



VISIT US AT:
www.associatedhebrewschools.com

חורף | תש"ע | WINTER 2009



We are **Associated**
 Associated Hebrew Schools of Toronto

Early Exposure... The Benefits of Hebrew Language in Bet Hayeled

BY DIANA NAIBERG

Most experts agree the earlier a child is introduced to a second language, the greater the chances that child will become truly proficient.

Associated's Hebrew language programs are modeled on the best and most current educational research. According to ERIC (Educational Resources Information Centre) – the world's largest digital library of education – a child's brain is extremely receptive to language acquisition between ages four and seven because children's minds are more flexible than those of adults.

Keith Weiser, Professor of Modern Jewish Studies at York University, supports this finding. He says young children acquire second languages with great facility because their ears and tongues "have not yet learned to be unable to detect or produce certain sounds that are outside the inventory of the language they know best."

Weiser adds that social and cultural inhibitions do not impede children's acquisition of a new language as much as

it would adult learners. For instance, the more self-conscious a person is about pronunciation, the more difficulty that individual will have, Weiser explains. Children are typically less self-conscious than adults, especially if they have not yet learned to conceptualize a linguistic system as "foreign," he says.

The most successful way of teaching any second language at a young age is through emphasis of the spoken word, which is exactly the model Associated adheres to and prides itself on.

Twice a week, a Hebrew language facilitator speaks to nursery students only in Hebrew for a half-hour at a time. This is in addition to having a Hebrew-speaking assistant in the class. At the junior and senior kindergarten level, the Hebrew language program *Chalav U'dvash* (a curriculum developed

specifically for children in the Diaspora by the Jewish Agency) runs twice a week for half-day students and four times weekly for full-day students. All classes in Bet Hayeled (Associated's Pre-School program) are introduced to routinely-used phrases in connection with directives. This is usually done with games, songs, rhymes, stories and arts and crafts, to name a few. Even the SMARTboard is used in Bet Hayeled to enhance sentence completion.

Elana Shapiro-Davidson ('87), Vice Principal of Bet Hayeled at the Kamin campus, says integrating *Chalav U'dvash* on the SMARTboard has been very exciting for both teachers and students.

"While the programming remains game-based in order to make a child's learning meaningful, the learning goal is to practice conversational language," she says.

That means students are able to check

if their Hebrew sentence structure is correct by launching a video of a Hebrew consultant, a teacher, or an older student who models the spoken language.

"This is where the element of immediate feedback comes into play without the teacher being at the centre...and by doing this, students can be asking questions and receiving information at once from both the teacher and the SMARTboard within the classroom," Shapiro-Davidson adds.

Along with the success of *Chalav U'dvash*, a Hebrew Immersion program was introduced for Bet Hayeled students at both elementary campuses. What makes the immersion program different from *Chalav U'dvash* is that full-day students are engrossed in the linguistic environment for half their day, five days a week. As such, they do different projects that incorporate different activities like baking, cooking,

Continued on page 2



We Are Associated

Editor:
Naomi Moscoe

Editorial Advisory Board:
Natalie Blumberg,
Chuck English, Marcie Fisher,
Deena Gauze-Nathanson,
Jodi Gottesman, Diana Naiberg,
Tammy Parker, Joanne Perlmutter,
Beth Singer, Robin Sofer, Tracy Zepp

**Marketing &
Communications Associate:**
Rebecca Soberman

Director of Development:
Pauline E. Pankowski

**Manager, Development
& Special Projects:**
Rella Margolis

We Are Associated is a joint communication vehicle of Associated Hebrew Schools and the Parent Teacher Council. It is our aim to provide meaningful and useful information to parents, students, alumni, staff and members of the community who all contribute to the excellence of our school.

The goal of Associated Hebrew Schools is education. Our constituency comprises members from many cultural, social and religious segments of the Jewish community. Since 1907, we have provided the finest educational services and facilities. A dynamic institution, Associated has adapted its programs throughout the decades to ensure that an outstanding educational experience remains accessible.

For those who seek wisdom, understanding and the opportunity to perpetuate the Jewish people and our Jewish community, we invite you to associate yourself with our quest for success.

