



# כוכב הצפון

## NEWSLETTER

NORTH SHORE HEBREW ACADEMY

EDITOR: MICHELLE RUTTA

FRIDAY NIGHT CANDLE LIGHTING: 7:26 PM: הדלקת נרות

SHABBAT ENDS: 8:35PM: זמן הבדלה

Parashat Tazria-Metzora

## SEEING THE HUMAN

### A Shabbat Message from Rabbi Dr. Jeffrey Kobrin

A friend this week was tested for antibodies in a local parking lot. After his ID was copied out by hand (the computer had run out of power) and his finger was pricked, he asked the supervisor if he would be informed both if he did or did not have antibodies -- he wanted to be able to donate blood if he could. The enthusiastic if unhelpful response: "Yes! We'll call you if you're positive, negative, or indeterminate." Since my friend was already "indeterminate," this was not great encouragement. Sometimes all we want is a diagnosis, because then we know what we're facing and we can chart a path forward. That's what the discussion about testing is all about.



The parshiyot this week seem lifted directly from current events: patients in need of a diagnosis, the need for testing, and the importance of a clear ruling from the expert conducting the examination. The suspected metzora, the person possibly suffering from the spiritual disease of tzara'at, needed the kohen to look -- u-ra'a ha-kohen et ha-neg'a -- and he would determine if the person was a "positive," if the skin affliction was actually the dreaded tzara'at.

We have all been deeply inspired by the stories of doctors and nurses going above and beyond any demands of their profession as they care for victims of the virus and have often even served as stand-ins for their patients' loved ones. Such inspiring behavior speaks about the character of the caregiver. Rabbi Meir Simcha HaKohen of Dvinsk in his Meshech Chochmah notes that this verse is a little clunky (my word, not his). After telling us that the kohen will see the patient, it says so again: ve-ra'ahu hakohen, ve-timei oto, "the kohen will see him and declare him tamei." Why repeat that the kohen "sees" his patient?

The Meshech Chochma explains that the kohen's job is not only to look at the affliction but to look at the person as well. If he sees someone with tzara'at who is about to get married, the diagnosis waits a week until sheva berachot are over. (Years ago I worked with a person who was an excellent diagnostician, but saw all of the children in our care as "cases," not as people -- and that's a problem. )

We are used to this mindset: commemorating Yom HaShoah this week, we don't think of the number six million; we try to think of the individuals who suffered. On Yom HaZikaron next week, we will think not of the more than 20,000 killed in wars and acts of terror, but of the individuals who were lost and their families who were forever impacted.

Every evening at 7:00 in our neighborhood we clap for our essential workers and our health care providers. One of the things we should appreciate about these people, whether we clap or not, is their ability to see their patients not just as "cases" or as "positives," but as fellow human beings.

Shabbat Shalom and Chodesh Tov.

## NAMES, NOT NUMBERS GROUPS CONNECT WITH THEIR SURVIVORS

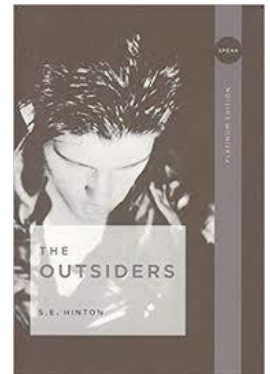
As Pesach, one of the most sacred holidays in the Jewish religion, approached, the eighth-grade students who opted to participate in the Names, Not Numbers program this year worked diligently to contact the survivors whom they interviewed. During tense times like these, when our lives are challenged by uncertainty and upheaval, it is more essential than ever to have human contact. With compassion and sensitivity, these students reached out and connected with the survivors in order to make sure they are well and wished them a happy holiday. At such a challenging time, the students, your children, acted with the kindness and the empathy they had expressed during their Names, Not Numbers experience. This act of chesed speaks to the upstanding young citizens they are becoming.



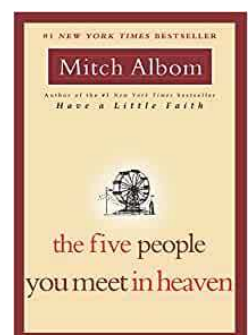
## SPOTLIGHT ON: MIDDLE SCHOOL ENGLISH

**Mr. Pepper's 6th Grade English** I hope you and your family are feeling well at this difficult time. Although the venue of the learning process has changed, our push towards the pursuit of knowledge has not. Scholars are still producing independent work with compound sentences and simple paragraphs. We are accomplishing this by continuing to delve into the novel we are reading and actively discussing. Additionally, we have had ongoing lessons and whole-class discussions on annotation and how to differentiate between the main idea and supporting details. Scholars are also investigating educational online sites that will assist them in completing their daily and weekly independent reading requirements.

