



MORASHA KOLLEL: A SPIRITUALLY-STIMULATING ENVIRONMENT

BY BRIAN CHERNIGOFF

It was a gray and rainy day. Buckets of rain poured down from the sky, showing little hope for respite. The grass was muddy, the courts were flooded, and we were all stuck inside. When nothing could possibly get any worse, I heard a large crack of thunder followed by a frightening flash of lightning. A second later, the lights blew out. We had lost power. No plumbing, no air conditioning, nothing. Although most people would conjecture that the aforementioned factors would lead any camp into chaos, this was not the case in Morasha Kollel. Despite the lack of power, we still prayed, learned and stayed in good spirits, and even had a *kumzitz* (gathering in which spiritually inspiring songs are sung) with Rabbi Mordechai Willig that night, in the dark. This is Morasha Kollel.

It is a well-known biological concept that environment affects gene expression. What this means is that the phenotype, the traits and characteristics expressed by an organism, is not just dependant on the genetic composition of the organism, but is also dependant on the organism's surroundings. Biology teacher Mrs. Lisa Futterman offered an example to illustrate this idea. Imagine if two people had the exact same IQ

(intelligence quotient). One of them was raised in a family that values education, and for his whole life grew up in an environment that fostered his intellectual growth by encouraging activities such as reading and visiting museums. However, the other grew up in a home in which education was not very high up in the list of priorities. At the end of the day, who would be more successful? Similarly, by spirituality, although two people may both be genetically destined to achieve greatness, if one does not properly foster and develop those genes by placing himself in a spiritually cohesive environment, those genes will not fully express themselves. This is why Morasha Kollel is the answer. In Morasha Kollel, there are no distractions. One finds himself in an environment in which he can solely focus on his spiritual pursuits and studies. One is able to both grow spiritually and develop and express those genes ascribing him to spiritual loftiness. *(Continued on page 2)*

editors, a term which refers to any contributor to the site. Anyone can contribute to the site, regardless of whether they make an account or not. There are more than 20 million accounts on Wikipedia, and creating one is quick and free. Some trustworthy editors are given certain advanced permissions on the site, which allow them to block editors (technically disable them from editing), delete and protect pages, among other tasks.

Editing the site is quite simple. Simply click the "edit" button on the top right of the page, and you will be able to modify the contents of the page. Individuals without accounts, referred to as IPs (internet protocol addresses) are able to edit the majority of the site, with the exception of articles that are protected for an array of reasons. An account is required to create an article or edit certain protected pages. All edits to articles are made by volunteer editors. In addition, if an issue arises, it will be dealt with by a volunteer. Vandalism to the site is removed by volunteers as well, who handle nearly all of the site's operations.

If everyone can edit, can people insert false information, or vandalize a page? The answer is yes, but it is often reverted (undone) in a matter of seconds or minutes, depending on a variety of factors. Edit filters disallow certain malicious edits, and various automated bots (computer programs) patrol for vandalism, *(Continued on page 2)*

SPORTS YEAR IN REVIEW: 2014

BY JUSTIN WEISS

It was the year of Michael Sam, inspirational speeches and obscure first pitches. Of record-breaking performances, angry fans and #TheReturn. Yup, 2014 had it all. There were those who pretended to know sports, from the Americans who professed to know soccer to the preposterous fans who claimed to know college basketball in the latest thrilling March. There were Jets fans (because who else, of course), flying "Fire John Idzik" flags outside the general managers office and starting a website called firejohnidzik.com. They clearly aren't over Buttumble yet. PLEASE don't mention where Mark Sanchez is now. There was 50 Cent's farcical first pitch. But, because everything in 2014 had to be a competition, Miss Texas had to throw out an even worse first pitch. Then there was scandal; a never ending string of events that filled up the front page of the newspaper practically every day. From Ray Rice to Adrian Peterson, to the University of North Carolina to Chris Davis, 2014 was not kind to the players. And how can we forget Alex Rodriguez, who managed to get into more trouble than he already was in January? Or Donald Sterling, who couldn't do anything right? But how can you recap 2014 and fail to comprise Derek Jeter's retirement celebration? Before walking-off in style at Yankee Stadium, before recording his 3,400 hit, the captain deprived all 29 other teams of their money and forced them to purchase him presents. And how can we not speak of Peyton Manning's incredible season? We are all thankful for the allegory that proves that old men CAN, in fact, throw a football. LeBron led Miami to the NBA Finals for the fourth straight year, left to Cleveland and won a Teen Choice Award all in the same off-season. He had quite a busy summer. There were the Sochi Olympics, where we all pretended to care about curling and Luge for three weeks. And then there was the National Championship game, where we all joined the Florida State bandwagon. No matter the sport, no matter the circumstance, sports inspired us in 2014. It connected us, tore us apart, brought us down and cheered us up. Here's to 2014. And here's to 2015!

THE HIDDEN WORLD OF WIKIPEDIA

BY YITZCHAK CARROLL

We've all used Wikipedia from time to time. Whether it has been to study for a test, to complete a term paper, or for any other use, we've all availed ourselves to the free online encyclopedia. But what happens behind the scenes? Who runs the site? Is it truly reliable?

Wikipedia was founded by Jimmy Wales and Larry Sanger more than a decade ago, and is owned by the Wikimedia Foundation, which has a few dozen paid employees, and manages a variety of projects owned by the foundation, including Wikimedia Commons, Wikinews and the Mediawiki software. However, neither Wales nor his staff are responsible for maintaining the site, and they are not involved in creating or editing articles. Nearly all responsibilities are handled by the site's

THE HIDDEN WORLD OF WIKIPEDIA

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along with many volunteer editors.

After vandalism is detected, it will be reverted (undone) and the vandal will also receive an orange notification banner on his screen, directing him to a warning on the talk page. All edits are logged, and a warning is issued to editors who vandalize the site. After multiple warnings and incidents of vandalism, an editor can be blocked (technically disabled from editing the site). In the end, your humorous attempt at editing Wikipedia will most likely not remain on the site for long, although a permanent record of your edit and IP address will be kept forever.

While many teachers do not allow students to reference Wikipedia as a source for term projects, the site is more reliable than than it is given credit for. However, Wikipedia is not a source, and all information on the site must be taken from another reliable source and referenced properly, so anything true on Wikipedia can be found on another site. All sources and references found in Wikipedia articles can be found at the bottom of the article's page. The site's policies forbid original research from

being included in articles, and requires most information in articles to be supported by reliable sources, which must be referenced on the page. Hence, you're not missing out on any information when your teacher forbids Wikipedia as a reference; however, the references on the article can be a helpful starting point to base your paper off of. In addition, as anyone can edit the site, no particular expertise is required to edit a certain topic, although there are many professors and individuals with advanced degrees who heavily contribute to articles about certain complex topics.

The actual world of Wikipedia is a highly complex and bureaucratic one. Without going into many details, editors get into many conflicts, and editors involved in certain areas of the site frequently get harassed. Editing can be quite stressful at times, and disputes are commonplace on the site. Still, contributing to Wikipedia can be quite rewarding, although one should expect bumpy points along the road.

