Annual Dinner & Yom Yerushalayim Celebration

Paying Tribute to
Rav Yehuda Amital, zt"l
Founding Rosh Yeshiva, Yeshivat Har Etzion

and Honoring
Morton ’75 and Esther Fridman
Jay ’80 and Rachel Jubas

Tuesday, May 31, 2011
at the Grand Hyatt Hotel
Park Avenue at Grand Central
New York City

For Dinner Reservations and Tribute Journal ads:
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usoffice@haretzion.org
Tel. 212-732-GUSH (4874)
A Letter from Australia

My son, Daniel, studied at Yeshivat Har Etzion in the Bnei Akiva MTA program in 2007 and continued on for a second year. What has impressed me more than anything about the Yeshiva, its rosh yeshiva, ramim and teachers is the solid framework which it provides to its talmidim not just for the period they are there, but for life.

...These young boys from Australia who come with a paucity of Jewish learning develop into eager receptacles of all the Torah and Mussar emanating from the walls of the YHE Beit Midrash. The messages given over by the rabbanim are certainly ones of limud Torah, but at the same time are bound up with love and concern for Klal Yisrael and an understanding of the life and pressures that the chutznik boys in particular will encounter back in their own countries. It is this chizuk and understanding...that provide support for these young men as they enter university with its many challenges.

The Yeshiva for me is truly an outstanding and crucial institution in the Jewish world and may it iy"H go from strength to strength.

Kol Tuv,
Harry Mainzer
Caulfield, Australia

M’Dor L’Dor

Harry (Chaim) Schimmel of London, England, author of “The Oral Law” and grandfather to five Har Etzion students – Elizur and Itai (Shana Alef), Binny and Yishai (IDF Machal), and Yoni ‘07 — visited the Yeshiva in December. Mr. Schimmel, whose book is considered a fundamental work on the development of Torah Shebe’al Peh, delivered a shiur on “Torah and Morality.”

Darkaynu

Yeshivat Darkaynu, now in its fifth year at Yeshivat Har Etzion, has been enjoying another productive, exciting year. The program is tailored to young men with special needs and functions as an unique adjunct to the overseas program. This year’s students hail from New Jersey, Michigan, Florida, New York and Los Angeles.

In addition to their busy daily routines of Torah learning, vocational training, and Hebrew ulpan, Darkaynu students
spend time each week volunteering at the local army base, the Chatmar Etzion. Darkaynu students in IDF uniforms help sort ammunition, prepare meals, and keep warehouses stocked and orderly. They work alongside their Israeli peers and the response from the Commanding Officer of the base has been very enthusiastic. So much so, that he plans to award one of the Darkaynu students with the prestigious Outstanding Soldier award at a ceremony on Yom HaAtzma’ut.

In the Yeshiva’s Beit Midrash, Darkaynu students spend time each day with their Har Etzion chavrutot studying a Torah topic of the Darkaynu student’s choosing. Over the course of the year, students and their study partners have had the pleasure of finishing many significant portions of Torah, including whole books of the Tanakh, tractates of Mishna and Gemara, and other sifrei kodesh.

Third-year Darkaynu student Meir Levi recently made a siyum on the mishnayot of all of Seder Moed. Meir’s teachers, friends and family gathered in the Darkaynu classroom for a festive Seudat Mitzva at which Meir explained that he had begun his journey almost ten years ago and this event was the exciting culmination of many chavrutot, settings, and years of serious learning – including three in Gush. Mazal Tov, Meir!

Major Dorm Renovations

Most of the dormitory rooms in the Yeshiva have recently undergone a significant makeover, thanks to the generosity of dedicated supporters. To date, approximately 125 rooms have been renovated and the plan is to complete the rest by the end of the year.

The new dorms have greatly enhanced the living and learning conditions of Hesder students in the Yeshiva. IDF Machal students from overseas, for whom the dorm is their main home, have also greatly benefited from the renovations.

Itzik Forer, fifth year Hesder student from Petach Tikva, who serves in the elite Kfir Unit of the IDF, recently moved into a renovated dorm. “The room is much more pleasant now. It’s a good feeling to come into such a nice room at the end of a long day in Yeshiva,” he says.

The renovations included a total makeover of the bathrooms, electrical work, the installation of an improved heating system and new paneling, closets, bookshelves and curtains.
Alumni Shabbaton for Machzorim 2, 3, 4 and 5

“After a long period of separation, we were very happy to have the opportunity to reunite at the Yeshiva for a wonderful Shabbat!”

On Parshat Teruma, the Yeshiva hosted a Shabbat reunion for over 80 alumni who commenced Hesder at YHE between the years 1969 and 1972, and several chutznikim.

The Shabbat began with a sicha by Rav Yoel Bin-Nun, one of the Yeshiva’s founding members, about the fine balance presented by the Torah between religious structure and personal autonomy. After the Friday night meal, the alumni and their wives gathered according to machzor and stayed up until late at night reminiscing and sharing stories about HaRav Amital z”l.

After tefilla on Shabbat morning, everyone joined together in the presence of Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein to describe how the Yeshiva has influenced their lives. HaRav Lichtenstein responded with an analysis of the advantages and risks inherent in the Yeshiva’s complex derech. After lunch, Moishe Rosenfeld ’70H led a tour of the Torah library and related fascinating stories about the transfer of sifrei kodesh that survived the Holocaust to the library of Yeshivat Har Etzion. This was followed by a shiur on current kashrut issues by Rav Zev Vitman ’72H, the chief rabbinic authority of Israeli food giant Tnuva. The Shabbat program ended with a discussion about the essence of Torah Shebe’al Peh by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan.

