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GIFT Food Drive

By Aviva Shalom

Recently, GIFT announced a competition – which form could collect the most food for their food drive? We had until Thursday 17th February to collect as much food as we could. GIFT then said that the class who collected the most food were to get a prize!

But why do GIFT need our food donations? GIFT is a charity which supports families that cannot buy all the food they may need. GIFT, standing for Give It Forward Today, gives each family a weekly supply of food, and anyone is eligible to volunteer to help pack food bags for families, at the GIFT hub - many people in Yavneh already do! However, not only does GIFT offer food for those who need it, they also make support packages, host GIFT dinners, and, in 2017, put together GIFT Shabbat walk! GIFT also provide weekly videos on the Parsha (Sparks of Giving) – if you're intrigued, you can find them on YouTube or jgift.org.

On this website, you can also find the GIFT online learning programme, which has educational and entertaining videos for all ages!

Furthermore, GIFT has a bar/bat mitzvah programme and the One Small Deed project, in which you can give a GIFT pack to a homeless person.

If you are interested in volunteering for GIFT, then head to jgift.org or inform Sophie or Aliza, who regularly come to Yavneh!

We will be finding out the winners soon, but even if you don't win, remember that your donations have made a massive difference to GIFT and to other people's lives.



Odd Arts

By Eliana Kaye and Adina Rose

On Thursday 17th February, a theatre group called 'Odd Arts' came to do a workshop all about Radicalisation and extremism for Year 9.

At the beginning we were given some statements and we had to decide whether we agreed or not - we then had to justify our decision. The organisation further went on to perform a small play displaying a real-life scenario in which acts of radicalisation and extremism were involved. After this, we had to pick out points in which we felt the characters had made bad decisions and that they had been swayed to do something that they do not truly agree with. People were then chosen to act with the actors and to slip into a conversation when they thought the characters needed help to stand their ground and stay true to themselves or if they needed some advice to help them and their situation.

From the workshop, we learnt to stand our ground and to listen to ourselves – not to let others sway our opinion on something we know is wrong. We are more aware of radicalisation and extremism, what it is and why it's important to know about! We really appreciate 'Odd Arts' coming in and we look forward to seeing them again soon!



Lishma

By Libby Gordon

Each week as Wednesday comes around girls from Year 8 to 13 get excited for the Lishma learning which takes place from 5-6 in the Yavneh Hall. Run by Emily Radivan and Dalia Kreike, Lishma is the highlight of my school week. Dedicated bogrot and sixth formers come to learn in chavrusas with girls in younger years discussing a range of topics from the parsha to emunah.

Before the learning begins food is sponsored weekly - sometimes pizza is served for everyone to enjoy! Before we go off into our learning groups each week a different speaker comes in to give an inspirational message.

Lishma is a place to deepen our love for Torah in a more relaxed environment and have time to catch up with all the Yavneh family. We would love to see more faces there in the coming weeks!!



School Council

By Aviva Shalom and Yehudit Greenhouse

The students in Yavneh have a bigger voice than ever, due to the recent establishment of the school council. With one or two members selected from each class, the students get together with Miss Burberry to discuss the views of the pupils and what they consider the school needs.

For example, the breakfast club, a recent development, was suggested by the girls of Yavneh, many of them who do not have the time for breakfast before school. The club, a successful institution which many girls go to each day, serves toast in the mornings before registration.

Another recent addition to Yavneh, are the beanbags in the tuck room, which were once more requested by the school council!

If you have anything which you feel the school needs, then pass it onto your class school council member(s) and they will inform Miss Burberry!

Winter Music Concert

By Brachi Shwartz

The winter concert (on the 10th February) was a memorable event, the first concert in over two years. It was led by Miss Shields and Mrs Dale and included many performances including an orchestra, singing, piano playing and more. There was also an interval with many refreshments provided by The Parents Guild.

There were many singers who sang a range of different songs from 'Yesterday' by The Beatles songs to 'Naughty' from Matilda and also a traditional Jewish song – 'Ani Maamim'. The Year 7 choir was fantastic, and one of the best performances was an acapella group who sang 'Pitch Perfect', 'And So It Goes' and 'Bring Me Little Water Sylvie'.

Furthermore, there were some super solos and duets playing their instruments. A saxophone player who played a composition by Dave Brubeck. 'Here Comes the Sun' by the Beatles was played on a drum kit and there were two enjoyable trumpet and violin duets.

