



Stellar Education for Every Jewish Child

# U'ahavta... ואהבת

March 15, 2019 8 Adar II, 5779

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## RTA Ice Cream Day!

Did you notice that most of the RTA students were a little bit happier than usual last Thursday, March 7th? The reason was obvious - it was Ice Cream Day!!!!



The 8th grade fundraising committee hosted an ice cream cafe for the entire school.

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### Candle Lighting

Friday, March 15  
6:59 p.m.

Saturday, March 16  
Shabbat ends  
8:03 p.m.



**Monday, March 18**  
Art Club  
3:40 - 5:00 p.m.

**Tuesday, March 19**  
What's Cooking?!  
3:45 - 5:00 p.m.

**Wednesday, March 20**  
Fast of Esther  
6:02 a.m. - 7:54 p.m.

**Thursday, March 21**  
PURIM - 1/2 Day  
Special Schedule  
Begins 8:10 a.m.

**Friday, March 22**  
Hachnasas Sefer Torah



## RTA PURIM SCHEDULE Thursday, March 21



8:10 a.m. – Shacharis (Morning Prayers)

9:00 a.m. – Megillah reading followed by costume parade,  
music & Purim Seudah (festive meal)

11:30 a.m. - Dismissal

### Attention Parents

Enrollment Contracts for next year are due in the office by Monday, April 1. Please take the opportunity to complete and turn in your contracts as soon as possible and earn Give or Get credit!  
by March 15 (today!) - 200 points  
by April 1 - 100 points

For your convenience, the enrollment contract is available online - click here for the link:

[http://rudlin.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2019-2020-Enrollment-Contract\\_online.pdf](http://rudlin.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2019-2020-Enrollment-Contract_online.pdf)

**Mazel tov to Rabbi Dovid & Aliza Asher on the birth of a son.**

Dear Parents,

As Purim approaches, we look forward to this most joyous Jewish holiday. It is a time of happiness and hope, and unites us as a people with wishes of brotherhood and love for each other.

For the past twenty-eight years our school and parent body have supported the tzedakah organization Od Yosef Chai at this time of year. This organization helps the poor and needy of our brethren in the land of Israel with their needs for food and shelter and other necessities of life. Our Rabbis have given us a special mitzva of giving charity on the day of Purim itself. We raise money and then call in our pledge on the day before Purim. Od Yosef Chai then advances the money, and it is distributed on Purim day itself, and thereby we fulfill the mitzva.

We raise money in two ways. First, we hold a raffle. The sixth grade students will be selling raffle tickets everyday during lunch. Tickets cost twenty-five cents each. Just for purchasing a ticket, each student will receive a prize. There is a maximum of one prize per day. On the day before Purim, we will raffle off six prizes ranging from a fifteen dollar gift certificate to Target to other lesser prizes.

The second way in which we raise money is to accept private donations with checks being made payable to Od Yosef Chai. As the money is distributed on Purim day, one fulfills the mitzvah of Matanos L'evyonim - gifts for the poor.

In the past, both the students and the parent body of RTA have generously supported this worthy cause. It is my fervent hope that we will continue to do so this year, and for many years to come.

Thanks for your support.

Rabbi Baruch Sherman



Please Join Us in Welcoming a New Sefer Torah  
Marking the 18th Yartzheit of

*Yosef Chaim Paley ob"m*

Friday, March 22, 2019 *Rain or Shine!*

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| 10:00 am | Completion of Sefer Torah<br>at Keneseth Beth Israel, 6300 Patterson Ave                     |
| 11:30 am | Grand Torah procession with music<br>and special Sefer Torah truck                           |
| 12:00 pm | Hakafos (dancing) followed by buffet reception<br>at Yeshiva of Virginia, 6801 Patterson Ave |

For more information visit [www.inmemoryofyossi.com/sefertorah](http://www.inmemoryofyossi.com/sefertorah)  
Questions? Email [inmemoryofyossi@gmail.com](mailto:inmemoryofyossi@gmail.com)

## RTA Ice Cream Day

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For just a couple of bucks, one could get a scoop in a bowl with various toppings. For a dollar more, one could get two scoops in a cone or bowl, with toppings. Some even chose a broken up cone in a bowl!?!

Thanks to Hilary Bender for leading, Esther Merel for shopping, and Sarah & Keith Rakofsky for working the event. Thank you to Adrienne Epstein for taking beautiful photos of our special day. A big shout out to the 8th graders for setting up, serving, and cleaning up.

Look out for more great and yummy fundraising events!



(more photos on next page ...)

### RTA Ice Cream Day

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(more photos on next page ...)



