

Hillel Highlights



Views from Hillel Academy

Last week, before the Chanukah vacation, the fifth grade boys celebrated a siyum of parshiyos Shemos and Vaera with delicious ice cream and cookies. The boys showed their spirit with lively singing, dancing and shtick (inspired by our leibedige 8th grade boys). Keep up the amazing learning!



Rosh Chodesh Teves activities include the 4th-8th grade girls playing dreidel with chocolate chips. After amassing a pot of chocolate chips, they regrouped and used their chocolate chips as points. They picked prizes in order of which groups had the most chips. It was loads of fun with great prizes.

On Wednesday, the girls celebrated their annual Chanukah Chagiga with a wonderful lunch prepared by Mrs. Esti Erlanger and lots of fun activities. The 3rd grade girls were their special guests!



In order to raise funds for their end of year trip, the 8th grade boys decided to do a "Split the Pot" raffle. On Tuesday morning the winning name was drawn from the pot - Mr. Rick Kunz (a neighbor of Shlomo Jacobs). Mr. Kunz generously returned \$200 to the boys and made a \$100 donation to Hillel Academy. The boys sold over \$1,000 in raffle tickets. They did an amazing job!



The 7th and 8th grade girls language arts class completed a “one pager” on their study of Anne of Green Gables. Each page includes an illustration, dialogue and information about the story.



Mrs. Bram's 5th grade girls are learning to touch type using their Chromebooks. This skill has become increasingly necessary as computers become an integral part of our lives.



The 6th and 7th graders were given a Chanukah challenge. They needed to come up with as many things that they could find that are connected to the number 7. Seven is teva, and relates to nature in comparison to the number 8 which relates to the supernatural, neis. For example, the oil lasting for 8 days was supernatural. The girls whipped out sefarim and siddurim to do their research! It was wonderful to see.



Our Preschool and Kindergarten classes recently visited Fire House #19 - always an exciting field trip. One of the most important things our students learn when they visit the Fire House is to not be afraid of the firemen, especially when they are in their heavy, firefighting clothes. The firefighters of Fire House #19 always make the kids feel comfortable and safe.



The Sunday before Chanukah break, the 3-8th grade boys shared a beautiful Breakfast and Learning session with their fathers and some grandfathers. Davening, learning, a message from the Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, a raffle and a great breakfast. It was truly a wonderful morning.





Preschoolers enjoyed a wonderful Chanukah party with their parents and friends. They entertained them with Chanukah songs and then shared Chanukah activities and treats.



The 1st graders read a story about a boy who made a mask. For a writing assignment they described a mask that they would want to make. Then according to their description that they wrote, they created their own masks.



Wherever you looked this week it was doughnuts, doughnuts, doughnuts - being fried, decorated or sold. The 4th & 7th grade boys made doughnuts together, Rabbi Goldbaum instructed the 8th grade boys in the fine art of Canadian doughnuts and the girls decorated doughnuts as part of their Chanukah Chagiga. The 8th grade girls sold doughnuts at their Snack Shop in addition to having fried hundreds of them for their successful doughnut sale. This Chanukah treat has certainly found fans at Hillel!



(Doughnut pictures continued)



Spotlight on our Teachers **Mrs. Faigy Gertz - 5th Grade Girls Kodesh**

Welcome to a sneak peek at Hillel Academy's 5th grade girls. Each day starts with *tefilla*. In between brachos and the rest of davening we have one short subject. Some days it is *biur tefilla*, where we will be learning the meaning of shema. We also do a *pisgam hashavua* once a week, learning important sayings that teach lessons or fundamental concepts, always taught in a song. The main focus of our morning is chumash. We are learning sefer Shemos, which means we have the unique opportunity to do the mitzva of remembering *yitzias mitzrayim* all year long. The girls are working hard to strengthen their skills and fluency in translating chumash and Rashi as well as working independently in preparation for middle school. We are about to begin our study of the Makkos, which includes in depth knowledge of the pesukim and midrashim along with hands-on projects for each makka. This will culminate in a beautiful makkos presentation before Pesach. In Navi we are studying sefer Shoftim and creating an interactive scrapbook with a page about each shofet. Ivris and yahadus round out our day, in addition to PE with Miss Goldbaum and yedidos with Mrs Sommers.

Counselor's Corner

How to help your child deal with losing a game:

Tip #1

Avoid frustration by explaining the point of the game before you play. Explain the rules and the circumstances that allow a player to win. In Candyland, for example, you can explain that some spots mean moving back several spaces.

Knowing the rules before your child starts makes it seem less shocking when he/she loses. It'll also remove any sense of unfairness.

