

# Heritage Academy

# TIMES

Jewish Community Day School



Summer 2008  
Sivan 5768  
Volume 5, Issue 3

## EVENTS:

Wednesday, March 26 – Grade 7 field trip to Mount Holyoke College to visit the exhibits on ancient Greece and Rome

Sunday, March 30 – *Destination Imagination* competition in S. Dartmouth, MA.

Thursday, April 3 – *Performing Arts Club* field trip to Thomas J. O'Connor Animal Shelter

Monday, April 14 – Grade 5 presents “From Slavery to Freedom”

Tuesday, April 15 – *Performing Arts Club* presents “A Benefit Production for Animals.”

Wednesday, April 16 – Model Seder; Israeli *Shaliacha* from New Orleans visit

Tuesday, April 29 – Grades 3-5 field trip to the Springfield Symphony; Firefighter Phil presentation to grades K-2

Thursday, May 1 – *Yom Hashoa* assembly for grades 4-8

Monday, May 5 – Board Meeting; *Rosh Chodesh* assembly

Thursday, May 8 – *Israel @ 60* Event

Friday, May 9 – *Grandparents’/ Special Friends’ Day*

Monday, May 12--Friday, May 16 – Standardized testing week for Grades 3-8

Friday, May 16 – Kindergarten field trip to the Karen Sprague Cultural Center at AIC to see the *Paperbag Players*

Monday, May 19 – *PTA Family BBQ*

Wednesday, May 21 – First Grade *Siddur Party* at Heritage Academy; *Wingmasters Birds of Prey* presentation for grades K-5

Friday, May 23 – *Lag’B’Omer* – Field Day!

Thursday, May 29 – Grade 3 *Poetry Café* at the JCC

Sunday, June 1 – *An Evening in the Garden* at Heritage Academy Honoring Major Donors

Monday, June 2 – *Yom Yerushalayim* activities for grades K-8 in school; Annual Meeting; Installation of officers

Wednesday, June 4 – Grade 4 & 5 *Timeline Celebration*

Thursday, June 5 – Second Middle School *videoconference* with students in Afula, Israel @ STCC

Friday, June 6 – Rabbi Breakfast honoring Rabbi Schwartz; *Shavuot* Assembly for grades K-5

Thursday, June 12 – Kindergarten field trip to *Magic Wings*; Grade 3 field trip to Mt. Holyoke Summit House

Friday, June 13 – Heritage Academy *Student Talent Show*

Monday, June 16 – *Kesher L’Boger* – Connecting with our Graduates

Tuesday, June 17 – Grade 5 field trip to *Ellis Island*; Grade 2 *Book & Author Event*

Wednesday, June 18 – Grades 6-8 field trip to Six Flags; Grade 4 field trip to the *Boston Freedom Trail*

Thursday, June 19 – 8<sup>th</sup> grade Graduation

Friday, June 20 – Awards Assembly, Last day of school

## MESSAGE FROM

### THE HEAD OF SCHOOL:

*Blessed are You, Lord our God, King of the universe, who has sanctified us with His commandments and instructed us on the counting of the Omer. (Daily blessing between Passover and Shavuot)*

Here at Heritage Academy, we have just finished counting the Omer and we are also closing out another school year. (Actually, I am sure some of our students are probably counting the days till the end of school. But, the counting of the Omer and the counting of the days till the end of school are not the same thing.) Our sages have given us many interpretations and commentaries on why we may have been given this commandment of counting the Omer. Rabbi Twerski (*Living Each Day*, p. 197) points out that it is significant that we count the Omer from Passover to Shavuot, for this coincides with the time in which the Israelites, as a people, were moving from being slaves to that of a “*kingdom of priests and a sacred people.*” (Exodus 19:6) How was this transformation accomplished? The answer: “one day at a time”. Yes, when one moves forward “one day at a time”, daunting tasks become possible. The same could be said about a school.

As a school continuously transforms itself to meet new visions, challenges, community needs, it does so “one day at a time”. As I reflect back over the year (actually many years), I can see so much that was accomplished, but it

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was all done slowly, methodically, and with thought. We have grown into a school of many achievements. Israel permeates the school through our *schlichim* model, new Israel Studies curriculum, *Israel Studies Tour* (with an emphasis on “studies”), participation in the *West Hartford Israeli Dance Festival*, and this year’s emphasis on *Israel @60* (*Sulomot* program and participation at community events). We have brought the outside world inside and the inside world outside. We have established field trips in each grade (bringing the inside out) and performing artists, authors, musicians, and science experts engage our students (bringing the outside in). We are a pluralistic school where we all live together in *Klal Yisroel*. Our students have a formalized community commitment through our *Sheat Chesed* program. We enjoy each other’s company as we practice Jewish rituals together (*Succot, Simchat Torah, Havdallah*, etc.). Academic offerings are continuously upgraded, enriched, and eliminated as appropriate. Our teachers receive Professional Development on-site and off. They have studied: the Writing Process, Differentiated Instruction, Enrichment, Classroom Routines and Procedures, Open Circle, and How to Write Objectives. Heritage Academy is a true learning community in every sense of the word: students, parents (through our *Sulomot Family Education* program), teachers, and the community.

It has been a rich and rewarding year; *Ropes Courses, TEVA, Chanukah Show, Bird Lady, Shakespeare & Company, Springfield Symphony, Ellis Island, National Geographic Geography Bee and Fair, Israel Bee, Science Fair, Siddur Presentation, Mt. Tom, Boston Freedom Trail, Higgins Armory, Talmud, Pirke Avot, Chick Hatching, Living Time Line Project, Performing Arts Club, Rosh Chodesh Assemblies, Keshet La-Boger Program* and so much more. How do we do it all? We do it like counting the Omer, “one day at a time”. *Tell your friends about us, we have room to grow!*

**Dr. Deborah R. Starr**

## MESSAGE FROM THE JEWISH LIFE DIRECTOR:

The year passed by so quickly that it is hard to believe that we are already starting another summer vacation ... and what a wonderful year it was at Heritage Academy - our students experienced and achieved so much.

A short D’var Torah will explain better our achievements at Heritage this year. In Psalm 27, King David expresses his desire to dwell in the house of G-d forever

*“One thing have I asked of the LORD, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the LORD all the days of my life...and to visit early in His temple.” (Psalms 27)*

The big question here is; *dwelling* and *visiting* are opposites! If King David asks to **dwell** in the house of G-d, why, in the next line, does he ask only to **visit** as a guest?

The answer is that David really wants to dwell in the house of G-d and to establish himself as a permanent resident there. He knew, however, that routine-repetition and familiarity detract from the awe of experiences. David was concerned that the routine of dwelling in the house of G-d would detract from his experience as well. Thus, he asks G-d, Please keep my enthusiasm and excitement when I view your glory daily, just the same as it was the very first time.

One of my goals this year, as the Jewish Life director, was to inculcate this enthusiasm into Jewish life at Heritage Academy - to get every child excited before each holiday assembly, happily anticipating the approach of a new Hebrew month, practicing Jewish tradition, enjoying the *Havdalah* ritual every week at the conclusion of the *Shabbat*, and lovingly performing acts of kindness to classmates and family.

Our middle school students participated in the *Building Jewish World Program* focusing on learning the meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The students met our twin class from Afula Israel, in two video-conferences, and anticipate more to come next year. The highlight of this program will be the celebration of Bar/Bat Mitzvahs with our twin class in Israel next year, during the Israel Trip.

The *Keshet La Boger Program* (connecting to our graduates), is ongoing and we are about to bring the current eighth graders into this group.

Space just does not allow the listing all of the excellent activities that we experienced this year. But it is all recorded in the *kidmail* that we sent you every week – so many wonderful events, assemblies, programs and activities for our children this year.



I am looking forward to another great year with our children; another year of excitement, joy, and enthusiasm in the school's Jewish life.

Have a great summer. *Mr. Shimon Shushan*



Kindergarten Family Havdallah Celebration at the Berman residence.

