

## A Freshman speaks...



**Name: Sarah Schwartzberg, '13**

**Major: Occupational Therapy**

I first discovered the Chabad house on campus at the beginning of the first semester, as a freshman. I went with one of my friends for the Friday night Shabbat dinner and had a wonderful time. Ever since then, I try to go as often as I can with all of my friends. What I really enjoy about the Chabad house is the welcoming environment, the new friends I have made, the interesting dinner conversations, and of course, the wonderful meals. One of my favorite times at the Chabad house was Passover. Living in New Jersey, a few hours away from school, makes it hard to be able to go home for things such as the Jewish Holidays. For Passover, Mendy and Sheiny opened their home to students just like me. The Passover Seder was very interesting, enjoyable, and easy to understand. The atmosphere reminded me of home. It was a great time to meet new people and to enjoy a wonderful Passover meal. One memorable Shabbat dinner was the All Girls Shabbat Dinner. This was a time for the girls who attend the Chabad house to come together to talk and relax. Every time I have been to the Chabad house, I have fully enjoyed myself. From the small dinners with 5 students to the dinners with 30 students, each time has been a great experience. Mendy and Sheiny Rivkin have been wonderful hosts, who make Shabbat dinners very fun, meaningful, and memorable.

## A Parent writes...

**By Susan Witty**

The Chabad House of Rabbi Mendy and Sheiny Rivkin provides a welcoming home for students of all Jewish backgrounds.

My daughter has attended Shabbat dinners at the Rivkin's home since she was a freshman two years ago. She enjoys cooking and preparing meals for Shabbat, as well as the dinner conversations.

I was privileged to attend a Shabbat dinner with students from various local universities at the Chabad House. I was impressed by the diversity of the young men and women, as well as the discussions that ensued. The food was delicious, the atmosphere warm and hospitable. It is a pleasure to know that my daughter is able to spend quality time with people who discuss local, national and international events and share opinions with others that provide discussion and debate. The Rivkins are kind and caring people who truly enjoy hosting students and their parents.

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Chabad arranged for a unique "Sukkah mobile" to park on campus, giving the opportunity to dozens of students to step in, shake Lulav & take a bite. A Mitzvah truly on the go!

As cold winter snuck in, it brought with it the favorite holiday of many: **Chanukah!!** The lights of the Menorah bring back warm memories & the smell of donuts is just irresistible!

Chabad made sure that every Jewish student, while away from home during the difficult finals season, had the chance to spend time with their "family" in college. Students joined the Rivkins at home for Menorah lighting, home-made fresh latkes & Chanukah songs. Two Menorah lightings were held on both Towson & Goucher campuses, where everyone could join & warm up with a cup of hot chocolate & donuts.

200 mini Menorahs (we ran out) were distributed to students on campus, & a fun "Guess how many Dreidels in the jar?" contest was sure to get everyone involved!

**Purim** rolled around right before spring break. Chabad of Towson was up for the fun Purim standards that Chabad houses the world over have established. As you walked in the Chabad house, you could feel "Purim in Mexico" in the air!! Hot pepper lamps & cactuses hanging from the walls. The smell of hot chili & tortillas, & Rabbi Mendy & Sheiny dressed like real Mexicans in their serapes!! The highlight of the evening certainly must have been the Meghila reading! Rabbi Mendy reading from the scroll in his sombrero, while the dressed up students cracked firecrackers every time Haman's name was mentioned! This was surely a party not to be forgotten!

## A Birthright Reflection...



**Name: Spencer Greenberg, '11 Major: Mass Communication**

This past summer I had the unique opportunity of going to Israel with Rabbi Mendy on birthright. Being that this was going to be my first time leaving North America, I must say that I was a little nervous. However, once I arrived at the airport and met all of the guys that I would be going with, I suddenly felt relieved and very excited. Spending those ten days in Israel and meeting the soldiers, hiking through the Golan Heights, touring the town of Tzefat (the city where we jumped in the mikvah), spending the night in Tel-Aviv, hiking Masada, swimming in the Dead-Sea, touring Jerusalem and simply getting the feel of the life of a Jew and an Israeli citizen changed me as a person and how I view the world. This trip taught me to have an open mind on many issues and to think for myself rather than just trust others. Something that was instilled in me through the many stories that the Rabbi told, was that G-d made that all great things come with hard work and sacrifice, so that we truly appreciate them. Upon hearing this, I realized that I am not the type of person who understands things or gets the job done instantly. In order for me to do what I gotta do, I've always felt that I had to work extra hard. Even though I am not the most religious Jew, once I realized this similarity between my life and these stories, I felt an extreme connection to Judaism that I had never felt before in my life.

If it wasn't for Chabad's MAYANOT birthright, I would be depriving myself of so much! Lastly, since I've been home, every day I have said to someone "If I could, I'd be on a plane to visit Israel!!"

# The heart of