Two of the crowd's favourites were definitely either the mind-blowing piano piece played by the piano teacher - Dr Stratigou, who played an incredible melody. Or, the comical, new sixth form band, Shed, who performed a few original songs, including 'Now I know'.

The concert started with the orchestra playing '60s Rock Mix' and ended with them playing two phenomenal pieces called 'Jupiter' from The Planets and 'Autumn' from The four seasons.



Parshat Pekudei – Exodus / Shemot 38:21-40:38

The Torah portion Pekudei is the final parsha of the Book of Shemot (Exodus), and in Hebrew means accounting; it wraps up the book of Exodus, detailing the events around the inauguration of the Tabernacle- the portable sanctuary built by our ancestors by divine command to serve as “a dwelling place for G-D in this physical world”. All of the many parts and pieces we have read about over the past few weeks are finally put into place, and Moses himself oversees the project’s completion.

Pekudei contains three elements: 1) An audit of the gold, silver and copper used in the Mishkan’s construction, 2) the making of the priestly garments and 3) the erection and consecration of the Mishkan. Whilst reading the Torah you may have asked yourself this question: In the beginning of Bereshit (Genesis), the Torah devotes 31 verses to describe how G-D created the entire world. In striking contrast, the Torah portions of this and the last 4 weeks devote 371 verses to describe how the Jews created the tabernacle in the desert. This seems profoundly strange and begs the question, “Why?” I hope to address this:

In last week’s parsha Vayakhel, we read that the copper basin was not only made from one of the most common of metals, but was also the last item made; however, it was one of the most precious items and the first one used as the Kohanim were required to wash before performing their priestly duties. This is the central message of Judaism. When we honour, love and respect our fellow man, we by extension honour, love and respect our G-D. Within each of us is a spark of the divine. The purpose of that spark is to light the way for the soul inside of us to find its way out. Judaism is about creating time by utilizing space. Time is holy and allows us a progression of continuum with which to connect to the Divine by using the physical world and its contents (space) in the performance of sanctifying time. Were this not so, why would HaShem spend 371 verses detailing the construction of the tabernacle and its contents, while only 31 verses were used to detail the construction of the universe?

Furthermore, according to the Midrash, the boards of the *Mishkan* were so heavy that the people could not hold them up erect next to each other long enough for them to assemble the *Mishkan*. They kept toppling over. In frustration, the people brought all the boards and poles to Moshe, and he assembled it with miraculous strength that Hashem granted him especially for this purpose. One would be right to pose this question: if it were impossible for the people to assemble the *Mishkan* single-handedly, why did G-d not simply build the *Mishkan* Himself?

Judaism is a deed-oriented way of life. It is not enough to say, "I am a Jew at heart." Deeds are what count, learning Torah, performing mitzvos, doing *chessed*. Being a Jew is about doing, from the moment we arise until the moment we go to bed. Our lifestyle is not one of sentiment, it is one of deed.

At the same time, however, intent also plays a great role in Judaism. If someone is prevented by circumstances beyond his control from doing a mitzvah, the Torah considers it as if he had done the mitzvah (*maaleh alav hakasuv k'ilu asahu*). Judaism demands deeds but not necessarily results. As long as a Jew puts in the honest and sincere effort, he is rewarded even if he is not successful. Hashem considers his intentions as deeds. When the time came to assemble the *Mishkan*, the Jewish people made every effort to do it by themselves. Sweat pouring from their brows, arms aching, they strained, and they pushed those heavy boards with

all their might, but they could not erect the *Mishkan*. It was simply beyond them, and they had no choice but to turn to Moshe for help.

Nonetheless, the Torah reports that they "brought the *Mishkan* to Moshe," because that is what they intended to do and what they tried to do with all their hearts. Hashem considered it as if they had erected the *Mishkan* themselves, and He rewarded them.

This teaches us a great deal. Even in our most difficult times we have Hashem to guide us, and we can trust that we will make progress, even when it may seem that all hope is lost. It certainly seems easier to give up but when you realise why you've kept going all this time, continuation can only lead to an even better outcome. Reward comes in all forms if only we can open our eyes to see it for what it truly is, to build ourselves up not only as a single unit but as a nation.

I may not have known Joshua Carr personally, but from what I have heard, he never gave up. He worked at himself to become the best possible version of himself even at the most challenging times, thriving to do what was right.

By Anja Halner

Leilui Nishmat Yehoshua Ariyeh Leib HaCohen ben Yonatan Chaim HaCohen