

Kol Bogrei Rambam is the Alumni Committee's monthly e-newsletter for and about Maimonides School graduates. Each month we share information on individual graduates' ventures and accomplishments, as well as general news notes, all reflecting the school's mission of preparing educated, observant Jews to be contributing members of society. Your ideas and accomplishments will help sustain and strengthen this key communications tool; please forward to alumni@maimonides.org.

Recent Alumnus Joins Team Working to Revolutionize Agriculture

"I've always been passionate about food -- cooking it and eating it," asserted **Ben Niewood '10**.

That's wonderful, because Ben and **Aliza (Shapiro) Niewood '10** just moved to New York to start careers in the food industry – Aliza at Hello Fresh, a meal kit delivery company, and Ben at "an amazing modern farming company called Bowery Farming."

into the water and grow the plants under LED lights."

"Because we grow indoors in a controlled environment, we can vary the temperature, humidity, CO2, and other environmental variables to get perfect growing conditions for every crop. Because we are inside, we can also ensure that there are no bugs in the lettuce without using any pesticides." He added, "That's particularly beneficial for us kosher keepers." Bowery produce is available at some Whole Foods and Foragers stores in the Tri-State area.

The company uses a proprietary software system, vision systems, automation technology, and machine learning to monitor plants and all the variables that drive their growth, Ben said. "Because we control the entire process from seed to store, the Bowery farm uses 95 percent less water, and is exponentially more productive on the same footprint of land than traditional agriculture."

Bowery has raised almost \$28 million in venture capital and is backed by established leaders and innovators in the food industry.

"Bowery's mission isn't just to grow fresh produce," Ben said. "Our long-term goal is to use our farms to help deal with the world's impending food crisis. The world's population is going to explode over the next 30-40 years. With more people moving to densely-populated urban areas, growing more produce close to cities is the only cost-

and energy-effective way to feed everyone in the cities; traditional farming can't do that."

Ben learned for a year at Yeshivat Orayta before matriculating at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, receiving a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering in 2015. He was working as a product design engineer at Nest in San Francisco when he spotted the opportunity at Bowery on an MIT alumni jobs list.

He is one of two mechanical engineers, "working mostly on systems engineering. We design the systems -- lighting, irrigation, and HVAC -- that help the plants grow." He not only runs experiments, takes measurements, and builds new prototype systems, but also helps harvest the day's lettuce haul. "We're focused on building our next farm, which will be much larger. After that we'll look for new cities in the U.S. to build farms near, and we eventually want to have at least one Bowery farm next to every major city in the world.

"In America, our food is consumed so far from its source that many people don't understand the connection between farming and food," Ben observed. "For contrast, in many of the other countries Aliza and I have visited, especially in Asia, people buy far more produce from small markets whose farms are just outside the city they live in. And food is central to any culture; the best part of traveling, and the best way to experience any new culture, is to try the food."



Ben Niewood '10

Bowery is "growing the purest produce imaginable by revolutionizing agriculture," Ben continued. "By combining the benefits of the best local farms with advances made possible by technology, our indoor farms create the ideal conditions to grow post-organic produce, and good, fresh produce is the

easiest way to effortlessly make food taste better."

The Manhattan company is operating its first farm, and is building a second. "We grow everything hydroponically in a warehouse," Ben explained. "All of the plants grow in little plugs made of a synthetic, dirt-like substance. The plugs sit in Styrofoam rafts that float on top of a large tray of water. We put nutrients

Couple Expanding Their In-Home Therapy Service to New England

Susie and **Josh Loberfeld '98** have been matching qualified physical therapists with patients in the comfort of their own homes since 2011. The business model has proven so successful in New York and Florida that they have recently established a new practice, In-Home Rehab of Boston.

"We are an outpatient physical therapy company that only does house calls, primarily for Medicare-age patients," Josh explained. "We offer quality individualized one-on-one physical therapy in patients' homes, so there is never any time lost waiting in waiting rooms, looking for parking, or taking the bus."

He added, "Our physical therapists work on everything from balance to gait training to fall prevention. Therapists also deal with any type of rehabilitation needs, as well as post-surgical therapy."

Josh received his bachelor's degree in finance from Yeshiva University in 2002, and spent the next 12 years in the telecommunications industry.

About six years ago, Susie launched a business delivering rehabilitation services to residences in the New York area. "She was working at an outpatient therapy facility part-time and she noticed that there was a need for a house-call business," Josh recounted. "Therapy is a commitment, and people who can't go are not going to get better. With a house visit, there's no excuse. We come to you."