Readers are invited to submit comments or questions in writing to **We Are Associated** at the address below:

BUSINESS OFFICE:
We Are Associated
c/o Associated Hebrew Schools
252 Finch Avenue West
Toronto, ON M2R 1M9
Tel.: (416) 494-7666
Fax: (416) 494-2925
www.associatedhebrewschools.com
or email: editor@ahschools.com



UJA Federation provides funding for Jewish Education at Associated Hebrew Schools.



Hebrew Language Acquisition CONTINUED

painting, Israeli arts, exploration and experimentation. They take part in a multitude of experiences wherein they can practice Hebrew in real contexts.

The immersion program began as a pilot project four years ago at Associated's Posluns branch at the senior kindergarten level. Ora Shulman, Vice Principal of Bet Hayaed at Posluns, says the school felt the need to introduce a "rich, Hebrew-speaking environment." What started out with one classroom in 2005 has now grown to three with 55 students in the program altogether.

At the Kamin branch, the immersion program was introduced to one senior and one junior kindergarten class last year. This year, a second senior kindergarten immersion class was added to Bet Hayaed.

"We are now looking to expand to two junior kindergarten classes and at least two senior kindergarten immersion classes for the 2010-2011 school year," says Eynat Katz ('85), Vice-Principal of Bet Hayaed at Kamin. Like any other language immersion program, Associated's has proven that students who complete the program have more formal instruction in Hebrew by the time they

reach grade school.

"Their ear has become attuned to the language and they are most comfortable with the receptive and expressive aspects of the Hebrew language," Katz goes on to explain.

York University's Weiser agrees. He says an immersion program exposes a child to a fuller range of language use for different functions and in different contexts.

Adds Posluns' Shulman, "We aim to impart a basic knowledge of spoken Hebrew that will also provide a foundation for future study of the language and develop children's ability to communicate in Hebrew. This is part of a continuum, which takes into account different components at various stages of the children's language development."

Ultimately, the experts agree that being bilingual at an early age has a positive effect on intellectual growth; it enriches a child's mental development, encourages more flexibility in thinking and provides a head-start in language requirements for higher learning.

All in all, as Shulman puts it, knowing another language is a real asset in the real world. •

THE LANGUAGE OF OUR PEOPLE

BY DR. MARK SMILEY, DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION



Dr. Mark Smiley ('72)

Part of the educational vision at the educational vision at Associated Hebrew Schools is to connect our students to Israel, Jewish culture and the centuries-old understanding of Hebrew classical sources. Despite the growing trend to teach

Judaic and Rabbinic courses using English as the language of instruction, Hebrew language continues to be a cherished value and staple of Jewish day schools in Toronto.

At Associated, we are equally committed to the value of teaching Hebrew as a key to studying original sources, as we are for enriching our connection to the importance of upholding an independent Jewish state. As to those who argue Hebrew language is not necessary in the study

of Jewish texts, as they are mostly available today in translation, or to visit the State of Israel, we respectfully disagree.

Associated continues to see the mastery of classical sources and fluency in spoken Hebrew as ultimate aims of our education. While the School takes pride in accommodating students of all abilities and backgrounds, we remain steadfast in our belief that the educated, modern Jew is someone who can swim in original Hebrew sources and always remain connected to the language of the Jewish state.

Our approach to Zionism – *Ahavat Medinat Israel* – is inextricable from our unwavering commitment to Hebrew, and our approach to *Ahavat Hatorah* continues to guide us as being

reflective of the Covenant between *Hashem* and the Jewish people.

In Toronto, we are blessed with a community that values Hebrew in many ways. For as one visionary wrote, Hebrew education "... all depends on the willingness of the community to recognize that Hebrew must be acquired in order for the Jewish heritage to be transmitted in all its force. But this willingness is, in turn, dependent on the weight that the community assigns to a meaningful Jewish education."

Even in our internet age, we must be reminded of the wisdom of our Sages that it is through our language and literature that Jews have sustained themselves. Such has been that case at Associated, for over a century, and in our history, for millennia. •

**Hurwich Education Centre
Danilack Middle School
(416) 494-7666**

**Kamin Education Centre
(905) 889-3998**

**Posluns Education Centre
(416) 787-1872**

**Bet Hayaed
(905) 889-3998, Ext.2**

Publication Mail Agreement
Number 40026867

PRINTED IN CANADA

As my son, Josh, prepared for Bar Mitzvah this past summer I was extremely proud, but not surprised at the ease and familiarity with which he approached his studies. While he wasn't familiar with his Torah portion, he was at ease with the text and learning Torah was already a part of his daily life.

