



**Hasten Hebrew Academy  
of Indianapolis**

**Friday, October 8, 2021 Vol. 18 #7**

**“Shabbat Shalom”**

**2 Cheshvan 5782**

Friday, October 8, 2021

Candle Lighting 6:55 pm

Saturday, October 9, 2021

Shabbat ends after 8:14 pm



**A Message from the Principal  
Mrs. Miriam Gettinger**

I am dedicating this weekly column to the HHAI Stars volleyball teams who under the inspiring leadership and coaching of Michael Voskoboynik have achieved near miraculous play this season in the classic David vs. Goliath paradigm outmatched in size and stature. The older team barely had the requisite size players to compete and yet with such spatial depth, smart game-play, communication skills, and incredible teamwork boasted an impressive 8-2 record, while the younger team playing second, third and fourth graders alongside a mere few fifth and sixth peers made it to the third set of the semifinal round of the IISL championship!



As many of you know, I am an avid baseball fan, a hopeless Chicago White Sox underdog fan as my family has connections to Chicago for decades. This year they too achieved stardom in winning their division, the first time since 2005, and are presently playing in the MLB playoffs. Interestingly, they have a Jewish player on the team with a fascinating Davidic like metaphorical background. Hardly as famous as Sandy Colfax who refused to pitch in the World Series on Yom Kippur, Leury Garcia hails from the Dominican Republic and was actually orphaned at his very birth when his parents died in an earthquake as the hospital was sadly built upon the Septentrional Fault line. Pitying the infant, the attending midwife swaddled him in her arms and took him to the local synagogue raising him up to the congregation like a Jewish Simba, pleading with someone to adopt him. Ironically, a kind Jewish zookeeper who specialized in lions immediately volunteered. Tragically though just three years later, exploding glass shards killed the lionkeeper when an Austrian opera troupe made its way through the zoo during its Central American circuit literally leaving Leury to live amongst the lions for the next ten years.

As a bar mitzva gift, some of the zoo staff bought him a ticket to a professional baseball game where he became enamored with the game from the first pitch. Lightning struck yet again a third time for the young Jewish boy as he himself was hit by a derailed train during the game and was airlifted in a hot air balloon to the very hospital where he was born. Curiously, after being in a coma for 28 days, he awoke and was asked his name after whereupon miraculously the staff not only matched him to the name of the young orphan born during the earthquake but told him that his biological father actually survived the quake and would be delirious with joy to be reunited with his son. His father, in fact, turned out to be the local high school baseball coach



**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**



Homework Club for grades 4-8 will meet Monday-Thursday next week.

Homework Club for Grades 1-3 will meet Monday and Wednesday



The next scrip order will be placed on October 19. Orders will be here on October 22. Please call Toni at 251-1261 ext. 158 to place an order.



**Begin Friday 3:00 Dismissal  
November 5th  
After School Care last pick up 4:30**



**Midterm Progress Reports  
Grades 1-8  
Available October 11th  
Grades will be emailed or accessed  
through FACTS Family Portal  
Look for email with more information**

and Leury’s grit and passion afforded him the opportunity to become a utility player helping the team win a national championship, where serendipitously American scouts were present and impressed with the depth and breadth of his skillset. Offering the young player a contract, he came to Texas and ultimately to the White Sox where he was officially adopted by Jerry Reinsdorf, the Jewish team owner, and where he remains the longest tenured player on the team. Giftedly versatile, a team leader and fan favorite, he plays every position besides pitcher and catcher and has contributed offensively to the team’s incredible run.

The legend of Leury is an inspiring tale of resilience and tenacity, the hallmarks of King David who himself battled a lion before the epic giant Goliath. The legend of Leury is the miraculous stuff of the Jewish narrative of a tiny people who have survived millennia despite the obstacles and tragedies which have beset us time and again. In the end, it teaches the lessons of determined grit, resilience and flexibility in training for many positions and possibilities. Congratulations to our tiny perseverant STARS, ...never stop chasing your dreams! We are richly proud of you and your tenacious spirit.