To be continued next week....



D'var Torah – Vayigash

"I am Yosef" – With these simple words Yosef revealed himself to his astonished brothers, and a twenty-two-year saga of pain and suffering came to an end with the pieces of a perplexing and troubling puzzle all fitting together in an unexpected manner. Years of guilt and recrimination amongst the brothers and mourning on the part of Yaakov vanished, with all seeing how HaShem's Hand had manipulated on both a micro and a macro level – for the benefit of all – the events related to the sale of Yosef, his imprisonment and rise to greatness, and the hardships endured by the brothers and their families in his absence. Now they understood the reasons why they had to suffer the indignity of purchasing food in a foreign land and why they had been accused of espionage. With those few words, "I am Yosef," it all became clear!

The Chofetz Chaim, Rabbi Yisroel Meir Kagan, zt"l, relates this to our own predicament, as we suffer through our long, bitter exile. We live in a period of "Hester Panim," of Divine concealment, in which the Hand of HaShem is not always apparent in good times, even more so when we experience suffering and pain. However, a day will come when HaShem will reveal Himself and the entire world will acknowledge Him. When that day will arrive, all the travails of our national and personal histories will be understood with the same clarity and just as quickly as the brothers understood their situation when Yosef revealed himself. The Chofetz Chaim would often refer back to the words, "I am Yosef," when encouraging those who poured out their hearts to him, searching for meaning in their anguish. He acknowledged their pain and commiserated with them in their confusion, but always reassured them that their pain had meaning, it fit into HaShem's master plan, and that a day would come when all would see and understand the big picture, which in turn would shed light on the smaller pictures as well.

As a teacher, I would try to highlight this idea in a vivid manner. Using a projector, I would display a worksheet with many blanks and multiple-choice questions on a white board. As a class, we would fill in the blanks and circle the appropriate answers. When the worksheet was completed, I would also add some smiley faces and other marks to highlight different parts of the sheet.

After the children had finished completing their work, I would draw their attention to the completed piece of work on the board and how everything fit together and made perfect sense. Then I would turn off the projector and, suddenly, all that was left on the board was a jumble of random words and markings that had no meaning whatsoever! When I flipped the projector back on, everything made sense again, but when I turned it off, confusion reigned. I would then go on to talk to the students about how the things in life that don't make sense to us are only confusing because HaShem has not shined His projector, i.e., His master plan on our board, i.e., our world. When Moshiach will come, and HaShem's light will shine, everyone will suddenly see that all the seemingly random and troubling elements of history fit together in a grand design that will make perfect sense.

Rabbi Yisroel Goldbaum

From the Principal's Desk....

Dear Parents,

As you will see from the many pictures in this week's edition of Hillel Highlights, Chanukah at Hillel Academy was a very special time. Although – due to our Chanukah break taking place on the first days of Chanukah – we got off to a late start (except for the Father-Son Pre-Chanukah Sunday Program and 8th Grade Girls Donut sale) we more than made up for it with the way that we finished Chanukah.

The Pre-Chanukah father-son program was not limited to fathers and sons, as we also had grandfathers and other assorted relatives attending. After a beautiful davening, we were honored with words of Torah by the Rosh HaYeshiva, Rabbi Kagan, shlita. This was followed by inspirational words by the Rabbi Seidenfeld, Menahel of Yeshivas Toras Chaim. After a special bagel breakfast, all joined in learning Mishnayos Sukkah, followed by Kaddish, dancing a donut siyyum. The morning finished with fun games and bingo. Thanks to all the Rebbeim who pitched in to make this event possible and, especially, to Rabbi Sher for spearheading it all!

8th Girls again demonstrated their energy and initiative in pulling off a very successful donut sale, with proceeds earmarked for their end-of-year graduation trip. Much thanks are due to Mrs. Seligman for orchestrating this enterprise and all the other work she does – above and beyond the call of duty – on behalf of the 8th grade girls!

On the subject of graduation trip fundraising, 8th Grade boys were amazing as well. On their own (with guidance from Rabbi Berkowitz) , they came up with the idea of a Split-the-Pot raffle, designed and posted fliers, printed tickets, and – most importantly – hawked tickets to one and all. B”H, the raffle was a great success, and with the help of the winner donating part of his proceeds back to their class, a tidy profit was realized. Most importantly, the boys learned many valuable lessons in teamwork, cooperation, promotion, bookkeeping, etc., lessons that will serve them well in the future as well. I am so proud of them and look forward to working with them and Rabbi Berkowitz on future projects.