## DESTINATION IMAGINATION

By Claire Sholes, Enrichment Coordinator

Our second year fielding Destination Imagination teams was a great success! Our four teams traveled all the way to Dennis to represent Heritage Academy, and all four teams did a great job. Ms. Stokes' third and fourth graders placed third in their structure problem, despite a last minute collapse of the wooden structure. Their poise and enthusiasm were amazing. We loved the satire on "American Idol." Congratulations to all of the "Switch-Its": Kiarra, Danny, Arianna, Miriam, Shachar and Shoshana, as well as managers Christine Stokes and Rima Yashgur!

Our Rising Stars (grades 1 and 2), the "Fantastic History Twisters," performed like old hands, showing us what COULD have happened if the dinosaurs hadn't died out. Managers Lara Pisani and Jeff Schneider worked with the fabulous team of Raphaela and Rebecca, Will, Sol, Max and Roi.

The "Obstacle Drivers" maneuvered their air-driven vehicle around the obstacle-strewn baseball field like all stars. Jami Zmurko and her third and fourth grade team of Eden, Eli, Marin, Eitan and David overcame technical challenges and the additional challenge of performing a non-verbal skit.

Our first middle school level team, "The Scary Ghosties," worked with Peter Prewandowski to develop a performance involving optical illusions, transforming set pieces and a character with a secret identity. Team members Korben,

Noam, Lauren, Micah, Noa, Carmi and Eliana performed their clever skit with stage presence and verve, in stiff competition with older, more experienced teams. Their humor and enthusiasm were contagious, even in a large auditorium.

Despite the long bus/ car trip and the early departure time, our teams had a terrific day. We look forward to next year—and we expect a closer location for the competition! Many thanks to the parents and teachers who donated their time and support so that our students could have this experience. Special kudos to the Scary Ghosties, who designed our school tee shirts this year!

## ENRICHMENT PROGRAM 2008 - MRS. SHOLES

Each year our enrichment program has grown to involve more individuals and has offered more opportunities to Heritage Academy students. This year, whole classes in grades 1 through 5 have engaged in enrichment activities several times throughout the year, small groups of students have been able to pursue deeper or more advanced study in particular subjects, and a few students in grades 4 through middle school have been able to pursue individual projects and interests. The Destination Imagination program has also expanded to include more teams and more adult volunteers. We look forward to continuing to build on this foundation next year.



Rising Stars of Destination Imagination, L to R: Sol, Raphaela and Rebecca, Max and Roi.



At the very end of the year, a few kindergarten students have begun meeting in a small group to try some math and reading activities. Several first grade students have met for math and reading enrichment each week throughout the year, and the whole class has made origami fish and learned a water cycle song. Second graders measured dinosaurs and made origami Mother's Day cards. We've also learned about logic, geometry, problem solving, measurement and estimation.

The entire third grade class made origami crowns for Purim and mice for the Year of the Rat. Some enrichment activities were incorporated into the Native American unit. Some students learned about numeration and various number systems. They've also continued to solve problems in math and logic. Another group of students has been writing stories and poems during their weekly enrichment period. In fourth grade, we've had students reading extra novels, others writing stories and poems, and still others studying numeration, place value and algebra. The whole class has been engaging in hands-on activities in flat and solid geometry by making origami hexahedra, tetrahedral kites, and cutting out five-pointed stars like Betsy Ross. Fifth graders wrote jazzy advertisements for "Gnu Foods." They've been writing original fairy tales, reading extra novels, studying probability and algebra, and solving a variety of mathematical problems.

Individual student projects have ranged from fantasy stories to websites to slide shows to movies to games. Even those students who ran short of time to complete their projects have learned from the process.

Our resource shelves have lots of new materials for teachers to borrow and use in their own classrooms. It has been a very successful year for the program, thanks to the cooperation of classroom staff, students and administrators. I look forward to an even better year in 2008-9! I wish a summer of rest and enjoyment to everyone in the Heritage Academy community. Keep those brains hummin' while you're sunnin'!

## MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH AND LANGUAGE ARTS— MRS. GLORIA ROY

This has been a very productive year albeit a very quick one. Each year our students read more and write better. *The Odyssey* and *A Midsummer's Night Dream* have been added to the eighth grade curriculum; *The Prince and the Pauper* to the seventh grade curriculum; and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* to the sixth grade curriculum.

The eighth grade prepared grades 5, 6, and 7 for a performance of *A Midsummer's Night Dream* at Symphony Hall by Shakespeare and Company. They wrote a modernized version of a scene and performed it at a middle school assembly. In addition, they organized four rotating sessions to acquaint students with Shakespeare's life, his times, his works, and his stage. These creative students used performance, costumes, PowerPoint, posters, and talent to entrance their audience while instructing.

Middle School students were teamed up with Lower School "buddies" for story reading. Sixth, seventh, and eighth graders wrote original short stories that read to their "buddies." Students worked very hard to create enchanting stories that mesmerized the first and second graders. The program was very successful.

The English program is comprehensive. Students continue to develop their vocabulary, including Latin and Greek roots. They write expository essays weekly that analyze and respond to the literature they are reading. Grammar is essential to good writing, and with its mastery, many students are working on developing their style of writing. Although students are looking forward to a restful summer, many are starting their summer reading and writing assignment now.

## PERSUASIVE ESSAY - DEVORAH

In the twelve years I have been alive, I have tried to do good deeds. As I remember all of them, one will stand out in my memory for many years to come. When I was eleven years old, I learned about a program. This program is in Afula Israel; it is called the Emunah Children Center. This program removes children from their homes because their parents cannot appropriately care for them. Many of these children are victims of abuse and neglect. I am most proud for my service to this program.

In December of 2006, fifteen of the girls in the program came to America. They came with their singing group called the Emunotes, and traveled all over the United States. For the three days they stayed in Springfield I became friendly with many of them. The girls sang for an audience at the Basketball Hall of Fame, and then had ice cream with my family and a group of families that had been housing the girls. I spoke to them in Hebrew and we had a great time. I really felt a connection among us.

The next November when I was preparing for my Bat Mitzvah, I had to think of a charity project. After my amazing experience with the girls from the Emunah Center the year before, I realized that I needed to give money to this remarkable program. I proudly donated ten percent of my Bat mitzvah money for good use to this program. I hope that the money will get to Israel and



continue to help children in need of a place to live. With this small donation I look forward to making a difference.

Next summer I will be going to Israel with my family to celebrate my Bat Mitzvah. Having a Bar or Bat Mitzvah in Israel is a family tradition. Both my brothers had a traditional celebration in Israel. I decided to do something a little different. Since the girls' families in the Emunah Center can't afford to celebrate a bat mitzvah, I decided to share my big day. My family will be sponsoring a group Bat Mitzvah party at the Emunah Center this July. We are all going to meet again and celebrate with lots of good food and music. A few of us will also prepare a d'var Torah to share with the guests. Some of the girls and I are already pen pals and email each other in anticipation of the upcoming summer. I am looking forward to this special occasion. Quite honestly, at first I wasn't sure I wanted to do this. I had been looking forward to my special day with family and friends in Israel my whole life. Sharing the spotlight with a bunch of other girls was not part of the plan. After realizing that these girls would have no Bat Mitzvah never mind sharing the day with other girls, I knew it was the right thing to do.

I am looking forward to this day. This is an experience most girls my age will miss out on. It is my privilege to have the opportunity to give these girls who are so less fortunate than myself the occasion to have a meaningful Bat Mitzvah and a day that we will all remember for the rest of our lives.

My involvement in this program is the proudest of all my good deeds. The program is the most special because I have met the girls. I know that they have been through some harsh times, but they are regular girls, just like me. Since these girls have been through so much, it is important to know that. This is the most cherished experience I have ever had and I hope to continue supporting this program.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING - ILANA

"I'm so excited, mommy!" I screeched. I was three years old and we were driving to a farm to pick strawberries. I had never gone berry picking before, but I absolutely loved the taste of strawberries.

