

Chabad of Richmond to be transformed into factory

By Alan Campbell, Richmond News September 6, 2011

The Jewish community in Richmond will create a temporary factory to manufacture what is arguably the world's oldest musical instrument.

On Sunday, Sept. 18, Chabad of Richmond will be temporarily transformed into a factory, with adults and children of all ages getting a unique opportunity to participate in a hands-on manufacturing workshop, crafting their own shofars, or ram's horn, for the upcoming holiday of Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year.

The "factory workers," will learn just what the criteria is to make a kosher, or genuine, Shofar. Workers will manufacture (saw, drill, sand and polish) their very own horns and then learn how to sound the traditional notes.

The shofar is perhaps the oldest wind instrument known to mankind. Consisting of a simple horn taken from a ram or similar animal (such as a kudu) and hollowed of its internal cartilage, the instrument produces a haunting, almost mystical tone.

"The shofar generates an otherworldly sound. It's very soulful, very stirring, and open to much interpretation," said Rabbi Yechiel Baitelman, director of Chabad of Richmond and sponsor of the Shofar Factory.

"Each individual hears something else in the shofar's voice. Thus, it is most fitting and quite uplifting for the shofar to be blown during the High Holidays, the holiest Jewish season of the year."

According to Jewish history, the sound of a shofar accompanied G-d's giving of the Torah (the Bible) to the Jewish people as they stood at the foot of Mount Sinai in the Middle Eastern wilderness.

In addition, Jewish tradition has it that the Messianic Era, a time of world peace, will be ushered in with the sounding of the great shofar.

Temporary operations of the Shofar Factory will take place Sunday, September 18, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. at Chabad of Richmond, 4775 Blundell Rd.

All interested Factory workers can contact Rabbi Yechiel Baitelman at 604-277-6427, Rabbi@ChabadRichmond.com or on the web at www.ChabadRichmond.com.

There is a \$25 charge to each worker-participant in order to cover the cost of factory operations, materials and other assembling costs for each worker, who will get to take a shofar home.

A special factory, free of charge, will be set up for high school students at the same time.