Not long after his triumph on the *bimah*, my son boarded a plane to Israel. Josh's instant connection to "*Ha'aretz*" filled me with *nachas* but, again, came as no surprise. His love for Israel, instilled by us, had been cultivated and enhanced by his school environment.

What did surprise me was how well he got on with the language. My son could communicate in

Hebrew. More importantly, his grasp of the modern language connected him to the people and culture of modern Israel, just as learning the ancient language of our forefathers connected him to our cultural and spiritual heritage.

Associated Hebrew Schools has long since widened the breadth of its Jewish Studies curriculum to incorporate conversational Hebrew, most recently focusing on Bet Hayaed. In her article, Diana Naiberg looks at the benefits of early exposure to a second language and how innovative programming integrates everyday Hebrew into the children's everyday lives. In his address, Dr. Smiley emphasizes the value of learning our forefather's Hebrew, and the deeper

LETTER FROM THE

Editor



Naomi Moscoe

understanding and connection it brings to the study of Jewish texts. Together, these pieces reflect the coexistence of Associated's traditional standards with modern curricular advancements. The result is a well-rounded student who, like my son, feels as connected to the Jews of today as he does to the ancients.

Mordechai Cohen

JEWISH STUDIES
PRINCIPAL,
DANILACK
MIDDLE SCHOOL



Principal Profile

Q. What made you want to become a Jewish educator?

A. I view teaching as a sacred obligation and I firmly believe, as the Jewish sages say, that a teacher learns from his students. It is this synergy of wanting to contribute to the next generation and learn from them and with them that makes Jewish education so exciting for me.

There is a well known story in the Talmud that I believe illustrates my understanding of the obligation of teaching.

(Ta'anit 23a) Honi, the circle drawer or *HaMagel*, saw a man planting a carob tree and asked, – as the carob tree needs 70 years to bear fruit – “Do you think you will live another seventy years and eat the fruit of this tree?” The man answered, “Perhaps not. However, when I was born into this world, I found many carob trees planted by my ancestors. Just as they planted trees for me, I am planting trees for my children.”

The Talmud is teaching that one needs to better the world for the sake of the coming generations even if one does not benefit directly from one's labours; however, unlike Honi, I don't have to wait 70 years. I already have *nachas* from many of my students, the best fruits for an educator.

Q. How long have you been a teacher/administrator?

A. Almost all of my professional life has been in Jewish education

Q. What is your education background?

A. A word on my family background before my education. My parents are South African, met and married in London, England and moved to Winnipeg where I was born. While I was a small child, we moved to southern California, where I grew up and then I made *aliyah*.

I attended the Hebrew Academy Lubavitch (Chabad) Day School in Orange County, CA and went on to graduate high school from the local public school. I spent a gap year in Yeshiva in Israel and then studied at the University of Southern California, graduating with a BA in International Relations. For part of the program, I spent a semester in Washington DC and interned for the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), as well as spent time in Jerusalem on a junior year abroad program at The Hebrew University.

After completing my BA, I returned to Israel and was a founding student at the Bat Ayin Yeshiva. I completed the Pardes Educators Program including graduate studies in Jewish Education at The Hebrew University and then went back to the US where I was a lead teacher at the San Diego Jewish Academy. Before returning to Israel, I was the Director of Jewish Studies at the New Community High School in Los Angeles. I also participated in the Day School Leadership Training Institute that trains leaders for North American Jewish Day Schools. In Israel, prior to my arrival in Toronto (with my wife Liat and 4 children), I taught at the Shalom Hartman Institute and worked for the Jewish Agency.

Q. Describe a classroom experience that makes teaching worthwhile.

A. When a class is able to learn the tools to unlock the values in a Jewish source, the class becomes even more rooted in the Jewish textual tradition. And then the class is able to understand why I love learning and teaching, and together we become the next link in the chain of Jewish learning.

Q. What is it that you love most about teaching and/or being a principal?

A. Helping to construct a feeling of community, trying to help a child find the good in him or herself and others. I also believe it is key to work with students so they internalize that what happens in the classroom applies to life outside the classroom.