## By Rabbi Berel Wein Parshat Noach

The ten generations described in the Torah that lived from Adam until Noah produced only chaos and eventual destruction. There were a few individuals, such as Chanoch, who were moral and positive people. However, they had little, if any, influence on the general society in which they lived, or even one person who would follow them and their moral behavior. Our world, and all our societies are to a great extent, are copycat structures of those days. The general excuse for all immoral behavior from childhood is the expression "everyone is doing it". Somehow, this excuse, that everyone is doing it, removes responsibility from any individual who engages in any immoral activity. Thus, there develops a chain of almost never-ending failure, excuses, and willingness to accept bad behavior, as being a societal norm. Therefore, the ten generations that led up to the coming of the Great Flood sank into this morass of evil without realizing it. They were merely repeating the actions of the generations before them. And what they saw was everyone else behaving in a similar fashion. Evil and immoral behavior are very easily accepted in general and mass society. This notion explains Nazism in Germany and Stalinism in the Soviet Union. It also helps describe much of what is transpiring in Western society today. The slow erosion of morality, good behavior and godly faith is a constant challenge to all societies, and if no one stands up against it, those societies are eventually doomed to their own self-destruction.

In the eyes of Jewish scholarship and tradition, Noah is found wanting, not so much for his own personal failings after the Flood, but, rather, for his inability to stand against the evil in his society. He builds an ark and warns against the impending disaster that is about to befall the human race. However, he is unable to callout and identify evil for what it is, and to declare a viable alternative for human beings to adopt and follow. There is a feeling of hopelessness that seems to envelop him and his actions, and he fails in building a new world because of the belief that that "everyone does it" is a sufficient excuse for bad behavior and human immorality. It is because of this that Midrash and Jewish tradition generally view Noah and his righteousness with a fair degree of skepticism. His planting of the vineyard as his first project after emerging from the ark is an example of the acceptance of the idea that if everyone does it, then, somehow, it can be justified and even lauded. It is, therefore, almost painful to read in the Torah how Noah fails to remake the world after the Flood in a better image and a more positive vein. The Torah illustrates for us that great people can have great failings, and that lost opportunities will always come back to haunt us and frustrate human progress. We are all the descendants of Noah, and his character traits exist within our personal DNA even millennia later. We will have to wait for the arrival of Abraham and Sarah to put us on a better and more upward trajectory of belief and behavior.

Shabbat shalom

Rabbi Berel Wein



## Artist of the Week By Mrs. MaryEllen Fellegy

Congratulations to first grader Davey Grabovsky! After reading the book, "The Great Blueness and other predicaments" by Arnold Lobel, first graders were excited to get to work on an art project using two of the elements of design: line and color. First, a line was traced around each student's hand. Then, with a black sharpie marker, additional decorative lines were drawn inside the hand as well as from the fingertips to the edge of the paper. Finally, the colors of the rainbow were painted sequentially in the spaces between the fingers and thumb with watercolors. Please come see Davey's colorful hand next to the Ruth Nitsun EC Library!



# Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan

Rosh Chodesh Cheshvan initiated our annual Rosh Chodesh programming with both Elementary and Middle School. The fifth grade shared via Zoom an integrated project on the astronomy of the Moon phases, an art visual depiction of these phases as well as Judaic research on the first collective mitzva of establishing the lunar calendar and the uniqueness of each of the twelve Hebrew months. Special appreciation to Rabbi Birnhack who himself was initiated into our school programming for the creative rap song with which he engaged the students! Kudos to Mrs. Bick, Mr. Voskoboynik and Mrs. Fellegy for teaming on this integrated instruction and making Rosh Chodesh so meaningful for the students and their families with the research, and presentation skills central to our school culture.



Middle School kicked off its monthly international travel project of Chaverim Kul Yisrael with Naomi and Megan taking students to Poland where they enjoyed special locale cuisine including potato pancakes and stuffed cabbage. The girls presented a slideshow on the Jewish history of Poland followed by a cultural sports game during their advisory .



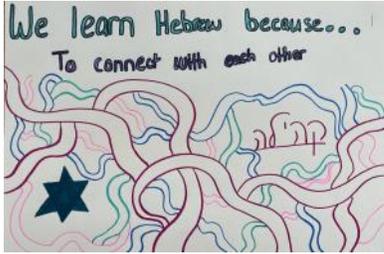
# Classroom News

## Hebrew Language

By Shoshi Yaari

Students in fifth grade and middle school Hebrew have been using a program called Ulpan Or. It was developed in Israel and is utilized in many of the Hebrew immersion programs for new immigrants.

