



THE BUGLE

SPRING 2021

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AVODA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

From Antarctica to Middleboro

By Ken Shifman

As many managers and leaders know, there is a well-known ad from Ernest Shackleton to recruit men for his hazardous journey as he explored Antarctica in the early 1900's. (There is some question about its authenticity - did he really run this ad? Regardless, I like the anecdote.)

The ad read: "Men wanted for hazardous journey. Low wages, bitter cold, long hours of complete darkness. Safe return doubtful. Honor and recognition in event of success."

Like many managers I started using this, thinking I was being smart, honest and edgy. I used it for a few interviews for nurses one year to illustrate that the summer was a journey, the workload was heavy and that they were doing hard work for the kids' advancement.

After I realized that I was scaring them off and we had no nurses, I stopped using that excerpt as a way to discuss camp.

But now as I think about this summer, I can't help but think about this ad. I think I might share it with the staff during pre-camp orientation; they will already be hired after all.

With all the planning around COVID: different forms for parents, different sessions, modified drop off procedures, locks for the water fountains, Mess Hall procedures, programming changes, and more - it feels like a "hazardous journey" already.

But we are confident that we will succeed. We have been busy working with the American Camp Association, the Mass Camp Association, JCamp 180, our pediatrician and alum Dr. Aaron Bornstein, other camps and colleagues, and our own board of directors. Ronni Saltzman Guttin, our director, has been in the trenches with the COVID rules, guidelines, and details. With Leon's help too, we feel that we have a great plan in place.

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of the Board of
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HELPING KIDS GO TO
AVODA

IN THIS ISSUE

Avoda Hangouts, pg. 3-4



The Room Where It Happens, pg. 5-6



SoundOff!, pg. 5



From Antarctica to Middleboro... continued

Camper numbers are strong, considering this strange world we have been living in for almost a year and half. We have higher enrollment second month and look very good for the last two weeks and Color War. The staff is in place: bunk counselors, kitchen, office, arts and specialty, nurses, and administrators. We have a lot of people who are committed to creating a much-needed summer experience for our campers.

We are busy updating, adding to, and renovating the facilities with some enhancements before the summer starts. After our beloved Ernie Varnum passed away, we cleared out his cabin, gutted it, and made it into a prime real estate building in the middle of camp. We are still deciding how it will be used but have a few good ideas. We are expanding the Infirmary - making a larger exam area for the nurses to see campers.

We are also making the Chapel Site more of a multi-functional space for camper shows as we try to limit all-camp indoor gatherings. Overall camp looks great.

We have set a lot of the calendar for regular days, special events, and incoming performers. We will, of course, plan our program based on our familiar and traditional foundation of games, choices, competitions, and fun for the campers.

We are poised for another summer at Camp Avoda. While things will look a little different, we know it will be fun and safe for everyone. I am excited for the energy, the community, the ups, the downs, the personal growth and the outlet that the kids need. In this case "safe return" is likely!

"Honor and recognition?" Of course - for our staff, campers, and CIT's.

But this expedition will also include Brotherhood, Leadership, Spirit, and Tradition!

While we ordinarily love alumni to visit camp, the state of MA has said no visitors this summer. We kindly ask for the alumni to refrain visiting camp from 6/27 - 8/18.

President's Letter by Dan Gollinger

We're back to life, people! I've felt a new sense of freedom taking off my mask and once again high fiving, hugging, eating inside at restaurants, and yelling at sporting events (not from my couch).

The anticipation "to get back" to pre-pandemic life was palpable. It reminded me of springtime as a kid, eagerly hoping for the best summer ever. Imagine being a camper this year and having that feeling x2! It's the first time in Avoda history that campers had to wait 97 weeks (683 days to be exact) to return to camp.

I'm pretty far removed from it. 2002 is my Bunk 14. However, I remember that anticipation like it was yesterday. You probably do too.

Take a second and imagine your younger self, as a camper, on the road, headed back to camp [cue Boston's "More Than a Feeling" chorus]:

"Who's in my bunk? I hope I get top bed. How big is everyone? Get me on the courts. What pranks do the Franks have up their sleeve? I wonder who my counselors are. Maybe I'll have a decent league team this year? I can't wait to see everyone. Is the Candyman going to throw frozen candy bars at me again? I think I lost a bet to Spencer but maybe he won't remember. I want Papa Timmy's Pizza already."