"I saw the growth and opportunity that Susie's practice had, so I decided to change course. I left the telecommunications field and joined Susie full-time," Josh said. "It was a great decision. I'm no longer in corporate America. I was an executive, but I always had a board to report to."

The Loberfelds moved to Hollywood, FL in the summer of 2014 and expanded their business into the area that

November. "Now we cover all three counties in south Florida," he said. "Therapists are found through various job placement sites and word of mouth. Once we are able to give them the volume that they are looking for, they like working for a house calls practice because they can make their own schedules. We hand them the referrals and we do all the sales, billing, and marketing; they do all the therapy."

The service is primarily for patients "who either have a hard time getting to a facility, don't drive anymore, don't want to go out, or just prefer the therapy in the comfort of their homes," Josh said. "The population we serve is mostly 80-plus years old. They don't need high-tech equipment. We bring portable processes and equipment, like electrical stimulation, ultrasound, bands, and weights."

"One of our areas of emphasis is helping them after a fall," Josh commented. "We work with the patients in their homes so that they can be more aware of the surroundings and be sure they can stay safely at home."

"More services will be needed in the home as the elderly population increases," Josh observed. "You can expect to see more doctors making house calls. Every doctor's goal is to keep patients out of the hospital." He added that In-Home Rehab "can prevent people from going back into hospitals, or to rehabilitation facilities or nursing homes."

Josh and Susie have continued to build their brand through expansion. New locations are key to enhancing the value of the company, Josh said. "Since I know

Boston very well, I thought this was a good opportunity."

So now there are three different divisions in three states. They don't need a lot of full-time staff – only themselves and a full-time administrator. There are about 35 therapists altogether, with the business offering just physical therapy in New York and both physical and occupational therapy in Florida. That's the model for Greater Boston, which is already operational.

In the Boston area, "I go door-to-door



Susie and Josh Loberfeld '98 and family

trying to meet doctors and their staffs, educating them as to how we can benefit their patients," Josh said. They also work with hospitals and home health-care agencies.

Technology is a key to the operation and expansion. "It's easier to communicate with the staff electronically. Our entire system is online," Josh said. "I can't imagine having a company that uses pen and paper for medical records. We do all of our billing with Medicare and other insurance companies electronically."

Indeed, almost everything is done remotely, although they do visit the markets often. "In New York and Boston we have mailing addresses, no physical offices. Our administrative office is in Florida – we used to work out of the house but that changed very quickly," Josh said. The Loberfelds also have three children.

Lady M-Cats Star Returning to Boston – with Lady Macs

One of Maimonides School's most celebrated student-athletes will compete with her collegiate teammates in Boston on *Motza'ei Shabbat*, November 18.

Michal Alge '14 and the Yeshiva University Lady Macs will help open the Emmanuel College Tip-Off Classic with a match against the host school. The game is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. in the Jean Yawkey Center on the Emmanuel campus, 400 The Fenway. (Shabbat ends at 5:05 p.m.)

There will be a special presentation by the school at halftime to Michal, who is

the Lady M-Cats' leader in career points. Tickets at \$5 each may be reserved by writing mike@maimonides.org or calling (617) 232-4452, ext. 405. A portion of ticket proceeds will benefit Maimonides athletics. There will also be a game on Sunday afternoon, November 19.

Michal enters her senior year at YU's Stern College as a co-captain and leading offensive powerhouse. Last season she led the Lady Macs in scoring (almost 25 points per game), rebounding (13) and minutes played, and was tied for steals. She led the entire Skyline Conference in rebounding and was the fourth leading scorer. Over her two-year collegiate career, she has scored 560 points.

Michal is also a co-chair and athletics liaison of the Beren Student Life Committee at the university, and has played intercollegiate softball and soccer. She is still part of the Maimonides School landscape as director of the M-Cat Sports Camp every June and July.

The head basketball coach at Emmanuel is legendary. Andy Yosinoff is beginning his 41st season. His teams have 788 victories and 17 post-season NCAA tournament appearances. Coach Yosinoff received the Red Auerbach Award in 2012, given annually to the nation's top Jewish college coach. He coached the United States women's basketball team to a gold medal in the 2005 Maccabiah games.



Michal Alge '14

CLASS NOTES

1982

Mazal tov to **Dr. Rebecca (Kolodny)** and Steven **Schwartz** on the engagement of their son **David '11** to Dena Guttman. Rebecca is the daughter of Drs. Nancy and Gerald Kolodny.

