

Whatever it is in your power to do, do it with all your might. -Ecclesiastes 9:10

How the Rashi Community Learned and Lived Tikkun Olam and Tzedek this Year 2008/09 – 5769

...wrote a powerful prayer for President Obama that we read at our weekly *tefila* (kindergarten and 1st grade)... **collected children's books from the Rashi community for Hands Across the Water Program for their B'not Mitzvah (middle school students)**...traveled to the Pucker Gallery to view and learn about the work of Samuel Bak, Holocaust survivor and renowned artist, in connection with *Yom Hashoah* (Rashi faculty and staff)... **did hands-on teamwork at the Lowell Wish Project, Cradles to Crayons and Second Step as part of a special mitzvah experience in Greater Boston (6th, 7th, and 8th grade)**... took a bus to the Baldwin School in Cambridge every Monday to be literacy buddies and mentors to kindergarten students in connection with JCRC's Literacy Initiative (middle school students)... **created colorful fleece blankets for children at Second Step (8th graders and Leo Baeck students)**...)... put Moses on Trial complete with witnesses and lawyers as part of a year-long study of Shmot (5th grade Family Program)... **engaged in a Hunger Awareness unit and collected, delivered and shelved over 100 cans of soup for The Newton Food Pantry in Waban (kindergarten cut hair for Locks of Love and Pantene to benefit children who suffer from medical hair loss (several students)**... participated in MLK Learn-In Day with a focus on marginalized groups and welcomed dynamic guest teacher Robyn Reece (middle school)...**visited residents at Hebrew Rehab once a month to celebrate holidays, share stories, sing songs, do art and build special friendships (Mitzvah Makers)**...raised funds (over \$7,000), consciousness, and spirits by learning about and supporting this year's five *Purim Tamchui* child-centered organizations including: *S'derot* Indoor Playground Project of the JNF, Clown Care Unit of Big Apple Circus, Camp!, Seeds of Peace and the Kids' Campaign Against Child Labor at the Broad Meadows Middle School in Quincy, MA (Rashi community)... **welcomed back beloved Tzedakah Hero, Tom McNichol, founder and director of the Charles River Clean-up Boat Project (2nd grade)**...transformed birthday celebrations into personally meaningful *mitzvah* opportunities and asked for donations in lieu of birthday gifts (many students) **sponsored a special faculty/staff lunch (faculty and staff) and lemonade sale (2nd – 4th grade students) to benefit Team Samantha and brain tumor research**... collected 438 books and designed bookmarks for Ms. Dayehs' second grade class at the Wilson School in New Orleans whose school was destroyed by Hurricane Katrina (2nd grade)... **created colorful signs with personal messages about fairness, peace and freedom for our annual MLK Freedom March (kindergarten)**... donated pizzas, challahs and delicious chicken dinners to Second Step (*Yachad*)... **gathered in Newton Centre for the 14th year to raise funds for Project Bread and do the Walk for Hunger (Team Rashi)**... read, discussed and spotlighted twenty five extraordinary children's books that taught us different *mitzvot* (*rodef shalom, bikkur cholim, shalom bayit, gemilut chasadim, v'ahavta l'reicha kamocho and ahavat Yisrael*) and gave us concrete examples of how we can make the world a better place (first grade)... **volunteered at Cradles to Crayons before school started and filled backpacks with loads of school supplies for children in the Boston City Schools (Rashi faculty and staff)**... read and critically analyzed the book *The Sunflower* by Simon Wiesenthal and then participated in a high-level debate focusing on the theme of forgiveness and choice during the Holocaust (8th grade)... **made**

fleece caps for children at the Horizons for Homeless Children in connection with their unit of study on clothing (1st grade)... performed Bye Bye Birdie for the Baldwin School students and the residents of Hebrew Rehab and delighted everyone (MS cast of Bye Bye Birdie)... **collected soccer cleats to benefit children in Boston in honor of his Bar Mitzvah (middle school student)** counted up, discussed, voted on and allocated their classroom *tzedakah* collection to purchase requested cans of fruit at Stop and Shop for the Newton Food Pantry (kindergarten)... **welcomed and was inspired by guest teacher Rosian Zerner of Newton who survived WWII in the Kovno Ghetto, Lithuania - and in hiding- for our Yom Hashoah remembrance (5th-8th grade)...** learned about and then designed informative display boards highlighting the mission and special work of six compelling “water-related” *tzedekah* heroes: The Jewish National Fund, Ryan’s Well, the Nashua River Watershed Association, the MA Oyster Project, River of Words and the Kigezi Community Project as part of their year-long study of the Charles River and the *mitzvah* of *shomrei adamah* – protecting and guarding the earth (2nd grade Family Program)... **researched and began experiment with worms eating and recycling paper following class trip to Teva (6th-grade students and faculty) ...** sold concessions on Marathon Day and raised over \$120 to donate to Cradles to Crayons in Quincy, MA. (a group of 3rd -5th grade students)... **wrote a stunning Prayer for Israel during a spirited lunch period this fall that has been recited every week in tefila (1st grade)...** collected food for Family Table of JF&CS at Sukkot, Chanukah and Pesach (Rashi community)... **held our second annual “Day On” of service at Rashi to honor the spirit and important work of MLK and the people of the Civil Rights Movement and engaged in hands-on mitzvah work to benefit Horizons for Homeless Children, the MA Children's Defense Fund, The Massachusetts Legislature (for the petitions) Cradles to Crayons, Children’s Hospital, The Lowell Wish Project and Pathways for Children (Rashi community)...** participated in a 25-mile Bike Ride to benefit Team Samantha and Brain Tumor research (Rashi Faculty)... **engaged in the mitzvot of Sukkot by collecting and distributing food to Family Table as well as collecting and distributing clothing and baby items to the Lowell Wish Project (Rashi community)...** made reminder door-hangers about turning off lights for every classroom and office in the building; proposed energy-saving measures for the school and sent 5 xerox-paper cartons full of plastic bottle caps to Aveda to bring more “green” to the school (RGT- Rashi Green Team)... **participated in a hands-on project in Jerusalem providing food to people in need (8th grade Israel trip)...** participated in the first-ever Rashi intergenerational book group discussion of The War with Grandpa with residents of HSL on the Roslindale campus and Brookline campus (4th grade)...**welcomed Edgar Krassa, Holocaust survivor, and Elizabeth Dopazo, a Jehovah's Witness, who shared their compelling witness accounts during World War II (7th & 8th grade)...** made 115 packages of stationery, pens, stickers and stamps for every child attending Camp! this summer (Rashi faculty member)... **welcomed back Rashi alum, Liza Comart, a junior at Concord Academy, to share her summer social justice experiences in Costa Rica (Global Aware) and Sierra Leone (Free the Children Program) (middle school)...** explored the concept of peace in a myriad of ways through a year-long unit of study (kdg)... **reached out to one another at school and in the greater community with compassion, kavod and kindness (Rashi community)...**

And our work continues...

B’kavod from the Social Justice Tie-Dye Office
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