

Welcome

By Arnold Cohen, President

I am excited to greet you as alumni and parents of campers of the Eli and Bessie Cohen Camps and welcome you to our first Cohen Camps Newsletter. Although we know how to run great camps which have a real impact on young lives and create wonderful lifelong memories, we have not done a good job of communicating with you—our extended camp family. This newsletter is the beginning of a new effort to help keep you connected to us and those warm memories of your summers at camp.

Our vision is to have this once-a-year Cohen Camps newsletter be complemented by another about your particular camp. We will try to convey

what we do; how camp has changed (or not) over time; and to pass on some stories we have heard about the impact of camp on the lives of Cohen Campers and Staff.

You are the reason we are writing this, so we really need you, our extended camp family, to help us by suggesting things you would like to know about in future newsletters or by offering your time and talents to help us. I personally have lots of camp stories to share, but those will have to wait. Now we need to hear your voices.

Any suggestions, advice or comments can be sent to newsletter@cohencamps.org.

So What Do You Do The Rest of the Year?

By Pearl Lourie, Executive Director

“So what do you do for the rest of the year?”

“Do you have the winter free?”

Camp Directors are always asked questions such as these, and I always like to share that getting ready for camp is much like getting ready for opening night on Broadway. The moment camp closes we, the Directors and I, take a close look at our programs, facilities, staffing and evaluations from the past season and immediately start to work on planning for the next year.

Each one of our three camps along with the Dor

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planning for the next year.”*

L’Dor program have their own special personality and flavor, however they all benefit from and are enhanced by the opportunities that come with being part of the larger Cohen Camps family. As Executive Director, it is my job to not only see the “big picture” but also to remember what makes each entity truly unique.

To this end, we sponsor many programs throughout the “off” season that keep our winter office humming. Our “New Camper Orientation” brings new families together to meet the Directors and other head staff. We bring in an expert, Dr. Christopher Thurber, to talk about how to prevent homesickness and prepare children for their first time at camp. Our new campers meet with the head counselors and program directors to learn about a “typical” day at camp while parents talk to the directors and get their questions answered regarding medications, laundry, bunk placement, and activities, among other important things.

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What Do You Do from Page 1

Our goal of building a community of positive Jewish role models culminates with our Dor L'Dor Leadership program, one of the largest programs of its kind in the country, with over 110 participants each year. Participants from all three camps come together for an unforgettable 5-week educational trip to Israel and then return to their respective camps for two weeks of leadership training. Two meetings are held during the fall and winter months to help prepare our participants and their families for this truly life-changing experience.

The excitement these young adults bring to camp

Camp News

Everyone in our organization is moving at full speed preparing for the upcoming summer. Our new websites should be up around the time you read this with fresh looks and easier navigation. Each camp's website has a message from the Director in anticipation of the coming summer.

The next two summers will bring major milestone seasons for all three camps, with reunions planned at camp. Alumni should be sure we have their contact information so they don't miss anything. To register online, go to your camp's website under the Alumni tab.

If you have received emails from us - you are already in the database - so login with that email address as your ID. You can request your password right in the Login box. This helps us reduce the number of duplicate entries we have.

Camp Pembroke

This summer will be Camp Pembroke's 75th season. Plans are underway for a spectacular celebration on August 8. Registration will be opening in April - online and by mail. Alumnae will be notified as soon as that happens (we prefer email, but will be sending mail too.) Since the reunion will take place while camp is in session, pre-registration will be mandatory.

Camp Tel Noar

Tel Noar will celebrate its 65th season in the summer of 2010. We will be gathering a

after their return from Israel is simply magical and these new "leaders" then have the opportunity to continue to impact camp by applying to become junior counselors. C.A.M.P. Cohen, or "Counselors Achieving Maximal Potential", encompasses two separate days of training for our new junior counselors and helps to complete the smooth transition from camper to counselor.

These are just a few of the ongoing activities that keep us busy during the winter months. Camp is now just weeks away and as they say on Broadway, "the show must go on"!



committee of alumni to start the planning before summer begins.

This summer we are trying something new at Camp Tel Noar a 2-week long program called the "Taam of Tel Noar." *Taam* is Yiddish for 'flavor' or 'taste.' *Taam* includes everything that Tel Noar has to offer, but is aimed at younger campers (and their parents) who may not be ready for a full session of camp. This pilot program begins on July 27. Interested families should contact Molly at the camp office at 508.881.1002.

Camp Tevya

Tevya will be celebrating its 70th season this summer. Plans are in full-swing for a celebration

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on June 27. Registration will be opening in March and alumni will be notified as soon as that happens. Pre-registration will be greatly preferred.

