



YEAR IN REVIEW 2009-2010

USING THE PIONEER VALLEY (AND BEYOND) AS OUR CLASSROOM!

As a school, Lander~Grinspoon Academy believes that learning should pervade our students' lives. Field trips throughout the entire Pioneer Valley, and beyond into greater New England, highlight the richness of the area we live in. One highlight was the fifth-grade overnight at Boston's Museum of Science, along with peers from Heritage Academy.



Above: First graders and their teacher, Rana Morrissey, line up to get ready for school in traditional 1810 garb at Storowton Village. Right: The morning after! Fifth grade students watch the sun come up over the Charles River after a relatively sleepless night at the Museum of Science.



MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE CLASSROOM

When children come to LGA, they are taught right from the start about real, meaningful ways to make a difference in the world. Throughout the year, students are highly engaged and motivated to participate in community service learning.



During our second annual Mission Mitzvah (the day before Thanksgiving), Gan students get ready to deliver homemade mashed potatoes to the Northampton and Amherst Survival Centers.

In March, one of the Chavayah chavurot (5/6 advisory groups) planned and executed a Haiti relief carnival. Along with their advisor, Renee Bachman, students thought through every aspect of what would make the carnival a success for younger students. They opened it up to the entire community, and were joined not only by fellow LGA students but by the CBI religious school and members of the greater community. They raised more than \$700, which was given directly to an organization helping rebuild schools in the Haitian countryside. Their money actually purchased the land for the school!

SCIENCE, SCIENCE EVERYWHERE

In 2010-2011, we will begin a deep exploration of how science is taught in our school. Following the great success of our first schoolwide science fair, a faculty committee will look at every aspect of our science curriculum, and potentially refashion it to meet the needs of twenty-first-century learners.



Above: Sage Aronson and Nava Chevan, grade 2 students, work on a magnet experiment during a science block. Left: Ben and Eve Sirulnik demonstrate their hovercraft to the crowd.

AN ARTIST'S MIND AND HEART

Oscar Wilde once said, "Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known." Art has always been an important part of the curriculum of LGA. We have enhanced our program, and students at LGA now spend forty-five minutes a week with our resident arts educator, Kitty Marshall. They explore all different media, and have created stunning pieces that



Above: In the autumn, grade 4 student Livia Shelasky uses nature and her surroundings to create hanging art.

Below: One of the many beautiful torah illuminations created by our students and faculty in honor of our new torah.



nations will be rotated on a weekly basis in our front hallway for all to see and identify the weekly torah portion. Thanks go to parent Joel Greenbaum, who has volunteered to build us a wooden display case.

STRENGTHENING LANGUAGE ARTS

On Thursday mornings throughout the school year, you will often find our general studies teachers working in cohort or maybe just with one partner. This year, our general studies faculty has been engaged in creating an extensive plan for reading assessment.

Our teachers are immersing themselves in learning the Fountas &

Pinnell Literacy program; students were assessed twice during the year. We use these assessments to help guide our work both individually and in groups.



Keenan Morrissey, Hannah Ballantine, and Ben Siegel, all fifth graders, work in language arts.

MAZAL TOV TO THE CLASS OF 2010

Our students leave sixth grade fully prepared to tackle the complexities of middle and high school. Students will be attending JFK Middle School/Northampton, Heritage Academy/Longmeadow, The Bement School/Deerfield, The Williston Northampton School/Easthampton, and Quabbin Regional Middle-High School/Warren. Many of our students will also continue their Jewish education at Congregation B'nai Israel in Northampton. Our graduates reflect on their

have adorned our hallways throughout the year. Students also were given the opportunity to work with local Pioneer Valley artists such as Lynn Peterfreund and Abbie Steiner.

Abbie worked with all of our students in grades 3 to 6 on torah portion illuminations for the Tikkun Torah siyyum. Each student was given a specific torah portion to illuminate and create.

These parshiot illumina-



The LGA sixth graders stop to pose for a picture during a rehearsal for their graduation ceremony. Thank you to Shana Sureck for taking the students' portrait photos below.

time spent at LGA Schechter, and at graduation each student delivers a speech about something meaningful to him/her as a student. Please enjoy these excerpts from the students' speeches.



