

THE HEILICHER MAGAZINE

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMOS & CELIA HEILICHER MINNEAPOLIS JEWISH DAY SCHOOL



**The New Makerspace:
Where All Learning Comes Together**

Remembering Lisa Heilicher (z"l)

**Annual Benefit to Honor the Legacy of
Fay and Leonard Ribnick (z"l)**

Enduring Values • Extraordinary Education



Dear Heilicher School Families & Friends,

We've talked a lot this year at school about the importance of cultivating a growth mindset. Faculty, students, and staff alike have been challenged to go outside their comfort zones in order to learn and grow as we continue to strengthen our STEAM pedagogy, implement a new writing curriculum, and refine our Judaic Studies and Hebrew programs.

Nowhere is the growth mindset more evident than in the interdisciplinary learning taking place in our new Makerspace, which opened in the fall. In our cover story, you can read all about how this engineering lab is stretching minds and advancing problem-solving skills at Heilicher. Pressing olive oil is only the beginning! Thank you to the many donors who made the Makerspace possible (list on page 4).

Sadly, we lost a dear friend and stalwart champion of the school when Elissa (Lisa) Heilicher (z"l) passed away in December. Lisa was a model of an indefatigable volunteer, strong leader, and generous philanthropist, and she will be greatly missed. Please read a tribute to her on page 6.

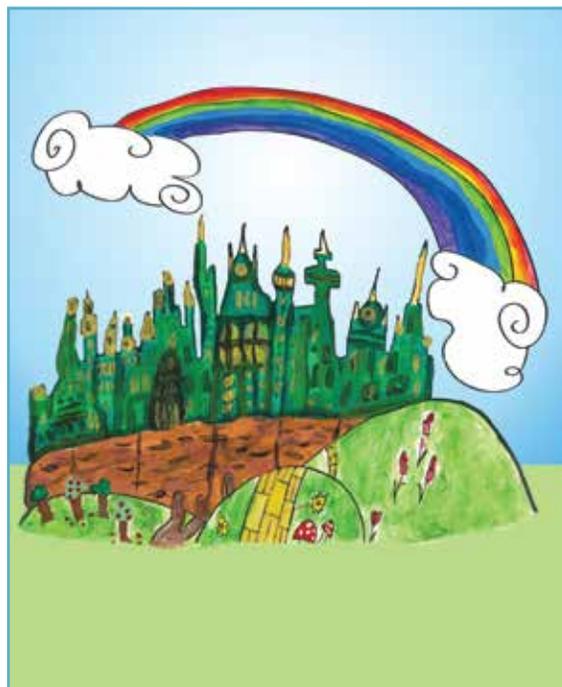
Heilicher is fortunate to have incredible community support. We are energized by the fabulous momentum leading up to our Annual Benefit honoring the legacy of Fay and Leonard Ribnick (z"l) on March 14. We are predicting record attendance and philanthropic support this year and look forward to a fantastic evening of celebration (see page 7). We hope to see you there!

B'shalom,



Yoni Binus, Head of School

From the Head of School



**JOIN US FOR THE
HEILICHER
GRADES 7-8 PLAY**

**The Wizard
of Oz**

**March 6, 7 at 7 p.m.
March 10 at 2 p.m.**

Dolly and Edward Fiterman
Theatre

Purchase tickets online at
www.hmjds.org/forms/tickets

Our New Makerspace in Action

BY RUTH THOM, MAKERSPACE EDUCATOR

Since September, Heilicher students have been designing and building numerous projects in our new Makerspace, a place for hands-on learning and experimenting. It is a space where students can learn and practice the 21st-century skills of collaboration, problem-solving, communication, teamwork, and critical and creative thinking. Think of it as a laboratory where students can take the lead in their learning and be inventors, artists, engineers, mathematicians, scientists, and “makers.” As third grader Izzy says, “The Makerspace has a lot of unique tools to test out and try. The only limit is your imagination!”



Where did the idea of a Makerspace get its start? Some credit MIT’s Fab Lab, which began in 2001, or *Make: magazine*, which began publishing maker-related projects and promoting Maker Fairs as early as 2005. Since then, many schools, libraries, and community organizations have established innovation labs or Makerspaces to promote hands-on, inquiry-based learning.

“The idea of the Heilicher makerspace came about through our deep dive into STEAM and inquiry,” explains General Studies Director Maia Poling. “We knew we wanted a space in which our students

could tinker and discover—a place they could roll up their sleeves and get messy. We are grateful to community members who believed in our vision and donated funds to help create and staff the Makerspace.” (See sidebar on page 4 for list of Makerspace donors.)

