

Ruach Reflections

November 2007

Gray Academy of Jewish Education

Cheshvan/Kislev 5768

Upcoming Events

November 8	Gr. 11 & 12 - University Fair
November 9	Remembrance Day/Kristallnacht
November 12	No school
November 13	Board Meeting @ 7p.m.
November 14	Jugglefest @ Lunch
November 15	Theatre Arts Performance Berney Theatre @ noon - Gr. 9-12
November 16	Report Cards go Home
November 16	Spirit Weekend for Gr. 8 & 9
November 20	PAC Meeting @ 7:30 p.m.
November 22	Alumni Meeting @ 7 p.m.
November 23	No school
November 28	Grad Pictures
November 30	Early Dismissal @ 2:15 p.m.

Class of '82 Reunion

The Class of 1982 rekindled its ties to our school on October 19, participating in an hour-long interactive session with this year's Grade 12 students.

The graduates were in Winnipeg for their 25th Reunion, and wanted this opportunity to connect with present students of our school. Their visit to Gray Academy was organized by Al Benarroch, who is chair of the GAJE Alumni Committee and part of the Class of '82 himself.

After introducing themselves, the ten-or-so alumni who were able to attend then proceeded to engage Grade 12s in a meaningful discourse examining our school's past and present impact on its students. Following a conversation peppered with humour and nostalgia, the graduates divided up and each led a discussion with five students.

Needless to say, the Alumni visit proved to be a most meaningful one for all involved, and the Torah cover the class donated will be a wonderful memento of their visit to our school.

Stay tuned for more news about an Alumni-based Career Day in March 2008, to be planned by Mr. Benarroch, Ms. Peters, and myself!

- Michael A. Schwartz – Student Rep, Alumni Committee

Israeli Students Visit School

Not even the miserable rain could put a damper on Partnership 2000's (P2K) visit to Winnipeg! This past month, seven students: Yarden, Hadar, Chaim, Nofar, Adi, Emily, Nadav, and their teacher – Magi, enjoyed an unforgettable *massa* (adventure) to Canada.

Highlights of the ten-day trip included: a visit with Winnipeg Mayor Sam Katz, glow-in-the-dark miniature golfing, a bowling night, Shabbat dinner with host families, and several trips to the Polo Park Shopping Centre!

All students had the opportunity to meet our visitors and create a meaningful relationship with them at the many events hosted by our school. Those of us (myself included) who have had the privilege of visiting our sister school, Danciger, in Kiryat Shmonah, Israel were able to re-ignite old friendships. And our visitors learned that they are not alone in their struggle and that the Jews of the Diaspora care about them.



The impact that P2K has had on participating students is tremendous. Whether it is Zev Faintuch saying, only half-jokingly, that he has a new brother in guest Chaim, or Tali Aziza organizing a flower fundraiser for Danciger, the force of P2K, and the bonds it creates, continues to make itself felt.

Kudos goes to the many families, staff, Federation officials, and students who have worked to make our P2K initiative so successful.

- Michael A. Schwartz – Student Rep, Alumni Committee



Students Contribute Toward Setting Guinness World Record in Food Drive

Students at Gray Academy of Jewish Education heeded the challenge to help break the Guinness World Record for the most food donated during a 24-hour period. Students, parents and teachers donated **680 pounds** of canned and dry goods to Winnipeg Harvest in their successful quest to surpass the current world record established by the city of Regina in 2006.

Winnipeg Harvest announced they collected just over 176 tons of mostly cereals and canned goods in 24 hours with the support of corporate donors and the larger Winnipeg community.



Gray Academy student council representative David Rubinfeld coordinated the initiative at school with bravado in his role as the **Environment and Humanitarian committee co-chair**, along with Judaic Studies high school teacher Rochelle Gamliel. David's impetus for the school's involvement involved approaching every grade in elementary to take part in the fight against poverty, and placing posters and announcements in the high school. "It was a huge success and the fact that we brought in over 600 pounds in just four days is amazing. Kol Ha-Kavod to everyone," David Rubinfeld said proudly.

