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# Olam Tikvah Preschool News

## From the Director

*Sharon Sherry*

Communication can be defined as: 1. the act or process of communicating; 2. the imparting or interchange of thoughts, opinions, or information by speech, writing, or signs; 3. something imparted, interchanged, or transmitted; 4. a document or message imparting news, views, information, etc.; and 5. passage, or an opportunity or means of passage, between places. I believe it can also be defined as the crucial element of any healthy organization and relationship. At Olam Tikvah Preschool we strive to ensure that we have good communication processes in place to guarantee that our school functions at the highest level with all involved partners in good communicative relationships with one another. Who are the partners? I would include the teachers, the director, the parents and the students. We all need to know that we are working toward the same goal—the positive cognitive, social, emotional and physical growth of our children.

The teachers work toward good communication by providing monthly calendars, frequent email messages and/or daily notes for the parents. The parents only need to read the communications from the teachers to know what is going on in their child/ren's class. For the children, the teachers work hard to let them know not only what they are working on at the moment, but also of what bigger picture that activity is a part. The parents only need to reinforce this by letting their child/ren know that they know what is going on and by asking guided questions.

The parents also contribute to the healthy communication in our

community by letting the teachers and/or director know what is going on at home. Whether it is a phone call or email to let us know when a child will be out due to illness or vacation, or a lengthier conversation (electronic or otherwise) regarding special circumstances at home which may impact the child/ren. We appreciate hearing from you...

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## From the Classrooms

### 2 Day 2s

*Evie Stein & Lauren Ortiz*

We just had the biggest snowfall to hit our area in the 41 years we have lived in Northern Virginia. In our classroom we have covered Groundhog Day, Tu B'Shevat, and the snowy days we have experienced. ....

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### 3/4 Day Class

*Livia Jacob & Nechama Retting*

Can you believe that it is 2010 already?!?! This year is flying fast! Snow filled January kept us indoors...

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### Pre-K

*Tobey Greenberg & Sondra Mann*

Wow! It's hard to believe that 1/2 of the year has already gone by. Winter cooperated with our lesson plans...

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# From the Classrooms

## 2 Day 2s

Evie Stein & Lauren Ortiz

(Continued from page 1)

The children are busy playing together. This is what a teacher of two year olds waits to see. Friendships are developing and everyone is beginning to play in groups. In this month's issue of the *Virginia Association for Early Childhood Education*, President Mary M. Landis writes an interesting article called "Happiness and Play," where she writes there is a huge connection between play and happiness. When you look at the faces of children engaged in play activities you can see this happiness. She quotes a psychiatrist, Stuart Brown, who wrote a book called *Play: How it Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul*. He says that "the ability to play is critical, not only to being happy, but also to sustain social relationships and being a creative, innovative person." I have seen this in the classroom throughout my years of teaching. In September, children engage in parallel play. Lauren and I provide and encourage situations and activities to work together as a team. We do team projects, including our monthly murals and cooking projects. We also do daily projects working together as a class to respect each other and to take pride in their own work. At the end of each day, we show the children their projects so they can see how beautiful it looks. They are so proud! Lauren and I tell them we are proud of their beautiful projects and they put their projects in their back packs to take home.



We thank you for the generous donations made during Chanukah. Sharon suggested that we use the money to enrich our playground. New equipment, including special rubber mulch, will be put down for the

children's safety. The children will benefit from your generosity. Thank you all so much.

In our classroom, Luke and Kate have turned three years old. Because of illness and bad weather, we have not celebrated with them. Soon spring will come. The birds will appear and the weather will warm up.

I love the parsha *Beshalach* and the exodus from Egypt. If I could choose another time to live, I would choose knowing Moses and the miracles that

occurred at that time. When the Israelites saw the Egyptians pursuing them and the sea in front of them, how frightened they must have been. Miriam encouraged them with a Song, *Az Yashier* and Moses urged them on saying, "the Lord will fight for you and you shall hold your peace." Midrash says that the birds sang as they crossed the Red Sea, giving the Israelites confidence. That is why we have *Shabbat Shira*. We made bird hats. Two year olds love this story. It is full of adventure and ends on a good note.



Purim is coming. We read the Megillah Saturday night, February 26 and Sunday morning, February 27. We will make a grogger, masks, *hamantashen*, a Purim train, *mishloach manot*, and, of course, a crown. We also read the Megillah and emphasize the fun of this holiday. The story of Purim, appropriate for two year olds, will be told. Esther is beautiful and brave. King Ahashveros is a lonely king who needs someone to eat breakfast with. Mordecai is Esther's uncle and helps her to be brave. Haman is the bad guy and, as in every story, we need a good guy and a bad guy.

I want to thank Lauren Ortiz for all the help in the classroom. She is a magnificent inspiration and a wonderful, and a superb, upbeat person. Working with you, Lauren, is my pleasure.