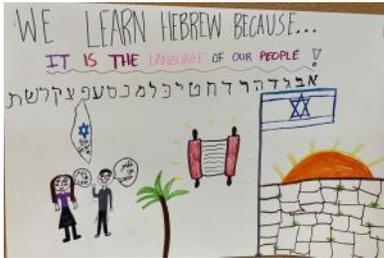
In the beginning of the school year, the middle schoolers discussed the importance of learning Hebrew and how, as Jews, we are connected to this holy ancient language. The students came up with many wonderful insights:



“We learn Hebrew because it is the language of our people.”

“We learn Hebrew so we can speak in Israel.”

“We learn Hebrew so we can all speak it when Mashiach comes.”



“We learn Hebrew to connect with each other.”

For Jews who don't live in Israel, Hebrew isn't just a second language, it really is a special connector that binds us across countries, communities, and generations!



In class, the students are working at their own pace on different levels. We come together for clarification and new information. We have discussed the differences between several verb forms and went over conjugation in present, past and future tenses.

This week we began learning how to write Hebrew letters as they appear in the Torah using calligraphy pens. We hope to complete the alphabet by spring! Moving forward, we will be writing and acting out dialogues, as well as creating our own cartoon strips in Hebrew.

# Classroom News

## 1st Grade General Studies

By Julie Vairo

First grade has had an amazing start to the school year! We have been learning lots and having fun! In reading we have just started rotations. Each student spends 15-20 minutes in each rotation during reading. Mrs. Z uses Orton Gillingham in her small group to work on phonics and phonemic awareness which gives students valuable word decoding skills. When students are with me in a small group we read texts at students' levels to further comprehension and vocabulary. During the other two rotations, students work on sight words, phonics, sentence building, and independent reading. This provides students with tailored instruction to meet them at their current levels.



In math we are working on number sense, addition, and subtraction. Students are using many strategies to help them solve addition and subtraction basic facts with accuracy. Some of the strategies we have used are touch points, number lines, and drawings. We use games and pencil paper activities to support students in their learning of these concepts.

Last month we spent time learning about grit, perseverance, and empathy. The kids wanted to do something kind and as a class we decided to write thank you cards to the teachers we see on a regular basis. The students chose the teachers and they worked in partner groups to create a card to thank the teacher they had chosen. The teachers that received cards were very appreciative!

Additionally we were able to hold Judaics class at Dina Hasten's sukkah where she read the children a wonderful story about Sukkot! The class was also able to enjoy a special treat and Morah Schusterman also joined us to share her valuable knowledge.

# Giving Tree Early Learning



## Katon

By Krysti Adams

What a unique experience it has been to get to know our littlest learners over the past months! See, not only are they the youngest of the school, but they are also learners born during a pandemic. They have never known a world where people are not wearing masks. They have never known a world without social distancing. Now they are in school, many for the first time, and are quickly adjusting to this new experience. Where we once saw tears and trepidation at drop off, we are seeing smiles and excitement. Where once we saw children engaging in mostly isolated play, we are seeing more parallel play.

The comment we hear most often from people who come into our classroom is that the class is “calm.” Our group is very calm. Beyond the naturally calm personalities they possess, they are engaged in learning through play and exploration constantly. They come into the room every morning like they have a plan for their day. Teachers set the provocations and invitations, but the children are very much in charge of what they learn. Over the last few months, the children have honed in on their activities of choice and personalities have emerged helping us to identify their learning styles. We can now anticipate which children are going to head straight to the sensory table or the blocks or dramatic play as soon as they arrive. As a collective, the children all LOVE paint. We can guarantee if there is paint out for exploration at a table that our friends will be eager to engage. With modeling, the children have learned to take turns with toys and activities building a sense of community within the classroom. They have started learning to count and build. They have gained confidence in their motor skills and their ability to communicate. However, the most important lesson they have learned so far is that they are safe in this space.

Our current exploration is centered around fall. The children have shown us they know their colors by calling out the colors they see in the leaves around the classroom. They have shown us fine motor control by taking acorns out of ice cube trays with tongs or with their fingers. They have shown problem solving skills as they tried to figure out how to make different patterns in playdough with pine cones, acorns, and leaves. We have enjoyed reading silly stories like I Know an Old Lady Who Swallowed Some Leaves and continue to enjoy various finger plays such as the poem “Five Little Leaves.” They also used their skills to determine that the child-sized broom in the dramatic play area would help them clean up some leaves that had fallen on our classroom floor. We are certain the natural curiosity of these toddlers will help guide us to many more adventures in the classroom.