Wikipedia is far more than what a student reads when he or she researches a topic. It is a complex world of its own, an established bureaucracy with a tremendous influence on both the academic and professional world. And it can be edited by anyone – even you!

total of 120 hours! I hope you've completed most of them in previous years; otherwise you may be in trouble. Luckily, you still have several months to do them! Take every opportunity you can get!

Then, there is Israel. Most people have already decided which Yeshivot they wish to apply to, but some still haven't. Make sure that your decision is yours, and not someone else's decision. Your year in Israel can be the most impactful year of your life, and you are the only person who can truly judge what is right for you. Even if in the end you decide not to go, that is your decision and yours alone. Take advice from others, but make sure you are doing what you want to do.

The yearbook is also coming up soon! Make sure all your ads are in and your pictures are chosen. A high school yearbook is often a prized item for many people, as it contains pictures and reminders of copious nostalgic moments and memories. Hopefully, we will all get ours (and on time, too).

Everyone should also start looking at summer programs now as well. Many universities offer learning programs and

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What makes Morasha Kollel unique is not only its spiritually-stimulating environment, but also the amazing group of guys contained in it. In Morasha Kollel, one will make friends and form bonds and relationships that will last a lifetime. One does not find himself spending time with guys who are involved in drugs and other enticing vices, but rather with guys who are not only the nicest and most accepting and loving of every person no matter who he is or where he is from, and not only want a summer of spirituality, but also one jam-packed with loads of fun. Whether sports, swimming or amazing trips, the guys at Morasha Kollel are excited and energetic to make any activity amazing and super exhilarating. The friends one will make at Morasha Kollel will not only ensure a person an amazing summer, but will also ensure him connections that could transcend the limitations of time and space.

Walking into Morasha Kollel, I only knew a handful of people. I was uncertain whether or not I'd be able to make friends while so many of the other guys seemed to already know each other. I was so wrong. Each person I met smiled gracefully at me and warmly shook my hand, eagerly introducing themselves to me. No one thought of themselves as "too cool" or "better" than anyone else, rather everyone came together as one group, all friends, to grow spiritually and have a terrific summer. Going there was one of the best decisions I've ever made in my entire life. Seize the opportunity; it won't be there forever. Don't miss the boat; it won't be at dock forever.

businesses internships, so make sure you get your applications for them done, otherwise you may lose your spot!

So don't slack off. Senior year is a year that can define who you are and what you like. Don't let senioritis take control of what you do. Take senior year seriously, and I promise you it will pay off.

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SENIORITIS - HIGH SCHOOL IS NOT OVER YET

BY NOACH LEVY

As the first half of the school year comes to an end, many seniors begin to relax. Nearly all of their college applications have been sent in, so their grades from now on barely matter, and spring is almost in sight. This is a time for fun and excitement. This is the period of high school that everyone looks forward to.

However, this is not the time to slack off. Several colleges still look at grades from the second half of senior year, and a dramatic change in one's grades could affect their decisions. It's never too late for colleges to change their minds. So while you may relax a little bit, don't just stop showing up to class or ignore assignments. Take pride in your work and keep working to the best of your ability.

Also, have you gotten all of your chesed hours in yet? If not, now is the time to complete them. Every student needs thirty of them per year in order to graduate. So those of you who have been here from the beginning need a grand

SENIOR-FRESHMAN TRIP: UNBREAKABLE BONDS FORMED

BY DANIEL GREENFIELD

The Senior-Freshman trip was one of the most memorable and greatest moments of my freshman year at DRS. During the trip I forged a relationship with my senior, and I also had an awesome time. It was an amazing experience for both freshman and seniors. I learned how to survive in DRS, and I also bonded with my senior in a way I never thought I could have.

Before the day started, I was a little skeptical about the Senior-Freshman trip. In all those TV shows and movies, the seniors seem like the coolest kids in school, who wouldn't even give freshmen a second glance. However, I remembered that that's just TV, and everything would be fine. After all, I needed someone to guide me through high school who truly understands my problems and what I am going through. Once I had that in mind, I knew the trip would be amazing.

The day started off with learning with your senior, which we all "certainly" did. It was basically an icebreaker, and what's a better way to do that than with Torah? We talked about a couple of things and got to know each other a little better.

RACIAL PROFILING: SHOULD IT CONTINUE TO BE PROTOCOL?

BY AVISHAI SAMOUHA

One of the main struggles when attempting to advocate reform of racial profiling, on a policy level, is convincing political leaders that it is a disparaging, ill-conceived, and ultimately ineffective law enforcement technique, and not just "politically incorrect". This means that we must use a keen eye in determining what, specifically, is wrong with racial profiling.

A lawsuit by The American Civil Liberties Union revealed police records indicating that 73% of suspects pulled over on the I-95 (drug possession) between 1995-1997 were black. But according to the Public Health Service, approximately 70% of drug users are white, 15% are black, and 8% are Latino. However the Department of Justice reports that among those imprisoned on drug charges, 26% are white, 45% are black, and 21% are Latino. When suspicious behavior rather than race is used to apprehend suspects, police will ultimately catch more suspects. Evidence of the ineffectiveness of racial profiling

Then, we hopped on a bus and headed to Dave and Busters. There, we had a great time playing games, bowling, drinking soda, and just chilling out. At the end of the day, we learned a lot about each other and had a great time.

During the trip, my senior gave me so many tips and advice on how to get by for the next four years. I know I can always go to him if I ever needed any help or anything like that. The trip was not only a one-time thing where I spoke with my senior; we say hello to each other every now and then in the hallways and when we see each other around. From this trip, I made a never-ending relationship with a friend who's always willing to help me.

I don't think DRS's main goal was to give us a fun day, even though they succeeded in that too, but rather to help us make a new, and helpful friend who wasn't in our grade. That trip also made me realize that just because someone is not your age, it doesn't mean that you can't be friends with him. Sometimes it is even better to have an older friend to give you advice, help you avoid the mistakes he has made, and teach you how to be a better person. That's why the Senior-Freshman trip was a turning point in my high school career, and why I will remember this day for a very long time.

was apparent in a 2005 report by the Missouri attorney general. It stated that white drivers, who were pulled over for suspicious behavior, were charged with possession of drugs or other illegal activities 24% of the time. Yet, black drivers who were pulled over for suspicious behavior, with racial profiling as a factor, were found to be charged 19% of the time. Racial profiling gives the impression that law enforcers believe that whites are law-abiding citizens, while blacks and members of other races are out committing crimes. Racial profiling is ineffective, as it disparages by race, rather than by area or community where crime is generally committed.

In contrast with racial profiling, policy by community has been shown to work consistently. The stronger the relationship between the people of a community and the police, the more likely those people will come forward to report crime, serve as witnesses, etc. However, when racial profiling isolates black and Latino communities, it reduces the ability of law enforcement to examine crime in these communities. Community policing will cease to work if police have already established



themselves as enemies of a black or Latino neighborhood. If there is no rapport between enforcement and residents, then racial profiling sabotages any possibility for community policing efforts, and deals nothing beneficial in return.

