

# Ruach Reflections

March, 2007

Gray Academy of Jewish Education

Adar/Nisan 5767

## Welcome to our new format!

### Upcoming Events

March 1 <sup>st</sup>	Fast of Esther
March 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Pre-Purim Activities
March 3 <sup>rd</sup>	Gray Academy Shabbat – Etz Chayim - 9 a.m.
March 4 <sup>th</sup>	Purim
March 5 <sup>th</sup> -9 <sup>th</sup>	High School Musical
March 11 <sup>th</sup>	Purim Prom
March 14 <sup>th</sup>	S2 Youth in Philanthropy Site Visits All Day
March 15 <sup>th</sup>	PAC Dance
March 16 <sup>th</sup>	In-Service Day
March 19 <sup>th</sup>	PAC Meeting - 7:30 p.m.
March 20 <sup>th</sup>	Rosh Chodesh Nisan
March 21 <sup>st</sup>	Loonie – Toonie Day Rosh Chodesh Nisan- Science Fair - 7 p.m. MPR
March 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Can in the Secretaries
March 26 <sup>th</sup>	Grad Play - 2:15 p.m.
March 29 <sup>th</sup>	

### Ski Trip

The grade eight ski trip this year took place from January 31<sup>st</sup> - February 1<sup>st</sup>. We had a great time. We left bright and early at 6:30 a.m., and we took a bus to the Asessippi ski lodge. Once we got there we had a safety orientation and then we got our skis and equipment. The rest of the day was spent skiing and snowboarding, though some decided to stay in the comfort of the lodge. We then took the bus to



our hotel, The Russell Inn. The next morning we got up and took the bus back to the ski resort. On this day we had the option of tubing as well as skiing and snowboarding. All in all it was a great experience; we got to break the routine, spend time with our friends and learn a

*Sarah Levy (grade 8 student)*

### Jewish Awareness Retreat

After spending a weekend on a Jewish awareness retreat, with Barry Bender and the Yeshiva University students, my perspective on many different topics changed. The atmosphere of the retreat was very relaxed and one felt very comfortable talking with anyone about certain issues. The topics that were covered during discussion were very well done. They made me think about issues and ideas that I would never have thought of before. For example, one of the topics was, "is there an after life". The Yeshiva University students did a great job this weekend. We all thought that we could talk to them and that they were a lot of fun. Without them, the retreat would not have been the same.

This weekend taught me about Judaism and brought me closer to my religion. At the start of the retreat we prayed about 3 times a day. At first I did not understand why we were doing this and what was its significance to



me. By the end of retreat I understood why I was praying. This made me think that it is not hard to go everyday to synagogue and do things such as helping others to fulfill a Minyan. I felt that perhaps I can do more for my synagogue than just going for Shabbat every Saturday. The topics that were discussed made us go deep into our souls and think about Judaism.

This retreat also gave me a different perspective on the Yeshiva University. It made me consider attending the University. Anyone can attend and I feel that having a Jewish University is important.

*Steven Baker (grade 10 student)*



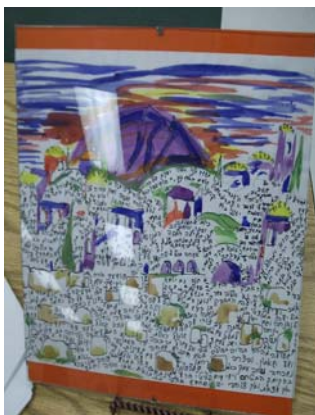
## Shabbaton

On February 9, the Grade 6 students participated in a Shabbaton weekend celebrating the theme of "Giving". Teachers Morah Sherry, Mrs. Pollock, Mrs. Allen, Mrs. Spigelman, Morah Ruti and Mr. Kaplan planned two days of activities that was the spiritual culmination of their grade 6 Judaic Studies year: a morning Shabbat service, a Shacharit service, and a Havdallah service with parents. For some students, this was their first experience with a kosher Shabbat.

"Attending the Saturday night service which concluded the Grade 6 Shabbaton was a wonderful experience for us, from the first moment when the students walked in with their candles. I think the highlight of it was the feeling in the room of the students' togetherness and support for each other, which was



especially apparent when we watched the video of them preparing for the Shabbaton. It was clear that the students had worked hard, had enjoyed themselves, and had really come together as a group. We extend our thanks to everyone who worked hard to make this great experience possible," parent Karen Blicker said.



