



The MetroWest Jewish Moment

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from MetroWest Jewish Day School

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Framingham, MA 01701
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www.mwjds.org

MWJDS's New Location



Our new address for an interim period.

MWJDS moved to Temple Beth Am, 300 Pleasant Street in Framingham, for an interim period. As we begin to prepare our new campus on Prospect Street, this temporary location (in the synagogue's education wing) is accessible and convenient for our community, close to Route 9 and the Massachusetts Turnpike.

"We are grateful to the staff and membership of Temple Beth Am for graciously providing us with a temporary home. Our staff and students will continue to fulfill the mission of our school while the Prospect Street location is completed," said Behzad Dayanim, Head of School. "With two such talented staffs in one building, I have no doubt that exciting collaborations will benefit both the Temple Beth Am and MWJDS communities."

"On behalf of our professional staff and lay leadership," said Cantor Jodi M. Schechtman, spiritual leader of Temple Beth Am, "we eagerly await the arrival of MWJDS. We look forward to the vibrancy of having students here in our building all day. We anticipate exciting shared programs between our two organizations, and we envision a continuation and extension of the collaboration that we have enjoyed over the past few years of partnering together on Mitzvah Day."

Learning from Special Friends



"Ola, the service dog, visits the second grade class to help her friend discuss disabilities"

People are similar in some ways and different in others," said second grade teacher Ellen Fink, as she introduced a unit on people with disabilities. "When a person has a disability, it simply means that there is a difference in the way the person's body or mind works."

The class learned about accommodations for people with disabilities, such as accessibility for wheelchairs, Braille and adaptive sports. They discussed the importance of having places and activities be accessible, so that all can participate. But it was the very special guests who taught the best lessons. "Our guests

helped us connect our studies to the Judaic concept of *kavod habriyot* (honor due to God's creations/human beings)," says Ellen.

Ellen's sister, Dana Fink, is a wheelchair user and professional athlete who works for the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD). Dana spoke about how adaptive sports are played, especially her favorites, basketball and rowing. She answered questions about what it is like to use a wheelchair and taught students some simple signs in ASL (American Sign Language). Kyle Dame, a high school student and the brother of second grader Meg Dame, shared his experiences having limited mobility on one side of his body and about participating in the Special Olympics softball team. Francine Rothkopf, our Tefilla Coordinator, talked about being a mother of a child with Down syndrome.

Elaine Ellenbogen came to class with her guide dog, Ola. Mrs. Ellenbogen told the students about life with a visual impairment and how Ola helps out. She also talked about her "gadgets," a talking clock, Braille watch and color identifier. Students learned that when a helping dog is wearing a harness the dog is working, and people should not try to pet or talk to it. When Mrs. Ellenbogen took off Ola's harness, the dog enjoyed playing with students.

"We learned a lot," says second grader Sam Sokol. "People can do cool things even with disabilities."

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Discover Day School | cjp

Greetings from Behzad Dayanim



Nine years after arriving at the Juniper Hill School, MWJDS has moved! Once informed of the Town of Framingham School Department's plan to relocate their pre-school program to the building, we explored directly moving to our Prospect Street campus (a stunning 10+ acre estate in the heart of Framingham). It was determined that an interim step was needed, which sparked a search for viable alternative sites. We are excited to announce that we have moved to 300 Pleasant Street in Framingham, in the education wing of Temple Beth Am (TBA). This move supports both our mission to broaden our connection to the Jewish population and to collaborate with another organization serving the local Jewish community.

While we proceed with developing our permanent site and intentions to more frequently utilize it soon, we are very optimistic with this move to TBA and look forward to developing a mutually beneficial relationship. A highlight of this move includes access to the spectacular grounds. Many parents and staff have commented that this was something they missed in the past year during the construction at Juniper Hill and we are thrilled that parents and teachers will have a lovely area to congregate, eat lunch or even hold classes. The garden courtyard even has a beautiful ark. Additionally, as we move forward with our 21st Century learning goals, our school community will continue to enjoy various technological advances, our MacBook and iPad learning labs, an invigorated arts program and especially our sustained commitment to each child.