"Yeah, me too!" said my sister, Hannah. Hannah was seven at the time. She also loved strawberries, but she was experienced at berry picking.

Yet, I was determined to pick more strawberries than Hannah.

"Good, that's good, girls!" My mom yelled over the thumping radio in the car. Hannah was singing to a song that I had never heard before.

"Daddy, are we there yet?" I whined. I was so anxious!

"Almost," Dad replied. "We'll be there in about ten minutes."

"Yay!" Hannah yelled.

"Nooooooo! Ten minutes is a *long time!*" I threw my arms up in the air and sulked.

Fifteen minutes later I heard the big van's tires crunching along over the gravel of the farm.

"We're here, girls," my mom said. She unbuckled her seatbelt and stepped out of the car.

"Yay!" Hannah and I chorused.

"Okay, girls," mom went on, interrupting our excitement, "We're going to have a little contest. I'm going to give the girl who picks the most strawberries a special prize!"

"Yay," I thought, "I'm definitely going to pick the most strawberries and win the prize!"

"But *mom,*" I replied, "*you have* to tell us what the prize is *before* we start picking the strawberries."

"No, it's a *surprise.*"

Congratulations  
to our  
Graduates!





“Ugh,” I thought, “I HATE surprises.”

“Come on, mom! *Please?*” Hannah chimed in.

“Oh, *all right*. Whoever wins will get an ice cream sundae!”

“Yay!” Hannah and I jumped up and down in excitement.

Holding my mom’s hand, we all walked over to a small tent. A woman there gave us all green baskets to hold our strawberries.

“One basket equals one pound,” she said, “and it’s six dollars per pound.”

“Okay,” my Mom said to the woman, “thank you.” Then she turned to us. “Girls, remember: whoever wins the contest gets an ice cream sundae! Now don’t go too far out in the field or you won’t be able to find your way back here. Go ahead now, go pick some berries!” Hannah and I ran off in separate directions. I was excited and determined to win the contest, but I was a little bit intimidated by Hannah because she had gone berry picking before. To be honest, I wasn’t even really sure how to get a strawberry off of a bush! How was I ever going to beat Hannah?!

I ran for a while thinking about this, but made up my mind that I would at least *try* to win the contest. “Winning is EVERYTHING,” I thought. “Yes, it definitely was.”

I had been wandering for about twenty minutes and hadn’t picked any strawberries. I traveled through the different rows, but none of the strawberries really appealed to me. They were unripe, overripe, smashed, or too high for me to reach. This was going to be a LONG day. Finally, I found a row with decent-looking berries on them. I tugged at them and tugged at them and tugged some more, but it was no use. It was true: I couldn’t even get one strawberry! There was no way I would win the contest.

Feeling defeated, I sat down on a patch of dirt and sulked. “Wow,” I thought, “What am I going to do?” I stayed there for a bit, but then decided to get up because I knew that I wouldn’t be able to find my way back if I went any farther out in the field. As I stretched my legs, I saw the best berry I had ever seen: a huge, juicy strawberry. It wasn’t overripe or under ripe, not too big but not too small. I screeched in delight. As I looked up at it in awe, I saw a huge bee buzzing by. But I didn’t care, it was MY strawberry. As I reached up to grab it, the bee stung me. Crying hysterically, I ran to my mom

Of course, Hannah won the contest. After Mom went over to the tent to pay for the strawberries, we headed home. Even though I did not win, I learned a lesson that day. Now I think before I act.

Jackie and Nate work on mosaics at the Israel @ 60 event at HeritageAcademy



## GEOMETRY - MRS. LORENZO

The geometry class continued to discover the close connection between the skills of algebra and the concepts of geometry. The study of circles involved many algebraic relationships used to determine the size of angles, arcs, and segments of the circles. The study of regular polygons also used equations to find the measure of the interior and exterior angles and the area of the figures. The Pythagorean Theorem and special right triangles utilized both rational and irrational numbers in finding the length of the missing sides. Other topics included: volume and surface area of solid figures, the use of proportional relationships in similar figures, and an introduction to trigonometry.

The students also researched how geometry is used in architecture. They reported on Vitruvius, the father of modern architecture and Frank Lloyd Wright, a famous architect.

## ALGEBRA - MRS. LORENZO

The Algebra class was extremely busy during the last part of the year. The students discovered that each chapter built on the one before and that they were able to conquer difficult concepts by thinking of them in small manageable pieces of things they already knew from earlier in the year.

Topics covered included: solving equations with algebraic fractions; using slope to determine the equation of a line; graphing linear functions and linear inequalities; graphing and solving systems of equations and inequalities; understanding and working with irrational numbers; and solving any quadratic equation.

The students also helped create a classroom bulletin board by correcting and explaining the “Common Errors in Mathematics”. They also answered the age old question of “When am I ever going to use this?” by researching and reporting on careers in mathematics. Some of the careers were aeronautical engineer, actuary, economist, statistician, research mathematician, and computer scientist.



## MIDDLE SCHOOL SOCIAL STUDIES AND MATH – MRS. HEATH

It's hard to believe that this school year is over. It seems like we had only just begun and now the last issue of the Heritage Times is being sent out. For all the grades, it has been a most productive year. Besides the regular curriculum, we also celebrated many holidays and events, as well as commemorating Israel's 60th Birthday. I hope you enjoy reading what we have accomplished this past year.

The sixth grade math students concentrated on all the operations involved in working with fractions and decimals. We worked with ratios, reciprocals, percentages - as used not only in normal algorithms, but also in word problems and in daily living – an example being how much sales tax affects our purchases. We created 3D polygons and on Fridays had *Math Lab* activities doing math-o-grams, decoding messages and measuring a variety of items around the room. The 6th graders also improved their cutting and counting skills as they were totally involved in our Student Council's most successful project for the school, the "Links of Love".

The sixth grade social studies program this last trimester was spent studying the Constitution and the Federal Government of the United States. Reading materials were correlated with many lively and interesting discussions and debates along with some outstanding art projects. They illustrated their interpretation of the Six Goals of the Constitution, created a mobile of the Federal Government, and thoroughly explored the Bill of Rights. This unit ended with a presentation by Officer Steve Donnelly who explained and answered many questions concerning the first 10 amendments of the Constitution as well as the importance and the commitment of law enforcement agencies to not only abide by these laws, but also their duty to serve and protect this country's citizens.

Seventh graders spent this last trimester in Ancient Greece and Rome. Besides learning of the many contributions from these ancient civilizations to the modern world, they learned how to say and write their names in Greek, increased their vocabulary as they learned how many of our English words are derived from Greek and Latin, as well as viewing the origins of myths. The culmination was their creation of their own myth, including their 3D construction of an original god or goddess.

The eighth graders' course of study this last part of the year was spent learning about World War II and the Holocaust. Using videos, outside readings and many interesting class discussions, they learned not only of the horrors of this event, but also of the courage and strength of not only those who survived, but of many others who tried to help combat this atrocious event in mankind. They, along with the entire Middle School, attended the opera "Brundibar" which was originally performed at the Theresenstadt Concentration Camp and actually heard a presentation by one of the survivors of this camp. In

conjunction with the Holocaust, the 8th graders dedicated this year's Holocaust Memorial Service to the memories of the children who lost their lives at Theresenstadt in a most moving, emotional and respectful manner.

One of the requirements of this course of study was to respond to some of the videos seen in class. They all did a great job as they tried to understand the "whys" of this occurrence in history. Below is one of the responses to "Escape from Sobibor".

### ESCAPE FROM SOBIBOR - JACKIE

Since January, my eighth grade class has been studying the Holocaust and World War II. In conjunction with this study, we have also watched various movies relating to events of this period. One of the movies we saw was Escape from Sobibor.

Of all the movies we have watched this year, Escape from Sobibor was my personal favorite. Not only for the usual reason people love movies, such as good acting and lots of action, but because of how moving and inspirational it was. The film showed the devotion, courage, and everlasting faith of imprisoned Jews in ways I never thought possible. Instead of remaining passive, these people used what little strength they had left to devise the most successful escape plan in all of World War II.

