

The Mitzvah of the Mitzvah Project

Stepping into Jewish adulthood, young men and women give to their communities

Heidi Mae Bratt

Eitan Hiller

Be a clown, be a clown.

Eitan Hiller has been mitzvah clown since he was 12, but knew about mitzvah clowning from his older brother, Ari, 17, and went along on visits since he was 10 years old.

So it made sense to him to take his clowning skills and use them for his bar mitzvah project.

But it wasn't just him, alone.

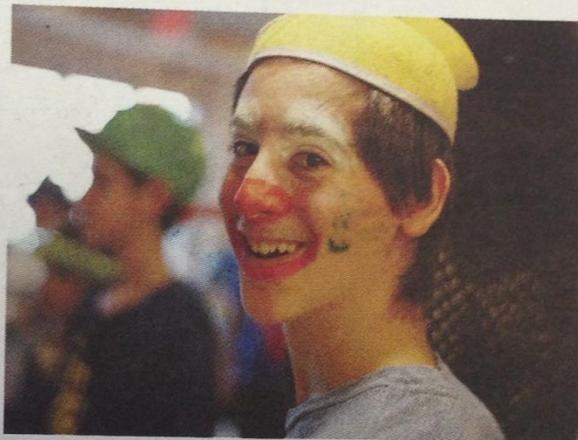
Eitan Hiller enlisted the help of his classmates at Yeshivat Noam. On Election Day, Nov. 3, 2015, 44 boys came to a mass training presided over by Daniel Rothner, the founder and director of Areyvut, which does among other things the Mitzvah Clown program. The boys learned skills of how to bring cheer to adults as well as how to twist a balloon into a fun shape. Armed with their new skills and motivation, the boys gave cheer to the residents at the Jewish Home in Rockleigh.

"We just felt that we needed more clowns so we invited Eitan's grade to get the training," said Eitan's mother, Tzippy Hiller.

It was also a lot of fun.

Eitan's friends learned how to make a balloon animal dog and a flower and learned how to approach the elderly.

"I have to tell you, it was very sweet to watch

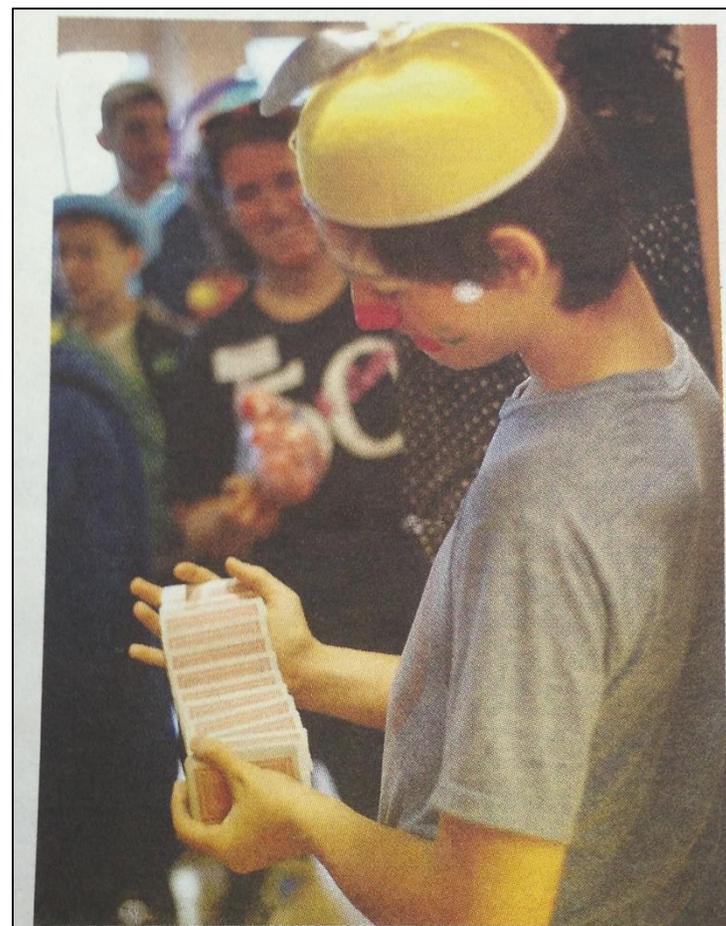


these rough and tumble boys just become these sweet, charming clowns," said Tzippy, who lives in Teaneck with her family including, husband, Ezra.

For his part, Eitan who loves the stage – he is also an actor – and being able to bring people cheer, said that he does his magic tricks as a mitzvah clown.

"I really love making people smile," said Eitan. And what did his friends think?

"A couple kids were not so into it at the beginning, but then afterwards, they thought it was a great party and they wanted to become a mitzvah clown."



It's all smiles for Eitan Hiller, who celebrated his bar mitzvah with his newly trained mitzvah clown friends at the Jewish Home in Rockleigh.