Although students had vacation starting the first day of Chanukah, our teachers were in school for professional development. Our first sessions featured Cyle Feingold of Results Learning. Mr. Feingold revisited Executive Functioning, the topic of his last workshop and then developed the idea of helping students learn to be advocates for their own learning needs. My belief is that students who learn how to better express their needs in the classroom will not need to resort to inappropriate behaviors to get across to us that their needs are not being met. Mr. Feingold concluded with some ideas about time management and strategies to help us better utilize the scarce time at our disposal.

Chanukah ended with many exciting activities, which created a palpable Chanukah Ruach through the very end of this special Yom-Tov. It is my hope that the positive energy generated by this Yom Tov will infuse the coming weeks with much positivity as we proceed into Term II and beyond.

Have a wonderful Shabbos,

Rabbi Yisroel Goldbaum

Hillel Updates

- **Monday, December 25th - Noon dismissal for all students**
- **Thursday, December 28th - Fast of Teves** - middle school students dismissed at Noon.
- **Mazel tov to Rabbi Moshe and Leah Fyzakov** on the bar mitzvah of their son, Levi.
- **Mazel tov to Jonathan and Gloria Crystal** on the birth of a granddaughter and to parents, Rabbi Marcus and Chana Crystal.
- **Mazel tov to Bob and Amy Balaban** on the engagement of their son, Jeffrey to Sarita Wyszynski of Los Angeles.
- **Thank you to Rabbi Yaakov and Chaya Meyer** for having sponsored the Boys Breakfast the week of Dec. 10th and for providing doughnuts at breakfast on the last day of Chanukah.
- **Thank you to Yehuda and Chana Aminov** for sponsoring the Boys Breakfast for this week and **mazel tov on the birth of a daughter**, Aliza.
- **Our deepest condolences to Mrs. Estee Popack** on the recent loss of her father.
- **Are you talented with selling items online?** The school has some Judaic art that we would like to sell. Please contact the office if you want to take on this project. This will qualify for Give or Get hours.

Community Events

December 23 - Motzei Shabbos Women's Night Out -Enjoy viewing the movie "My Sister My Keeper" not yet out for rental or on DVD!! 7:15 pm at the Bais Yaakov School Building, \$8 a person. Information: call or email Rochel Field: 303-623-0422, fieldrochel7@gmail.com.

December 24th – Sunday – The Denver Community Kollel presents the Jewish Family Extravaganza at the South Suburban's Family Sports Center, 6901 S. Peoria (at Arapahoe Rd), Centennial from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. Unlimited rides, laser tag area, rock climbing wall, ice skating, Ferris wheel, teacup ride and more all for \$15 per child, \$7.50 per adult. For more information contact info@denverkollel.org or 303-820-2855. Please note that this is a date change from previous years.

Monday, December 25th - The Jewish Experience presents Six13 A Cappella performing live for the first time in Denver at 4:00 PM at George Washington High School. For tickets, go to TheJE.com/Six13 or call The Jewish Experience at 303-316-6412.

Motzei Shabbos, January 6th – Aish Ladies Melava Malka – 7:45 to 10:00 pm – “The Special Role Women Play Every Saturday Night,” presented by Rochel Goldbaum. The evening will include a dairy dinner with sushi platter, entertainment by the Bais Yaakov Girls Choir, and a sale of hosiery, hats, snoods, cosmetics, and more. Cost is \$15, students \$5.

Sunday, January 7th, 7:30 pm - Bonei Olam 2nd Annual Event. Cost is \$18 a person, \$30 a couple

Program includes: Mr. Kleinbart; founder of Bonei Olam, Sarah Drexler (nurse midwife), Rachel Lubchansky, and Dr. Polotsky (infertility specialist). Come support this wonderful organization! Information and RSVP: Estie Rotstein at estierotstien@gmail.com

January 14th – Sunday – Bais Yaakov of Denver 50th Anniversary Gala – honoring Rabbi Myer J and Mrs. Bruria Schwab at the Doubletree Hotel, 4040 Quebec St. Gala buffet reception at 6:45 pm, program at 7:30 pm. To reserve, place an ad or for more information, visit www.bjhs.org, email reservations@bjhs.org or call 303-893-1333. Ad deadline is December 29th.

PIZZA LUNCH

- **FIRST GRADE, 2-5 GRADE BOYS, 2-8 GRADE GIRLS**
- **WEDNESDAY JANUARY 3RD 2018!!!**
- **PIZZA AND LEMONADE!!!!!!!**

NAME: _____

GRADE: _____

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|--------------------------|----------------|---------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 1 SLICE | \$3 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 SLICE | \$5.50 |

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO THE OFFICE BY MONDAY, JANUARY 1ST.

