



צ"ס-ס"יז תש"ע • Spring 2010

ENTHUSIASM, ACCLAIM GREET NEW ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP TEAM

Enthusiasm and applause from all corners of the Maimonides School community greeted the May 17 announcement that Rabbi Yaakov Jaffe and Mrs. Judith Boroschek will assume leadership of the Upper and Middle Schools on July 1.

Rabbi Jaffe, a high school Judaic studies teacher and department chair who also serves as *mara d'atra* of the Maimonides *kehillah*, will succeed Rabbi Yair Altshuler as principal of Judaic studies. Rabbi

Altshuler will return to his home in Israel this summer after four years as principal.

Mrs. Boroschek, who brings more than 40 years of experience as a teacher, administrator, educational trainer and consultant, will serve as general studies principal. She will succeed Ken Weinstein, who has been named principal of Marblehead High School.

Rabbi Jaffe and Ms. Boroschek are "educational leaders who are committed to

the values of our school, have the administrative and pedagogical skills we need, and want to write the next chapter of the Maimonides story with us," said Jeffrey Swartz, chair of the school's Board of Directors, in a May 17 letter to the school community.

Rabbi Jaffe has taught Talmud, Tanach and psychology during his two years at Maimonides, and chairs the Upper School

Continued on page 2

CHIDON HATANAKH: ONE CHAMPION REJOICES, ANOTHER REFLECTS

2009 CHAMPION BECOMES 2010 INTERNATIONAL FINALIST

Menachem Schindler '11 has returned from Israel, where he had the experience of a lifetime. Not only did the Maimonides School junior compete in the International *Chidon HaTanakh*, finishing fifth overall and second among Diaspora candidates, but he also spent two weeks with his fellow contestants meeting dignitaries, reuniting with family and exploring the country.

Yet, back at Maimonides, he was still Menachem Schindler: soft-spoken, humble, discerning.

"I think it's important that this shouldn't be just about me," he said. "Everyone should take inspiration from this. Other people should find value in learning Torah and seek their own ways of incorporating it into their lives."

Menachem's great adventure began a year ago when he won the National Bible Contest and automatically qualified for



A beaming Alexander Kahan with Menachem Schindler after announcement of the results of the national *Chidon HaTanakh*.

the international *Chidon*. This is no easy feat. Competitors spend months in preparation, immersing themselves in several books of the *Tanakh* that are designated for the exam. Questions are challenging and sophisticated, requiring detailed knowledge and understanding.

For Menachem, the challenge included lifelong benefits. "I view *Tanakh* as a

Continued on page 5

2010 NATIONAL CHAMPION

Alexander Kahan '13 didn't seriously weigh the possibility of winning the National Bible Contest until he discovered that his score in the regional competition was one of the highest nationwide. Indeed, it wasn't a consideration even while immersed in the two-and-a-half hour national test on May 9 at the Ramaz School in Manhattan.

"I didn't realize I had a chance of winning until all the entries were in and they were counting up the scores," he recalled, adding, "I knew I had done well."

That's an understatement. The freshman from Brookline, competing in his third *Chidon HaTanakh* U.S. finals, was the top scorer among high school competitors, automatically qualifying for the 2011 international *Chidon* in Israel on *Yom HaAtzma'ut* 2011.

Can anybody say "dynasty?" This is the second straight year a Maimonides student has won the national contest. Last year's

Continued on page 5

PROJECT SHALOM A SMORGASBORD OF *CHESED* OPPORTUNITIES

Project Shalom has been a Maimonides School trademark of *chesed* in the Greater Boston community for more than a generation. Each January, Maimonides seniors begin a five-month weekly commitment to hospitals, homeless shelters, pre-schools, nursing homes and social service agencies.

Among other popular destinations for members of the Class of 2010 were the Tenacity center in Brighton, which focuses on life skills and tennis instruction for inner-city youths; Combined Jewish Philanthropies' literacy project; and the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Two Mock Trial team veterans served in the Middlesex County district attorney's office, where their coach is a prosecutor.

Avigayil Kelman blazed a different trail. Avigayil says she always has loved horses. As a child, she learned to ride and attended horsemanship camps. As the demands of her Maimonides schedule intensified, there was little time left for this pursuit.