I was amazed by the decision Leon, the Jewish rebellion leader, made to attempt to free the entire camp. I figured 50 people, at most, would escape. But everyone? It was an ambitious and daring move, but it worked. Leon didn't think it was fair for only some prisoners to have the opportunity to escape and not others. Everyone was equal in his eyes, and everyone deserved a chance to be free. I think his actions really speak for the Jewish nation as a whole, and how we are always there for each other. I never realized until now how much emphasis Judaism puts on working together and helping one another. I also admired Sasha, the Russian POW leader, and Leon for putting their differences aside and cooperating, for the sake of everyone else. They were smart to use each other, and understood each side needed the other's help. Even in such dire times, it was reassuring for me to see a true sense of partnership and community. They focused on a common goal, escaping, and together made it a reality. I was incredibly shocked to see the inmates blindly grabbing at barbed wire fence when trying to escape. They severely cut, injured, and made their hands bleed. My initial response was, "Doesn't that hurt?" It was then I understood how much freedom meant to the prisoners, and how far they would go to get it. That scene also made me appreciate my freedom, and I feel as if I truly understand why the world must never forget. This tragic event is part of my history, and it cannot happen again.

The epilogue of the movie perfectly concluded the film. I loved hearing the stories of what happened to these characters. It really made the audience realize that this isn't some made up story for entertainment, but an actual tale of bravery. These characters really existed, really escaped, and really were imprisoned, tortured and killed. Although I was so upset to discover that many of the escapees perished even after breaking out of Sobibor, I realized the important thing: at least they died free.



If I was an inmate at Sobibor involved in the escape plan, I would have been incredibly nervous but 100% supportive. I probably would have requested not to do the physical killing, but would have gladly volunteered for anything else. However, if necessary for the success of the plan, I think I would have tried my hardest to perform whatever task I was assigned, no matter what it was. I hope I would have been equal to the bravery of those Jews, bravery essential to make the plan become a reality. I would just keep thinking of the reasons to live and get out of there: for my family, but also to let the world know. To give the truth about the Nazis and to educate people on what actually occurred and tell them to ignore Hitler's fabrication and web of lies. I think that is what really drove the leaders of the revolt. The idea of surviving was revenge in itself, because then everyone would know what really happened.

A truly inspirational film, Escape From Sobibor is captivating and gripping throughout. It conveys positive lessons of unity, organization, and resistance, while discouraging passivity. Based on a true story, the movie uses real facts and accurate descriptions to draw in viewers. Actors Alan Arkin and Rutger Hauer both perform brilliantly as co-leaders of the uprising. Although the true horrors of the concentration camp are not explicitly described, the courage of the camp inmates, especially of those planning the escape, is vividly portrayed. The entire cast gives a memorable and magnificent performance. Everything about Escape from Sobibor goes above and beyond, and the movie is a must see for anyone, Jewish or not.

## A LOT OF FUN IN MR. SHUSHAN'S CLASS

What a wonderful year it was in Judaic Studies. Our students achieved so much in class activities and projects. Serious learning coupled with fun activities is a winning combination for our class.

In sixth grade Israel Studies, students explored the second Aliyah. Each student created a beautiful display on various characters connected with this Aliyah. The students learned a lot about life in a kibbutz and about the challenges that the Kibbutzim have been dealing with for the past twenty five years.

Bible class for sixth, seventh and eighth grade was quite enjoyable. As a conclusion to the *Navi* (Prophets) unit, the students put together an incredible newspaper. In the *Biblical Times*, written by our imaginative eighth grade students, you may find a report of King Solomon's fall, the civil war that almost happened, and Breaking News from the field where the prophet met Yaravam, the new king. In the *B.C. People*, written by seventh grade, you could learn a lot about King David's era, Sports: Armenia vs. Israel, and an interview with Bat Sheva. In the *Shaul Times*, written by sixth grade, you will find the Editorials about Shaul's faith, Comics on the first war, Guerilla or Gorilla article and a very special interview with Jonathan's Sword.

In a variety of subjects we integrated Judaic and general studies. For instance, as a conclusion to the unit of Kosher Animals in the torah, every student from seventh and eighth grades prepared a brochure for visitors to the Biblical Zoo in

Jerusalem. Each brochure explored different type of animals/groups of animals. In the brochure you could find a welcome page, background about the animal, habitat and of course, the kosher issue. The students learned related information from the science point of view which helped them to understand better some of the issues of Kashrut.

In Talmud, our students achieved so much in the skills of dealing with a Sugiya, and in critical thinking.

In Parashat Shavuah class Mrs. Wesley and I are making the lesson fun and always with a message that can be applied to our daily life. Our students created plays about the Parashah topics, discussions and activities such as: crossword puzzles, songs, learning from a picture and more. From time to time we had one of the community rabbis visit to deliver an interesting Parasha class.

In Judaic Elective course, we traveled around the chain of Jewish history through the generations. We learned how our rabbinic tradition had developed after the torah was given on Mount Sinai.

Our students had a chance to participate in Alternative Tefillah; such as: Meditation & *Teffilah* or *Hitbonenut* Observation.



## SCIENCE NEWS FROM THE MIDDLE SCHOOL – MR. SYMINGTON

Over this final term, our sixth graders have been investigating Plate Tectonics and the impacts of earthquakes and volcanoes upon Planet Earth. It was easy to make connections between the recent major earthquake in China and our understanding of the movement of Earth's plates. We also discussed weathering, both chemical and mechanical, and the impact that this form of Mother Nature has upon our daily lives. With the help of an experienced geologist, the students were able to construct their own volcano during one of our lab sessions. We had a lot of fun and excitement as each volcano erupted onto the lab counters, the students, and the floor.

The seventh grade students continued their studies of Health and the Human Body, concentrating on a number of body systems. They researched the Digestive, Circulatory, Respiratory



and Excretory systems. This information helped them to realize that the human body is quite a complex machine that needs regular maintenance. During a couple of lab sessions, the students were busy dissecting frogs, seeing many of the systems they just finished reading about and discussing in class. They completed this task with high honors.

The eight grade students continued their trip into the world of chemistry, learning of the many bonding opportunities present with the elements. They concentrated on carbon atoms and discovered that many of the things we take for granted have a connection to the element carbon. The ending of the term had them studying petrochemical technology. They soon learned how oil is so important to so many populations around the world. The recent increases in the cost of a barrel of oil have fit perfectly into this area of study. Their final writing assignment, "What If?", required each student to write an editorial about how the world will and must change when the planet no longer has any available supply of oil.

As a finish to the term, all students discussed smoking and its harmful effects upon the body. Being a Middle School student, peer pressure could soon require them to make a decision about smoking. Hopefully, the decision they make will be the right one.

## HEBREW AND JUDAIC STUDIES - MRS. WESLEY

### Advanced Hebrew

In this trimester, we finished two units: *Tikvatam LaNetzach* (Their Eternal Hope) and *Me'Avdut LeCherut BeYameinu* (From Bondage to Freedom in Our Time).

The first unit discussed values and concepts, such as joy, truth, trust, consideration, brotherhood and good-will through a story. The second unit examined, from a historical and multicultural perspective, the struggle of mankind for freedom as inspired by the saga of the Jewish people being freed from bondage in Egypt. In different activities, the students distinguished between physical and spiritual freedom.

### 7th Grade Israel Studies

This trimester we continued our study of the relationship between the Jews and Arabs under the years of the British Mandate. Students divided into groups. Each group researched one component that influenced those years.

### 8th Grade Israel Studies

We ended our three years of learning about the history of the modern state of Israel culminating in the Creation of the State of Israel. We recognized the diversity of Israeli society as a result of the mass immigration which occurred at the beginning years of the country, and afterwards. The students watched the movie *Sallah Shabati* a comedy about the chaos of Israeli immigration and resettlement in the holy land in the fifties. For their final projects, the students chose a subject that related to

life today in Israel, such as technology, wars, Israeli Air force, technology in the Army, leading women, sports, the government, and Israeli Food.