Alex Eisenthal -- "...I'm proud of how much Hebrew I've learned and how much I've learned about the Jewish people. But the thing I'm proudest of is all the friendships I have made. With goodbyes, some friendships fade, but I hope that many of the friendships I've made will continue on..."



Nathan Gordon -- "...I've been working on doing something quickly and not worrying about if it is absolutely perfect. This is something I have to work on because I like to do a good job on everything, but I get frustrated when it takes me too long because I want everything just right..."



David Kuhr -- "...My time here at LGA has been a good but hard experience for me. It has been good because LGA has been a positive environment for me to begin my education. I have trouble concentrating and this has made school difficult for me. I believe if I keep trying I can be successful as everyone else..."



Abby Luddy-Dunn -- "...It seemed at the beginning of the year, this day would never come, but now we are here. I have been waiting for this day for a long time. I want to graduate, but I don't really want to leave..."



Sam Mescon -- "...During my years at LGA so many people have encouraged me to keep trying. Whether it was with math facts, reading, writing, or playing sports, they would always tell me to use my talent.

I would always sit and wonder what do they mean by

talent. I would wonder, ‘Do I have any talent?’ Now I know what talent is. Talent is a skill, gift, a piece of your life that you possess...I want to be able to say that I used my talents wisely and have known satisfaction and triumph that few men have ever known...”



Sylvan Norris -- “...I would make a joke because I don’t usually openly share my deeper feelings with most people. I feel my humor is a characteristic that will get me far in life...”



Dvora Pader -- “...I have a confession to make. I don’t want to leave. I love the way our class has bonded to each other. We may not always get along, but in the end it’s like we are one big family. In fact that’s how the whole school is...”



David Plotkin -- “...LGA has been like a family to me the past seven years. I’ve developed relationships with both kids and teachers. I’ve learned a lot of skills I need to succeed. I’ve learned if you work hard and do your best, the people you trust will help you. If I believe in myself, I can accomplish anything I encounter...”



Rebecca Rosenblum -- “...All in all, I learned from my mistake and figured out how to do better. Mistakes are made, and we learn from them. If we got everything right all the time, there would be no Slinkies, Silly Putty, Post-it Notes, and potato chips, which are some of the most famous mistakes in the U.S. It’s hard, but it’s worth it...”



Zev Bromberg Seltzer -- “...I think that there are two more “c” character traits that Walt Disney does not mention -- compassion and community. My years at LGA have taught me that these are also important because to be a good person, you can’t only think about yourself...”



Benjamin Sirulnik -- “...This year, I have also gotten better at organizing my time and designed my own planner to help me. I know that I will continue to work hard to be more organized and to procrastinate less, but I also know that I can do anything I put my mind to...”

STUDENTS TAKE CENTER STAGE

This was ALSO great year for our students to showcase their learning through another medium: theater arts. We are most proud of the fact that every student at LGA participates in our theater productions. Many

of our shows focus on aspects of our social studies or Judaics curriculum. Students and teachers take their parts incredibly seriously. Student productions this year included: Grade 1, Marionette Show on Fables; Grade 2, Tall Tales; Grade 3, Colonial American Music inspired play; Grade 4, Poet Biographies; Grade 5, All-Hebrew Hanukah play featuring special guest stars from the Gan; and Grade 6, Purim shpiel.



Left above: Grade 1 students pose with their marionettes after their performance. This year, first graders also performed their show during the annual regional educators’ banquet.



Left below: Grade 3 students dressed up in full costume after their play on colonial America.

LGA: A MODEL FOR OTHER JEWISH DAY SCHOOLS

LGA has spent the year involved with two national initiatives. We are finishing up the first year of a three-year teacher-induction project with the Mandel Center at Brandeis University. Teachers at LGA are working in mentor-mentee and peer relationships to strengthen their practice in teaching. LGA faculty have been working with the Mandel Center’s senior education specialist, Nili Pearlmuter, on a number of different projects including looking at hiring practices and creating a document for LGA’s “Vision of Good Teaching.”

