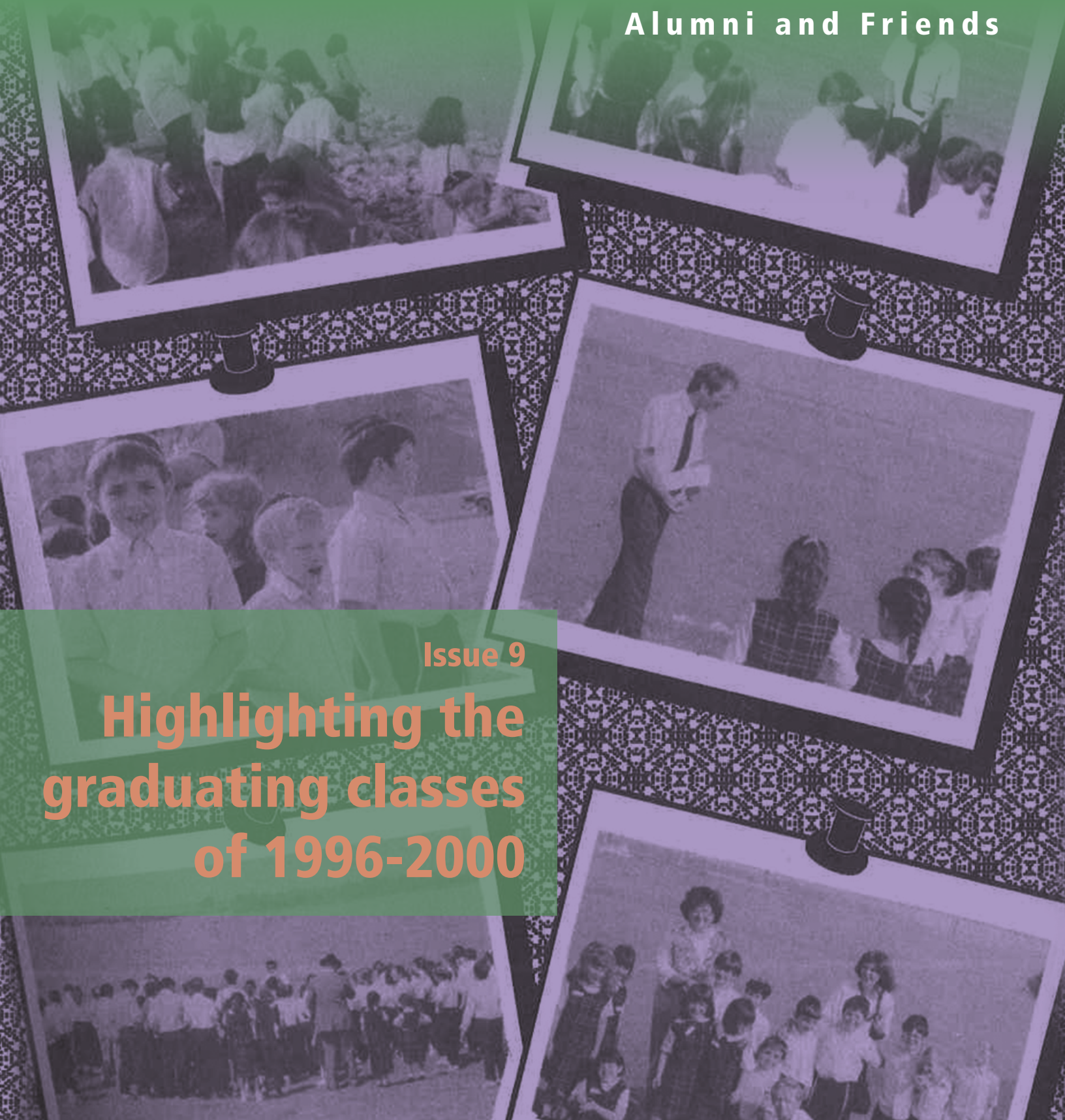


MHA/FYOS

Alumni and Friends

Issue 9

**Highlighting the
graduating classes
of 1996-2000**



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This newsletter is dedicated in loving memory of

Aaron Gold

(FYOS '97)

May his memory be a blessing.

MISSED AN ISSUE? ARCHIVES

Click on each link to enjoy past issues!

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Issue 5, Pesach 2016

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Issue 7, Chanukah 2016

Issue 8, Pesach 2017

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

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Feinstone Yeshiva of the South

COVER PHOTO: In 1992, Rabbi Yonason Gersten supervised a school-wide field trip to the banks of the Mississippi River to perform *tashlich*, the New Year ritual of symbolically casting one's sins into a body of water.





Dear MHA/FYOS alumni,

I want to first welcome the eighth and twelfth grade graduates of 2017 to the distinguished ranks of MHA/FYOS alumni. We know that

you will follow in the tradition of reflecting positively on our school and community, and we, in turn, will always be here to proudly support you. Mazel tov, and continued success in your future academic, professional and personal endeavors.

The past few months have seen a whirlwind of activity. This summer, two of our alumni—

Josh Kahane (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and **Caleb Milobsky**

(FYOS '17)—competed in the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel. (See the Alumni News feature for more information.)

My husband and I traveled to

Israel to watch our son Josh play basketball at the Maccabiah, and it was amazing to see how many MHA/FYOS alumni turned out to cheer for our two athletes. We were accompanied by at least one alumnus at every game, and at some games there were as many as 10. This was so touching to me, and I know it meant a great deal to Josh and Caleb. It proves once again that our roots run deep, even half a world away from Memphis. To those who came

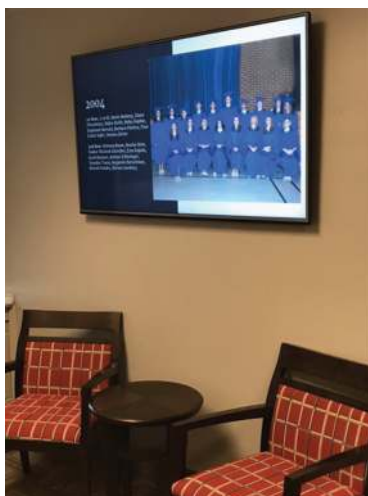
to the games to support our alumni, please know how much your presence meant.

It is always exciting to have an alumnus join the faculty of our school, and we are excited to share that **Rabbi Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) is teaching in both the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys and Goldie Margolin School for Girls this year. Dovid returned to Memphis last year for the launch of the new Memphis Community Kollel. When a teaching position opened up in our high school, Rabbi

Safier expressed interest and was, of course, accepted. He provides a wonderful example of the heights of Torah learning our alumni can achieve.

Ever since the school hallways were refurbished two summers ago and lined with oversized bulletin boards, alumni have contacted me to ask what happened to the eighth grade

class graduation pictures that used to adorn the main hallway. (Many of you will recall that Mrs. Dottie Katz, of blessed memory, meticulously kept these photos current from year to year). I assured everyone who reached out that the pictures had not been discarded and that plans for how to best display them were being discussed. I am excited to announce that the pictures, spanning from 1957 to 2017, and the names of all the graduates in each picture, were digitized this summer. As shown in the photos here, they



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MESSAGE TO ALUMNI

Joanne Kahane, alumni committee chair

are now on display as a digital picture gallery in the front office of the school. The photos rotate through the graduating classes in a constant digital slide show. So, if you graduated from the MHA eighth grade, visitors to our school are seeing you in your cap and gown every day!

When our students returned to school in August, the building was abuzz with excitement over the next phase of our capital improvements project: the total renovation of the *beis midrash* (study hall) in the CYHSB

wing. Although the work is not completely finished, the story and photos of the new *beis midrash* can be found on pages 20-21 of this issue. Pictures cannot do justice to the incredible beauty of this room. If you visit Memphis, you must head over to the school to see the new *beis midrash*; you won't believe it's the same room as what was there previously. One faculty member reports that a student came up to her the first day of school and said, "We don't deserve such a beautiful *beis midrash*." The teacher responded, "Now you have something to aspire to." The official dedication will take place around Chanukah, and we will have more information and photos in our forthcoming Chanukah issue.

