



בית הספר הקהילתי בשיקגו

# Chicago Jewish Day School News

## A Glorious First Year

As our first year comes to a close, it is absolutely clear that our Lower School Director, Jill Kushnir LeVee and our teachers, Morah Rivkah and Morah Elisheva, have brought our school, its mission, its vision and its curriculum, to life.

Every morning began with tfila (prayer) from the siddurim the students and the teachers created together, each week our students studied Parshat Hashavuah (the

weekly Torah portion) and learned to chant the first line in the traditional trop, and every Friday they celebrated Kabbalat Shabbat with the entire school family and guests from the community. Throughout the year they worked on pre-reading strategies in both English and Hebrew, such as letter-sound recognition and the identification of high frequency words, and developed skills in math and science while seamlessly incorporating music, art and movement.

Themes this semester included a January unit on space in which the students each painted a planet in the solar system, then all together painted the sun, decorated the classroom with shooting stars, and pre-

tended to be astronauts. They studied the phases of the moon and how they impact the Jewish calendar.

February was all about Israel. Our students “flew” there, visited the Kotel, shopped at a shuk, worked on a kibbutz, hiked in the Negev Desert, floated in the Dead Sea and swam off the beach at Tel Aviv. They ate Israeli food, danced Israeli dances, sang Israeli songs, created Israeli artwork and generally had a wonderful time!

In March the school celebrated Purim and prepared for Passover. Our students heard the Megillah (Purim story), made groggers (noisemakers), masks and hamentashen (Purim cookies). After Purim they cleaned the classroom to get rid of hametz, learned the Four Questions and other seder songs, and created a classroom haggadah.



Back row: Moreh Daniel Weinberg (volunteer Kabbalat Shabbat songleader), Morah Rivkah Gossage and Morah Elisheva Aranoff (our Kindergarten teachers), Karyn Osinki (office manager) and Jill Kushnir LeVee (Lower School Director). Front row: Avigail Morris-Reich, Karen Weiner, Leah King, Galit Rosenblatt, Rose Landau, Orly Genin, Maya Michalewicz



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Chicago Jewish Day School

*Educating our children in the richness  
of their past, the diversity of their present,  
and the possibilities for their future*

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any race, color, and national or ethnic origin.

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**Celebrations/Memorials**

Send a CJDS tribute card in honor of a simcha or in memory of someone who has passed away by sending a minimum \$18 donation to the school. Or, you may purchase 10 cards for \$150. Please call the school office at 773 529 4900 for more information.



Learning with Morah Rivkah in our Kindergarten Classroom



## CJDS Hires New Head of School

After an extensive national search process involving board members, staff and faculty, parents, community members and our community Rabbis, we are thrilled to announce that we have hired Judy Finkelstein-Taff as our new Head of School. Judy comes to us with over 25 years of experience in education, including early childhood, el-

ementary, Jewish camping and informal education. She is completing a year long Senior Educator Fellowship at the Melton Centre for Jewish Education at Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and prior to that, was the Director of Judaic Studies at the Abraham Joshua Heschel Day School in Northridge, CA. Judy is very proud of her three sons, Avi, Ari and Josh, all of whom are day school products.

Judy will formally join the school in July, but visited with us in Chicago for a wonderful week in May filled with apartment hunting, lots of planning for next year, meetings with prospective parents, and a festive evening with our parents, board members and committee members to celebrate the culmination of our first year and welcome her to our school. We look forward to Judy's experience and passion taking our school to even greater heights.



Please visit our website at  
[www.chicagojewishdayschool.org](http://www.chicagojewishdayschool.org)

## A Glorious First Year, cont'd.

In April they studied animals and their habitats, learning what features to look for to classify animals and examining their features. Why do some animals have patterns on their bodies? How does each animal feed and/or protect itself? Can you look at an animal and tell where it lives? And in May they watched caterpillars become butterflies! They continued learning about animals, this time focusing on their life cycles. To better understand the weekly Torah portions that discussed God instructing the Israelites to be holy, including how to speak and behave properly, our students made puppets to show how people should treat each other with holiness and how thoughts and feelings should match words and behavior. As a school community, they celebrated Yom Ha'atzmaut, Lag B'Omer and Shavuot.

To culminate the end of our first year at Chicago Jewish Day School, our students and teachers created a time capsule. Mark your calendars to join us in 50 years to open it!

### Excitement for Fall 2004 continues to build

Enrollment for the 2004-2005 school year is strong, with recruitment efforts ongoing for both Kindergarten and First Grade. Please call the school office at 773 529 4900 to request an application and/or a personal meeting with Judy Finkelstein-Taff, our new Head of School.

### CJDS Welcomes New Office Manager

Day in and day out, Laura Anderle answers our phones, responds to emails and assures that everything runs smoothly. Her energy, creativity and warmth come through every task she undertakes. Please don't hesitate to ask her if you have any questions; she'll be sure you get the answer you need!

### New Monthly E-Newsletter

"Chicago Jewish Day School Happenings," our new e-mail newsletter, is sent out monthly to share important information about our school. To subscribe to the list, send an email to [ChicagoJewishDaySchool-subscribe@yahoo.com](mailto:ChicagoJewishDaySchool-subscribe@yahoo.com).

### Box Tops for Education

Chicago Jewish Day School joins with schools all over the country collecting Box Tops for Education. Each box top earns our school money! Simply clip the specially marked box tops from your favorite General Mills Cereals, Betty Crocker baking goods and more, and bring them or send them to Chicago Jewish Day School.



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**Chicago Jewish Day School**

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## CJDS Happenings



CJDS parents and board members celebrated the culmination of our first year and welcomed our new Head of School Judy Finkelstein-Taff



Our Kindergartners and Morah Elisheva all dressed up for Purim!



CJDS families walked together at this year's Walk with Israel.



PEJE presented its Award of Excellence to CJDS at its grantee conference in Boston. CJDS Board members Marcy Goldberg and Ann Luban, shown here with PEJE Executive Director Joshua Elkin, attended the conference and received the award on behalf of the school.



Students, parents and grandparents at the Kindergarten Name Celebration



Prospective families, current families and board families enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at our 2nd annual Swim and Learn party. This year's theme was Tu B'Shvat.