

### Schedule of Events

Monday Feb 4: 7:15-8:30 - All parents are invited to a special get together at the school, to celebrate our success with SACS.

Following the celebration, Dr. Beebe will address his program "Learning & Study Skills for Teenagers"

Friday Feb 8: A special Kabbalat-Shabbat **Challah baking experience** at the school. Students and Staff will get to prepare a Challah for Shabbat and take it home with them to for Shabbat (bake it at home after school). Please send \$3 with your children.

### Past Week Events

Sunday Jan 27: Keshet-Konnections 4 was lots of fun. Over 30 teens enjoyed the **Israeli Music and Food Festival**. Mrs. Sharon Rubinstien taught some Israeli songs, and a great Yemenite melody with its cool movements. Ofir from Temple Israel gave a wonderful presentation on the development of Israeli music over the past 60 years. Then they all prepared an authentic Israeli lunch, which included: Falafel, Hummus, Tehina, Israeli Salad, Malawach and sauces. It was delicious.

See more details in next week's addition of the Hebrew Watchmen, by Karen Stein a Keshet-Konnectins board member.

Monday Jan 28 – Our students were honored to walk on the court at the Grizzlies-Mavericks game Monday night. We didn't get to 'high-5' the players this time and the game was not what we expected from the Grizzlies after being inspired by our students. But it was still nice.

### Todah Raba

To Ms. Lipson and Ms. Malkin for driving students to the JCC on Wednesday.

Mazal-Tov To **Ethan Trotz** on his up coming birthday next Tuesday.

### Educational corner by Mr. Kevin McLellan

Starting this week we will host one of our faculty members as a guest writer in the educational corner.

It will be a good opportunity to get to know our teachers a little better and to enjoy their shared thought. This week we are hosting Mr. McLellan who is the 10<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher:

#### Communication

Communication is part of everyday life. We communicate constantly ....sometimes verbally, sometimes using the written word, sometimes silently. But how many of us do it well? The first step is taking pride in our communications. It's easier when we remember that successful communication helps us to connect with others. 'Communication' and 'community' are pretty similar, right?

Next, notice others who speak and write effectively, and learn from good examples. Whether we are making a point, sharing a feeling, expressing an opinion, or asking a question, communicating sincerely is a reward in itself. We enrich our lives when we practice the art of communicating. So, what's on your mind!?!?

*Kevin McLellan, Eng Two Instructor*

### Special message - Super Bowl and Us

How could we not mention the coming Super Bowl in our newsletter?

**The Super Bowl teaches the world a great Jewish lesson -- that destiny can rest in the hands of one person.** By Cliff Alsberg

It is nothing less than a national holiday, of course -- as it has been since its inception some 35 years ago. And like all other fervent national holidays, the spectacle of the "ritual of January" has its attendant high priests, pageantry, color, legendary heroes, millions of adoring disciples and sagacious commentators.

All this can teach us some valuable lessons about competition, about what the world deems "important," and, most importantly, about ourselves.

What are we individually capable of? What could we really accomplish if we absolutely had to? If there was

no one else around to get the job done?

Lets focus on the next-to-impossible accomplishments an improbable athlete by the name of Kurt Warner made a few years ago. He was the second string quarterback of the St. Louis Rams who no one thought of as being particularly great. He was a young man who began his football career by tossing rolls of toilet paper around an Iowa supermarket. But when St. Louis' \$16 million starting quarterback was injured during pre-season, along came Kurt Warner to emerge as a superstar.

Greatness can come from anywhere. Kurt played hard and he believed in himself. Now he's the single most valuable football player on planet Earth.

### **BELIEVE YOU CAN AND YOU WILL**

*I always believed in myself ... There was never a doubt that if I ever got the opportunity, that I could be successful. I continued to believe that through the times I worked in the supermarket and the times I played in Arena Football. I never lost sight of that. To me, that's what it's all about -- believing in yourself, waiting for that opportunity and then seizing it when it comes.*

In these words, he states a powerful, central Jewish theme: The Almighty created each and every one of us with unique gifts, talents and insights. Any one of us is capable of greatness. And the measure of our potential for greatness very often comes down to the ability to recognize an opportunity and seize it.

God told the prophet Samuel to go to Jesse's home to anoint the next king of Israel. After going through all of Jesse's sons and finding none fitting, he finally approached the shy, improbable young lad named David who was tending his father's flock out in the field. No one imagined he could be a leader.

In the Purim story, Mordechai is distraught when -- out of thousands of the most beautiful women in the Persian Empire -- his beloved Esther is taken by King Achashverosh to become Queen. But then it became clear that Esther was in this position for no less a task than saving the Jewish people from annihilation. An unlikely candidate? Esther, at the risk of her very life, seized the opportunity and saved the day.

Super Bowl Sunday gave the world a stunning lesson in personal achievement against all odds.”

### **Parshat Mishpatim summary by Courtney Thomas**

This week's Torah reading, Mishpatim, lists many of the damage and interpersonal laws:

Some of the laws given are those concerning manslaughter and murder, kidnapping and stealing, injuring or cursing a parent, personal injury or damages, and killing or injuring slaves.

The nation is also given laws concerning animals, damage by grazing, or by fire, the laws of custodians, and money lending. Other laws include those dealing with a man who seduces a woman, supernatural practices, and idolatry.

We are commanded not to oppress widows or orphans and are obligated to lend money to the poor.

We must accept the authority of the judges, bring the first of our produce and animals to G-d, and not go against the system of justice. We are instructed to return lost objects and help unload an animal that is unable to carry its burden.

One subject was the **Shmittah**: For six years we work the land-prepare the land, plant seeds, take care of the plants, and harvest the fruits and vegetables. But the seventh year, called Shmittah, we must give the land a break and not do any work on it. We are currently learning all about Shmitta in oral Torah class.

What about your responsibility over your property's damages?

The Torah discusses what happens if somebody's ox goes wild and kills somebody, is the owner responsible? It depends. If it is the first 3 times, he is considered a “Shor Tam”, an innocent ox, but after the 3<sup>rd</sup> time, the owner should have known that he has to do something about this animal, and in that case he's responsible.

If someone digs a pit and forgets to cover it up and an animal falls into it and dies, the person who dug the pit must pay the owner the full value of the animal. If someone steals someone else's animal and kills or sells it, he has to pay back five times the amount he stole, or four times for a stolen sheep. If he steals something and still has it, he has to repay double.

Many of these laws are found relevant for now days after going through a little transition to fit modern days. For example Jewish courts will use the laws about ones ox and the pit to deal with car accidents.

Shabbat Shalom