Almost 20 years later and here I am still talking about it. Still reveling in the Avoda experience. Still cracking the same jokes and meeting up with the same friends. It's a testament to the people that make up Avoda, including the dedicated volunteers who I'm lucky to collaborate with on the Board's Alumni Committee. (continued on pg. 8)

Avoda Hangouts by Lee "Fossil" Kaiser

Well, Covid-19 has certainly changed our daily lives. For the first time since 1927, Avoda's gates were closed. I can assure you that the Board of Directors and Camp Administrators gathered as much information as possible, spent a great deal of time discussing and followed state guidelines in making this difficult decision. Let's hope it's the one and only time that Avoda will ever be closed. The closing of camp left campers and staff to wonder what new memories and experiences would've been created. Lost were League Competition, general swims, late night bunk shenanigans, field trips, evening activities, meets and Color War.

There was also no Alumni Weekend. Nor were there opportunities to stop by camp for a visit. Some of you were "stuck" at home with your Avodian campers, thus no periods off! So, we did what many others did and found a way to stay connected. Avoda joined the world of Zoom (and other digital platforms) to stay engaged and united. Last spring and again this spring, Avodians gathered online to reconnect, rekindle and recall. Through the efforts of our Bunk Captains (a HUGE thank you to all of you for your dedication and leadership.) Bunk 14s gathered from all parts of the country and even across oceans. It was an opportunity to connect with those you may not have seen in weeks, due to Covid, or those you haven't seen or talked to since you parted ways back on the shores of Tispaquin many years prior.

These Bunk Hangouts were a tremendous success! While the hair may have grayed or even disappeared, the stories stood the test of time (although the embellishments seemed to have grown like some waistlines). It was an opportunity to catch up and find out what your fellow bunkmates have been up to over the past years. Some bunks played camp trivia (using Kahoot & Family Feud), others poker, many looked at old Avoda photos but most importantly they all shared, remembered and reconnected. THE '84 14 (greatest of all-time as reported by the Banquet Edition Avodian of 2020) even had Heisman Trophy winner, Eddie George join their hangout.

198			
larry gold	7	Greg Smith	0
medonalds	36	Pappa Timmys	40
lee kaiser	25	Greg Smith	0
flag rush	42	Soobail	9
Dubble Does Dallas	39		
TOTAL 198			

Family Feud

Recognizing that as the years go by, it may be more difficult to gather the ole gang, we created a Senior Hangout primarily for anyone who attended camp between 1950 - 1987. It was a huge success as about 40 guys showed up to again, share stories (some validated, some not), banter, view photos from the '40s - '70s, watch videos of present-day Avoda, thank participant Pauly D/PGD/Paul G. Davis for his years of involvement and hear from current Camp Executive Director and Grand Poobah, Ken Shifman about the current state of camp.



Avoda 1949



1950 Bunk 7



Can you find Eddie?

(continued on pg. 4)

**Avoda Hangouts
continued**



Avoda 1961



1970 Bunk 14



Senior hangout

Bunk Hangouts are on their way to becoming yet another phenomenal Avoda tradition. It'll be an event for all alumni, far and near to gather and connect. The benefit of not having to travel allows everyone the opportunity to join. So, be sure to keep your current contact information up to date with your Bunk Captain. Also, if you have any creative ideas for future Bunk Hangouts, please contact your Bunk Captain or Lee Kaiser (PositiveAttitude@cox.net).

**HELP WANTED: GRANT WRITER
TO APPLY CONTACT LEE KAISER AT
POSITIVEATTITUDE@COX.NET**

Sound Off!

by Gary Epstein

1981 was such a great year! College graduation, Larry Bird's first title, Bunk 14 counselor, Athletic Director and the end of an era. I always considered myself extremely lucky to have such a special camp experience during the 60's, 70's & now the 80's. My best & most loyal friends are and will always be my fellow Avodians! 1981 would be the last for me and fellow cohort (and soon to be roommate) Louie Dennis. Louie & I met in 1974 when I returned to camp after a 4-year hiatus in Bunk 14. For many years I had the pleasure & honor in leading the camp in pep rallies for all intercamp meets. I had inherited this position from Tom Leavitt who provided me guidance and skill level needed to handle such a chore. The one thing I brought to the table I was a lot louder than Tom! I have to admit it was awesome to stand in the middle of the Mess Hall and let loose! The last meet of '81 was against archrival Camp Bourndale. Back in those days they were stuck up, wealthy, and spoiled! It would also be the last meet for the counselor team. The staff had a record number of seven games that year (being AD had its advantages!). I was so proud to say that team was the best I had played for & with. Robbie Coppel (guest WFD that year), Steve Aronson, Steve Camiel, Mike R-O-T-H, David Benga Bejamin, Mike R-O-S-S, Louie D in center always! David Wald (sorry Nat Phillips, too young!), and yours truly (coached, pitched & batted clean up! Another AD advantage!).

