

PASJE Press

SUMMER ISSUE

PALO ALTO SCHOOL FOR JEWISH EDUCATION • KISLEV 5765 • JUNE 2004

A parent's reflection

As my second and last child graduates from PASJE, I find that I feel very lucky that, 14 years ago, new to the Bay area, we attended the 1990 PASJE Purim Carnival to take a look at the school and excitedly signed up for Sunday School. Our daughter, a first grader then, now a junior in college, joined a large class and had one excellent teacher after another, music and Israeli dancing, culminating in 8th grade where the entire class was invited to the many Bar and Bat Mitzvahs, gave erudite talks on their research projects on Jewish topics and went to a festive dinner with their teachers. Many returned as aides.

My son, a member of a very small class, has had a different but also very good experience at PASJE. This small group has worked well together and has enjoyed excellent rapport with

Continued on page 4

From Cathy Taylor, PASJE Director

Once again...summer has arrived

and it is time to wish everyone a relaxing and pleasant vacation. As I look back over the last year I think we have accomplished another positive year of learning and community building at PASJE.

On May 23, I had the privilege of hearing six very inspiring graduation speeches from Terry Fayer's eighth grade students. Many times parents tell me how difficult and frustrating it is prying their children away from home and other activities on Sunday morning to attend PASJE. I listen and try to be very empathetic, as I also had to give a little push to my daughter over the years on Sunday mornings. I always tell parents not to give in but hold fast to what they know is really important for their children. After hearing the graduating students give speeches over my now four-year tenure as director, I am more confident in my advice to parents when their children do not want to get up and out to Sunday School. We are the adults and we know we are doing the right thing for our children. The eighth grade speeches always confirm what I know is correct both as an educator and as a parent.

We will feel proud of each and every one of them when their time comes to step up to the plate and give their graduation speech, and most of all, they will have the joy of knowing that they have studied about their Jewish heritage and have completed the first steps in knowing who they are. They will have the foundation to go out into the broader Jewish community with their heads up high because they are informed about their "Jewishness." This will mean different things for each of them, but they will always know that they are part of a diverse community and they can make the choice of what they want their place to be in the community. It is so much easier to have the comfort of knowing who you are as a child and growing with it, than

Continued on page 4

Views from Adi's 7th grade class

This year, we studied from two books. The first was titled "Mah La'asot." It was a book full of debatable topics using Jewish Law. My favorite debate was about an old refrigerator. The moral of it was to prevent possible dangers. We also read "The Story of the Jews," which is a comical version of Jewish history. I really enjoyed talking about the different types of Judaism (Ashkenazi and Sephardic).

—**Andrew Litt**

Something to look forward to this year was the book "Mah La'asot." Real stories filled this book with fun and real life situations. This book would list and create a situation and you would guess an answer or a solution. After you had guessed, the book would tell you solutions from different quotes and different rabbis.

Another exciting thing this year was reading the book "Story of the Jews." It was not an ordinary history book. It was made so that it was easy to understand. Comics, pictures, and captions made it even better. This year was very fun-filled and exciting. It was filled with lively debates and enthusiastic conversations. It was definitely worthwhile.

—**Noah Johnson**

This year, we did many exciting things! One of them was learning about Romans. I liked it because we'd learned about it in school and it was cool to learn a different perspective.

Another thing I enjoyed was the "Mah La'asot" book, especially the movie endings. An example was Terminator 2 and when he committed suicide — if it was right because he was saving a lot of people, but suicide is wrong.

One day we went to Terry's house and we talked about who is at fault if there's an uncovered pit, or a public bush, etc. Those are my favorite things.

—**Ben Stillerman**

I most enjoyed debating about the Jewish law from the book "Mah La'asot." I also enjoyed reading from the book "Story of the Jews" and how Jewish history went on throughout time. I also had some of the most intelligent Jewish conversations of my life. I learned how the Jewish people got expelled from all sorts of different places.