The Fourteenth Amendment explicitly states, that no state may "deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." By definition, racial profiling is based on a policy of unequal defense. It has been proven true that blacks are more likely to be searched than whites. This is the ultimate characterization of unequal protection. Racial profiling promotes the police using a lower standard of evidence for blacks and Latinos than they would for whites. And this lower standard of evidence can easily lead police, private security, and armed citizens to respond violently to blacks and Latinos out of a perceived "self-defense" concern. If one has reason to know or believe that a specific suspect is of a certain racial or ethnic background, then it makes sense to include that information in the profile. But that isn't what people generally mean when they talk about racial profiling. They mean discrimination prior to the introduction of data--the very definition of racial prejudice. When we allow or encourage law enforcement agencies to practice racial profiling, we are ourselves practicing racial discrimination. That is unacceptable.

STRICTER GUN CONTROL: A BIG NO-NO

BY JORDAN EIDLISZ

I believe that the United States of America should make stricter gun laws. In my opinion, the current gun laws are as strict as they need to be. I even think that in certain states, these laws may even a bit too strict. There are several reasons that back up my claim, the first one being that criminals in general will not purchase their guns legally. Only 6 percent of murders are committed with legally purchased firearms. And not only do murderers purchase their guns legally, but all different types of criminals acquire their guns illegally. In surveys conducted in state prisons, where a vast array of criminals are imprisoned, only 2 percent of criminals bought their guns at legally-run gun stores. Statistics like these show that no matter how strict gun control is, it will not affect criminals in

the slightest, as most of them get their guns from illegal sources anyways. It will, however, affect the millions of law-abiding citizens in the United States who want to buy guns legally. Whether it is for self-defense, or even just for sport, why deny these citizens their right to bear arms when the odds are criminals are not using the same gun store? Stricter gun laws would only stop these law-abiding citizens from buying guns, not the criminals that these types of laws target. In addition, stricter gun control is against everything that America and her citizens stands for: freedom. From a common sense point of view, it would also be beneficial to have more lenient gun laws. This is because if you were a criminal, would you rather rob someone or a home in an area in which it is more likely that your victim will have a firearm and can defend himself, or one where it is more likely that the victim are unarmed, resulting in a risk-free robbery? The obvious answer is the

second house. Criminals will think twice if it is more likely that their intended victim will be armed before they rob them. But with more gun restriction laws, these robbers will have a greater chance of robbing an unarmed house. There are also studies that show that gun sales violence have no direct correlation. In the past 18 years, gun related homicides have dropped 39 percent, and non-violent gun crimes have dropped even more over this time period at a staggering 69 percent. And yet, gun sales have also been skyrocketing during this same period. This shows that legal gun sales have no direct correlation with gun violence. These facts prove that stricter gun control laws wouldn't lower gun crime rates and be beneficial. Rather, they may actually have the opposite effect, with crime and murder rates increasing. That should never be allowed to happen. Gun control laws must not be changed, or else utter catastrophe will break out in the United States.

REFORMS IN THE FIREARM INDUSTRY WILL GO A LONG WAY

BY SHIMON HEIMOWITZ

A man is walking home after a long day at work; he turns the corner and walks into a dark alley. All of a sudden, he feels a cold metal object against the back of his neck - "Hand over your wallet," the thief says to him. This is not fiction; it happens to so many people across the country. It could even happen to you. Gun violence is a big problem in the United States and needs to be taken seriously. In 2011 alone, 67.7 percent of murders, 41.3 percent of robberies, and 21.2 percent of aggravated assaults were committed with guns. Logically speaking, the more guns that are in circulation, the more crimes that will be committed with these guns. The United States ranks first among the amount of guns per 100 residents, having 90 guns per 100 residents. Ranking second is Serbia, with a measly 58.2 guns per 100 residents. Yes, criminals will ignore any restrictions placed on obtaining guns, but just because a small minority of individuals with ill intentions have guns doesn't mean that everybody needs to have one. America isn't some anarchy-rich, criminal-infested land with no police force. On the contrary, America is a functioning society with a functioning police force. If a person feels threatened, all he or she needs to do is call the police and wait for them to come. If a person feels that the police take too long to respond, he or she can purchase a

self-defense item such as mace spray, or even an electrical stun gun (in some states). It doesn't have to be a gun. "Guns don't kill people, people do," is the National Rifle Association's slogan. Granted, a person needs to pull the trigger for a gun to kill; nevertheless, it is much easier to kill someone with a gun than with a knife or a similar weapon. Just look at the massacres that have been committed in the past few decades: Sandy Hook, Virginia Tech, and Columbine all were committed with guns. I'm not advocating for the complete removal of guns from the United States, but rather I am advocating that it become much more difficult to obtain a gun. After all, there are legitimate reasons to own a gun, primarily hunting. If these three simple restrictions were implemented, the amount of gun violence in the United States would decrease drastically. First of all, before buying a gun, citizens should receive the same amount of training that police receive. Secondly, a person buying a gun should be given extensive background checks before being sold the gun. Lastly, all guns should be registered with the state, similar to how drivers' licenses are registered. These three countermeasures would ensure that all gun owners know how to use their guns and are mentally sound, as well as make it easier for the police to trace a gun. Gun violence is a serious issue in the United States, and countermeasures need to be implemented to ensure the safety of American citizens.

HOCK OF THE HALLWAY: COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM

BY DOVI SCHLOSSBERG

DRS allows all of its students to bring computers and tablets to school to take notes and do research with. If a student is caught occupying himself with things other than class work on the computer, such as games, he loses his privilege to continue using a computer in class. However, is the actual use of computers in class beneficial to the student, or is it a negative force?

There are many benefits in using a computer in class. The primary one is note taking. For example, a classmate of mine said, "Sometimes, if the teacher is teaching a bit quickly, it's too hard to take notes on everything that's being said, and students miss notes, which can be very bothersome to deal with," (I can attest to this from personal experience). However, with a computer, you can easily edit notes because you can backspace and retype, a luxury not given when writing on paper. Additionally, with computers, if you save notes into a "drive" like Google Drive, Dropbox, or iCloud Drive, the notes cannot be lost or damaged, whereas written notes on the other hand seem "accident prone". It's much easier to lose a notebook or spill something on notes than to lose a file saved in an Internet based drive. Furthermore, with the ability to have a folder on a computer, it's unequivocally the most organized method of note taking. *(Continued on page 5)*

HOCK OF THE HALLWAY: COMPUTERS IN THE CLASSROOM CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

Another benefit that comes with using computers in class is the luxury of relieving your back from the average weight of multiple notebooks, two textbooks, four folders, a hole puncher, and ten pens and pencils. That can weigh in the range of up to 30 pounds! In comparison, one laptop, maybe a notebook or a textbook, and three or four pens and pencils, weigh approximately a mere 14 pounds. That's less than half the original weight! A fellow classmate of mine also pointed out that laptops can be used to include an absent student in the class with video chat, provide absent

students with notes they missed, collaborate on review sheets, and to do research using online databases and other online information chests.

Although there are a lot of great reasons for using computers in class, there are also some major downsides. The most apparent and most commonly given reason for prohibiting students from using computers in class is the problem of distractions. Computers can open a whole world of distractions for students, including doing work for other classes, surfing the web, and playing games. Therefore, if students are taking advantage of their computers in counterproductive ways, they should not be allowed to use them in class.