### Bible –Leaders and Leadership 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Grade

This trimester we studied two important leaders: King David and Ruth. King David was the second king of the united kingdom of Israel. He is known as a righteous king, as well as a warrior, musician and poet (he is traditionally credited with the authorship of many of the Psalms). One of the customs of the holiday of Shavuot is to read the scroll of Ruth. Students researched Ruth and created a story board telling her story. The story of Ruth ended with the birth of David.

### Judaic Elective – Women in Judaism

This trimester we learned about Rose Schneiderman, a labor organizer and socialist of the first part of the twentieth century in America; and Ida Kaminska, the woman who created the Yiddish theater. We expanded our learning to include the Yiddish language and culture. The students learned about this funny sounding language, which is a part of Jewish heritage. The project that summarized this unit was to rewrite a children's book adding Yiddish words that we learned.

## COMPUTER CLASSES - MRS. WESLEY

Kindergarten continues to explore fun and educational web sites as well as playing computer games to identify the computer parts. This is a list of some of the sites:

[www.wacona.com](http://www.wacona.com)

<http://www.snopi.com/kids/kids.asp>

<http://www.zooloo.co.il/games/>

Third grade continued practicing using PowerPoint. Ask your children to show you their special presentations.

Middle school students worked on *Inspiration*; learning to use the graphic organizer program.

## COMPUTER CLASSES - MRS. Z.

**1<sup>st</sup> grade-** The first grade has been learning about safe sites on the internet for games to play that help teach them Math, Science and Reading, Some of these include: [www.kaboose.com](http://www.kaboose.com), [www.apple4theteacher.com](http://www.apple4theteacher.com), [www.scholastic.com](http://www.scholastic.com), and [www.funbrain.com](http://www.funbrain.com). They also have practiced their typing skills and are showing improvement all the time. They have learned how to log on and off the server and sign on to the Internet. They have even tried their skills in PAINT and have drawn some wonderful pictures using various tools they learned about.



**2<sup>nd</sup> grade** The second grade have been practicing many skills that they have been learning. They continue to improve their typing skills and each child made a power point presentation about themselves. They also have learned how to log on and off the server and have explored many sites on the Internet to look for information on the baby chicks they were taking care of. They used their word processing skills to write short stories and poems to share.

## SULAMOT - TALIEDRY

How do I summarize a year filled with so many activities on just one page? The first half of the year we had 3 programs. The first: *The World of Shabbat*, Sunday Funday. Second: *The Light of the Shabbat Candle*, and finally: *The Magic of Havdalah*. While these programs were well attended and very successful, it is the second half of the year that I want to share with you.

In February we had a program, *The World of Bread*, for grades 4 -6 and their families. The evening began with a delicious deli dinner catered by our very own Cheryl Blonder. We continued with a PowerPoint presentation, "*Bread, Daily and Divine.*" It taught the importance and symbolism of bread and how it is used in different cultures. A baker from Gus & Paul's demonstrated unique ways of braiding *challah*. Each family was able to participate and then bring one home to bake.

Kindergarten and their families enjoyed *Shabbat in a Box* during the month of March. We started by lighting the candles and saying a special blessing for the children. Singing *Shabbat* songs, reciting the *Kiddush*, washing for the *hamotzi*, enjoying a delicious meal, and singing *zmirot*, brought Shabbat to life. Each family used a *Kiddush* cup, candle sticks, and *challah* cover that their child made, and felt very proud to use. A special thank you goes to Rabbi Micah, our class Rabbi, for bringing his guitar and leading us in song.

Celebrating Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> was the finale. The day's festivities began with *Tefillah* for the middle school. It continued with an *Israel Bee* for students in grades 4 - 8. For the next 3 hours the children rotated through 6 different stations. The Kindergarten classroom was transformed into a *kibbutz*.

Stanley, a representative from the Lupa Zoo in Ludlow, brought 9 different animals. The first grade classroom became *Eilat*. The children decorated aquariums and received Beta Fish to take home. In the second grade, the *Negev*, the boys and girls made an art project with different colored sand. A camel die cut added the finishing touch. Third grade became *Jerusalem*; the students decorated a wooden *Hamsa*. The bustling city of *Tel-Aviv* took over the fourth grade classroom. We listened to the story, *And Shira Imagined*, and ate Israeli snacks. The sweltering heat of *Masada* and the buoyancy of the *Dead Sea* were experienced by all in the fifth grade classroom. Creating a mosaic picture completed the visit. After the children (their families included), rotated through the stations, one and all hiked to the JCC picnic area for lunch. After digesting lunch we came together in the multi-purpose room to view a 3-D movie, "*A Journey in Time*", 3-D glasses included. *The Israel 60* show offered each grade the opportunity to perform an Israeli dance/song and for the middle school to put on a skit.

Many, many thanks, todah rabah, to everyone for helping make all the programs such a huge success! I could not have done it without you!

It is a pleasure to be Heritage Academy's family educator. I am looking forward to next year. The theme will be: Jewish Arts and Culture. I encourage each and every one of you to take part in learning together.

B'shalom.

Students feeding the animals at the "kibbutz" on Israel @ 60 event at Heritage Academy





## LIBRARY CORNER – MRS. JOHNSON

Our 2008 Scholastic Book Fair *almost* equaled last year's bounty. Much appreciation to Karen Schneider and Lisa Garipey, who stepped up to assist. We also had the pleasure of many student helpers. We were able to select over \$600 worth of books which greatly updates our collection. Thank you for buying and helping make this year's Book Fair so rewarding.

Our students' confidence in the library is evident when they use the computer to find books. Our students get accustomed to library protocol, and begin to see, and then realize, the relationship between our library cheer, "Last Name First", finding books, and the necessity of keeping books in order. They also learn that the Library is used for many things, and by many people, all at the same time.

The library looks even better with the addition of nice wooden bookcases, formerly in the chapel. We want to thank Drew Guertin for making that work. We also want to thank Susan Shaker and Lara Pisani for the beautiful student artwork that is displayed in the library.

Summer is a great time to continue to strengthen reading habits. I strongly encourage you to check out your local library Summer Reading Programs. Books can take you away and the mileage is priceless. And in case you forgot, responsible students may take out Heritage books for the summer.

I want to thank everyone for another wonderful Heritage Library year. Your support and generous donations truly make a difference. Notably, donations from the Chipkins, Bergs, many other families, as well as Dr. Starr, greatly enhance our collection.

Have a healthy, happy reading summer.

## MUSIC NEWS - CANTOR BERKE

It has been a busy year in music! In the winter the Kindergarteners and first graders were only becoming familiar with quarter notes (ta) and eighth notes (ti-ti). Now most of them can patsch a drum confidently, reading these rhythms in different combinations. Each student enjoys his or her turn to be the soloist with the drum, and they have also become composers by creating their own rhythms for their classmates to imitate.

Second Grade has progressed in these skills as well, and they are a nice bunch of singers. Next year they will tackle the recorder and learn more note reading and rhythm reading skills. Third Grade took to the recorder with gusto. They performed at the Purim Assembly and the Passover Seder. They are also confident singers with the ability to hold parts independently. Fourth Grade and Fifth Grades have continued to hone their musical skills and knowledge. Their familiarity with musical terminology has grown, and they enjoy performing for their classmates.

The Third through Fifth grades experienced a field trip to the Springfield Symphony to see the premiere of the piece

called *Encounter* by Clifton Noble. He based this piece on a book by the same name by local author Jane Yolen. She read from the manuscript as the orchestra illustrated the story through music. It was quite moving, and the Heritage students shared their knowledge of the instruments twice with Maestro Rhodes when he asked for answers from the audience.

The Middle School had a field trip to the Springfield Symphony at the beginning of February. We enjoyed the music of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Felix Mendelssohn. Many students were interested to learn that Mendelssohn had Jewish grandparents, including the famous Rabbi Moses Mendelssohn. Both of these composers were child prodigies and lived short but very productive lives. Maestro Kevin Rhodes spent time explaining different sections of the music, and then the orchestra would play each portion he discussed. By the end of our brief time together we heard portions of symphonies by both of these composers, including heretofore unheard revisions of Mendelssohn's Italian Symphony.

