

Ruach Reflections

May, 2007

Gray Academy of Jewish Education

Iyar/Sivan 5767

Upcoming Events

May 3	Grad Rehearsal @ Etz Chayim at 10 a.m.
May 5	Grad Shabbat @ Etz Chayim @ 9 a.m.
May 6	Lag B'Omer National Bible Contest
May 7	Grad Convocation @ Etz Chayim at 7 p.m.
May 8	Grad Dinner and Dance
May 10	Holocaust Symposium
May 13	Washington Trip Departs
May 16	Yom Yerushalayim
May 18	Rosh Chodesh Sivan
May 21	No school - Victoria Day
May 22	Erev Shavuot
May 23 & 24	No school - Shavuot
May 25	In-Service
May 31	Chaggigat Ha-Siddur (@ Berney Theatre at 7 p.m.)

Science Fair

On Thursday March 22, Gray Academy held their annual Science Fair to showcase the latest scientific contributions of students in Grades 5 and 6.

Examples of thought-provoking projects that were on display ranged from: are fabric softeners flammable?; is there too much fat on French fries?; what brand of band-aids is most adhesive?; are there bacteria on lip gloss?; and does cardiovascular fitness affect foul shots?

The judges had a challenging time evaluating the projects. Mazel Tov to Alexa Hecht and Julia Grubert van Iderstine as the overall winner for their project on **"Chewing Gum and Ph Levels."** Our 10 teams will advance to the Manitoba Science Symposium on April 27 at University of Winnipeg.

Gray Academy has been well represented on the provincial stage over the years: In April 2006, 14 science projects received 13 medals at the Manitoba Science Symposium with Grade 8 placing third and Grade 7 finishing fourth; at the Manitoba Science Symposium in 2005, students received 16 medals for all 16 projects in competition.

P2K: The Trip of a Lifetime

Gray Academy's 5th student exchange to our sister school "Danciger High" in Kiryat Shmonah proved to be



a unique and wonderful trip for all involved. Leaving on April 11, the group, accompanied by teacher Nancy Margolis, toured Amsterdam en-route before touching down at Ben-Gurion at

1:40 in the morning. After spending Shabbat in Jerusalem and touring the Jewish sites in the area, we proceeded to Kiryat Shmonah, where we spent the rest of our trip. We made many new friends with our host families, fellow members of student

council, and participants in the joint Danciger-Gray Academy of Jewish Education programs. Taking part in the somber Yom Hazikaron Ceremonies and the jubilant Yom Ha'Atzmaut festivities also proved to



be an experience like none other. Our Tours of the Golan Heights, the Israeli Army Base, and the "Canada Centre" in Metulla were enjoyable; while the delicious Israeli food – Glidah, Falafel, Shwarma, and of course, Kosher McDonald's, made for a culinary adventure. We were all very sad to leave our "second home" of Kiryat Shmonah on April 24, and each one of us hopes to come to Israel again within the next year. Clearly, P2K has served to strengthen the connection between us, the participants, and the land, state, and people of Israel. Am Israel Chai!

- Michael A. Schwartz, Grade 11 student



An interview with the High School Hebrew Resource Department: Featuring Karen Richter

What is Hebrew Resource and how do students know about it?

Hebrew resource is a program for those students new to or struggling with the language. It could be that they are new to our system and have little or no background in Hebrew or it could be that they struggle with languages in general. Also, the new NETA program has several levels and some students may not be quite at the level of the booklet that is being studied by the majority of students in their grade. Generally I am assigned classes of students in the same grade who will not be taking the NETA program with their class, and if I have any resource periods in my timetable left available, then teachers might refer a student to me if my available period coincided with their Hebrew class or another free the student had.

What do you do in the program?

That would depend on who I was working with. If I see the student once a cycle only then I would most likely pre-teach or reinforce a lesson that the teacher has already taught. The one-on-one or small ratio allows us more time to focus specifically on the task or vocabulary that the particular student needs reinforced.

What grades do you work with?

This year I have a Grade 7 resource class made up of students who are either newer to our system, who have difficulty with language acquisition or for whom the NETA level in their grade is not suitable. The same can be said about my Grade 9 resource class. Then I have a few students who are there for one-on-one. I also teach a Grade 10 NETA class of students.

Do teachers refer students to the program?

Students are usually referred to Administration by their teachers at the end of the school year with the upcoming school year in mind.

What are the requirements in Judaic Studies for graduating i.e. do you need to have a certain level of Hebrew proficiency?

