorite subject to teach was math, because I loved seeing the 'light bulb' come on for students when they finally grasped a concept."



Mrs. Casada teaching seventh grade math in 1983.

"Working at the Hebrew Academy was such a pleasure. I thoroughly enjoyed the experience and learned so much. If I hadn't, I would have left! I loved and respected the people I worked with and the students I taught."

Based on the birthday letters Mrs. Casada received, the feelings were certainly mutual.

"What a proper, dignified and kind teacher Mrs. Casada was," said **Devora (Kipper) Gradon** (MHA '77, YOS '81). "She was the ultimate professional."

"I recall Mrs. Casada's warmth and exemplary skills as a teacher," said **Jesse Schwartzman** (MHA '72). "She expanded our horizons and was, quite simply, a great teacher."



Mrs. Casada (second from right) was faculty advisor to the school's safety patrol in 1984 (pictured, from left): **Chaya (Russ) Feigenbaum** (MHA '85), Adina Belsky, **Ruth Samuels** (MHA '86, YOS '90), **Sorah (Goldfein) Goldstein** (MHA '85), **Ellen (Wolff) Silverman** (MHA '85, YOS '89) and Mrs. Miriam Cheruff, z'l.

"Mrs. Casada was the quintessential educator," said **Judy (Yormark) Fruchthandler** (MHA '75, YOS '79). "She was firm but caring and wanted everyone to do their best. Much of what I learned from her about the countries of the world and their capitals has remained with me for many, many years."

"I have vivid and wonderful memories of Mrs. Casada teaching us math and social studies," said **Abbe (Seiger) Kaplan** (MHA '71). "She was very kind but also no-nonsense. Her classroom was well organized, positive and happy. Mrs. Casada was tremendously encouraging, and I always had a sense that she loved her profession and being our teacher. She seemed to revel in the accomplishments she inspired in her students. I am grateful for the foundational love of learning she instilled in me." "Mrs. Casada was a superb teacher and a wonderful

person," said **Mashie (Marsha Greenblatt) Langsam** (MHA '73, YOS '77). "She made an impact on me on many fronts, but most importantly, on how one should be an honest and upstanding person. Thank you, Mrs. Casada, for all the energy you poured into your students in such a nice and unassuming fashion."



Mrs. Casada handing out awards to elementary school participants in the St. Jude Math-A-Thon in 1989.

"Mrs. Casada opened my eyes to the wonders of math," said **Victor Shine** (MHA '79, YOS '83). "She was a no-nonsense teacher with a deep respect for her students. She helped me learn to believe in myself and to gain a strong foundation in math, which I appreciate to this day."

"Because of Mrs. Casada, I enjoy math immensely," said **Sorah (Goldfein) Goldstein** (MHA '85). "I use it all the time in my everyday life, including cooking in my kitchen and fixing things around the house. I can, thank G-d, still recite the first 30 prime numbers! I've had coworkers over the years who knew to come to me when they needed to figure out percentages or other math problems. I feel privileged to have been Mrs. Casada's student; not everyone is lucky enough to receive such a solid educational foundation from a master teacher."

Memorable words of wisdom

Many of the alumni letters to Mrs. Casada referenced her trademark sayings. "I can hear her unforgettable mantras running through my head like it was yesterday," said **Lisa (Yormark) Neuman** (MHA '79, YOS '83). "Mrs. Casada clearly left her mark on my life and my way of thinking."

Students' favorite Casada-isms include:

- "I'm from Missouri, so you have to 'show me.'"
- "Get working like a house on fire!"
- "You're up a creek without a paddle!"
- "Never let grass grow under your feet."
- "Put your money where your mouth is."
- "Strike while the iron is hot."
- "Good, better, best. Never let it rest, till your good is better and your better is best."

"Every day, I apply the phrases Mrs. Casada taught us, and that is why I am successful today," said **Lauren Feinberg** (YOS '84).

Moving on

In 1992, Mrs. Casada retired from teaching, having educated and inspired hundreds of students along the way. "It was my honor to speak of her value to the school and its students when she retired," said Dr. Jerry Kutliroff, former dean of the MHA. "Mrs. Casada was a master teacher and a pillar of the school who had everyone's respect."

In retirement, Mrs. Casada and her husband enjoyed traveling together and spending time with family until his passing in 2007. (She still has the letter of condolence she received from former student **Steve Graber** (MHA '70, YOS '74), who saw the obituary in the newspaper.)