Dor L'Dor

Preparation for the Dor L'Dor Leadership program has been underway since the fall – it takes almost

as much time and effort as preparing for one of the three camps does – with our partner, Keshet: The Center for Educational Tourism in Israel. As usual there are some exciting, new changes to the program this summer for the 112 CITs participating, who should already have their passports and be breaking in their hiking shoes.



Fundraising

By Jonathan Cohen, Executive Vice President

I've been asked by many people about our camps' relatively new practice of fundraising. Fundraising has become a necessary part of our organization simply because it is becoming increasingly challenging to provide high quality Jewish summer camp experiences while maintaining affordability. We cannot keep raising tuitions at the same rate our costs rise. Much has changed since my grandfather Eli started Camp Pembroke 75 years ago.

In many ways, our camps are coming a bit late to this. Virtually all of the non-profit Jewish camps across the country have relied on their alumni, families and friends for financial help for many years. Except for minor event-related endeavors, we only started in earnest in 2006.

Having 'Foundation' in our name has misled many to believe we have a substantial endowment behind us. The fact is we do not. We have a small amount of money invested, with a respected, cost-conscious financial institution, as a cushion to help

us through the proverbial economic rainy days. The performance of the stock market over the past year, even with our conservative asset allocation, has trimmed that amount. To continue the analogy, the weather hasn't looked very promising recently, but we are taking steps to avoid dipping into those funds as long as possible while maintaining our high standards.

In 2008, our annual appeal raised \$18,393 for scholarships (see box); just 10% of the \$183,025 in financial aid we provided to 111 campers. So far this fiscal year, we have raised \$14,361 for scholarships. Not surprisingly requests are up this year, and we are working hard to be fair and help as many families as we can that apply and qualify.

Thank you to everyone who has assisted us with generous gifts for scholarships, capital improvements and programming. With your continued partnership, we will be able to sustain our mission to provide the best Jewish camp experiences we can for many more generations of children.

Camp Pembroke	Camp Tel Noar	Camp Tevya	No Camp Affiliation
\$5,840	\$6,809	\$4,536	\$1,208

Fiscal Year ending September 30, 2008

Why Camp Blood Runs Deep

By David L. Yas

Lev. Bern-dog. Greenie. Russ. Mills. Maze. Chet.

The nicknames never change.

I realized this as I took a mental roll call around a restaurant table last fall.

There we were, in glitzy Las Vegas, eight men joyfully sharing drinks, dinner and stories. Lots of stories. We had one thing in common: Camp Tel Noar. It has been 20 years or so since we last stood around the flagpole, but the memories are as vivid as ever.

It is no secret why parents send their kids to camp. It is a chance to explore independence, make great friends and have fun. But the hidden secret of summer camp, particularly Camp Tel Noar, is that the camp gives back to you *long* after you make that last, long melancholy drive away from Hampstead.

Why? Because Tel Noar blood runs deep.

When I graduated law school in 1993, the job market was soft and I was looking for any type of lead to get my career going. The first three people I spoke to were friends from Camp Tel Noar. My elders. The ones who tucked me in bed in the '80s.

One of the guys told me that it was a smart thing I was doing.

"Tel Noar," he said, "is the best fraternity."

He's right. CTN connections are everywhere.

There is a running joke in my office. When I approach a co-worker and begin a sentence with "I have this friend," the co-worker invariably finishes the sentence for me: "... from summer camp."

This usually occurs with a smile and a knowing roll of the eyes. And, the co-worker is usually right. I find that I have even connected with CTN alumni who I didn't know particularly well at camp, if at all.

The mere mention of "dance in the dell," "Apache relay" or "Rock Havdalah" will draw a smile and in a flash, the two of you are back on the shores of Sunset Lake, recalling, the last burning of the TN, or maybe the last swim.

Camp does a lot more than teach you how to do the backstroke across the third crib. The CTN connections are powerful tools in the worlds of business, law, medicine, what have you. You won't be shocked to hear the professions of my pals around the table in Vegas: family lawyer; accountant; dentist; financial advisor; criminal defense lawyer; operations manager; business lawyer. Today's head of boating is tomorrow's corporate powerbroker. These success stories are borne out of the palpable energy at Tel Noar.

You see, high school prepares you for college. College prepares you for your career. Tel Noar prepares you for *life*.