Our graduates understandably have a higher proficiency level than a student who comes from another system and simply writes the Hebrew proficiency exam for credits from outside our system.

In the June issue read about your passport to Judaism with the NETA Program.

Field Trips: Comparative Religion

For the past two years of teaching the Comparative Religion course to our Grade 11-12 students, I have invited religious leaders from Winnipeg to talk about their faith. This year, after nurturing our connections, I asked the speakers to host us in their place of worship. I was pleased to receive positive answers from all three leaders, and we participated in three field trips at a time when there were no services.

The first visit was to a Catholic church (Holy Rosary) in Osborne Village. We first had a tour of the church, learned about the Baptismal corner, the confessional and the designs. Then, Father Sam, a well known Priest and member of the Interfaith Round Table, talked to the students about different issues of the early Church and the life of believers today. Father Sam answered the wonderful questions that the students presented and shared many interesting stories.



The second field trip was to the central mosque on Ellice Avenue. Shahina Siddiqui, the President of The Islamic Social Services Association welcomed us with a tour of the mosque. Shahina then showed the students the sequence of a prayer service and talked about the history of the Muslim community in Winnipeg, as well as a variety of issues faced by Muslims today. The students had an opportunity to ask questions and learn about Islam and the traditions of its believers.

Our last field trip was to the Buddhist temple on Winnipeg Avenue. Sensei Fred Ulrich welcomed us in the main hall. He spoke briefly about the early days of Buddhism and the life of Buddha, and then demonstrated some prayers and mantras.

All of these visits have enriched our students' knowledge of the different religions and communities around us. They had the wonderful opportunity to go beyond the pages of the books and experience first hand the places of worship and leading people in our community. I believe that our course and this unique experience will lead to open minds and hearts in meeting and interacting with new and different people.

- Anat Ekhoiz, Judaic Studies Teacher

Alumni Shabbat Program: A Dvar Torah by Yossi Benarroch ('76)

The Alumni Committee held a Shabbat Service on March 31. Dvar Torah was delivered by Michael Benarroch ('77) for his brother who lives in Israel:

I would like to share something that one of my children commented on at our Seder a few years ago. These were his words, "Why are there four sons? If I had to write the Haggadah I would also write about four types of parents. After all aren't we who we are because of our parents?" The point was well taken.

It certainly got me thinking and as a result we put our heads together and tried to come up with a version of "The Four Jewish Parents". If it were in the Haggadah it would go something like this:

The Wise Parents: What do they say? What are your questions my dear children? No question is out of bounds, and time is not an issue. Let us sit together to study our Torah. Together we will answer your most perplexing questions.

The Authoritarian Parents: What do they say? Do not ask questions, just do as you are told. This is the way my parents did it and this is the way you will do it; end of story!

The Well-Meaning Parents: Your questions are very good dear child, but what can we do given that we have very little Jewish knowledge. We would like to make Judaism more meaningful and relevant in our lives, but we just don't know how to do that. You will have to look elsewhere for the answers.

The Parents Who Don't Care: Dear child how many times have we told you Judaism just isn't at the top of our priority list. We are far too busy at work to even give these questions any consideration and besides this Jewish stuff is OK once in a while, but too much will just get in the way. So dear child why don't you get involved with things that are "really" important.

Every parent has the tools to give that child exactly what they need for their spiritual, and emotional growth and well-being. As parents we must constantly be asking ourselves – "Are we fulfilling our parental mandate?"

We, the graduates of JWC and Gray Academy are very fortunate. The school not only gave us a quality education (not to mention all of those great Raider Basketball games), it connected us to a community, "the Jewish Community". JW instilled within us a pride in being Jewish. We studied the history of our people, cultivated a love for Israel, and graduated knowing that Judaism should be, and could be, an important part of our lives.

Chesed Corner

Loonie Toonie Days

Students at Gray Academy of Jewish Education in Winnipeg went loonie over fundraising for **Cancer-Care Manitoba** in the first ever provincial wide **Loonie Toonie Days**.

On March 21, student council was asking fellow students, parents and visitors to place their loonies and toonies on a one-mile tapeline along Main Street at the Asper Jewish Community Centre that houses the school. The Gray Academy fundraising event has been held for over six years, and last year the event raised over \$750 for Cancercare Manitoba.

Yael Shrom, Student Council President, says this year they decided to expand the student-driven initiative to other schools in the province. "My vision since Grade 7 has been to unite all student councils across Manitoba in a singular cause. Two years ago, in Grade 10, I had the idea to bring together schools in a large scale fundraising event."

Last November, Yael Shrom approached all high schools in Manitoba and sent out 350 letters to Student Council contacts. As of today, there are now thirteen participating schools that will also roll-out *Loonie Toonie Days* at their respective schools.



Schools interested in participating in Loonie Toonie Days: College Churchill, Gilbert Plains Collegiate Institute, Joseph H. Kerr School, McCreary School, Roseau Valley School, St. Johns-Ravenscourt, St. Maurice School, Sanford Collegiate, Stonewall Collegiate, University of Winnipeg Collegiate, Hamiota Collegiate and Institut Collegiate de St. Pierre.

This year's combined fundraising goal was \$5,000 with all monies going to CancerCare Manitoba. When asked why students chose this particular charity, Yael Shrom responds that everyone knows someone who has been or is presently affected by cancer.

It was an obvious choice for all student councils to make.



Model Passover Seder - JK

Ma Nishtanah? Why was this day different from all other days in Junior Kindergarten? Well, for one thing, all four JK classes had a Passover Seder in the MPR. Each child brought a family member to



enjoy the festivities with us and see all that we had learned. We of course did a JK abridged version of the Passover story with all of the blessings, some special songs, and lots of *naches*. The children



had a lot of fun singing the songs, especially the one about Pharaoh who would not let the people go. The children each took turns being the Jewish people and being Pharaoh. And boy, you should

have heard them sing the *Ma Nishtanah!* We all had so much fun! We would like to thank the Passover parent committee, and a special thanks to Shauna Cogan who set-up our Seder, and Ilanit Shapiro who played the piano beautifully to accompany the children.

- Morah Simone, JK teacher

Passover Hampers

Thank you to Grade 4 students who brought in Passover goods for the hampers. The beautiful packages that were assembled were attractively decorated. The hampers were distributed through **Jewish Family & Family Service** to needy families who were very appreciative of this assistance.

Model Passover Seder - K-6

On Thursday, March 29, 2007 a "Rockin' Seder" was held in the gym for Grades K-6. The gym looked very festive with the tables set with blue tablecloths, fresh flowers, lit *Yom Tov* candles and all the Seder sym-



bols and foods. At each table, the Seder was led by Grade 6 students who guided the younger students through the Seder. As well, the Grade 6 students had also done a Pesach art activity in each younger classroom earlier in the week, as part of the Grade 6 leadership program.

Traditional Seder songs were sung, culminating in a resounding and spirited rendition of our favorite Passover song, "Echad Mee Yodayah?" or "Who Knows One?" Great fun was had by all. The stu-



dents truly shone with their knowledge and enjoyment of all the Seder rituals. A huge *todah* to all the people involved in the coordination of this huge undertaking: Morah Joyce, teachers on the Pesach committee, Shore staff, parent

volunteers, custodial staff, Grade 6 leaders and especially to all students from K-5 who made us so proud to be part of our school family. *Yasher Koach* to all! We know that your children make you proud at your family Seders!

- Morah Sherry, grade 6 teacher



Extracurricular Activities

Fern Shawna Rykiss Literary Award

Congratulations to the following winners: Junior High: 1st place -Daniel Kroft and 2nd place - Rachel Duboff. For Senior High: 1st place - Haley Rabb and 2nd place had a tie with Brenna Kessler and Zev Faintuch.

Reach for the Top

Our Intermediate team did well finishing 6-5 for the season and was the winner in terms of points. The Senior team standings for the regular season have them leading in their region and they played in the Provincials on April 20.

Regional Spelling Bee

After winning the school spelling bee contest, Grade 8 student Sarah Levy represented us at the Regional Competition held mid-March at the Winnipeg Art Gallery where 70 students competed.

Debating & Public Speaking

Shira Lerner competed at the *World Individual Public Speaking and Debate Championships* in Cape Town South Africa from March 30 to April 5, 2007. There were 80 competitors from 10 countries and she competed in 4 events: Debate, Persuasive Speaking, Impromptu Speaking, and Interpretive Reading. The scores from all the rounds from each event were added to find the overall results. Shira placed 15 overall. Mazel Tov! Thank you to the **Women's Endowment Fund of The Jewish Foundation of Manitoba** for funding support!

Josh Fineblit will compete on the Manitoba Team at the *National Debate Seminar* in Ottawa April 25 to 30 and will then remain in Ottawa, April 30 to May 2, to try out for the Canadian Team to represent us at the *World Schools Debate Championships*.