As lunch was finishing up the excitement was starting to build! I could sense this was to be my final "YOU AIN'T GOT NO PLACE ON YOUR RIGHT.....YOU AINT' GOT NO PLACE ON YOUR LEFT! I got into the middle of the mess hall and screamed "THIS IS IT- THE LAST TIME"! The place was going bonkers! I'll always remember even the kitchen crew with Jason "Boob" Rubin, Larry "Sticks" Crasnick & Scott "Zamboni" Brown were front and center, hitting trash can lids together like cymbals! LOUD LOUD LOUD like a playoff game in Boston Garden against the 76'ers! The building was shaking to the point that this moment, years later was voted #1 in Avoda history! I believe that we won all events that day (it really doesn't matter !) The staff won its final game and finished 7-0 in both basketball & softball encounters. Also, we had planned to start Color War with me taking on Mickey Russo in a fight at the end of the game (my fellow AD director at Bourndale and pal from New Bedford). Such a great way to end a special day. I slept very well that night! 1981 was filled with so many amazing moments that will live for lifetime. I know I've thanked all my great friends over the years for all those memories. Well I'm thanking you all again. And as Jay Epstein always says (co-founder with me of the Pink Flamingos) There is nothing like AVODA!

Gary Epstein, 1968-69, 1974-81

The Room Where It Happens

by Robbie Coppel

I miss Avoda. I miss the drive on battered Gibbs Road, always wondering what the people who live on both sides of the road, think about the presence of a Jewish Camp in their midst. I miss the slow walk from the parking lot to the Avoda Pines at the Director's Cabin, where hopefully, I catch-up with a few fellow Avodians, who have just arrived for the day. It's a nice place to linger. I miss the easy stroll to the athletic field, the fulcrum of the camp, breathing in the Avoda air (nothing like Avoda air), while I gaze at the bunks, the Rec Hall, the ballfield and the edge of the waterfront. It is a beautiful site, full of memories that have lasted a lifetime. Dear old A-V-O-D-A.

I love the Mess Hall. With apologies to Lin-Manuel Miranda, it is really the room where it all happens.

The room is communal; a gathering place three times a day for all at camp to be together. To eat, to socialize, to horseplay, to pray, to hear all the announcements of the day.

The room is spiritual as we all wear our Avoda beanies and sing/say the Hamotzi (some with more enthusiasm than others).

(continued on pg. 6)

The Room Where It Happens continued

At times, the room is the most inspirational place in camp. Especially during those times when the Avoda teams are poised to head to one of our rivals like Bournedale to take them on in softball and basketball. "What do we eat? Bournedale meat!" We would never exit the Mess Hall without bringing the rafters down with, "Camp Avoda, hats off to thee, to thy colors true we will always be, firm and strong, united are we, rah, rah, rah for Blue and White, yeah, yeah, yeah, hats off for victory!"

Over the years, the mess hall has become a camp museum. It started with the home-made plaques of the Kosher Cabin winners and moved on to the elaborate and fact filled Color War team names/rosters and winners/scores. Camp History for all to see and absorb!

The room is a place to play ping pong. It was always used for the Color War declamation. So multipurpose.

Finally, last, but not least, the food was good. Some of the time. On my hit list of favorites are grilled cheese, fish fry on Wednesdays (thank you Judge Barnett), the Friday night chicken (so plump), tuna, subs and bug juice (who can ever forget bug juice). What were some of your favorites?

Hope to see you again in the room where it really happens. —Robbie Coppel, 1967-1977 and 1981

The AVODA Network by David Bacdayan

At the halfway point of my sophomore year of college, I was at a crossroads in just about every way. What did I want to do? Where did I want to end up? What did I even want to study? Posing these questions to myself, I realized that instead of looking into the future, I should be looking to the past, to my roots.