Other initiatives that the Environment and Humanitarian committee are planning this school year will promote environmental awareness along with their partners, such as a 30 hour famine where students give up food for 30 hours to raise awareness and donations for global poverty issues (*World Vision*); a music fest called "Keep the Beat" that is a music marathon fundraiser (*War Child Canada*); an environmental awareness week with a focus to fight climate change by getting Canadians to use less energy (*Flick Off*); and a recycling program with a mandate to change all paper products at the school.

"We are proud of David's initiative and self-directed approach to this important city-wide project that benefits so many people in need. One of our Judaic Studies courses, *Gemilut Chasidim*, focuses on the strong moral sense of giving back to the community, and David has taken the timeless message of *tikkun olam* to heart with resounding positive consequences," said Hart Sera, Principal.

Parlez-Vous Français? An Interview with High School French Teacher Gregg Beddome

Life Skills, Awareness, Tolerance and Adaptability...these are words that most people do not associate with mastering the French language. But in talking to Monsieur Beddome, French teacher for senior students at Gray Academy, it becomes quickly apparent that through the process of language acquisition, one walks away with far more benefits than ever imagined possible in learning to speak French.

"The words you choose in French will help you to express your true thoughts. Learning how to communicate effectively depends on our understanding of the power of vocabulary," says Gregg Beddome.



So what can students expect to learn after graduating from Grade 6 French in elementary school? They become even more adept at using authentic conversation in French, and

will use the language more commonly found in everyday life, in authentic sources, and in pop culture, among other things.

In learning how to deal with the unfamiliar language, students begin to hone their learning skills which can be transferred to all disciplines, while students are also encouraged to think out-of-the-box, to be adventurous, and to take risks on a daily basis.

Further, with Monsieur Beddome's encouragement, there has been a constant flow of students who continue with French through Grade 12.



"What I find exciting to see happen with my students, is when the moment of discovery occurs and they realize that people around the world live their lives in this language, and from there they begin to develop an understanding and appreciation for other cultures," Gregg Beddome exclaims.

Ç'est magnifique!!

Also congratulations to the French Department who will be receiving a \$5,000 grant from the French Second Language Revitalization program, to purchase the latest material available for students in Grades K-6 for the "**Histoires en action**" program and to attend workshops.

Scholastic Book Fair

This spring our school participated in the Scholastic Book Fair's "Partnership in Reading" as part of their Summer Reading program. Due to the support of our parents, we achieved a 35% increase in the number of overall books that Scholastic donated to designated children's hospitals across Canada as part of their partnership with Children's Miracle Network.

In recognition for our involvement, Scholastic Books donated over \$300 in books to the local children's hospital on behalf of Gray Academy. Thank you to parents and teachers for your participation.

AVI CHAI Bookshelf Grant

Gray Academy of Jewish Education is pleased to announce that it has been awarded an AVI CHAI Bookshelf Grant.

The AVI CHAI Foundation, a New York-based private foundation dedicated to supporting and encouraging the growing Jewish day school movement, developed the Bookshelf Program nine years ago in an effort to upgrade day school libraries and library collections.

Lauren Merkin, a member of AVI CHAI's Board of Trustees, says, "One feature of any first-rate high school is a comprehensive library. Experience has taught us that school buy-in is critical to ensuring the long-term success and sustainability of any short term philanthropic intervention in a school. It is gratifying to see how many schools have committed themselves and their resources - both financial and human - to the growth of their libraries and the success of the Bookshelf venture."

"We are delighted to have been selected for the AVI CHAI Bookshelf grant. Through this grant, the Kaufman Silverberg Library and our library staff will be better equipped to effectively serve both our teachers and students, helping to enrich the classroom curriculum and develop the research skills our students will need for University," said Rory Paul, Head of School and CEO. "As partners with the AVI CHAI Foundation in enhancing and maintaining our library, we express our commitment to offering all-around excellence in Judaic and General Studies, to our students and staff."