Here's why. Camp occurs in a thick, sturdy bubble. Aside from a national disaster or a huge Red Sox win, the outside world matters very little. This "Planet Tel Noar" phenomenon is particularly acute because of the intense pride, the feeling that something *important* is happening on our planet. Fifth-graders star in the camp play, and it might as well be Broadway. Little boys hold the Apache Relay baton and sprint across asphalt with every fiber of their being, and for that moment they are at the center of the universe.

In the CTN bubble, the top story is Boston Cream Pie for dessert. The captains of Negev and Galil are celebrities, and the counselors are near-deities. Pride? At camp, we had two teams we rooted for: Tel Noar, and whoever was playing Tevya. We primed every hair on our head for each social. We screamed fight songs at the top of our lungs each Game Day. And we died a little on the last day of the summer, that tragic morning when the parents begin arriving to take us back to Earth.

To grow up on Planet Tel Noar is an empowering experience. Every memory, every friendship, every

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funny and sad moment is a piece of your being. To be a part of this exclusive community fills you with waves of confidence and maturity. You laugh at camp. You cry. You grow up.

That's why we stay in touch. That's why we smile at the memories every time they come up.

And that's why anyone happening by a certain hotel room in Las Vegas last fall would have heard

the curious sound of eight men, while watching their beloved Red Sox on TV, spontaneously breaking into song ...

"Fight on Tel Noar team, fight for all you're worth ..."

David Yas (CTN 1981-89; '91) is an award-winning columnist and V.P./Publisher of Massachusetts Lawyers Weekly in Boston.

Shabbat and Nature

By Elyse Horowitz

Maybe God had it right all along.

That seventh day of rest - without television, driving, spending money on material possessions - maybe that is what the world needs in order to maintain its "green" environment.

We are instructed to observe the day on which God rested, keeping in mind all of the work God had done to produce the rest of the world in the six days prior. Although this is an unimaginable amount of work for one being to complete, it can be argued that God didn't have to worry about paying the bills, going food shopping or handing in term papers on time.

However, on this holy day each week, many Jews across the world walk to *shul*, with covered heads and dangling *tzitzit* in respect.

I would never be one to contradict the observances of any religion, but it is interesting to wonder if these rules were put in place not only for the benefit of people, but also to allow our Earth to observe a day of rest. Without driving cars, handling money and using electricity, we are helping conserve energy while observing the laws of Judaism.

While most Shabbat mornings follow the path of formal services in a congregational synagogue followed by a Kiddish luncheon, my ideal Shabbat differs from the norm.

I was lucky enough to attend Camp Tevya as a child and recently completed my fourth summer as a

counselor there, my tenth overall. Set in the rural lakeside of Brookline, New Hampshire, Tevya is the second brainchild of Eli and Bessie Cohen and part of the Cohen Foundation. It has been a home-away-from-home for Jewish children for almost seventy years. Its lush green fields and breathtaking sunsets are only some of the attractions of the camp, as it has also provided me with Jewish experiences to last a lifetime.

A Shabbat morning at Camp Tevya begins with late wake-up, a coffee cake and cereal breakfast and relaxing outdoor services. Imagine sitting beneath the trees as the sun shines through, the voices of young ones praising God as God's work of art is appreciated in the purest form.

Shabbat afternoon is left open for walks around camp, reading in the shade, or pick-up games of soccer and basketball between counselors and campers of all ages.

I believe that this is the kind of Shabbat that God must have wanted people to experience at least once in our lifetime. By being so close to a natural environment, we are able to understand how God truly intended Shabbat to be observed, which can only enlighten our connection to our Jewish roots.

So, next Shabbat, remember to spend time heightening your connection to nature and appreciating its beauty as God's creation.

Elyse Horowitz is a junior at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

Three Generations of Self-Discovery

By Suzanne Sherman Propp

My first memory of Camp Pembroke is of my mother, Ruth Klayman Sherman, running around our neighborhood with a young neighbor who had just returned from her first summer at Pembroke. They were skipping around the block singing camp songs and their spirit and energy and laughter led me to immediately start begging my mother to let me to go to camp.

My mother and her sister Diane attended Camp Pembroke from 1950 to 1957 when camp was under the leadership of Hadassah Blocker, and when I began coming to Camp Pembroke at the age of 9, Hadassah Blocker was still the Director. My younger sister Caroline eagerly joined me at camp a year later. We had lived through many car rides filled with camp songs and stories and we seamlessly adjusted to camp life. The knowledge that my mother and aunt had sung the same songs, chanted the same chants on the same well-worn paths, had lain beneath the same rafters in the same bunks around the same horseshoe oh-so-long-ago, gave me a constant sense of well-being. I remember looking up at the rafters in Bunk 14 to see my mother's name written in white shoe polish on the brown wooden planks high above the cots. Slight homesickness turned quickly to sheer pride as older campers exclaimed "That's your Mom??!! That is so cool!"

