



# THE UHI BULLETIN

The Weekly Newsletter of United Hebrew Institute, Kingston, Pennsylvania, USA

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL



Rabbi Raphael Nemetsky

By now you have had many reminders that Pesach is imminently upon us. You've seen the Passover displays in the supermarkets and perhaps many mailers from Jewish organizations that solicit funds to assist needy families with this holiday. You may have heard your child singing a few of the Haggadah songs or chanting the fifteen steps of the Seder.

As I wrote in last week's bulletin, the ultimate purpose of this festival is to renew and rejuvenate our bond with G-d. He took us out of Egypt so that we could be His chosen people and that relationship continues to this day. The Seder, the eating of matzah for eight days, the refraining from eating chametz (leavened grain products), and many other components of this holiday are there to instill in us a renewed sense of loyalty to G-d.

The Pesach Seder is the single most observed element of Judaism. More than any other holiday, including Yom Kippur, the Seder has the broadest range of Jews who participate. While it is beyond the scope of this article to examine why Jews are so interested in the Seder, it is fairly safe to say that the Seder resonates even with Jews who would normally not partake in Jewish holidays.

Parents conducting or participating in a Seder have the unique opportunity to inspire their children to truly gain a great deal from the Seder. The single most important element for children to absorb some of the messages of the Seder is that young participants remain interested in the Seder. That is best accomplished by asking them questions and encouraging them to ask you. It's alright if you do not have the answers – no one has all the answers. However, if children are praised for showing initiative and curiosity they will ask additional and better questions.

Please encourage their curiosity by responding to their questions. If your children propose an answer that you can discuss, you have kept them engaged. Try to have them imagine being eyewitnesses to the exodus from Egypt. Encourage them to sing the songs they learned in school and practiced at the model Seders. Above all else, teach by example by focusing on the Haggadah and not rushing to get to the meal. If the Seder is important to you, it will likely become more meaningful in the eyes of your children.

*On behalf of the staff and directors of the UHI,  
I wish you a happy and kosher Pesach.*

Rabbi Raphael J. Nemetsky

## Preparing for Passover

Nursery to  
Grade 4



NEWS

Thank you to Leah Dougherty for shopping for the Model Seders.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mar. 29 – Apr. 7 NO CLASSES  
Passover Vacation

Apr. 8 Classes resume.

Apr. 11 Yom Hashoah at JCC 4:00 PM

Apr. 20 Yom Ha'Atzmaut at the Courthouse  
9:30 AM



## Polar Animals

Angela Kalie, Teacher

The preschool has been having such fun learning about polar animals. We kicked off the theme with polar bears. We learned that polar bears are great swimmers. We read about the kinds of foods they like to eat. The children were amazed by the fact that polar bears have black skin and tongues. The children learned about the arctic fox, seals, and walrus. All of these animals have blubber in order to keep them warm in the freezing cold North Pole.

We ended our theme learning about the penguins that live in the South Pole. We learned that penguins are great swimmers, too. These great animals are birds but they can't fly like other birds. We also learned that after the female penguin lays an egg, the male penguin takes care of the egg by carrying it around on its feet being very careful not to let it touch the snow. We also learned that the male penguin doesn't eat for months while taking care of the egg. During this time, the female penguin is searching for food. It was interesting to learn how the penguin parents cooperate in caring for the "young".



## Pesach

Malka Seewald, Teacher

The 4<sup>th</sup> grade students are extremely busy preparing for the upcoming holiday of Passover. We are making our very own Haggadas, and we are also decorating pillowcases to be used at the seder. We are learning all about the enslavement in Egypt and how Hashem took us and made us His nation.

Originally, Hashem planned for us to be in Mitzrayim for 400 years, but after 210 years, we reached our quota of suffering and were freed in the year 2448.

We discussed each item on the seder platter - the marror, charoset, karpas, egg, zeroah and the chazeret - and the reason behind it. Each one represents a different aspect of our slavery and our freedom.

Another name for Passover is the Holiday of the Spring. Jewish holidays go by the lunar cycle, and the seasons follow the sun. This causes a problem as we are off each year by eleven days. After a few years, the 14<sup>th</sup> of Nissan would not come out in the spring, but in the winter. Our rabbis came out with a solution and instituted the leap year. This year is not a leap year; however, but the 4<sup>th</sup> grade students now understand the reason why we need 7 leap years in a 19-year cycle.

Hashem always refers to Pesach as Chag Hamatzot, the Holiday of the Matzot, giving credit to the Jews for having complete faith in Him by leaving Egypt for an unknown destination with just dough on their backs. We call the holiday Pesach, giving credit to Hashem for passing over our doors and sparing our first born boys during the tenth plague.

Have a happy and kosher Pesach



## Second Grade Students Experiment at the Science Fair

Karen Traver, Teacher

UHI's second grade students tested how surface tension of water is affected by soap. In addition to performing the experiment in class in preparation for the Science Fair, the students had the opportunity to repeat their experiment (or guide their family members in performing the experiment) at the Science Fair.

Based on the data collected at the Science Fair, the average number of drops of plain water that can fit on the surface of a penny is fifteen. The average number of drops of soapy water is twelve. We expected the drops of soapy water to be fewer than the plain water because soap changes water's ability to stick to itself. Thank you to everyone who participated in our experiment at the Science Fair.

