

May 22, 2009

210-302-6900 - www.eka-sa.org

Iyar 28, 5769

Parasha: Bamidbar

Candle Lighting 8:06 pm

May 2009		
25	M	Memorial Day – No School
27	W	Annual Board Meeting (see below)
27-28	W-Th	Middle School Exams
28	Th	Mensch Breakfast March/April/May 7:50 am
29	F	Shavuot – No School
June 2009		
1-2	M-T	Middle School Exams
3	W	Talent Show 2:00 pm
4	Th	Last Day of School 8 th Grade Graduation 9:30 am

EKA Summer Schedule:

June 8 – June 12 8:30am – 4pm
June 15 – July 3 Office Closed
 July 7 – July 31 10am – 2pm
 August 3 – August 18 8:30am – 4pm
August 19 First Day of School

End of the Year Teachers Gifts

Please don't forget to drop off a check to the office for teacher's gifts. PIE is looking for 100% family participation.

**8TH GRADE GRADUATION WILL BE HELD IN THE AUDITORIUM
ON JUNE 4 AT 9:30AM**



by William Kavy, 1st Grade



by Noa Barenblat 6th Grade

PARENTS AND STAFF:

COME HEAR OUR STATE OF THE SCHOOL ADDRESS!

COME CELEBRATE THE SCOTTS' ACCOMPLISHMENTS!

COME HAVE SOME YUMMY DESSERTS!

WEDNESDAY, MAY 27 AT 7:00 PM IN THE FISHER BOARD ROOM

EKA Board of Trustees Annual Meeting

Please RSVP to Sigal by Tuesday

Message from the Head of School

This week we read *Parashat Bamidbar*, the first parsha of the Book of *Bamidbar*, as we celebrate the last Shabbat of the school year. In some ways it parallels the beginning of the school year which fairly closely coincides with the ending cycle of reading the Torah on *Simchat Torah*. The school cycle, like learning, never stops but continues to revolve upon itself.

We learn that when *B'nai Yisrael* was camping in the desert the twelve tribes were placed at each point of the compass with the *Aron HaKodesh* in the middle. Would it not have been more respectful to put the Torah in the front of everyone?

It's placement was not mere coincidence but symbolic of the Torah being accessible to all, not just to those tribes in the front. The greatness of the Torah is that everyone can learn on his own level; two people can learn the same *Pasuk* (verse) but derive two (or more!) different meanings.

At the Passover Seder the Haggadah speaks of four sons. The Brisker Rav says that this shows that Torah can be taught on many different levels. In the Tractate of *Brachot* in the Talmud it tells us that when Rabbi Eliezer ben Azaryah was appointed to replace Rabban Gamliel, 100's of seats were added to the Yeshiva. Rabban Gamliel only accepted the top students to his Yeshiva while Rabbi Eliezer ben Azaryah felt everyone should be allowed to learn. Perhaps this is why this particular paragraph in the Haggadah is mentioned before the Four Sons!

I mentioned before about the *Aron HaKodesh* being in the middle of the camp, not the front. This can be likened to a school where *all* learning should be accessible to *all* students, not just to those in the front, not just to the top students, and this should be the philosophy of our school, to meet the needs of all students.

A simple task? Absolutely not! Think of what we as parents go through trying to find something that will keep all of our children occupied and interested on a Sunday afternoon, rainy day, or a family trip. Sometimes we'll find that one thing that occupies their interest for that day, but hour after hour, day after day? Speaking personally, it is truly a challenge!