At the end of the weekend, students were proud of their accomplishments and had a great time in the process. They were independent and empowered to celebrate and respect Shabbat and perform the corresponding mitzvot.

To view photos from the Shabbaton, please visit the school website at [www.grayacademy.ca](http://www.grayacademy.ca)

## Kindergarten's 100 Day Parade

On February 20<sup>th</sup>, the Kindergarten classes celebrated their 100<sup>th</sup> day in school. The day began with face painting and a parade, complete with musical instruments and singing.

The hundredth day of school is an important milestone for them. Kindergarten is their first real exposure to math and looking at numbers in many different ways. They begin the school year by counting Popsicle sticks in groups 1's, 10's and up to 100.

One of the skills to be acquired in Kindergarten is to be able to count up to 100.



The children spent the day working their way through six different stations, run by parent volunteers. Each station focused on the number 100:

1. Hand painting their own t-shirts with "100" on it
2. Exercise (10 sets of 10)
3. Fruity O necklaces (4 strands of 25)
4. Dice game with colouring in a grid to 100
5. 100 Hungry Ants literature circle
6. 100 piece puzzle/paper chain making



The day ended with a 100 Day cake and an encore parade through the high school.

- Morah Nancy (Kindergarten Teacher)

## **Interview with Science & Math Department Head: Jamie Kagan**

The success of our school in meeting National Standards of Excellence has been mirrored by extra-curricular achievements of our students in the areas of Math and Science.

Jamie Kagan has been with the Winnipeg Board of Jewish Education for 12 years and more recently has been in his current role as Head of Science and Math since 2004. He oversees a large department of staff whose areas of expertise cover Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Pre-Calculus, Consumer Math and Calculus.

In April 2006, 14 science projects received 13 medals at the Manitoba Science Symposium with Grade 8 placing third and Grade 7 finishing fourth.

And at the Provincial Math Contest in 2006, three students placed in the top 10 for Grades 7 and 8 in the province.

"I enjoy seeing students develop their math and science skills starting in the elementary grades right through to Grade 12. It gives me a feeling of accomplishment that we have nurtured the minds of our students and are able to help guide their career choices," says Jamie Kagan proudly.

Recently, students in Grades 7-9 competed in a Regional Math Contest where historically Gray Academy students have placed well; the upcoming Science Fair on March 22 for Grades 5-6 is another opportunity for students to excel and possibly advance to the Manitoba Science Symposium in April 2007.

Mr. Kagan is active in bringing an enriched science curriculum to JK that incorporates a mentoring program for students in Grades 9-11, with scientific experiments taught in weekly lab-based environments.

With a \$500 Imperial Oil grant, the kindergarten area will be looking to improve science education in the classroom by encouraging students to develop an interest in science at a young age. The kindergarten staff will be able to build portable science stations to be used in each of the two classrooms.

Mr. Kagan also is active in coaching the Varsity girls basketball team; teaches the elective course on CO2 car design; and is Chair of the Professional Development committee.

With AP courses in Chemistry, Physics, Biology and Calculus in high school, there definitely is no shortage of opportunities for all our students to shine—both inside the classroom and beyond!

## **Go Raiders Go!**

### **Boys Basketball**

Recently the Grade 8 boys team and the Varsity boys team finished the season. Thank you to all coaches for their commitment: Michael Benarroch, Damien Reinberg, Avi Posen and Frederico Lopez-Ficher.

The Grade 9 boys team start playoffs on March 6 vs. General Byng at Viscount Alexander, coached by Wally Chubaty. Best of luck!

### **Girls Basketball**

The Varsity girls basketball team had an outstanding season with a 17-4 record. The team finished third in the Virden Invitational Tournament and they were the B side Champions in the Teulon and St. Anne's tournaments. The Grade 8 girls team advanced to the semi-finals by defeating Viscount Alexander 28-22. The semi-final game is on March 5. Good luck!

Thank you to coaches, both staff and volunteer: Mara Weinberg, Leah Pfeffer, Rebecca Rykiss, and the Varsity girls coaches Jamie Kagan and David Saifer.