After Shabbat, the alumni traveled to nearby Kfar Etzion, where the Yeshiva was originally located, and sang HaRav Amital’s favorite, “Ve’Taher Libeinu,” in an emotional visit with Rav Hanan Porat ’68H (also a founding member of the Yeshiva).

The Yeshiva extends its thanks to Rav Jonathan Snowbell ’98PC and to all those who worked so hard to ensure the success of the Shabbat.

Holidays at Yeshiva

Talmidim light Chanuka candles at Gush Etzion army base

Matza Baking with Rav Danny Rhein

Purim dancing in Beit Midrash
Bar Mitzva Program

Over 50 alumni and their sons of bar mitzva age participated in the Bar Mitzva Program at Yeshiva held on February 17, 2011. They came from across the country – Katzrin, Ma’ale Gilboa, Shadmot Mehola, Tzfat, Ra’anana, Netanya, Jerusalem and Gush Etzion. Eliezer Grossman, a Hesder student from 1970, attended for the second time with a grandson.

The program included joint father-son learning in preparation for a shiur with Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon, a tefillin workshop with sofer stam Avital Goldner ’86H, a tour of the Torah library, and personal meetings with the Roshei Yeshiva. Following a festive lunch, fifth-year Hesder student Lavi Bigman spoke to the group about the essence of the Yeshiva. The program concluded with a sicha by Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein.

Rav Yitzchak Blau ’86 said, “My son Mordechai and I both thoroughly enjoyed our day at the yeshiva. For Mordechai, the highlight was meeting with Rav Gigi. In his words: ‘I found the meeting interesting and inspiring.’ I loved the chavruta time with my son in the beit midrash where I had spent so many hours studying, more than twenty years earlier. What could be better than experiencing the joy of Talmud Torah with a child while sitting in the same swivel chairs in that familiar and dear room, with so many of my ramim and friends (some of whom are now also ramim). We thank the yeshiva for enabling this wonderful day.”

Upcoming Events in Israel

As part of our goal of strengthening the connection with our alumni, the Israeli alumni association of the Yeshiva is expanding its activities to include special events for alumni and their families.

- **Shabbaton** for alumni of machzorim 11-20 and chutznikim from 1978-88 will take place at the “Har Tabor” Hotel on Parshat Naso (June 3, 2011), with the participation of Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan and Prof. Shachar Lifshitz ’88H of Bar-Ilan University and the Israeli Democracy Institute. Prior to Shabbat, there will be a guided hike in the lower Galilee for those interested. Registration: shabatbogrim@gmail.com or call Yoni Levi 054-440-1935.

- **Bat Mitzva Program** for alumni and their bat mitzva-aged daughters/granddaughters will take place on Thursday, May 26. To register: batbogrim@gmail.com

- **Bar Mitzva Program** for alumni and their bar mitzva-aged sons/grandsons will take place on Thursday, September 15. To register: barbogrim@gmail.com
Panel Discussion on Aliya LeHar HaBayit

On March 1st, Herzog College hosted a fascinating evening of study, attended by over 200 people, that focused on the permissibility of ascending the Temple Mount today. A panel of experts was moderated by Rav Yitzhak Levy, YHE Mashgiach Ruchani and speakers included Rav Yehoshua Magnes of Yeshivat Mercaz HaRav, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan, Yehuda Etzion, one of the fighters who liberated the Temple Mount in 1967 and a member of the Temple Mount Faithful, and Dr. Shmuel Berkowitz Esq., expert on Jerusalem and the holy places.

The evening was in memory of Yitzhak and Tali Ames, Hy”d, residents of Beit Hagai and parents of six children, who were shot dead by terrorists on the road near Hevron in August, 2010. Yitzhak, who had previously learned in the Yeshiva kollel, was completing a degree at Herzog College and guided groups of olim to Har HaBayit weekly.

Dedication of New School for Gifted Children

Minister of Education Gideon Sa’ar participated in the dedication of the Afikim Regional School for Gifted Children at Herzog College on February 15, 2011. The event was also attended by Shaul Goldstein, Head of the Regional Council of Gush Etzion, and the driving force behind Afikim’s establishment.

Minister Sa’ar met with Afikim students and gave his blessings on the establishment of the school. He emphasized the great importance of enabling gifted children to fully develop their potential and praised the teachers in the program, saying, “The soul of the nation is entrusted to its teachers.”

The Afikim School for Gifted Children opened at the beginning of the current academic year and it serves 40 third and fourth grade students from Efrat, Gush Etzion and Kiryat Arba. The number of students is expected to grow and will be expanded to eventually serve grades 3-9. Students spend one day a week at Afikim, where they benefit from advanced classes in the sciences and the arts that encourage creative, independent thought. Thanks to Afikim’s proximity to the Yeshiva and Herzog College, its students also benefit from advanced classes in Jewish studies and from meeting some of the great Torah educators of our time.

The school, run jointly by the Gush Etzion Council and Herzog College, functions as a training ground for specialized teachers studying at Herzog College and also enables our institution to serve the wider community.