**Mrs. Guggenheimer's 7th Grade English** Although the past several weeks have been surreal, Mrs. Guggenheimer's 7th graders have overcome the challenges with grace and intellect. Our Zoom sessions have allowed us to complete reading the timeless novel *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton. We began the unit with a discussion about the many different social issues that people may be affected by in their lives. We also studied the concept of social classes and how each social class is defined by the stereotypes that are associated with the individuals within that class. The students connected the idea of stereotyping to our previous novel *The Boy on the Wooden Box*, exploring how Jews were stereotyped by the Germans, ultimately leading to the Holocaust, and determining the extreme danger of stereotyping. Throughout our reading of *The Outsiders*, we have engaged in critical thinking about the characters' identities as well as our own, making significant connections between social class, stereotyping, actions and consequences, while sharing ideas in our Zoom forum. The unit culminated with some formal assessments as well as a fun celebration of watching the movie together.



**8th Grade English** Hello to all our eighth-grade families. I hope this message finds you well. Transitioning to online learning has been a challenge, to say the least, but in our classroom, there has always been a focus on interpersonal communication, and Zoom has been an excellent platform with which to keep our class discussions active. When we began this virtual journey together, we were just finishing reading Mitch Albom's novel, *The Five People You Meet in Heaven*. The theme of the book is the connectedness that exists between all human beings, present, future and past. It suggests that each of our heavens is unique and designed to allow us to spend eternity in our favorite memory amongst those we hold dear. In order to provide a



temporary escape from our present reality, the students were given an assignment in which they had to recall their most favorite moment and write about it in detail. Although this may sound like an easy task, in fact, it was quite the challenge because we have been blessed, in our lives, with countless memories for which we should be grateful. The project culminated in the students sharing wonderful memories with each other.

Despite our recent change of format, the eighth-graders have continued independent reading and journaling. Many have embraced reading as a welcome pastime while spending hours indoors and away from their friends. Instead of sharing their “book talks” with members of their group, however, presentations have been made to the entire class.

During these very trying times, I look forward to catching up daily with all my students and remind them constantly that we will get through this together.

## SPOTLIGHT ON: PRE-K JUDAIC STUDIES

**Brought to you by: Morah Galit Naftali, Morah Connie Reichmann, and Morah Rebeka Ebrahimi**

Our focus in Pre-K has been helping our students adapt to their new normal situation. Our sessions before Pesach focused on learning about the Chag so our students would be ready to enjoy this holiday with their families. Each class, guided by the Morot, created a personal Haggadah to enjoy at the Sedarim. We also made a Seder plate and baby Moshe floating on the Nile River. It was really fun seeing everybody's home made projects and how they creatively used materials at hand. We are extremely proud of our students.

We are now moving forward with counting the sefirah, in anticipation of the giving of the Torah (Shavuot). We've created bulletin boards in our homes which we use as teaching tools to depict what is being taught (just like in school). We are setting the mood for our little ones and bringing our classrooms into their homes.

Next week is Yom Ha'atzmaut, Israel's Independence Day which is always a very fun time for educational experiences. We are currently learning all about Medinat Yisrael - its history, our experiences and why it is so important to us.

In the upcoming weeks we will celebrate Lag B'Omer together with a 'bonfire'. No bonfire would be complete without roasting marshmallows and making s'mores! Stay tuned (we promise it will be kid safe and friendly!). Shabbat Shalom!

PreK Morot

## NSHA: A FOCUS ON RESILIENCE



This Yom HaShoah our educational focus was on resilience. Our Middle School students experienced Heroes of the Holocaust seminars led by IsraEd educators Rabbi Joel and Mrs Shulamith Cohn. We learned about single individuals, as well as entire countries, who risked their lives to save Jews and others persecuted by the Nazis. In addition to providing broad views of the communities affected by the

Shoah, discussions focused on the following questions: What can we learn from their decisions? From their actions? From their choices? Most importantly, we focused on the historical effect of saving even one single life.

Our fourth and fifth grade students viewed the HBO documentary “The Number on Great-Grandpa’s Arm” which is a film created specifically for teaching children about the experiences of individuals during the Shoah. We finished our program with a moving video clip of hundreds of our Israeli soldiers singing Ani Ma’Amin. It helped us make the connection between the Jewish people moving from the depths of the Shoah to the strength of building our own state which we will celebrate next week on Yom HaAtzmaut. We were happy to see many of our parents join our program together with their children and we hope the discussion questions we prepared for home were helpful in facilitating family conversations.





## "OPEN DOOR ZOOM" WITH MR. SIGAL: MON-THURS 3:00-3:20

Mr. Sigal is known for his literal "Open Door" policy at school and he's bringing it now to Zoom!