Grade 7 Friendship Final Tournament was March 1.

## **Chesed Corner**

### **Grade 7 Chesed Project**

Morah Yehudit along with Dr. Coodin and the grade seven students are participating in a month long chesed project as part of the Grade 7 Bar/Bar Mitzvah course.

The Grade 7 students in 7C will be selling pro-Israel slogan pins. The proceeds will be going to *Danciger High School* in Israel and *D'arcy's Arc*, a no-kill animal shelter. Students in 7A will be having a "Hershey Kisses" Guessing Jar. The money raised from this class will go to *The Ladybug Foundation* and "*A Package Home*". This project assists Israeli soldiers without families. And students in 7B will be holding a "Silent Auction" in the spring. We will let you know the details closer to the auction date.

You can donate to these projects at the high school musical "*Urinetown*" (March 5 – 8) and at the School Science Fair (March 22).

### **Student Pallbearers**

CBC French TV recently filmed a 10 minute documentary about our extraordinary students in Grades 11 and 12 who volunteer as pallbearers for the Jewish community when called upon. This beautifully filmed episode aired on **Telejournal Manitoba** on February 21 and will air again nationally in April.

## Extracurricular Activities

### Canadian Chess Challenge

On February 25, Grade 2 students Matthew London and Noah Lieberman and Grade 3 students Ariel Glikman, Braden Ganetsky and Matthew Slusky competed in the Chess Challenge. Mazel Tov to Noah Lieberman and Ariel Glikman who



both qualified in their respective grades to advance to the Manitoba Provincial tournament on March 18, 2007 at the University of Winnipeg.

Congratulations to all the players for rising to the challenge and demonstrating their skills and great sportsmanship. Good luck to Noah and Ariel!

### Reach for the Top

Our Senior Reach for the Top team recently won all its games. This win gives them a 10-0 record so far this school year and puts them at the top of our division. Coach Janet Gould is confident that our team will be in the Provincial championships to be held late April. Mazel Tov to our Intermediate team who took first place in a tournament at Shaftesbury High School.

### Debating

Congratulations to grade 8 debaters who competed against grade 9 students at St. Mary's Academy in the Junior High Tournament. Blake Lerner was the top Gray student. In the novice division, Daniel Kleinmann and Max Erenberg placed top team!

### Regional Bible Contest

Congratulations to students who participated in the Regional Bible Contest: Yoni Coodin, Daniel Gall, Noah Gall, Raphael Hoult, Adam Stoller, Meir Cohen, Ben Fleischer, Levi Garber, Max Lerner and Avihai Stoller.

## Did you Know?

**Mazel Tov** to the Borovich and Baruch Families on recently becoming Canadian citizens.

**Stock Market Challenge** - Thirty-five senior students are participating in the Winnipeg Free Press Stock Market Challenge under the direction of Mrs. Ross. Last year, one of our Grade 9 students came in third place, and we wish all participants good luck.

**Family Dance** - The Gray Academy PAC is excited to announce their 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Gray Academy Family Dance on Thursday, March 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:30- 9:00 p.m. in the school gymnasium. Tickets are only \$20.00 per family or \$6.00 per person. Come dressed as Queen Esther or Mordechai and get ready to party. There will be prizes for originality.

**Urinetown** - The high school musical will be held at the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain from **Monday, March 5 – Thursday, March 8** at 7:00 p.m., with a 1:00 p.m. matinee on Wednesday, March 7. Ticket prices are \$10 for regular tickets, \$5 for the matinee and \$3 for students for the matinee only. Please call 477-7410 for your tickets today!

## Community Announcements!

**Shabbat Dinner with South American Style**  
**Friday, March 9th, 6:30 p.m., Asper Jewish Community Campus**

This special Friday night Shabbat dinner will include great food and live music with South American style! Tickets: Adults \$14; Children 3-12 \$7; Children 2 & under \$3. Advance payment is required, space is limited. For tickets, contact the Rady JCC before Tuesday, March 6<sup>th</sup> by calling 477-7510 or on-line at [www.radycentre.com](http://www.radycentre.com) – click on Ticket Central.

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