MWJDS was established to serve and appreciate the diversity of our community while providing a challenging and nurturing educational environment. Our dedicated and talented staff, innovative Personal Learning Plans, and generous community enable us to fulfill our mission as we celebrate our new students. Thank you for your support.

The President's Perspective: Jody Comins



After nine wonderful years in our Juniper Hill home, MetroWest Jewish Day School is moving to a new location. While moving a school can certainly be daunting, we are fortunate to have a skilled committee whose members made a smooth transition to Temple Beth Am.

When the students heard about the move, they were curious as to how an entire school could relocate. I was reminded of my sister's experience a few years ago when she moved. She explained to her kids that their house was just a building, but that the people and what's in their hearts and their love for one another are what really make their house a home. Juniper Hill is the only home our students have known. They have walked up and down the hallways hundreds of times and shared meals, celebrations, prayers and performances. They have played sports in the gym and learned in the classrooms.

The school is the children and the MWJDS community. It is the administrative team and all the same people in the office. It is Mr. Dayanim and the teachers. It is the parents gathering in the pick-up line or on the playground after school. It is the annual Gala, Mitzvah Day, holiday celebrations, Shabbat and Special Visitors Day. It is the board and the committees. It is you, and it is me.

While we unpack and get settled, we will hold onto the great memories that will always live on in our hearts.

Hunger Awareness, Our Social Action Theme

With an "attitude of gratitude," we have kept our focus on this year's social justice theme: Hunger Awareness. The MWJDS community learned the real meaning of the words of Abraham Joshua Heschel (a leading 20th century Jewish advocate for human rights, a theologian and educator), "praying with our feet," during the culminating event of the year, our Walk for *Mazon*.

With sponsors pledging for every quarter-mile lap walked around the school, students raised money for Mazon: The Jewish Response to Hunger. (*Mazon* is Hebrew for "food" or "sustenance.") This national nonprofit organization, which is dedicated to preventing and alleviating hunger among people of all faiths and backgrounds, was founded by MWJDS grandparent Leonard Fein. Fein spoke to students on Special Visitor's Day as they presented him with a mock check Thanks to all of our walkers and donors.



A walking team's pep rally



Students presented a very "large" check to Mr. Fein



Water breaks are important!

HaMorah Margalit (Gretchen Marks Brandt) Shares Her Love for Students, Stories, Judaism & Journeys



“Hamorah Margalit works with Seth on a project

“I love stories,” says Gretchen Marks Brandt, Director of Teaching and Learning. “I can tell someone how and why to keep *Shabbat*, for example, because they will find it meaningful, but a story makes a more compelling message.” Gretchen brought her extensive experience in Jewish education as well as

her fascination with Jewish folklore, short stories and the power of parable when she joined MWJDS last fall.

Gretchen is a wellspring of ideas that engage children with diverse learning styles and integrates many subjects and age groups into projects and lessons. The Omer (the counting of the 49 days from the second night of Passover to *Shavuot*) bulletin board is one example. The Omer was introduced Sesame Street-style with the headline “Today’s number is brought to you by…” with each grade as daily educators. The kindergarten students introduced the number 11 because there are 11 students in the class, seventh grader Talia Schnur aced the number 20 by figuring out that she turns 20 in 2020, and so on. “This illustrates how each of us is made up of many parts,” says Gretchen, “I’m a Jew and a writer and a mathematician and so on.” Never shy about diving into a project, before Passover Gretchen took over the school kitchen to make four kinds of *charoset*,

summoning staff and students for taste tests. Students’ number one choice was California *charoset*, while the staff vote was divided between New England and Persian.

The fifth generation Californian and descendent of Judah Benjamin (Secretary of State of the Confederacy).