In conjunction with the remodeling project, many old *seforim* (holy books) were removed and buried at the Beth El Emeth Cemetery. (Photos are available on Facebook [here](#).) New bookcases have been filled top to bottom with brand new *seforim*. At the time of the *beis midrash* dedication ceremony, there will be

opportunities to dedicate *seforim* in honor or memory of loved ones. More details are forthcoming, but please give some thought to dedicating a *sefer*. It would be a great *mitzvah* and a great *chesed* (kindness) to the school.



We continue to make good progress in locating "missing" alumni. Our readers have been so helpful in spreading the word. I will ask once again that if you know of any alumni who are not receiving this newsletter, please share it with them and ask them to send me their email address.

May we all be inscribed for a year of good health, joy and inspiration. Please let us continue to hear from you.

L'shana tova—to a good year,

Joanne Kahane

joannekahane111@gmail.com

My fellow alumni,

The *yomim noraim*—or High Holidays—are upon us. These auspicious days provide a generous opportunity for us to reconnect and



recognize Hashem's presence in our lives by resolving to keep a strong relationship with Him through repentance. How lucky we are to be given this opportunity each year!

As I begin my second term as MHA/FYOS board president, I likewise want to encourage all of you to reconnect: to build an everlasting relationship with our school, which has provided so much to its students in the past and continues to nurture the youngest members of our Jewish community. One of my goals for this term is to increase our alumni engagement. We want to thank you for your continued support and explore new avenues for you to demonstrate your *hakaras hatov* (gratitude) regarding your experience at the MHA/FYOS. I would love to hear from you with any specific ideas; if you are willing to get involved to help us promote the engagement of our alumni, even better.

I am pleased to share with you that the school has initiated a new brand ambassadorship program. The concept is simple: utilizing our ambassadors—faculty, parents and alumni—to promote our brand. It's all about spreading positivity regarding our school whenever the opportunity arises. We want to highlight the great work we are doing in educating the Jewish children of Memphis, as well as the ac-

complishments and influence of our graduates around the world.

The alumni of our school are among our strongest brand ambassadors. I hope all of you will join us in sharing wonderful things about your experience at the MHA/FYOS, wherever you live and with whomever you may be conversing. You never know how your words of positivity may have an impact. They might spark a positive memory in someone else, inspiring them or their family members to send their children to our school (or their local Jewish day school), donate to one of our fundraisers, submit a contribution to this publication, or even recommend our wonderful dorm program for high schoolers to someone in their community. Positivity is contagious and can have an immeasurable impact.

This past summer, we continued our efforts to make meaningful capital improvements to our campus. Of special importance is the complete renovation of the *beis midrash* (study hall) in the boys' high school wing. That project is nearing completion, and the finished product is guaranteed to be the crown jewel of the Memphis Jewish community. See pages 20-21 of this issue for more details on the renovation and to learn how you can be part of this rare and special opportunity.

Please continue to stay engaged and keep in touch. Come by and visit, too. You will find that being an ambassador is a privilege.

L'shana tova – to a good year,

David Katz (MHA '88)

President, MHA/FYOS Board of Trustees

dkatz@terminix.com

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DVAR TORAH

By **Rabbi Dr. Ethan Eisen** (MHA '96)

STORMS AND TZEDAKAH—A LESSON FOR THE GEULAH

The *haftarah* for *Parshat Re'eh*, one of the seven *haftarot* of consolation after the destruction commemorated on Tisha B'Av, begins with the following verses from Isaiah (54:11-12):

"O afflicted, storm-tossed (*aniya, so'ara*), unconsolated one, behold! I shall lay your floor stones upon pearls and make your foundation of sapphires. I shall make your sun windows of rubies and your gates of garnets, and your entire boundary of precious stones."

What is the connection between the two ways the prophet describes Jerusalem—afflicted (or "impoverished," according to some commentators) and storm-tossed—and how do those descriptions relate to the consoling message that there will be wealth in such abundance that we will use precious stones as permanent fixtures in our buildings?

The destructive capacity of a storm, combining the effects of wind, rain, and flooding, is unique. Fire, earthquakes and other types of disasters can be devastating, but some items can be salvaged in their aftermath, especially gems and precious metals that can survive a fire's heat. However, when a storm ravages a city, all is lost. The winds and flood waters scatter a home's contents, particularly small precious stones and metals, and the thought of retrieving them is hopeless. Amazingly,

according to the Talmud in Bava Metzia, if a person's item is caught up in a current, he is considered to have given up all hope to get it back, even if he is standing and screaming that he does not give up hope!

The affliction and poverty that the Jewish people faced was that of *so'ara*—complete devastation, with all of its valuables lost to the tempest of the *churban* (destruction of the Temple). However, in this passage, Isaiah promises that the Jewish people, who had seen such wreckage, will experience a great salvation. The consolation described here is much more miraculous, as even the tiny, precious gems that were scattered in the storms of exile will be restored in such great quantity that they can be used as the foundation of new construction.

This hopeful message of rebuilding and redemption is powerful, but our Sages provide a deeper, more profound understanding of the prophet's message. The subsequent verse in our *haftarah* is part of a passage recited by many as part of the daily liturgy: "All your children will be students of *Hashem*, and abundant will be your children's peace." The Talmud in several places makes the following drasha: "Do not read the word 'your children' (*banayich*), rather it should be read 'your builders' (*bonayich*)."

Who are those responsible for the rebuilding?
With this explanation, our Sages are teaching us that it is not the wealthiest Jews or those with a stockpile of precious stones; anyone who is a “student of G-d” is credited with the rebuilding associated with the salvation. What does it mean to be a student of G-d?

The prophet answers this question in the next verse: “Establish yourselves through *tzedakah* (charity/righteousness).” Kindness towards those in need is the qualification for being counted among the builders of the salvation, and the reason why “abundant will be your children’s peace.” The bounty that brings peace is not a material one; instead, it is the goodwill engendered from kindness and concern for the less fortunate that paves the way for the redemption.

With this in mind, we can suggest an additional interpretation to our original question of what “afflicted and storm-tossed” have to do with using precious stones as building material. When people experience the support and kindness of others in the face of devastation, they come to realize that their precious stones

and metals are not of true value; *Hashem* will lay them permanently and inaccessibly into a building’s foundation because their currency is empty. The true currency of humanity is the acts of *tzedakah* learned from being “a student of G-d.”

I have been thinking a great deal about this

idea as I reflect on Hurricane Harvey’s decimation of parts of Houston and the surrounding areas—and shortly thereafter as Hurricane Irma bore down on the Caribbean islands and Florida. My thoughts keep turning to memories from Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and what I saw from the MHA/FYOS community.

In the aftermath of Katrina, I joined other Yeshiva University students on a mission to Memphis to help families forced to

evacuate from New Orleans who were absorbed by the Jewish community in Memphis. The newcomers were graciously invited to stay for days and weeks with people they had never met, rental homes were fully furnished, and the school, together with other community institutions, organized special events for the children of these families. These are what

Kindness towards those in need is the qualification for being counted among the builders of the salvation.

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DVAR TORAH

By **Rabbi Dr. Ethan Eisen** (MHA '96)

I saw, but there were no doubt thousands of unrecognized acts of kindness performed by members of the Memphis community aiding those affected.

Following Katrina, the city of Memphis in general, and the Jewish community in particular, understood that as regional neighbors, they were responsible for supporting their brothers and sisters in Louisiana. The help was surely needed and appreciated by those who received it, but it also left a lasting impression on people like me, as I was able to witness the effects of *tzedakah* in action. The conveyance of lessons about *chesed* (kindness) and *tzedakah* was achieved not through classes and texts, but through sweat and tears.

Just as with Katrina, there have surely been countless private acts of *tzedakah* performed by the Memphis Jewish community, and the MHA/FYOS family in particular, for the victims of Harvey and Irma. In the weeks and months following these catastrophes, we should redouble this *mesirat nefesh* (self-sacrifice) on behalf of Houston—a city that also absorbed

many families who fled the flooding in New Orleans—and the other areas affected by Harvey and Irma. Survivors of these hurricanes surely feel like the *aniya so'ara*, and, of course, tending to their physical needs remains of crucial importance. But we will also be training ourselves and our youth in the value following G-d's ways, performing *tzedakah* and hopefully bringing to fruition the beautiful and hopeful prophecy of Isaiah: "All your children will be students of *Hashem*, and abundant will be your children's peace."