Mrs. Casada (standing, second from left) with her six siblings and their mother (center) at a family reunion in 1995.

Two years ago, Mrs. Casada moved with her beloved shelter cat, Binks, into a lovely East Memphis assisted living facility, where she gets around in a motorized scooter due to arthritis. She's made wonderful friends there and enjoys reading and playing mah jongg, bridge and other card games. She relishes opportunities to see her two children, three grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, such as at her milestone birthday celebration.

During a recent interview with our editor, **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), Mrs. Casada demonstrated that she is as sharp as ever at age 90 — recalling the names of students and colleagues she hasn't seen in decades.



Editor **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) with Mrs. Casada (holding the binder of birthday letters from her students) in December 2022.

"The beautiful book of letters and photos helps keep my memories from the Hebrew Academy fresh," she said. "I look at it often, and everything comes flooding back.

"If even half of the things my students said about me are true, I'll feel content and wonderfully blessed."



Mrs. Casada with Binks in 2020.



Mrs. Casada (seated, second from right) surrounded by three of her siblings and her children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren at her 90th birthday party in July 2022.

MHA/FYOS dedicates the Irby and Bernice Cooper Beit Midrash

On Sunday, Sept. 11, students, alumni and friends gathered in the beautifully renovated Torah study and prayer hall in the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys for a community-wide ceremony to formally dedicate the space as the Irby and Bernice Cooper Beit Midrash.

The dedication marked the culmination of a multiyear capital improvements campaign — led by **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and contractor **Lee Baum** (MHA '74) — to enhance areas of the school's campus most in need of updating. As we shared in our [ninth issue](#), the *beit midrash* underwent a complete renovation and has been in full use since the start of the 2017-18 school year; however, delays in the arrival of some custom-made furnishings, followed by the health and safety concerns sparked by the COVID-19 pandemic, paused the dedication plans multiple times.

At long last, the ceremony held this fall was an inspiring tribute to the vibrancy of Torah study at our school, as well as an opportunity to recognize the Cooper and Weinstein families for their longstanding generous support of this project.

Two of Irby and Bernice Cooper's grandchildren, alumni **Jeremy Cooper** (MHA '08, FYOS '12) and **Rabbi Dov Emerson** (MHA '91), spoke publicly at the dedication ceremony.

"It's befitting that the *makom Torah* (central place for Torah) be the nicest, most inviting space in the building for contemplating the wonders of Hashem," Jeremy Cooper said. "I see how engaged every single high schooler is in their learning here, and my grandparents would be beaming with joy

at all the Torah study that is coming out of this *beit midrash*."



Jeremy Cooper (MHA '08, FYOS '12) speaking at the dedication ceremony

"This is one of the most important rooms in Memphis," Rabbi Emerson said. "It's the nerve center of our collective and individual Jewish experience — the place where all are invited to sit and learn, to grow, and to develop a deeper relationship with Hashem. It's a place that shows people, young and old and at all levels, what the paradigm of Jewish growth is and what a Jew can become through learning Torah."

Rabbi Emerson, a noted Jewish educator and administrator at Yeshiva University's High School for Boys in New York City, shared the significance of the MHA/FYOS *beit midrash* in his own life. "This is where I was first introduced to the concepts of night *seder* (evening Torah study) and *bekius* (breadth of knowledge), learning in a *chabura* (study group) with Rabbi Uri Silver. It's where I was first shown

that I could learn independently in Rabbi Ayson Englander's *shiur* (class) in high school — a *shiur* that was so impactful that his approach to teaching Gemara is how I model my own teaching to this day. It's where we listened to Rabbi Yonason Gersten give a *mussar* (ethics and conduct) schmooze and learned what Jewish self-fulfillment looks like.

"It's where we all watched a *gadol hador* (giant of the generation) in Rav Nota Greenblatt, z'l, walk in and learn and be available to answer any question, and always with a smile. It's where we would run to the shelves to find the volumes of *Rivevos Efraim* and feel pride that we, too, in Memphis had someone like Rav Efraim Greenblatt, z'l, who had written *seforim* (books) enjoyed by Jews the world over. This is where it happens," Rabbi Emerson said.



Rabbi Dov Emerson (MHA '91) delivering remarks at the dedication ceremony

After the ceremony, **Rabbi Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04), a member of the FYOS Judaic studies faculty, reflected on his personal and professional connection to this bright and sacred space.

"There is a lot of tradition and 'character' in our *beit midrash*," he said. "When I learned here as a student, I felt part of an historical chain of people who toiled in learning these *seforim*, values and ideals. Now that the space has been impeccably renovated, we can all take a certain amount of pride in it. It makes an impression on people when they see our collection of beautiful new *seforim* and understand that this is the crown jewel of our campus, where we take scholarship seriously."

The recent renovation marks the first enhancements to the space since repairs were made after an electrical fire damaged the YOS wing in 1991. Several attendees of the 2022 dedication ceremony reminisced about the last time the *beit midrash* was unavailable due to construction three decades ago. "The fire burned our term papers," recalled **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92), who was in middle school at the time of the incident.

"May this *beit midrash* continue to introduce the sweetness of Torah to each young person who enters it," Rabbi Emerson said, "and may all who continue to gather here be inspired by a vision of what they can truly become."

A recording of the dedication ceremony is available for viewing on the school's [Facebook page](#).

Special thanks to **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99) and MHA eighth grader Hodaya Harary for their assistance with this article.



Pace (MHA '77, YOS '81, left) and **David Cooper** (MHA '78, YOS '82) affixed mezuzahs to the doorways of the beit midrash at the conclusion of the ceremony

<i>Furnishings</i>		<i>Seforim</i>	
ARON KODESH	DEDICATED Cindy & Joe Weinstein	OTZER SEFORIM (ENTIRE LIBRARY)	\$36,000
ENTRANCE CORRIDOR	\$72,000	OTZER HA'CHOCHMA (DIGITAL LIBRARY)	\$18,000
BIMA	\$50,000	TALMUD BAVLI	\$3,600/per
MECHITZA	\$50,000	TALMUD YERUSHALMI	\$2,500/per
NER TAMID	\$36,000	MIKRAOT GEDOLOT	\$1,000/per
AMUD	\$25,000	MISHNE TORAH	\$720/per
ENGRAVED WINDOWS (4 AVAILABLE)	\$18,000/per	MISHNAH BERURAH	\$360/per
PAROCHES	DEDICATED Nina & Sandy Blockman	SETS	\$136/per
LARGE BOOKSHELVES (2 AVAILABLE)	\$7,200/per	SINGLE VOLUME	\$36/per
RABBI'S SHTENDER (4 AVAILABLE)	\$5,000/per		
SINGLE BOOKSHELVES (4 AVAILABLE)	\$3,600/per		
CHAVRUSA TABLES (20 AVAILABLE)	\$1,800/per		
CHABURAH TABLES (16 AVAILABLE)	\$2,500/per		

Additional sponsorship opportunities are available. If you'd like to dedicate any of the furnishings or seforim in the beit midrash, please contact Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky at 901-682-2400 or jessica.baum@mhafyos.org.

In loving memory of Mrs. Regina Belsky, z'l



The MHA/FYOS family mourns with profound sorrow the recent passing of Mrs. Regina Belsky, beloved wife of Rabbi Meir Belsky, z'l, and mother of Rabbi Hillel Belsky, Rabbi Zvi Belsky, **Rabbi Daniel Belsky** (MHA '64), **Rabbi Ezra Belsky** (MHA '67, YOS '71), **Gitti (Belsky) Thomas** (MHA '70, YOS '74), **Naomi (Belsky) Homnick** (MHA '74, YOS '78) and **Molly (Belsky) Cohen** (YOS '83).

In addition to teaching at our school, Rebbitzen Belsky partnered with and worked alongside her husband in establishing the Yeshiva of the South and ensuring the success of our school for many years. Rabbi and Rebbitzen Belsky will always remain an integral part of MHA/FYOS history.

We send our deepest condolences to the Belsky family. May they be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem, and may the memory of both of their beloved parents always be a blessing. Our community is eternally grateful for their indelible contributions to the MHA/FYOS.

MHA enrolls its first fourth-generation student!

This fall, the MHA celebrated a significant milestone when Ahron Katz became the first fourth-generation student to attend the school! He is the son of **Avi Katz** (MHA '11, FYOS '15), grandson of **David Katz** (MHA '88) and great-grandson of **Allan Katz** (MHA '65, YOS '69). His great-great-grandfather, Izzy Katz, was one of the founders of the MHA.

Yasher koach (kudos) to the Katz family on their inspirational legacy at our school and to the MHA for instilling a love of Jewish learning in its students for more than 70 years.