Through the Avichai Foundation, LGA was also selected to work with the Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School and its leadership around using case studies as a method to look at problems. Bil Zarch and a number of other members of the staff and the board of trustees have been looking at case studies specific to LGA and brainstorming different ways to solve issues.

COMMUNITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Mazal Tov to Morah Rana Morrissey for receiving a Grinspoon Award for Excellence in Jewish Education.

Rana was honored before her peers at a dinner and ceremony in early June.

Mazal Tov to Justin Cammy, board president, for receiving the outstanding lay leader award from HGF.

Mazal Tov to Rachel Brazie (class of '04) for being honored with the B'nai Tzedek Outstanding Teen Leader award from the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.

Milestone events

LGA has many wonderful events throughout the year that our students anticipate all year. Milestone events like the grade 2 siddur celebration and grade 5 Math Pi Day are a celebrated part of the school culture. 2010-2011 was no exception, and milestone events at all grade levels were enhanced.



Lili Lieberman-Bachman reads from the Torah and Jesse Zeldes waits for his turn.

HOLIDAY CELEBRATIONS

The Jewish and secular calendars give the school a symbiotic rhythm to our year. Teachers across all grades and subjects help plan educationally appropriate programs for our students to take part in. Students participated in a number of assemblies that reinforced different holiday themes. Our annual MLK celebration looked at themes of freedom and equality. Students performed for each other musical pieces that went along with this theme.



Danny Valitt and Benjamin Gollis-Pedelaborde help prepare for the school's Passover seder.

This year for the first time, LGA hosted two other Jewish day schools for an Israel Independence Celebration and Zimriyah (Music Festival). Students spent the morning split into age-appropriate activities with peers from all three schools. After a delicious falafel meal, we all gathered for a lively music session.

We celebrated Chanukah a little differently this year as well -- we came together on a Sunday afternoon for a Chanukah show that not only showcased our fifth-

graders' Hebrew talents but also featured every single student in the school performing.

ULTIMATE FRISBEE REIGNS SUPREME

Thank you to the hard work of Coach Hilary Gollis for once again leading our team of students in ultimate Frisbee. This co-ed team comprised of students in grades 4 through 7 (current & alumni students) played in a couple of regional Sunday tournaments, and won games against teams that were much bigger. A shining moment for the team was during the Eaglebrook



Team co-captain Sam Mescon plans out a play with his fellow teammates during the Eaglebrook tournament.)

School's Middle School tournament, when LGA was given the Spirit of the Tournament prize awarded to a team who shows exemplary sportsmanship.

CHAVAYAH

Our students in grades 5 and 6 started a new program this year called Chavayah. One of the main goals of this program was to expand the social circles of our oldest students. Once a week, students in chavayah would be split into advisory groups and meet with a teacher to discuss myriad topics. Students also were afforded, for the first time, a weekly Judaic studies elective taught by either a Judaic studies staff member or a local rabbi. Thank you to Rabbis Justin David and Riqi Kosovske for each teaching a trimester in the program. Some of the electives included Jewish Cooking, A Look at Barney Ross: Jewish Boxer, Contemporary Jewish Music, Intro to Jewish Mysticism, Midrash, Torah & Art; and Honoring Elders.

WORKING WITH ALL LEARNERS

LGA continues to work with students with a variety of learning needs. Our teachers embrace differentiated instruction. This year, our faculty have been highly engaged in working with students and parents to best meet the needs of individual learners. Our learning specialist, Leah Finch, meets individually and in small groups with students. She along with Suzy Klein, our school psychologist intern, helps faculty plan and implement different strategies for academic success in the classroom.

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN 2009-2010

as of June 16, 2010

\$25,000+

Anonymous
Harold Grinspoon Foundation
Jewish Federation of Western
Massachusetts

\$10,000-\$24,999

Hilda & Louis Greenbaum
Nancy & Howard Kaufman
Lois & Bob Peirent

\$5,000-9,999

Catherine Epstein & Daniel Gordon
T. Marc Futter
Bonnie & Joel Gordon
Karen & Saul Kuhr

\$1,800-4,999

Anonymous
Joanne Levin & John Joelson
Jodi & David Kaufman
Rose & Rabbi Yechiael Lander
Learning Solutions
Rachel Rubinstein & Justin Cammy
Ethan Starr
Diane Troderman & Harold
Grinspoon