Ethan Eisen (MHA '96) earned a bachelor's degree and rabbinical ordination from Yeshiva University and a doctorate in clinical psychology from George Washington University. He lives in Israel with his wife Talia and their four children. Rabbi Dr. Eisen is a researcher at Bar Ilan University and works in private practice as a licensed clinical psychologist.



We find ourselves in the month of Elul, which means that the holidays of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkos are just around the corner. This is a very meaningful month—a time for reflection and planning self-improvement. As I am writing this, Hurricane Irma is approaching Florida; the anniversary of the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, draws near; and North Korea is rattling its saber. It is a time when we are acutely aware of our own vulnerability.

Sukkos adds to our recognition that we are transient guests in this world. Just as our homes during this holiday are not permanent, neither are our lives. In fact, the Chofetz Chaim (Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, 1838-1933) teaches that we should be especially careful to invite guests on Sukkos because it benefits the host. How? Hosting a guest is a clear reminder that every person is a guest in this world. Sitting in the sukkah reminds us that our time in this world is temporary, and our belongings here are not permanent. Contemporary author Rabbi Zelig Pliskin sums this up by writing that having guests on Sukkos is a double reminder of our temporary status here in this world.

Reading through the masterfully compiled MHA/FYOS alumni publication three times each year makes us all aware that time flies. It serves as a happy reminder of who we were,

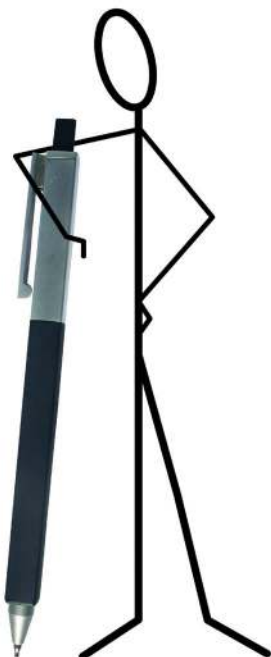
who we have become, and it should prompt each of us to consider: who do I want to be?

When we hear the *shofar* blasts on Rosh Hashanah, we each must internalize that *Hashem* is my king and that I am only here, living, by the will of G-d. We need to infuse our lives with meaning, love, unity and respect for others. As the students of Mrs. **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80) will recall, she reiterated to us many times, “Carpe diem! Seize the day!” Life is wonderful, and life is short. We each benefitted tremendously from the personalized attention and education we received at the MHA/FYOS. Every student matters, and every alumnus matters! Resolve to fulfill your potential this year.

Best wishes for a healthy, happy new year!

Dana (Chafetz) Berlin (MHA '92, FYOS '96) studied at Michlalah in Jerusalem before earning a bachelor's degree from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania. She currently lives in Passaic, New Jersey, with her husband, Dr. Aryeh Berlin, and their five children: Elana, Adina, Yaakov, Shira and Meira. In addition to raising her family, she works as a commercial real estate lender for a New Jersey bank.





We welcome your feedback on the alumni newsletter at alumni@mhafyos.org. Here are some of the responses we received to Issue No. 8.

Thank you so much for the beautiful article about my parents, Rabbi and Mrs. Yaacov Goldfein, z'l. It really captured the flavor of their years in Memphis. Keep up the good work!

-Ruthie (Goldfein) Veshnefsky

MHA '80

The article about my parents [Rabbi Yaacov and Sharon Goldfein, z'l] was beautifully done and a wonderful tribute to them. A *groisser yasher koach* [thank you for a great job] from my whole family. We really appreciate all your hard work.

-Rivka (Goldfein) Kramer

MHA '88, YOS '92

It was cruel to expect me to prepare for Pesach when you sent out such a great issue just before the holiday! Thank you so much for doing a beautiful job remembering my father [Rabbi Meir Belsky, z'l] and the Goldfeins, z'l. Keep the newsletters coming!

-Naomi (Belsky) Homnick

MHA '74, YOS '78

Thank you for your dedicated work putting together such a beautiful magazine. I am proud to have been included.

-Aaron Thomas

MHA '68, YOS '71

Wow, what a beautiful job! I really enjoyed this issue. Thank you.

-Steven Geller

YOS '79

Thank you for keeping the old Memphis memories alive!

-Rabbi David Finkelstein

MHA '75

Thank you for sharing so many nice memories in this newsletter. I had no idea about some of the deaths and was sad to learn of their passing.

-Mr. E. Frank Bluestein,

former MHA faculty member

Thank you so much for all of the time and energy you put into the MHA alumni publications. This was yet another spectacular issue.

-Joel Siegel,
*immediate past president,
MHA/FYOS board of trustees*

I wanted to share the sad news of the passing of Zev Gross, z'l. He attended the YOS for a year in the late 1960s. Though he did not graduate from our school, I know many of us have fond memories of him. Zev and his sister **Nina (Gross) Lubart** (MHA '67, YOS '71) were dormers from Atlanta. Nina is now living in Baltimore; may she and the entire Gross family be comforted among the mourners of Zion and Jerusalem.

-Sherry (Rosenberg) Gans
MHA '68, YOS '72

I recently met a man by the name of **David Gray** (MHA '67, YOS '70) from Atlanta who attended the YOS. He was the only boy in a graduating class of six girls. Now living in Miami Beach, he has all the old yearbooks, including the one in which Elvis Presley paid for the back page! He is so excited about reconnecting and receiving the latest issue of your extraordinary labor of love.

-Shari Schwartz,
*former Memphian
and MHA parent*



TRIVIA ANSWERS

FROM
ISSUE 8

1971-1975

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

This was obviously a tough quiz, as most respondents did not know the correct answers.

Ronnie Katz (MHA '70, YOS '74) got

7 out of 15
correct answers.

He will receive his tin of goodies from Ricki's Cookie Corner—owned and operated by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70)—in time for Rosh Hashanah.

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

1. What year marked the first time the YOS basketball team won a championship in any Memphis Jewish Community Center (JCC) league?

ANSWER: 1975 (Yeshiva B Team).

2. How many times in its history did the dorm burn down?

ANSWER: Twice.

3. Who cleaned the dorm bathrooms and girls' high school building between 1970 and 1974?

ANSWER: **Mike Stein** (MHA '68, YOS '72) and **Ronnie Katz** (MHA '70, YOS '74).

4. Who was the most absent-minded yeshiva professor? And what musical instrument did he play?

ANSWER: Mr. William Sullivan played the piano, old saloon style.

5. Which teacher used to check that students cleaned under their nails and behind their ears?

ANSWER: Second grade teacher Mrs. Ted Williams.

6. Which teacher drilled students on the multiplication table with fun and games until they got it down pat?

ANSWER: Mrs. Frances Gibbs.

7. Which school fundraiser had all of the students out on the streets?

ANSWER: Selling Barton's Candies.

8. Which beloved children's book did Mrs. Janet Yancy read to her third graders on days when they completed their work?

ANSWER: E.B. White's "Charlotte's Web."

9. Which no-nonsense high school teacher did students somehow convince to replace their final exam with creative, small-group presentations?

ANSWER: History teacher Mrs. Phyllis Wahl.

10. Who were the school's two outstanding speech teachers, who taught eighth and ninth grades, respectively?

ANSWER: Mrs. Jerry Israel and Mr. Effie Bluestein.

11. What was Mr. David Cotton's other profession, aside from being a junior high school math and science teacher?

ANSWER: Professional drummer.



Births: Mazel Tov to...

Robert and **Joanne (Wen-er) Cohen** (MHA '64) of Memphis on the birth of a grandson. His proud parents are Todd and Lauren Rabin Cohen of St. Louis.

Teri and **Larry Graber** (MHA '71, YOS '75) of Memphis on the April 24 birth of granddaughter Reva Elizabeth, the first-born child of Peter and Ahuva (Graber) Winik of New York City.

Stuart (MHA '75, YOS '79) and **Pam (Blotner) Thomas** (YOS '79) of Memphis on the May 27 birth of granddaughter Rosie to Efrayim and Brittany (Thomas) Prero of Chicago. Mazel tov also to big sister Daliah.

