

KIDS COOK UP FUN WHILE LEARNING JEWISH HERITAGE

About a dozen – make that a baker's dozen – of children spent a recent Sunday threading juicy fruit chunks onto skewers and dipping their Tu B'Shvat-inspired kebabs into colorful pools of melted chocolate.

They are a part of the Chabad Community Center's Kosher Culinary Club, learning to prepare foods like challah and hamantashen while Rebbetzin Nechoma Goldman and her sister Fraidy Mann intersperse lessons about Jewish holidays and traditions.

Mann said they developed the ideas for each class with another sister in Detroit, where a similar cooking club is underway. She said most of the cooking projects focus on the nearest holiday.



CHILDREN MAKE CHOCOLATE-DIPPED FRUIT KEBABS TO CELEBRATE THE BIRTHDAY OF THE TREES DURING A RECENT KOSHER CULINARY CLUB EVENT. THE STUDENTS MAKE JEWISH FOODS AND PLAY GAMES THAT HELP THEM LEARN AND BOND.

"The kids have a blast no matter what we do," Mann said. They're also talented, she noted lightly with a towel in her hand after-

ward, at dripping food on the exact spots where the tablecloth has shifted.

» See COOKING, 2

FESTIVE MOOD WRANGLED IN AT WILD WEST PURIM PARTY

A knight in shining armor, princesses and ballerinas, Star Wars' Commander Cody and a band of young three-foot-tall cowboys and cowgirls livened the Chabad Center for Jewish Life and Learning during a Western-themed Purim party this March.

About 150 people joined the festivities to listen first to Meir Szkovski's reading of the Megillah and respond with a roaring echo of graggers at the mention of Haman's name.

"Enough people wore (cowboy) hats that you understood right off the bat what the theme was," said Naomi Cohen, who sported Western wear to the holiday celebration. Cohen

» See PURIM, 3

IN YOUR WORDS

"Passover in Lanzhou (China) was a reaffirmation of the ability of Chabad to unite and rekindle the Jewish spirit."

DR. ELI RESHEF

"The kids also learn that being Jewish is fun. You don't only have to come for services - you can come to make fruit dipped in chocolate."

FRAIDY MANN

"I basically think (the cooking club) is awesome ... because it's fun and we also play games, which I really like."

ZACHARY KAPLAN

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All fun and games

"I basically think it's awesome," said baker-in-training Zachary Kaplan, 8, whose face gave away the fact that he had already enjoyed some of his chocolaty treat.

"It's fun cooking in the cooking club because it's fun and we also play games, which I *really* like," Zachary said.

For instance, one game that covered a time lapse in a recipe left the children scrambling to collect puzzle pieces and assemble a large comic strip about an upcoming holiday.

Parents get involved

Galit and Moshe Levy, whose children Michelle, 6, and Noa, 3, both participate, said they like that their daughters get to spend time with other Jewish kids and get to express their creativity in hands-on ways.

Making the edible arrangements for Tu B'Shvat was fun "because you got to dip them in chocolate and eat them," Michelle said, speaking for herself before turning her attention back to

a chocolate-covered dried apricot.

There are tangible perks for the parents, too. "He doesn't necessarily like eating everything he makes – he's a really picky eater," Dr. Andy Wagner said of his son Brandon, 5.

"Like the rugelach last time, I think he ate one and me and my wife ate the rest," he said.

Jewish future

Mann said the Kosher Culinary Club is a way of getting parents into the Chabad Center and a way of securing the Jewish future.

"The kids also learn that being Jewish is fun," she said. "You don't only have to come for services – you can come to make fruit dipped in chocolate."

The children in the Kosher Culinary Club range in age from 3 to 12, and the youngest receive nearly one-on-one attention thanks to other helpers.

And although Wagner said his son is often more interested in "cooking" on the Iron Chef game for the Wii when at home, he echoed other parents in saying that Chabad activities like the

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: GALIT LEVY WITH DAUGHTERS NOA AND MICHELLE; BRANDON WAGNER; DOVBER GOLDMAN AND LIOR ELBERG; ADAM JUDKIEWICZ; CHYA SARAH CASSIUS; RACHEL ROSE; CORBIN KILLEEN.

cooking classes are both fun and enriching for his son.

Coming up next

The next Kosher Culinary Club event will be May 3. Visit www.JewishOKC.com to register your children!