Q. What are your individual education philosophies and how do you apply them in school?

A. For me, the Jewish soul plays a vital role in a young person's connection to God. Our Jewish and universal experiences, both in and outside of school, can and should be elevated to connect to the Divine. By talking and raising the consciousness of our students' Jewish souls and helping them realize that, while important, it's not only about friends and marks but also about developing a relationship with God, we can help them understand this important principal.

Q. Can you tell us something about yourself that your students would be surprised to learn about you?

A. During my undergraduate years at university, I spent some time studying abroad in Israel at the Hebrew University and worked part time as a taxi driver and a falafel maker. While not so good, I enjoy playing ping pong. Also, I have more passports than anybody I know and, no, I am not a secret agent.

Q. What inspires you?

A. When students work hard and use their creativity to contribute to the Jewish People, I am inspired. My first day at Danilack Middle School, before I even sat down to talk with students, I saw the certificates on the wall thanking them for their contributions to organizations in Israel. Their commitment to Judaism and Israel inspires me. •



Share the Nachas

My husband Boaz and I are so happy with the Bet Haya'eled Hebrew Immersion program at Associated.

Just a few weeks into the school year, we were amazed when our daughter Aliya, currently in JK, would come home and insist on having conversations with us in Hebrew. It's also interesting that when she starts speaking to me in Hebrew she calls me *Ima* instead of Mama. I'm amazed by how much she understands already, and when I ask her how to say certain parts of the body or to name animals in Hebrew, she knows it all. Her Hebrew is by no means perfect, but it's very impressive for the short time she's been learning it. She loves singing Hebrew songs and we love that she pronounces her "*Resh*" like an Israeli. We are so proud of her new language skills and we're confident that the next time we travel to Israel to see her cousins, she'll be speaking with them in Hebrew or at least listening in on their conversations. Hebrew will definitely be a part of our lives and our children's future, so we're happy that there's a program where they can grasp the language with such ease in a fun and interactive way from an early age. – **Esther Willinger, AHS Parent**

We invite parents, former parents and alumni to share their *nachas* with us.

Esther Willinger

AlumniStory

Please tell us about your family and your current studies.

I am in my second year in the Arts and Science Program at McMaster University. After graduating from CHAT, I spent a year in Israel studying in Hebrew at *Midrehest HaBanot Ein Hanatziv*, an Israeli seminary for Jewish and Talmudic studies.

I come from a large family, two parents (Fred '73 and Rina) and four siblings. My father is a graduate of Associated, and my siblings and I are all alumni of Associated and my youngest brother is currently in Grade 5 at the Kamin Education Centre.

We know that you have received awards and recognition – can you please share some of those honours with us?

In Grade 12, I was named a Senator Joseph Lieberman Scholar (despite being a Canadian!). I graduated from CHAT with distinction, earning above a 90% average in my studies, both Judaic and General.

What are some of your most meaningful memories from your Associated days? Is there any particular defining moment that has stayed with you?

Music classes and programs were the highlight of my week. Mr. Gilden would play "musical football" and other games with the students and I was also part of the choir and sang at the Ricoh Coliseum for Israel's 50th Birthday. Another teacher who stands out is Mrs. Berdugo who had faith in me to do well despite the fact that Hebrew grammar was my worst subject.

The one lesson that has stuck with me is the plurality of the Jewish community at Associated. When we work together and overcome our differences, we embody the meaning of *Klal Yisrael*.