Then Project Shalom reopened this wonderful window in her life. She learned from a neighbor in Lynn about Windrush Farm Therapeutic Equitation in bucolic



Avigayil Kelman '10

Boxford, a non-profit working horse farm on the North Shore that helps children and adults with physical, emotional, and learning disabilities. "It was such a cool opportunity to go back to it," Avigayil said. "I was a little apprehensive because I hadn't been on horses for so many years. But they completely train you and help you out."

Windrush offers not only physical therapy but also psychological counseling, as "riders get so much out of it in self-confidence," Avigayil pointed out. "Watching people work through their fears and try new things they didn't think they'd be able to achieve is really awesome."

Patients at Windrush ride with a partner; volunteers like Avigayil walk alongside or lead them. "The goal is that they can learn to steer themselves. You talk with them in ordinary conversations and give them information they might need." She also was called upon to groom horses, bring them to and from destinations, saddle the animals, clean and polish tack and leather, and other odd jobs.

"It's such a partnership to be with a horse," Avigayil explained. "You have to each know your space and your boundaries in order for it to be a successful relationship. There's also the caretaking aspect. When

you pick up those heavy feet, you have to let it know, 'I'm doing this for you.' You have to listen to each other."

The Windrush assignment was "such a great experience for me," said Avigayil. She said she learned not only from the staff and the patients but also from many of the adult volunteers, and hopes to volunteer again in the summer. She also is excited about her upcoming year learning at Emunah v'Omanut in Israel. "I heard they do some kind of *chesed* with horses."

Sarah Diamond and Adina Blazzkowsky were Project Shalom volunteers at the Boston Higashi School in Randolph, which employs a unique methodology to address the needs of autistic children.

"They get the kids running at the beginning of the day. That uses extra energy and makes them more focused," Sarah explained. "So at the beginning of the day we jogged with the kids." Sarah said they began as observers, then worked one-to-one with children in areas such as computer time. "They try to do everything together, which means that they need a lot of aides helping," she said. "We had to gain some confidence in ourselves, so the teachers trust you more. Once they do, you really get to help."



Sarah Diamond '10

"The best part of my day was chorus practice, and they were singing 'We Are the World.' I have a connection with music, and to see how much work these kids put into this was amazing," related Sarah, who added, "I always connect with kids."

She is planning to return to the Higashi campus for an upcoming celebration that will culminate months of work. "I've seen the process," she said. "Now I want to see the end."

Project Shalom, Sarah observed, provided her with a sense of responsibility and empathy. "It was a glimpse into what the future's going to be like." 🐾

NEW LEADERSHIP TEAM

Continued from page 1

Tanach Department. He has published a wide range of scholarly articles and served as director of the Jewish Agency's National Bible Contest (which he won as a high school student). He graduated magna cum laude from Columbia, majoring in English, and earned master's degrees in Bible and Jewish history and an M.S. in Jewish secondary education from Yeshiva University. He was ordained in 2006 by YU's Rabbi Isaac Elchanan Theological Seminary and is working on his Ph.D. in curriculum and teaching of Halachah.

Ms. Boroschek has served as a classroom teacher, academic department chair, and high-level administrator in some of the area's top public school districts. Currently she is one of the leading instructors in a licensure program for school supervisors and directors. She is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis and the Harvard Graduate School of Education.

Also joining the administrative team will be Rabbi Dov Huff '00, as assistant principal of the Upper and Middle School. Rabbi Huff is currently Grade 8 dean and a Judaic studies teacher in the Middle School. 🐾

GRADUATE'S LOVE OF TEACHING BENEFITS BROOKLYN TODDLERS



Debra (Levine)
Greenbaum '72

Debbie Levine was enrolled in Brighton High School when she spent a summer at Camp Yavneh more than 40 years ago. She returned to Boston with a new level of religious observance—and a personal mission to enroll in Maimonides School as a sophomore.

With the support of her parents, Daniel and Beatrice Levine, and the guidance of her neighbors and friends, Rabbi Abraham and Sylvia Halbfinger, she was accepted.

Today, Debbie Levine Greenbaum is among those charting the future of Jewish education in the U.S. She is the director of Early Childhood at Brooklyn's Yeshivah of Flatbush, overseeing a staff of 70 teachers and specialists and 23 classes of children between the ages of two and five years.