2000

Mazal tov to **Julia Hoffman '00** and Eitan Hersh on the birth of their daughter. Grandparents are Eva and Mel Hoffman.

2004

Mazal tov to

Zehava (Bloomberg) and Dov **Cohen '04** on the birth of their son. Grandparents are Miriam and Rabbi Jon Bloomberg.

Danny Malkin on his engagement to Talia Goldberg. Danny is the son of Ruth and Alexander Malkin.

2008

Mazal tov to **Arielle (Birnbaum)** and Solly **Silverman** on the birth of their daughter, Elizabeth Lou. Grandfather is Dr. Herb Birnbaum.

2009

Mazal tov to **Yoey Schacht** on his engagement to Penina Kozlovsky. Yoey's parents are Phyllis and David Schacht.

2010

Mazal tov to **Talia (Kesselman)** and Amiel **Abir** on the birth of their daughter, Aya Haleli. Grandparents are Tamara Kesselman and Dr. Howard Kesselman.

2011

Mazal tov to **David Schwartz** on his engagement to Dena Guttman. David is the son of **Rebecca (Kolodny) '82** and Steven Schwartz.

2012

Mazal tov to

Yakov Ellenbogen on his engagement to Miriam Pearl Klahr. Yakov is the son of Debbie and Dr. Hershel Ellenbogen.

Yoni Nouriel on his engagement to Avigayil Unterberg. Yoni is the son of Daniel Nouriel.

2013

Mazal tov to **Moshe Beiser** on his engagement to Rachelli Schechter. Moshe is the son of Suellen and Joshua Beiser.

2015

Mazal tov to **Kayla Shatz** on her engagement to **Austin Hauser**. Kayla is the daughter of Lisa and Michael Shatz. Austin is the son of Dr. Wendy and Eli Hauser.

Condolences to

Esther (Abelow) Tekuzener '77, Dr. Avram Abelow, and Gerald Abelow on the loss of their beloved mother, Greta Abelow, ז"ל, retired Elementary School teacher and tireless Maimonides School volunteer for 50 years.

Corrections

There were several errors in the most recent issue of Kol Bogrei Rambam. We apologize for these errors:

Yaakov Feit is a member of the Class of 1995.

Maya (Krohn) Joyandeh is a member of the Class of 2006.

The 1965 graduate identified as Alan Gulko in the photo on Page 2 is actually **Ely Lamdan**.

Alan Katz '77, new Maimonides School treasurer, was omitted as an alumnus serving on the Maimonides Board of Directors.

Graduate's Virtual Jewish Coffee House Spreading the Spoken Word

Several months ago **Rabbi Scott Kahn '88** launched Israel-based JewishCoffeeHouse.com, "a podcast network producing interesting and provocative material, properly recorded and edited."

Scott defines a podcast as "a form of radio on demand. But unlike radio, podcasts offer easy access without geographic boundaries, and opportunities to engage in whatever topic interests the listener."

The site offers its product in four categories: "Thought podcasts, which consist entirely of Torah content; talk and interviews, covering topics such as finance, dating, Jewish-Christian dialogue, and more; politics and society, which are shows of a more provocative and controversial nature; and culture, comedy and sports -- pure entertainment."

The Jewish thought content presents an Orthodox perspective, Scott explained. "The other categories may have nothing to do with Orthodoxy, although offensive language is not used, and many of the issues addressed affect the Orthodox community."

JewishCoffeeHouse currently has more than a dozen podcasts, featuring not only Scott but also some of his rabbinic colleagues; former Member of Knesset Dov Lipman; educators including **Anne Gordon '85** and **Rabbi Asher Lopatin '82**; and comedian Molly Livingstone. Topics range from *halachah* and *tefillah* to women's issues and storytelling.

Scott is an alumnus of Brandeis University and was a graduate student at Oxford University. He studied at several *yeshivot* in Israel and received *semichah* from HaRav Zalman Nechemia Goldberg and Darche Noam.

Scott was co-founder and *rosh yeshiva* of Yeshivat Yesodei Torah in Beit Shemesh, which closed in 2015. "For 15 years, I was

deeply involved in the field of post-high school Jewish education, as a teacher, administrator, and developer of curricula," he said. "The *yeshiva* was unable to recruit enough students in 2015, so a potential career change became inevitable. Frankly, I thought then that it was a blessing, and I feel doubly so now."

