

- Photo of the Week (4)
- Politics (7)
- Singles (3)
- Special Sections (22)
- Sports (2)
- Torah Commentary (4)
- U.S. (55)
- What They're Saying (3)
- World (17)

## SEARCH

 →

## JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!

Tuesday

Nov292011

Posted on Tuesday, November 29, 2011 at 1:33AM Category: **Special**

**Sections**

### **BIG BUCKS AND PINK THRONES: THE MOST OVER-THE-TOP BAR MITZVAHS IN RECENT HISTORY**

ALINA DAIN SHARON JOINTMEDIA NEWS SERVICE

**A chocolate factory, a \$27,000 gown, and**

**'Mitzvahpalooza.'**

(Download this story in Microsoft Word format [here](#).)

Young Benjamin Fiedler just returned from a lavish Titanic-themed party held logically, though maybe with a note of morbidity, on a cruise ship. This was simply the bar mitzvah of his friend Arnie Stein. As Benjamin also prepares to turn thirteen, he can barely read his haftorah while trying to figure out what it means to become a man. Meanwhile, his parents nearly drive themselves crazy in an attempt to outdo Stein's event by renting Dodger Stadium for Benjamin's party. The ensuing events result in hilarity.

If this sounds familiar, it is either because it's the plot of the 2006 film "Keeping Up With The Steins," or it rings all too true with your personal observations. Simple synagogue gatherings or house parties with bubbe as the caterer are now a thing of the past. Most bar/bat mitzvahs fit more comfortably in the "extravaganza" category, but in recent years, some have blown the rest right out of the water.

Here are the top five most ridiculous bar/bat mitzvahs in recent years:

**5. Doompty Doo**

For a child that was particularly into "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," a re-creation of the factory itself is what he got. Pat James, a New York City event planner, recalled in a 2005 Washington Post interview, "We had a purple suit made for him, and we hired these people to be Oompa Loompas and they came out and danced. We had these trees with candy all over them, with signs that said 'Do not eat.' It was fantastic."

**4. A bar mitzvah on lockdown**

Financial scam artist Tuvia Stern hosted a bar mitzvah party for his son—get this—from behind bars. He used his own kosher caterer to feed 60 guests and entertained them in the jailhouse gym. "It's outrageous what transpired," said at least one objecting official according to the New York Post. And yet corrections officers were actually paid over-time for the extra hours it took to "supervise" this party.

**3. Mixing business with bar mitzvah**

Consider the Ridinger family. Bat mitzvah girl Amber wore a \$27,000 Dolce & Gabbana gown and \$100,000 crystals at her party at the Miami Beach club the Forge, reported MTV. The guests walked into the venue on a pink carpet and partied to musical entertainment by Ja Rule and Ashanti. The club's cellar

was transformed into a "candy land" with chocolate colored drapes.

"Well, diamonds are a girl's best friend," Amber Ridinger said. Let's not forget that every party can be a business opportunity. The eighth-grader took care to debut her line of club clothes, Gossip, and her commercial perfume, Amber No. 13.

## 2. Bar mitzvah Tweets

Jeff Zucker, former CEO of NBCUniversal, got Drake to sing at his son's bar mitzvah for a relatively "reasonable" price in comparison to the \$1 million Zucker almost shelled out for a performance by Kanye West. Clearly, everyone has limits. From sushi and rack of lamb to asparagus and smoked salmon, this feast was a culinary heaven, the New York Post reported. Zucker entertained his guests with a photo booth, a bracelet-making lounge and an iPad station where everyone could tweet to the world about the greatest party on earth in real time. It's an event guests will remember every time they trot out in the pair of customized Converse sneakers they received as gifts.



(Click photo to download. Caption: Rapper

50 cent recently graced the stage at a bat mitzvah that made all others pale in comparison. Credit: Alex Const.)

## 1. Mitzvahpalooza

In an event that had jaws dropping across the country, multimillionaire Long Island defense contractor David H. Brooks booked two floors of a banquet facility for the more-than-lavish bat mitzvah of his daughter in 2005, the New York Post reported. Dubbed, "Mitzvahpalooza," Brooks had a stage built, brought in jumbotrons, and installed special carpeting for a concert most people would die for.

Names in the lineup included Steven Tyler and Joe Perry from Aerosmith, The Eagles' Don Henley and Joe Walsh, Fleetwood Mac's Steve Nicks, Tom Petty, and—so the younger crowd could recognize a few names too—DJ AM, Clara, and 50 Cent. Kenny G serenaded the guests on sax during cocktail hour. Apparently Tyler and Perry even tried to humor Brooks when he jumped on stage and demanded to let his nephew play the drums. Guests left the event with iPods and digital cameras in goodie bags.

The total cost for the blowout? A cool \$10 million. Five years later, Brooks was found guilty of insider trading and committing \$185 million fraud—using his company, DHB Industries, to pay for his

personal expenses. At least his daughter reaped some of the benefits?



(Click photo to download. Caption: Steven

Tyler and Joe Perry from Aerosmith moved aside to allow David Brooks' nephew a turn at the drums during his cousin's bat mitzvah. Credit daigooliva.)

Whatever kind of bar or bat mitzvah suits your style, one thing is for sure: It is definitely fun to see how it's (occasionally) done.

*Alina Dain Sharon is the Assistant Editor of JointMedia News Service.*

---

**EMAIL ARTICLE**

**[View Printer Friendly Version](#)**

**[Email Article to Friend](#)**

**Reader Comments**

There are no comments for this journal entry. To create a new comment, use the form below.

---