*Preschooler and fourth-generation MHA student Ahron Katz (left) is the son of **Avi Katz** (right, top), grandson of **David Katz** (right, center) and great-grandson of **Allan Katz** (right, bottom).*

Join us Jan. 14 for the annual Alumni Basketball Game

You're invited to come home to the MHA/FYOS Saturday evening, Jan. 14, 2023 (the weekend of Martin Luther King's birthday) to continue the tradition of the Irby and Bernice Cooper Alumni Basketball Game as our boys' high school varsity team takes on our graduates. The game will be held in the school's beautiful Moss Gym.

If you'd like to play in the Alumni Game, contact **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99) at jessica.baum@mhafyos.org or by phone at the school office, 901-682-2400. We also welcome those who prefer to stay on the sidelines to come and root for their fellow alumni.

Whether you're coming to play or to cheer, we are glad to assist with your arrangements. Local home hospitality can be arranged for out-of-town visitors; please contact Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at joannekahane111@gmail.com for more information.

We look forward to greeting many alumni at this fun and exciting event in January!



ALUMNI REUNITE

We continue to be impressed by the submissions to the “Alumni Reunite” section of this publication.

Any time two or more alumni get together for any reason — whether a *simcha* (celebration) or otherwise — we would love to get a photo. Our thanks to those who provided these pictures, especially those who took time during a simcha to assemble a group of MHA/FYOS alumni and friends. *Yasher koach* (kudos)!



Lisa (Yormark) Neuman (MHA '79, YOS '83, left) and **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85) posed together during a recent visit.



“We are still in touch on a daily basis,” said **Noson Yanofsky** (YOS '82, far right) of his fellow alumni (from left) **Issar Mordechai (Edward) Fuchs** (YOS '75) and **Reuven (Ron) Topper** (MHA '72).



Judy (Baum) Green (MHA '76, YOS '80, second from left) celebrated her son Yakov's Sept. 14 wedding in Israel with classmates and lifelong friends (from left) **Debbie (Brown) Nissel**, **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** and **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (all MHA '76, YOS '80).



GMSG schoolmates (from left) **Rebecca (Rubenstein) Gutman** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), **Sarah (Harris) Bauer** (FYOS '96) and **Shoshana (Stein) Safirstein** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) reunited in Memphis during Sukkot.



Classmates **Shoshana Silbermann** (left) and **Meira Braverman** (both MHA '14, FYOS '18) ran into one another while out and about in New York City in November.



During a recent visit to Israel from their home in Albany, New York, **Amanda (Mack) Gurock** (FYOS '98, far right) and her husband Josh (second from left) met up with **Evan Saltzman** (FYOS '95, far left) and his wife Rebekah (second from right).

On Nov. 6, **Rebecca Brown** (MHA '14, FYOS '18) married Avi Eisenstadter in New Jersey. Our school and community were very well represented at the simcha.



Friends of the bride (from left) **Rena Mashinsky** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Rena Osdoba** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Kayla Klazmer** (FYOS '17), **Brooke Winestone** (MHA '13, FYOS '17) and **Chaya Klein** (MHA '14, FYOS '18).



Believe it or not, this fantastic picture does not even include all of the alumni who were present!

(front row, from left) **Sandra (Loterstein) Osdoba** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Esti Samberg** (MHA '16, FYOS '20), **Sophie Wruble** (MHA '16, FYOS '20), **Shira Osdoba** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Brooke Winestone** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Rena Osdoba** (MHA '13, FYOS '17), **Deena Thomas** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Pesi Katz** (MHA '19), **Elana (Krupp) Kahane** (MHA '92); (second row, from left) **Angela Snyder** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Simone Fertel** (FYOS '09), Mrs. Anat Kampf, Mrs. Sara Plotitsa, **Rina Soffer** (FYOS '19), **Jamie (Epstein) Gibber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Rena Wogan** (MHA '18, FYOS '22), **Rachel (Winestone) Liss** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Kayla Klazmer** (FYOS '17), **Meira Braverman** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Batya Bosin** (MHA '14, FYOS '18), **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99), **Brittany (Baum) Lindenfeld** (MHA '04), **Brittany (Thomas) Prero** and her husband **Efrayim Prero**; (back row, from left) **Shelby (Winestone) Baum** (MHA '77, partially obscured), **Lee Baum** (MHA '74), **Slava Bosin** (MHA '80, YOS '84), bride **Rebecca** being kissed by her father **Joel Brown**, and **Shoshana Silbermann** (MHA '14, FYOS '18).