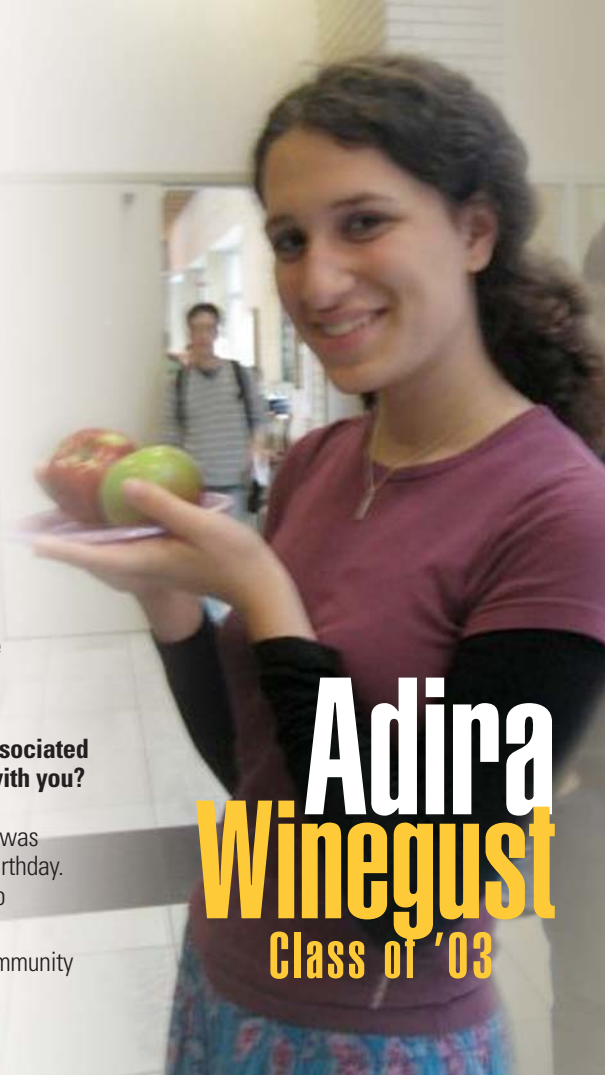
How does being Jewish impact your life? Does it have an impact within your life as a university student?

Being Jewish impacts my life everyday. At university, I am sometimes the first Jewish friend people have and I am glad that my education at Associated has given me the tools to be an ambassador.

On campus, I am active in the Jewish Students Association at McMaster University, serving as its chair for Social Action. This gives me the responsibility of co-ordinating "*Tikkun Olam*" projects, including co-ordinating volunteers at the Shalom Village, the Jewish retirement home in Hamilton, and for Hamilton's "Out of the Cold" program. I am also a member-at-large of the Israeli advocacy group "Israel on Campus".

What do you consider the highlight of your student life to date?

Spending a year in Israel in an all-Hebrew program and then being accepted to a 60-person program at McMaster, making the Dean's List at McMaster, and maintaining my entrance scholarship at university. •



Adira
Winegust
Class of '03



Adira (second from right) and her siblings l-r: Tamara, Class of '01; Yarden, Class of '05; Zev, Grade 5 at Kamin; and Marc, Class of '07.

The Power of Family

JANUARY 2010 WILL MARK THE LAUNCH OF A REMARKABLE
NEW ASSOCIATED FUNDRAISING INITIATIVE

Family Giving is an innovative and exciting way for Associated families to enhance the excellence of the educational experience for their children and the children of the community.

The program is designed to encourage parents and their children to participate together in the mitzvah of *Tzedaka* and direct their energy and support toward Associated. In that way, Family Giving will also provide a positive and active means for parents to instill important values into family life.

Families will choose an annual giving target based on the Possibilities Menu – a list of items that have been scheduled for purchase by the school. They will then be able to direct their giving toward defraying the cost of items/programs that are most meaningful to their family. A rewards program will make families that reach their target and/or certain giving levels, eligible for special prizes and recognition. Family Giving will also host a number of interesting and fun programs for the whole family (of course) throughout the year.

Each participating family will have their own *kupat mishpacha* – family account. They will receive regular updates and will be able to track their progress as the amount contributed grows.

"I think this is the kind of opportunity to support the school that parents have been waiting for. Its fun, personal, meaningful and the whole family can participate," said Renee Rosenzweig, Family Giving co-chair.

Families will be able to contribute through the purchase of tribute cards/ certificates or by making donations and will be encouraged to create family projects to help them raise money for Associated. Grandparents, aunts, uncles and other extended family members will also be able to help our giving families achieve their goals by making contributions to be included in a family's *kupah*.