Since the start of the school year, over 20 different teachers and their students have utilized the Makerspace. Projects have included making models of cities, reenacting battles, building *sukkah* structures, creating olive oil (see *A Note from the Heilicher Makerspace* on the hmjds.org blog), crafting frames



MEET RUTH THOM

Ruth Thom, M.A., Makerspace Educator, earned her B.A. in English from Luther College, and a certificate in Gifted, Talented, and Creative Education and M.A. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of St. Thomas. She first taught Junior High English, but has been a gifted and talented (GT) teacher/coordinator for most of her teaching career. In addition to public school teaching, Ruth was an environmental educator for youth camps and the National Park Service. She is also a part-time technical writer. Since joining the Heilicher staff in 2018, Ruth has brought the Makerspace to life and made a positive difference in the students’ educational experience at Heilicher.



Photos from various interdisciplinary explorations in the Makerspace, including: pressing olive oil at Hanuka, solving physics problems, and a unit with a guest scientist from High Tech High Touch.



“The only limit is your imagination!”

—IZZY, GRADE 3

to display student writing, making habitat dioramas, designing and testing desalination systems and marshmallow launchers, creating instruments with multiple pitches, experimenting with light, and much more.

In the Makerspace, students are encouraged to think and collaborate like engineers. Fourth-grade students designed a display of the Engineering Design Process that hangs on a wall to

remind all students to **Ask, Imagine, Plan, Create, Test, and Improve**. Each of the words appears on arrows that make an unending circle, reminding students that the engineering process really never ends.

Students have internalized that there is always room for improvement and for new ideas—and that is true for teachers as well. As we complete these first experiences in the Makerspace, we are always looking for ways to make the lessons even better the next time.

Although Hebrew teacher Batsheva Berman is excited to see her students using their hands and their imaginations to design a model of the battle of Ai from the Book of Joshua, she has further ideas about how to improve the experience. “The next time, I think I would have the students imagine themselves in the role of the commander of the battle, and think about how they might have approached the plan differently,” she reflects.

Each week, classes continue to use the Makerspace for STEAM integration projects, small groups of students can visit during recess for TinkerTime (to try out new programs, take apart objects, and build what they choose), and teachers continue to brainstorm ways to make the most of the space. In addition, costume designers for the school play will soon be using our new sewing machines, and several area preschools plan to visit and experience the Makerspace this spring.

Trish Mintz, Assistant Director of General Studies, is enthusiastic about the promise of the Makerspace to deepen the students’ learning. “Students are encouraged to innovate to solve problems and apply concepts they have learned,” she says. “Makerspace time encourages questioning and gives students the opportunity to discover not only what works, but why a concept works.”

So far, the concept of the Makerspace seems to have taken off at Heilicher!

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS WHO MADE THE MAKERSPACE POSSIBLE:

- Mark Appelbaum
- The Beverly Foundation
- Heilicher Foundation
- The Louis Herman Memorial Fund
- Merle and Mort Kane
- Minnesota Independent School Forum—STEM Grant Program
- The Wittcoff and Kuhl Families

List updated as of January 15, 2019

The Riedels and “Hands On” Careers



Laurel and Claude Riedel with their grandchildren Charlotte and Aidan.

“It was a dream come true,” said Claude Riedel, reflecting on the day he learned that his grandson Aidan would attend Heilicher. “And we’re also thrilled that Charlotte will start Kindergarten there in the fall. Laurel and I both entered parenthood understanding we would raise our family in the Jewish faith. To see both our children find their own paths to Jewish living as adults brings us great joy.”

The Riedels particularly appreciate Heilicher’s focus on STEAM and Judaic Studies integration. Claude and Laurel should know, as they themselves have made careers combining science, health care, arts, and Jewish values.

Laurel shared that she especially values the school’s focus on teaching about *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. During three decades as a nurse midwife at Hennepin County Medical Center, Laurel guided women and families through the miracle and mystery of birth. She shared that creating respectful space for cultural, spiritual, and family beliefs was her version of making the world more whole.

Claude recently retired as a psychologist, but he stays busy as an artist, creating sculptural *Nerot Tamid*, Eternal Lights, for synagogues around the world. In 1995, Bet Shalom asked him to create a *Nerot Tamid* for their sanctuary. Since then, he has completed numerous commissions and has come to see this creative outlet as a way that he honors and deepens his connection to Judaism.

He describes his work as trying to put back the shards of *Kristallnacht*, piece by piece, referring to the Night of Broken Glass at the start of the Holocaust. His work can be seen locally at Bet Shalom, Shir Tikvah, Temple Israel, Adath Jeshurun, the former B’nai Emet, and the Kollel school.

Read more about the Riedels’ story at www.hmjds.org/news-events/heilicher-blog



ALUMNA PROFILE LILY HARRIS

Read an interview with fashion designer Lily Harris ('02) and how Heilicher influenced her career as a “maker” and creative person. See www.hmjds.org/news-events/heilicher-blog.

Remembering Lisa Heilicher (z”l)

The Heilicher community is saddened at the recent passing of Elissa (Lisa) Heilicher, a long-time friend of the school.