Bible Quiz

As a representative of one of the foremost institutes for Tanakh study in Israel, Rabbi Prof. Yitzhak Kraus, Director of Herzog College, was chosen to serve as one of the judges in the Chidon Tanakh for Adults held on Chanukah. He joined a distinguished panel of judges composed of former President of Israel Yitzhak Navon, Israel Prize Winner Prof. Sara Yafet, Shimshon Shoshani, Director of Israel’s Education Ministry, Neriah Pinhasi, former Bible Quiz winner and writer of the contemporary quiz questions, and Eli Shermeister, Chief Officer of Education in the IDF. Herzog College was singled out for this honor because the contest’s purpose is to encourage public study of, and engagement with, the Tanakh, a goal that Herzog College has been pursuing since its inception.

Herzog College hosted a day of preparation for this year’s contestants and has been asked to do the same next year.

Graduation Ceremony

130 men and 22 women received their Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degrees at the Herzog College graduation ceremony on March 16. For the first time ever, Master’s degrees in Tanakh were awarded to 10 men and 8 women. Dr. Zvi Tzameret, Chairman of the Pedagogical Division of the Ministry of Education, was the guest of honor.
On February 16, 2011, a festive dedication ceremony was held in Har Homa, Jerusalem, at which a state religious elementary school was named in memory of HaRav Amital zt"l. Participating in the ceremony were Mayor of Jerusalem, Nir Barkat, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi, Chief Rabbi of Israel, Rav Yona Metzger, Director of the Jerusalem Educational Authority, Dani Bar Giora, Head of the Religious Educational Authority, Dr. Avraham Lifshitz ’73H, Rabbanit Miriam Amital and other family members, students and parents.

"Rav Amital's point of departure was that Am Yisrael is one nation – and we should seek the common ground and that which builds bridges between us. The establishment of Yeshivat Har Etzion and the advancement of the Yeshivot Hesder movement bring the world of Torah and the IDF closer together and facilitates their integration in pursuing the national tasks at hand," said Nir Barkat, adding that “Rav Amital's ideas and personality reached thousands and won over their hearts, and therefore, it is so appropriate to name a school here in Jerusalem, the capital of Israel, after him. I am proud and happy that during the year since his passing, the Jerusalem municipality decided to honor his legacy by naming an educational institution in his memory and I hope that the students and community will follow in his footsteps.”

Rav Baruch Gigi pointed to the importance of additional educational institutions adopting the educational legacy of HaRav Amital.

Tali Brin, HaRav Amital’s daughter, expressed gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the Amital family to the school administration, the Parents’ Committee and the Jerusalem Municipality. “My father z”l’s love of children was apparent in all stages of his life. At the end of the war, he made aliya and lived in Jerusalem. During that period, when he would go out walking and see children playing, he would stop to watch them for a long time…the sight of children playing in the streets of Jerusalem, after the devastation of the Holocaust, fascinated and excited him. He heard in this the echo of the prophecy of Zekhariah: ‘So says the Lord, old men and women will once again dwell in Jerusalem…And the streets of Jerusalem will be filled with children playing.’ I think that his warm connection and relationship with children is tied to the characteristic which he considered so important and which he so admired and which he found in children – honesty; honesty without pretense, with no ulterior motives. In addition, my father believed in his students and wanted each one to think independently. He attributed great importance to independence, creativity and self-expression. The faith that he had in his students gave them confidence and empowered them.”

The Chairman of the Parents’ Committee, Ilan Kaminetzky Esq., said that it was a great honor for the school to be the first educational institution to be named after HaRav Amital, and that the school will continue to educate its students according to HaRav Amital’s path, towards a love of Torah and Israel, religious tolerance and openness.

Following the ceremony, Rav Dr. Shlomo Yishai ’80H, son-in-law of HaRav Amital, delivered a shiur in HaRav Amital’s memory.
OVERSEAS EVENTS

Australia

Rav Menachem Leibtag was invited to visit the Mizrachi community of Melbourne, Australia in November. He was the keynote speaker at their annual dinner, discussing the topic of “Why the Land of Israel is not mentioned in the Ten Commandments”. Proceeds of the dinner were dedicated to supporting the local Torah MiTzion Kollel, headed by Rav Elad Dehan, and staffed by four Yeshivat Har Etzion (2005 Hesder) alumni – David Baras, Isaac Landes, Elad Roth, and Ro’i Herman. The Kollel members run educational activities at Melbourne’s large Jewish day school (Leibler Yavneh College), offer Torah classes and chavrutot to the community, volunteer with Bnei Akiva and with other religious Zionist initiatives in the community.

Rav Leibtag gave three sessions at the Bnei Akiva Leadership Seminar, which was attended by many graduates of the Yeshiva’s MTA program. He also spent two days delivering teacher training sessions to the Tanakh staff at the Leibler Yavneh College High School, and was a scholar-in-residence for Shabbat at Mizrachi Synagogue, whose rabbi is Rabbi Yaakov Sprung ’74.

At the end of March, Rosh Yeshiva Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein attended the Third Conference of the Religious Zionist Organisations of Australia in Sydney. In early April, he spoke at the Bondi Mizrachi Synagogue, Sydney on “Challenges Facing Contemporary Modern Orthodoxy”, and at the Beit Midrash in Melbourne on “The Halakhic Obligation for Ethical Behaviour”.

Rav Leibtag at Bnei Akiva Leadership Seminar in Australia

Rav Menachem Leibtag and Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein in Melbourne, Australia

North America

The annual Yeshivat Har Etzion Alumni Shabbaton with Rosh Yeshiva Rav Aharon Lichtenstein took place on October 29-30, at Congregation Rinat Yisrael in Teaneck, New Jersey. On Friday night, there was a Q&A session with HaRav Lichtenstein followed by an Oseh Shabbat. HaRav Lichtenstein spoke several times during the day – before Musaf, before Mincha and again at Seuda Shlishit. Over 150 people packed the room at Seuda Shlishit to hear HaRav Lichtenstein’s sicha.

