

THURSDAY NOTES



February 5, 2009

11 Shevat 5769

Beshalach

Shabbat Candle Lighting: 5:29 p.m.

Calendar

February

8th– PJC Dedication -New Early Childhood Pavilion 2:00 p.m.

9th- Tu B'Shevat Family Seder– 10:00-11:15 a.m.

20th– VIP/Grandparent's Day

21st– Auction/School Bar Mitzvah Celebration

Lerner School T-Shirts

Please have all t-shirt order forms turned in by tomorrow:

February 6th at noon.



The Coming Together of a Community

Reprinted from the Menorah

As most people know, right around the MLK weekend the Triangle area experienced some of the coldest and harshest weather our region has had for a long time. Temperatures dipped into the single digits for an extended period, we had over four inches of snow, schools were cancelled for several days and driving was difficult. During this same time the Lerner School, our community's Jewish Day School, suffered a terrible disaster, when a water pipe broke in several places throughout the original school building - flooding it entirely with several inches of water. Classrooms, offices and supply closets were filled with water, bulletin boards were ruined, computers were soaked to the core, hundreds and hundreds of books were destroyed, and years of teacher's resource materials were soaked beyond recognition.

As they say, however, in every cloud there is a silver lining - and so it was with this disaster. Within literally minutes of the damage being discovered by one of Lerner's teachers early on Sunday morning, parents, students, teachers, and community members started to show up on Cornwallis Road to offer a helping hand. By the late morning over 125 people had stopped by or called to see what could be done. People pitched in by wading through the standing water and carrying school items out of the classrooms into dry areas. Desks, bookcases, computers, supplies, student's possessions, teacher's personal items, etc. were carried out of the rooms one item at a time. Others went to bring in coffee and doughnuts to all of the volunteers, and later in the afternoon brought in pizza and soda for everyone. Never in my thirty years of being involved in Jewish education, have I seen such an unsolicited overwhelming response in such a quick fashion to a need such as this. People were assigned tasks and everyone went right to work without missing a beat. Some of the volunteers stayed until late into the night when everything was finally taken care of, despite being totally exhausted and wet.

As Head of School I received offers of help from so many of our community's leaders and institutions. The Jewish Federation, Beth-El Synagogue, our local Hillels, and many others called to offer us meeting space and help in whatever manner they could think of. Even non-Jewish institutions, such as Triangle Day School offered a helping hand. The leadership of Judea Reform stepped forward immediately and offered to allow the Lerner School to move all of the classes into the Judea educational complex and main building until things returned to normal, and that is where the Elementary students have been meeting for the past two weeks. I am not sure how we would have been able to have such a smooth transition from this overwhelming misfortune without Judea Reform's ongoing help and assistance on a daily basis.

I have had the opportunity to work in several Jewish communities during my years as a Jewish educator, including Boston, New York, Chicago, Atlanta, and south Florida, but I must admit that I was astonished by the way that our Durham-Chapel Hill Jewish community came together so quickly and in such an unselfish way to take care of things and of each other. The parents and students of the school have been terrific in the reaction to this unfortunate event, and have had an unbelievably wonderful attitude. The teachers and staff have not complained once despite all of the hardships created by this event – they have gone on with their teaching without missing a single lesson. And the Jewish community at large has been so wonderful.

When people send their children to the Lerner School, we welcome them into our Lerner family. Although I am relatively new to our community, having lived here only eight months, it is clear to me that our entire Durham-Chapel Hill Jewish community is indeed a wonderful extended family that looks after each other - and I feel blessed to be part of such a caring and amazing community. Rabbi Abraham Heschel once stated, "One is never alone doing a mitzvah – for that is where man and God meet." Clearly our coming together as a community during this difficult time for the Lerner School was a mitzvah in which no one was alone and God's presence was certainly felt.



Fly on the Wall

If you were a fly on the wall:

We have had an incredibly interesting two weeks. Here are a just a few of the highlights.

- Teachers set up temporary classrooms intent on making it as smooth a transition for their students as possible.
- Students arrived in their temporary class space and got to work as if it was just another day at school.
- Parents volunteered to man the door at the Judea Education Building on Mondays and Fridays.
- Parents scanned hundreds of soggy books and generated a spreadsheet to ease the reordering process.
- Parents worked with the 4th and 5th grade students as they prepared lunch for the visiting Chaverim.
- Early Childhood through 5th grade students enjoyed the stories of professional storyteller Louise Omoto Kessel.
- 3rd, 4th and 5th grade students participated in a storytelling workshop with Ms. Kessel.
- The Student Council met and formed committees to work on school wide projects.
- Classes prepared for their 100th day activities.

Parent/Teacher Conferences: Parent Teacher Conferences are scheduled for March 2nd. Please be sure to check your child's backpack for Conference sign-up sheets. The sign-up forms are due back to the office by Monday, February 9th. Confirmation of your conference time will be sent back to you by Wednesday, February 11th. If you are not able to meet with your child's teacher on March 2nd your child's report card will be sent home to you in his/her backpack on Tuesday, March 3rd.