RECIPE BOX

Chanukah Cookies

Mix together 3 cups flour, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda, 1 cup sugar, 1 teaspoon vanilla and 1 egg. Chill for one hour and begin preheating oven to 375. Then roll dough flat and cut with your favorite cookie cutters. Bake 8-10 minutes.

Rugelach

Mix together 4 eggs, 1 cup oil, 1/2-3/4 cup sugar, 4 teaspoons baking powder, 1 cup orange juice and 2 teaspoons vanilla. Chill for one hour and begin preheating oven to 350. Meanwhile, make filling by combining 6 tablespoons cocoa, 3/4 cup sugar, 3 tablespoons oil, 1 teaspoon vanilla and 3-4 tablespoons boiling water. Then roll dough flat into a circle. Spread a thin layer of the filling on the dough and cut like a pizza. Roll up each slice starting with the wide side. Bake 30-45 minutes.

Fruit Bouquet

Place chunks of fruit – choose from **pineapple, apple, dried apricot, strawberries, dried figs and oranges** – on skewers. Heat **baking chocolate** until melted. Dip each fruit halfway into the chocolate. Place skewers into a vase filled with **chocolate chips** or other treat.



PASSOVER TEACHES IMPORTANCE OF UNITY AMONG JEWS

Shalom to Y'all,
Soon, we will be at our Seder tables recounting the moments when Moses carried the message from G-d to Pharaoh.



"Let my people go," he intoned, a phrase that was to become one of the most familiar to every Jew, "so that they may serve Hashem."

At one point Pharaoh agrees. Indeed, he says, you may go! You can leave Egypt, but not all of you. Moses immediately declines: We will go, but all of us will go, we will leave no one and nothing behind.

My wife, Nechoma, and I recently celebrated our son Mendel's Bar Mitzvah. Inspired by the Lubavitcher Rebbe, we raise Mendel and his siblings to love Hashem, to love the Torah and to love every Jew.

Mendel did very well (I don't know of a father that would not say this). During the Bar Mitzvah, as I was k'velling and scheinig nachas, something caught my attention. We were dancing Chasidic-style, in circles. I looked at the people in the circles, and there was an expression of shared joy, uplift and even a tinge of excitement. Klal Yisrael of Oklahoma City was dancing - the professed atheists, the agnostics, the rabbis; from all walks of life, from all backgrounds, affiliations, knowledge levels and levels of observance, all in the embracing circle. All as one.

Weeks later I still can replay that scene in slow motion. And as I reflect on that today it dawns upon me that this is what Moses meant when he declined Pharaoh's generous offer.

This was an

» See RABBI, 6

Purim

previously brought two grand mezuzot back with her from Israel, both of which were affixed to doorways in the Chabad Center between the Megillah reading and the start of dinner and dancing. She said this year's Purim party was especially great because it was the first one in the new Chabad center. "This feels more like home," she said.

Chana Sorenson agreed. "I think it's better than the one last year - and next year will be better. Every year it gets better," she said.

An integral part of the event was the Wild West-style buffet, complete with beef and vegetarian chilis and sloppy Joes. "I know the food was good when there's none left,"

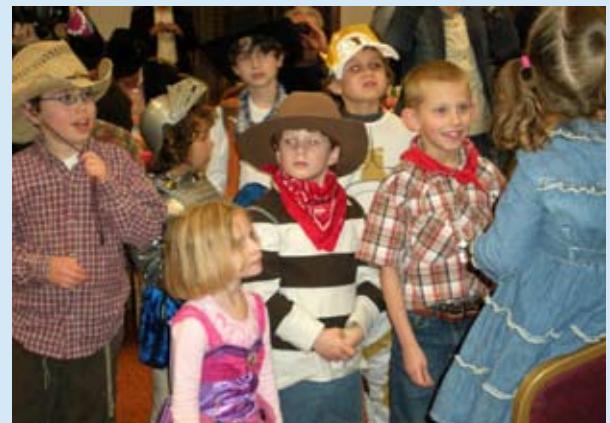
Rebbetzin Nechoma Goldman said of the empty serving dishes and everyone's empty plates.

Sorenson also said she loves getting to see all her friends and the freedom everyone feels in costume at Purim. "You can be yourself," she said.

Also in costume was Beni Harel, who came decked out with a cowboy hat, bolo-style tie and a silver d e p - u t y ' s badge.

"I love Purim," Harel said. "Let me tell you something, you won't believe it.