"When I began in Jewish education, I was amazed by how seamless a match it was for me," she says with a reminiscent smile. "This field is a perfect way to combine my lifelong interest in young children with my love for perpetuating the essence of Judaism."

Jewish education, Debbie finds, "is constantly evolving. The Yeshivah of Flatbush, Early Childhood, is an exciting, hands-on and engaging program. We provide the children with opportunities to discover, explore, experience and understand the world around them. We pride ourselves on our Hebrew immersion program—*lvrit b'lvrit*—which is integral to our educational philosophy."

Mrs. Greenbaum earned an undergraduate degree in Judaic Studies at YU's Stern College for Women and taught in supplemental Hebrew schools and day schools across the United States, but, she recalls, "I felt something was lacking." So she earned a master's degree in Early Childhood Education at Wheelock College. "It was a phenomenal experience—I loved every class and grew from every interaction."

She decided to pursue a career in Jewish education because "I felt drawn to help establish foundations for lives dedicated to Torah and mitzvot and to foster a love for *Am Yisrael* and *Medinat Yisrael*. It's so important to guide our children and raise them to be essential parts of the Jewish and secular communities in which we live, and that, more than anything else, is why I am here."

Mrs. Greenbaum began her preschool teaching career at Gan Torah, the precursor to Torah Academy in Brookline, and then accepted a position as a four-year-olds' teacher at Yeshivah of Flatbush in 1986. Later she taught five-year-olds before being named director of Early Childhood in 2004.

"I've furthered my education throughout my career," she points out, and indeed has earned a second master's degree in administration and supervision, been licensed in special education and certified by "All Kinds of Minds." Now she is pursuing a degree in children's reading and literacy. "Every year, there's more to learn and more ways to help the children grow. It's central to my work, and to the work of any teacher, to constantly seek methods of improving the preschool experience for every child," she said.

Debbie and her husband Yitzchak have four grown children and eight grandchildren. When she thinks back to her time as a stu-

dent at Maimonides School, she remembers the friendship and support of her classmates and their parents, who showed her constant *hachnasat orchim* throughout her high school years. The particular encouragement of two of her *limudei kodesh* teachers, Rabbi Abraham Goldreich and Rabbi Isaiah Wohlgemuth, stands out in her mind as instrumental to her success as a new student at Maimonides. "There's no doubt in my mind that the interactions and experiences that I had at Maimonides have had a significant impact on who I am today. I am honored to be able to pay it forward to the Jewish community of tomorrow." 🐾

Mazal tov to...

Ethel Chaya (Leder) '66 and Feivel **Igel** on the birth of their granddaughter, Avigayil Bannett.

Dr. Sharon Galper '84 and Dr. Shammai Grossman on the birth of their son, Elise and **Dr. Michael Wiener '84**, who were honored recently by their shul, Westville Synagogue of New Haven, CT.

Shari (Morgan) '88 and **David Katz '88**, who were honored recently by their shul, Young Israel of Sharon.

Adina Bloomberg '93 on her marriage to Aviv Melese.

Batsheva Halberstam '93 and Dr. Yoav Spiegel on the birth of their son, Ethan Zev.

Timna (Taube) '95 and Erez **Glabosky** on the birth of their son, Yehoshua Yitzchok.

Rachael (Gelfman) '97 and **Rabbi Michael Schultz '97** on the birth of their son, Yotam Yosef.

Israela (Levine) '99 and Mayer **Kahan** on the birth of their daughter, Amira Celia.

Caryn (Litt) '99 and Yaakov **Wolfe** on the birth of their daughter, Eva Rose.

Dr. Raphi Wald '99, who recently received his doctor of psychology degree from the University of Hartford.

Rabbi Shmuel Segal '00 on his engagement to Leah Kanner.

Shayna (Schafer) '00 and **Ruby Yarmush '00** on the birth of their daughter, Aderet Moriah.

Noam '02 and Sara **Sendor** on the birth of their daughter.

Sara Gale '03 on her engagement to Keith Weinberg.

Alana Gendelman '03 on her engagement to Landon Berns.

Ilan Mizrahi-Arnaud '03 on his engagement to Donna Ackermann.