The Middle School music curriculum has bridged many eras this year. In addition to the above composers, different grades spent time on Elvis, the Beatles, Michael Jackson, and learning the history of the American musical theater. It is my hope that the students will leave Heritage Academy with a broad-based knowledge of music and its varying styles.

## NEWS FROM THE ART ROOM - MRS. SHAKER

This year flew by in the Art Room at Heritage Academy, and boy, were we busy...with Geography Fair projects, holiday creations, Science Fair posters, props for shows, Artist-of-the-Month masterpieces, seasonal art, group murals, printmaking, sculpture, and field day art activities, to name a few!

We've used hundreds of sheets of paper, gallons of paint, many magic markers, broken crayons, and consumed countless glue sticks, all to create the masterpieces that are on their way home to you. On that note, I'd like to suggest selecting one or two pieces of your child's art work and framing it. Reasonably priced frames are readily available and it really does add sophistication to the art. This is a way to show your child that his or her work as an artist is valued. I have many framed pieces by my own children hanging throughout my house and I cherish them. What a perfect way to preserve a piece of their childhood!

Have a wonderful summer...come back well rested and ready to C-R-E-A-T-E!

See you in September!



L to R: Rebecca Baranovski, Naomi Cohen and Eliana Yashgur enjoy the tie-dyeing activity on Field Day 2008

## FIFTH GRADE – MS. STOKES

The fifth grade has been extremely busy since our last Heritage Times. The students spent a lot of their time writing and reading poetry, in addition to learning fascinating facts about immigration.

The poetry written by the fifth grade was astounding, as many of you have already seen the poems displayed in the school. The students were taught structured poetry and began writing free verse as well. They read different forms of poetry, including Shakespeare's sonnets. Writing poetry is an amazing medium for students to enhance their writing voice. The poetry unit was a success and I hope that their poetry booklets can be enjoyed for years to come.

The class read Land of Hope, by Joan Lowery Nixon. This novel enhanced their social studies unit on immigration. The book allowed the students to experience the journey of coming to America. When studying immigration, the students often reflected on what was happening in the book. The integration of reading and social studies has helped to make the immigration experience real. It was a pleasure teaching this unit to such enthusiastic learners. The culmination of the unit was our class trip to Ellis Island.

I would like to thank all of you for giving me the privilege of teaching your children. It has been a wonderful year at Heritage Academy. I hope you all have a fun-filled and safe summer vacation, and I look forward to seeing all of you next year.

Following are a few samples of poems that the students wrote.

### THE STORY OF MY LIFE – ADAM ACKER

The story of my life is a very special thing  
I grew up as a lonely kid  
Then I learned how to sing  
I went to the studio, and then I did what I did

The sun wasn't shining  
The fans were in a rage  
I quickly started singing  
As I went up the stage

The song was a masterpiece  
I wrote it by myself  
Until I started to cease  
And stare at the guitar shelf

I looked out the window, and stared at the light  
Then I figured it out, I had stage fright!

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION – MR. WELLS

This year, Heritage Academy first through eighth grade Physical Education students took on the *President's Challenge* – a physical activity and fitness awards program. Students participated in 5 different activities: curl-ups, push/pull ups, shuttle run, sit and reach, and the distance run. Their performance was compared with national norms and the students were eligible for three different awards. First, the *Presidential Physical Fitness Award* – which means student-performance at or above the 85th percentile on at least 4 of the 5 activities. Second, the *National Physical Fitness Award* – which means student-performance at or above the 50th percentile. The third, *Participant* - whereby students completed all of the activities at or below the 50th percentile.

For all involved, the most important thing was that each student further improved his or her strength, endurance, flexibility and physical condition by being an active participant in the program.



A PERFECT PLACE TO BE – LIANNE ZANA

I can see it everywhere  
It's right in front of you  
It's all around us, you don't have to stare  
I bet you can see it too.

It's as beautiful as can be  
It's enjoyable, it's fun  
It's like nothing you have ever seen  
It's so very hot, like a thousand suns

The weather sometimes mix, like fire and ice  
They'll all find out, hopefully soon  
When they do, they'll follow me to paradise  
Maybe sometime in May or June

This is our view, it's time to cheer  
I can't believe it's finally here!

FOURTH GRADE - MRS. ZMURKO

Dear Fourth Graders,

I do not know where to begin (there's so much to say), but as we learn in class, just start and you'll go somewhere. The year has been filled with beautiful memories. We have accomplished a lot. Not only did we achieve great things in the fourth grade curriculum, but we set goals for the future. Each one of us is heading for greatness. I am looking forward to hearing about your many accomplishments. I know we have some future doctors, journalists, teachers, veterinarians, directors, artists, athletes, scientists, engineers, writers, singers, and performers in our presence.

As I reflect back on the year, I am most proud of one thing; we were risk takers in every sense. We were honest about ourselves, and we opened up about strengths and roadblocks. We took part in our community on many different levels. We reached out to help animals in need. We took time for deep breathing and we stopped to listen to the birds. We "skernaled" (a combination of sketching and journaling) about our lives and included both the happy times and the sad times. We took part in fishbowl discussions and shared our thoughts about current events. We opened up to our friends and strengthened our friendships. We reached out to new people and found we have a lot in common. We talked about tolerance and how we need to do our part. We were risk takers and because of that we're better students and better people.

I wish each of you a summer filled with books and fun, and course, continued success. Your love of life and learning is inspiring.

Thank you - Mrs. Zmurko

*(Below is a writing piece completed by Sasha who took a risk and shared his beautiful story with us.)*

FAMILY STORIES PROJECT

SASHA W.

My class is writing about family histories. Through this project, I learned a lot and I took a risk. When I was an infant, I immigrated to America.

Hi! My name is Benjamin W. (but everyone calls me Sasha), and I am a ten-year-old boy living in Springfield, Massachusetts. I came to America all the way from Irbit, Russia in 1998. On my way to America, I fell asleep on the plane, but once I was in America, everything was exciting, like getting my first pair of eye-glasses. Now that I'm in America, I have three siblings: Nathan age twelve, Max age eight, and Gillian age six. Although Irbit, Russia is a cool place (especially because they make famous motorcycles), I'm glad to be living with my wonderful family in America.

When I started my life in Russia, I faced obstacles, but people were there to lend a hand. When I was a baby living in a hospital in Irbit, Russia, I was content, but the hospital didn't fulfill my life. It was difficult, because the hospital had many kids and each kid couldn't get the exact care they needed. Especially me as a baby in the hospital, I didn't have my forever family to give me all the hugs and love I needed. Even though I faced obstacles early in my life, people set goals to help me.

People took action to meet my needs, and I was adopted from Russia to America. The hospital found me a better home, which landed me in America (Springfield, Massachusetts to be exact). When my forever family heard about me, they wanted to help. My mom Jocelyn and my dad Stuart thought I was cute, so they came and lent me a helping hand. Then they brought me to America. I'm glad people took action to help me, because I love being in America.

When I came to America, everything was different. When I got to my house in Springfield, I wandered around. I had a new bedroom to get used to. I made new friends in America. The first friends I made were my mom, my dad, and Nathan. A few years later, my family grew, and I made friends with Max and Gillian. I also got (and still do get) a lot of attention from my grandparents Paul and Gloria Weissman, and Lenore Tobin and Stuart Tobin. I am glad everything was different in America, because I have a good life.

When I was an infant, I immigrated to America. Since then I've grown from a nestling to a youngling. I have a great family in America and I'm so happy.



## FIFTH GRADE – MR. EDRY

After two years together, you are finally leaving me to go on to Middle School. I cannot even get used to the idea of you being “middle schoolers”. I believe that after a short adjustment period, you will do very well with your new teachers and the different schedule.

