

Ruach Reflections

The Newsletter of Gray Academy of Jewish Education

January/February 2010 Shevat /Adar 5770

Happy Purim



January and February in Winnipeg can get pretty cold. School is back in full swing after a two week vacation and 2010 is about to begin. Nobody can predict what the future will bring, but we sure can learn from the past and help shape our present and guide our future. The past two months at Gray Academy have been filled with activities, workshops, classroom discussions, school wide tzedakah projects, travel opportunities and a heightened awareness of how lucky we are to live in the community that we do.

Raoul Wallenberg Day gave our high school students the opportunity to focus on Human Rights issues and to take action – shaping our present and guiding our future.

Shabbat weekends (Retreat and Gr. 6 Shabbaton) allowed our students to share Shabbat as a family – an activity that has been observed in the past, present and will continue in the future.

Countries and communities around the world have suffered misfortune over the past two months. Through specific Tzedakah projects over \$2000.00 was raised for Haiti Relief and food cupboards were filled with donations of macaroni/pasta from Purim which students brought as groggers for Purim.

Support for the Canadians at the Olympics and our very own Torch Bearers reinforced the notion of working together, supporting one another and the sense of community and pride.

Look again at the picture at the top of this page. It is our future. It is our responsibility to take care of each other and work together to remember the past, shape our present and guide our future.

Joyce Kerr
Vice Principal

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Gray Academy Students with Mark Waldman (CJPAC), Shimon Fogel (CEO, CIC) , MP Anita Neville, Joel Reitman (CJAPAC), Sayeh Hassan and Honourable Irwin Cotler (MP, PC, OC)

Raoul Wallenberg Day - Gr. 10 - 12

Students flocked to the Berney Theatre on January 18th to participate in the Raoul Wallenberg Day Human Rights Conference for High School Students. The program, inspired by the Right Honourable Irwin Cotler and Shelley Faintuch, coordinated by Ms. Faintuch and Dr. Ruth Ashrafi, was designed with a twofold purpose: to commemorate Raoul Wallenberg, a Swedish diplomat who put his life on the line in order to save approximately 100,000 Jews in Nazi Germany and to bring attention to current human rights issues and to encourage students to take action. This year, students from Gray Academy, Grant Park and St. John Ravenscourt learned about "Human Rights in Iran." Topics ranged from the corrupt government to the persecution of the Kurdish people. The Right Honourable Irwin Cotler returned to Winnipeg to speak at the conference, with other very prominent guests such as: Shimon Fogel, CEO of the Canada-Israel Committee, Sayeh Hassan, an Iranian lawyer, and Daniel Ashrafi, a former member of the Iranian military forces. The conference also saw the likes of notable politicians including: Anita Neville, Liberal Member of Parliament Winnipeg South Centre, and James Bezan, chair of the conservative caucus of Manitoba and member of parliament for Selkirk-Interlake.

In order to measure success, one must evaluate if goals were reached. It is very clear that ours were. First, without doubt, every single Raoul Wallenberg Day conference attendee walked out of the conference knowing who Raoul Wallenberg was, what he did and how his legacy lives on. Secondly, any student who was listening for more than five seconds has no doubt become more aware of the current humanitarian crisis in Iran, thus accomplishing our second goal. But honestly, what truly made this conference a success was the engagement of the students. Participants listened attentively, but more importantly, many people took an active participatory role by asking important and well articulated questions about the issues that were presented. We signed a petition that will be presented in Parliament and a letter that will put pressure on the Canadian Government to list the Iranian Guard as a terrorist organization. Raoul Wallenberg may have died, but the fire of his legacy burns bright here at Gray Academy.

Zev Faintuch - Student Council President (Gr. 12)

Grade 6 Shabbaton

Spiritual

The Blessing of the Children was very spiritual, meaningful and for me, partly emotional. We had Morah Sherry read it in Hebrew and some parents repeated after her. Mine did. Then, all of the parents read it in English. The parents had their hand on their child. I started to cry a bit because it was a lot to take in at the moment. This moment reminded me of the blessing given to Menashe and Ephraim. I hope that my parents bless me more often with their own words, it would mean a lot. I told them this and they said to me, "Every time we kiss you, is our way of blessing you."