Family Giving is being directed by a committee of parents co-chaired by Dr. Daphna Grossman, Renee Rosenzweig and Michael Kerzner. There are still lots of opportunities for involvement. **If you are interested in helping out or if you have any questions, please contact one of the co-chairs or our Director of Development, Pauline Pankowski at ppankowski@ahschools.com or at 416-494-7666 ext.260.** •



ASSOCIATED
family giving

What's Up @

ASSOCIATED

BY REBECCA SOBERMAN



Environment Week at Kamin

On October 23, Grade 3 and 4 students from Associated's Kamin Education Centre listened to an exciting one hour, hands-on presentation from *The Down to Earth Conservation Centre's* lead educator Loretta Penny (seen here with students). The presentation was part of the school's Environment Week that incorporated exciting hands-on activities with the students' curricular studies.

Students were able to see, touch and feel artifacts of various endangered species (confiscated from travelers who tried to smuggle them past Canadian officials and are now on loan to *Down to Earth* for educational purposes) as well as shop in the Global Village Gift Shop for an eco-friendly souvenir of their day. Ten percent of the sales were donated back to the School and enabled the purchase of new instruments for the music room.

Every grade participated in learning about and discussing aspects of the environment during the week. The Grade 5 students, for instance, connected with Jewish National Fund (JNF) and focussed on the issues related to water throughout the world. As well, every student from Grade 1 to 5 painted their own wall tile, based on the theme from each grade's environmental studies curriculum (pictured below). From images of wind turbines to cyclists to power saving methods to endangered species, the colourful renderings created by each student make up a magnificent mosaic that is on permanent display in the main entrance at Kamin.



Literacy through Photography at Posluns

Each year, Associated's Posluns Education Centre chooses a theme that stretches across all grade levels and curricula. This year, the chosen theme is 'Images'. Children of all ages are learning how to "read" photographs and how to tell a story using images. As part of this project, the school is engaged in an innovative elementary art curriculum called *Literacy through Photography*. This program goes beyond the mechanics of taking good photographs, by challenging children to think about how to express ideas and thoughts through photography.

The first project in the *Literacy through Photography* program has children creating self-portraits. Children first plan how they will tell something important about themselves through a photographic image. They then worked in pairs to create "self portraits". Next, children will be working with their general studies teachers to write about their pictures.

The self-portrait project will be followed by projects photographing family, community and dreams. These projects will be displayed at an art exhibit, taking place at Posluns' annual *Erev Tarbut* (cultural evening) on Yom Yerushalayim (Jerusalem Day), which falls on May 12, 2010.

The first project in the *Literacy through Photography* program

We have one of the best!

We are very proud of **Dianne Woznica**, Kamin's Bet Hayered SK Teacher, who was nominated as one of the best teachers in the GTA. Her name appeared in the October 1st issue of the *Toronto Star*, as one of 153 nominees for the newspaper's inaugural Star Teacher Award, an award that was created as a tribute to teachers on World Teacher's Day.

Mazel Tov Dianne – we are all so proud to have you as part of our wonderful team.



Our Associated PTC

Press PARENT TEACHER COUNCIL

As a parent volunteer for the past 8 years, I always felt that my contribution to our school community made a difference. Of the many hats that I have worn – as a class parent, branch liaison, acting chair of the Welcome Wagon and of fundraising galas – I am most proud of the hat I wear now. As President of the Parent Teacher Council of Associated Hebrew Schools, I lead the PTC into 2010 with Vice President Sari Bercovitch, a strong and involved Executive Committee and hundreds of volunteers. All are parents who are committed and dedicated to enhancing and enriching our children's educational experience. These volunteers and their work in the food programs, lice checks, drop off and pick up, book fairs, calendar, parent educational programming and many other PTC initiatives are the heartbeat of Associated. These initiatives provide a hands-on opportunity for parents to strengthen our great school.

The Parent Teacher Council plays an integral role in helping AHS fulfill its mission of providing the best educational and Jewish day school experience for our children. Through our many fundraising initiatives, the PTC is able to fully fund all three of the School's branch libraries and support such cutting-edge technology as SMARTboards and wireless computer labs. Whether PTC volunteers sit on committees and attend meetings, or show up to serve pizza or open car doors, we all take time out of our personal lives to contribute our skills and abilities. Why do we do it? We do it because Associated is not just any school; it is *our* school and *our* community. It is our efforts and our hard work that make the difference.

If you don't already wear a 'PTC hat', put one on. Join us in our common goal to continually better our school: yours, mine and our children's. Working together, we can accomplish great things.