This year we completed our Hebrew program, *Tal Se'lah*, and it seemed that the students got used to the system and they will continue that program in middle school. During *Navi* (Prophets) class, we studied the story of the Judges, their leadership, and their character. The students also learned how to read from the Torah with the proper tropes.

The fifth grade students loved to do creative, hands-on activities. The program, “From Slavery to Freedom” was very successful. The very proud students presented their parents with their work. The students researched Ancient Egypt. They built models of related to the culture and of the Nile River. They created a PowerPoint Presentation about the ten plagues and wrote their own play about the Exodus from Egypt. They also learned, in General Studies, about slavery in America and shared stories of different characters.

For each holiday, we had a special program and activities about the holiday. The Israel 60<sup>th</sup> event was the highlight event for this year, and the fourth and fifth graders performed a moving dance and were invited to perform it again at the Basketball Hall of Fame. We researched the heroic story of *Masada* and why *Masada* is such an important place in Jewish history. We built a model of the mountain of *Masada*, including the Cable Car that goes up the mountain. We also created the *Dead Sea* in our classroom. We had an archeological dig, and the students needed to reassemble different potteries.

The “Jewish Timeline” event for the fourth and fifth grades was very special. The timeline projected different Jewish characters for over 400 years; such as Judah Turrow, Golda Meir, Rabbi Cook, and many more. Towards the end of the year, the students went to Ellis Island to learn more about immigration to America, with a particular emphasis on the waves of Jewish immigrants that came to America from 1870 – 1924.

I wish you all a safe and great summer and hope to see all of you next year in middle school.

## FOURTH GRADE – MR. EDRY

It is hard to believe that we have already reached the end of the year. When I look at pictures of the students from the beginning of the year, I can see how the students have grown and matured. I can see how they are much more confident and have a much better understanding of Hebrew and Jewish concepts.

In Hebrew we finished the curriculum for this year and I am pleased with our accomplishments. The students participated in Hebrew and did not get frustrated while using the language.

I am glad to tell you we will be starting a new program, called *Tal Am*. I will be spending time learning it in Israel this summer.

Over the past two months, we learned so much about the Jewish Holidays. From the time of Passover until now, we have learned about every Jewish Holiday and we had a special program and activity for each. On Passover, we spent a lot of time learning the details of the *Hagadah* and we worked very hard learning about the *seder*. For *Yom Ha'Shoah*, the students participated in the assembly for the first time. We learned about a boy who survived the Holocaust under very bad conditions. We learned to appreciate what we have much more.

For *Yom Ha'Zikaron*, the Memorial Day for Israeli fallen soldiers, we participated in the assembly and learned about the State of Israel and the sacrifices that have to be made in order to maintain an independent Jewish country. For *Yom Ha'Azmaut*, the Israeli Independence Day, we celebrated with a great celebration at school. For this celebration, the fourth grade built the flea market in Tel-Aviv, and they visited different cities and sites throughout Israel. Each class transformed into a different city or site in Israel and you could feel the excitement of the students visiting all of these places and having different hands-on activities that were related to the place they were in. The fourth graders prepared a magnificent dance and they were also invited to perform that dance at the Israel 60<sup>th</sup> celebration at the Basketball Hall of Fame. It was great to see the whole Jewish community in Western Massachusetts get together to celebrate the Israel 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

For *Yom Yerushalyim*, each student researched a different site in Jerusalem and created a poster and built a model of that place. The students were so proud to share their knowledge with their friends. “The Jewish Timeline” was a great celebration of learning as each student presented a different character in Jewish History.

The year ended with a trip to Boston to walk the Freedom Trail and view The Holocaust Monument. We ate at a kosher Chinese restaurant and visited the Jewish neighborhood in Brookline.

This was a great year and I am looking forward to seeing the students as fifth graders.



Fourth Grader  
Sarah G. at the  
Model Seder



Fifth Grader Micah P. with both of his grandmothers on Grandparents'/Special Friends' Day at Heritage

and got to know David Ben-Gurion and Hertzl. We had a wonderful activity with an Israeli emissary.

On Jerusalem Day, we learned about sites in Jerusalem – old and new - and we made a picture of Jerusalem from copper flattening. On *Shavuot*, we got the *Torah* and studied the “Ten Commandments” and the story of Ruth.

The Elective group received enrichment by learning interesting stories and *Midrashim* about the holidays and watched short films. The students wrote poems in Hebrew and read them to their parents at the *Poetry Café*.

Every Friday we did “*Kabbalat Shabbat*” and learned the weekly Torah portion. A few times, Rabbi Hyman joined us for “*Kabbalat Shabbat*” and told us about *Parashat Hashavu'a*”.

My angels, I had much pleasure from being your teacher. All of you are smart and kind and we had a wonderful and effective year. A year filled with knowledge and experiences. Good luck in the fourth grade!

I love you all and I am already missing you-  
*Morah Hofit.*

## THIRD GRADE – MORAH HOFIT

### “All the good things are ending quickly...”

Since February we learned a lot. We did many projects and mainly enjoyed. All the students in class demonstrated much progress. The students experienced writing, speaking and reading in Hebrew. Almost every week the students were tested on vocabulary.

In the month of *Adar*, the third grade performed beautifully at the *Israeli Dance Festival* in West Hartford and represented the school respectfully. A few days later, we celebrated *Purim*. We learned the *Megillah* and different *Mitzvot* and customs.

We made rattlers and made noise with them when we heard the name of Haman during the reading of the *Megilah*. A month later, we celebrated Passover. We learned the *Hagadah*, “*Leil Ha’seder*” and the difference between freedom and slavery. We cleaned our desks and made four glasses for each of the “four questions”. The students presented the song “*Echad Mi Yode’a*” at the model *Seder*.

Right after Passover vacation, we counted “*sefirat Ha’omer*” – the counting of the 49 days between Passover and *Shavuot*. Every day we marked one day.

Towards Israeli Independence Day, we worked hard and built Jerusalem – the Holy City - in our classroom and celebrated “Israel celebrates 60” with a lot of joy and excitement. We learned about cities and sites in Israel and every student wrote about another place. We learned about the “Independence roll” of Israel

## A FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM GRADE 3 AND MR. PREWANDOWSKI

No more pencils, no more books,  
No more teachers dirty looks,  
Out through summer, out ‘til fall,  
Why must we come back at all?

The tops of our erasers are all erased, our pencils are all stubs, our crayons are all broken, and our markers have all dried up. It’s been a really fun year, but our brains are full; no more room for new stuff, and thank goodness there’s no more time to learn anything new.

We spent the last two months learning about, and writing, poetry. We read it, studied it, wrote it... lots... and learned about a whole bunch of poets. At the end of the two months we all had written at least 12 poems.

All that was great, but the best part of all was when we performed at the Beatnik-Poetry-Coffeehouse-Evening. We all dressed in black, just like real beatniks did in the 50’s. Over at the JCC we set up the lounge like a coffee house. For the first part of the evening we served coffee and snacks to our parents and friends. Then, the room went dark, the spotlight came on, and we each read two of our original poems.



It was a super cool night, and after talking to all the parents, we are confident they had a really great time too.



Our social studies topic for the end of the year was the state of Massachusetts. We are studying some of our history, as well as learning about the geography of the state. Since we have already studied the geography of the USA, and can tell you where any state is on the map, we are beginning to do the same thing with our state. So, go ahead, ask us where Boston is in relationship to Springfield. Most of you would point and say, "Over there, some place," but after we saw the confused look on your face we would say, "To the east!" And we'd be right. That's because we have such a good teacher (he can also name the five books of the Torah, but no one ever asks him).

Our really nice teacher took us on a field trip up to the Mount Holyoke Summit House. Its way up high on the top of the mountain, and it has a veranda all the way around. From up there you can see a great deal of Massachusetts. We learned about the history of the house, and how it played a part in the history of the area. We later had a picnic up on the mountain, and then got a chance to run around and play on the top. We climbed up rocks, ran around in the woods, and some of us even got scratched... but of course, none of us complained... we're not like that.