Learning

Writing a D'var Torah was a great experience for me. We all had to read a story and then answer 2 questions. I learned of a whole new level of how to honour my parents, and I also learned of how the Torah can connect to almost everything in our lives today! I think that this was a great preparation for my Bar-Mitzvah and it was a great experience that I'll never forget. The D'var Torah also let me express and relate my feelings to the Torah which was very cool. When I was told that I would be reading my D'var Torah at Shabbaton I was very happy and for me it was a life accomplishment. It is a mitzvah and tradition to write a D'var Torah for my Bar-Mitzvah and to know how to write one before my Bar-Mitzvah it is a true accomplishment. Writing a D'var Torah is like life. It is hard but the one who works harder achieves more.

Fun

Making a challah plate was really fun. First we had to choose a fabric and then glue it on to a plate. Then we chose a colour of tissue paper and glued it on too. I thought that it was cool how we got to make our plates and then actually eat on them. When I saw them finished I felt pride of how mine looked. I will try to make a tradition at my house that every Friday we can, we would put my mom's challah on my plate. It would make me proud. The plates looked ancient because it was wrinkled and the cool part was that it looked wrinkled. It looked great!

Ariel Glikman (Gr. 6)

Learning

The Torah reading was an inspiring experience. It inspired me to have confidence when it comes to my Bar Mitzvah. We first got assigned our piece from Parshat Yitro in the Book of Shemot. Then we were shown how to practice it, given roughly 8-10 weeks to know it, practiced it and finally read it at Shabbaton. I thought that it was a learning experience that had to be taken seriously and I did because if I didn't, I wouldn't know how to do it at my Bar Mitzvah. The Torah reading is connected to Shabbat because we read the Torah to know what HaShem has done for us. I really hope I get lots of Torah reading opportunities throughout my life.

Mati Pelich (Gr. 6)



Grade 2 - Chaggigat Ha-Torah

On Wednesday, February 24 in the afternoon and Thursday, February 25 in the evening our Grade 2 students beamed on stage in the Berney Theatre during their Chaggigat Ha-Torah. The story of Creation was told through art, music, dance and Torah text. This celebration showcased what they have learned over the past three months in their introduction to Torah Studies at Gray Academy. The evening concluded with each student receiving the book "In the Beginning" and a Torah followed by juice and cookies in the Berney Foyer.



Look Who Came To Visit ...



Tamir Goodman

On January 20th, Orthodox Jewish basketball player Tamir Goodman visited Gray Academy to run basketball workshops with the school's teams and share his story. Tamir, also known as "Jewish Jordan," grew up in Baltimore, Maryland and started playing basketball at a very young age. By the time he was in seventh grade he was already playing on his Yeshiva High School's varsity team. Once Tamir graduated from high school he turned down an offer to play at University of Maryland because their schedule interfered with Shabbat and other Jewish holidays. A Division I school, Towson State University, heard about Tamir and offered to change the entire conference's schedule to accommodate him. He ended up playing two seasons there and then moved to Israel. Tamir played professional basketball in Israel for five years but is now retired.

When Tamir came to our school he spoke to the grade seven, eight and nine students about his personal experiences as an observant Jewish basketball player. He also put on basketball workshops for our Junior Varsity and Varsity teams. At the end of the basketball sessions he spoke to the players about always having faith in G-d and in themselves. Tamir is a very inspiring person and a role model to many young Jewish athletes.

Hannah Fogel (Gr. 10)

Alumni - Breakfast #2

The second Alumni Breakfast hosted by the JWC/Gray Academy Alumni Committee took place on Wednesday, January 27th at Schmoozers. The breakfast was a wonderful opportunity for alumni from various years to connect and reminisce on their years at Joseph Wolinsky and Gray Academy. We were honoured to have Berry Bender attend our breakfast. Barry has been leading high school retreats at the school since 1986, and is continuing to make a positive impact on students at Gray Academy today.

Sari Rosenberg (Class of '93)



From Top To Bottom:
Tamir Goodman and the JV Girls Basketball Team
Noam Bedein - Director of Sderot Media Centre speaks to Gr. 11 & 12
Billy Brodovsky - Comes to Speak to Gr. 10
Dr. Shane Silver comes to K to talk about Sun Safety

Honourary Patrols

Gray Academy had lots to celebrate the week of January 4, 2010. Noah Palansky (Gr. 8) was nominated by Mayor Sam Katz to light the torch at the Forks. He was chosen from a group of 30 nominees to light the Olympic Torch at the Forks when it came through Winnipeg on its cross country tour. Noah was quite the celebrity on Monday at school. CBC, CitiTV, Global and CTV came to school to interview Noah and his friends on this exciting occasion. On Tuesday evening January 4, thousands of people gathered at the Forks for a huge celebration. Noah carried the torch down Market Street to the Forks stage where the cauldron sat. Friends, family and thousands of Winnipeggers came out to support Noah and the excitement of the Olympics. On Thursday, Jeff Kerr (dad of Lindsay – Class of '09 and Josh - Class of '12) and Israel Binnun (Dad of Gilad – Class of '13 and Oren Class of '14) also had the chance to be Olympic Torch Bearers. Jeff ran down Portage Ave and Israel ran in Oakville, Manitoba. What a fitting way to honour members of the Gray Academy family by having them be "Honourary Patrols" in our parking lot loop on Friday January 6. Constable Boulet and Sergeant Martell our District Patrol Supervisors also came to see "What Happens in the Gray Academy Parking Lot Loop".



February was... I Love To Read Month

Activities in the month included:

- ♥ MLA Heather Stephanson comes to K to read
- ♥ Reading Bingo for JK – Grade 1
- ♥ Daily Mystery Reader – JK
- ♥ Resa Ostrove comes to Grade 5 to read
- ♥ An Olympic Read-a-thon for Grades 2 – 6
- ♥ Buddy Reading with Elementary and High School students
- ♥ Library Treasure Hunt for Grades 7 – 12
- ♥ Grade 12 Visited the Dafoe Library at the U of M
- ♥ Favourite Author Book Display
- ♥ D.E.A.R.-Drop Everything and Read



Top Left: MLA Heather Stephanson Top Right: Buddy Reading
Bottom: Buddy Reading

Out and About

Model U.N.

Model UN definitely makes the list for one of the best programs Gray Academy has to offer. Besides the five days spent in New York City, shopping, sight seeing, shopping, spending Shabbat in Riverdale, shopping and walking all over the city, the Conference is the best part of the trip. The Model UN Conference was held at the luxurious Stamford Plaza in Stamford, Connecticut, about an hour drive from NYC. Our school delegates (Becky Frohlinger, Levi Garber, Rheann Brownstone and Evan Cantor), chaperoned by Mrs. Judy Doctoroff, represented the country of Botswana, a large African country situated right above South Africa.

We were split up into separate committees copied off of the actual United Nations, such as UNEP (United Nations Environmental Protection Committee), WHO (World

Health Organization), International Bank of Reconstruction and Development, and the UN Committee Against Discrimination. We were presented with issues facing the world and throughout six committee sessions, lasting 2 ½ hours each, with countries ranging from Andorra to Zimbabwe, rich and poor, we tried to solve these issues by creating motions and resolutions.

Throughout the Conference we met students from all over North America and made friends with pretty much everyone we could.

Model UN was truly an experience to remember and it was a total success for the delegates from Gray Academy.

Levi Garber (Gr. 10)



L to R: Becky Frohlinger, Rheann Brownstone, Evan Cantor, Levi Garber

Science Symposium in San Diego

On February 18, 2010 Dr. Coodin accompanied eight high school students to the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) annual meeting in San Diego, California. At the Conference we attended lectures and speakers on a variety of science topics ranging from the phenomenon of spontaneous lane formation in pedestrian traffic to the role of neutrinos in the standard particle model. This trip presented an opportunity for us to learn what is happening on the cutting edge of science, while being immersed in an environment of the science community.

