

Lubavitch of N.C.

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

The Educational Effect Of Pushke

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

A Pushke is for everyone, man, woman, teenager, the older child and even the very young boy or girl. The educational effect of the Pushke is remarkable. The child asks "What is that?" The father responds with an explanation of the basic concept of Tzedakah. He teaches the inquiring child that charity is nothing but a loan to the Almighty. "He who is gracious unto the poor, lends unto G-d, and He will repay him his good deed." He tells the child that there were Chassidim who considered it so important to get into the habit of giving Tzedakah that when they could not give charity, used to borrow and repay small loans to each other just to maintain the habit of lending and giving charity.

Pushke Versus Peanuts: Little David and his friend Bill are walking down the street. Says Bill, "Let's go into the store for a cream soda." David replies that he has no money. Bill expresses his surprise. "I know you get an allowance David; you told me so yourself." David explains that there is a phenomenon known as a Tzedakah Pushke. "What is that?" asks Bill. "I have never seen one." David explains that it is a "charity box," and that is where his money has gone!

Little does David realize that great quality of the charity that he has performed. A Pushke is one of the highest forms of charity, for the recipient and the

donor do not know each other's identity; not like a donation announced in the synagogue when everyone knows about it. Furthermore, the Pushke is a reminder even on Shabbas or Yom Tov (when one can not give monetary charity) that there are people in this world who need assistance. David gets a quarter a week for his allowance (or if his father is kindhearted or does not want that David should bother him, he gives him two quarters) to buy as much candy, peanuts or soda, reminding him that there are those who get even less than he. They do not have a father or mother whom they can persuade "through a little coaxing" to give them an allowance. The Pushke appeals to little David's ego; it makes him feel like a donor who actually helps "those poor people out there." To have less candies or soda doesn't seem to be so terrible after all. The young child has learned, thanks to the Pushke, to resist the efforts of his Yetzer Hara (evil inclination) to dissuade him from giving his money to charity.

The educational effect does not stop at young David; his parents' attitude towards charity also becomes affected. They see that although David receives only a quarter or two a week, he selflessly donates it to charity. Yet they, who earn hundreds of dollars a week, have been trying to "keep up with the Joneses." "It's rather embarrassing," muses mother, "proportionately, I should give at least 100 times as much to charity as the little one gives or at the very least, 20 times as much!"

Preschool and Day School Kept Busy at Year's End

The months of November and December saw many exciting projects at the preschool and day school, starting with the two-year-olds. Under the able guidance of Debbi Maslov, early child development teacher, the tiny tots have been progressing steadily into little "menchen" (little people).

Debbi sees the role of the school not as a daycare service for the two-year-olds, but rather as a place where they absorb information. Says Debbi, "Their learning ability is magnificent; we have enjoyed various fun projects which have taught them a great deal about children interaction."

Debbi and her children were busy preparing for the Chanukah play which was held on Friday, December 15, in participation of the entire school and their parents.

Chanie Weiss taught the older children at the preschool all about Chanukah, the story of Chanukah as told and dramatized by Chanie and Eliza Schoenes, in addition to the many hands-on and arts and crafts projects. The high point of their Chanukah experience was a professional Chanukah play presentation for the parents and friends of the school. The play was written and directed by Chanie Weiss who labored endless hours to perfect the performance of the children.

Fern Sanderson, morning teacher at the school, taught the children about American Indians, with special units on Indian dress and dance. The children assumed roles of different tribes and practiced "pow-wows" and dressed in Indian garb.

The children also learned about fire safety and life in a fire station. The children practiced fire safety with Mrs. Sanderson and also visited a fire station. At the fire station they observed the living quarters of the fire fighters and watched an emergency demonstration by them. The fire fighters introduced the children to a huge new fire truck and learned about the very important job these people do for the safety of our citizens.

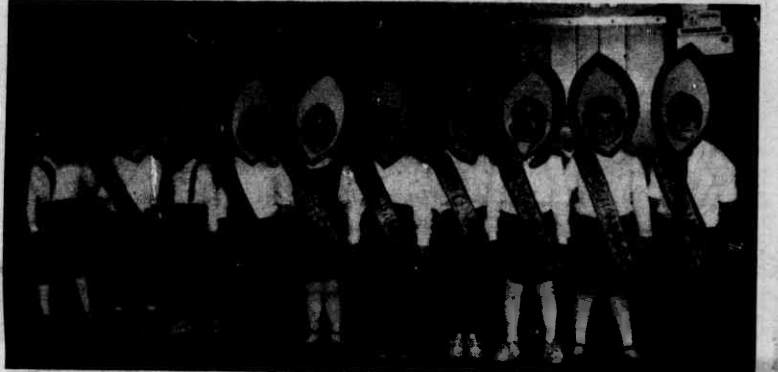
Eliza Schoenes, preschool Judaica teacher, in addition to



Alyssa and Diane Levine presenting Chanukah play, "The Maccabees of 5750."



The "Dreidle Players" at the Preschool.



Four-year-olds playing the part of Chanukah candles.



First graders at Day School proudly holding presents from Rabbi Binyomin and Chanie Weiss.

the Hebrew Alpha Bet, teaches the weekly Torah portion to the children on their level. For instance, the first week they

made a book on the six days of creation, the second week they made Noah's Ark. Every Friday they do a Shabbat project, like baking Challah, making Challah covers and singing Shabbat songs.

The kindergarten students have been experiencing hands-on demonstrations with Chanie Weiss. Chanie introduced the mitzvah of Mezuzah, the mark of a Jewish home. The children traveled to Mezuzaland to learn about the many important details that make up a kosher Mezuzah. The children made their own stained glass Mezuzah cases and studied the parchment scroll that is placed in it.

See SCHOOLS next page



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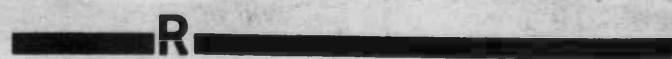
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