As any Avodian knows, Camp runs deep. Reflecting on what this place had already done for me up to that point, I knew if any Avodian ever came to me seeking advice or help, I would do whatever I could for them. The only issue was, how would this seeker know that I was available to them as a resource? Sure, my first initial and last name is all over the mess hall (and even a picture of a 12 year old of me on a Kosher Kabin plaque - shout out Artie Vidal for carrying us 3 years in a row and winning the first and last Kosher Kamper award), but how could they find my full name or contact information to actually get in touch with me? In the role of seeker myself, my mind was whirring trying to figure out ways I could reach Avodians.

Then I realized how many Avodians I was connected with on LinkedIn - and more importantly, how many I wasn't connected with yet. A few clicks and google image searches later, and The Avoda Network was born. My experiences with the Network so far have proven me right. Avodians help Avodians. I am grateful to be part of a group of individuals who are so loyal to their roots.

Here's to opening doors for Avodians far into the future.

David Bacdayan, 2015 Bunk 14



Use your
phone to
scan this
QR code
and join
The Avoda
Network
on
LinkedIn!

Alumni Happenings

Marriages:

Todd Miller '99 14, to Jenny Miller, 8/8/20

Engagements:

William Corbett '09 14, to Moiya McTier, 4/25/21

Bar Mitzvahs:

Aaron Bornstein '88 14, son Jonah, 5/15/21

Jason Kaplan '90 14, son Sam, Fall 2020

Stephen Peters '89 14, son Jonny, 5/29/21

Graduations:

Ken Shifman '84 14, son Alex, high school, Spring 2021

Lee Kaiser '84 14, daughter, Carson, high school, Spring 2021

Russell Sherman '84 14, son Owen, high school, Spring 2021

Births:

Steve Mendelsohn '02 14, baby girl, Miriam, 3/3/21

Dave Charton '95 14, baby boy, Tucker Quinn, 8/11/20

David Bamel '75 14, granddaughter Lilianna Adele Picardo 8/20/21

Barry Schneider '99 14, baby boy, Sonny, 12/17/20

Garry Rosenfield '03 14, baby girl, Maren Sloane, 12/7/20



David Bamel and granddaughter Lilianna Adele



Garry Rosenfield and daughter Maren Sloane



Sonny Schneider



William Corbett and Moiya McTier



Todd and Jenny Miller



Left: Arthur Mendelsohn with granddaughter Miriam



Right: Steve Mendelsohn with daughter Miriam

President's Letter continued

Recently, some long-time Alumni Committee members decided to hang up their cleats. I'd like to thank them for putting in the hours, the meeting agendas, and the Dunkin Donuts munchkins. I'd also like to commemorate their years of contribution by sharing their Alumni Committee (formerly Alumni Board) accolades:

JEFF VETSTEIN - Former Facebook Live influencer - Joined the Alumni Board in 2001 and is one of the founders of the Thanksgiving Football Game (side note: beginning in 1998, it actually started as a weekly Saturday game until too many injuries and hospital trips put an end to that. The season was highlighted by a big game on Saturday after Thanksgiving, and thus the tradition was born). As social chair for 3 years, he organized "Night at the Races" and "Bowling Nights." He ran Alumni Weekend from 2005-2010, bringing the first live music act and John Valby to the Rec Hall stages. He was Secretary for 6 years, and the Bugle Newsletter Chief Editor for many years. Capping it off, he was the Board's President from 2016-2020. 20 years of service!

AARON AGULNEK - Self-Proclaimed Alumni Board Leadership winner in 2010 - Joined the Alumni Board in 2007, was chair of the Social committee, ran Alumni Weekend from 2008-2012, and helped with fundraising and camper recruiting. Notably, he created BubbaFest.

BARRY MORGAN - Voted most likely to bring up the White Lions in a conversation - Joined the Alumni Board in 2008, ran Alumni Weekend from 2010-2012, helped with fundraising, and served as Treasurer from 2016-2020.

SETH JACOBS - Alumni Weekend Registration Table MVP three years in a row - Joined the Alumni Board in 2013, helped organize social events, produced and edited many great Bugle Newsletters from 2016-2020, and of course never failed to get a laugh.

Quality people that make up Avoda, and these four are legends!