However, our faculty is dedicated and committed to *your* children, of maximizing learning experiences so that each child can be challenged on his or her own level. Every student at the EKA is smart; they are just smart in different ways. For those who excel with artistic intelligence, we have a fabulous art program and our ceilings have been covered with reproductions of the Masters. For those with musical intelligence, our children learn instrumentation, rhythm, and choral harmony. For the linguistic and verbal intelligence, we have second language (Hebrew) and third language (Aramaic!) learning, an Oratory Contest and Spelling Bee. For the interpersonal or intrapersonal learner, we have the Knesset and Headmaster's Roundtable experience, and for those with mathematical intelligence we offer Algebra and Geometry in Middle School. And this year for the first time, for those who have kinesthetic intelligence, we provided an after-school sports program. This is but a *very* small list of the formal and informal experiences we offer at the EKA.

Our teachers work around the clock, even around the year, to provide a challenging and dynamic educational experience. We should continue to express our appreciation to each and every one of them for their contribution to our children's growth. Eleanor Kolitz Academy will continue to lead the way and make available the best Jewish and General Studies education possible. Next week, I will review what we have accomplished over the past five years for the benefit of your children. It is a list of which we can all be proud and reflects a school that makes us even prouder.

Shabbat Shalom, Robert A. Scott, Head of School

Senior Class Hears Lectures From Rabbis Chaim Block And Michael Sunshine

The 8th-graders continued their Comparative Denominations course this week, as Chabad's Rabbi Chaim Block, and Congregation Rodfei Sholom's Rabbi Michael Sunshine spoke about the history and core beliefs of the Chabad-Lubavitch- and Orthodox movements, respectively. The fourth and final presentation will be on Tuesday, May 26, by Temple Beth-El's Rabbi Barry H. D. Block, on Reform Judaism.

Yom Yerushalayim

At Kabbalat Shabbat today, our students learned of the importance of the holy city of Jerusalem and its centrality in the lives of the Jewish People. The article below was written by Rabbi Howard Wolk, the founding Rabbi of Congregation Shaare Tefilla of Dallas TX, and reprinted with permission.

Today, May 22, the 28th of *Iyar*, we will celebrate “*Yom Ichud Yerushalayim – Jerusalem Reunification Day.*” The day marks the 42nd anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem during the 1967 Six-Day War.

We recite *Hallel*, declaring our thanksgiving to *Hashem* for returning to us our holiest of places. During the Six Day War, Rav Zvi Yehuda Kook called the soldiers of the IDF *Tzivot Hashem – the Legions of the Almighty.*

For 2,000 years Jews exclaimed – *L’Shana Ha’bah’ah b’Yerushalayim – Next Year in Jerusalem.* For most of those Jews it was a prayer, a hope, a dream, but an unfulfilled dream. For us, we hop a plane and twelve hours or so later we are standing at the Western Wall.

As Gen. Moshe Dayan said upon entering the Wall area in 1967, “We have returned to our holiest of places, never to leave it.”

Information about The 1967 War

The war that began on June 5, 1967, followed a long period of tension between Israel and its Arab neighbors. The Syrian Army shelled Israel’s northern border settlements. General Gamal Abdul Nasser, the Egyptian leader, closed the Straits of Tiran to ships sailing to and from the Israeli port of Eilat. At the same time, Egypt also signed mutual defense pacts with Jordan and Iraq.

Israel was surrounded by an Arab force of a quarter of a million troops, over 2,000 tanks, and by 700 fighter and bomber planes.

In accordance with article 51 of the UN Charter, Israel had stated more than once that it would consider an Egyptian blockade an act of war, entitling it to use force in self-defense. Nevertheless, Israel tried to resolve the crisis through diplomatic channels. Its leaders decided on a waiting period so that the United Nations, which had condemned Egypt’s blockade, could work for its cancellation.

On June 5th, when it became clear that resolving the crisis through diplomacy would fail, the Israel Air Force launched an assault to destroy the Egyptian Air Force and its landing fields. The Southern Command Forces also moved against the large number of Egyptian troops gathered in the Sinai Desert. On the second day of fighting, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip.