Gray Academy of Jewish Education will receive funding from AVI CHAI over three years toward the purchase of materials (books, audiovisual items, computer hardware and software) for their media centres.

Gray Academy of Jewish Education is one of 95 high schools participating in the 2007/2008 program.

Go Raiders Go!

Although the school year is only two months along, Gray Academy has been busy making its mark in many athletic events in the city.

Cross Country

Linda Connor took her Grade 7 and 8 cross country team to two Pembina Trails Athletic Association meets. Gil Binnun had 2 top 20 finishes in the Grade 7 category. Other runners were Jordan Gertenstein and Adam Stoller while Elliot Lazar represented the Grade 8 students.

Flag Football

Our Grade 8 flag football teams recently competed in an invitational tournament at A. A. Leach School on October 2. Both teams advanced to the playoffs. One of our teams just missed taking the championship, losing in the final by a narrow 1 point margin to H. G. Izzat School. The team was: Griffin Bernstein, Hannah Fogel, Jeremy Hecht, Josh Kerr, Niri Pollock, Justin Rabb, Baillie Shuster, and Jordana Sommer. Our other team included J.J. Gerstein, Matthew Kaufmann, Anat Knyazher, Reese Ratson, Yale Selchen, Milana Schipper, Mai, Weinberg, and Lauren Yusim.

Golf Tournament

Gray Academy entered 3 teams in the Zone 12 golf tournament on September 17 at St. Boniface Golf Club. Team 1 placed 3rd in the zone. This team was comprised of David Coodin, Jesse Garber, Jorel Minuk, and Aden Benarroch. Team 2 was made up of Mitchell Billinkoff, Josh Morry, Jared Ackerman, and Daniel Breslauer. The 3rd team included Asher Billinkoff, Jonah Brown, Max Erenberg, and Avi Stoller.

Volleyball

The volleyball season is well underway. Gray Academy has three high school teams, 2 varsity teams playing in Zone 12 and a Grade 9 boys' team in the Pembina Trails league. The season is challenging for all our teams and the players look forward to continued improvement.

- Kevin Abrahams, Physical Education Teacher

Basketball Footnote...

From December 12-16 the Varsity boys will be competing in the CHAT Basketball Tournament in Toronto, as well as participating in a Shabbaton component. We wish good luck to the following players: Jordan Vine, Zee Lubocki, Jesse Garber, Jorel Minuk, Brayden Bernstein, Aden Benarroch, David Coodin, Daniel Breslauer, Saul Shrom and Shia Richter along with teacher Rochelle Gamliel and coach Wally Chubati.

Stay tuned for a Basketball update in the next newsletter.

Meet Your Student Council

On September 25, students listened to passionate and often humorous speeches from fellow classmates who were running for five coveted positions on Student Council. In their own words, here are their respective voices:

Jesse Garber (President) - Grade 12

My vision is to give the student body great programs and activities to participate in throughout the year and to help solve all their problems or concerns within the school. I enjoy the atmosphere of going to a school that does not have many people in it but has great school spirit. I also am very close with many people within the school from Grade 7 up to Grade 12. I have been the Sports Committee head for the past 2 years.

Josh Morry (Vice President) - Grade 11

Up until now, Student Council has done an excellent job of representing the students' views, but it hasn't really gone out to individual students to get them involved. If I could do just one thing as Vice President, it would be to make every student feel needed, whether they're on student council or not. We can do this through focus groups for each grade, and/or by just making the class reps more effective. I think that Gray Academy is a school where individuals can really excel. We're a unique school in that we all know and feel comfortable with each other. I've already noticed students coming up to me with questions or concerns about Student Council, and I've asked students to help me with Student Council, and they were more than happy to participate.

David Coodin (Treasurer) - Grade 12

My vision is to use our Student Council funds for the benefit of our school, and not just let them sit in a bank. Also, I hope to use some of the funds PAC is willing to allocate to the student council to the fullest degree. I like the closeness of everyone in the school, from the youngest of student, all the way to the administration. I love how close we are with the teachers, and how helpful they are to us in class as well as outside of it. I was a P2K committee head with Cara Katz last year, and replacement P2K committee head for Alix Billinkoff 2 years ago.

Blake Lerner (Secretary) - Grade 9

My vision for Gray Academy is to have the school more involved in the international community. I would like to see partnerships with more international schools to aid in our knowledge of the rest of the world. I would also like to see the creation of a long term sustainable charity that would aid in the development of villages in Third World nations. One of the many things that I like about the Gray Academy is the close knit community that we have. Everyone knows almost everyone else's name. It is almost like a family here. Gray Academy has become a way of life for many that they unfortunately have to leave in the end.

We wish you all much success in achieving your vision!

News from the Music Department

Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra Outreach

The school was invited once again to participate in an outreach program with other Winnipeg students singing with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra (WSO). An excerpt of an oratorio about the holocaust, composed by Zane Zalis, was performed at Miles Mac Collegiate on October 25 in the afternoon and the evening with the symphony. Students who participated included: Oren Binnun, Arielle Block, Emily Kroft, Julia Kroft, Dafna Schultz, Rafi Hoult, Jenna Adelman and Jana Elazar, and along with teacher Miriam Bronstein, proudly represented Gray Academy. It was an amazing experience to see our students be a part of this special evening performance with the WSO.

Elementary School Musical Production

Music teacher Miriam Bronstein recently sent out a casting call to all elementary students who wish to participate in the upcoming school musical, ***Once Upon a Mattress*** and was met with a great response.

Once Upon a Mattress is loosely adapted from Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale, "The Princess and the Pea. This musical opened on May 11, 1959 off-Broadway at the Phoenix Theater, formerly the famed Yiddish Art Theatre on Manhattan's Lower East Side. In 1996, a Broadway revival starring Sarah Jessica Parker opened and received a Tony nomination for Best Musical Revival.

A partial list of the cast is listed here. For more information, please go to www.graymusical.blogspot.com.

Princess Winnifred: Abigail Chochinov
Prince Dauntless: Rafi Hoult
Queen Aggravain: Talia Ripstein
The Silent King: Juan Mohadeb
Lady Larken: Julia Kroft
Sir Harry: Noah Palansky
The Minstrel: Claire Chochinov
The Jester: Melissa Minuk
The Two Wizards: William Pitch and Aaron Stone
Lady Lucille: Arielle Block
Lady Rowena: Samantha Worb
First Knight: Nico Berman
Second Knight: Jeremy Gunn
Sir Harold: Oren Binnun
Princess Number 12: Lana Tennenhouse

Gray Academy is proud to present this musical from April 1-4, 2008 at the Franco-Manitobain Cultural Centre. Please watch this space for details about ticket purchase information.

We look forward to another electrifying school production under the musical direction of Miriam Bronstein, along with the volunteer support of many teachers, parents and students.

Chesed Corner

Food Drive

Thank you very much for collecting food for the Jewish Child and Family Service (JCFS) food pantry. As the social service arm of the Jewish community, JCFS supports individuals and families in need of our help. Sometimes people are challenged by difficult financial circumstances and do not have food to feed themselves or their families. We maintain a food pantry in our office so we can provide food provisions.



Our pantry was almost bare so we are grateful for the supplies that you brought in. A special thanks to *morah* Joyce Kerr and students Jarod Standil Margovski, Dafna Schultz, Estee Katz and Sari Cohen for delivering the bin of food to our office.

- Merrill Schwaid, Public Relations Coordinator,
Jewish Child & Family Service

Student Drive

In an open letter to the school, Grade 12 student Tali Aziza and the Partnership 2000 Student Committee planned a very important tzedakah initiative in the school during the visit from Danciger High School.

The Partnership 2000 Student Committee initiated a project that is close to the hearts of Gray Academy students who travelled to Kiryat Shmonah on the P2K trip last April. On the border of Kiryat Shmonah, there is a project underway to build a home for soldiers called "**Liran's Home**". The home will serve as a home away from home for soldiers on duty in the area and will be constructed in Liran's memory.

Last year on Yom Hazikaron, the Memorial Day for fallen soldiers in Israel, Gray Academy students had the opportunity to meet and hear from Liran Sa'adia's family. Liran lost his life on July 20, 2006 while searching for fellow soldiers in Lebanon. Liran was a graduate of Danciger High School.

The student driven project is proud to announce they raised over \$10,000. Thank you to all students and staff involved in the planning and to those who participated!! Kol Ha-Kavod!

Acts of Kindness

On October 11, visiting P2K students from Israel, along with teacher Magi Mualem, welcomed Pastor Rudy and his wife Gina from Faith Temple at the school, along with Vice-Principal Lori Binder and David Greaves, FRD Associate Director, from the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg.



Pastor Rudy Fidel talked to the Danciger High School students about his many missions to Israel, and to their school, along with his wife and fellow congregants, and explained his emotional and spiritual connection to the land of Israel. Pastor Rudy also discussed his personal philosophy of "giving back" to the community, and stated that only through education can hearts become open. All of this was a fitting response for our students who had initiated a fund-raising project called "Liran's House".



After talking for about an hour, Pastor Rudy presented Magi and Grade 12 student Tali Aziza with a cheque for \$7,000 to go towards this project.

Danciger High School teacher Magi Mualem was overwhelmed by the generosity of Pastor Rudy, and responded that she could see the kindness in his eyes. We thank them for their incredible generosity and warm spirit!! Todah Rabah!!



Extracurricular Activities

Debating and Public Speaking

Congratulations to Josh Morry and Josh Fineblit for their participation in the Senior Douglas Campbell Speaking Tournament last month. Both students had strong performances with Josh Morry finishing third for the impromptu category.

And just back from the International Public Speaking Championship in England, three of our students competed and did exceptionally well: Josh Fineblit placed 22 and was in the Persuasive final, Jessica Donen came in 67, and Jonathan Ripstein ranked 91, with Gray Academy placing 11th out of 40 Canadian schools.

Exciting Opportunity to be part of an International Experience! We are looking for Volunteer Judges for the Asper Cup International High School Debate on Sunday, December 2 & Monday, December 3.

If you are interested, please call Judy Elliott @ 945-4732 or fineblit@shaw.ca. No experience required.

Bible Contest

Following a very successful year of studying for the Canadian National Bible Contest held last year in Montreal, we are very excited to get started again this year.

Interested students in Grades 5-12 will study for the *Regional Bible Contest* to be held at the school on Sunday, March 9, 2008. For those who qualify, the *National Contest* will be held in Toronto from Sunday, May 11 through Tuesday, May 13, 2008.

Writing this contest in school is one way for us to promote the study of Torah in a new and interesting way. The Bible Contest follows a 3-year cycle. This year, students will study the *Book of Bereshit* and its fascinating portraits of the first Jewish families in Grade 5-6. The students in Grades 7 and 8 will also study the *Book of Joshua* and its captivating report how the B'nei Yisrael settled in the promised land in addition to Bereshit. In addition, students in Grades 9-12 will study sections from the Prophets Isaiah and Amos, and the *Book of Psalms*, which deal with political and spiritual leadership in Biblical times.

Did you Know?

Baby News! - Teacher Karen Richter became a safta to Aharon and Aharon Yosef; teacher Chris Garroni is a second time dad to daughter Hayley; Patti Morris is now a fifth time baba to granddaughter Stephanie Mya; Val Leibl welcomes her second grandchild Hudson Taylor; and teacher Linda Martin is a first time grandmother to granddaughter Brynn Leigh. Mazel Tov!!

