

Youth Visions

"To Everything There is a Season" For Hebrew High Students

Despite cold weather and Panther playoffs, more than 40 Hebrew High 8th graders gathered for an amazing weekend of fun and learning, as they explored the Jewish Life Cycle.

The group explored Jewish laws and customs that help guide us through the happiest and most difficult times of our lives. Students were lucky to have an outstanding array of community leaders help them understand these important aspects of our culture and faith.

We began with Brit Milah (circumcision) and baby naming rituals. Dr. Laura Sinai spoke to the students about being a female Mohelet and the process she uses to adhere to the ancient ritual. After leading us in Havdalah,

Cantor Mary Thomas shared ideas on the rituals of welcoming a new baby girl into the community. As a new mom and clergy member, she has special insight into this meaningful experience.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is the next event in a young Jewish child's life. Since most in the group had just become B'nai Mitzvah, we reflected on the personal meaning of the ritual. In addition, we did several mitzvot to benefit the residents at the Ronald McDonald House.

We ended Saturday night with a giant L'Chaim as we learned about Jewish weddings. Ginny Freirich brought a display of her wonderful ketubot and discussed her art and the different texts now available for Jewish wedding con-

tracts.

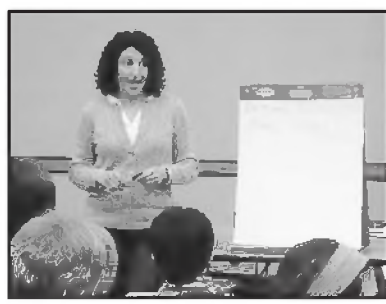
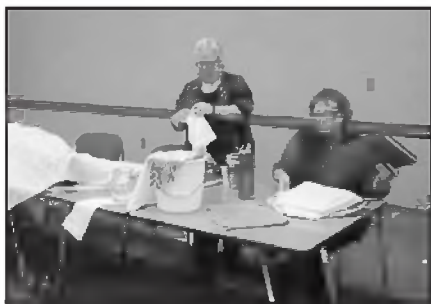
On Sunday, we concentrated on the traditions associated with death and dying. Brian Yesowitch and Sandra Goldman introduced the students to the history of our own Hebrew Cemetery. Sandra brought photos of some of the more interesting stones for the group to artistically embellish and display.

Debbie Hirsch and Corine Bockenek gave overviews of how our Chevrah Kadisha Committees prepare the deceased for burial. For many students, this was the first time they heard about the tender way we treat loved ones as we send them to the world to come. They asked really thoughtful questions as they processed the information.

The afternoon concluded with a panel discussion about Jewish views of the afterlife. Rabbi Judy Schindler and Rabbi Yossi Groner presented their movements teachings on this complicated subject.

Hebrew High is deeply grateful to all of the amazing community members and leaders who helped to make this retreat a success. Your support adds tremendous support to our program. A huge thank you to the teachers who work with our students and make sure that they are getting a wonderful foundation for their Jewish lives. And, of course, thank you to

the students whose lively attention and positive attitudes make Hebrew High, "The Place to be on Wednesday Nights" and sometimes on the weekend. ☆



Clockwise from left: Cantor Mary conducts havdallah; celebrating the "wedding"; Corinne Bockenek and Debbie Hirsch describe the Chevra Kadisha; Dr. Laura Sinai, Mohelet; Rabbis Schindler and Groner discuss life after death; Center: The 8th graders.

Freedom School Seeks Teen Volunteers for Summer Session

The Shalom Park Freedom School is once again pleased to accept applications for its Teen Board, which will serve the 2014 summer program at Shalom Park.

Twenty teens, rising 10th-12th grade, will be chosen from both the Jewish community as well as the larger community to work with CMS 1st-5th graders to boost their literacy skills and enrich their cultural experiences during the summer months.

Teen Board members will commit to working as school assistants for two successive weeks between June 18 and July 30. Hours will be 8:15 AM-3:15 PM, five days a week. Opportunities will include working in classrooms, accompanying teachers and students on field trips, planning activities for the classrooms, securing and delivering supplies, and other assistance as needed. A swim test and swimming with scholars will be required. Addi-

tionally, a book drive and fundraising for Friday challahs for the scholars will be planned by the Teen Board.

In addition to serving as program assistants, Teen Board members will commit to attend two instructional meetings. One in April (TBA) which will focus on social justice, learn about the challenges of urban education and poverty in Charlotte, develop leadership and organizing skills, learn about the Freedom School literacy and science curriculum and participate in Shalom Park Freedom School volunteer orientation. The second meeting will be held June 16 and 17 for set up and training.

Interested applicants should contact Dana Ditesheim or Shana Suris for an application. Application deadline is March 3.

Dditesheim@me.com or shana.suris5@gmail.com. ☆

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Milton Goldstein, CLTC
Certified Long Term Care Specialist
Charlotte, NC: (704) 442-5618
Cell: (205) 907-0670
E-mail: miltgold@bellsouth.net
Visit my Web Site
www.goldsteinltc.com
Licensed in 11 States