On that same morning of June 5th, the Israeli Government, through the chief UN observer, had informed Jordan’s King Hussein that Israel did not wish to start a war with his country; if the Israel-Jordan border stayed quiet, his kingdom would not be touched. Hussein, however, ignored this call for peace. His forces began shelling Israel, with the heaviest bombing directed toward Jerusalem. Israel’s forces counterattacked and in three days conquered the entire West Bank (Judea and Samaria), as well as East Jerusalem. On June 7th, the Israeli flag was raised over the Temple Mount and the Western Wall was once again in Jewish hands.

Also on June 7th, Israel’s Navy sailed from the Gulf of Eilat and seized Sharem-el-Sheikh, reopening the blockaded Straits of Tiran. On the fourth day of fighting in the Mitla region, involving almost 1,000 tanks in one of the largest battles in the history of armored warfare, Israel declared a decisive victory. The Israeli flag was raised on the banks of the Suez Canal.

A few months later, the rebuilding of the Old City as well as new sections of East Jerusalem had begun.

Jerusalem Facts

- The only time that Jerusalem was divided into two separate parts with separate Jewish and Arab areas was between 1948 and 1967 when Jordan occupied the eastern part of the city, expelled all Jewish residents, and destroyed much of the ancient Jewish quarter.
- 1000 B.C.E. – King David made Jerusalem the capital of Israel and brought the Ark of the Covenant to the city.
- There has been a continuous Jewish presence in the city ever since, despite a dozen invasions and conquests. Jews have been the largest ethnic and religious community in Jerusalem since at least 1840 C.E., the majority population for more than 130 years. Soon after Israel’s rebirth in 1948, Jerusalem was rededicated as its capital.

- Jerusalem is the only city in the world that is the capital of the same city (Israel) inhabited by the same people (the Jewish people) worshipping the same G-d and speaking the same language (Hebrew) as they did 3,000 years ago.
- The first Temple was built by King Solomon 480 years after the Exodus.
- It was destroyed on Tisha B'Av in 586 B.C.E. by the Babylonians.
- The Second Temple was built in 516 B.C.E.
- The Story of Hanukah happened in 164 B.C.E.
- The Second Temple was destroyed in 70 C.E. by the Romans.
- The Bar-Kochba revolt against Rome was 132-135 C.E.

D'var Torah – Parashat Bamidbar

Parshat Bamidbar begins with a census of the Jewish people. We might think this "reduces everyone to a number." But actually the census teaches that every Jew is important. The Kabbalists point out that just as 600,000 Jewish souls stood at Mount Sinai, **so too** there are 600,000 letters in the Torah (including the white spaces between letters). And just as a Torah scroll is invalid if even a single letter is missing, so too the Jewish people need everyone working together.

Yet if every Jew is so important, why does this week's parsha go on to describe the special role for the tribe of Levi? Isn't that discriminatory? Just by virtue of birth, is a Levite inherently "better" than a non-Levite?

In truth, everyone is equally important. Sure, some people are born smarter, and some with more talent in one area or another. But that doesn't make that person any "better."

The key to living in harmony is that everyone fulfills his/her own capability, and is accepting of others as equally valuable.

The story is told of the great sage of Jerusalem, Rabbi Shlomo Zalman Auerbach. One evening he asked his congregation to wait to begin prayers until the street sweeper had arrived. Rabbi Auerbach explained: "This man is totally devoted to beautifying the streets of Jerusalem. I only wish that my own work would be performed with such pure intentions!"

So before we look down on another person, let's remember that every human being has an important contribution to make. And in life, the only thing we truly earn is our own good name.

Rabbi Shraga Simmons, Yeshivat Aish HaTorah

Mensch of the Month

On **Thursday, May 28th**, students in Grades 1 – 5 who have received Mensch of the Month Certificates for the months of March, April and May are invited to have breakfast at 7:50am with Mr. Scott, the Head of School. Middle School students will join him for a special treat during lunch.