Personally, I feel that students should be allowed to use computers in class, on the grounds that they sit in the front of the room and that the teacher deems them worthy of using a computer. Furthermore, if a student is caught using it counterproductively, then he should lose his privileges of using it in that class. If the student is circumspect enough never to get caught using the computer counterproductively, then that's his fault, because he is hurting no one but himself by cheating himself of a proper education. However, if the student works more efficiently and performs better when using a computer, then the student should be allowed use his computer in order to maximize his potential in that given class.

SLEEP DEPRIVATION: IT'S WORSE THAN YOU THINK BY DANIEL ROSENTHAL

With DRS' long school hours and many opportunities for after school activities, it is very easy for students to get insufficient amounts of sleep. Many students probably assume that the only negative effect of this lack of sleep on them is just a more tired version of themselves. However, sleep does much more than give you the necessary energy for the coming day.

During a typical night's sleep, a person will alternate from REM (rapid eye movement) and NREM (non-rapid eye movement) in cycles that take about ninety minutes to complete. While sleeping, the blood supplied to muscles and tissue growth and repair is increased, and energy is replenished. Sleep also lowers blood pressure and makes you feel much happier. It also releases certain hormones such as growth hormone, ghrelin, and leptin. The latter two contribute to the feelings of fullness and hunger. Sleep also directly contributes to a healthy immune system, a better memory, and releases another hormone, cortisol, which helps you to become more alert in the morning.

So at this point it is clear that sleep allows you to become taller, skinnier, achieve more in and out of school, feel energized for the new day, and feel better about yourself overall. It seems so perfect that you are probably considering going to sleep right now! Well you may be surprised to hear that although adults require only about seven to nine hours of sleep, teenagers need around 8.5 - 9.25 hours of sleep to function properly. Yet, less than 10% of polled DRS students (nearly the same statistics were recorded in American high

schools throughout the country) say that they get more than eight hours of sleep per night. The fault, however, is not entirely on their shoulders.

With our Yeshiva's demanding schedule, it is not difficult for a student to find himself in a situation in which he cannot function throughout the day properly and in which he becomes too tired to learn or participate. He may even find himself sleeping through those long morning periods such as Gemara or Davening. An obvious solution to this problem would be caffeine, though teens should limit their intake to no more than 100 milligrams daily. Some other healthy alternatives to stay awake and energized include staying active and being exposed to bright light (preferably from the sun). So the next time you find yourself slipping into the deep abyss that we call sleep, ask your teacher to be excused and run to the bathroom to splash some water on your face, do a quick lap outside, or maybe just try to get some quality sleep!

NEW WOUND CLOSURE METHOD INVENTED IN ISRAEL BY CHAIM LEIB ALPER

For thousands of years, humans have been relying on approximately the same wound closure methods. Dating back to the ancient Egyptians, the common sew and stitch method, known as suturing, was commonly used as a temporary wound seal so that the body can heal without a scar.

Although it was later joined with the stapling and super glue method, each of these techniques has a minor difficulty with promoting effective wound healing. The detriment is that when healing large, complex wounds, sutures have trouble fastening all the skin together without causing increased

skin tension, which results in unnecessary pain and ugly scarring.

Therefore, Dr. Moris Topaz, the head of plastic surgery in Hillel Yaffe Medical Center in Hadera, Israel, recently presented a newly invented method to solve this complication involved in the surgical closing of wounds. Known as "TopClosure," this method serves to stretch the skin around a wound closer together in preparation for surgical sealing, or simply to provide support after a suture has already been applied.

It operates by the following mechanism: Two attachment plates are fastened to the skin using either staples or adhesive tape. Then, an approximation strap goes through the two plates and pulls them, and therefore the skin becomes closer together. This allows the suturing of the skin to be less painful and is easing for the undamaged skin that surrounds the wound. In addition to being physically effective, TopClosure takes into account the biomechanical properties of the skin and consists of the perfect chemicals to avoid skin irritation.

Although this new Israeli technology can be used to close open wounds, it works best when combined with sutures and other common wound closure methods to provide the best possible healing environment for the injury. The reason to use both is that while the sutures firmly hold the skin together, TopClosure can prevent the skin from suffering from too much tension. Finally, this method paves the way for even more innovative inventions serving to improve the medical treatment of wounds and ensure as fast of a recovery as possible. Without this great Israeli invention, doctors from all around the world would have to settle for the less effective method of wound closure.

MY SUMMER EXPERIENCE: NCSY BILT

BY AARON KOFFSKY

At this point in the year, most of us are counting down the days until summer. Whether we are staying at home, traveling to Israel, or going to camp, most of us will undoubtedly have some of the greatest times, make some of the greatest friends, and have some of the greatest memories over these two months. During my experience in Israel this past summer, I can honestly say that I accomplished these things more than I had during any previous summer of my life. Over the course of five weeks in Israel, I was proud to be a part of the NCSY program known as BILT. BILT is an all-boys Israel touring program in which roughly 35 teenage boys between the

ages of 15 and 17 tour around Israel with eight staff members. Since the staff opportunities are extremely limited and the demand for the job is so high, the staff and administration on BILT are often collections of not only good staff, but also combinations of some of the greatest people you will ever meet. Over my experience on BILT, I found the staff to be just this. They were the kind of people you could talk to about anything, they were always very understanding, and often wanting and willing to break the rules for an added laugh. It was these factors that helped contribute to a fun and constantly positive environment. The itinerary for BILT was one created with an immense amount of thought and planning. We traveled all over Israel with just the right balance between visiting locations with religious significance and

traveling to locations that were simply fun and memorable.

However, like many things, it isn't what you do as much as who you do it with. Although the boys on BILT are new every year, the welcoming atmosphere brought about by the staff enables the entire BILT community to unite together and make every single participant feel welcome. And although the sayings "We don't leave any kid behind," and "Everyone is united together as one," are enforced by almost every summer program, BILT is one of the few that actually manages to uphold this claim. Going on, BILT enabled me to have the best summer of my life, and I certainly hope that you will have the same too. Good luck in picking the right program this summer!

YAD BYAD 2014 - LIFE LESSONS BY EYTAN ARYEH

This past summer, I had the great privilege of going on Yad B'Yad, an Israel summer program for teenagers both with and without special needs. This program is truly special. It creates everlasting friendships and teaches so many valuable lessons over the course of the summer. The first day of the program started with a three-day orientation in upstate New York. I was very anxious because of all the new people there and wasn't really sure what to expect. We went through many group activities, which brought our entire program closer together. On the last day of orientation (the third day of the program), we found out that because of the war between Israel and Gaza, we would not be able to go to Israel. Instead, we would be traveling to the West Coast. At first, we were all very upset about the news and thought that the summer was ruined. But later that night, we created a bonfire and everyone in the program started singing together and telling personal stories about why he or she decided to come on the program. Each story comforted us and caused us to realize that it didn't matter where we were going to spend our summer, because no matter where we would go, we would always be surrounded by amazing friends. After only three days, I felt like I had known everyone on the

program for years. The friendships created on Yad B'Yad are not friendships that end after the summer. For the first month after the program ended, there was a reunion scheduled every single day. Yad B'Yad created an environment in which friendship was a key focus, and taught us the value of maintaining strong relationships. However, the value of friends was not the only value that Yad B'Yad ingrained in us. We were taught the important lesson of inclusion. Towards the end of the summer, we went to Six Flags in San Francisco. There was one boy on our program who uses a wheelchair, but he was expecting to be able to go on all of the roller coasters because we only went on trips that everyone could participate in. Our whole group was excited to go on one specific ride called "Superman." As we approached the ride, the worker told us that the boy in the wheelchair couldn't go on the roller coaster. We all decided as a group that since *he* wasn't able to go on the ride, we wouldn't go on the ride either. Yad B'Yad taught us how to put others in front of ourselves. It taught us that other people do matter and everyone should be treated the same no matter how different you are. *Because everyone belongs!*

Do you have a camp experience you'd like to share? Email us at editor@drsstar.com and your article could be featured in the next issue!