"Many of our podcasts are concerned with ideas and issues relevant to the larger Jewish community, with a special – though not exclusive – emphasis on the Orthodox world. My ongoing contact with my students helps me to better recognize the issues that matter most outside of the bubble in which I



Rabbi Scott Kahn '88 and family

"It took me a bit of time to find an area that would be personally and professionally rewarding; I wanted to run my own business, and was fortunate to discover a real need in the marketplace for high-quality online radio for the Jewish world," he continued. "I surveyed the landscape and found that there were too few Jewish-themed podcasts, many typically of inferior quality. Quite often, 'Torah podcasts' are not true podcasts, but classes recorded in front of an audience on an iPhone."

In addition, he said, many podcasts have failed to address serious issues that confront the Orthodox community, although "there are certainly exceptions to this; some Jewish and Torah podcasts are exceptional."

live in Israel."

Scott said he is involved in every aspect of the production, from writing to recording to editing. "I often record in a quiet room in my basement, and I also go to where my podcast partners are," he related. "So, for example, while my 'Maimonides Minute' (Rambam-themed) podcast is recorded at home, 'Knesset Corner' with Rabbi Lipman is recorded at his dining room table, and 'Cup of Salvation' has been recorded at various locations."

"Podcasting is far from a niche product or fad; I anticipate that it is the future of audio broadcasting," Scott said. He added that the technology encourages

continued on page 5

Maimonides School Alumni Here and There...

Rena (Katz) '90 and Richard **Berger** will be honored for their years of service by Congregation Bikur Cholim-Machzikay Hadath in Seattle at the shul's dinner on November 12. Rena, who is director of operations at Torah Day School of Seattle, has lived in the city since 2003. Indeed, the Bergers live right next door to the shul.

"When we met, Richard was very involved with the shul, running the *chevre kadisha*," Rena said. "He was on the board for a few years and is now in his second year as shul president. Richard is a marriage and family therapist so he's very involved – and effective -- in resolving conflicts, and has been focusing on bringing our community closer together."

Rena is a long-time member of the Mikvah Committee, serving as chair for the past five years or so. "I'm a volunteer shul *meshgichah* and spend a lot of time in the kitchen cooking for shul events. We also help out with the shul summer camp, being an extra pair of hands when needed. I do a few other things as well."

The Maimonides School Invitational Basketball Tournament in Memory of Leland Gelman is scheduled for Thursday-Sunday, December 7-10. The varsity boys and girls will host teams from Atlanta Jewish Academy; Melvin Berman Hebrew Academy in Rockville, MD; Rae Kushner Yeshiva High School in Livingston, NJ; and Joel Braverman High School of Yeshivah of Flatbush.

Beginning this year, the tournament name includes a memorial to **Leland Gelman**, ל"ט. Leland, who passed away unexpectedly about four years ago, was an outstanding athlete in the Maimonides Class of 1982, when our interscholastic program was in its infancy. Thanks to the generosity of his family, this tournament will serve as a tribute to his love for competition and for his friends.

Among the alumni leading the tournament planning are **Sheera (Kessler) '76** and **Ahron Solomont '76**, overall co-chairs; **Sharon (Hecht) Kramer '85**; and **Claudine (Cohen) Grossman '91**. Details can be found at www.maimohoops.org.

Jewish Educator Launches Podcast Resource *continued from page 4*

"democratization. A good podcast, produced at home, can find an audience that rivals the ratings of established radio networks."

Scott feels his experiences in *yeshiva* "have come in very handy. This is more obvious with regard to the Torah podcasts that we produce; however, all podcasting and broadcasting is, like teaching, the process of transmitting ideas in a clear, stimulating, and entertaining manner."

Much of the inventory on the site "deals with subjects that matter to me," Scott said. "Our '*Chochmat Nashim*' podcast, which is co-hosted by Anne Gordon, addresses issues of concern to Orthodox feminists, while '*Orthodox Conundrum*' investigates serious issues in the American and Israeli Orthodox communities that some would rather ignore."

Other podcasts are suggested, such as '*Middle Grade Horror*,' which Scott calls "a light-hearted horror podcast produced by a professional fiction writer in New York. The host of '*Real*

Relationships,' a marriage therapist and relationship coach, approached me with the idea for a marriage and dating podcast. If it's a good topic, and we can make it sound good on the air, I'll usually give it a try."

JewishCoffeeHouse.com is not supposed to be a non-profit. "As we increase our listenership, I hope to attract advertisers who want to reach the Jewish community," Scott said. "Moreover, some of our podcasts may appeal well beyond the Jewish community. For example, '*Cup of Salvation*,' which is an explanation of the verses of Hallel tailored for a Christian audience. The potential advertisers for a podcast aimed at Christians are quite different from those targeting young Jewish adults on the Upper West Side." Scott's wife Aliza is the director of marketing and advertising.