Ahuva (Robinson) '04 and Joshua **Sclair** on the birth of their son, Aaron Joseph.

Joshua Gendelman '05 on his engagement to Hannah Rosenthal.

Maya Krohn '06 on her engagement to David Joyandeh.

Condolences to...

Ruth Poritz '77, Naomi Schechter '77, Dr. Sara Abromson-Leeman '71, Deborah Abromson Hannoucene '73, Dr. Miriam Ladell '69, Daniel Poritz '11, Aaron Schechter '10, Avi Schechter '13, Dena Pearlman '02, Joshua Poritz '03 and Leia Poritz '07, on the loss of their beloved father and grandfather, William Abromson, z"l.

Cheryl (Rabinovici) Epstein '72 on the passing of her beloved husband, Dr. David Epstein, z"l.

Hadassah (Shonfeld) Tatelman '67, Jonathan Tatelman '90, Orit Brueckheimer '96 and Atarah Hedvat '97 on the loss of their beloved mother and grandmother, Mrs. Chana Shonfeld, z"l. Mrs. Shonfeld was the beloved wife of Cantor Abraham Shonfeld, former Maimonides School teacher.

Yehezkiel Gluzband '77 and Rivka (Gluzband) Mascoop '81 on the loss of their beloved father, Eli Gluzband, z"l.

Jocelyn Gordon '78 on the loss of her beloved father, Bernard Gordon, z"l.

Dr. Jeffrey Mael '88 on the passing of his beloved father, Dr. M. Sidney Mael, z"l.

ACCOLADES FOLLOW NEW AND IMPROVED SPECIAL VISITORS' DAY



Halle Kahan, Grade 3, shares a classroom lesson with grandmother Anne Kahan.

Maimonides School's expanded and upgraded Grandparents and Special Visitors Day has engendered a burst of positive feedback.

Some 175 guests visited the school for the annual event on May 14, Rosh Chodesh Sivan. They connected with children in the classrooms, enjoyed a catered luncheon, and were treated to music by the Elementary School orchestra and chorus, as well as fourth-grade dancers and a d'var Torah delivered by Grade 5 student David Kotler.

Those highlights were consistent with the itineraries of more than a dozen past Grandparents Days. This year's event, however, also included a number of new features, including:

- An informal opening session during which grandparents and other visitors could relax and meet each other.
- Elementary School class sessions tailored to include and enlighten visitors.
- "Middle School Mosaic," composed of a series of presentations, question-and-answer sessions and vignettes about the program, philosophy and achievements in Grades 6-8.
- Afternoon opportunities for learning, with presentations by two Upper School faculty members, Rabbi Yaakov Jaffe and Mrs. Roberta Wright.

"Visitors were treated to interactive classrooms, dynamic lessons, and the ability to experience a day with their student courtesy of our caring faculty," said Elementary School Principal Rabbi David Saltzman. "Our visitors were quite appreciative of the daily effort exerted by our staff to ensure that Maimonides remains a comfortable, fun, and exciting place to learn and grow," added Assistant Principal Reena Slovin.

Middle School Mosaic was designed "to give Maimonides Middle School grandparents and special visitors a small taste of the myriad of student activities and pursuits that are nurtured within our halls," said Rabbi Avi Bossewitsch, Middle School director.

"Our school's Chidon HaTanach finalists, Newsbowl participants and math team members answered quiz show questions in their respective domains, followed by presentations in Hebrew and Arabic from foreign language students," he said. "Other students read their original poetry composed in Mrs. Samuels' class and displayed their artwork, Shevet



Second grader Batya Rose with grandparents Charlie and Bernice.

Degel projects, Beit Hamikdash projects, and shtenders that they built." The presentation was opened with words of Torah from Student Council co-president Adam Katzman.

Administrators applauded the efforts of teachers who planned lessons and presentations "which would be engaging and interesting for an audience which spanned many generations coming from diverse backgrounds." 🐾



Ms. Rebecca Fisher conducts the Elementary School Orchestra.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY MOURNS PASSING OF 45-YEAR DIRECTOR

The Maimonides School Community mourns the passing of Mr. William Abromson, z"l, long-time parent, grandparent, volunteer leader and benefactor, whose family involvement with the school spans seven decades.

