

This issue of the Kol-Kadima is dedicated to the memory of **Leah Ellen Marks**. Last Friday, December 7, four young people were in a car accident. The driver swerved to avoid hitting an animal on the road, thus causing the accident. The driver was fine, one passenger was immediately killed, and another passenger had to have an arm amputated. Leah was in critical condition. She had her life support removed on Thursday, Dec 13. Leah was a junior in high school and she lived in Birmingham, Alabama. She was a member of Magic City, BBYO. Many Memphis teens knew her well.

Schedule of Events:

Dec. 16 Keshar-Konnection, Session 3: "The Memory of Holocaust," Sunday, 11:00–12:45. This session will include a group workshop, and a movie followed by a discussion.

Dec 16 The School's dinner in Honor of Jack Belz 80th Birthday, 6:00 Peabody Hotel. Mazal Tov!!

Dec. 17–21 Exam week's schedule:

- Monday through Friday, school starts at 8:10
- Monday school ends at 3:15
- Tuesday & Wednesday school ends at 2:40
- Thursday & Friday school ends at 11:30
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Dec. 21 After the last exam on Friday we will treat the students with a fun day at Memphis Paintball Park. We will be leaving school at 11:30 and returning to MJHS at 2:30. Please fill it out the permission slip and send it back with your child.

Past Week Events:

On **Tuesday** afternoon we had the student Hanukkah party. The students planed this party and put it all together on their own. They split up to 4 cooking teams at 4 different homes and fixed a 4 course dinner.

The Gellman Crew (Logan Belz, Jake and Jessica) made a delicious sweet potato and celery soup. It was quite an experience to watch them cook. **The Malkin Crew** (Elana, Monte, Parker, Courtney and Kevin) prepared unbelievable colorful salads with dips and great dressings. **The Bierman Crew** (Logan, Ethan, David and Alex) made a real fancy Italian Fettuccini.

The Wank Crew (Morgan, Hannah, Arielle and Seth) made a variety of desserts, 2 kinds of cookies, and a chocolate cake.

After only one hour of preparation we gathered at the Biermans for Hanukkah Candle Lighting, followed by dinner, a story and a Divar Torah.

On **Thursday**, during Town Hall, the Assistant District Attorney for Juvenile Court, **Ms. Terre Fratesi** spoke on *Cyber Felony & Consequences*. See story on page 2.

Todah Raba

- To the Bierman Family for hosting the Student Hanukkah party on Tuesday night.
- To Logan Bierman for taking responsibility on organizing this event.
- To Logan Belz for doing the shopping.
- To The Malkins for offering their kitchen to one of the cooking teams.
- To Shlomit Gellman for offering their kitchen to another cooking team.
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- **Mazal Toy** to Mrs. Hudson on her Birthday, Dec 17th.

This week's Parasha Vayigash by Ethan Trotz

This week, we learn that Joseph could no longer control his emotions and ordered everyone but his brothers to leave the room. Joseph told his brothers that he was Joseph, and asked them whether his father was still alive, but his brothers were too frightened to answer him. Joseph recounted how for two years there had been famine in the land, but there would be five more years without harvests. But God had sent him before them to save them for a great deliverance, so it was not they who sent him to Egypt, but God, who had made him ruler over all Egypt. Joseph thus directed them to go quickly to his father and convey that God had made him lord of all Egypt and his father should come down to live in the land of Goshen and Joseph would sustain him for the five years of famine.

The brothers went to their father Jacob in Canaan and told him that Joseph was still alive and ruled over Egypt, but he did not believe them. They told him what Joseph had said, and when Jacob saw the wagons that Joseph had sent, Jacob revived and said that he would go to see Joseph before he died. Joseph set Jacob before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh.

This week's Parsha and its actuality

This week I read the following essay by Rabbi Avi Weiss. Since I find it to be very relevant and important, I decided to bring it in sharper analysis.

