



# AVODA ALUMNUS

THE BIENNIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE CAMP AVODA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

FALL 2004

## The Ultimate Gift — The Avoda Experience

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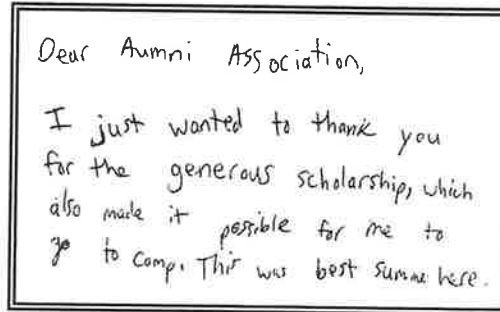
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**A heartfelt "Thank you"  
from one of our  
scholarship recipients**

This past summer the Alumni Association was once again able to bestow the ultimate gift upon three youngsters – the Avoda summer experience.

Through our scholarship efforts, the Alumni Association sent two young boys for the entire summer and another for one month. With the help of Paul Davis, we selected three worthy recipients. Two of the boys came to us through the Jewish Big Brother Organization and the third was a former camper who had not attended camp the previous two summers due to financial difficulties. We are happy to report that all three children enjoyed themselves immensely, and thrived in the Avoda environment.

These scholarships would not be possible without the generous donations we receive from alumni like you. This winter you will again receive a solicitation to donate money to the Alumni Association Annual Fund. As you can tell the money raised for the annual fund is put to good use.

If you are interested in learning more about our scholarship effort or if you would like to sponsor a camper for the summer of 2005, please contact Jeffrey Blocker, head of the Alumni Scholarship Committee at 508-231-1455 or email him at jeffb blocker1@yahoo.com and out how good it feels to give the ultimate gift to a deserving young person!

## Hoops Tourney

By Ken Shifman

June Madness, 2004 — Middleboro, MA — Some players came wearing Avoda Blue. Some came wearing headbands. Some afros (both on head and chest). Some balding. Some came down as favorites after the previous night's draft – and some came in as "just another team." Some were just plain hung over.

With a slightly different bracket format, and brand new hoops we were ready to showcase our games for an entertaining day.

FOR THE THRILLING  
CONCLUSION TO THIS  
STORY, SEE "PAGE 9" on  
the internet at  
[www.campavoda.org](http://www.campavoda.org).

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## A Time to Build

By Robert Zuker

2004 proved to be a very busy and exciting year for capital improvements at Camp Avoda. We worked hard to upgrade many different areas of camp. For starters, the Mess Hall floor was replaced with a shiny and easier-to-clean new VCT tile. The Rec Hall basketball court walls and beams were upgraded through the strategic placement of hi-tech padding.

The newly dedicated Martin P. Wolf Sports Center also received a major upgrade. We now have glass backboards and adjustable basketball hoops, and the court was repainted and lined. The tennis courts were completely redone, with a brand new asphalt surface, new posts and nets. Additionally, we repainted and lined the hockey court. Finally, we added a new electric scoreboard to the complex.

One thing you might not notice when you visit camp are the new dividers in the shower house. We have created individual shower stalls for all campers. This improvement came about as a result of a survey of parents conducted by the Camp Avoda Alumni Association at the end of the 2003 summer. All of these improvements have made camp look better than ever. The parents, campers and staff love them and so do the many prospective campers who visited camp this past summer. See all the changes on the Avoda Web Site.

### Sam's Ode to the Sox - 10/21/2004

Every twenty minutes or so I find myself laughing because I'm giddy with excitement and disbelief that this has actually happened. And at the expense of the Yankees. And in Yankee Stadium. I saw footage of Timlin dancing on the mound at Yankee Stadium with a bottle of Champagne. Then I was sure I was dreaming. I feel like I had my Bar Mitzvah, kissed a girl for the first time and won \$2000 playing blackjack yesterday. And we're going to win four more games if Big Papi has to pitch, catch and warm up pitchers in the bullpen. Ortiz is officially entering into my "Favorite Players of All-Time" pantheon with Bird, McHale, George Scott and Darryl Dawkins.

Anyway, I'm off to return to my glazed-over look of bliss and giddy satisfaction.