### Container Animals

by the Art Club

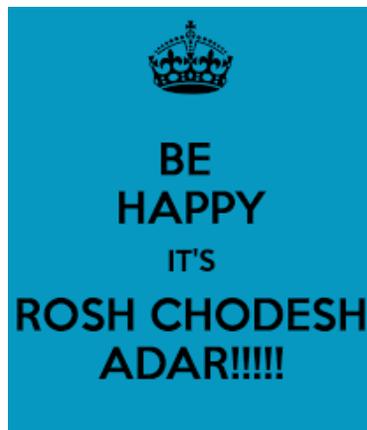
The second Art Club session began with a fun project. The students are making animals out of various containers taped together. When they are painted and finished, they will be amazing!



## What's Wrong With This Picture???



In keeping with the spirit of celebrating the First of Adar, the 7th and 8th grade pranked Rabbi Bart by moving his car to the back of the playground and filling it with balloons.



## Parsha Points

Each week we feature an article on the weekly Torah portion.

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### Vayikra (Leviticus 1-5) Parshat Zachor (Deuteronomy 25:17-19)

This week's Parsha presents a lengthy, detailed description of animal offerings to be brought in the Sanctuary – the burning of limbs, sprinkling of blood, flaying of flesh. The Modern world may at first find this notion pagan and primitive. It sure sounds quite different from the warm spirituality we imagine our ancestors practicing!

The question becomes increasingly difficult as one considers Judaism's position on care and concern toward animals. Besides the general Biblical prohibition against causing pain to animals ("Tzar Baalei Chaim"), there is also a whole list of separate Mitzvot designed for the protection of animals, including: to unload a donkey whose load is too heavy, to give your animal a day off of work on Shabbat, not to muzzle an animal when working in the field (i.e. don't prevent it from eating what it sees), and many, many others.

So why animal offerings? Let's address some basic misconceptions.

*Misconception #1:* Isn't it cruel to kill an animal?

Why should this bother us? We eat hamburgers and wear leather shoes. We throw footballs and eat fried chicken.

So if using animals is justified for physical benefit, then all the more so for spiritual benefit!

(For the record, all offerings had a practical, physical benefit as well. The vast majority were eaten by human beings - e.g. the Passover offering was roasted and eaten at every Seder table! Even with the "all burned offering," the animal's leather was used by the Kohanim.)

*Misconception #2:* These offerings are a "sacrifice."

The Hebrew word *korbon*, which the Torah uses to describe animal offerings, is not a sacrifice (as in, giving something up), and it is not an offering (as in, bringing a gift to the gods). Rather, *korbon* means "to come near." These help a person get closer to God.

In the Temple, we take the animal parts and elevate them onto the altar of God. This is a personal declaration of intent to elevate our material resources to a higher level - to direct it toward the service of God.

#### FOR WHOSE BENEFIT?

Which leads us to:

*Misconception #3:* We think, "What kind of god needs offerings from us? Is this some kind of bribe so he won't be angry with us?"

We have to differentiate between Greek mythology and Judaism. The pagan sacrifices were to appease finite gods who had control over a limited aspect of existence. Every god needed something else and the humans could avoid the wrath of the gods by giving them what they needed.

Jewish offerings are not for God. He doesn't need them. God is All Powerful and has everything already. Rather, the offerings are for us. They teach us to take the physical - the body - and sanctify it.

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## Parsha Points

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One of the 613 mitzvot is that the Kohen Gadol must keep the Ephod (breastplate) constantly attached. Rabbi Shimshon Rafael Hirsch points out that in idolatry, the ceremonial breastplate was typically tied onto the idol. The philosophy was to control the idol and "get it on your side." But in Judaism, the Kohen Gadol ties the breastplate to himself - because it is ourselves that we want to control.

Every human being is comprised of two components - the body and the soul. Each part wants to be nourished and sustained, yet each achieves this in very different ways. The body seeks comfort and immediate gratification: food, sleep, power, wealth. The soul seeks longer-lasting, eternal pleasures: meaning, love, good deeds, connection to God.

The Mitzvot of the Torah are designed to guide us toward "soul pleasures." However, when the body exerts dominance, the consequence is a transgression of these Mitzvot.

The way to repair that mistake is to bring an offering. The transgressor steps forward and declares: "I have made a mistake and regret the damage it caused my soul. My animal side got the best of me. I don't want to repeat that mistake again. I hereby pledge to slaughter animalism as the dominant force in my life."

*Adapted with permission from the award winning website, [www.aish.com](http://www.aish.com).*

# Richmond Community Purim Celebration



at the Weinstein JCC

**Sunday, March 17** ☆ **11:30AM-2:30PM**

**Free and Open to All!**

Carnival games and prizes, clowns and face painting  
arts and crafts, a DJ costume party, moon bounces and more!

(Food available for purchase.)

*Purim Spiel presented by Congregation Beth Ahabah at 2:30PM*

Be sure to dress in your best "Magical Creatures" costume!



*Sponsored by Richmond Council of Jewish Educators (RCJE) with a generous grant from the Jewish Community Federation of Richmond*



**DETAILS AT WEINSTEINJCC.ORG OR CALL 285-6500**