Warmest Regards,
Tracy Zepp



PTC President
Tracy Zepp

ptcpresident@ahschools.com

DID YOU KNOW ...

You can register your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date to avoid conflicts? The Parent Teacher Council is proud to have a Bar/Bat Mitzvah Coordinator, Risa Elmalem, as part of its executive committee. The role of this coordinator is to record the dates of students' *simchas*. Please contact her when you are ready to book a date for your child's bar/bat mitzvah to verify whether any other *simchas* have been booked for that date and to document that you have selected a date so that others will know. Risa can be reached at 905-709-4693 or risae29@hotmail.com.

Israel bonds can be purchased through the school as gifts of any amount to registered Bar/Bat Mitzvah students? The Parent Teacher Council is also proud to have an Israel Bonds Coordinator, Andria Eisen, who organizes the **We're Associated with Israel Bonds Bar/Bat Mitzvah Gift Registry**. Please consider AHS-PTC Israel bonds in lieu of gifts for your child's bar/bat mitzvah in support of Israel and in support of our school. Andria can be reached at 416-638-1278 or bondsregistry@ahschools.com.

Hold the Date

Please join us for our PTC General Meetings:
Tuesday, February 2, 2010 | 8:00 p.m. | Hurwich Branch
Tuesday, May 25, 2010 | 8:00 p.m. | Posluns Branch

A Night to Remember

CASINO NIGHT GALA 2010

Saturday, March 13, 2010 at 8:00 pm – Don't miss this event!

2010-11 PTC Calendar Personal Greetings

Don't forget to order your personal greeting in next year's 2010/2011 AHS calendar. By placing a personal greeting, you will receive your calendar as well as a tax receipt in June 2010. You will also be supporting countless PTC initiatives at all three branches of Associated. | **Please visit** the PTC section on our website at www.associatedhebrewschools.com and click on 'calendar sales' to print an order form.



Welcome Wagon BBQ Volunteers (l-r): Caline Schneider, Sari Bercovitch, Kathy Fleming, Jodi Gottesman and Tracy Zepp

A PTC Volunteer's Perspective

When I became a mother I knew that whatever involved my child as he grew up, I was going to take part. When he started school, I started volunteering. I thought I would do a few things here and there and that would be enough for me. I had no idea how much I would enjoy being a part of things.

Last May, I was asked to head up Kamin's Welcome Wagon for this school year. I was told I would be partnered with Renee Cammy, a mom I had met but didn't really know. Meeting and working with Renee was meant to be. We have since become great friends.

I also never realized just how important the Welcome Wagon is. I learned that it is one of the most important events and initiatives of the Parent Teacher Council. It is much more than a barbecue. It is opening up the arms of the school body and hugging new families. It is warmly and affectionately telling new students and their families that they are truly welcome at Associated and we are glad they are here.

I am so proud and honoured to be a part of

such a great school with such a fabulous Parent Teacher Council. I have developed friendships with mothers that I never thought I would. I am somewhat of a shy person. I like to help, but usually in a background sort of way. Never would I have imagined that I would become so involved. Never would I have imagined loving it so much. Being a part of the PTC and the Welcome Wagon gave me such a great feeling of accomplishment and success that I smile every time I think about it.

Teaching my five year-old son how important it is to help out and volunteer is of extreme importance. He loves to help and is always willing to participate.

In his own words, "I love that my Mommy helps at my school. The Welcome Wagon was so much fun and I got to do all the jobs I wanted to. I was in charge and handed out all the drinks to all the people. I also gave out other food too. I love helping."



Ann Rastin and her son, Tyler.



...address AHS students, teachers and parents

On Monday, November 23, Danilack Middle School (Hurwich Education Centre) welcomed cyberspace safety expert Chris Vollum. The program was made possible through the support of the PTC. He provided helpful tips to the school's Grade 6, 7 and 8 students about how to improve their security and privacy on such social networking sites like Facebook. Mr. Vollum has conducted thousands of workshops across Ontario for students, teachers and parents and is a recognized authority on Facebook & Twitter. Mr. Vollum, along with Retired Detective Sergeant Paul Gillespie of the Toronto Police Force sex crimes unit, co-presented to over 120 Associated parents at a PTC event held later that night.

Bulletin Board