One of the attendees noted, “It was a wonderful Shabbat for the alumni and congregation; it was a special opportunity to have HaRav Lichtenstein share his Torah in the newly renovated shul and the Rosh Yeshiva was very well received by the entire community.”

On October 31st, Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein visited Skokie, IL. He attended a dinner reception to benefit the Etzion Foundation at the home of Drs. Sharon & Yosie Goldberger (parents of Adina ’06 MO, Sara ’09 MO and Michale ’11 MO). The event was chaired by Andrea & David Polster ’87, Bethia Straus & Paul Quintas (parents of Joseph ’10), and Lynn & Irv Shapiro (parents of Sammy ’03 and Aaron ’07).

HaRav Lichtenstein spoke to an overflowing room of over 400 people at the Or Torah Synagogue on the topic of “Engaging Modernity: Challenges, Opportunities and Boundaries”. The discussion was followed by questions submitted by community members. It was co-sponsored by Yeshivat Har Etzion, Congregation Or Torah and Congregation KINS of West Rogers Park, moderated by Rabbi Dr. Leonard A. Matanky, (father of Yaakov ’99 z”l, Yitzi ’05 and Avi ’08) and included remarks by Rabbi Zvi Engel ’92.

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We had a great time with Rav Mosheh over the weekend in Sydney; it felt like being back in yeshiva. Over 35 people attended the spontaneous melave malka at the JLC Centre, which featured pizza, divrei Torah, Q&A and songs.” — Daniel Bollag ’08.

Lunch & Learn with Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein at Melbourne, Australia

Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein at Melava Malka in Sydney

Rav Aharon Lichtenstein and Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein at Lunch & Learn hosted by Meir Nordlicht ’86 at Platinum Partners, NY
In early November, on Parshat Toldot, Har Etzion’s Center for Torah Leadership (CTL) held a Shabbaton in Toronto with the participation of Rosh Yeshiva Rav Lichtenstein. Rav Lichtenstein gave a shiur at Yeshivat Ohr Chaim and also spoke at the “Bayit” shul in Thornhill. Marvin and Eileen Goldstein (parents of Dov ’08) hosted an Oneg Shabbat in their home with Rav Mosheh. Thanks to Aaron Greenberg ’97 PC and Jeremy Magence for organizing the trip. Rav Lichtenstein met with Yeshiva alumni on motzei Shabbat and gave a shiur on Sunday morning at the Ohr Chaim minyan run by Rabbi Yitz Kurtz ’78.

Rav Yosef Zvi Rimon spoke at the Shaarei Shomayim Congregation, Toronto, on motzei Shabbat, Nov. 13th on "Who will be a Jew – Conversion and the Jewish Future" and on Sunday, Nov. 14th on "The Gaza War, Two Years Later: Halakhic Dilemmas of Israeli Soldiers in Battle".

In November, alumnae of the Stella K. Abraham Beit Midrash for Women in Migdal Oz enjoyed a Shabbaton in Teaneck, NJ with

Esti Rozenberg, Head of the Beit Midrash. “It was an opportunity to reconnect through Torah study, meaningful conversation and uplifting singing,” Esti said. “I was excited to meet with our alumnae, and was filled with admiration and appreciation upon seeing their growth.”

A Sunday morning benefit brunch was held on December 12 at the home of Joyce and Daniel Strauss (parents of Julia ’09) in Englewood, NJ. Julia began the program by sharing her warm feelings for Migdal Oz and introducing Esti, who briefly spoke about the unique blend of intense study with spiritual community at Migdal Oz, and delivered a shiur on “The End of the Beginning: Closing Sefer Bereishit”.

In December, Rav Yair Kahn joined Congregation Ahavath Torah in Englewood for Shabbat, accompanied by a small team of alumni. A Friday night community learning program was held at the home of Jerry and Anne Gontownik (parents of Ari ’01 and Hillel ’09), after which there was an Oneg Shabbat with Rav Kahn and Rabbi Chaim Poupko, Ahavath Torah’s Assistant Rabbi. Alumni met on Shabbat afternoon with the rabbi of Congregation Ahavath Torah, Rabbi Shmuel Goldin, who
spoke with them about issues in community leadership. The weekend was organized with the help of the CTL.

In January, Rav Mosheh Lichtenstein gave a lecture at Yeshiva University on the topic of “Rethinking Contemporary Modern Orthodoxy.” He also visited Torah Academy of Bergen County, the Rav Teitz Mesivta Academy of Elizabeth, NJ and Rambam Mesivta in Lawrence, NY.

In January, there was a Lunch & Learn with Rav Mordechai Friedman ‘79 at the Platinum Partners offices of Meir Nordlicht ‘86 on the topic “The Nature of Seuda Shlishtit”.

In February, Rav Amnon Bazak was scholar-in-residence at the Etz Chaim Synagogue of Kew Gardens Hills. A motzei Shabbat panel discussion took place on “The Legacy of HaRav Amital zt”l” with Rav Bazak, Rav Danny Rhein and David Landes ’73.