Eva and **Josh Gavant** (MHA '94) of Seattle, Washington, on the Aug. 1 birth of a baby girl, Margo Belle. Mazel tov also to grandparents **Morris** (YOS '72) and **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA

'70) of Baltimore and siblings Asher, Yosef, Hannah and Caleb.

Aviva and **Rabbi Ben Gonsher** (FYOS '98) of Boca Raton, Florida, on the June 28 birth of their daughter, Chana Esther. Mazel tov also to siblings Shira Rivka, Naftali Chaim and Yehuda Meir.

Richard (MHA '99, FYOS '03) and **Aviva (Krupp) Lewis** (MHA '02, FYOS '06) of Memphis on the Aug. 20 birth of baby boy Joseph Isaac. Mazel tov also to siblings Abby and Jacob (students at the MHA) and grandparents Michael and **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70) and Teri and **Larry Graber** (MHA '71, YOS '75), all of Memphis.

Stuey and **Bracha (Stein) Einhorn** (MHA '04, FYOS '08) of Memphis on the May 8 arrival of their first child, daughter Kayla Pesel. Mazel tov to grandparents Essie and **Mike Stein** (MHA '68, YOS '72), also of Memphis.

Ariel and **Eliana (Graber) Abittan** (MHA '05, FYOS '09) of Lawrence, New York, on the May 14 birth of daughter Gabrielle Ruth. Mazel tov also to big sister Rebecca and grandparents Tova and **Roy Graber** (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis.

Joel and **Hanna (Baruchman) Katz** (FYOS '07) of Atlanta, Georgia, on the Aug. 20 arrival of a baby girl.

Benji and **Shoshana (Somer) Mehler** (MHA '07, FYOS '11) of Chicago on the March 27 birth of their first child, baby boy Joey.

Engagements/ Weddings: Mazel Tov to...

Alan and **Brenda (Silverman) Pritzker** (MHA '70, YOS '73) of Miami, Florida, on the engagement of their daughter Shira to Maor Danino. They will wed Oct. 30 in New Jersey and live in Dallas, Texas.



Teri and **Larry Graber** (MHA '71, YOS '75) of Memphis on his son Joel's engagement to Jess Alter. The couple will marry Feb. 11, 2018, in Phoenix, Arizona, and plan to live in New York City.

Rabbi Eliyahu and **Devorah (Sharon Wolff) Herbst** (YOS '80) of Lakewood, New Jersey, on the engagement of their daughter Tova Bracha to David Zageilbaum. They are planning a Dec. 26 wedding in Lakewood, where the couple plans to live.

Randi and **Michael Loskove** (MHA '78, YOS '82) of Chicago on the Aug. 23 marriage of their son Moshe to Mirel Forchheimer.

Shifra Goldstein Smith (MHA '04, FYOS '08) on her engagement to Yakir Itzhaki. Mazel tov also to father **Sidney Goldstein** (MHA '64) of Memphis.

Rachel Rubenstein (MHA '06, FYOS '10), daughter of Marvin and **Karen (Katz) Rubenstein** (MHA '69, YOS

'72) of Memphis, on her June 25 wedding to Noam Amar in Pardes Chana, Israel. The newlyweds live in the Israeli town of Lod.

Jordana Wender (MHA '06, FYOS '10), daughter of Penina and **Elliot Wender** (MHA '79, YOS '83) of Memphis, on her engagement to Robby Rubin. They will wed Dec. 31 at Baron Hirsch Synagogue in Memphis and plan to reside in New York City.

Chaim (Charles) Schreiber (FYOS '10) of New Orleans, Louisiana, on his Sept. 4 wedding to Elisheva Weissman in Baltimore, Maryland, also where the newlyweds are making their home.

Natanel Brakha (MHA '09, FYOS '13), son of Menashe and **Ronit (Sauer) Brakha** (MHA '83) of Memphis, on his engagement to Sarah Sheps. They are planning a Nov. 26 wedding in Teaneck, New Jersey, and will live in New York City.

Bnei/Bnot Mitzvah: Mazel Tov to...

Deena Thomas (MHA '76, YOS '80) of Memphis on the May 27 bat mitzvah of her daughter, Natalie Mashinsky.

Gary (MHA '77, YOS '81) and **Dena (Rosenberg) Wruble** (MHA '84, YOS '88) of Memphis on the Aug. 14 bat mitzvah of their daughter Emma, a sixth grader at the MHA. Mazel tov also to grandparents Frances and **Hershel Rosenberg** (MHA '60), also of Memphis.

Silha and **Slava Bosin** (MHA '80, YOS '84) of Memphis on the April 29 bar mitzvah of their son Zevy, a seventh grader at the MHA.

Scott and **Pesha (Pamela Friedman) Izenberg** (MHA '87, YOS '91) of Atlanta, Georgia, on their son Tzvi becoming a bar mitzvah April 22.



Sara and **Dan Zalowitz** (FYOS '94) of Washington, D.C., on the June 7 bar mitzvah of his son, Andres.

Rina and **Rabbi Dov Emerson** (MHA '91) of Bergenfield, New Jersey, on their son Yehuda becoming a bar mitzvah on Sept. 14 in Kingston, New York. Mazel tov also to grandparents Donny Emerson and **Laurie Cooper** (MHA '65) of Memphis.

Dayna and **Philip Klitzner** (MHA '92, FYOS '96) of Seattle on the Sept. 10 bat

mitzvah of their daughter, Naomi.

Michael Prakhina and **Anna (Bakulina) Vladi** (FYOS '96) of Glen Rock, New Jersey, on celebrating Yana's June 7 bat mitzvah.

Baruch and **Mariam (Levi-tanus) Berzon** (MHA '93) of Mo'adim, Israel, on the Sept. 3 bar mitzvah of their son Gabi in Jerusalem.

Sarah and **Naftali Thomas** (FYOS '97) of Memphis on the July 15 bat mitzvah celebration of their

daughter, Lea. She is the granddaughter of **Gitti (Bel-sky) Thomas** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Jerusalem and **Aaron Thomas** (MHA '68, YOS '71) of Memphis.

Eva and **Josh Gavant** (MHA '94) of Seattle on the June 11 bar mitzvah of his son Yosef in Jerusalem. Mazel tov also to grandparents **Morris** (YOS '72) and **Ann Ellen (Blockman) Gavant** (MHA '70) of Baltimore.





Julie and **Nathan Thomas** (MHA '95) of Palo Alto, California, on the June 22 bnei mitzvah celebration in Jerusalem for their twin sons, Hershel and Jonathan. Mazel tov also to grandparents Wendy and **Ira Thomas** (MHA '70, YOS '74) of Far Rockaway, New York.

Other: Mazel Tov to...

Josh Kahane (MHA '93, FYOS '97) and **Caleb Malobsky** (FYOS '17), who medalled in international competition at the 20th Maccabiah Games in Israel in July. Both athletes played basketball for Team USA; Kahane won a bronze medal in the Masters division, and Malobsky won a gold medal in the Juniors division.

Jeremy Cooper (MHA '08, FYOS '12), son of Aileen and **Pace Cooper** (MHA '77, YOS '81) of Memphis, who received the prestigious Robert Lincoln Carey Memorial Prize at his May 2017 graduation from Columbia University. The prize is awarded annually by the Columbia College Alumni Association to a graduating senior who demonstrates admirable academic and extracurricular achievements and exemplifies the ideals of the award's namesake. Cooper graduated Phi Beta Kappa and earned departmental honors in both philosophy and economics.



Mazel tov!

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

Have Torah, will travel

MRS. CHANA SILVER RECONNECTS WITH ALUMNI DURING U.S. SPEAKING TOUR

Now living in Jerusalem, Israel, **Chana (Anet Yaffe) Silver** (MHA '76, YOS '80) is an esteemed teacher at several women's seminars and popular lecturer for various outreach programs. She also leads tours to Poland and Eastern Europe, serves as a crisis intervention counselor, manages the Jerusalem Seminary Connection website (jemsem.org), and is a dating mentor and marriage adviser to former students.