Mr. Abromson served as an active member of the Maimonides Board of Directors for some 45 years. He followed in the footsteps of his father, Harry Abromson, who was chair of the School Committee and an officer of the school in the 1940s and '50s.

William Abromson was a regular participant in Board meetings through 2005, after which he joined the reconstituted Board of Trustees. The father of five Maimonides graduates, he was a tireless advocate for alumni involvement, including representation on the Board. Mr. Abromson for many years handled all of the school's property and liability insurance through his business.

The school family extends condolences to Mr. Abromson's daughters, Dr. Sara Abromson-Leeman '71, Deborah Abromson Hannoucene '73, Dr. Miriam Ladell '69, Ruth Poritz '77, and Naomi Schechter '77, and his grandchildren, including Joshua Poritz '03, Leia Poritz '07, Aaron Schechter '10 and Avi Schechter '13. 🐾

“CRITICAL FRIENDS” ARE BUILDING TEACHER TRANSPARENCY

“Critical friends group” sounds like some kind of reality program on the Lifetime channel. But for Maimonides School teachers and administrators, the term represents the beginning of a heightened effort at building a true professional learning community.

These small groups of teachers look at student and educator work, giving feedback on dilemmas, asking tough questions, and gathering multiple perspectives.

Here at Maimonides a group of Middle School teachers has been operating in this way since the winter, meeting once every three weeks or so. “It’s a structured way for teachers to receive meaningful feedback. It’s a wonderful process,” says

Barry Ehrlich, director of curriculum and instruction. “Everybody benefits.”

“Critical friends groups are only one piece of what it means to have a professional learning community,” Mr. Ehrlich noted. “There are many things that can support teachers in their own growth.” The term *professional learning community* describes a collegial environment in which administrators and staff share a vision, work and learn collaboratively, visit each other’s classrooms, and participate in decision-making.

Mr. Ehrlich was the group’s first facilitator, then handed the reins to Rabbi Avi Bossewitch, Middle School director. Next, teachers will manage the conversations.

“I’m looking forward to having a cadre of people trained so they can be catalysts for teachers to be reflective about their own practice,” Mr. Ehrlich said.

“Teaching can be a very isolated, private experience,” he observed. One result of the critical friends experience is “bringing greater transparency to what goes on in the classroom, so teachers can benefit from collaboration and reflection. The research shows that, with this kind of dialogue, student learning increases.”

This is part of a schoolwide effort to support teacher growth. Last winter a number of teachers attended a one-day workshop on approaches to building a professional learning community. 🐾

SCHINDLER *Continued from p. 1*

part of Torah just as integral to learn as Gemara, Mishnah and Halacha,” he said. “It’s the base for all those things, and the basis for all our ethics, all our morals, all our values as Jews.”

After months of study, he arrived in Israel on April 11. During the week all the contestants took a written exam. Then the winners from 16 countries outside Israel were narrowed to six in a public match at a kibbutz. Menachem emerged tied for second. “I definitely felt pressure,” he acknowledged, “but I wouldn’t say it was overwhelming.”

Menachem spent Shabbat with his aunt and uncle. Sunday the finalists met dignitaries and Monday was more or less a dress rehearsal at the theater.

The culmination took place on April 20—*Yom HaAtzma’ut*—in the Jerusalem Theatre, on live television. The crowd included Menachem’s brother and sister-in-law and several Maimonides alumni. He said he actually found the whole scene relaxing. “Everyone was able to keep focused; there was a lot more pressure beforehand. When the contest started, this was our comfort zone—studying *Tanakh*.”

During the run-up to the finals, contestants shared study space and quizzed each other. “Actually, that was one of the most rewarding parts—to meet all

those people so dedicated to *Tanakh*,” Menachem reflected. “There wasn’t any competitive rivalry to speak of. It was an atmosphere of cooperation.”

Following the *Chidon*, the finalists spent the next few days touring, including three days in the Galil and some time with a youth military program. The atmosphere, Menachem said, was even warmer than before. There was no post-*Chidon* animosity.

Returning to Maimonides, he said teachers and students have been more than happy to help him catch up with the academic workload.