-Mary

PAC CORNER

VIP/Grandparents Day:

Volunteers are needed to help on Friday, February 20th with VIP/Grandparents day. There will be two shifts that day:

- The first is from 8:00 till noon.
- The second is from noon till 3:00.

If you would like to help with setting up and cleaning up refreshment tables or greeting the Grandparents and VIP's, please email Miriam Cohen Franzen at mamele@gmail.com. If you would like to lend a portable photo printer that prints 4X6 photos or help stuff goody bags, please contact Rachel Bearman at rbearman@mebtel.net.

Tu B'Shevat Seder:

Volunteers are needed for set up for the school-wide Tu B'shevat Seder on Mon. Feb 9th, right after drop off in the morning. Please contact Jsbeetham@bellsouth.net to help.

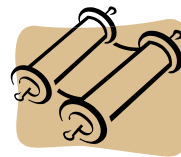
Are you an NPR Supporter?



NPR offers a wonderful public relations opportunity to non-profits whose members support NPR – free on-air sponsorship announcements. This is an easy way to support The Lerner School! Please let us know if you plan to donate to WUNC's spring fundraiser and would like your gift to benefit Lerner as well. Email or call before you make a pledge or send a check: 919-286-5517 or develop@lernerschool.org

Parshat Beshalach

Prepared by: Nancy Reuben Greenfield



בשלח

Moses leads the Israelites across the Sea of Reeds (the Red Sea) to safety while Pharaoh's army drowns in pursuit. After reaching the other shore the Israelites, led by Miriam, sing praises to God. In response to the complaints of the Israelites about a lack of food and water, God provides them with manna. At the end of the portion they are attacked from behind by Amalek and his army.

From My Jewish Learning
www.myjewishlearning.com

Each week we will choose our d'var (explanation) from one of the following websites:

Torah Hayim	(Reform)	www.urj.org
Divrei Torah	(Reconstructionist)	www.jrf.org
Torah Sparks	(Conservative)	www.uscj.org
Orthodox Union	(Orthodox)	www.ou.org



2008-2009 Annual Fund—Haven't pledged yet?

Thank you to the 70% of Lerner School families who have helped us raise \$83,000 toward our goal of \$110,000 in this year's Annual Fund.

Lerner has a proud tradition of 100% parent participation in the Annual Fund. We still need the support of EVERY FAMILY to make this year's Annual Fund a success.

Every gift is important, so...

**Do your part and
make your pledge today!**

Visit our website at www.lernerschool.org to donate online, or drop off a check at the front desk.

Mishloach Manot:

Purim is almost here! Send Mishloach Manot and holiday greetings to friends and family while supporting the Lerner School's annual fundraiser. Gift bags with hamantaschen and other treats are available for local delivery (\$18) or shipment in the US (\$25). Contact the Lerner School (286-5517 or shalom@lernerschool.org) by **February 13** to place your order!



Student Council

The Student Council has been meeting for the past few weeks and have been discussing several ideas for the school:

- Israeli Dancing
- Recycling

Further information will be shared with everybody as soon as possible.

Thank you,

Lerner School Student Council

Auction—More great items to bid on!!

Tutors: Two 1-Hr Sessions with Sabina Sager! 4th-12th grade mathematics and SAT/GRE prep & Three 1-Hr Sessions with Marcy Ollis, Reading Specialist

Children's Items: Little Gym birthday party, Spring Break Soccer Camp at Duke, One Week of Filmmaking Summer Camp, & One Week of Horseback Riding Lessons at Quail Roost

Painting by Internationally Renowned Artist Elizabeth Goldman

Castle Play (2009; mixed media on paper, 32" X 24") is a continuation of a series of abstract drawings and paintings that explore Goldman's recollections of her early childhood experiences in Aberdeen, Scotland during WWII, a city subjected to intensive bombing. Earlier works in this series reflect a child's perception of the violence of war. *Castle Play* expresses an entirely different aspect of these years, summers in the safety of the Scottish Highlands where she and her brother explored a fairyland of dense forests and deserted castles.

Have additional items to donate?: please contact Caitlin Pitt 294-6370, 914-844-7460 or caitlinpitt1@gmail.com OR Tal Lewin Wittle at 484-9479, 475-3337 or tal@wittle.net

Please RSVP by Friday, February 13, 2009

Send or bring in your RSVP card, call Lerner (919-286-5517) or register online at www.lernerschool.org

Need a sitter for the Auction??

Bring your child(ren) to the **Havdalah Pajama Party** at Judea Reform Education Building! Hosted by our own DRTY teens (Durham Regional Temple Youth)! \$25 per child, 6:00 p.m. – 11:00 p.m.

**It's the best ticket in town!
We're going to party like it's... 2009!!!**

Elementary Building Update



The ED Building continues to be worked on by our reconstruction contractor. Great progress is being made and the painting, ceiling work, carpets, plumbing repairs, and window treatments are nearing completion. We are still waiting for a few more items to be delivered in order to finish everything up. We hope to be back into our building within the next week or so. We will keep you informed as more information is available.

Volunteers Needed!

We are in need of a few volunteers who are willing to help look up prices for books we need to replace due to the loss from the flood. This job can be done at home on your computer. Please call the office if this is something you might be able to help with.