Terry Novetsky ’80 hosted a Lunch & Learn with Rav Amnon Bazak at the offices of Kaye Scholer LLP in NYC. The topic was “Megillat Esther: the Question of Jewish Identity in the Diaspora”.

In February, on Shabbat Parashat Vayakhel, Rav Danny Wolf and Rav Danny Rhein joined students at New York University (NYU) for a communal Shabbat replete with shiurim, singing and sichot that was attended by approximately 70 YHE alumni, including alumni currently studying in U. of Penn, Columbia and YU. The Shabbaton was organized in cooperation with the campus Hillel and was co-sponsored by the YHE Center for Torah Leadership. Thanks to Rabbi Yehuda Sarna ’95 and Noam Mintz ’08 for all their help.

South Africa

Rav Daniel Schreiber ’86 and Rav Pini Cohen ’94 both spent a week in December at the Bnei Akiva summer camp attended by 800 children in the Western Cape, South Africa. A new program was initiated at the camp this year, a kollel for campers and counselors, many of whom are Yeshivat Har Etzion alumni. Rav Schreiber and Rav Cohen gave the advanced and intermediate Gemara shiurim, as well as classes on Shabbat.

“Rav Schreiber represented the CTL’s continuing mission to bring Torah leadership from the diaspora to communities here in South Africa,” said Rabbi Ramon Widmonte ’94, Rabbi of Bnei Akiva South Africa and Executive Director of Mizrachi South Africa.

Rosh Yeshiva Rav Baruch Gigi spent the first week of March in South Africa, giving shiurim and reconnecting with alumni in both the Johannesburg and Capetown communities.

THE CENTER FOR TORAH LEADERSHIP

Latest Developments

The CTL, under the leadership of Rav Doniel Schreiber ’86, develops the leadership skills of YHE alumni and enables them to bring meaningful Torah leadership to their communities, in Israel and around the world. The Director of the CTL is Danny Mirvis ’03.

Rabbi Yehoshua Lindenbaum ’01 has recently been appointed North American Program Coordinator. He will be in charge of organizing the CTL shabbatonim and other CTL programming in North America.

Special thanks and recognition go to Rabbi Jeremy Litton ’04, outgoing North American Program Coordinator, for his hard work and dedication.

For more news from the CTL, please see our webpage at www.haretzion.org/ctl.

For more details and news about overseas events, see the Yeshiva’s website: www.haretzion.org.
On the weekend of February 5th, Shabbat Parshat Terumah, I – together with several other alumni from Har Etzion — attended a CTL Shabbaton led by Rav Moshe Taragin in Wesley Hills, NY, which took place at Kehillas Bais Yehuda (KBY), headed by Rabbi Josh Blass.

On Friday night Rav Taragin gave a shiur on Parshat HaShavua that attracted a sizeable crowd despite the cold, icy weather. Following the shiur, we sat down to a private tish with Rav Taragin and Rabbi Blass to get their perspectives on various aspects of chinuch, the rabbinate and Jewish community leadership. The next day I spoke at the Teen Minyan and Dov Lerner '05 delivered a shiur on the history of kiddush levana. Rav Taragin spoke in the main shul, and observing him was a learning opportunity as well.

I feel that the Shabbaton was a terrific platform for us to develop our skills in communal leadership. We were able to deepen our connections with incredible rabbis, to give a bit back to the community, and to have an enjoyable, meaningful time.

Yeshiva Shabbaton in South Tel Aviv

A group of 18 Israeli and overseas YHE students spent Shabbat Parshat Teruma in South Tel Aviv, at an event organized by Chaim Godinger '01H, Rav Sefi Sherman '86H, Principal of the Reishit School, and Kobi Gigi '04H, in conjunction with the Yeshiva's CTL.

The aim of the Shabbat was to spiritually strengthen the disadvantaged local community. During the course of the Shabbat, students attended services at three different minyanim and added much ruach to the proceedings. On Friday night, the group led an Oneg Shabbat for the community which featured source-based learning on the topic "Honesty and Integrity", singing and dancing. In another highlight, all the local communities were invited to a kiddush on Shabbat morning followed by a shiur by Rav Sefi Sherman. Students ate meals together with staff members of the Reishit School and their families, enabling the group to learn about the challenges facing the school and the neighborhood. An outdoor Seuda Shlishit attracted over 100 participants for singing, dancing and a dvar Torah from a member of the group.

Ariel Brounstein '05H, Madrich of Overseas Students, commented, "We felt that our contribution went beyond the formal presentations and frontal talks. By partnering with the local leaders, we were able to create a Shabbat atmosphere and enhance the unity between parents and children, teachers and students, more observant and less observant members of the various communities. This brief exposure to the South Tel Aviv community renewed our sense of responsibility and brotherhood. As clichéd as it sounds, we received more than we gave."

Har Etzion Guest Rooms

Yeshivat Har Etzion has embarked on a new initiative that will enable the community at large to enjoy the special Yeshiva Shabbat atmosphere on its beautiful campus in the Judean Hills – a guest house, appropriate for groups large and small. The Shabbat guests are served in a separate dining area by waiters and are welcome to join the davening, sichot and shiurim at the Yeshiva. Guest rooms include private bathrooms and showers, air conditioning/heating, and a refrigerator in most rooms.

Reservations can be made for Shabbat or weekdays. For details and reservations, call +972-52-260-6301 or email: auritalb@haretzion.org.il
Due to the addition of Adar Aleph to the calendar, this year’s winter session (zman choref) was a full six months. For most of that time, Shana Aleph learned Masekhet Sanhedrin and Shana Bet learned Masekhet Bava Metzia. In February, the entire Beit Midrash had a week of intense review (chazara), after which all the talmidot studied Masekhet Pesachim in preparation for the Seder.