Graduation is still more than a year away, but Menachem is already thinking about the future after Maimonides. He said a *chesder* yeshiva that includes service in the Israel Defense Force is a distinct possibility. As an undergraduate, “I’m interested in history and the liberal arts. I’m thinking of majoring in political science. It’s a very broad major that can be applied to many professions.”

“I view myself in a *Torah U’Madda* way,” he stated. “I learn Torah whenever I can and at the same time try to excel in the secular world.”

Reflecting on the past year, Menachem observed, “It’s great to have a deep understanding of *Tanakh*. Only then can you have a deep understanding of our ethics and morals, and of a Jewish identity.” 🐾

KAHAN *Continued from p. 1*

champion, junior Menachem Schindler, finished fifth in Jerusalem on April 20. Returning to school, he helped coach the 12 Maimonides qualifiers and accompanied the delegation to New York. “I could really feel his influence in helping me,” Alexander said.

When the results were announced, “It was pretty amazing and exhilarating,” said Alexander, who donned a Red Sox cap as soon as he finished the test. “Everyone was cheering—Menachem was ecstatic.”

During the week before the test, Alexander and the other Maimonides qualifiers undertook an intense review of the material “There was a lot of pressure,” he acknowledged, adding, “but I always find I perform well under pressure.”

The exam, entirely in Hebrew, covered all of *Bereishit* and *Shmuel Aleph*, as well as much of *Yechezkel* and *Tehillim*. Contestants navigated 119 questions over two rounds, and there were a few additional questions for the finalists.

“That’s not nearly as much as I’ll have to know for next year,” said Alexander, who already is thinking about how to handle the time commitment that adequate preparation will require. He feels the experience with the national *Chidon* will be enormously helpful. “I’m going to be able to understand much better.” He added that he hopes to stay connected with the Mock Trial team as well. 🐾

PRACTICING LAWYER IN ISRAEL NOW TEACHING AT MAIMONIDES

The Hebrew language is “the glue for the Jewish People,” says Maimonides Middle and Upper School teacher Refael Fadlon. He emphasizes to his Hebrew students that “through our whole history, Hebrew is the connection among Jewish communities all over the world, and will keep us as brothers. It is part of our identity.”



Refael Fadlon

Mr. Fadlon, who worked as an attorney in Israel, is finishing his fifth year on the Maimonides *Ivrit* faculty. He also teaches three sections of Israel advocacy to members of the senior class.

As a child, Mr. Fadlon lived in the ancient city of Lod in central Israel. His parents were refugees from Libya. He graduated from Hebrew University with a degree in law. As a college student, he worked as a volunteer counseling young people removed by court order from troubled homes. “That’s what kept me interested in education” as a career, he said.

Mr. Fadlon practiced law in Israel for four years, often representing hospitals and insurance companies in malpractice cases. “It was very intense every day,” he recalled. “It was hard to face the people who suffered, whatever the reason for it.”

His wife Rachel, originally from Ohio, suggested living in the U.S. Mr. Fadlon saw it as an opportunity for a career change. In Boston he received a job offer as a

union mediator—and also heard from Galit Grutman, Hebrew language coordinator at Maimonides, and former Elementary School Principal Stuart Klammer.

“Thank G-d I was accepted at Maimonides,” Mr. Fadlon said, even though he didn’t have formal training as an educator. Since then he has completed a three-year program leading to a

teacher’s certificate. He also is Hebrew coordinator for Hebrew College’s Prozdor supplementary education program, where he mentors the teachers in *Ivrit*.

Mr. Fadlon regards his Hebrew classes as part of an interdisciplinary experience at Maimonides. “Everything I teach, I try to show a connection to Judaism, to Israel,” he explained. “I see it as my mission that when someone graduates from my class, he or she knows more than just Hebrew.”

The weekly advocacy classes are designed to prepare Maimonides seniors for the anti-Israel activity and sentiment they can expect to encounter on most college campuses. “Our kids don’t have the tools to respond to some of that,” he said. “They don’t know how to deal with what often are lies. We try to give them basic information, how to respond to specific allegations that have been repeating themselves since the ‘60s.”

His advice is not to try to confront the entire anti-Israel culture, but rather “to

convince one person at a time. If you can show someone the true picture, you did something good in your life. My biggest reward is when I hear from a student and how he or she responded.”

Mr. Fadlon said he hopes to earn a doctorate in education, but is wary of losing the classroom experience.