It comes as no surprise that a woman who busies herself with so many jobs does not spend her summers relaxing. Instead, Mrs.

Silver travels to America to do what she does best and loves most: teach Torah. Again this summer, she embarked on a nationwide tour to deliver inspiring *shiurim* (classes).

Among the hundreds of women who attended her lectures were fellow MHA/FYOS alumnae. Some knew her in school, some were her students at the Goldie Margolin School for Girls, and others knew her by reputation only. Here are but a few of the photos she took with alumni she encountered during her speaking tour. We thank Mrs. Silver for sharing her journey with us.



In New York City, Silver (far right) brought together her former MSG students (back row, from left) **Masha (Marcia Wogan) Ginian** (MHA '92, FYOS '96), **Tami (Thomas) Radinsky** (MHA '92, FYOS '96), **Sarah (Katz) Tarkieltaub** (MHA '91, FYOS '95); (front row, from left) **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) and **Naama (Aviner) Weinstock** (MHA '90, YOS '94).



Pictured with Silver (front row, center) at the home of MHA/FYOS faculty members Rabbi Yonasan and Mrs. Sandy Gersten in Memphis are alumni (back row, from left) **Shani Braverman** (MHA '12, FYOS '16), **Shifra Ehrenkranz** (MHA '10), **Lisa (Wruble) Kaufman** (MHA '73), **Linda (Ostrow) Schlesinger** (MHA '74), **Judy (Baum) Green** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80), **Barbara (Katz) Kutner** (MHA '64, YOS '68); (front row, from left) **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97, editor of this publication) and **Ronit (Sauer) Brakha** (MHA '83).

HAVE TORAH, WILL TRAVEL

Mrs. Chana Silver reconnects with alumni

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*In Baltimore, Silver reconnected with schoolmate **Beth (Kipper) Pasternak** (MHA '75, YOS '79, photo at left) and **Rabbi Avigdor (Vigi) Gutnicki** (FYOS '96, in photo at right with his wife, Michal).*



*Also in Baltimore, Silver visited with schoolmate **Julie (Brown) Roll** (MHA '75, YOS '79, far right), along with her daughter, **Rena (Roll) Bortz** (center), son-in-law **Daniel Bortz** and their children.*



*Silver (far right) caught up with classmates **Cindy (Cooper) Ehrenkranz** (MHA '76, YOS '80, far left) and **Judy (Baum) Green** (MHA '76, YOS '80, center) at TCBY in Memphis.*



*Taking a silly selfie in Atlanta with **Pesha (Pamela Friedman) Izenberg** (MHA '87, YOS '91).*



*Silver (center) with sisters **Renata Sadetsky** (MHA '85, YOS '89) and **Elana (Sadetsky) Avis** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) in Philadelphia.*

Capital improvements continue with complete overhaul of *beis midrash*



As outlined one year ago in our [*sixth issue*](#), the MHA/FYOS has undertaken a multi-year capital improvements campaign to enhance areas of the campus most in need of updating. Construction is completed incrementally each summer to avoid interfering with classes in session.

Last summer saw the complete renovation of the school's gym/auditorium wing; the capital improvements plan continued this past summer with a total overhaul of the *beis midrash* (study hall) in the Cooper Yeshiva High School for Boys'

(CYHSB) wing. Thanks to the extraordinary efforts of contractor **Lee Baum** (MHA '74) and capital campaign chair **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97), a job that should have taken six months was completed in just two. Much gratitude is due to the Cooper family and to Cindi and Dr. Joe Weinstein for their generous financial support of the project. To get involved in supporting our school's capital improvements campaign, please contact Josh Kahane at jkahane@glankler.com.



As you can see from the photos, the beautifully renovated *beis midrash* is nearly unrecognizable. Note that the new chairs, *bima* (platform), *aron kodesh* (holy ark for the Torah scrolls), *ner tamid* (eternal light) and several other items are expected to arrive soon and should be in place before our next publication comes out; we hope to feature pictures of those final additions in our Chanukah issue.

The article below, which originally appeared in the CYHSB's weekly newspaper, is reprinted here with permission from its author, eleventh grader **Akiva Finkelstein** (MHA '15). He poignantly captured the impact of this magnificent renovation on our students and the community at large.



For much of my middle and high school career, I dreaded the first day of school. During those last cherished days of summer vacation, the thought of returning to the pressure and hard work of school would dawn on me. When that dreadful day finally arrived and the relaxation of summer vacation ended, I

would walk through the doors and sneeze as the dust of the old *beis midrash* returned to my nose. Excited to see my classmates once again yet fearful of the journey that lie ahead, I'd sit down in my seat, crack open a broken *shtender* (lectern), and begin my morning prayers with a sigh. "Ugh, another difficult school year," I would think to myself.



This year, however, was completely different. Before even reaching the double doors of the *beis midrash*, I

was taken aback by the beautiful new entranceway that immediately transported me to the old city of Jerusalem, where I had been just days before. As I entered the *beis midrash*, the bright lights reflecting on the shiny new *seforim* (books) brightened my mood and filled me with excitement. Taking in the astonishing view around me, I couldn't believe that I stood in the same room I had left a mere two months ago. All the feelings of dread soon left me, and I *davened* (prayed) with passion and excitement. At that moment I knew this would not be just another year; this was going to be something very different than years past.

Every *davening* and learning experience will now be transformed by the incredible environment of our new *beis medrash*. The beautiful room will enhance each *davening*, and the excellent new supply of *seforim* will allow for greater achievements in learning. Additionally, the beauty of the room will draw us in, which will lead to an increase in learning and spiritual growth in the coming year.

Like a synagogue, a *beis midrash* serves as a "*mikdash me'at*," a small sanctuary for G-d's

presence. It's the closest thing we have nowadays to the *Beis Ha'mikdash* (Holy Temple), and it is therefore fitting that such places should be constructed in the most beautiful fashion, just as the *Beis Ha'mikdash* was. Through the renovations that took place this summer, our school has fulfilled this in the best way possible.

This summer, I visited the Belz Great Synagogue. The largest synagogue in Israel, it resembles the *Beis Ha'mikdash* in its outer appearance and cost millions of dollars to construct. When our tour guide was asked why sponsors were willing to pay such an enormous amount for the synagogue, he replied that it was because they prioritized Judaism over everything else in their lives. If every community valued Judaism as much, he said, then every *shul* in the world would be just as stunning. By making our *beis midrash* the

most glorious room in the entire building, the school and community have demonstrated to the students the priority that's placed on Torah and Judaism.

Every morning, my fellow students and I can now put aside the stress of school and really

connect to *Hashem* throughout our *davening* and learning in this extraordinary room. The large amount of money and effort that went into this amazing *beis midrash* was absolutely worth it for the impact it has had—and will continue to have for years to come—on the students of the MHA/FYOS and the entire community. I'm excited to continue learning in the new *beis midrash*, and I am confident it will continue to transform the school for the better.





Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Abby Johnson:



Sharing the gift of the written word

With a legacy at our school spanning from the mid-1980s to just five years ago, the teaching power couple of Mr. Thomas and Mrs. Abby Johnson left a lasting impact on scores of junior high and high school students at the MHA/FYOS.

Mr. Johnson, a graduate of White Station High School in Memphis and the University of Tennessee, met the future Mrs. Johnson, a native of Long Island, New York, while both were graduate students at Cornell University in upstate New York. They married in Maryland in 1981.

Given their eventual mastery of teaching, it's surprising that neither intended from the outset to enter the profession. Mr. Johnson "sought a teaching deferment as a means of conscientious objection to the Vietnam War," he said. Mrs. Johnson first taught to fulfill a requirement of her Cornell tuition assistance package. "I took to it instantly," she said. "After all, I was talking about things I loved [namely, English

and creative writing] and other people had to listen."

Following stints in the DC area (he taught at the University of Maryland, and she was a writer and editor for the federal government's Office of Personnel Management) and at the University of Wyoming, they grew tired of the

"increasingly bottom-line-driven 'adjunct' teaching environment in higher education," he said. The Johnsons drove from Laramie, Wyoming, to Memphis in "a memorably un-air-conditioned Mazda," she recalled, to be closer to his family.