The students listed below have all received the Mensch of the Month award for **May**;

1st Grade: Evan Katzman, William Kavy
2nd Grade: Michael Blaess, Tamar Cohen
3rd Grade: Phillip Kaplan, Lee Kaplan
4th Grade: Evan Goldberg, Chaya Marrus
5th Grade: Shaina Weisberg, Grace Goldstein
Middle School: Ariella Shapiro, Noa Barenblat, Madeline Miller, Henry Stolow, Yonaton Cohen, Ahuva Wright

April Mensches

1st Grade: Talia Delambre
3rd Grade: Ilan Sonsino, John Friedberg, Noah Furman, Ethan Weingart
4th Grade: Joseph Klein, Tamar Furman

March Mensches

1st Grade: Evan Katzman
2nd Grade: Olivia Wyker
3rd Grade: Julia Butnaru, Devorah Block
4th Grade: Ari Rotenberg
5th Grade: Grace Goldstein, Shayna Brookman
Middle School: Shayna Block, Madeline Miller, Henry Stolow, Ahuva Wright

End-Of-Year Talent Showcase

The EKA's End-of-Year Talent Showcase will be held on Wednesday June 3rd at 2:00pm. All parents are invited to join us in the Holzman Auditorium. Students in 2nd – 8th Grades are *encouraged* to participate and acts are limited to two minutes. Acts with two or more students may request additional time. **All interested students must audition (Monday, June 1st @ 3:45pm)**. The acts auditioned and the music used must be the same as those performed at the talent show. **Music from a source that carries a *Parental Advisory-Explicit Content Label* may not be used. Auditions will be announced soon!** For info, call Nancy Gold at 302-6906.

Yearbooks for Sale

The 2009 yearbooks are in the office. See a sample in the display case. You will be getting a DVD if you bought a yearbook. We also have a limited number of 2006, 2007 and 2008 yearbooks for sale. If you or someone you know would like a previous year's yearbook please see Sigal.

The cost – \$40.00, the memories – priceless!

8th Grade Ice Cream Sales

Every Wednesday at lunch the incoming 8th grade class will be selling ice cream to start their fundraising for the trip to Israel. Remember to send a \$1.00 with your child on Wednesdays.

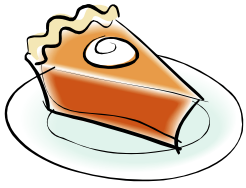


Chesed Hours Opportunities

Gina and Nim Meishar have contacted the San Antonio Food Bank about doing Chesed Hours there. The Food Bank will assign a shift from 6-9pm for groups of 15 or more. If you are interested in participating please contact the Meishars at 884-9146 or gxm@sbcglobal.net.

OR

Beldon Library needs students Grades 4 and older to help with the inventory and straighten books. Call Marlene Raynolds 302-6805 for information.



PIE

Take a Little Piece of the Pie!!

Box Tops for Education

Please turn in all remaining box tops for Education by the end of the year!! We have one last submission date on June 5th and the school can still receive funds! Please search your cupboards and bring in any discovered box tops!

End of the Year Teachers Gifts

The end of the year is rapidly approaching, and soon we will be saying goodbye to the teachers and staff at the EKA.

We often think our children have one “primary” teacher that touches their lives each day. In reality, the entire faculty (Hebrew, Judaics, Music, PE, Computer Lab, Science and Art) compliment your child’s educational experience. There really is a team effort orchestrated on the children’s behalf every day.

Along with PIE, the room parents for each class are organizing a meaningful expression of thanks and gratitude for each teacher. We will be collecting donations in order to purchase gift cards from retail establishments tailored specifically to the teachers’ interests or requests. We hope as this busy school year comes to a close this will save each of you time, effort and money in gathering individual gifts for your child’s teachers. By combining our efforts and our money, we will be able to purchase gift cards that will be a reflection of their significance in our children’s lives.