Parents, Lauren and I love your children. We "kvell" at their success, accomplishments and growth. They are great and are doing so wonderfully. We are so proud of this class!

### Parent Participation

Karen Robinson

Dear Parents!

It's hard to believe that it's February already, but that means that we're ready to start the Parent Participation Days in the preschool classes!

The Parent Participation Day is a GREAT way for you (Mom or Dad or both!) to see what fun our kids have each day in school, while also showing your child that you are an active participant in his/her education! You can make this Participation Day whatever you want it to be: you can plan and bring in a craft for the kids to do, you can bring in a favorite book to read, or an instrument to play, you can bring in a special snack, or you can just come to the class to be helping hands for the teachers for a little bit. It is your day to be a part of your child's class. And wait until you see how THRILLED he/she will be to have you there!

I distributed the schedules both via email and backpacks, but please let me know if you did not get one and are not sure of your "assigned" date. Thanks in advance for your help, participation and energy!

## From the Classrooms

### 3/4 Day Class

Livia Jacob & Nechama Retting  
(Continued from page 1)

more than we would have liked. So we enjoyed working on gross motor skills inside instead using scooters, balls,

hoops, hurdles to jump and step over, etc... Now that we are finally able to get outside again, the children have been

having a blast! Our gross motor skills are coming along, and almost all of us are full-fledged "spiders" while going up and down the stairs (alternating legs like a spider). We have been learning all about winter, snow (we made really beautiful snowflakes using our new and improved scissor skills), snowmen, penguins, sparkly, winter, white play-dough, mittens, Tu B'Shevat (the tree's birthday in Israel) and all kinds of fun on fine motor Fridays.

The children are really enjoying Fitness with Miss Arlene and music with Miss Carol. Kabbalat Shabbat with Rabbi Shalva is always a blast! Feel free to join us for Kabbalat Shabbat any week!



clothes either under the costume or in their backpacks).

Spring is coming soon and we will be learning all about Passover (Pesach), flowers, bugs, nature, air, wind and kites and Yom Ha'Atzmaut (Israel's Independence Day).

Thank you to parents for joining us for your parent participation day. We really appreciate your help! Be advised that sometimes when a parent is in the classroom, your child might turn into a "cling-on" and may not allow you to participate as you had hoped. Just know that this is not how they usually behave

in school but we have experience this reaction often. Don't worry! If you would like to plan an activity to do with the class or if your child has a favorite book you want to share, please let us know, but don't feel obligated to plan anything if you don't want to. An extra pair of hands is always welcome!



In February we will be studying Hibernation, bears, dental health, general health, Presidents, and Purim. Mark your calendars for our Purim Shpiel on Wednesday, February 24 when your children should wear a costume to school (with a change of

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us via phone or email. It is better not to discuss your child's progress in the classroom during school hours in front of the children. Thanks for your consideration!

We are enjoying our interaction with your children and love watching all their progress.

Nechama and Livia

## Donations to Olam Tikvah Preschool

As of January 31, 2010

- The Lifland Family
  - In memory of Milton Mitler, father of Meredith Farling
- The Close Family
  - In memory of Milton Mitler
- The Shalva Family
  - In honor of Sharon Sherry and Stephanie Sussan and all of the hard work they do to help make OTPS an amazing place
- The Farling Family
  - In celebration of a wonderful school year
- The Sherry Family
  - Mazel tov to Laura and Jerry Budiansky and the birth of their new granddaughter
- Daisy Girl Scout Troup 3997
  - In honor of Sharon Sherry

## Membership Update

Ronnie Tepp

Thank you to everyone for getting your applications in for next year. It's hard to believe that we are already planning next year's classes, but September will be here before we know it!

Please spread the word about our fantastic preschool (at gymnastics classes, ballet classes, karate classes, etc.), and let friends and neighbors know that there is still space in most of our classes for next year. Please have any new families contact Ronnie Tepp at 703-865-5600 or at [mamatepp@yahoo.com](mailto:mamatepp@yahoo.com) for more information and/or to arrange a tour.

# From the Classrooms

## Pre-K

Tobey Greenberg & Sondra Mann

(Continued from page 2)

...because we got to learn "first hand" about what winter is all about. We played with snow in the ice table, did freezing and melting experiments and such.

Here's what we can look forward to in the upcoming months: already we talked about Tu B'Shevat. We planted, made flower gardens in the rice table, looked at the inside of a tree trunk that was cut down from our shul property when they started construction, created our own trees from RECYCLED MATERIALS, and participated in a wonderful Tu B'Shevat Seder where we tasted fruits that are grown in Israel.

