

Create a video/ slideshow bio for the party

By DIANA GERSHMAN
Jewish Press

If a picture speaks a thousand words than a slideshow or video must speak volumes. Some families are enhancing their celebration with a multimedia biography of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Both family-produced and professional presentations are debuting at Tampa Bay area parties.

One such Bar Mitzvah, Isaac Netzer, son of Evin and Linda Netzer of Tampa, was presented with a slideshow that took his mother 40 hours to put together. A scuba diving enthusiast, the Bar Mitzvah chose the party theme, "Dive in with Isaac." The slideshow included images of him underwater, as well as photos of him growing up, and featured songs by Aerosmith and the Beatles.

The Bar Mitzvah ceremony was at Congregation Schaarai Zedek in Tampa on Dec. 6, and the party was held the next day at a private club where Isaac's slideshow was screened after dinner for 100 guests.

Linda Netzer said she had to learn a computer program in order to make the slideshow. A month before learning this program, she had gathered dozens of family photos, and scanned the older ones that were taken before cameras went digital.

"I was very happy with it in the end. I thought that it turned out better than expected," she said.

At Reva Halprin's Bat Mitzvah celebration last October at Congregation B'nai Israel in St. Petersburg, another family member, her 16-year-old brother Harvey, was responsible for putting together the slideshow. Eight months later, Reva said her favorite memory of her party and a keepsake is that slideshow of her life.

Taking a different route, Ellen and Ira Siegman of Clearwater, hired a professional to pull together a 22-minute video for son Reuben's ESPN-themed party following his Bar Mitzvah at Clearwater's Congregation Beth Shalom.

For the video, the Siegmans rented a studio where a family friend pretended to be an



Isaac Netzer carried out his scuba-diving inspired Bar Mitzvah theme throughout the celebration including the video presentation, table decoration and candlelighting, shown here. Guests were asked to wear tropical attire and received leis and "beachy" hats.

ESPN anchorman who gave reports on Reuben's life including recorded interviews with Reuben's friends and relatives. The video project took about six weeks to complete.

Ellen Siegman said the video is a keepsake, and the family shows it to relatives and people who weren't at the Bar Mitzvah. "Maybe we'll show it at his wedding," she said.

At Rachel Saady-Saxe's Bat Mitzvah celebration, the 160 guests viewed a 12-minute slideshow during the Broadway-themed event following her Bat Mitzvah at Congregation Kol Ami on Nov. 1.

The slideshow was a joint effort between Rachel's mother, Claire Saady, and a photographer. They used images of Rachel throughout her life with family and friends plus pictures of her from a recent trip to Italy, a Bat Mitzvah gift from her parents.

"It really gives you the opportunity to include all the guests," said Saady, who added some of the guests complimented the slideshow later because of this.

Saady said the family has even started a new tradition centered on the video biography: On the anniversary of each of their children's Bar/ Bat Mitzvah, they will gather in their family room, order a pizza, view the slideshow and enjoy the memories.



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