We are hoping for 100% participation from our students and request that each one contribute a suggested amount of \$20 per student. However, this is a suggested amount and any donation is welcome and every child will be given equal credit. Please keep in mind each class will be contributing for approximately 6 to 8 teachers. PIE will purchase gifts for the administrators and staff members. The money will be collected over the next 2 weeks in the EKA office by Sigal. Please make your checks payable to PIE. The deadline will be May 28th.

On behalf of PIE and each class room parent, we would like to thank you for your continued support and participation in our school. It is your involvement and recognition of the efforts and sacrifices made by our teachers and staff which helps create and enrich our children’s educational experience.

BE A JCC Maccabi Games® HOST FAMILY!
August 9-14, 2009

We are reaching out to the Jewish community to ask that you open your hearts and homes to visiting Jewish Athletes this summer! Be one of the more than 300 local Jewish families who will extend a warm welcome to 700 visiting JCC Maccabi Games® athletes from across North America and around the world.

Being a host family is a wonderful way to be a part of the JCC Maccabi Games® experience. Many past host families have developed long-lasting friendships with their visiting athletes and their families. The entire San Antonio Jewish community is needed to help make sure there are enough homes for every athlete.

Register as a Host Family by downloading a registration form from our website at www.jccsanantonio.org/maccabi09! In addition to much more information about the JCC Maccabi Games experience, you can also find out which delegations will be visiting in case you know someone from that city.

Being a host family isn't hard at all. Families with children of all ages will enjoy being a part of the Games as a Host Family. Just a few things you should know:

- If you have a Jewish home in San Antonio or the surrounding area, we NEED you Aug. 9-14!
- Each host family is asked to host a minimum of two (2) visiting athletes providing each athlete with reasonable and separate sleeping accommodations. We will make air mattresses available if needed.
- Hosts are asked to provide a light breakfast each morning and dinner Sunday through Tuesday. We will provide the athletes with lunches each day.
- While it's not a requirement, we will need several kosher homes for kosher athletes, please let us know if yours is a kosher home.
- For your convenience, we will have three transportation hubs where host families may drop off and pick up athletes: These hubs are: the JCC, Trinity University and Concordia Lutheran Church.
- Host families will be provided with the week's schedule at an orientation in advance of athletes' arrival.
- There will be planned events each night of the week except Tuesday evening which is designated as Host Family Night. Host families are encouraged to get together with other host families and plan an evening of fun for the athletes.
- Being a Host Family is very rewarding for both the hosts and the athletes! Don't miss out on this gratifying experience!

Register TODAY as a Host Family!

Call Cathy Pottorf at 302-6870 or download the registration form
from our website at www.jccsanantonio.org/maccabi09!

Every Jewish home is needed! We hope we can't count on yours!

שַׁבּוּוֹת

SHAVUOT

**SHAVUOT AFTERNOON FAMILY SERVICE
AND ICE CREAM PARTY**

Friday, May 29th

5:00 - 6:00 p.m. at Chabad



- **Family Holiday Service in English & Hebrew**
- **Hear the Ten Commandments read from the Torah**
- **Special opportunity to see a real Torah scroll up close**
 - **Kosher Ice Cream Party for all ages**
 - **Special raffle for all children in attendance**

You don't want to miss this fun event!!!

No charge! No hassle! Just Show Up!!!

SHAVUOT COMMUNITY DINNER

Thursday, May 28th
at the Chabad Center

8:00 pm Holiday Services

8:45 pm Delicious Holiday Dinner

Cost: \$12 Adults . \$6.00 children under 12

Please RSVP to Chabad at 492-1085



Followed by **ALL NIGHT TORAH STUDY**

Join us as we delve into this year's Tikkun Leil Shavuot Torah study topic:

MIDRASHIC SELECTIONS OF THE BABYLONIAN TALMUD



Taught by Rabbis Chaim Block & Yossi Marrus

Study begins at 11:00 p.m.

Shacharit Services at 5:45 a.m.

Torah Reading & Ten Commandments at 7:00 a.m.

No charge!