“I really cannot see myself not teaching,” he said. “The minute I come to class I forget everything else.” And it makes all the difference being at a school like Maimonides. “It’s a connection to Israel, and I couldn’t be in America without it.” 🐾

SCHOOL’S 10TH YOM IVRIT A BIG SUCCESS

Yom Ivrit, a celebration of Maimonides students’ Hebrew language skills, was a huge success, according to Galit Grutman, the school’s director of Hebrew language. Mrs. Grutman applauded the 15 Hebrew teachers for investing time and creativity, as well as the entire faculty for its involvement.

This was the 10th annual *Yom Ivrit*, which took place May 12 in the Upper and Middle Schools and May 13 in the Elementary School. The theme of the celebration was *Yerushalayim*, to mark the 43rd anniversary of the city’s reunification this week. Students at each level rotated among a variety of stations, staffed by *Ivrit* teachers with assistance from Judaic and general studies faculty. Each station provided opportunities to speak and listen to Hebrew in practical situations.

“I walked around the school, and students told me this was the best day ever—and they really appreciate the work by their teachers,” Mrs. Grutman said. Among the most popular stations was “Cafe Dilemma” in Room U-1, where students enjoyed light refreshments and attempted to solve challenges facing Jerusalem in 15 minutes. Other stations ranged from stories, virtual tours and games to crafts and written testimonies on connections to the city. One activity featured letter-writing to President Obama (in English) supporting a unified Jerusalem. 🐾

The cast of the Drama Club’s 2010 performance, a compendium of one-act plays called “Flip”: from left, Yael Koevary ‘10, Yadaena Milgram ‘11, Leah Ellenbogen ‘10, Eitan Kahn ‘12, Leora Nouriel ‘10, Stephanie Guedalia ‘10, student director, and Naftali Ehrenkranz ‘12.



LOTS TO DIGEST DURING LUNCH AT BRENER BUILDING

This spring, lunch in the Brener Building for Maimonides Elementary School students has been much more than washing, eating, conversation and *bentsching*. Lunch, says Rabbi David Saltzman, Elementary School principal, is “a whole enterprise.”

Racheli Amar and Sara Garber, Bnei Akiva *shlichot*, conduct half-hour *Shulchan Ivrit* sessions for Grades 1–5 on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. The informal, relaxed opportunities to speak and understand Hebrew are popular among students—for reasons that are obvious when you look around the room. Two days before *Yom Yerushalayim*, a couple dozen fourth graders found some comfortable lunchtime seating in the classroom—on the rug, on cushioned milk crates, alongside the windows. As they finished eating, the *shlichot* led them in Hebrew songs and games celebrating Jerusalem.

Rabbi Dovid Reisman meets with students in his classroom every Monday for a session of Grade 5 Mishnah Munchies. “We haven’t done Mishnah in quite a while,” Rabbi Reisman said. “We started out with Mishnah. Eventually I began to see that this was an opportunity to address a range of issues and concerns with students—things we can’t seem to find the time to talk about in class.”

These topics can range from unique aspects of Jewish history to “how best to enjoy your life, from a Jewish perspective.” It’s a voluntary program, but the fifth graders “pack the room” each Monday, Rabbi Reisman said. “Often we have to bring in extra chairs.”

There’s a smaller gathering every week in the office of Lois Lange, who has been the social worker in the Elementary School for almost 35 years. “Lunches with Lois” are opportunities for students to share what one fourth-grade girl called “issues and problems.”

“I meet with students at various grade levels in small groups at lunch time on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays,” Mrs. Lange related. “We meet to encourage positive socialization as well as to discuss and solve problems that come up at school among friends. These lunches help me get to know the students better and to understand how they feel about their relationships in school, plus we have a lot of fun!” Attendance is voluntary, she added.

A quartet of delighted second graders played a card game with Mrs. Lange as they finished eating one day in May. “I am happy to be with Mrs. Lange because, if you have a fight at recess, you can talk stuff out and forgive each other,” said Batya Rose. “If we have problems, she can really help us solve them,” added Eden Kohane. “Sometimes when you don’t have a friend where you sit, you can come here,” said Daniella Bessler.