TECHNOLOGY CORNER: INDESTRUCTIBLE PHONES

BY DAVID HERMAN

In America, 58 percent of people own a smartphone. But what happens when you drop your precious device on the ground and the screen breaks? Or what happens when you drop your phone in the pool? Unless you have a thick, bulky Otterbox case, you can say goodbye to your smartphone. Now, the Otterbox may be convenient in these certain circumstances, but overall it's very annoying to carry around that fat, frustrating phone that doesn't even fit in your jeans. And that's why things are changing. New technologies are surfacing that will put Otterbox out of business, and these technologies are simply amazing.

If you've ever dropped your phone face down on the sidewalk and heard that dreaded crack, you know that sinking feeling in your stomach when you pick it up and see that huge spider web crack and those countless scratches. But what if you could prevent this from happening? It's actually very simple. The standard Smartphone uses gorilla glass. Gorilla glass is stronger than regular glass, but as you may know, after a few bad drops it will break or shatter. That's rather annoying. Others must think so too, which is why sapphire glass was invented. Sapphire glass is the second hardest material on Earth, after diamond. It is virtually scratchproof, unless you are carrying a bunch (*Continued on page 7*)

TECHNOLOGY CORNER: INDESTRUCTIBLE PHONES CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

diamonds in your pocket. It's also 10 times as strong as stainless steel, quite an impressive feat. Even though you may think of this glass as unobtainable, it's actually coming sooner than you may think. Apple has bought enough sapphire crystal to make 200 million 5-inch phone displays. That means that iPhones may soon be coming with this seemingly indestructible glass. Also, people have been buying their own sapphire glass, and then cutting it and putting it on their phones. If you want an indestructible screen, you could have one.

Have you ever dropped your phone in a puddle and had to soak it in rice? In those cases, things may turn out fine for your phone. But if you ever dropped your phone in the ocean, you should go to the phone store as soon as possible. This is obviously very annoying, and that's where nano coating comes in. Nanocoating is the process in which scientists apply nanostructures on a phone, making a network of fibers, which makes it completely waterproof. When water lands on this nanocoated phone, it just beads up and runs off. With this new waterproof technology, there will be no need for any bulky, aggravating Otterbox. In fact, a nanocoated phone can last twice as long underwater until it breaks than the Otterbox. And this nanocoating

technology can be used for anything. Want waterproof headphones for walking in the rain? Or maybe a waterproof bag, so your books don't get ruined. Finally, if you are ever unfortunate enough to drop your phone in a puddle, you will be safe.

This new technology that is going into protecting phones really is revolutionary. The sapphire glass will ensure that your phone will have no more cracks or scratches. The nanocoating will let you do whatever you please that involves both your phone and water. And if you ever have a phone with both sapphire glass and nano coating, you will have a nearly indestructible phone.

HUMOR COLUMN BY NOACH LEVY

Throughout your life, people will tell you that puns aren't funny. These people are wrong. And this is their punishment.

Whiteboards are remarkable!

Did you hear about that famous Italian chef? He pasta way. His wife is still upset, cheese not quite over it. We never sausage a tragedy coming.

Which American president was least guilty? Abraham Lincoln. He was in a cent!

A taxidermist was once asked: "What do you do for a living?" He replied: "Oh, you know... stuff."

I can see five years into the future, thanks to my 2020 vision!

When Beethoven passed away, he was buried in a churchyard. A couple of days later, the town drunk was walking

through the cemetery and heard some strange noise coming from the area where Beethoven was buried. Terrified, the drunk ran and got the priest to come and listen to it. The priest bent close to the grave and heard some faint, unrecognizable music coming from the grave. The priest was frightened and got the town magistrate. When the magistrate arrived, he also bent close to the grave and listened to the music. "Ah, yes," he said, "that's Beethoven's Ninth Symphony being played backwards." He listened to it a while longer and said, "That's the Eighth Symphony, and it's backwards too. Most puzzling." So he kept listening; "That's the Seventh... the Sixth... the Fifth..." Suddenly the realization of what had happened dawned on him. He stood up and announced to the crowd that had gathered in the cemetery: "My fellow citizens, there is nothing to worry about. It's just Beethoven decomposing."

What do you feel when there is no coffee? Depresso!

What do you call a snake that studies past events? A HISSESSStorian!

Who is the funniest Disney princess? Rapunzel!

How many ants are needed to fill an apartment? Tenants!

Do you think that prison guards use Proactive to prevent breakouts?

A man was physically removed from Olive Garden once for eating too many breadsticks. How many did he eat? Olive them!

I broke my finger today, but on the other hand I am completely fine!

My math teacher called me average. How mean!

The invention of the shovel was truly groundbreaking!

How does Moshe Rabbeinu make his tea? Hebrews it!

There's a fine line between a numerator and a denominator!

POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT VS. PUNISHMENT: WHICH IS MORE EFFECTIVE?

BY NATAN ALPER

Psychologists as well as parents have faced a problem for decades: which method is more effective for behavioral modification (specifically for kids): Positive or negative reinforcement?

Positive reinforcement is the method in which you reward your patient for doing something well. Remember the joy of receiving a gold star or "smiley face" sticker from your kindergarten teacher when you spelled your name correctly, or a praise from your mom

when you achieved a 100 on a test? These are examples of positive reinforcement. Punishment is the use of negative reaction to discourage a certain behavior. For example, if a kid misbehaves, and the teacher puts the child in a time-out; or if a parent spansks a kid after he or she makes a mess in the house or receives a detention after cutting class.

But which method actually works the best? The reward system or the punishment system?

There are many opinions about this issue, but in the end, it all comes down to pain versus pleasure. Will

someone be more motivated to do something if they will receive something pleasurable or if failing to do so will result in pain? While one way may be more effective in the short run, it is important to consider the effects each method would have in the long run. Moreover, even if one method is more effective and/or sustainable over time, one must ponder the overarching psychological consequences on one's psyche. It is also possible that either reinforcement or punishment can be the better method, depending on the context, the goal trying to be achieved, and the nature of the individual.

THE HEALTHY CHOICE

BY ELI LAUER

We are growing boys and frequently get hungry, but as with anything in life, there are choices. This dilemma is now taking on new dimensions at DRS. Students have recently proposed that the snack machines offer healthy choices, rather than the junk we have grown to love and expect. This initiative was brought to Rabbi Brazil and Dr. Kirshenbaum, and is being implemented through a new initiative, dubbed The Healthy Choice. According to Yoni Gutenmacher ('16), the organization's founder, "The Healthy Choice is an initiative that we started in order to raise nutrition and health awareness within our school, and to provide healthier options for students who feel that they need a snack." Gutenmacher explained, "We started by meeting with Brian Gallagher, the man in charge of the company who provides snacks and drinks for the vending machines in DRS, as well as other schools including the entire New York City Public School System, and we discussed changes we wanted to make in the types of snacks in the machines. He reacted with concern and understanding, and he was very impressed with our mission. So, with his help, nutritious yet tasty snacks have already started being added to the machines."

"That being said," Gutenmacher continued, "most of the snacks currently offered in the machines will continue to be sold, especially the very popular ones." In addition to the vending machine enhancements, there is also a push to have the G.O. offer healthier breakfast options such as individual oatmeal packets and whole wheat bagels in addition to the cereals already being offered. For lunch, healthier options from Traditions and other restaurants will become available through this initiative as well. In addition, a food of the week will be chosen by the organization's members and publicized via a weekly flyer which discusses the nutritional benefits of that respective food. At the end of each week, the group will be giving out that food item during breakfast and lunch. Examples of such healthier foods may include Greek yogurt and apples. In order to educate students about healthy eating, The Healthy Choice also put up a bulletin board on the second floor. According to (Continued on page 9)

IN THE LONELY HOUR (★★★★)

BY CALEV SANDERS

Over the past few months, British singer Sam Smith has taken the world by storm. Performing in countless music festivals and concerts, several late night and day time talk shows and even being nominated for multiple music awards, Sam began his career in 2012 with his debut album Nirvana, which was a smash hit in the UK, featuring hits like Latch and Safe With Me.

Since appearing on the US charts earlier this year, with his hit single Stay With Me, Smith has displayed a seemingly fresh take on the R&B (rhythm and blues) genre.

In the Lonely Hour, a ten-track EP with each track bold and well balanced in lyrics, instrumentals and especially vocals, the songs all revolve around a common theme of love in an uncomfortable state inspiring an emotional dilemma that is ever so flawlessly reflected by Smith's powerful and rich voice. The album generally leans to the darker side of relationships, almost taking to a single faceted viewpoint on love, leading to a rather homogeneous feel to the EP in terms of the lyricism.

Though Smith does a superb job of varying his vocal ranges throughout different songs, from the soulful, slow, guitar-strummed Leave Your Lover, to the fun, pulsing and exciting beat of Like I Can, it only goes so far in leading the album to a more multi-dimensional piece. For the most part, there is not much that sets In the Lonely Hour different from other R&B albums, with regard to the vocal content.

But there is one unique feature that sets this album on another level and makes it the exquisite work it is, and that is the music production. In an age of the music industry where every top chart hit is an auto-tune heavy, synthetic, electronically over-produced track with the singer's original voice edited to the point it can even be unrecognizable as their own or sometimes as even human, Sam Smith does something very different. In The Lonely Hour, the music primarily features pianos, steady drum beats, chorus backup vocals and the occasional other musical element here and there, but overall, his songs all have an authentic, clear, acoustic sound to them. (Continued on page 9)

WILDCATS BACK ON TRACK

BY RUVIE STURM

Desperate for a win after starting the season off with an 0-2 record, The DRS Wildcats faced the Rambam Ravens at Lawrence High School. The Wildcats' defense was excellent early on, stopping Rambam on their early possessions. DRS's offense also began to pick up their play, taking risks and playing aggressively. DRS went for it on a key fourth-and-nine and converted, with quarterback Sammy Miller ('15) throwing a deep 40-yard touchdown to wide receiver Ezra Alyeshmerni ('15). On the ensuing drive for Rambam, safety Chaim Samet ('15) intercepted a deep pass, giving the ball right back to the Wildcats. However, DRS failed to capitalize and Rambam scored a touchdown, making it 7-6 DRS. Fortunately, on the next Rambam drive, Alyeshmerni had an interception return for a touchdown. Early in the second half, Miller threw a two-yard touchdown to tight end Aaron Dua. Other highlights included Heezkeyahoo Burstyn's ('17) three sacks. The rest of the game consisted of back-and-forth punts and turnovers, as DRS won by a score of 19-6.

The following week, DRS played a double header at the Brooklyn-based Aviator Sports Complex – one game against Yeshiva Sha'arei Torah and one against Yeshiva Darchei Eretz. The Wildcats' defense was incredible throughout both games, producing many turnovers and getting numerous sacks. On Sha'arei Torah's first possession, Samet had his first of two interceptions, and on their next drive Alyeshmerni added an interception of his own. It was back-and-forth early on with both teams being stopped offensively and being forced to punt until Miller threw a great pass to Alyeshmerni for a 30-yard touchdown late in the half. Then, very early in the second half, Alyeshmerni caught another touchdown pass for 45 yards to put DRS up 13-0. The Wildcats' defensive front produced numerous sacks including Burstyn's three sacks. Right before the game ended, cornerback Daniel Gordon had an interception to seal the win. DRS came out with the victory, winning 13-0 because of their outstanding defense.

In the next game, DRS played Yeshiva Darchei Eretz, whom they lost to in the first game of the season. The offense was a (Continued on page 9)

THE HEALTHY CHOICE CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

Gutenmacher, the bulletin board will include articles, information and fun facts about certain foods, drinks, and nutritional topics. Social media will be utilized as well, as the Healthy Choice has already established Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter accounts.

This appears to be a controversial yet exciting initiative, as some students are worried that they will lose their beloved unhealthy snacks for healthier choices. Yet, the members of The Healthy Choice are confident that their initiative will be both beneficial and successful for the entire student body.

IN THE LONELY HOUR CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

The appeal of this album is reliant on the basics of music, making the experience of listening to it a true and fulfilling one for anyone sick and tired of the music that sounds like a randomly generated sequence of electronically synthesized noises, which is also ever so popular in recent years.

Ultimately, In The Lonely Hour is a breath of fresh air in the music industry of a more traditional, classic style of music brought out in such a skillful way, so entertaining, so interesting and so enjoyable that it has led the relatively new artist Sam Smith to be nominated in five different categories of the upcoming 2015 Grammy Awards, including Record of the Year, Album of the Year and Best New Artist. While this album isn't perfect, it's something new in the form of something old and for that, along with its high quality of beautiful music and production, it certainly deserves all the awards it can get.



Above: Senior Jeremy Lichter gives blood at the annual Blood Drive, held on Nov. 24 in the Greenhouse.

-Yoni Gutenmacher/Star

WILDCATS BACK ON TRACK CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

little stagnant in the beginning, punting on consecutive opening possessions, but it started to pick up when Yoni Eichler ('17) caught a 30-yard touchdown pass midway through the first half. The Wildcats' defensive front continued its outstanding play as they produced even more sacks including Burstyn's five sacks and Rafi Guttman's two. The secondary was also outstanding due to interceptions from both Samet and Eichler. Right before the half, Miller threw a beautiful pass right into the hands of Eichler for a 65-yard touchdown. Early in the second half, Miller threw his first of two interceptions, giving Darchei Eretz very good field position which ultimately led to a touchdown, making it 13-6. But on the ensuing drive, Alyeshmerni caught a 50-yard touchdown pass, making the score 19-6. Towards the end of the game, Eichler caught his third touchdown pass for five yards to put DRS up 26-13. In the end, the Wildcats came out on top and won by a score of 26-13, improving their record to 3-2 and bringing them closer to making the playoffs. As Coach Yitz Mendlowitz said, "I'm very happy with the results of this week's double header. We pulled out two big wins and got ourselves on a winning track to hopefully continue into the playoffs."

One week later, DRS played their rivals, the HAFTR Hawks, at Lawrence High School. The offense and defense both played remarkably well throughout the game. The Wildcats' offense was connecting early on when Eichler caught a two-yard touchdown pass. A few drives later, Miller threw his first of two interceptions, but when HAFTR got the ball back, Eichler intercepted the first pass for a 60-yard touchdown. On HAFTR's ensuing drive, Alyeshmerni picked off another pass for a touchdown to put DRS up 20-0. In the second half, Eichler caught a pass for a 50-yard touchdown. Later in the game, wide receiver Daniel Kimmel ('15) caught a pass for a one-yard touchdown. The defensive front put lots of pressure on HAFTR's offense, getting three sacks, one by Guttman and two by Burstyn. DRS won 34-0, improving their record to 4-2. "I am very proud with the way our guys stuck together today and came out with a monstrous win to put us two games over 500 and to win three straight games going into a big matchup against MAY in two weeks," Mendlowitz said after the game.

YAD B'YAD: LIFE LESSONS LEARNED BY BARUCH WEISSMAN

If no one had special needs, the world would be a very different place. There are many things to learn from people who have special needs, and without those people, many important life values would be lacking. I'm going to discuss three key values that I learned from people with special needs over my experience on Yad B'Yad this past summer to prove this.

Tzvi, a participant on my Yad B'Yad trip, is the happiest person I've ever met in my life. He inspires everyone with his motivational quotes and cheers people up when they're in a bad mood. Tzvi always has a smile on his face and over the 5 weeks that I spent with him, I didn't hear him complain a single time. He taught me to be happy with what I have, because no matter how bad the situation, it can always be worse. Tzvi has a wheelchair.

I learned another lesson from Tzvi, though it was really from the entire Yad B'Yad as a whole. Tzvi and his attendance group had been waiting online to go on a ride at Six Flags, and when it was Tzvi's turn to get on the ride, he was told that he couldn't go on for safety reasons. He was obviously disappointed, but he didn't let it show one bit. When the other members of his attendance group offered to not go on the ride so that he wouldn't feel left out, Tzvi insisted that they go. His attendance group kept insisting that they not go without him, but he wouldn't budge. Eventually he gave up and the entire Yad B'Yad boycotted the ride for the rest of the day, because if it wasn't for everyone, it wasn't for anyone. Tzvi really taught me a lot over the summer and I wouldn't be the same person without him.

Another participant on Yad B'Yad that taught me a valuable lesson is Ariana. Ariana is almost the exact opposite of Tzvi. Let's just say on the outside, she isn't exactly the happiest person in the world. But if you sit down and have a nice conversation with her, it can really brighten her mood and make her happy. She taught me that just because someone may seem a certain way on the outside, and just because someone may have a really, really hard external shell doesn't mean that you can't make a difference for them. If you sit down and have a conversation with them, you can really (Continued on page 10)

YAD BYAD: LIFE LESSONS LEARNED

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

help cheer them up and make a big impact on them.

As the old adage goes, "patience is a virtue." No one taught me this more than Yoel [last name redacted]. Yoel, a participant with special needs on Yad B'Yad, was my roommate on the very first night in the West Coast. It had been a long day and I was very tired, so when Yoel asked me the same question numerous times after I'd already answered it, I got a little frustrated. A few days later, Yoel literally became the face of our trip, and a couple of weeks later I found myself requesting to be his roommate again. Yoel and I developed an unparalleled friendship over the summer, and when he left a few days early to go to Europe, I cried. Yoel taught me to be patient, because not everyone has the same abilities, and that while frustration may be a common reaction to certain situations, it should be replaced by patience.

In conclusion, without special needs, this world simply would not be the same. Key values and virtues would be lacking in our lives, and important life lessons would go untaught. The world is a better place because of people who have special needs.

**NCSY KOLLEL: GAINING A GREATER
APPRECIATION FOR TORAH AND
ISRAEL**

By YITZCHAK CARROLL

When I signed up for the NCSY Kollel summer program in Israel this past fall, little did I know that a bitter conflict would break out between Israel and Hamas. I had no idea that I would have to dash into a bomb shelter at any given moment. But I did know that I would have the summer of a lifetime, a learning experience that would strengthen me and give me a greater appreciation for the Jewish homeland.

Shortly after we arrived on Kollel's campus, located in Beit Meir, a moshav (cooperative settlement) near Jerusalem, we had a security orientation, where we were instructed what to do should an air raid siren sound. That night, we went to the Kotel (Wailing Wall) to pray, and as we were preparing to leave the Jewish Quarter of the Old City of Jerusalem, a siren sounded. As instructed, everybody calmly filed into a nearby store without panicking. Two days later, a siren sounded in Beit Meir, and once again, we

went into the nearest bomb shelter, as the missile was intercepted by Israel's Iron Dome anti-missile defense system. Some participants, including Yehuda Alter, 16, of Denver, saw the Iron Dome in action intercepting a missile. "I saw a small streak in the sky flying through the air. I then saw a small flash, as the Iron Dome intercepted the missile."

The current conflict between Israel and Hamas has complicated the situation throughout the country, and Kollel is no exception. While Kollel is based out of Beit Meir, due to the security situation in Israel, Kollel, as well as several other NCSY Israel summer programs, relocated to northern Israel for several weeks. Kollel moved to Hispin, located in the Golan Heights (northeastern Israel) for more than three weeks, and returned to Beit Meir on July 31, followed by an off-Shabbos. Since our return, no further sirens have sounded, although several Israeli fighter jets have flown over Beit Meir, a subtle reminder that the conflict has not completely cooled.

Despite our temporary move to Hispin, we were still able to have a schedule full of Torah study, sports and tiyulim (trips) in the Golan Heights. We visited Safed and Tiberias, two of the four traditionally holy cities in Israel. We went zip lining, toured a chocolate factory, went on various hikes, and biked in the beautiful Golan region. In addition, during our stay in Hispin, we were able to help out Israeli troops by making packages full of goods to be shipped down to Gaza, as well as by tying tzitzit (knotted ritual tassels) for the soldiers stationed there.

As we did on the first night of Kollel, on the day of our return to Beit Meir, we visited the Kotel to pray, which brought about a myriad of emotions from Kollel participants. "Being here is that much sweeter when your enemies are trying to keep you away," said Yitzy Scheinman, 18, of Woodmere, referring to the Kotel visit. Never the less, due to the security situation in the country, extra police officers and soldiers were stationed at the Kotel, and we stuck close together as a group to ensure our safety.