In 1984, Mrs. Johnson

"walked in [to the MHA] off the street to inquire about employment," she said, "and encountered Dr. [Jerry] Kutliroff," who hired her. "On my very first day of teaching at the MHA, I parked on Meadowcrest and approached the boys' [high] school. I was greeted by the senior boys – from up on the building's roof. That's where they all were; don't ask me why



Thomas Johnson and Abby Rosenthal as graduate students in Ithaca, New York in 1977.

or how. And so it went, always somewhat in that vein.”

She taught English and history at the school for one year but decided to take time away from the classroom to be a stay-at-home mother to daughters Hannah and Rebecca (who now goes by the name Bee). Mr. Johnson assumed his wife’s teaching position in 1985 and remained a member of the faculty until 2002. Mrs. Johnson later returned to the school, teaching between 1991 and 1999 and again from 2008 until 2012.

Mrs. Johnson is remembered by many for her TASCPT assignments, in which students had to list the title, author, setting, characters, plot summary and themes of literary works read. She also introduced dozens of students to the plays of William Shakespeare.

“Mrs. Johnson was my junior high English teacher, and I especially remember reading ‘A Midsummer Night’s Dream’ and ‘Twelfth Night’ in her class,” said **Deena (Katz)**

Yarmush (MHA ‘93, FYOS ‘97). “She was a tough teacher but funny and nice, too. She pushed us to think and to put effort into our work and our writing.”

“Mrs. Johnson was a kind, thoughtful and dedicated teacher,” said **Ethan Eisen** (MHA ‘96). “When I was preparing my speech for

eighth grade graduation, I wanted to use a cockroach (with a puppet) as a funny—and generally positive—metaphor for the school experience. The administration at the time tried to nix it, and she defended the speech

and helped me craft it. I don’t remember whether I used it or not, but I found her to be very supportive.”

A number of MHA/FYOS alumni attribute their subsequent academic and career success to lessons learned from Mr. Johnson. “While other

teachers helped me get through high school, Mr. J helped me get through college,” said **Yoni Freiden** (MHA ‘96, FYOS ‘00). “He really taught us how to organize and write essays and spent long hours conveying this extremely important skill.”

Anshel Kaplan (MHA ‘98, FYOS ‘02), a commercial litigator who won first prize in a 2011 New York State Bar Association writing competition, often thinks back to Mr. Johnson’s English classes. “There is no denying that he was quite demanding; every minor detail, infraction and mistake was caught, analyzed, and corrected in an effort to make his students better writers. Many were the times I grumbled to myself (and to him). Today, I sing his praises. The ability to express oneself in writing is imperative, and I am proud to say I learned that skill from the best.”



A recent picture of the Johnsons.

An MHA/FYOS student from the mid-1990s (who asked that his name not be used) said that Mr. Johnson was among the most influential teachers in his life. “He took the time to get to know me as an individual,” the former student said. “He realized my issue wasn’t that I didn’t like reading; I was just bored by old English poems and Shakespeare plays. He recommended I read ‘Exodus’ by Leon Uris, and that book changed my attitude toward reading. Now, I devour books, both fiction and non-fiction, and my infatuation traces back to him seeing potential in me that no one else saw.”

“Mr. Johnson was a true class act and one hell of a fantastic teacher,” said **Meir Wexler** (FYOS ’98). “As much as I hated writing book reports, the works I read actually had an impact on me, and the reports helped me grow in my writing and organizational thinking skills. As a result of Mr. Johnson’s classes, I am now a voracious reader and a huge American history buff. I am forever grateful and thankful I had the opportunity to learn under his tutelage.”

Though Mr. Johnson retired from his position as history and social sciences chair at Memphis’ Hutchison School in 2014, he balks at the notion of retirement. “I am involved as

ever, freer than ever, and finding time to take time to forget about what time it is,” he said. “I have returned to my own writing, and then there is my library against whose heaped titles ‘to be read’ I am ever making scant headway.”

In her retirement years, Mrs. Johnson is enjoying writing fiction, reading, practicing yoga, gardening, cooking, and caring for their dogs and cats. The couple travels regularly to visit Hannah, a Minneapolis graphic designer and

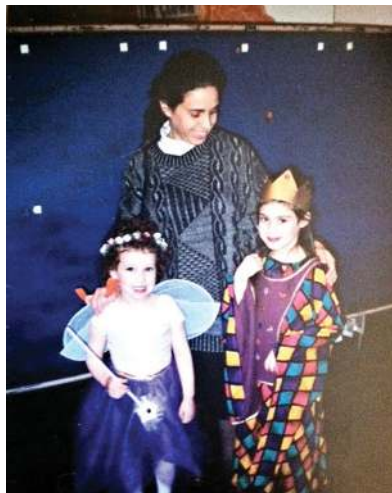
professor of design who got married in June, and Bee, a New York City freelance artist and illustrator. The Johnsons are also looking forward to becoming grandparents; Bee and her husband are expecting their first child in January.

To her former students, Mrs. Johnson says, “Carry on! Think, talk, eat, argue, and challenge (you are all so good at that!). Cherish your native

cynicism, but keep those good hearts open.”

Mr. Johnson urges his students to “question, question, question. And when you find answers, you haven’t, but the fiction of indelible ‘fact’ can be, when not lethally corrosive, provisionally useful.”

The Johnsons offered many positive reflections on their years at our school. “Because the imposition of uniformity and discipline wasn’t allowed to become the school’s primary



Mrs. Johnson celebrating Purim with daughters Rebecca “Bee” (left) and Hannah in the early ‘90s.

purpose, as it is true of some schools, critical thinking and free expression were encouraged," Mrs. Johnson said. "So were curiosity, concern for others, humor and uniqueness of personality, which my students had in abundance."

"Encountering the same students in successive years allowed for refinement of my teaching to address specific needs, skills and interests," Mr. Johnson said. "I enjoyed having

a certain intellectual autonomy in developing the content and pedagogical approaches of my courses, and there were students whose seriousness of purpose, curiosity and character still stand out sharply in my memory."

"I had both Mr. and Mrs. Johnson as teachers," said **Heather Braverman** (MHA '98, FYOS '02). "You could honestly tell how much they cared about each of their students."



Mrs. Johnson shared this photo on Facebook in April 2012, when she announced she would retire from the MHA/FYOS at the end of that school year. "I've never stopped having fun in the classroom, and the kids are why," she captioned. She is pictured with her ninth and tenth grade honors English students (from left) **Bryan Itkowitz** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Isaac Graber** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Leib Wiener** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) **William Weinstein**, **Gabriel Goldstein** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Gabriel Address** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Akiva Somer** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Benjamin Kampf** (MHA '10, FYOS '14), **Yonatan Cooper** (MHA '11, FYOS '15) and **Tzvi Joffre** (MHA '11, FYOS '15).

1996-2000

TRIVIA

Regardless of when you graduated, have some fun with these trivia questions. Please send your answers to joannekahane111@gmail.com. The person who gets the most answers correct (or, in case of a tie, the earliest respondent) will win a tin of Ricki's Cookies, made by **Ricki (Thomas) Krupp** (MHA '66, YOS '70). Good luck!



1. What nickname did GMSG students give to the dictionary that sat on Mr. Thomas Johnson's desk?
2. What did Mrs. Karin Schmitt bring to school every December as a special treat?
3. What was Mrs. Karin Schmitt's familiar response to complaints about the air conditioning?
4. During the freshman kidnap of **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and **Shmuel Bergman** (FYOS '00), which two seniors were in the car with them when they got pulled over by the police for having expired tags? (Bonus question: Who was driving?)
5. What special Sunday morning program did the GMSG introduce in 1999?
6. In what year was the first CYHSB Steak Dinner held?
7. Which school team went undefeated in 2000 and won first place in the city's Park Commission Youth Athletics league?
8. Who directed the school's 1999 production of "The Parent Trap"?

9. Who played the reunited twins in the school's 1999 production of "The Parent Trap"?
10. In what year was the first (and last) "annual" Science Derby held?
11. The dedication of what took place on Nov. 9, 1997?
12. In 1991, the sixth grade ran a campaign encouraging other students to do what?