CHILDREN DRESSED UP IN COSTUMES TO CELEBRATE THE PURIM IN THE WILD WEST PARTY. MORE PHOTOS ON PAGE 5!



FIRST HAIRCUT IS CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

Aaron Clark's first haircut didn't take place in a home kitchen or in a corner barbershop - it took place at the Chabad Community Center in front of an audience of about 30 people, nearly all of whom took a snip. "I thought, OK, it's a celebration of a haircut," said Aaron's father, Kevin, about his first impression of an upsherin, the custom of celebrating a Jewish boy's first haircut at age three that leaves distinctive payos, or hair curls, on the sides. But really, Kevin Clark explained, the event marks the beginning of the child's formal Jewish education.

Aaron's mother, Nancy, said the metaphorical concept of an upsherin really rings true to her - that like a tree needs nurturing to reach maturity, a child's hair is not cut for several years, and then upon the age of maturity both the tree and the child rely on their roots and their nourishment to grow strong. Aaron didn't even wait for his upsherin to end before asking a thoughtful question, wondering out loud as his mother, Nancy, placed tzit tzit over his head for the first time why the garment had no sleeves.

Rabbi Ovadia Goldman told the inquisitive boy, invoking his Hebrew name, "Lazor, your haircut today will tell you you should never be embarrassed to be a Jew."



LEFT: NANCY CLARK CLIPS HER SON AARON'S HAIR AS HIS FATHER, KEVIN, AND BROTHER, ROBERT, LOOK ON. TOP: AARON BLOWS OUT THE CANDLES ON HIS THIRD BIRTHDAY CAKE.



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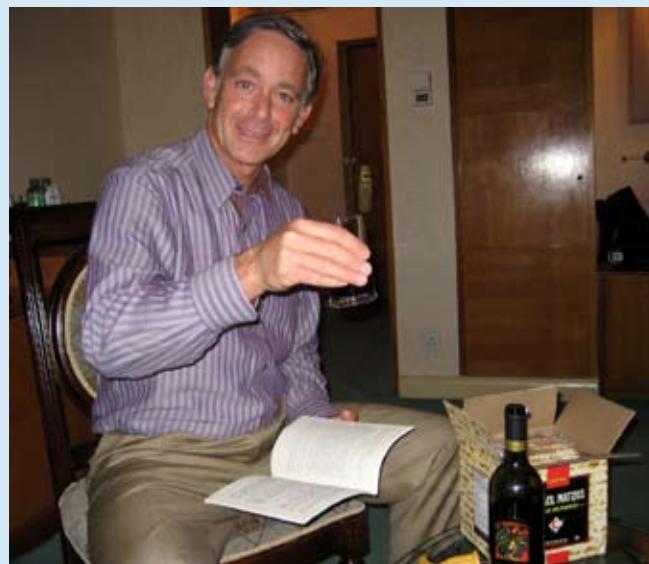
PESACH IN CHINA SENDS A MESSAGE



In the city of Lanzhou, in Gansu Province of northwest China, I read the Four Questions to an audience of one - my wife, Edie Roodman; I was the youngest in attendance. I suspect that in that remote Chinese city of 4 million people (a quarter of them Muslim), we were the only Jews celebrating Passover, or perhaps the only Jews, period.

A Chinese professor, a reproductive specialist like me, followed me in my medical practice for six months. She then invited me to speak at Lanzhou University at a conference for 200 Chinese physicians from four provinces. Our tour of China coincided with Passover while in Lanzhou. Prior to setting off to China, we contacted Rabbi Ovadia Goldman of Oklahoma City Chabad to see if his connections around the world would assist us in celebrating a kosher Passover Seder in a faraway land.

"Absolutely," said Rabbi. "One of my Torah study-buddies is a Chabad rabbi in Beijing. Let me contact him." Armed with the names of Rabbi Shimon Freundlich and his wife, Dini, and their phone number, we arrived in Beijing for the second part of our China voyage. We contacted the appropriate Chabad following the discovery of actually three Chabad houses in this sprawling Chinese metropolis. After invoking Rabbi Ovadia's name, we were politely notified that the rabbi was out of the country but that we were welcome to celebrate Passover with them at the house or come and pick up a care package. Beijing is a large and confusing city. A trip to this Chabad House would



sap the energy even from a seasoned Beijing cabbie. We decided to pass on the generous offer.