## President's Letter

By Russell Sherman

Visiting camp is always great, but visiting camp when your seven year-old nephew is in Bunk 1 is even better. I had the fortunate experience of sneaking up to camp one Sunday in July to watch my nephew, Bennett, in action as he enjoyed his first summer at camp.

We all have strong memories of Avoda, but actually witnessing a younger relative go through the paces of a regular day at camp is akin to stepping in a time-machine. Thankfully the Avoda experience is like Rolling Rock, "same as it ever was". I got to watch Bennett play softball, canoe on the lake and even stuff food in his face in the Mess Hall. During the Bunk 1 Alumni he sang "Gink Gonk" with his pinky high in the air, signaling "We're number 1".

Now of course not everything was the same as it was when I was in Bunk 1 roughly 27 years ago. The facilities have been pleasantly upgraded and there are plenty of new activities to enhance the experience. And obviously the kids are different; guys like Tiny, Truck and Moose have been replaced by new guys named, uh, Tiny, Truck and Moose.

It was truly great to be able to watch him enjoy the Avoda experience. There is something very comforting to know that with so much change and uncertainty in the world this small utopia nestled in the woods in Middleboro still exists relatively unchanged. As I headed home I couldn't help but think how lucky we are to have a place like this, and as alumni how lucky we are to be entitled to a lifetime association with it.

By the way, my friends often kid me whether my infant son will be required to go to Avoda when he is old enough. My response? Of course he will have a choice about attending Avoda.....he can choose to go in July or August.

*Russell Sherman*



## Martin P. Wolf Day: Dedication of the Martin P. Wolf Sports Center

By Paul G. Davis

Saturday, August 7, 2004, was MARTIN P. WOLF DAY at Camp Avoda. The Board of Directors honored Marty Wolf, long-time Board member and current Treasurer of the camp.

The new basketball, tennis, and street hockey courts were dedicated in Marty's honor as the Martin P. Wolf Sports Center. Over 50 of Marty's friends and relatives gathered in the dining hall with the entire camp community present to honor Marty. Camp Director Paul Davis welcomed everyone to the proceedings and introduced Tom Leavitt, President of the Avoda Board, who acted as the master of ceremonies for the festivities.

Tom spoke about Marty's work on the Board, and his involvement with the camp. He then called up Marty's sister-in-law Sheila Bender who read a poem honoring Marty. Tom then introduced Herb Bamel, a member of the Board of Directors, a former President of the Board, and a long-time friend of Marty.

Herb spoke about Marty's career at Camp Avoda as a camper and staff member, and his election to the Board of Directors in 1975. In 1977 Marty became the Secretary to the Board and in 1989 he became the President of the Board. In 1994, he stepped down as President and took over as Treasurer, a position he holds today.



After Herb spoke, we unveiled the new electronic basketball scoreboard inscribed with the following: MARTIN P. WOLF SPORTS CENTER. Marty was then presented with a bronze plaque which will be affixed to the tennis and basketball fence, inscribed:

MARTIN P. WOLF SPORTS CENTER  
DEDICATED TO  
MARTIN P. WOLF

in grateful appreciation for his  
many years of service and devotion to  
generations of Campers, Staff, and Alumni

CAMP AVODA  
AUGUST 7, 2004

Marty then expressed his gratitude to all present. He was quite moved by the ceremony, and thanked everyone for coming.

Following the dedication ceremonies, all of Marty's relatives and friends were invited to a barbecue, prepared by our fabulous kitchen staff, in the grove next to the Director's cabin. It certainly was a memorable occasion.

## Where are they now? Avoda Alumnus Investigates



1979 Bunk 14 Then...

Top:  
 M. Rutstein,  
 D. Novsam  
 M. Zablatsky  
 S. Alperin  
 D. Morse  
 Bottom:  
 N. Phillips  
 G. Epstein  
 L. Dennis



... And Now



1984 Bunk 14 Then...

Top: R. Katz  
 J. Roffman  
 J. Yampolsky  
 S. Levenson  
 J. Keselman  
 Bottom:  
 R. Kane  
 K. Shifman  
 L. Kaiser  
 H. Finer  
 R. Sherman



... And Now



1989 Bunk 14 Then...

Top:  
 A. Sherman  
 L. Kaiser  
 B. Malamut  
 J. Ross, J. Fox  
 Bottom:  
 J. Agulnek  
 S. Gladstone  
 L. Rubin  
 S. Peters  
 M. Block



... And Now

One of the best things about Alumni Weekend is catching up with Avodians you may not have seen in a long time. Included among returning Alumni are Bunk 14's celebrating reunions. This past summer, the 1979, 1984 and 1989 bunk 14 years had their reunions. Make sure you come back for yours!!!