Alumni News! - Congratulations to Alexandra Frohlinger ('06) for a show stopping, remarkable performance on the CBC TV show *Triple Sensation*. This new TV show invited young performers across Canada to impress the judges in order to win a \$150,000 scholarship to any performing arts school in the world. Not only did Alexandra make the top 10 in the auditions, but she had a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to do so with world famous composer Marvin Hamlisch on the piano! To catch a glimpse of the show, you can click on www.triplesensation.ca.

Lights, Camera, Action! - The school is in the midst of shooting a promotional video on the school that will be a visual showpiece on all the wonderful aspects of Gray Academy - from academics to sports to Judaic curriculum to art and music and much more. We are anticipating completion of this project in early 2008.



Looking for Scrabble Game - Do you have a complete scrabble game gathering dust somewhere in your home or cottage? If you have an unused scrabble game, a group of dedicated high school scrabble players would make excellent use of it. Please contact Sharon Freed at 477-7501 ext. 845 or send the game to the school office. Thank you!



School Gala Fundraiser

SCHOOL GALA FUNDRAISER - DATE CHANGE!

Co-Chairs Nona Leibl and Sharon Delbridge invite you to join us of the evening of **Sunday, March 30, 2008** at The Fairmont Winnipeg as we **Celebrate One Hundred Years of Jewish Education in Winnipeg**. Monies raised goes towards supporting the school. If you are interested in volunteering on the gala committee, contact us at advancement@aspercampus.mb.ca.



The evening will be hosted by Kinzey Posen with entertainment provided by special guests and a keynote speaker, along with a sumptuous meal, dancing and live auction. Tickets and corporate tables will be available soon. Please watch this space for more details.

Community Announcements

FAMILY SHABBAT DINNER

Join other families on Friday, November 30 for a fun, spirited and warm Shabbat Dinner experience. This special Friday night program will include great food, singing and activities for children and adults. Presented by the Rady JCC and YAD. For more information, call Nora Sobel at 477-7508.

FLORENCE MELTON ADULT MINI-SCHOOL NEXT CLASSES - FALL 2007

A workout for the brain... A refreshment for the spirit... The Rady Jewish Community Centre presents The Florence Melton Adult Mini- School, a two-year, once-a-week course which offers adults the opportunity to acquire Jewish literacy in an open, pluralistic and intellectually stimulating learning environment regardless of one's background or affiliation. There are no tests, no homework, and no grades. For more information, please contact Nora Sobel at 477-7508 or nsobel@aspercampus.mb.ca.

Community Announcements

"DARE TO DREAM"... AN EVENING WITH A CONSCIENCE

"Dare to Dream" ...An Evening with a Conscience. The Half Shekel Task Force invites you to an exciting evening of Dancing, Desserts & Dreams. The Half Shekel Task Force on Poverty was created by the Planning Committee of the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg to address issues of poverty and economic disparity in our community, because poverty is a community issue. *Saturday, November 17th, 2007 at the Winnipeg Convention Centre – 2nd Floor, Banquet Room 2H. Doors open at 7:30 p.m.* Tickets \$ 20.00 available at the Jewish Federation of Winnipeg by calling: Stephanie Jacobs-Lockhart at 477-7473 or go on-line at www.jewishwinnipeg.org. Dress: Casual. Cash Bar.

ISRAELI CONCERT SERIES 07/08 SEASON

Performing on a variety of middle-eastern instruments, the Yair Dalal Trio takes us on a middle-eastern Sephardic journey on Saturday December 1, at 8:00 pm. On Saturday, January 19, at 8:00 pm, the irreverent Brillaner Duo, featuring Shirley Brill, clarinet, and Jonathan Aner, piano, performs an evening of classical and Israeli music. On Saturday February 16, at 8:00 pm, the Avishai Cohen Trio, featuring bass, piano, and drums, present an incomparable evening of jazz. All concerts take place at the Rady Jewish Community Centre in the Berney Theatre, Asper Jewish Community Campus, 123 Doncaster Street. Subscription packages are \$67 Rady JCC members, \$72 non-members, \$48 students. Order on-line at www.radyjcc.com by clicking Ticket Central or call the Rady JCC at 477-7510.

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