Enter the BlackBerry. A quick e-mail across seven seas to Rabbi Ovadia and lo, a personal messenger from Chabad with a huge package of kosher-for-Passover provisions for at least a dozen people arrives that evening at the front desk of our hotel. The next night, in our hotel suite overlooking the central square of Lanzhou, a Passover Seder was conducted. And while the pace of the service was dictated by

yours truly in a typical physician fashion (you never know when the next delivery or emergency will occur, even in China...), the Passover spirit shone bright in this remote desert town on the ancient Silk Road. Hagaddah reading, kosher wine, matzos and other appropriate fixings were greatly appreciated in our slightly shabby yet spacious hotel suite.

Both my wife and I are products of diametrically different spiritual backgrounds from Chabad. But the universal Jewish message of love and respect transcends our differences, as illustrated in a remote part of China. In this day and age of connectivity, Chabad networking touches lives across the globe, whether in Nepal, Shanghai or Oklahoma City.

The other day, during Mendel Goldman's Bar Mitzvah, I looked around the room in amazement. A very diverse audience celebrated an important life-cycle event. There were Jews and non-Jews, Orthodox, Conservative, Reform, agnostic, and perhaps a smattering of atheists. All were united by an uplifting event, by a dynamic and charismatic and inclusive Chabad family, and by a spirit of kinship rarely seen today. Similarly, Passover in Lanzhou was a reaffirmation of the ability of Chabad to unite and rekindle the Jewish spirit.

Rabbi

important part of the experience of our first taste of freedom. It was not Moses, Aaron and the wise sages who were meant to experience this great simcha, it was not the women or the men, the boys or the girls. It was not the believers or the doubters, the ones who observed or the ones who would not. It was as the verse states, binoreinu u'vizkeineinu, all of Klala Yisrael. Each and every Jew was an integral part of that first Jewish simcha, that first Pesach.

The scene at Mendel's Bar Mitzvah was sweet indeed, but it was but a magnification of smaller scenes that repeat themselves almost daily at the Chabad Community Center for Jewish Life and Learning. Whether at the children's Kosher Culinary Club, Nechoma's Parsha class, JLI or the Purim party, whether on a day of joy or at a time of mourning, it is always a conglomeration of all types of Jews coming together, celebrating and experiencing as one.

As we each celebrate Passover, in our homes and at community Seders, and recount the exodus experience, the exodus of the entire Jewish people as one, let us also re-experience it. Let us do all we can over the next few months to bring together and unite our Jewish family and friends in special gatherings, either around your kitchen table, in your living rooms or across your backyards. And when we do, let us serve some kosher food for the body and inspiring Jewish thought and study for the soul. For soon we will, together as one, experience the final exodus, the final redemption with the coming of Moshiach Tzidkeinu, the righteous Moshiach. Amen.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Goldman

PROGRAMMING



PESACH SEDERS

April 8 & 9, 8 pm. RSVP to the community Passover Seders by March 27 to reserve your spot at the table and relive our journey out of Egypt and into freedom.



And don't miss ...

LAG B'OMER

May 12, 5:30 pm. Celebrate this outdoor holiday marking the passing of the great sage Rabbi Shimon bar Yochai, including a cookout, petting zoo, moon bounce, and music and dancing.

SHAVUOS

May 29, 5:30 pm. Celebrate the giving of the Torah by listening to the reading of the Ten Commandments, and enjoy a delicious dairy buffet. Fun for young and old alike!

JEWISH ENRICHMENT

Sundays 1-3 p.m. Fun merges with learning each week as students explore their heritage in a joyful, nurturing environment. Ages 3 and up.

JLI: BIBLICAL REFLECTIONS

Wednesdays May 6 - June 10, 6:30-8:30 pm. Find yourself in the stories of the Torah as we explore the themes of ambition, jealousy, courage and conviction in Genesis.

MOMMY AND ME

Thursdays April 23 - May 14, 10:30 am - 12 pm. Create lasting relationships with other mothers while helping your child learn new skills and have fun Ages 3 months to 4 years.



COMMUNITY SHABBATON

May 8-10. Join us for a family weekend getaway in Guthrie. Eat, pray, laugh and learn at this Shabbos with scholar-in-residence Rabbi Manis Friedman. Email fraidy@jewishokc.com for more information.

AFTER THE SHABBATON:

GETTING TO LIKE THE PEOPLE WE LOVE

May 10, 10 am. This workshop at the Chabad Community Center is a chance to hear more of Rabbi Manis Friedman's wisdom on our relationships with the people we love.