Moving back to Beit Meir allowed Kollel to have its annual "Kumzitz at the Kotel." During the late afternoon of Tisha B'Av, the saddest day in the Jewish calendar, more than 200 Kollel participants and staff members joined hundreds of Jews from all different backgrounds at the Kotel. In a circle, we sang in unison to mourn the destruction

of the two holy temples and to pray for the coming of the messiah and the rebuilding of the third holy temple. The kumzitz was very touching and inspired many participants, including Michael Weiner, 17, of Philadelphia. "It was an inspiring afternoon of heartfelt song and prayer," he said about the kumzitz. "I was personally moved to see Jews from diverse backgrounds come together in unity and closeness."

Despite the conflict in Israel, I had the summer of a lifetime on Kollel, as I gained a greater appreciation for what Israeli citizens go through on a daily basis. Many Israeli youth just a few years older than myself and other Kollel participants put their lives on the line to serve in the IDF (Israeli Defense Forces) and to protect their country. Unfortunately, we attended the shiva (mourning) of one of those young soldiers, Staff Sgt. Evyatar Turgeman, of Beit She'an, who was killed at the age of 20 in a firefight with terrorists in Gaza. At the shiva, we heard about his devotion to Israel and the Torah from family members. It is the commitment of soldiers such as Staff Sgt. Turgeman that allows people from around the globe, including myself and the rest of the Kollel participants, to visit Israel and Jerusalem safely. The two sirens which sounded gave us a greater appreciation for what the residents of the communities of Sderot and Ashkelon go through on a daily basis, as they have a mere 15 seconds from the time a siren sounds to get to safety in a bomb shelter.

Asher Willner, 15, of Los Angeles learned the importance of national unity from his experience this summer. "This summer taught me that a nation can only stand strong if it stands together," he said. "The way we helped the soldiers, prayed and got together as one shows the strength of a nation that stands together." Woodmere resident Aharon Goldblatt, 16, learned to stay focused on the positive from this summer in Israel. "Being in Israel at this time has taught me how important it is to be loyal to my homeland and to not let challenging experiences affect my summer of both fun and personal growth," he said.

Although several other summer programs cancelled their trips to Israel due to safety and logistical concerns, Kollel did not. Sometimes, the most valuable experiences in life come under non-ideal circumstances. While this summer certainly came with challenges, I had an experience of a lifetime on Kollel, one that gave me an even greater appreciation for Israel.

MACH HACH B'ARETZ BY ZACH LOWINGER

Mach Hach B'Aretz is an original Israel programs for teens finishing 10th grade. Mach Hach B'Aretz is an amazing and inspiring five-week Israel summer tour that gives participants a chance to fall in love with the country and form an everlasting bond with its people. I had the privilege of attending Mach Hach this past summer.

When a tenth grader comes back from a summer program, they say, "Wow, this was the best summer of my life! That really was the best program!" This statement isn't true for every program, but for Mach Hach, it really is.

On most programs, there is only one option to choose from, but Mach Hach offers 2 separate branches to choose from – Hesder and Adventure. If you choose to do Hesder, you will

experience Torat Eretz Yisrael both inside and outside of the Beit Midrash. The learning and touring complement each other, giving participants a well-rounded appreciation of Am Yisrael, Eretz Yisrael and Torat Yisrael. With a Tanach in hand as they tour Israel, participants bring the Torah they learn to life.

But, if you do Adventure, you have multiple options. You can do Yam L'Yam and take part in one of Israel's most popular hikes, crossing the width of Israel from the Kinneret to the Mediterranean Sea, culminating with a thrilling five-mile bike ride; you can see the lush greenery of the Galill while challenging yourself on demanding trails; you can enjoy the camaraderie of your fellow hikers and finish triumphantly, having literally hiked across Israel; or you can do Negev.

I did this option and had the time of my life. Even though we were unable

to hike the Negev, we did Yam L'Yam in a more intense way. You can leave your phones at home and experience the rugged beauty of the seemingly endless Negev desert, sleep under the clear Negev skies (*Continued on page 11*) while appreciating a crisp desert breeze, hike for days without encountering cars, buildings or roads, and learn how to survive in the wilderness.

The third option is chessed. You can make your contribution to the people of Israel in conjunction with Shalva participants and run a four-day after-school program for children with special needs. Shalva is a world renowned institution that works with mentally and physically challenged youth in Jerusalem.

All in all, Mach Hach B'Aretz was a great experience, one that truly taught me the beauty of Am Yisrael in Eretz Yisrael with Torat Yisrael.

DRS Wildcats Standings

As of December 20th

Varsity Basketball: **8-1** (*Second Place, Eastern Division*)

JV Basketball: **3-3** (*Tied for Fourth Place, Eastern Division*)

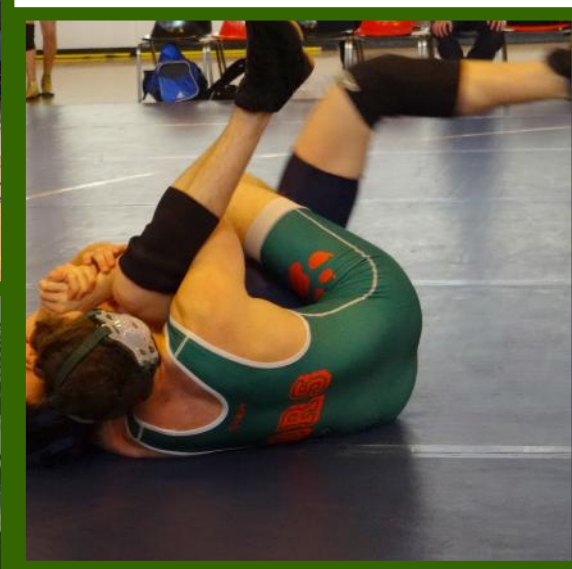
Varsity Hockey: **8-2-0-0** (*Second Place, Eastern Conference*)

JV Hockey: **4-2-0-0** (*Fourth Place, Eastern Conference*)

Flag Football: **4-2** (*Mesivta Football League*)

Compiled by Yehuda Posner and Shmulik Roth.

Source: Metropolitan Yeshiva High School Athletic League



Left: The Flag Football squad lines us at Lawrence High School (Ruvie Sturm/Star).

Above: Tip off at a Wildcats basketball game (Ari Savitsky/Star).

Right: The Wrestling Team dominates at a recent match (Natan Davidowitz/Star).

Below: The Wildcats exchange high-fives with the opposing team (Yoni Gutenmacher/Star).

***The DRS Star*, the official school newspaper of the Davis Renov Stahler (DRS) Yeshiva High School for Boys, is published bi-monthly by the students of DRS High School, and is distributed free of charge to members of the high school community.**

***The Star* serves as a medium for the expression and exchange of responsible opinions. While recognizing the United States Constitution's guarantee of free press, *The Star* does not publish content which is contrary to the educational philosophy of DRS High School. *The Star* accepts letters to the editor, and the writer's name will be withheld at the request of the author. Additionally, while *The Star* accepts advertisements as means to defray publication costs, it does not endorse or guarantee any business, product, or service advertised within.**

The DRS Star

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