



## Thousands 'Rejoice' in music and culture



Doni Zasloff Thomas of the Mama Doni Band leads her back-up shofar players at the annual Rejoice Music and Culture Festival on Sept. 13.

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The second annual Rejoice Music and Culture Festival turned out to be an even bigger hit than last year, drawing almost 4,000 community members to Woodlot Park in the Monmouth Junction section of South Brunswick for a celebration of all things Jewish.

The Sept. 13 event featured klezmer, folk, and children's music and lots of clapping, dancing, and singing.



Festival-goers could feast on popcorn, falafel, hamburgers and hot dogs, Italian ice, and other goodies, as they walked among vendors selling everything from jewelry to artwork to Judaica and explored tables set up by local synagogues, organizations, and schools. Men were encouraged to learn from Chabad representatives how to put on *tefillin* as children nearby had their faces painted. Other children played in the moon bounce or were entertained by acrobat Miss Lisa or magician Brian Richards.

At the festival's Hadassah booth are, from left, Amy Kertesz, copresident of the Metuchen-Edison Geshet chapter, and Sharon Bender of Hadassah L'Dor V'Dor Young Women of Raritan Valley chapter and its president, Celeste Albert.

Rejoice was sponsored by Congregation B'nai Tikvah in North Brunswick and cosponsored by the Middlesex County Arts Commission, New Jersey State Council on the Arts, the township of South Brunswick, and the Jewish Federation of Greater Middlesex County.

"This is an inspiring gathering of the young and young at heart," said federation executive director Gerrie Bamira. "Our federation encourages and supports events that celebrate and involve the entire community."

Leila Alterman of East Brunswick attended the festival with her mother and daughter.

It is just wonderful," she said. "This is our second year here, and we hope they do it again next year."

Her six-year-old daughter, Miriam, added that her favorite part was the cotton candy.

Kira Greenberg of South Brunswick said, as she sold popcorn for the North and South Brunswick United Synagogue Youth chapter, "Everyone seems to be enjoying themselves. I'm loving it and having a great time."

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