# Alumni Weekend - 2004

## Heard it Through the Grapevine—Alumni Happenings

### Birth Announcements

Mike Rutstein—1979 Bunk 14—Allison—Born July 25, 2004  
Dave Richards—1984 Bunk 14—Abigail—Born April 23, 2004  
Greg Kurr—1984 Bunk 14—Ellen—Born July 9, 2004  
James Roffman—1984 Bunk 14—Baby Girl—Born March, 2004  
Stu Glass—1988 Bunk 14—Rachel—Born July 19, 2004  
Andy Bramson—1988 Bunk 14—Kiley—Born June 30, 2004

**Billiards Night - November 19**  
**Boston Billiards - Bring Your**  
**Wife or Significant Other along**



**Wedding of Jay Yampolsky & Anne Fell - June 5, 2004**

**Top:**  
**Sam Mirkin**  
**Dave Wertheim**  
**Evan Yampolsky**

**Middle:**  
**Russell Sherman**  
**Grayson Kimball**  
**Paul Simon**

**Front:**  
**Russell Katz**  
**Jay Yampolsky**  
**Ken Freeman**  
**Ken Shifman**  
**Mark Glovin**

**Bride:**  
**Anne Fell-Yampolsky**

### Weddings

Evan Yampolsky—1980 Bunk 14—Married Deborah Herman—Sept. 4, 2004  
Jay Yampolsky—1984 Bunk 14—Married Anne Fell—June 5, 2004  
Bruce Silverlieb—Chef, Assistant Director—Married Dr. Mark Korson—May 17, 2004  
Scott Levenson—1984 Bunk 14—Married Julie Nussbaum—August 8, 2004  
Gary Block—1988 Bunk 14—Married Darlene Machado—June 22, 2003  
Ricky Hyman—1988 Bunk 14—Married Megan Grindstaff—March 6, 2004  
Adam Jacobs—1990 Bunk 14—Married Nicole Rose—October 25, 2003  
Eric Shaff—1990 Bunk 14—Married Sharon Kams—July 4, 2004  
Josh Rovner—1990 Bunk 14—Married Christine Kucia—Sept. 5, 2004  
Steve Goldsmith—1991 Bunk 14—Married—June 27, 2004

**Share your news with us: [campavodaalumniassociation@hotmail.com](mailto:campavodaalumniassociation@hotmail.com)**



## Evening Activities—Continued from Page 8

Two of my distinct movie night memories. When I was a wee tyke (relatively speaking) of nine or ten years, the movie was a Western where the entire goal was apparently for the good guy to defeat many foes in order to find a fair maiden of virtue true – and sign her rear end. The other big memory was Color War starting in 1983. Supposedly the movie (Paper Moon) was to include spliced footage of Chubes announcing the Start of CW, only the film broke. In inimitable Chubes fashion, he just stood up at the front of the room and yelled that it was Color War.

Other memorable evening activities were the camper and counselor talent shows. Forever burned into my mind is the image of Mike Shapiro “singing” some heavy metal song or another then spitting onto the stage and licking it up. I’m not sure what that was all about, but it sure was cool to a ten year-old. I also recall Shif and Peewee carrying on the timeless tradition of the Priscilla routine from Darren Peister. Personal highlights from counselor talent shows were my own rendition of “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” with special hand movements, and Jeff Davis, Mark Goldberg and I crooning Grateful Dead favorites “Friend of the Devil”, “I Know You Rider”, and “Ripple”. A warm memory for me, indeed.

Along with the proven winners, there were some losers to be sure. Who can ever forget the ill-conceived and seldom played

Hoccer. It’s like football, hockey and soccer rolled into one!!! That’s great, because I think we only played it once. Who can forget Notes the Clown? Another memorable failure was the ill-conceived stock market night. Explaining the nuances of stock trading to a crazed and rowdy mess hall full of eight and nine year olds may not have been the best idea.

One of the most significant and memorable evening activity experiences at Avoda was always Fireworks, Bomb Pops and the Bonfire on the 4th of July. Each year, the day of July 4th would be filled with a carnival of booths set up by the bunks. At nightfall, the staff would launch a marvelous fireworks display from the swimming docks while the kitchen staff handed out bomb pops. For a young kid, fireworks over the lake and bomb pops with your best friends are tough to beat.

The fireworks would always be followed by a massive bonfire constructed by Bunk 14. Sitting around the fire, sharing stories of camp and life was another unforgettable experience. Starting in 1986, with the arrival of Bob Stone, the Chip Ceremony was introduced to the bonfire. Each bunk would send a representative up to the Bonfire to say a word or two about what camp meant to them. As the older bunk representatives took their turn, the speeches became more emotional, with the longest running Bunk 14’er sharing his passion for the special place we called home every summer. Then it was the staff’s turn, and the build up to senior staff in their final summer.

Watching Avoda Legends like Lee Kaiser, or Russell Sherman, or Bruce French say their wistful goodbyes was always incredibly powerful. In my final summer, torrential rains forced us to postpone the bonfire until the end of the summer. I remember standing beside the fire, shoulder to shoulder with my best friend, Dan Reiser, each of us in turn speaking our own truth about Avoda and our love of the place. Then we started Color War.

Some other evening activity programs you may or may not recall, in the infamous dot-dot style: Play Night (back when there was a theatre program)...Bunk Night... Indian Relay (Russell’s favorite)... Free Time (a Friday night special)... Medieval Manor...Israeli Scouts... Alex’s Goodbye Bash...Zooball With Holes...Survival...Bruce’s Soirees...Pembroke Socials (another story for another day)...Counselor Hunt (I hid in the woods once and was not caught. I also hid at the Pub once and was not caught there either)...Birds of Prey (Rez and I were the Birds of Prey)...Jell-O Wrestling...Bunk Clean-Up and Work Detail (on topsy-turvy day)... Lip Synch contest (one time only, in 1984, won by yours truly and Ed Heitin lip-synching “Feelin’ Groovy” by Simon and Garfunkel), and of course Spelling Bee, Declamation, Plays and Songfest. If I forgot one of your favorites, sorry, but LTML really does get you every time. And now I’ll end the same way every evening activity ends:

Right hand over left, “Of all the camps passing by...”

# Greased Watermelon, Hoccer & Movies—Pure Avoda

By Sam Mirkin

One of the oft-overlooked joys of attending Camp Avoda were the evening activities. The entire camp would come together and enjoy events both athletic and otherwise. While favorites like Flag Rush, Zooball, and Dead Zone were certainly highlights, more obscure activities also deserve mention.

Now, you may have been a superior athlete at camp. Someone for whom Flag Rush was a game of “grab-the-flag-and-go” simplicity. For a lesser skilled (and slow-footed) athlete like myself, these events weren’t so exciting as I was usually relegated to guarding a flag or standing near the crease to chase the faster kids while they shot on net. The game where I ruled the roost, however, was the Greased Watermelon. I could always swim some, and am certainly a creature of the water. So, when Greased Watermelon came around, I was the obvious choice at captain and superstar. How many places other than Avoda can you be a hero for being a galoot who can lug around greasy fruit?

From my younger days at camp, a memorable favorite was Night at the Races. Placing our fake wagers on pre-filmed horse races seemed like quite the thrill in those days. The winning bettors would receive the ultimate coin of the realm – candy from canteen.

Another popular activity was always movie night, again highlighted by the seemingly endless wait to get called to the canteen window. Funny how the best activities always seemed to surround canteen. (An aside - were you the kid who got the Necco Wafers™? You’re out there, and you know who you are.) Anyway, when I started at camp we still watched movies reel to reel. “Barney” Kleinman was no longer there, but he was still yelled at by the entire camp when the reel broke off for years.

Continued on Page 7 →

## Billiards Night - November 19 at Boston Billiards

Camp Avoda Alumni Association  
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<http://www.campavoda.org>

