

Jewish Preschool on Sardis Opens Up Jewish Connections

By Yael Osovski

When my husband, our 1-1/2 year old and I first arrived in Charlotte, I learned very quickly that unlike other cities I had lived in previously, such as Philadelphia, NYC, and Tel-Aviv, I would have to actively seek out the city's Jewish community. Charlotte has a

Jewish community, I was informed, but it is small enough that you must attend events and join various Jewish organizations if you really want to meet other Jews and have any sense of community.

My husband and I are not religious at all; if anything, we consider ourselves very secular. Thus



The Osovski family.

school and its curriculum since it was run by Chabad. Dedee was incredibly honest and open in all of her answers- I truly appreciated her candor and sense of humor.

What I would soon learn for myself, and what she explained at the time, was that Chabad here in Charlotte and the JPS itself were inclusive of all levels of religiosity.

When I entered JPS for the first time, several observations struck me: boys and girls in classes together, the absence of long skirts on the

staff and mothers visiting (parents in tank tops even). It looked like a regular preschool but with Hebrew and Jewish-themed toys and signs. I heard English and Hebrew being spoken and found two mothers sitting and talking while their children played nearby. I asked them if they were considering JPS for preschool and they both answered a resounding yes. I asked them why and they both answered the same telling answer: "the atmosphere here is very warm and loving - your child receives a lot of attention and is nurtured. Some of the other schools in the area are larger, but we prefer something more intimate."

For my family, JPS has become our first connection to Charlotte's Jewish community. The families and the school itself are warm and very welcoming to newcomers and try to get everyone involved in the various activities the school and the community provide. The office staff and teachers are truly welcoming and genuine; each time I enter the school with my son I see just how much love they give him by the greetings he receives from his teachers and the administrative staff. He loves going to

school and runs to his teachers and hugs them. When I pick him up on Fridays he is gleefully yelling "Shabbat! Shabbat!" and "Shabbat Shalom." We've started lighting the candles on Friday night at home to keep some sort of continuity from what he's retaining from school; as I bless the Shabbat candles he dances around and covers his eyes. It seems that what he's gaining from JPS may instill a sense of tradition in our family which I'm coming to realize is our responsibility as Jewish parents. ☆

I had not really thought of sending our son to a Jewish preschool before arriving in Charlotte, but seeing what my options were in the area and not wanting him to be the sole Jewish child in his class, I decided to check out the Jewish preschools.



I first heard of JPS in passing. By chance, it was mentioned to me that there was an additional preschool run by Chabad. Now please understand - when I first heard Chabad I immediately assumed that JPS would be very religious and not exactly what I was looking for. As I said, being secular, I truly didn't know what to expect and was a bit concerned. I said that since I was new to the area and I knew from experience that Chabad differed in terms of its inclusivity in different cities and countries around the world, that I would at least check the school out.

I called JPS one afternoon and explained that I was new to the area and was looking for a preschool for my son. I told the director that I had a lot of questions about the school in general, as preschools go, but was particularly curious as to the religiosity of the



**Help Us Bake
Challah for Shabbat2Go
Packages
Wednesday,
December 11
9:15-11:15 AM
JPS, 6619 Sardis Rd.,
Charlotte, NC 28270
RSVP
Leah@JPSONSARDIS.ORG
To recommend a
package visit
www.shabbat2gocharlotte.com.**

**WORK WITH A LEADER IN
CHARLOTTE REAL ESTATE**

**704-926-2544 office
704-975-8500 cell
www.LepowRealtors.com**

STEVE LEPOW
LEADING THE WAY TO YOUR SUCCESS

MEG D. GOLDSTEIN
ATTORNEY-AT-LAW

ESTATE PLANNING,
ESTATE AND TRUST ADMINISTRATION,
PRE-MARITAL AGREEMENTS,
CHARITABLE PLANNING AND ENTITIES,
GENERAL CORPORATE AND TAX LAW,
BUSINESS SUCCESSION PLANNING

5960 FAIRVIEW ROAD, SUITE 400
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA 28210

TEL: 704.523.2202 ♦ FAX: 704.496.2716
MGOLDSTEIN@MGOLDLAW.COM ♦ WWW.MGOLDLAW.COM



**WHAT'S THE VERY
BEST HOLIDAY GIFT?
MEMORIES!**

Travel is a great way to create memories. Whether you want to surprise someone with a vacation, or purchase a gift card for future travel, we're here to help.



704.556.8322 Park Road
704.541.0943 Arboretum
704.892.9020 Lake Norman
704.542.4242 Blakeney
803-327-1156 Rock Hill
704.282.1063 Monroe

Youth Visions

Chai Chaverim BBG, a Thriving Chapter

By Natalie Berman

The term has started off with a bang. The girls of Chai Chaverim are having a great time getting to know our MITs, Members in Training, and participating in fun programs every Tuesday. From making clothes out of trash bags to show off our inner beauty, to

bonding in the sukkah with other chapters, we have had a lot of fun and it has brought us even closer as a chapter. We also had a great evening when we all went out to Qdoba and Ben and Jerry's; a sweet treat and a great time with our sisters. What could be better?

We'd like to give a big thank you to everyone that supported our bake sale at the end of September, where we raised \$206 to support our chapter and contribute toward meaningful Jewish experiences. Make sure you look out for upcoming fundraisers; we always love getting together and sharing with the community around us.

The MITs are doing a fabulous job learning all about BBYO from their awesome MIT Mom, leader and educator, Jenna Rosen. They went to their very first convention on October 18-20 and I, for one, was very envious of them. While there, they met other kids from Eastern Region (North Carolina and Virginia) and I'm sure they are very excited to see their new

friends at future conventions throughout the year. A senior member of our chapter, Danielle Adler, got to go and train our new members, along with others from Eastern Region. She got to connect with the younger members and teach them about BBYO and all it has to offer. We're very proud of her and we know she did a fabulous job.

On October 22, we had a joint program with MBA, our brother chapter, and learned about Globalization. BBYO has been growing as an international movement and Eastern Region is ready to be a part of it. In our Global Game of Trivia, we also raised a collective amount of \$109 for the International Service Fund, BBYO's scholarship fund that helps teens in other countries form a closer connection to Judaism while developing their leadership skills.

We've greatly enjoyed the year so far and we're all looking forward to a wonderful year ahead of us. ☆