Gretchen grew up in Hollywood, CA where the late superstar Michael Jackson was her sixth grade classmate. She graduated from the University of California at Berkeley and spent four years in Israel working for the Environmental Protection Service and teaching. She is an active member of Temple Israel of Natick and the Chabad Center of Natick. She and husband Stewart have four children, all day school graduates. While Gretchen sees herself as being on her own “Jewish journey,” it is her goal “to meet everyone wherever they are on their journeys and to encourage them to find their own path.”

The Poets and Artists of MWJDS

MWJDS is proud of our student poets who were winners in the 24th Annual Massachusetts Science Poetry contest. Our winners include: Arlie Burg - honorable mention; Ben Schwartz and Kendra Burg, third place; Sabrina Casey and Jessica Wulf, second place; the kindergarten class, Ethan Klopman and Tzali Nislick - first place.

We have a number of talented poets who share their thoughts on many themes. In

celebration of National Poetry Month, students read their own work or published work at the school’s annual Poetry Reading and Book Fair (pictured here) at Barnes and Noble in Framingham. Art teacher Patti Kelly Bernhard curated an accompanying exhibit featuring works by every MWJDS student including drawings, watercolors, pastels, collages and relief sculptures.



Rabbi Bazer: Tour of Duty Program

Rabbi Laurence Bazer, of Temple Beth Sholom, visited with all students. Children saw his slide show and listened as he described his tour of duty experiences as the sole rabbi in all of Afghanistan. He showed photos and told stories of the two schools that his unit helped to build, how he travelled the country in Chinook and black hawk helicopters, discussed the 23 yr. old soldier who finally had the opportunity to become a *bar mitzvah*, about the dinner Rabbi Bazer had with Apollo 13 astronauts, his pop up *sukkah*, and more. Rabbi Bazer even found an Afghan tailor to make a *tallit* from camouflage material. Thank you Rabbi Bazer for sharing this unique experience.

MWJDS student Clara just happened to be wearing her camouflage outfit when Rabbi Bazer was a guest speaker



Ohayou.* Welcome to Japan



Jared's snack time Japanese style

First and second graders enjoyed an intensive three-month social studies project which explored the culture of Japan and the lives of its children. They began by finding Japan on a map, labeling the four major islands and making Japanese flags. They learned calligraphy and origami, designed Japanese gardens, made carp streamers (the carp is a symbol of strength and determination as it swims against the current), and illustrated Kamishibai stories, a traditional form of storytelling using picture scrolls. They also enjoyed Japanese cuisine using chopsticks.

A highlight of their studies was a visit to the Boston Children's Museum Japanese House, a fully-equipped 100-year-old house which was reconstructed on site by

Japanese carpenters. "I really liked how we got to do what Japanese people do during different times of the day," says second grader Eliana Simons. For this activity, children used bins with objects for different meals and leisure activities. Students enjoyed comparing their own houses with the Japanese House, noting that the home was made of wood, straw and paper - very different from theirs. "The garden was really pretty," adds Eliana, and it was just like the ones that the children made in class.

At the end of the unit, students invited their families for a celebration of Kodomo No Hi, Japanese Children's Day, and enjoyed drinking tea and making origami with them.

**Good morning*



Amanda enjoys a Japanese tea ceremony

Middle School Takes a Bite of "The Big Apple"



The ATID class in NYC

The Atid (7th grade) class visited New York City, experiencing Jewish history combined with modern culture. Teachers Elana Rome and Carrie Fuchs joined the group along with Behzad Dayanim, Head of School.

A scavenger hunt in Times Square got things started. "The trip was a lot of fun," says 7th grader Sam Rothkopf. "I really enjoyed the sites, especially Time Square, because we went there at night, and it was all lit up."

The group toured Ellis Island, where many of our ancestors arrived in the U.S. Next stop was the Tenement Museum, housed in several apartments in the Lower East Side, which was home to over 7,000 working class immigrants. The museum recreates immigrant life in the 19th and 20th centuries. "This was where immigrants lived right after passing through Ellis Island," says Elana.

The students experienced modern New York City by way of a tour of NBC Studios and a performance of "Stomp", a combination of musical theatre, choreographed percussion, and physical comedy.