There is utter joy, comfort and freedom in my memories of camp. The joy of celebrating Shabbat through song, dance and prayer surrounded by friends and counselors who love and care; the comfort of quiet nights, cozy wool blankets under wooden rafters and "Rad Ha Yom" being sung over the loudspeaker; the freedom to choose elective activities on my own and the chance to participate in whole-group bunk activities all contributed to the wonderful summers I spent on the shores of Lake Oldham.

Being a part of Camp Pembroke's strong community taught me about sharing, compromising and making the most out of living in a group. Camp Pembroke is where I developed a love and appreciation for Jewish traditions and values that have helped define my adult life. I discovered many things about myself at camp and

"...Camp Pembroke's strong community taught me about sharing, compromising and making the most out of living in a group."

gained insight from counselors and friends about the kind of adult I hoped to become. I developed a strong sense of independence and self-esteem, as well as many life-long friendships that began around the horseshoe at Camp Pembroke.

I am still very close with many of my Pembroke friends; in fact, in 2006 a group of us recorded a CD of camp songs after a 4-day reunion in Florida. We feel so lucky to have been able to visit Camp Pembroke to teach and perform those songs with the current camper community.

My daughter Rose began attending Camp Pembroke in 2004 and is now a devoted member of the "Brokie" family. The Pembroke spirit is very much alive in Rose; she spends the winter months talking with her camp friends, remembering the events of the previous summers and waiting out the 10 months until they can be back at camp.

Camp Pembroke and the sisterhood that exists there has been enormously integral to Rose's emotional growth and development, as it was for my mother's, my aunt's, my sister's, and my own. Two generations of women now spend the summers living vicariously through my daughter. We are thrilled by the knowledge that the joy, excitement, comfort and freedom that is Camp Pembroke is alive and strong in yet another generation.

Suzanne Sherman Propp is the writer of "World Outside", a song written about life at Camp Pembroke. It is available on iTunes and also appears on a CD of camp songs called "CAMP FRIENDS" available at www.suzanneshermanpropp.com.

Camp is the Same, but Different

People ask how life at camp has changed over the years. The truth is that while the essence of camp is constant, many things change over time. Traditions come and go, and camper needs and wants change over time.

We found a Camp Pembroke menu from the 1940's where Shabbat lunch was borscht and boiled potatoes, and Saturday dinner was liver and onions. Imagine having that as the menu now! Few campers would eat much of that. This got us thinking about what else is different today at camp.

Here are some of the more notable ones:

- Laundry service takes only one day. Really! Gathering and distributing the laundry is no longer a rest hour-long bunk activity. Also, no one has to use a safety pin to keep their socks together.
 - There is a salad bar at lunch and dinner with fresh vegetables, beans and different salad dressings.
 - There is a vegetarian option for every meat lunch and dinner.
 - Yearbooks are in full color, they include the August campers, and everything that happens through the end of camp. Staff doesn't spend
- the last few nights of camp collating in the dining hall.
 - Campers receive healthy snacks twice per day – in the afternoon and in the evening before bed. And fresh fruit is available throughout the day.
 - Campers don't need to wear true blue and white for Shabbat. The camps are more flexible with the color blue.
 - Pembroke campers don't need to wear tie shoes in the dining hall to "give their feet a rest from their sneakers."
 - Computers are used in almost every administrative task. No longer does the administration spend all night setting up electives and making lists. Although the Directors do still use notebooks to assign campers to cabins.

*"...many things change...
Traditions come and go, and
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Cohen Camps

Arnold Cohen, President
Jonathan Cohen, Executive Vice President
Pearl W. Lourie, Executive Director
www.cohencamps.org

Camp Pembroke

www.camppembroke.org
Ellen Felcher, Director

Camp Tel Noar

www.camptelnoar.org
Molly Lourie Butter, Director

Camp Tevya

www.camptevyva.org
Matt Brand, Director

Telephone: 508.881.1002

Do you have something you'd like to say in the next newsletter? Would you like to help? We are looking to get alumni involved. Contact one of the Directors or email newsletter@cohencamps.org.

PARENTS: If your children don't live at this address anymore, you can help us by sending their correct address to alumni@cohencamps.org.

Cohen Camps
75 Second Ave., Suite 520
Needham, MA 02494

SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER

