



# THE AJAI!

## THE ASSOCIATION OF JAGUARS AGAINST ILLITERACY

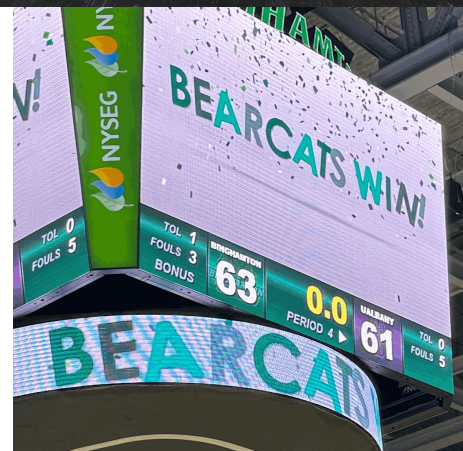
### Basketball Fun

By Avromy Chein and Lilly Foster

Hello everyone, on January 15, 2026. Hillel academy went to the Event center for a women's basketball game. It was the Binghamton Bearcats vs the University of Albany Great Danes. When we got there we went to our seats and sat down. After finding our seats, they introduced the players.

Now I'm going to explain a little about women's basketball. There are four periods of ten minutes each. Each team has 5 players on the court at a time. In between the periods, while the players were resting, there were mini games and dances to keep the crowd excited. By the way, Mrs. Derkowski and Ms. Kane were part of a teacher dance contest. Ms Kane had a crazy dance with lots of twirling. Mrs Derkowski used lots of arm waving and energy.

It was BU women's biggest basketball game with 4,671 people in attendance. In the first and second period we were losing. In the third period we came back and we were winning. Finally in the fourth it got very close and we **won!!!!** We won by 2 points and the score at the end was 63 Binghamton- 61 Albany.



## Animal Spotlight...

### *Peacock mantis shrimp!*

BY Camilo Azzellini Sitrin

The Peacock mantis shrimp is quite possibly one of the most exceptional and fascinating animals in earth's oceans. Not a true shrimp at all, but rather a member of the mantis shrimp family, it is more closely related to crabs and lobsters. This species is native to many shallow, warm areas of the Indian and South Pacific Oceans. It can be quite large, ranging in length between 1 and 7 inches (2.5 to 18 cm)!

Peacock mantis shrimp have vision unmatched by any other member of the Animal Kingdom: They have unimaginably complex eyes. (And by that I do mean that it is impossible for human beings to perceive everything that they can, as we have much simpler eyes.)

This species has 16 photoreceptors (compared to a human's mere 3), allowing them to see Ultraviolet (UV) and polarized light. This means that they can see the vibrations of waves of light, which is very hard to imagine as a human being, to say the least. They can also perceive depth with one eye and move each eye independently. Now, moving on from this confusing but fascinating subject...



Peacock mantis shrimp also have the strongest punch in the Animal Kingdom. Their punch is strong enough to break glass, shells, and even human bones! The punch of this species has the speed of a bullet and a force that is 1700 times its body weight. It uses this incredible punch to break the shells of its prey.

# SO YOU THINK YOU KNOW... ZALMAN!

BY Camilo Azzellini Sitrin

Zalman is a kind child with a curious mind. In the 3 and a half years that I have known him, he has always expressed much enthusiasm for the many things that he is interested in. This, I believe, is a quality that we share: when we develop an interest in a certain area, we both are thrilled to learn as much as we can about it!



**What is your favorite holiday? I really like Chanukkah. First, because I get money; Second, because I get to eat donuts; and Third, because I enjoy lighting the menorah.**

**What do you like about being a member of a large family? An advantage is that I always have someone to play (and sometimes fight) with.**

**What kinds of books do you like to read? I like mystery books, like *The Haunted House* and *The City of Ember*.**

**What is your favorite animal? I would say that I like kangaroos, because they can jump very high, and mountain goats, because they are very good at climbing steep mountains.**

**If you could create a magical potion, what would you use it for? I would want a magical potion that I could use to see Hashem. I would die, immediately, but it would be worth it.**



# No Ordinary Day Off

By Jonah Kaminsky

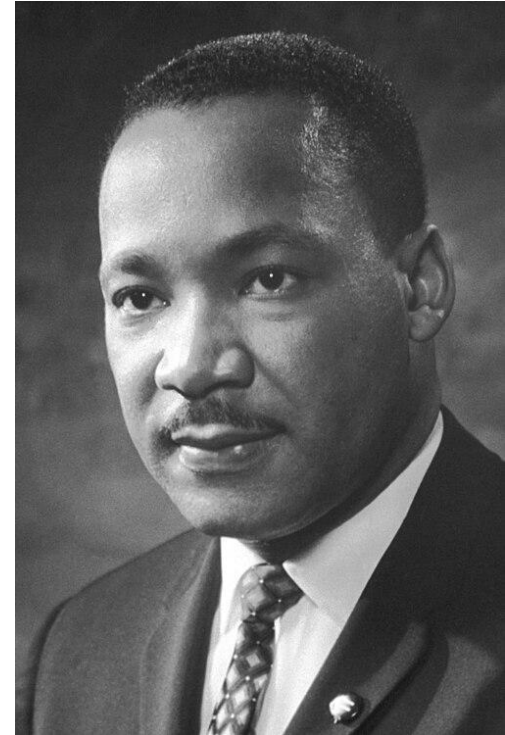
On Monday, January 19th there was no school because of Martin Luther King Jr. (MLK) day. We celebrate MLK in January because his birthday was January 15th 1929. I asked myself and others a few questions related to the holiday.

First, what word do you think best describes MLK? In my opinion, I think heroic describes him best. I chose heroic because he made a huge impact on many people's lives. He also wanted everyone to have equal rights. He went to jail many times but still kept going and preaching nonviolence.

Next, I wanted to know what question Avromy would want to ask MLK if he were still alive today. Avromy answered: "I would want to know what life was like with segregation (the practice or policy of separating a race, class or group from the rest of society). When Martin Luther King Jr was alive black people and white people could not swim in the same pool, drink from the same water fountains or go to the same school in the South. He spent his whole life trying to change this.

Then, I asked my classmates about what they think we should do for MLK day. Zalmam said: "remember MLK's actions with nonviolence". Avromy said: "be nice to people". And I said we should make cards and send it to his memorial.

The last question I asked was what does it mean to do the right thing even when it is hard. I think it means when people are doing something wrong you should stand up even if they threaten you. Just remember MLK day is no ordinary day off.



# CRAZY 8'S FUN

By Zalman Slonim

Crazy 8s is an after school program with a goal to creatively make math fun through activities and games. Each week has a different Math theme. So far, our themes have been geometry, patterns, skip-counting odd and even numbers, arrays and a 6-7 math funday. Crazy 8s is a 8 week club that takes place on Wednesdays from 3:30 to 5:00.

Avromy thinks that crazy 8s is better than math class because sometimes you get prizes or fun math tools. Also, it's more active than class because you get to run around more.

Jonah likes how it incorporates math and fun and not just math and not just fun. Lilly says that it is educational and fun. It is fun having the whole school together learning Math. If we've learned anything from Crazy 8's it is that Math is not boring!