At the Museum of Natural History they visited the Hall of Human Origins, examined dioramas of animals from North America and Africa, and explored the rocks, minerals and gems exhibit. They "topped" things off with a trip to the Empire State Building.

HaMorab Tali's Torah



Project

Fifth graders and their Torahs

The last *mitzvah* of the *Torah* is for each of us to write our own *Torah*. The fifth grade students worked very hard this year on their *Torah* project. Since the beginning of the school year, they have been writing summaries and commentaries on all 54 *Torah* portions. They made a *Torah* cover, a *yad* (pointer) and a breast plate to create their own personal *Torahs*. It is amazing how much work these students completed.

Chai Society Discusses the Power of Pluralism



Aron and Susan Ain pictured with Rabbi Daniel Lehmann at the Chai Event

“How Wide is Our Tent: Case Studies of Pluralism in Jewish Day Schools” was the subject of a lively discussion led by Rabbi Daniel Lehmann, the President of Hebrew College, at this year’s Chai Society

event. Four dozen supporters gathered at the home of MWJDS founders’, Renée and Steven Finn, to hear Rabbi Lehmann, the founding Head of School at Gann Academy. He presented real-life cases leading to conversation relative to the issue of how schools can respond to individual and community differences and needs.

The Chai Society consists of two opportunities to support MWJDS:

- The Chai Circle was created for donors who wish to make a sustaining commitment to the MWJDS Annual Campaign. These gifts help the school in recruiting students, enhancing STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts,

Math) initiatives, and providing professional development. Members make an annual commitment of \$1,800, \$2,500, \$3,600, or more, for three years. New and renewing members will receive two complimentary reservations for the Winter Lights Gala 2012 and an annual invitation to the Chai Society event.

- Chai Champions contribute \$750 or more annually and are invited to the Chai event during the year of their gift.

Make a profound impact on our school. For these and other major gift opportunities, please contact Behzad Dayanim, Head of School at behzad.dayanim@mwjds.org or 508-620-5554.

Why An Envelope?

As you read these pages, you will see that we are focused on the full spectrum of our students’ educational experience: enhancing their curiosity as they learn to question everything, engaging them in social justice and the arts, and helping them to find their place in the broader community.

A Jewish day school education is expensive. We are grateful for the culture of giving that has supported MWJDS since its founding in 2003. Offering Metrowest families a strong Jewish day school is dependent on our continuing to receive this vital support. As we begin our 10th year, we hope you will consider a gift. Your generosity means everything to our students. Inquiries into tribute and sponsorship opportunities are always welcomed. Contact Behzad Dayanim, Head of School at behzad.dayanim@mwjds.org or 508-620-5554. Thank you - we couldn’t do it without you!

Join Us in Supporting MWJDS



Paul & Marcia Rosenberg photo courtesy of The Rosenbergs

“We have been donors of MWJDS since it was a dream in Reneé Finn’s mind,” says Marcia Rosenberg. “We signed on early, because we felt it was the right thing for Metrowest,” added her husband, Paul. The Rosenbergs are proud MWJDS Founders and Chai Society members.

“We especially like that MWJDS is multi-denominational, bringing everyone under the umbrella,” said Marcia. “The small classes and high standards make us wish we could have had this choice for our children.” She is especially pleased by the school’s focus on social justice. “The kids learn that they are part of a community and have a responsibility to make their Judaism real.” Marcia noted the school’s partnership with Temple Beth Am for the annual Mitzvah Day, the middle school trips to Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly’s Shillman House and this year’s MWJDS Walk for Mazon. “When you come to the school, you see students who are very excited to learn and a staff that is very creative.”

The Wayland residents, who are also long-time supporters of the Danforth Museum and Jewish Family Service of Metrowest (JFSMW), acknowledge that many non-profit organizations are experiencing fundraising challenges. The couple urges the community to support MWJDS.

“We are very excited about the new campus and plans for the school to become a center for Jewish learning,” said Paul. “We’re glad to be a part of its continued efforts to strengthen the Metrowest Jewish community.”