—**Jason Garcia**

I liked the "Mah La'asot" stories, with lively debates on many subjects regarding Jewish law and religion, from the Sabbath to the very depths of Jewish law. It was very fun to be allowed to argue.

—**Katie Pearlman**

Advice from Terry's 8th graders

Respect your teachers — they know more than you do — and bring tzadaka for those who need it.

—**Julius Berezin**

People who bring good snacks become popular at PASJE. Don't worry, enjoy learning because you don't get graded and you learn with a Jewish perspective that you don't get in regular school.

—**Yotam Dror**

Be good to the teachers and eat lots of doughnuts to keep your energy up.

—**Daniel Lubarov**

There is lots of really good stuff to learn because this is a Jewish school, and remember to always bring good snacks, especially doughnuts.

—**Adam Yefet**



May 8, 2004

*A letter of thanks
from a school in Israel
for Tzedaka given
by students of PASJE*

Ms. Cathy Taylor
Palo Alto School for Jewish Education
4000 Middlefield Rd.
Palo Alto, CA 94303
USA

Dear Cathy:

Thank you so much for the kind and generous donation to A.H.A.V.A., English Learned in a Natural Method. Your donation will go toward our scholarship fund for several families who, until now, could not afford to send their children to our groups.

By supporting these children now, you are offering them a brighter future. Your Tzedaka is truly an investment in the Jewish community of tomorrow.

I am planning a trip to California in October. I will be in touch with you before that in order to arrange a time to speak to your students.

With warmest regards,

Gaila Cohen Morrison
Executive Director
A.H.A.V.A. "Brighter Horizons
for Our Children"



The PASJE community

is grateful to the many families who made donations in the past year to support Jewish education at PASJE. (This is a partial list of donors, as some donors asked not to have their name published.)

Zach family
 Uyeda/ Levy family
 Stillerman/Storm family
 Fayer family
 Kitchen family
 Rochester family
in honor of Sema & Paul Levin
 Pearlman/Barber family
 Asher/Hosay family
 Wasow family

Hebert family
in loving memory of Susan Crawford, former president of PASJE
 Mills family
 Marc & Diane Gordon family
 Appelman/Soglin family
in honor of Leah Bernstein
 Frankel/Ikinaga family
 Katsev Family
 Intuit Donation Matching Program

A parent's reflection

Continued from page 1

their teachers, some of the same ones that his sister enjoyed and some new new ones. The topics of Jewish history, ethics, law and Israel, which they learned and discussed on Sunday mornings, are near to their hearts and engaging, and I think that the process has helped them to define themselves and their perspectives.

The enthusiastic, talented and committed teaching staff, the well chosen texts, the inclusive environment, and the holiday celebrations have all contributed to what I feel was an important component of my children's Jewish upbringing.

Orit Yefet

From Cathy Taylor

Continued from page 1

reaching adulthood and feeling lost or alone. Our PASJE Community is a very important place, and it is our responsibility to help our children learn how to respect and nurture it for future generations to come. I am looking forward to an even bigger and brighter 2004-05/5765.

I would like to once again congratulate Bob Stillerman for the honor of receiving the Laurie Stein Award for his hard work and initiative on the PASJE board. With the assistance of his family, Bob has shaped a viable fund raising program for our school. Bob has been a very active PASJE Board member and we have really learned a lot from him.

On behalf of the PASJE Community and myself, we thank Nancy for all her hard work in making sure that our office functions smoothly and all our e-mails are sent in a timely fashion. Nancy's trusty office assistant is leaving us for Sarah Lawrence in the fall. We will miss Amanda, but we are very proud of her.

Further thanks to Jennifer Cousins for all her hard work with registration, and Monica Frankel for helping produce the PASJE Press. We are very fortunate to have so many bright and hard working people making up the PASJE Community.

*Today Rabah,
 Cathy Taylor
 PASJE Director*