-  On www.JEWISHOKC.com
- ♦ **PASSOVER: WHAT FOUR QUESTIONS DO YOU HAVE?**
- **GET THEM ANSWERED AT WWW.JEWISHOKC.COM!**
- ♦ **START WITH A HOW-TO LESSON ON PREPARING FOR THE HOLIDAY.**
- ♦ **THEN MOVE ON TO A STUDY OF THE HAGGADAH AND THE SEDER, BOTH THE SERVICE AND ITS SPIRITUAL SIDE.**
- ♦ **YOU CAN ALSO LEARN ABOUT TIMELESS PESACH STORIES, REVIEW THE HISTORY BEHIND THE HOLIDAY AND FIND OUT HOW TO MAKE A SPREAD OF KOSHER-FOR-PASSOVER FOODS.**
- ♦ **AND REMEMBER TO TAKE THE TIME - OR, IF YOU'RE SHORT ON IT, REMEMBER TO DOWNLOAD TO YOUR MP3 PLAYER - AUDIO LESSONS ON VARIOUS PASSOVER THEMES, SONGS TO SING AT THE SEDER, AND VIDEOS ABOUT HOW MATZAH IS MADE AND OTHER TOPICS IN AN EXTENSIVE MULTIMEDIA COLLECTION.**
- ♦ **PLUS: PHOTO ALBUMS. INTERACTIVE CALENDAR. VIRTUAL TOUR. ONLINE LIBRARY. JUDAICA SHOP.**

BAR MITZVAH



WHAT A WONDERFUL EVENING TO CELEBRATE OUR SON MENDEL'S BAR MITZVAH TOGETHER ON JANUARY 17 WITH SO MANY FAMILY AND FRIENDS! YES WE LIVE FAR FROM ALL OUR FAMILY, BUT YOU ALL CAME TOGETHER AND GAVE MENDEL A GREAT CELEBRATION. THE WARMTH, THE LOVE AND THE FEELING OF 'YES, WE WANT TO BE HERE WITH YOU' WAS AMAZING. MENDEL DID A GREAT JOB AT READING HIS CHASSIDIC DISCOURSE BY HEART (YES FROM MEMORY!) AND HE DELIVERED A BEAUTIFUL D'VAR

TORAH. THE DANCING AND SINGING AND UNITY WAS VERY TOUCHING AND WILL STAY WITH OUR FAMILY FOREVER. HE HAD HIS FIRST ALIYAH IN THE BEAUTIFUL CHABAD COMMUNITY CENTER, AND HE GAVE ALL OF US HERE IN OKLAHOMA CITY SOMETHING TO BE PROUD OF. LET US ALL CELEBRATE MANY HAPPY TIMES TOGETHER!

-RABBI OVADIA AND NECHOMA GOLDMAN

Eric Kaplan, April 2 (11 Nissan)
 Andria Kaplan, April 5 (10 Tamuz)
 Ronit Judkiewicz, April 6 (9 Iyar)
 Sholom Cohen, April 12 (8 Tamuz)
 Daniel Seelig, April 15 (5 Nissan)
 Adam Gratch, April 16 (27 Iyar)
 Judy Mitchell, April 16 (10 Nissan)
 Menachem Mendel Pinson, April 24 (28 Sivan)
 Sam Karchmer, April 29 (27 Iyar)
 H. Gene Goldstein, April 30 (12 Iyar)
 Miriam Litzman, May 5 (10 Sivan)
 Fishel Litzman, May 8 (13 Nissan)
 Ben Shanker, May 10 (12 Nissan)
 Victoria Mahan Mitchell, May 16 (6 Iyar)
 Naomi Ruth Romani, May 17 (22 Nissan)
 Yakov Romani, May 21 (12 Sivan)
 Jacob Bannet, May 31 (8 Iyar)
 Eli Fuchs, June 1 (13 Sivan)
 Adam Perlmutter, June 3 (27 Nissan)
 Eli Reshef, June 4 (21 Nissan)
 Sivan Segall, June 4 (26 Sivan)
 Yaniv Segall, June 15 (3 Sivan)
 Michelle Seelig, June 16 (25 Nissan)
 Eve Herling, June 17 (19 Iyar)
 Robert Wise, June 24 (29 Sivan)
 Marina Roytman, June 26 (23 Nissan)


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