“Day school should be available to all.” said Marcia. “It should be there for our children and grandchildren.” Marcia Rosenberg

Winter Lights



Joyce Bohnen, 2012 MWJDS Winter Lights Honoree

MWJDS Board of Directors

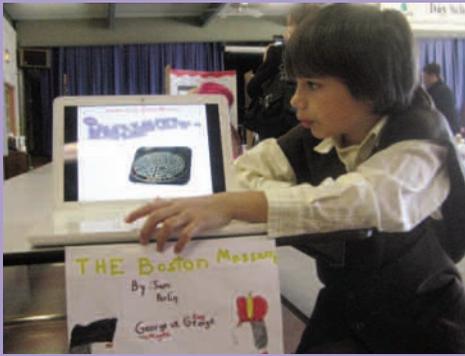
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Save the Date for Gala 2012: Our 10th Anniversary!

Joyce Bohnen will be our special honoree at the annual MWJDS Gala, celebrating our school’s 10th Anniversary, on Sunday, December 2nd, 5:00 pm at Gann Academy in Waltham. Joyce, a longtime leader in Boston’s Jewish community, was the founding Director of Admissions for MWJDS, working closely with Carolyn Keller and Renée Finn, in recruiting our first students. She continues as a mentor and weekly volunteer. For tribute opportunities, please contact Behzad Dayanim, Head of School at behzad.dayanim@mwjds.org .

MWJDS Becomes a Stop on the Freedom Trail



Sam explains the Boston Massacre

The Freedom Trail came to MWJDS as part of the fourth grade American Revolution studies. Students each chose a specific area on the Freedom Trail to research and designed a PowerPoint presentation. They then fashioned their own Freedom Trail at MWJDS with each student's presentation being a stop on the trail. Fellow students and parents walked the trail to learn about Boston during Colonial times. "The project was a great combination of technology and social studies," said Assistant Teacher Eliza Weiss. The class visited the real Freedom Trail in Boston. At the Paul Revere House they saw the presentation "Paul Revere: The Man behind The Myth" and examined artifacts from Colonial times. While exploring the Old South Meeting House students took the parts of the Patriots in an energetic debate with the fifth graders, who played the Loyalists. They discussed the pros and cons of throwing tea into Boston Harbor. It was a draw!

Fifth Graders Can Weather Any Storm



MEMA Director Kurt Schwartz (back row, left) hosting MWJDS student visitors

Consulting the experts while becoming experts themselves, fifth graders learned all about weather. The students checked daily newspaper or on-line forecasts, learned to read a weather map, and were often spotted outside using various weather instruments. They noted precipitation levels with a rain gauge; measured the temperature in Celsius; determined wind speed and direction using a compass; used a barometer to check air pressure; observed cloud formations and compared their data with that of the National Weather Service (NWS).

"We were in his office, which was certified by the F.B.I. as a location for a top secret meeting."

Sam Burg

Students met with Glenn Field, Warning Coordination Meteorologist for the NWS. During his presentation he explained that what we perceive as unusual weather can be part of a larger weather pattern. The class visited the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA) and met Director Kurt Schwartz. Student Sam Burg commented, "The visit to MEMA was cool because we visited the bunker and usually the only people who go inside there are the workers or state officials during major

emergencies. Director Schwartz described how the bunker was built to survive a nuclear attack. We were in his office, which was certified by the F.B.I. as a location for a top secret meeting."

During their trip to the Channel 5-TV studio, Chief Meteorologist Harvey Leonard showed them the control room and green screen, Doppler radar and other tools used to monitor the weather. He explained that even with all the technology, sometimes he has to "roll with the punches," recalling one stormy day when the computers failed and he had to rely on his

instinct and expertise. Mr. Leonard also spoke about climate change, explaining that the extreme weather we have experienced lately might not be an indication of global warming. He shared with the class that his early interest in science and math led him to his career in meteorology. "The trip to Channel 5 was awesome," says fifth grader Sabrina Casey. "We got to see how everything works. Now when I watch the weather on TV, I can say, 'I was there!'"