Other News:
- Ongoing discussion in the Beit Midrash led to a lecture series on the topic of “Women and Talmud Torah in Our Times: Challenges and Directions.” The series included talks by scholars Malka Peterkovsky, Michal Tikuchinsky, Oshra Koren, Racheli Shprecher, Rosh Beit Midrash Esti Rozenberg and YHE Rosh Yeshiva HaRav Aharon Lichtenstein, and concluded with a panel discussion of Migdal Oz staff. The series was dedicated in memory of David Silver z”l by Saul and Elaine Schreiber of Ra’anana, grandparents of Shana Aleph student Raquel Schreiber.
- “Volozhin Week”: A program of 24/7 learning initiated by students, in which for several days in March there was round-the-clock learning in the beit midrash, as well as special shiurim from staff and guest speakers.
- Purim Celebrations:
  Migdal Oz students produced and published a megilla. It was hand-written with a feather quill in traditional sta’ım writing and illustrated in watercolor. Over 700 copies of this beautiful work of art sold by Purim day! A group of Shana Aleph and Bet students learned Masekhet Megilla together in preparation for Purim and made a siyum on Shabbat Zakhor. Purim itself was celebrated with a festive Kri’at Megilla by students, followed by much dancing and merriment.
- The winter session ended with a Pre-Pesach Yom Iyun and tish on April 7th. Featured speakers included YHE Rosh Yeshiva Rav Yaakov Medan, Rav Amnon Bazak, Dr. Shmuel Wygoda, Rami Yanai and Rav Yosef Tzvi Rimon.
- The new Migdal Oz website has been launched. Sign up to receive news of ongoing events at: www.skamigdaloz.org

YHE Alumni Achievements
- Rabbi Nathaniel Helfgot ’81 was installed this past November as rabbi of Congregation Netivot Shalom in Teaneck, NJ. In addition he joined the 12th grade Judaic studies faculty of the SAR High School while continuing to serve as Chair of the Departments of Tanakh and Mhshevet Yisrael at YCT Rabbinical School.
- Rabbi Prof. Mordechai Cohen ’82, IAS Fellow, Professor of Bible and Associate Dean, Bernard Revel Graduate School of Jewish Studies, YU, delivered a lecture on “New Cultural Perspectives on the Jewish Tradition of Bible Interpretation” on January 24 at the Institute for Advanced Studies, Hebrew University, Jerusalem. He was introduced by YU President Richard Joel.
- Dov Weiss ’91, appointed Assistant Professor of Religion at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

Toldot Yisrael
Aryeh Halivni ’93 (Eric Weisberg) is the Executive Director of Toldot Yisrael, a Jerusalem based nonprofit dedicated to recording and sharing the firsthand testimonies of the men and women who helped found the State of Israel. Toldot Yisrael has conducted over 500 video interviews and the footage is being developed into a website, educational material, and films that will bring authentic accounts of the founding of the State of Israel to the general public.

The New York Times ran a front section story about Toldot Yisrael which underscores the importance of capturing the Israeli narrative, particularly in light of a very well-funded...
Columns in Haaretz and the Jerusalem Post lauded Toldot Yisrael’s role in protecting the Zionist narrative, calling the project “A history lesson come alive.” For more information, see www.toldotyisrael.org

Campus Outreach

Rabbi Aron Hier ’82 has been director for the past four years at the Campus Outreach Division of The Simon Wiesenthal Center. The organization’s goals include a commitment to “exposing the truth behind anti-Semitism, hate and terrorism…promoting human rights and dignity, standing firmly with Israel and celebrating our unique identity as Jews.”

Rabbi Hier says, “I studied at Har Etzion over two different time periods (before going to YU, and afterwards). During my second period at Gush, I did Machal army service with Chativat Barak, the 188th Tank Corp. My strong sense of Jewish pride and my commitment to defending Jews everywhere against anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism are a direct result of my years at Har Etzion.”

A Letter from Moshe Roth ’92-’94

I read with great affection in the last issue of Etzion Update about all the children named for our dear Rosh Yeshiva, Rav Amital zt”l. This past summer (June ’10), I had the opportunity to travel on a medical mission to Haiti to help the victims of last year’s devastating earthquake. As a physical therapist here in Baltimore, I joined with other medical professionals from Sinai Hospital to staff a hospital in Port-Au-Prince for a week, where our team performed 53 successful orthopedic surgeries. I returned a few weeks before Rav Amital’s passing, but his famous story about the importance of hearing the baby cry was foremost in my mind long before I left for Haiti and certainly during the time I was there, and it will remain with me for years to come.

Thank you for keeping us all connected.

Sincerely,

Moshe Roth

Teach For America

Yaakov Miller ’06, a senior at U. of Penn, Simi Botwinick ’06, currently at YU, and Adina Goodman ’06 MO have all been accepted to the prestigious “Teach For America” program, and will begin teaching in the coming year. They join Har Etzion alumni Boaz Cohen ’04 and Noam Fine ’04, who are currently participating in the program.

Teach For America is a national corps of outstanding recent college graduates who commit two years to teaching in urban and rural public schools. The program’s mission is to eliminate educational inequity by enlisting promising future leaders in a concerted effort to improve student achievement across America.

“One of the constant messages of Yeshiva that continues to resonate with me is to leave the world a better place than you found it. Over the next two years I hope to begin to work towards that lofty yet attainable mission,” says Yaakov Miller.

Simi Botwinick adds, “I chose to join Teach For America mostly because I’ve been sitting in classes my entire life, absorbing information about the world, and wanted to finally get out and do something good for it. I’m not sure where I’ll end up after Teach For America, but at least I’ll know that for these two years I’ll be doing all I can to make the world a slightly better place.”
Yeshiva Alumni News

**Marriages**

Ezra Frazer ’96 and Azadeh Refah
Gabi Gluck ’01 and Natalie Wicks
Simon Stern ’01 and Gabrielle Nejad
David Faleck ’03 and Deena Peyser
Josh Berman ’05 and Lani Lederer
Yedidia Koschitzky ’05H and Miriam Sacks
Mordechai Siev ’06 and Rebecca Grazi

Yedidia Koschitzky ’05H and Miriam Sacks on the marriage of their daughter Moriah to Yair Ariel
Hirsh ’73 and Irene Cogan on the marriage of their son Jonathan to Brittany Rumeld
Larry ’75 and Lynn Finson on the marriage of their son Chaim Meir to Shira Reinitz
Gary ’77 and Deena Sigel on the marriage of their son Motti to Maayan Cochba
Aryeh ’78 and Yocheved Fund on the marriage of their son Eliyahu to Nerya David
Arve ’81 and Bashi Colton on the marriage of their son Nachliel to Michal Goldstein

**Births**

Yisrael ’88 and Sara Krengel, Chana Shifra, Alon Shevut
Mark ’88 and Michelle Smilowitz, Emunah Ruth, Beit Shemesh
Jason ’91 and Meira Rappoport, twins: Halel and Mao, New Haven, CT
Ariel ’93 and Gittit Ness, Renana Tehila, Teaneck, NJ
Yehuda ’94 and Lisa Septimus, Gila Yael, Woodmere, NY
Mitch ’95 and Tova Rich, Avraham Yehuda, Ramat Beit Shemesh
Avi ’95 and Danna Zimmerman, Libi Zion, Ariel
Shai ’96 and Tova Gerson, Serena (Sara Nicha), Bergenfield, NJ
Adrian ’97 PC and Gabi Tregor, Itai Yehuda, Alon Shevut
Danny ’98 and Michelle Eisenberg, Yaakov David, Sydney, Australia
Yair ’98 and Talia Hindin, twin girls: Leba and Eliana, NYC
Yoni ’98 and Rena Ray, Talia Michal, NYC
Yonatan ’98 and Suzi Reich, twins: Sarah Chava (Sophia Hannah) and Shalhevet Chayah (Charlotte Grace), NYC
Gershon ’98 and Gabrielle Strauchler, Allon Israel, Riverdale, NY
Jamie ’00 and Naomi Feinmesser, Avichai Reuven Daniel, London, England
Gideon ’01 and Aliza Black, Yehuda, Riverdale, NY
Avi ’02 and Mor Anouchi, Ayelet, Givat Shmuel
Josh ’02 and Tamar Ettinger, Matan Yehuda, Hashmonaim
Noah ’02 and Nava Greenfield, Judah Alan (Yehuda Avichai), NYC
Lance ’03 and Bikah Blumenthal, Mia Neshama, Johannesburg, South Africa
Aaron ’03 and Abi Djanogly, Sofia Liba, London, England
Ricki ’04 and Shelly Bornstein, Tzvi Yehuda, Jerusalem
Avi ’04 and Rachel Chazen, Uriel Yehuda, Alon Shevut
Shmuel ’04 and Sara Ozhekh, Dina, Jerusalem
Dani ’04 and Ariella Shaffren, Yaakov (Koby) Avichai, Teaneck, NJ
Daniel ’05 and Sipporah Tracer, Sarah Batya, NYC

**Births of Grandchildren**

Hirsh ’73 and Irene Cogan on the birth of a grandson, Yaakov Yehuda (Kobi), and to parents Jennifer and David Diamond
Yonatan (Tani) Yosef Bednarsh (Rav Assaf ’88 and Leora), Alon Shevut
Yonatan Michaelson (Shmuel ’88 and Ofira), Alon Shevut
Dina Paves (Shmuel ’91 and Tamar), Sao Paulo, Brazil

**Aliya**

Gili ’91 and Chaya Houpt
Udi ’00 and Anna Engelsman
Yonatan Shai Freedman ’01
Binyamin Zev (BZ) Rosenstein ’09
Condolences

Dr. Simeon Lauer ’80 on the passing of his mother Ilse z”l

Rabbi Joel Finkelstein ’81 on the loss of his father, Mr. Bernard Finkelstein z”l

Rabbi Eliezer Kwass ’83 on the loss of his mother, Esther Kwass z”l

Simcha ’85 and Avrom ’91 Okon on the loss of their father, Dr. Paul Okon z”l

Rabbi Gideon Sylvester ’90 on the loss of his father, Mr. Shmuel (Sam) Sylvester z”l

Ilan Prager ’96 on the untimely passing of his wife, Ahuva z”l

Aaron Leib ’98 on the passing of his father, Mr. Barry Leib z”l

Mrs. Doris Jacobs on the loss of her husband, Mr. Benjamin Jacobs z”l (father of alumnus Bradley Jacobs z”l ’76)

To Rabbi Dr. Bernard Rosensweig on the loss of his wife, Rebbetzin Miriam Rosensweig z”l and to her children, Marilyn Amar, Josh, Judah and Rabbi Michael Rosensweig ’73 and Sharon Gottlieb

Rav Ezra Bick on the loss of his father, Mr. Charles (Yeshayahu) Bick z”l

Board member Tobi and Anne Schapiro on the loss of Anne’s sister, Adele Turoff z”l

The Yeshiva mourns the untimely passing of our alumnus Ilan Tokayer ’04 z”l and expresses our condolences to his parents Aaron ’78 and Reva and to their children Danelle, Noam and Yarone ’10.