Every day, Mr. Sigal will be opening his Zoom for students who may want to drop in an talk. Join daily Monday-Thursday from 3:00-3:20



## NSHA CELEBRATES "POEM IN YOUR POCKET DAY"

Next Thursday, April 30, is "Poem in Your Pocket Day!" Started in 2002 by the mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, it's a day to celebrate poetry- the words and imagery of a poem, reading poems, and reciting them to others. This year, we'd like to celebrate this day as a community, and invite you and your family to safely "chalk your walk" with a favorite poem or share a video of your child reading a favorite poem! Please include the title of the poem and its author in your image or video.

You can email your photos of your driveway or sidewalk art and/or your videos of your child reciting a favorite poem to [media@nsha.org](mailto:media@nsha.org) by Tuesday, April 28. The poems selected can be in English or Hebrew.

Here are a few places to begin your search for a perfect poem to chalk or recite:

### In English:

<https://poets.org/poems-kids>

<https://www.harpercollins.com/childrens/shel-silverstein-poems/>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org>

<https://americanliterature.com/poetry-for-students>

### Middle School:

Mrs. Guggenheimer and Ms. Prisamt collated this collection of poems for our middle school students. [Click here](#)

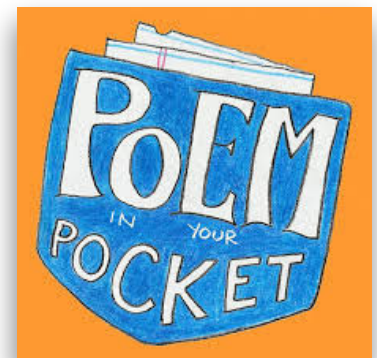
### In Hebrew:

This resource is suggested by Morah LeeHee Baruch and includes Hebrew text, along with video clips of each poem sung. [Click here](#)

This Hebrew poetry book called "The Eighth Color" is suggested by Morah Ronit Cohen. [Click here](#)

We look forward to sharing your photos and videos with the entire NSHA community on April 30!

Happy Poem in Your Pocket Day,





## KOBRIN CHALLAH BAKE!

Thank you, **Kobrin Family** for leading us in an amazing challah bake! If you missed it, [Click here](#) to view the event in it's entirety. For full recipe and details [click here](#).

## PTA HAPPENINGS

### Take Your Seat at ONE TABLE

#### A NSHA Cookbook Project

What Are You Making for Shabbat this week?

We are continuing our work on our NSHA One Table Cookbook. Please let us include your family's beloved Shabbat traditions and recipes in the Shabbat chapter.

Please email recipes (for Shabbat and any other meal) to  
[PTA@NSHA.ORG](mailto:PTA@NSHA.ORG)

**One School. One Table.**



NSHA PTA PRESENTS TO YOU A

# YOM HA'ATZMAUT T-SHIRT CONTEST

ALL STUDENTS (GRADES T-8) ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR  
FIRST EVER YOM HA'ATZMAUT DIY T-SHIRT CONTEST.  
DESIGN A PLAIN T-SHIRT WITH ISRAEL INSPIRED DESIGNS AND SEND A PHOTO  
BY MONDAY, APRIL 27TH TO THE PTA OR TAG @NSHAPTA ON INSTAGRAM.  
ALL PHOTOS WILL BE POSTED TO OUR INSTAGRAM STORY AND WE WILL  
CHOOSE 5 WINNERS!  
WINNERS WILL RECEIVE A GIFT CARD!



TEXT PHOTOS TO:  
Sadie (516)655-2580  
Marla (646)220-8105  
Or just tag @nshapta on your  
photo on instagram



## PTA HELPFUL LINKS:



Click [here](#) to shop on Amazon via our AmazonSmile link - a portion of your purchase will benefit NSHA.



Click [here](#) to register your Shoprite card and a portion of your purchase will benefit NSHA.



**Join the PTA "All Hands On Deck" WhatsApp Chat to be in the loop!**  
contact Marla or Sadie to be added.



**PTA Dues** Remember to pay your PTA Dues including teacher Chanukah and End of Year Gifts at [www.nsha.org/ptadues](http://www.nsha.org/ptadues)

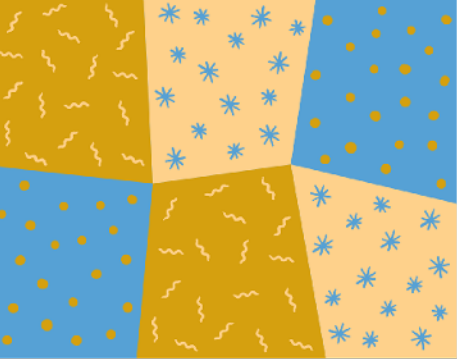


**PTA Uniforms:** Click [here](#) to purchase NSHA uniforms throughout the year



You can now submit PTA payments via Venmo (No Venmo payments accepted for Uniform orders):  
[@nsha-ptas](#).





# nsha

A WEEK IN PICTURES