The MHA/YOS Classes of 1996-2000 *Where Are They Now?*

Deena (Katz) Yarmush (MHA '94, FYOS '97) lives in North Woodmere, New York, and works as an early childhood teacher. She has been married to Gershon Yarmush (originally from Memphis and grew up in Monsey, New York) for almost 15 years, and they have five children: Yonah, 13; Ezra, 12; Margalit, 9; Yael, 7; and Hadar, 3.



"Growing up with such a close group of friends in Memphis was really special," she said. "I did not always appreciate being from a small town and having a limited number of classmates. However, now that I am raising my children in New York, I really understand and appreciate the benefits we had

growing up in Memphis. I have very strong and positive memories of my teachers and friends, many of whom I am still in touch with. The community raises each child, and I am certainly a product of the whole Memphis community."



Among Yarmush's favorite memories of the MHA/FYOS are high school shabbatons and "the Shakespeare plays we put on in seventh and eighth grade, thanks to the amazing Dr. [Jerry] Kutliroff," she said.

Her most beloved teacher was Mrs. Ann Ivins, who taught science. "She was awesome and brilliant—and also one of my best impersonations in high school! She loved us like her children. Shortly after our 12th grade graduation, she invited all the girls in our class

to her house. She purchased paper goods and ordered kosher deli platters from Gottlieb's so we could eat in her home. It was amazing! Sadly, Mrs. Ivins passed away a few years after that, but I will never forget her."

Yarmush's email address is dktn1130@gmail.com.



Amara Levine-Reich (MHA '94, FYOS '97) lives in Memphis with her husband Eli and their five-year-old son, Judah. She works as a communications consultant for third-party claims administrator Sedgwick and volunteers her time as editor of the MHA/FYOS alumni newsletter.



"The experience of living in New York City after college helped me appreciate the beauty of growing up in a close-knit town like Memphis, where every Jewish person is valued for their unique contributions," she said. "I am so glad to be part of this wonderful community once again."



Her fondest memories from the school include color war and the girls' school canoe trips. Her favorite teacher was Mr. Thomas Johnson. She can be reached at amaralevinereich@gmail.com.

Bracha (Beth Goldberg) Garland (FYOS '97), originally from Omaha, Nebraska, lives in Jerusalem, Israel with her husband, Gideon, who hails from Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. She is a stay-at-home mom, caring for Izzy, 14; Devorah, 4; and Ruth, 4 months old. Among her favorite memories of her time in Memphis was attending an R.E.M. concert with her classmates at the Pyramid and studying English with Mr. Thomas Johnson. She hopes everyone is well and happy and can be reached at bracha8679@hotmail.com.



Adena Konetz (FYOS '97), originally from Birmingham, Alabama, now lives in Miami Beach, Florida, and works as a market manager for getaroom.com, an online booking site for hotel rooms. Her job regularly takes her to cities in the site's Northeast territory, including New York, Boston, Toronto and Montreal, and her "fur baby," a 12-year-old Havanese dog named Sophie, welcomes her home from each trip.



"I am so grateful I had the opportunity to go to school in Memphis and create lasting relationships and memories," Konetz said. "My parents sacrificed and took a chance; they trusted in the community and the school. I was placed with wonderful families that only enhanced my time there—especially Tova and **Roy Graber** [MHA '76, YOS '80] and their children, who I consider to be my extended family. Memphis became a second home to me and always welcomes me with open arms! I am truly lucky to have a place to come back to often and look forward to doing so."



Her favorite FYOS teachers were Mrs. Ann Ivins, of blessed memory, and Rabbi Ari Katz. She can be reached at ask79@aol.com.

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WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Graduates of 1996-2000

'98

Amanda (Mack) Gurock (FYOS '98), originally from Omaha, Nebraska, is the clinical director for a non-profit agency in Albany, New York, that provides mental health services to children who have been victims of or witnessed trauma. She

and her husband of 14 years, Joshua, have four children: Leah, 13; twin boys Max and Jacob, 10; and Sophia, 8.



Gurock's favorite memory of high school is senior skip day: "It was awesome!" She hopes her classmates are doing well and that they'll stop by to say hello if they ever find themselves in the Albany area. Her email address is amandagurock@hotmail.com.

Meir Wexler (FYOS '98), who hails from Atlanta, Georgia, now lives in Boca Raton, Florida, with his wife Becca and their three-year-old daughter, Sophie. He works as a commodities trader and managing partner of ICO Advisory, LLC, which works with initial coin offerings in the block-chain and crypto-currency space. "Becca is a development associate for Southern Region NCSY and works with **Ben Gonsler** [FYOS '98], my CYHSB classmate and current *chavrusa* [study partner] in Boca," Wexler said.

"Memphis continues to be the paradigm for a community built upon *chesed* [loving kindness]," he said. "There are so many families I am grateful to have had the opportunity to meet and build relationships with through the years."

"Wex" has many great memories of his time in Memphis, and his favorite teachers were Rabbi Ari Katz, Rabbi Yonason Gersten, Mr. Thomas Johnson and Mrs. Nancy Thomas.

He hopes the FYOS class of '98 will be able to arrange a 20-year reunion next year. His email address is wex613@gmail.com.

'98

Nina (Kaplan) Sapir (MHA '95, FYOS '99) lives in Nokdim, Israel, with her husband Eial (who spent a year in Memphis as a dorm counselor and member of the *Kollel Torah Mitzi-on*) and their three children. She works as an assistant in a local preschool and as a nutritionist. She is also an attendant at her community's *mikvah* (ritual bath). Her favorite high school teachers were Mrs. Ann Ivins, of blessed memory, and Mrs. Fruma Rosenthal. Her email address is nina.sapir@gmail.com.

'95

'99

Yoni Freiden (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and his wife Aviva live in Memphis. Their three children—Benny, 9; Dahlia, 6; and Margalit, 3—are students at the MHA. He works as a manager for United Healthcare.



"My time attending the school was such a terrific experience," Freiden said. "I made such amazing friends and learned a great deal from my wonderful teachers. My classmates and I had so much fun as our teachers taught us love and appreciation of the Torah and made learning fun!"



He has many fond memories of being a student at the MHA/FYOS. "Kidnap was a fun experi-



ence when we were the ones doing the kidnapping; too bad it's outlawed now," he said. Freiden also remembers **Ben Gonsler** (FYOS '98) putting a fetal pig from the science lab in the locker of **Sarah (Emerson) Helfand** (MHA '95, FYOS '98), as well as **Elchanan (Ari) Reznick** (FYOS '00) dressing up as math teacher Mrs. Karin Schmitt, of blessed memory, and **Josh Zeitlin** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) commenting on it.

Another standout memory is the Cooper Macs "winning the BBYO basketball championship when we were picked to exit in the first round," he said. "Winning the 30-and-over men's league in the very same JCC gym brought those memories back to me! We should have won the Yeshiva University Red Sarachek tournament, too. I'm looking forward to my son Benny winning tier one at the YU tournament when he is in high school representing the Cooper Yeshiva!"

His favorite MHA/FYOS teachers were Mrs. Penina Wender, Mr. Menashe Brakha, Mrs. Betty "Bubbie" Griffith, "Doc" Gary Leventhal, Mrs. Karin Schmitt and Mrs. Ann Ivins. Freiden misses his classmates and hopes they can have a reunion soon. His email address is yonif@aol.com.

Talya Levin (MHA '96, FYOS '00) lives in Jerusalem, Israel, and works as a grants administrator at ROI Community, an initiative of the Charles and Lynn Schusterman Family Foundation that connects and supports a network of more than 1,300 young Jewish activists and change-makers around the world.

"I'm so proud to be a product of Memphis and lifelong member of the MHA/FYOS family," Levin said. "From Pre-K through 12th grade, our school was a warm and nurturing second home for me, as well as a launch pad from which to explore the



wider world, knowing that a team of teachers, support staff, classmates and friends were cheering me on from afar. Everyone I've met since graduation knows how lucky I feel to have grown up at the MHA (seriously, ask them; they'll tell you)!

"The best memories involved me and my classmates making our own opportunities. Whether reviving our Yeshiva University Model UN team after a several-year hiatus, producing 'Peter Pan' from scratch, or conjuring a Tu B'Shvat carnival out of thin air, nothing seemed too ambitious, and our incredibly supportive faculty—including, very often, my mom [former MHA art teacher Mrs. Judy Levin]—helped us pull it off."