Purim is approaching and our room will

become Shushan. Since the children have been so involved in writing and illustrating their own stories, we will publish our very own *Shushan Gazette*. By the way, all of the books we have written and illustrated – which are so fantastic – are on display in our room. We encourage you to stop by and read them.

During Purim, we have an opportunity to try out different characters and become the people in the Purim story. We will also be writing our own Megillah.

Passover is right after Purim and there is a lot to do to get ready for that holiday. Each child will compile their own Haggadah which we hope will be read at your family seder. It's a very lengthy process and the children work hard and therefore are very proud to read from "their" Haggadah.

We look forward to Parent Participation. Here's the answer to the question many people often ask: What do I do at school? Here are some options: If you have a hobby, i.e. play an instrument we'd like to encourage that, or perhaps you may want to bring in an art project or a game to play with the children, or cooking, or simply just spend the time with your child. We welcome any of these choices. Our day is Friday, but if that presents a conflict with you for any reason, we can be flexible. Just let us know and we can reschedule.

Our journals are coming along fabulously. In addition, the children just love becoming actors and actresses and acting out stories "on stage." And they are great at it. We're headed for Broadway. ☺

## From the Director

Sharon Sherry

(Continued from page 1)

The school also tries to keep the communication going by providing weekly emails and regular newsletters, such as this one. A very big *todah rabbah* (thank you) and *yasher koach* (good job) to Brittanie Werbel for volunteering as our communications liaison. Brittanie works very hard to keep us all in the loop with the monthly calendars, fliers for special events, emails and newsletters. And she does it all with a smile!

In addition to Brittanie, the entire Olam Tikvah Preschool Board works hard to keep our community as the warm and familial one that it is. I am lucky enough to work with Stephanie Sussan, board president, and all of the board members on policies and programs that enrich our school. Just as I try to be in good communication with the board, so should you. If you have any concerns or special interests, please feel free to speak with Stephanie or any other board member. Better yet, consider joining the board next year. It's a great way to make sure your voice is heard and to help make our school the best it can be.

I have to say that the best part of my job is my daily interaction with the students (smiles and hugs!). A close second is the chance to forge relationships with all of the families in our school. Please know that I am always available—in the hallway, on the phone and by email—for all of the important communication that we need to happen in order to maintain an excellent program and healthy relationships.

## From the President

*Stephanie Sussan*

Happy 2010! Can you believe the school year is already half over? The children are growing so fast – both physically and socially! I continue to be amazed by their emerging skills, not to mention the creativity of our devoted and loving teachers. We have learned about and celebrated so many holidays, baked so many yummy treats, and sung so many songs. Yet, there is still much to do before the end of the year and our amazing stepping-up ceremonies (sniff sniff).

To ensure you and your child don't miss out on any of this fun stuff, please remember to read our weekly email messages for important information. Also, please pay close attention to your child's monthly school calendar; your teacher marks very important reminders on the calendar for you and your child!

If you are going to have a student in our school next year, whether they are a continuing student or a sibling, you should have received an application. If you did not, or if you have questions about the application, please contact Ronnie Tepp or myself. Remember, the application deadline is Feb. 15!

Lastly, I urge you to get as involved in our preschool as you can. Our parent body allows for so many of the "extra" programs and activities we have come to love and expect. If you are interested on serving on the Preschool Board, please let me know, as we are starting to think about nominations and positions for next year!

I truly hope that you and your child are having a great year at OT Preschool. If there is anything I can do to help improve your experience, please let me know.

Warm wishes,  
Stephanie

## Olam Tikvah Preschool

### Pajama Party!!!

- Sunday, March 7, 6 - 7pm
- Congregation Olam Tikvah
- w/ our very own "Miss Carol" (singer/songwriter Carol Boyd Leon)
- Open to all preschool-age kids!



Wear your PJ's &  
Bring a small pillow, blanket, and/or stuffed animal  
(along with a parent or two)  
For stories, songs, & Havadalah  
And a bedtime snack of cookies & milk!

RSVP to Sharon Sherry  
[director@olamtikvahpreschool.org](mailto:director@olamtikvahpreschool.org) /703-425-1886

Tzedakah Opportunity: Please help us help others! Bring a pair of new children's pajamas and/or bedtime books for The Pajama Program, a non-profit charitable organization which provides new PJ's and books to children in need, particularly those in foster care.

## Upcoming Dates:

- **February 24, 9:15 a.m. – PURIM SHPIEL!**
- **March 29 – April 7 – NO SCHOOL, Passover**
- **April 21 – Dads' Participation Day**
- **May 18 – Shavuot, school closes @ noon**
- **May 19-20 – NO SCHOOL, Shavuot**
- **June 8 – Stepping Up, 2's class**
- **June 9 – Stepping Up, 3/4s class & Pre-K**
- **June 10 – Pack-up Day**
- **June 11 – School Picnic:**