\$1,000-1,799

Joanna & Clay Ballantine
Blair Barondes
Iris & David Berkman
Joel Gordon, M.D.
Morris Gould
Beverly Hirsch
Richard Norris
Michael Perlman
Sharon Strassfeld
Rabbi Sheila Peltz Weinberg
& Maynard Seider
Sara Weinberger & Mordi Kamel

\$613-999

Caryn Brause & Steven Breslow
Julia Chevan & Patricia Jung
Penina & Micky Glazer
Beth & Marta Lev
Maxine Stein & Henry Simkin
Sunderland Animal Hospital
(Deb & Steve Ellis)

\$365-612

Howard Bond
Nilda & Mark Cohen
Florence Dental Care
Yaffa & Haim Gunner
JOIA Beauty
Carol & Bradley Katz
Debbie Krivov & Jennifer Einhorn
Marjorie Osherow
& Gretchen Brockmeyer
Rebecca Peterfreund Zarch
& Bil Zarch
Dianne Pedelaborde
Julie Rosten
Naomi Shulman & Chris Templin
SiteLab Architecture & Design
Judy Wolf & Rabbi Justin David

\$200-364

Applied Mortgage Services
Balin Eye & Laser Center
Esther & Rod Bartels
Daniel Belmont
Judy & Lawrence Besserman
Maureen & Donald Blanchette
Elliot Bloom
Janet & Albert Chevan
Susan & Sherman Eisenthal
Gerald Flaster
Florence Savings Bank
Kathy Fraker & Joshua Yurfest
Evie Glickman
Barbara & Joseph Goldstein
Edward Greenbaum
Lisa & Joel Greenbaum
Hot Mamas Food
Jewish Family Services of Western Ma.
Geri Kleinman & James Katz
Kumon of Amherst
Kumon of Northampton
Barbara Kupfer
Tamara Kupfer & Andrew Sirulnik
Warren Manning
Matt's Barber Shop
Judith Meltzer
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Becky Miller & Tom Randall
Orthotics & Prosthetics Lab., Inc.
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Debbie & David Peskin
Charles Plotkin
Simona Pozzetto & Ed Weisman
Nancy Rothenberg
Schoen Books
Judith & Leonard Seltzer
Rebecca & David Serlin
Abbie Steiner
Shelley Steuer & Jeffrey Korff
Synergy Rehabilitation Services
The Salon
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Jane Trigere & Kenneth Schoen
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Reva & Sumner Weisman
Elaine & Ira Wolf
Nancy & Jack Zeldes

\$100-199

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Marian & Edward Bromberg
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Dawn Cordeiro & John Grossman
P. Duke Corliss
Danco Modern Inc.
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Greenfield Imported Cars
Jill & David Grossman
Jan Hackman
Mark Horwitz
Joanne Jaffin & David Sharken
Stephen Jasinski
Jones Group
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Sheri Katz & Daniel Plotkin
Susan & Edward Kline
Myriam Klotz & Margot Stein
Susan Korsower
Gail & Aaron Lansky
Kenneth Lepine
Renee & Julie Lieberman-Bachman
Karen & John Loeb
Jennifer Luddy & Seth Dunn
Mak'hela, the Jewish Chorus of
Western Mass.
Jonathan Marcus
Robert Marmor
Linda & Keith Minoff
Lisa Mintz & Lee Feldscher
Northampton Area Pediatrics
Northampton Cooperative Bank
Esther Plotkin
Jeanne & Robert Potash
Proactive Controls Group
Laura Reinhard
Denise & Gary Rosenberg
Jody Rosenbloom & Joel Kaminsky
Jacob Sapiro
Deborah & Rabbi Bruce
Bromberg Seltzer
Babette & Jon Shapiro
Judy & Steve Shelasky
Amy & Scott Siege
Singer Potito Associates
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Barbara & Ted Slovin
Nancy & Stanley Ulman
Rachel Valitt
Valley Fibers Corporation
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Lila & Marty Weinberg
Dyan Wiley
Judi Wisch
Wright Builders
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Adrienne & Efreem Berman
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