"I look at every podcast series as a small business," Scott explained. "When a given podcast begins to earn income, the podcaster and I are full partners

and split the proceeds evenly. This gives each host a chance at a greater long-term return, and also allows him or her to be personally invested in the success of that podcast."

JewishCoffeeHouse.com also doubles as an incubator. "The podcasts have -- by design -- led to other opportunities. To give just one example, we have created a new division of the company that does independent podcast production for other providers," Scott said.

"We are constantly refining our recording techniques, and on the lookout for new podcast series," Scott asserted. "Our goal is to be the premier Jewish podcast network in the world. I know that there is a long road ahead. As soon as new material goes up, it's necessary to produce new content. I'm always looking for new and better podcast series to produce and include under the *JewishCoffeeHouse* umbrella. It's a real challenge, but I'm enjoying it immensely."

A Dear Friend Remembers Rabbi Reuven Cohn '65, ל"ד

By Dr. Tamy (Simon) Chelst '66

My day stopped, my heart pounded, my feelings experienced a body disconnect when I heard that Reuven had been taken to the *olam haemet*.

It is so difficult to imagine an earthly world without his presence.

I have known Reuven for over 65 years. I just finished reading a book where the female main character spoke of one man as her best friend.

For years I thought of Reuven as my male childhood best friend.

I sat at his funeral and listened to details of his present, his warmth toward family and students, the respect he offered all G-d's creatures and his overwhelming interest and support of intellectual thought and creativity. Reuven worked so hard to be the man the speakers all described. He exuded effort to demonstrate warmth and loving, caring and kindness.

I am able to identify with this persona when I recollect his presence at my son Avishai's Bar Mitzvah in Stratford, Ontario and my son Dov's small second wedding at his wife Michal's parents' home in Brookline. At the latter *simchah* Reuven read the *ketubah*, and at the former he gave a *dvar Torah*. At both *smachot*, he emphasized that his pres-

ence with our family was a *sine qua non*; he was intricately woven with us, as the Simons were connected to the Cohns over decades of joint educational endeavors and life stories. Our families even traced back similar roots to the shtetl of Slonim in White Russia, where Dvorah Cohn's family were highly respected *rabbanim* and my dad was first recognized as a remarkable student and mentor, and subsequently chosen by the Slonimer Rav to attend the Mirrer Yeshiva.

But it was with regard to Maimonides School that Reuven remained for me a constant and consistent link to the past. Reuven was my bridge to our joint history. A guardian of memories, he knew people as they are today and remembered them as they were in the past. He held in mind family links and relationships. He remembered a long history of teachers and students at Maimonides. He cherished his salient relationship to this past history and treasured the connection to teachers and advisors, lay benefactors and philanthropists who were instrumental in building and growing this institution. I envied Reuven's good fortune to stay in the greater Boston area. He was given the opportunity to share details of the glorious past with present students and friends.

When studying *Gemara* as a teenager, I glossed over the stories of *Tanaim* and *Amoraim*, giving examples from seemingly insignificant incidents.

"When I was at Abbaye's home for lunch, he did the following..." These seemed like simple mundane corroborative details, minimally necessary for our understanding of *halachah*. Reuven was able to transmit such stories to his students, friends, children and grandchildren. On a regular basis, I receive emails and calls from my dad's former students and their acquaintances who ask for these memories.

How will this connection with the past ever be maintained without Reuven? The current students at Maimonides could visualize the Rav or my father, Rabbi Simon, clearly through Reuven's eyes. That concretized worldview is now severed.

I had an opportunity to visit my parents' *kvarim* and that of Rabbi Soloveitchik last month. On the Rav's *kever* is the phrase, "*Nistalek le'yeshiva shel maalah*." I feel with confidence that Reuven was "*nistalek le'yeshiva shel maalah*," and there he sits sharing stories from his past history with the host of distinguished personalities who knew him so intimately.



Members of the Class of 2000 enjoy a mini-reunion in Riverdale, New York during the recent *simchat bat* for Amy and David Green's daughter Odelia: from left, Judith (Lupatkin) Bernstein, Solomon Redlich, David Green, Eitan Kimelman, Noah Liben, and Benyamin Kohanim. Other alumni who helped celebrate included Daniel Bloom '98 and Rabbi Asher Lopatin '82.