The lunch room is a social laboratory of sorts on “Mix-It-Up Wednesdays.” Students are assigned seats at each session (first and second grades, then grades 3, 4 and 5) so they can get to know some new faces.

Lunchtime also is special for dozens of participants in Elementary School choruses, who meet weekly with their music specialist, Rebecca Fisher, for rehearsals and songs. 🐾



Rabbi Dr. Joseph B. Soloveitchik, רבי יצחק
Founder

Rabbi M.J. Cohn, רבי משה
Principal Emeritus

Rabbi David Shapiro
Rosh Yeshiva

Jeffrey B. Swartz
Chair, Board of Directors

Abraham Levovitz, רבי אברהם
President Emeritus

Nathan Katz '73
Executive Director

Mike Rosenberg
Editor

Erica Schultz
Designer

Tamara Kesselman
Director of Admissions

MIDDLE & UPPER SCHOOL

Rabbi Yair Altshuler
Principal

Ken Weinstein
Principal, General Studies

Rabbi Avi Bossewitch
Middle School Director

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Rabbi David Saltzman
Principal

Reena Slovin
Assistant Principal

Fourth grade girls join Lois Lange, Elementary School social worker, for lunch in her office.



Kol Rambam is published by the Office of Alumni and Community Relations at Maimonides School.

Comments, questions, and suggestions should be addressed to:

Maimonides School
34 Philbrick Road
Brookline, MA 02445
(617) 232-4452 x405
info@maimonides.org

NEWS & NOTES

For the 27th time in the last 29 years, the **Upper School Math Team** qualified for the New England Association of Mathematic Leagues Invitational Tournament. The "M-Stats" finished second in the Small School Division at the Massachusetts Association of Mathematics Leagues Invitational Tournament on April 9, thus qualifying for the New England finals, where they finished sixth. Team members were seniors Zachary Avigan, Eliezer Mendelev and Daniel Yahalom, juniors Yitzi Snow and Ezra Wyschogrod, and freshman Lior Ramati.

Senior **Bella Rumshiskaya** recently received a Rose Ruderman Scholar Award, established by the Combined Jewish Philanthropies Initiative for Day School Excellence and the Ruderman Family. The award honors a student in his or her last year of each area Orthodox day school who exemplifies the values of caring and compassion that Mrs. Ruderman embodied.

Thirty-eight Grade 1 students took part in one of Maimonides School's most significant milestones recently: the **Chagigat HaSiddur**. The children's presentation, directed by HaMorah Rosalie Koblick, featured a "musical melodies program" focusing on the class, *tefillah* and the alphabet. Teachers, parents, grandparents, siblings and friends filled the Brener Building auditorium for the ceremonies. In his Dvar Torah, Rabbi David Saltzman, principal, told the children, "This is really just the beginning of your future *tefillot* and your relationship with Hashem. Take the accomplishments of today and bring them to the next level."

Maimonides School's 2010 **Mock Trial season** came to an end with a top-level legal battle laced with a dose of irony. The Maimonides team faced off against Sharon High School in the first round of the 16-team regional tournament. These two teams competed for the state championship almost a year earlier, with Maimonides winning an extremely close match. This time the tables were turned, as Sharon prevailed in another impressive contest that was as close as could be.

The "Pink Ponies," **Elementary School Pillo-Polo** champions for 2010, gave the faculty team all it could handle during the annual student-teacher showdown in Fox Gymnasium. The faculty prevailed, 3-1, but didn't score its insurance goal until there were three seconds remaining. Twenty-four student teams competed in this year's competition, sponsored by the Physical Education Department. Fifth graders on the championship team were Naveh Antelman, Ariana Gewurz, Yisrael Dov Goldberg, Joshua Gruen, Gabriella Jacobson and Annika Tarlin.

Two dozen Upper School students took part in the **sixth annual Poetry Slam** April 22 on the Levy Library stage. Students recited works of many genres, by well-known writers as well as original compositions. The event was organized by library media specialist Sara Ravid, the literary magazine staff, and its faculty advisor, Jonathan Hartt of the English Department. The Middle School held its own Poetry Slam event the following week.

Second graders, from left, Ilana Leybzon, Shireen Davidson and Maya Weinberg conduct research on the sequence of the *Aseret HaDibrot* as part of an Erev Shavuot learning session.