To honor Ilan’s memory, the Tokayer family has set up a foundation, NETA ILAN, as a living legacy of Ilan’s chessed and life values. This fund will honor the memory of Ilan by “Planting the seeds for Tikun Olam, through a vision of global education, leadership, growth and development of the land of Israel.” For more information, please visit www.netaiilan.org

We are pleased to announce that Sharon Rifkind will join the Etzion Foundation in May as a full time Development Associate. Her portfolio will include, among other things, donor cultivation, alumni relations, programs and events, and young leadership development.

Sharon comes to us following ten years with the Jewish Community Relations Council of the UJA Federation of Northern New Jersey, which followed two years as Director of Operations at Harvard University Hillel. Yoel Weiss, Executive Vice President of Etzion said enthusiastically, “We are excited about Sharon joining the Har Etzion family and look forward to working together to further the foundation’s mission.”

Rav Danny Rhein, madrichim and students welcome Binyamin Zev (BZ) Rosenstein (center) at Ben-Gurion airport on the occasion of his aliya. BZ, currently in Yeshiva, will soon be serving in the IDF.

In the Beit Midrash

PC = Post-College  H = Hesder  MO = Migdal Oz
Please send your updates to office@haretzion.org.il
Recent Publications

**Gesher Benot Yaakov: The Status of Women in Halakha – Past and Future** (Hebrew)
by Rav Chaim Navon '92 H (Ram in Migdal Oz and Herzog College lecturer), published by Yediot Books 2011
This book proposes the adoption of a new terminology through which to approach the halakhic issues raised by the changing status of women. The book provides a philosophical and Torah basis for its approach, and applies it to the issues relevant to the status of women in halakha.
For more information: www.haretzion.org

**Samheinu Kimot Initanau** (Hebrew)
by Noam Schlesinger ‘84 H
In this book, Noam Schlesinger describes his experiences on shlichut in the city of Zaporizhia, Ukraine. The book contains entertaining stories from daily life, a description of the slow rebirth of the Ukrainian Jewish community, and a portrait of the emotional and wondrous discovery of Judaism by those returning to their roots.
To order: noam300@gmail.com

**Tefila Ki’Mifgash : The Halakhot of Prayer – A Journey from Halakha into the Soul** (Hebrew)
by Eli Taragin and Michael Rubinstein (both currently in YHE Kollel), Beit El Publishing Co., 2011
This book seeks to explore the spiritual meaning of prayer through a profound analysis of its laws. The book invites the reader to set out on a journey whose point of departure is the halakha but whose destination is the deepest recesses of the soul.
To order: mhalacha@gmail.com or tel. +972-52-977-6009

**Moment of Clutch**
by Eric Siskind '98
This novel is the story of minor league baseball player, Jake Kahn. The beginning of the book finds Kahn at the nadir of a career of unfulfilled potential. After some unusual encounters, Kahn rediscovers his Jewish roots and improves his game. It is a story of second chances, theodicy, personal growth, and the struggle of faith and destiny in the modern world.
Available for Kindle at Amazon.com

On the Daf
A number of YHE alumni have published online tools for learning Daf Yomi:

- Daf Yomi Learning Aid by Rav Amichai Gordin ’92H, Ram in the Yeshiva, includes graphics and flow-charts showing the structure of the sugya. (etzion.org.il/vbm/dafezer/index.php)
- Sinai site by Rav Uri Brilliant ‘98H offers ten-minute classes covering the basics of the sugya in a clear and organized way. (Sinai.org.il)
- Daf Yomi Portal by Rav Harel Shapira ‘94H groups together all the materials on the Internet and in other places on Daf Yomi (daf-yomi.com)
- Netivot Ha’Shas site by Rav Ephraim Kaduri ‘86H connects parallel topics in Shas, and enables one to see all the places a specific topic is cited (netivothashas.org.il)

To make your tax-exempt donation, please contact any of our offices:

**Israel Office** | Yeshivat Har Etzion
Alon Shevat, Gush Etzion, ISRAEL 90433, Tel. 02-993-7300, office@etzion.org.il

**United States Office** | The Etzion Foundation
111 Galway Place, Suite 203, Teaneck NJ 07666 USA, Tel. 212-732-4874
Fax. 201-833-0833, usoffice@haretzion.org

**Canada Office** | Attn: Inika Blackman
Pollack, Kravitz Teitelbaum, 2000 McGill College Avenue, Suite 1460, Montreal, Quebec H3A3H3 CANADA, Tel. 514-905-1373, pollack@bellnet.ca

**England Office**
28 Kings Close, London NW4 2JT, ENGLAND, Tel. 020-8202-7022, roselaar@roselaar.orangehome.co.uk

www.haretzion.org www.vbm-torah.org www.kimitzion.org

Yeshivat Har Etzion: Immersed in Torah, Engaged with the World
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