What makes Yosef (Joseph) so keen on settling his families in a suburb of Egypt--a place called Goshen? Goshen seems so attractive that it even appears that the assurance of living in Goshen helps Jacob agree to leave his home and travel to Egypt.

Isaac Arama suggests that Goshen was not a special place. As is the case with many attractive areas, its importance lies in its location-- far from the capital of Egypt. In the center of the politics of the Egyptian empire, one could easily fall prey to the intrigues and contradictions inherent in the Egyptian political system. Yosef and his father Jacob understood the appeal of remaining far away from such a place.

The Netziv, (R. Naftali Zvi Yehudah of Berlin), sees it differently. For him, living in Goshen was a way in which Jacob's family could have the opportunity to build a life of holiness.

The fundamental difference between these approaches is the following: Arama sees Goshen as a way to distance oneself from a negative--from the Egyptian political scene. Goshen in of itself had nothing positive to offer. Its only attraction was what it was not; the center of Egyptian life. Netziv disagrees. Goshen had something positive to offer. It was there that the infrastructure of an autonomous sovereign people could be developed.

My Rabbi in Chumash, Nehama Leibowitz notes that, as is often the case, the background of these commentators contributes to the differing views presented here. Arama lived in fifteenth century Spain and was involved in the Spanish political system. He knew the possible corruption of political office and understood how Jacob would have wanted to keep his family far from the center of political life.

Netziv, whose life was meshed with the return to Zion, saw Goshen as a move towards realizing a dream: the building of a state within a state, as a hopeful step towards returning to Israel and developing our national homeland.

But as Nehama remarks, in spite of all of Yosef's endeavors to prevent them settling down permanently in the land and becoming enmeshed in the attractions of the surrounding society, they forgot the temporary nature of their sojourn in Egypt. The last verse of our portion alludes to the dangers of assimilation when it states, 'and Israel settled in the land of Egypt and in the land of Goshen; they acquired holdings therein and were fruitful and increased greatly in numbers.' “

This is an important message for Diaspora Jewry today:

No matter how developed and sophisticated we are, the dangers of assimilation exist when we are living under the rule of a society that is not Jewish. To be sure, individuals may maintain their Jewish identity in the exile; but for the community of Israel, our destiny lies not in 'Goshens' of this world, not in Egypt but in a place where Judaism is the main compass, in the land of Israel.

Cyber Felony & Consequences

During Town Hall, Assistant District Attorney and lead prosecutor for Juvenile Court, Ms. Terre Fratesi spoke with us and answered questions.

Ms. Fratesi has been the juvenile court division leader since January 2001 and has been assigned to her office's juvenile court division since she began her career as a prosecutor in 1993. Since she has been the juvenile court division leader, she has taken an active role in educating the community about the dangers of juvenile sexual assault, gang membership and dropping out of school. Ms. Fratesi is a frequent speaker in her community on issues of juvenile justice, as well as a frequent instructor at the Shelby County Sheriff's Training Academy.

Her topic was 'Cyber Safety for Minors.' She explained legal consequences, both immediate and long term, for infractions involving sexual exploitation of a minor (anyone under 18 years old) over the internet. Almost all such infractions involving minors are felonies. Consequences include, but are not limited to, significant jail time, heavy fines, forfeiture of property, as well as diminished employment opportunities, required sexual offender registry, and community monitoring for life.

What really hit home was her discussion of the moral and ethical consequences. "Material on the internet or other electronic media NEVER goes away." It remains an embarrassment for self, family, faith, and community. The Internet is a powerful tool. What we do now and the decisions we make, as teens, will affect us the rest of our lives. Facebook and other such social networking sites, videos, and even emails are permanent records and define our character. Background searches required for any professional career will only get more intrusive in the coming years, and the job market is far too competitive to overlook such transgressions. Would-be employers can and will access such information, and use it to weed out candidates for employment. Think first so you have no regrets later.

The law is there to protect us, but our first line of defense is knowledge. Ignorance is no excuse when you are standing in a courtroom charged with a felony.