Special Visitors' Day

The school was awash in happy faces at the 9th annual Special Visitors' Day in May. Beloved adults – grandparents, family friends and volunteers – paired off with students as they shared classroom activities, academic achievements and arts and music presentations. Guests enjoyed a special performance led by Artist-in-Residence Judith Spitzberg, which combined musical improvisation, instrumental play and song with folk tales, poems, Israeli folk dances and classical music from "Peter and the Wolf". "This was a demonstration," said Judith, "of how the creative process is integrated and comes alive in our classrooms."

Our guest speaker was Leonard Fein, MWJDS grandfather, writer and founder of

Mazon: The Jewish Response to Hunger. His presentation brought our year-long focus on hunger awareness full circle. The students were proud to present Mr. Fein

with a check for *Mazon*, representing the amount they raised the day before during our *Lag b'Omer* Walk for *Mazon*. (See article on page 4.)



Special visitors worked with the students on reading, computer programs, and curriculum related projects



Students Learn about Heroes from the Inside Out



Johnny Appleseed (via Max Sinrich) arrives in Framingham!

Third graders do more than learn about historical figures during their 10-week biographical research project. They put themselves in their historical character's shoes to see the world from their perspective. The culmination of this project is a "Wax Museum." Students dress up as the person they studied and present their character "in person". These history-

makers describe their influence on society, tell how they became famous, and recall hardships and memorable times in their lives.

The Wax Museum featured Aiden Kent as John Fitzgerald Kennedy, Nathan Nislick as Paul Revere, Max Sinrich as Johnny Appleseed, Ilana Talamo as Susan B. Anthony, and Kayla Wolensky as Clara Barton. "It was fun," says Ilana. "I liked pretending to be Susan B. Anthony, because she helped women get the right to vote."



Clara Barton, Susan B. Anthony, Johnny Appleseed, Paul Revere and John F. Kennedy were featured in the Wax Museum

Mitzvah Day

In the spirit of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world, MWJDS and Temple Beth Am coordinated the fourth Annual Mitzvah Day on May 20th. Projects were for all ages and included cleaning up and placing flags at the grave sites of veterans at the Framingham-Natick Hebrew Cemetery, clearing the grounds of Danforth Museum of Art, making fleece blankets for use by police and firefighters during disaster relief, sorting toiletries for a family shelter, participating in a sing-a-long at a nursing home, and filling backpacks with school supplies for needy children.

Mitzvah Day is partially funded by Combined Jewish Philanthropies, Jewish Family Service of Metrowest, and the Metrowest Jewish Community Center. The Framingham Cooperative Bank provided a generous grant for project expenses. Thanks to the 100s of people who participated in and donated to the success of this meaningful program.



Elizabeth and Talia are making dough for dog treats



Friends sharing breakfast before Mitzvah Day

Intergenerational Fun at Shillman House



Once a month, students in grades five and seven visit the residents of Shillman House in Framingham. These visits are part of the Generations Together Program of Jewish Community Housing for the Elderly (JCHE). The purpose of the program is to enable residents and young people to develop relationships by spending time together teaching, learning and sharing life experiences.

For MWJDS students, their trips are also part of their goal of making a difference in the lives of people who may need companionship, while having the opportunity to learn from an older generation. "I see our focus as intergenerational interaction with a bit of oral history," explains teacher Elana Rome, who often accompanies the students. "Our students do many different activities with the residents. They talk about anything from leisure pursuits to their favorite foods. I enjoy watching the interactions." Elana recalled a favorite activity when students brought their favorite games. First the students interviewed the residents about their favorite games, and then the residents asked the students about their favorites. Then they taught each other the games they loved. Activities also included Human Bingo and spring planting. Seth Wulf reports, "Going to the Shillman House was a very cool experience. We learned how to play older card games that we didn't know before because kids don't learn them now. I remember one person named Esther taught us how to play Bastara, a game that's all about keeping the jokers, which in normal card games today get discarded."

