

# KIMU VEKIBLU AT YESHIVA OHAVEI TORAH

Much has been said and written about the phenomenon of *bochurim* dedicating their *Purim* to raising funds for *tzedakah*. While the concept of fundraising is undoubtedly a noble one, the downsides are well known.

Often overlooked in the broader discussion of the pros and cons is the missed opportunity for a *bochur* to experience the *aliyah* that can be achieved through utilizing this day properly and maximizing the *ruchniyus* that can be gleaned from it.

This year, for the first time, Yeshiva Ohavei Torah of Riverdale took the initiative. The *menahel*, Rabbi Chaim Pechter, set a ground rule that any type of group collecting or the participation in any non-family parties where alcohol was served would not be allowed. Alternatively, the *yeshiva* would host a voluntary *leil Purim seder* on Wednesday night, the first night of *Purim*, at the BTU Bais Medrash in Passaic, with transportation provided for all participants to and from Passaic. A special ski trip scheduled for after *Purim* would be held for all *bochurim* who participated in this *seder*. The trip would be followed by a barbecue at

Rabbi Pechter's home.

Immediately after *krias hamegillah*, Rabbi Pechter and the staff of *rabbeim* set out for Passaic, wondering how many brave souls would actually take them up on the offer. Not long after their arrival in Passaic, the transportation vehicles arranged by the *yeshiva* began pulling in. They came from Passaic, Riverdale, Monsey, the West Side, Queens, and Lakewood.

With 67 out of the *yeshiva's* 74 *talmidim* packing the *bais medrash*, along with the entire *hanhalah*, the pulsating energy and reverberating *kol Torah* quickly spilled over onto the streets, attracting the curiosity of local neighbors. Walking into the *bais medrash*, they were blown away by the sight: costume-clad *bochurim*, on *Purim* night, many in full *Purim* regalia, plugging away at their *Gemaros*, without a care in the world. The elevated aura of the evening added a special uplifting dynamic to the *geshmak* of the learning. The scene looked so other-worldly, so *Olam Habadig*, that they just stood there mesmerized. They offered sponsorships, anything to own a share

in this.

After a lively hour-plus *seder*, the *bochurim* sat down to lavish *Purim tish* with Rabbi Pechter. The singing and the uplifting *matzav* at the *tish* brought to the fore the elevated *ruchniyudige* fulfillment experienced by the *bochurim*. The singing and dancing lasted until 1 a.m.

One week later, on Thursday morning, Yeshiva Ohavei Torah began early with a special pre-*Shacharis seder*. Immediately after *davening*, the boys headed out to a full day ski trip on the slopes. Vendors for the trip, like the charter bus company and the food suppliers, offered generous discounts for the privilege of having a share in the *zechus* of this project. As promised, the trip was followed by a beautiful barbecue and *kumzitz* at Rabbi Pechter's home in Monsey.

Reflecting on the beautiful success of this initiative, parents pointed to Yeshiva Ohavei Torah's hallmark of having a steady finger on the pulse the world in which *bochurim* are growing up and doing whatever it takes to maximize their growth into healthy and well-rounded *bnai Torah*.





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