Lisa was an extraordinary leader, volunteer, and philanthropist, and a great champion of institutions and causes throughout the Twin Cities Jewish and secular communities. As noted at her funeral, Lisa was truly the “Queen of Everything.” Numerous organizations benefited from her amazing talents and volunteerism, including Jewish Family and Children’s Service of Minneapolis, Talmud Torah of Minneapolis, Herzl Camp, the Sabes JCC, the City of Golden Valley Human Services Board, and many other agencies and programs.

The Heilicher Minneapolis Jewish Day School was also very important to Lisa, as three of her five grandchildren attended the school. Lisa’s involvement with Heilicher grew stronger upon the generous 2008 contribution of her late father, Amos Heilicher, which resulted in the school’s re-naming in her parents’ honor. Lisa played an important advisory role as a member of the Heilicher Head of School’s “kitchen cabinet,” where her guidance ranged from fundraising to Board recruitment to community relations matters. She was also a champion solicitor for Heilicher, and rarely declined to make a call to ask for a gift to the Heilicher Annual Fund. In addition, Lisa was a generous philanthropic supporter of the school, both personally and through the Heilicher Foundation (of which she was a Trustee).

Heilicher Board President Bruce Manning says:

“We deeply appreciate Lisa’s personal leadership and unparalleled volunteerism at Heilicher. I personally admire her involvement in many other important organizations and causes. Lisa was truly a ‘woman of valor,’ as she was described in her obituary, and our community will very much miss her stalwart presence and caring heart.”

Lisa Heilicher is survived by her children, Marty (Tara) Kloner and Debra (Byron) Wieberdink and grandsons, Andrew, Colin, Elijah, Dylan, and Jackson.



Lisa Heilicher with her children, Deb Wieberdink and Marty Kloner.



Lisa Heilicher

“Mom knew how to take charge, ignore boundaries to get a job done, and never apologize for her passions.”

—LISA’S DAUGHTER
DEBRA WIEBERDINK

Fay and Leonard Ribnick (z"l) to be Honored at the Heilicher Annual Benefit



Leonard and Fay Ribnick

The story begins with Shabbat. For the extended Ribnick family, their grandparents, Fay and Leonard Ribnick, anchored Shabbat. Said grandson Steven Schoenberger:

The family Shabbat table was more than a table. It was a classroom for developing our ethics. It was a gathering place where, each week, we all enjoyed family and shared ideas. And it was a front row seat to creating a lasting legacy and profound impact on our family and our community.

The story is about values. Fay and Leonard instilled in their four children and eleven grandchildren a love for Judaism, a commitment to Jewish education, and a drive to engage with the Jewish community as reflected in their leadership roles in numerous Jewish organizations including Beth El Synagogue, Sholom Foundation, and the Minneapolis Jewish Federation.

And, the story is about Heilicher. All eleven of Fay and Leonard Ribnick's grandchildren graduated from Heilicher, and five of their great-grandchildren are currently enrolled in the school. Fay and Leonard were regular participants in the Heilicher Grandparents/Special Persons Day programs, and their children and grandchildren have served as volunteers, Board members, and professionals at

the school since its inception. When reflecting about his grandparents and Heilicher, grandson David Ribnick said:

Heilicher (then MJDS) was a very important part of my life. It was my grandparents' vision and hope that all of us would attend. I know how proud they were when all their grandchildren graduated with great academic skills and a rich Jewish education.

I spent some time thinking about the core values of Heilicher and how they truly align so beautifully with my Grandpa and Grandma. Heilicher helped me become a mensch, but my grandparents taught me what being a mensch truly is.



The children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren of Fay and Leonard Ribnick (z"l) pictured here at a family wedding in 2017. The family will receive the *Ner Tamid Award* at the 2019 Heilicher Annual Benefit.

Just before Fay's passing, her grandchildren created a Shabbat Basket program in her honor for Heilicher Kindergartners to enrich Shabbat experiences for students and their families in the same way that their grandparents did for them. Granddaughter Shoshana Mann commented:

My grandparents' "secret recipe" was creating excitement around Jewish values and community. Judaism

was a natural ingredient in my relationship with my grandparents and subsequently my relationship with the world around me.

Fay and Leonard will be posthumously honored with the *Ner Tamid Award* at the 2019 Heilicher Annual Benefit, recognizing their significant contributions over many years to building and strengthening Jewish education. Their legacy is being perpetuated through the tremendous leadership and engagement of their children—Nancy and Mike Schoenberger, Jerry and Louise Ribnick, Debbie and Gil Mann, and Dan and Mindy Ribnick—as well as their grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

HEILICHER MINNEAPOLIS
JEWISH DAY SCHOOL
2019
Annual Benefit

Thursday, March 14, 2019
BETH EL SYNAGOGUE

Purchase tickets and tribute ads at
www.hmjds.org/news-events/annualbenefit



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2019 Annual Fund

Your tax-deductible donation strengthens Heilicher's academic programs and supports financial accessibility. Please donate by mail, by phone (952.381.3500), or online at www.hmjds.org.

Thank you!

Take a Look at Jewish Day School



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Tour Today
www.hmjds.org