Levin thinks of her classmates fondly and often and hopes to see them soon in Jerusalem. She can be reached at talya.levin@gmail.com.



Ethan Eisen (MHA '96) and his wife Talia live in Israel, where he works as a psychologist and they are raising four children: Aderet, 10; Naama, 7; Nesia, 4; and Gadi, 1½. He can be reached at ethan.eisen@gmail.com.



Heather Braverman (MHA '98, FYOS '02)

lives in Richmond, Virginia, and works as a personal care aide for the elderly and homebound. She has two sons: Nachman, 5, and Ezra, 3. She misses the Memphis community and wishes she could keep in closer touch with her classmates. Her email address is hrb7384@yahoo.com.



Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky (MHA '99) happily resides in Memphis with her husband Alex and their five-year-old twins, Benjamin and Eliana. She teaches kindergarten at the Bornblum Jewish Community School and volunteers on the Memphis Recruitment Committee (100newfamilies.com) to attract Jewish families to the community.



"I'd like to thank the MHA staff and volunteers for their unwavering dedication to the Jewish community of Memphis," Sukhodolsky said. "I received an excellent education, and I am forever grateful. I feel blessed to have had exceptional teachers at the MHA. Three of my favorites are amazing women who continue to inspire me to this day: Mrs. Anat Kampf, Mrs. Sandy Gersten and Mrs. Michelle Katz."

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Graduates of 1996-2000

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"I have so many wonderful memories from the MHA! They include kicking roofers during kickball, playing four-square, *Lech Lecha* Land, *Pirkei Avot* plays, getting a "double check," being twins with **Tali (Bacaner) Levy** (MHA '00, FYOS '04) in an unforgettable production of 'The Parent Trap,' watching 'Willy Wonka' more times than we could count, learning about the Titanic for an entire year in sixth grade, Wender catching flies, our eighth grade trip to Atlanta, and most of all, each and every one of the special people I met along the way."

She enjoys seeing her classmates regularly when they come through Memphis. "To those of you who we haven't seen in a while, it would be great to catch up! Please don't hesitate to get in touch at jessicarbaum@gmail.com or come for a visit."

Rebecca (Wender) Chubak (MHA '99) lives on the Upper East Side of Manhattan with her husband Joshua and two children, Olivia and Jacob.



Benjamin Rubenstein (MHA '00, FYOS '04) and his wife Rivka live in Baltimore, Maryland, and are the parents of one daughter, Aliza. He works as an IT system engineer for a local hospital. His favorite MHA teacher was Mrs. **Peninah (Fink) Salid** (MHA '82, YOS '85). Rubenstein's email address is benjrubenstein@gmail.com.



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

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During GMSG color war in 1997, red and black team members (top photo, from left) **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), **Leaf (Liverman) Maggio** (FYOS '98) and **Aliza (Katz) Shapiro** (MHA '96) and blue and green team members (bottom photo, from left) **Talya Levin** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Deena (Katz) Yarmush** (MHA '94, FYOS '97) and **Bracha (Lubin) Hyman** (MHA '96) present their respective team banners to the judges.



GMSG senior **Bracha (Beth Goldberg) Garland** (FYOS '97, far right) imposes order with a super soaker during kidnap in 1996. The freshman hostages include (from left) Sharon Greenberg, **Esther (Schachter) Fridman** (MHA '96), **Jenny (Kagan) Gelfand** (MHA '96), **Talya Levin** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), Aline Waknin, **Bracha (Lubin) Hyman** (MHA '96) and **Aliza (Katz) Shapiro** (MHA '96).

flashback



High school girls (clockwise from top left) **Esther (Schachter) Fridman** (MHA '96), **Atara Thomas** (MHA '97), **Amanda (Mack) Gurock** (FYOS '98), **Sarah (Emerson) Helfand** (MHA '95, FYOS '98), **Talya Levin** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Esther (Yaselman) Gurovich** (MHA '94, FYOS '98), **Leaf (Liverman) Maggio** (FYOS '98), **Nina (Kaplan) Sapiro** (MHA '95, FYOS '99), **Rose (Zeitlin) Gold** (MHA '95, FYOS '99), **Amara Levine-Reich** (MHA '94, FYOS '97), **Dvora (Stein) Weisfogel** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), and **Shira (Katz) Nathan** (MHA '95) enjoy a sunny day on the front steps of the GMSG.



The FYOS class of 2000: (front row, from left) **Talya Levin** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Chaviva Halpert** (FYOS '00), **Sarah (Richstone) Saltzman** (FYOS '00), **Dvora (Stein) Weisfogel** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Sara Smith** (FYOS '00); (back row, from left) **Elchanan (Ari) Reznick** (FYOS '00), **Ronen Bass** (FYOS '00), **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and **Shmuel Bergman** (FYOS '00).

acks



Playing the roles of the 1992 presidential candidates in the school's mock electoral debate were **Josh Kahane** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) as George H.W. Bush, **Ariel (Grovetman) Weiner** (MHA '93) as Bill Clinton and **Dovid Schachter** (MHA '93, FYOS '97) as H. Ross Perot.



GMSG students, chaperoned by Rabbis Ari Katz and Yonason Gersten, on a hike near Gatlinburg, Tennessee, during their January 1997 school shabbaton.



The cast of the junior high school's 1995 production of Anton Chekhov's "The Good Doctor": (from left) **Nina (Kaplan) Sapir** (MHA '95, FYOS '99), **Brian Wender** (MHA '96), **Esther (Schachter) Fridman** (MHA '96), **Shira (Katz) Nathan** (MHA '95), **Aliza (Katz) Shapiro** (MHA '96), **Jenny (Kagan) Gelfand** (MHA '96), **Rose (Zeitlin) Gold** (MHA '95, FYOS '99), **Talya Levin** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Ethan Eisen** (MHA '96), **David Kaplan** (MHA '96), **Yoni Freiden** (MHA '96, FYOS '00), **Dvora (Stein) Weisfogel** (MHA '96, FYOS '00) and **Bracha (Lubin) Hyman** (MHA '96). The play was directed by Dr. Jerry Kutliroff and Mrs. Abby Johnson.

flashback



The eighth grade class of 2000 takes a cheeky photo to accompany the "If I Had a Dollar for Every Time" feature for the yearbook:
 (front row, from left) **Irina Bozin** (MHA '00), **Tali (Bacaner) Levy** (MHA '00, FYOS '04);
 (middle row, from left) **Shaindel (Kaplan) Kahn** (MHA '00, FYOS '04), **Shannon (Mantell) Nagrodski** (MHA '00), **Roni (Epstein) Berkovits** (MHA '00, FYOS '04); (back row, from left) **Paul Belz** (MHA '00), **Mark Kaplan** (MHA '00), **Dovid Safier** (MHA '00, FYOS '04), **Marcus Moss** (MHA '00), **Ben Schultz** (MHA '00), **Benjamin Rubenstein** (MHA '00, FYOS '04), **Mordechai Gersten** (MHA '00) and **Binyamin Ehrenkranz** (MHA '00, FYOS '04).



Classmates **Gila (Graber) Livi** (MHA '99, FYOS '03), **Betty (Baruchman Freiden) Gulko** (MHA '99, FYOS '03), **Jessica (Baum) Sukhodolsky** (MHA '99), **Rebecca (Wender) Chubak** (MHA '99) and **Jenny (Steinberg) Sved** (MHA '99, FYOS '03) enjoy some girl time atop the stage in the MHA auditorium.

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IN THE NEXT ISSUE

The tenth issue of our newsletter is scheduled for publication sometime around Chanukah. In it, we will highlight the eighth and twelfth grade graduates from the years 1981-1985. Members of those classes will receive questionnaires by email in October. Please return your completed survey promptly so that you can be included.

In that issue, we will feature a story about Rabbi Mordechai Yormark, z'l, who taught at our school for 32 years. If you have any stories, photos or memories of Rabbi Yormark that you'd 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 so we can include them in the Alumni News section of our next issue. Thank you!