Editor's Letter

Back in the 1970's, Leigh Montville (Boston Globe Sports Columnist) wrote a weekly Saturday column in the Globe titled "Thoughts While Shaving". The modern-day version of this is Dan Shaughnessy's "Picked Up Pieces" articles. Either way, here is our attempt (and tribute) to these great Boston Sports Writers. We give you the first:

"Tidbits from the AVODA Alumni Pu Pu Platter":

If you read anything in this edition of the Bugle- please read this:

WHILE WE ORDINARILY LOVE ALUMNI TO VISIT CAMP, THE STATE OF MASSACHUSETTS HAS SAID NO VISITORS THIS SUMMER! WE KINDLY ASK FOR THE ALUMNI TO REFRAIN FROM VISITING CAMP FROM JUNE 27 TO AUGUST 18.

Now for the good news- preparations are under way for Alumni Weekend 2021! This year, we will be having Alumni Weekend after camp. The dates are Friday August 27- Sunday August 29. More details to come in the coming weeks. If you did not need incentive to come, Sam and Jimmy will be manning the Friday night grill one more time!

From the "Heads Up" Department- When traveling 495 to camp, the exit number has changed from Exit 4 to Exit 12.

We are also planning our First Annual Alumni Golf Tournament. The event will take place on Friday, October 1 at Shaker Hills Country Club in Harvard, MA. More details to come in the coming weeks...

(continued on pg. 9)

Editor's Letter continued



We are in need of anyone that has Grant Writing Experience. If you have it or know someone with it that is willing to help us out, please contact Lee Kaiser at PositiveAttitude@cox.net.

Spring Camp Clean-Up Day was held on Sunday, May 16th. This has become an annual event to help Ken get the Camp cleaned up and ready for the season. We had a solid crew attend but are happy to welcome additional volunteers in the future. It was a beautiful day on Lake Tispaquin, and a good chance to see fellow Alumni and reconnect. Thanks to Ken for providing lunch. Village, as always, was delicious!

Thanks to the following alumni (and guests) for their hard work:

Dan Gollinger, Jeff Blocker, Jeff Keselman, Sam Mirkin, Jake Alexandrer, Dave Fine, Wes Fixler, Larry Rubin, Mark Goldberg, Nate Cohen, Seth Fox, Dexter Fox (future AVODIAN), Bobby Zuker, Lulu Zuker, Rosie Zuker, their dog Teddy Zuker, Andy Stone, and Ken Shifman.

In our spirit of Brotherhood, Leadership, Spirit, and Tradition, special thanks go to our Alumni that have provided internships for our staff members are looking for internships to round out their academic needs. Some of our staff members found the need to participate in internships, and traditionally, these have been summer internships that could keep our staff members for working at Camp. Through the creativity of Ken and the Administration, and through the support of some Alumni, we have been able to provide internships for those staff members, and still afford them the opportunity to spend the summer at Avoda. We are all set with internships for this year, but if you would be interested in helping out in the future, please contact Ken Shifman at ken@campavoda.org.

We would be remiss if we did not recognize the hard work and dedication of Ken and his Administration for their tireless work in the longest off-season we have ever experienced. It took a Global Pandemic to keep Avoda closed for one summer, and boy that sucked!

**ALUMNI
WEEKEND:
August 27-29**

**GOLF
TOURNAMENT:
October 1**





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AT CAMP AVODA, WE HAVE A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO HELP BOYS AND YOUNG MEN DEVELOP THEIR LEADERSHIP AND SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY SKILLS. WE TAKE THIS DUTY SERIOUSLY. WE WORK TOGETHER TO PROMOTE INCLUSION, RESPECT, AND A CULTURE NOT ONLY OF TAKING CARE OF EACH OTHER, BUT ALSO BEING A FORCE OF GOOD IN THE WORLD IN FIGHTING RACIAL PREJUDICE AND SEEKING JUSTICE. CAMP AVODA SUPPORTS THE IDEALS OF BLACK LIVES MATTER.



JUST AS WE ENCOURAGE OUR BOYS EACH SUMMER TO TREAT ONE ANOTHER WITH RESPECT AND TO INCLUDE EVERY AVODIAN IN HIS EXPERIENCE AT CAMP, WE INVITE YOU TO THINK ABOUT THESE ISSUES AND CONTINUE TO JOIN US IN OUR SUPPORT OF JUSTICE FOR ALL.