The Generations Together Program received a grant from the Framingham Cooperative Bank and has been honored by the National Council on Aging with the RespectAbility Award.

A Celebration of Science



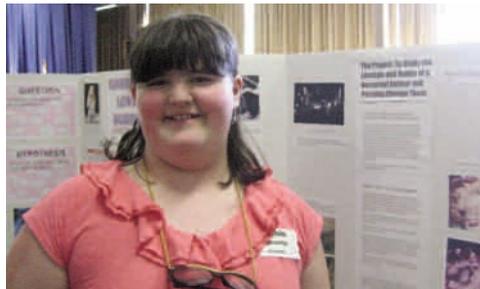
Matt determined that different surfaces affect the speed of race cars

electricity and vinegar-baking soda volcano eruptions. There were also investigations into where color comes from, why yeast makes baked goods rise, what causes lightning, how acid rain affect plants, and what seeds need in order to grow. There was even an experiment to test how music affects a person's reaction to a scary movie. "I made a habitat for a real cricket," says first grader Talia Goldvasser, "and got to see how it lives!" Grade 7 student, Matt Heaps commented how fun it was to determine "which surface was easier for my racecar to overcome: tile, a rug, pebbles and dirt. The tile floor won by far." Everyone enjoyed the presentation, "Microprocessor Mania" by Morry Safer, guest speaker from Intel. Several MWJDS students went on to participate in the Regional Jewish Day School Science Fair at Gann Academy.

What an amazing Science Fair we had!" says Head of School Behzad Dayanim. "It was a fantastic celebration of science, with experiments involving exciting resources from bubbles to bread and crystals to hamsters. Subjects ranged from physics to chemistry, botany, biology, ecology and engineering - all of which revolve around our STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) curriculum technology."

Kindergarten, first and second graders participated in class projects, with some students conducting independent projects as well. Students in grades three through seven developed their own projects at home, working individually or in pairs. All experiments were done according to the scientific method: ask a question, construct a hypothesis, test with an experiment, collect data, draw a conclusion. "Understanding the value of the scientific process enables students to grow as learners," says Behzad, "as they explore new challenges, make educated hypotheses and construct measurable ways to test their predictions."

The kindergarten class explored the sense of touch, while first and second graders learned how to grow wheatgrass in different kinds of straws. Other students designed experiments to discover how to make the best bubbles, a magnet with



Sophie researched nocturnal animals' habitats



Second graders investigated how various growing conditions affected the growth of grass

Our Fine Feathered Friends

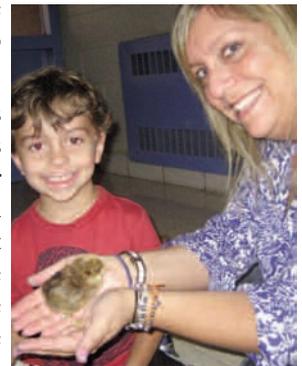


Will and Gabrielle chronicle their scientific observations of the chicks

There were six bright new faces in the kindergarten class - and they're surrounded by feathers! For weeks the students had eagerly awaited signs that the eggs they'd been observing in their incubator were ready. One night May, two hatchlings emerged, soon followed by four siblings.

The class recited the *Shebechayanu* prayer in *tefilla*, which is said when one experiences something new. Although they were not present when the chicks hatched, the class gladly recited the prayer when they saw the chicks for the first time. Through the incubation period, students learned about how chicks are born, including how the incubator substituted for the hen's natural heat. Nitzan explained why chicks hatch from farm eggs but not from eggs we have at home - because the latter are refrigerated. They also learned that the yoke is food for the embryo, while the white albumen is what surrounds the embryo. Looking at eggshells with a magnifying glass, the students were able to see the tiny holes that enable the embryo to breathe.

Once the chicks arrived, students monitored their daily growth and changes. At week's end, the class brought the chicks back home on a field trip to Codman Farm in Lincoln.



Zach, and mom Jina, enjoy the baby chicks

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