FLASHBACKS

1981-1985

Photographs from the past

In 1983, the students of the GMSG put on an elaborate Purim shpiel, with many dressing up as members of the faculty.



(from left) **Dawn (Pries) Smith** (MHA '80, YOS '84), **Yael (Spiegler) Weil** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85), **Holly Vitemb** (MHA '83), **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84), **Lisa (Yormark) Neuman** (MHA '79, YOS '83), **Angela Snyder** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Kim (Barger) Wilkes, z'l** (YOS '84) and **Tammy (Belsky) Sokol** (MHA '82, YOS '85).



(back row, from left) **Kim (Barger) Wilkes, z'l** (YOS '84), **Kathy (Alyesh) Dardashty** (YOS '85), **Yael (Spiegler) Weil** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Tammy (Belsky) Sokol** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Dawn (Pries) Smith** (MHA '80, YOS '84), **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84), **Angela Snyder** (MHA '82, YOS '85), **Sima (Greenblatt) Goodman** (MHA '81, YOS '85); (front row, from left) **Holly Vitemb** (MHA '83), **Julia (Barron) Steiner** (YOS '83), **Lisa (Yormark) Neuman** (MHA '79, YOS '83) and **Heftziba (Mandel) Chase**.



(from left) **Kim (Barger) Wilkes, z'l** (YOS '84), **Laurie Wieder** (MHA '81, YOS '84), **Lisa (Yormark) Neuman** (MHA '79, YOS '83), **Julia (Barron) Steiner** (YOS '83), **Randi Perlman** and **Dawn (Pries) Smith** (MHA '80, YOS '84).

"These pictures bring back memories of very fun times! If I remember correctly, we wrote the shpiel under the direction of Rav Ezra Belsky's wife. I recall pounding popcorn at her house and laughing out loud as we came up with a storyline and jokes. I also remember how pleasantly surprised we were that so many women from the community came to watch us and how much they enjoyed the performance. It gave us such pride in our school! The photos also make me sad about Kim, whose tragic passing I learned about from a past alumni newsletter." -Yael (Spieger) Weil



The MHA Bruins basketball team in 1981 (front row, from left): **Joey Loskove** (MHA '82), **Michael Kaplan** (MHA '81), **Ehud Kamin** (MHA '82), **Daniel Whitman** (MHA '82); (back row, from left) **Ira Lit** (MHA '82), **Marc Shine** (MHA '82), **Howard Pries** (MHA '82), **Jonathan Epstein** (MHA '82, YOS '86), **David Brown, z'l** (MHA '81) and **Beryl Whitman** (MHA '82).

"We were down by 20 before the game started! We could have been called 'The Bad News Jews.' Even Rashi had no comment about this team!"

-Howard Pries

"This photo reminds me that it's been over 30 years since David Brown's tragic death. He was such a good kid." -Ehud Kamin



(from left) **Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman** (MHA '84), **Anna (Fink) Kaminetzky** (MHA '84, YOS '88) and **Lauren (Chafetz) Roth** (MHA '84, YOS '88).

"I love this picture!" -**Lauren (Chafetz) Roth**

"This picture makes me smile and brings back such amazing memories of growing up in Memphis. How lucky I am to still be friends with these incredible women and to share in each other's smachot (joyous occasions)." -**Anna (Fink) Kaminetzky**

"Memphis will always have a special place in my heart. These are friendships that last a lifetime." -**Elyse (Epstein) Tuchman**



In 1984, PTA leaders Dotty Katz, z'l (left) and Pearl Katz, z'l embarked on a project called the Greening of the MHA, whose purpose was to beautify the school grounds with attractive landscaping. "We are planning for the future by planting," they said. "The beauty of our premises will be a living testimonial to all the true beauty of *Yiddishkeit* unfolding within our school." The efforts of these two women are still enjoyed and appreciated by our school and community today.

IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The 26th issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication around Pesach. In it, we will once again highlight the eighth and 12th grade graduates from the years **2001-2005**. Members of these classes will receive questionnaires by email (or regular mail) sometime in February. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

Our feature story in that issue will spotlight **Coach Robert “Jake” Jacobson**, who served as the school’s athletic director from 1996 to 2006. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Coach Jake that you would like to share, please send them to Joanne Kahane, alumni chair, at joannekahane111@gmail.com or to her attention at the school’s mailing address below.

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



Rabbi Yisroel Weiner, head of school
Deena Davidovics, president, board of trustees
Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky (MHA '99),
marketing and recruitment director