As a participant I must say that the time I spent at the conference was not only educational but eye opening. This year the theme of the conference was "Bridging Science and Society" and it was eye opening in that it really highlighted how science directly connects to almost every technology that we use today, and how it effects policy decisions by government officials. One of the keynote speakers of the conference, Eric Lander, spoke on "Science and Technology in the First Year of the New Administration" which highlighted sciences rightful place in society. The theme and underlying message were very fitting for students there to learn more about the opportunities and importance of science.

P.S. The San Diego Zoo is awesome.

Zev Ripstein (Gr. 11)

Ski Trips

On Sunday February 7, 2010, 47 fortunate students (along with 5 chaperones) departed on the 3rd annual High School Ski Trip to Giants Ridge, Minnesota.

After a six hour bus ride and a stop at the local Target, we enjoyed 2 awesome days of ideal skiing/snowboarding conditions. In addition to the 2 full days of skiing, we were also given the opportunity to “night ski” on Sunday evening, which was a great new experience. Giants Ridge offers runs for all levels, from easy greens to steep black diamonds and everyone found a place for themselves. The mountain also has a challenging terrain park for those thrill seekers. After an exhausting day of skiing we retired back at the beautiful Giants Ridge Lodge which is located right at the bottom of the hill. Each night we enjoyed a great dinner and had the opportunity to go swimming in the pool/ hot tub, hang out in the lodge lounge or in our extremely spacious suites. With perfect weather conditions, fresh powder, and sunny skies-it doesn't get any better! This trip is one that should not be missed. A special thank you to our trip chaperones- Morah Joyce, Morah Pam, Jodie Nemitz, & Debby and Bob Brown for their time and hard work. See you next year.

Jonah Brown (Gr. 11)



Top: Gr. 9 - 12 to Giants Ridge, Minnesota
Bottom: Gr. 8 to Asessippi

Canspell

This was my third year competing in the CanWest CanSpell Spelling Bee. It was quite an experience for me. I was entrant number two in this year's bee and I was really nervous. I haven't had much luck in past spelling Bees getting out in the third or fourth round. When I first got up on stage I was as nervous. I'm getting butterflies right now just thinking about it. Before I knew it more and more people got out and the competition kept getting smaller and smaller. I kept going through to the next round each time I spelled a word and then it was down to the final three people, and I was shocked that I had made it this far in the bee. I didn't expect to get this far. Kas Kuropatwa, Jeremy Gunn and I all spelling for the chance to be called “Champion”. I spelled my word right. Then Jeremy did and then Kas did. This same pattern went on for three to four rounds. Then I got my word right which was “financier”, and then Jeremy got out on a pretty tough word but I can't seem to remember what word that was. So it was down to Kas and me in the final two and I was extremely nervous knowing that the person I am standing with is a phenomenal speller who went very far in the bee last year. Then it was his turn in the same round. I had spelled my word right so if he spelled it wrong then I would be the winner. Then Mr. Beddome called out the word. The word

was fallacy. In my mind I knew that I couldn't spell it - there is too many ways I thought you can spell that word. Kas did not get the correct spelling. Inside I was screaming in happiness knowing that I just beat 40 people from Grades 4-8 in the 2009-2010 CanSpell school Spelling Bee. This was a very happy moment for me because I competed in Grade 5 and 6 and got out both times. I couldn't believe it I was the winner.

Zach Greenberg (Gr. 7)



L to R: Zach Greenberg and Kas Kuropatwa

Let's Celebrate...

Tu B'Shvat



L: Kindergarten Comparison - Israel and Winnipeg

M: Gr. 3 Tree Planting

R: Kindergarten and Gr. 1 Tu B'Shvat Seder

Kindergarten 100 Day Celebration



L: Parade

R: 100 Exercises

Purim



T: Purim Twister
B: H.S. Pancake Breakfast



T: JK Makes Hamantaschen
B: Gr. 7 Gym Riot Prep

What's Coming Up...

Elementary Model Seder - March 26

Celebration of Science (Gr. 5 & 6) - April 12 - 16

Gray Academy Song Festival - April 19

Yom Ha'Atzmaut Celebration - April 20

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Gray Academy
OF JEWISH EDUCATION