Blake Lerner, Zev Ripstein, and Zev Faintuch travelled to Halifax to compete in the *Donahoe Cup* at Sacred Heart School April 13 to 16. They entered the Novice Category (Grades 8 and 9) and placed 1, 2, and 5 respectively. Blake and Zev Ripstein placed Top Team and Zev Faintuch and his partner Miriam Sneiderman placed 2nd Team. Blake and Zev R. won all 5 of their debate rounds while Zev F. and Miriam were at 4 and 1. Congrats to all!

Extracurricular Activities

Forum for Young Canadians



Grade 12 student Eyal Kraut was in Ottawa from March 17 to 24 learning how the political process works; he had an opportunity to sit at the same table where the Queen signed the Canadian constitution in 1982. Standing behind Eyal is Noel Castella, Speaker of the Senate.

Math Competition

Zev Ripstein finished 4th in the Canadian National Mathematics League for Top Students in the region. Gray Academy placed 35th out of 401 schools in Canada, and was ranked third for Top Schools in the region. Our Grade 7s finished 7th in Manitoba.

National Bible Contest

Raphael Hoult (Grade 5) and Daniel Gall (Grade 6) will be participating in the National Bible Contest in Montreal to be held May 7-8.

Shoah Week

On April 18, students in Grades 6-8 attended a book reading and the launch of Carol Matas' new book *"The Whirlwind"* for Shoah Week organized by the **Jewish Heritage Centre**. Carol Matas is an internationally acclaimed author of over thirty-five novels for children and young adults.





An Alumni Interview: Alexandra Frohlinger

What positively influenced you at Gray Academy of Jewish Education?

The community atmosphere at Gray Academy allowed me to be myself in a safe and supportive environment. As a result, I have a strong sense of who I am and where I come from. Additionally, teachers and fellow students are always there if you want to talk or if you need help... even after graduation. I really feel like I have a family at the Gray Academy.

How has this positive influence affected your post secondary choice (s)?

When searching for a University, I was unafraid of places with intense work loads because the double program at Gray Academy prepared me for any challenges I might face at University. Additionally, I looked for a place that would be small and supportive, just like home. I found that place at the Boston Conservatory and now I am happier than ever. However, I will always miss GAJE and always remember the wonderful years I spent there.



Alexandra Frohlinger ('06) is currently studying at the Boston Conservatory of Music.

Did you Know?

Mazel Tov! - Guidance Teacher Diane Peters welcomes her new grandson Noah McCorrison 7 lbs 14 oz., while Head Librarian Teacher Janet Gould welcomes her first granddaughter Jordana Isabel.

Gym Riot - In February's gym riot, class 8B and the Grade 12 students took first place for their respective divisions. Congrats to all. The two teams have a first prize choice of either a pizza or ice cream party.

Community Announcements!

ANNUAL ART FAIR

Mark your calendar for the Annual Art Fair on **May 16 & 17** from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Art is also for sale from students with proceeds going to the Museum for Human Rights. Please join us and support the museum!

ANNUAL GOLF AND TENNIS TOURNAMENT

Mark your calendar for the Annual Golf & Tennis Tournament at Glendale Golf and Country Club on **Tuesday June 26**. If you are interested in playing golf and/or tennis, sponsorship or helping out, please call Lori Shenkarow at 885-7236 or Carrie Ransby at 489-6696. Monies raised goes towards supporting programs at the school.

THE 2ND ANNUAL SOL & FLORENCE KANEE DISTINGUISHED LECTURE SERIES

Dr. Deborah E. Lipstadt was the defendant in 2000 in a libel trial in London, England, launched against her by the infamous David Irving who sued her for calling him a Holocaust denier and a right wing extremist. To attend the lecture on **Monday April 30** at Shaarey Zedek synagogue, please call 477-7460.

COMMUNITY-WIDE LAG BA'OMER FAMILY CELEBRATION

Presented by Rose and Max Rady Jewish Community Centre and Congregation Etz Chayim on **Sunday, May 6** from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the outdoor field of the Asper Campus. For more information call the Rady Jewish Community Centre at 477-7510.

RADY JCC'S SUMMER CAMP: July 2-Aug 24

Shemesh - Preschool Half-Day (morning or afternoon) and Keshet - Full Day Sport & Specialty Camps. For information or to register visit www.radyjcc.com or call 477-7510.

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