

**When I dip, you dip, we dip**



My hubby is saying musaf, which is an additional service said on holidays, shanbat and rosh chodesh, both days of Rosh Hashanah this year. He'll stand before the small congregation in the Chabad house (conveniently located next to a head shop) of this North Carolina mountain town we find ourselves happily in this holiday season and proclaim his love both for Hashem, the community and our people. But, before he can truly feel ready to do all that he had to dip. Now I'm not talking apples into honey though we have big plans for that over the next several days. No, I'm talking the big dip--taking a plunge into the mikveh, literally translated as a collection of water, to cleanse and purify. The requirements of a true mikveh are pretty intense. A mikveh must consist of a natural spring or well of naturally occurring water, and thus can be supplied by rivers and lakes which have natural springs as their source. It is usually found in the form of a bathing facility in a local synagogue that remains in ritual contact with a natural source of water, yada yada, you get the picture. Needless to say, this small town doesn't have one. But, what this small town does have plenty of are natural rivers, lakes and creeks. It's not hard finding a natural body of water in the mountains but it is a little hard finding a secluded spot for a traditional dip (read: naked dip). After driving for a bit we settled on a gorgeous spot in a national forest (thanks government!) and well, there was some dipping. It wasn't hard connecting to Gd in this pure place and it got me thinking just how much I haven't been paying attention to the beauty of this season lately. As much as I work surrounded by my fellow Jewish community members and as much as "doing Jewish" is embedded in most everything I do, I feel like this Rosh Hashanah season might be passing me by before I have time to truly give thanks for the incredible gift that is my life. I mean heck, I didn't even make one thing outta apples and post it to this here kosher food blog. Nevertheless, I have 3 days of reflection (and eating) ahead of me and with the dipping of today, the dipping of apples into honey tonight and the pride I feel for this huge honor my hubs is about to

undertake, well, I think it all means I'm ready to be present this Rosh Hashanah. Shana Tovah—to a sweet new year filled to the brim of peace and goodness.<