So, all in all it's been a really good year. We hope you have a great summer, and if we can find the time, we'll certainly see you again in September.

## SECOND GRADE NEWS – MRS. KRAMER

It has been an EGG-STRAORDINARY year in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade classroom! As many of you know we are the proud parents of 11 baby chicks! For the past month the children have been able to see an ordinary looking egg hatch into an adorable little chick. It was fascinating to witness first hand; as well as hearing and seeing the reactions from my students. After the first chick hatched I asked them to immediately write down their feeling in their writing journals. Some of their comments were; "This is the most exciting day of my life"! "This is a miracle"! "I will never forget this as long as I live"! Seeing and hearing the children react like this was an incredible experience for me as well.

This entire year has been a pleasure. Each child showed such enthusiasm with every unit I introduced to them. Learning about dinosaurs was a favorite. We did dino- writing, dino-reading and even dino-math! I tried to incorporate as many different types of learning experiences into each unit. The children had such a zest for learning!





In math we were able to complete the entire Saxon program which included addition, subtraction, multiplication, and even the introduction of division. We did graphing, measurement, and geometry. Each child worked many hours solving multi-step math problems and enrichment problems. Poetry writing was a big success too! Many children were leery about poetry and by the end of the year I couldn't stop them from writing.

## SECOND GRADE JUDAIC STUDIES - MORAH IDIT

What a busy year in Kita Beit. Our children have achieved so much in both Hebrew and Judaic Studies that it is hard to believe that summer vacation is just around the corner. In Hebrew, our students can now express themselves on a variety of topics: Tov Ba-bayit; the daily routine at home from the moment that we open our eyes until the time that we prepare to go to sleep; as well as almost everything about clothes and food. They can even articulate in Hebrew the different types of clothes, food and food groups. We concluded this unit with a fun activity wherein every student closed his/her eyes and then had to guess the type of food by tasting it.

In Chumash (Torah) class, we learned the introduction for the Torah. In one exciting lesson, our students walked to Temple Beth El to meet with our beloved class Rabbi, Rabbi Schwartz. The Rabbi showed and explained the significance of the main sanctuary, the Holy Ark and the impressive Torah scrolls that are housed in that synagogue. Every child had an opportunity to read from one of the scrolls. Indeed, it was an exciting field trip. During this trimester, we learned about and celebrated two modern Israeli holidays, namely Independence Day and Jerusalem Day and we completed the school year celebrating Lag B'omer, followed by the holiday of Shavuot.

For the Israel@60 event, our students performed a beautiful dance. They know so much about Israel, different sites in Israel and about the culture of Israel. It is a pleasure to listen to them singing Israeli songs and dancing Israeli dances. Our students are ready to move on to the third grade to experience another exciting year at Heritage Academy.

## FIRST GRADE NEWS - MRS. Z.

The end of first grade has been fun-filled and exciting. We started out after our Passover break by going to see THE PAPER BAG PLAYERS perform at American International College in Springfield. It was a lively show filled with singing and dancing.

We have continued to learn more interesting things in Math, like TANGRAMS. It took us two days to figure out how to get all 7 shapes to fit into the square but we finally did it. We then moved on to harder forms. It is such fun we don't like to stop. We also worked on our Math -A- Thon books and

Mrs. Z. gave money to St. Jude's hospital for every problem we completed. The children there thank us for our hard work.

In Reading we have been reading short chapter books and answering what Mrs. Z calls comprehension questions. Sometimes they really make us think!!

We have learned all about our Earth in Science and we have enjoyed sharing our rock collections. Some of the children have said they would like to be geologists.....time will tell!

We are planning our end of the year birthday party and we can't wait. We will get to see a movie we pick out and have cake and ice cream. Then we get to pick a birthday book to take home with us.

We also are going to be going swimming with the second grade at the J.C.C. pool. That will be lots of fun.

This year has gone by so quickly and I have enjoyed having all of your children in my classroom. They have grown in so many ways. They are ready to take on all the challenges of Second grade and I know they will make us proud.

I hope you all have a very restful and healthily summer. Take time to relax and read a good book. Your child will thank you.

## FIRST GRADE JUDAIC STUDIES - MORAH IDIT

What a great year in Kita Alef - our children have achieved so much! They can now read Hebrew with ease and my, how their Hebrew vocabulary has grown. We had a lot of fun activities and projects in Judaic studies and the students have started to learn the cursive alphabet - indeed they have already begun writing in cursive. All of this was capped off with our Siddur (prayer book) Party in May.

The students learned quite a bit about the Siddur and about the meaning of some of the prayers. At the Siddur Party we invited the families as well as our community Rabbis to celebrate the children receiving their first Siddur. The students presented an outstanding performance of songs and dances. In a video clip that had been prepared in advance, the students shared their personal reflection on what to them is their favorite part in the Tefilah. Our community Rabbis blessed the children and distributed the Siddurim. I was so impressed to witness the impact that this event had on our children. The seriousness and the positive attitude that our children have been exhibiting during Tefilah time is meritorious.

Every Friday we have a Kabbalat Shabbat assembly, along with Shabbat Aba & Ima. The children learned new Shabbat songs, and it is such a pleasure to listen to them sing. We had a special goodbye Kabbalat Shabbat assembly for our beloved class Rabbi, Rabbi Schwartz, who is retiring and leaving the community soon. We are all going to miss him so very much.



During this trimester we learned about and celebrated two modern Israeli holidays, namely Independence Day and Jerusalem Day and we completed the school year celebrating the holiday of Shavuot. At our Shavuot Assembly the students acted out the five different names for this holiday and brought the Bikurim (first fruits) for Rachel's table. Our children are definitely ready to move on to the second grade and I am looking forward to working with them again next year.

In May, grades K-2 saw live actors on stage at the Karen Sprague Cultural Center at AIC. The Paper Bag Players, a troupe based out of New York City put on a show called *On Top of Spaghetti*. The group entertains young audiences, conveys positive messages, wears costumes and creates sets from recycled material. We also received a special delivery, painted lady butterfly larvae. For several weeks the children predicted and observed the life cycle of this lovely petite butterfly. It was miraculous to see the changes, going from larvae, to a chrysalis, and finally a beautiful butterfly. Each day the Kindergartners eagerly entered the classroom to see if any changes took place from the previous day. Performing the life cycle dance to music, reciting the shehechyanu, releasing the butterflies and a field trip to Magic Wings, a butterfly conservatory in South Deerfield, MA were highlights this spring.



First Grader Kayla W. and her Grandma on Grandparents'/Special Friends' Day at Heritage

## NEWS FROM GAN YELADIM – KINDERGARTEN MS FRAN & MORAH TAL

So many wonderful things have happened since our last newsletter. In science we learned about our teeth and body. Our young future health care providers learned about the 5 senses, digestive and pulmonary systems, skeleton and muscles. Some of our mummies and daddies who are in the medical field visited. The boys and girls were attentive, responding to and asking questions. Each child had a large cut out of the body that served as a visual aid. A body book journal helped recall, review, and write about the information.

Mazal tov! Gan yeladim finished the aleph, bet. The banim and banot (boys and girls) were so excited to acquire a new language, Ivrit, Hebrew. Hearing words and phrases in Ivrit throughout the day became part of the vernacular. Celebrating Shabbat and birthdays made Fridays extra special. Rabbi Micah, "our" class rabbi, came in from time to time with his guitar and taught us new songs. The ruach, spirit, was palpable.

The festivities held for Israel's 60<sup>th</sup> culminated everything that gan yeladim were taught throughout the year. Hearing about

the history of the Jewish people, culture, holidays, language, places, food, and song and dance came together. Seeing each classroom transformed into a different area in Israel, and being on stage to do a dance in front of the entire school was magical!

We want to thank Mrs. Johnson, Morah Wesley, Mrs. Shaker, Cantor Berke, and Mr. Wells for our "specials", and to the rest of the faculty and staff for their continued help and support.

**It was a great year! Wishing all of you a terrific summer!**