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# The Avoda Alumnus

THE QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER OF THE CAMP AVODA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION • SUMMER 1992

## The Rec Hall is...Wrecked!

Fineberg Hall is no more.

The familiar and just barely functional Rec Hall, for years the site of plays, talent shows, and Color War headquarters, was torn down this April. Deemed uninhabitable by local authorities, the blue-gray structure has been replaced by a state-of-the-art building that will house and host a number of popular camp activities.

The new building (see photos on page 3) is constructed of steel with vinyl siding. The strategy was to have it resemble the bunks as much as possible. It is roomier on the main floor than the old Rec Hall, and is on virtually the exact same spot, abutting the waterfront. The overall size of the new facility is 45'x60'.

Undereath, there are five rooms that will serve such functions as the Avodian office, Photography office and dark-room (to be named after long-time Avoda registrar and photographer Ruth Kumin), WPGD radio station, a weight room, and computer room. The basic structure is similar to the type used by a number of other camps, and should serve as an

important part of the Avoda experience for the 1992 season and beyond.

The Board has been working for some time with building specialists to make sure that the new Rec Hall would be sturdy and appropriate for the camp's needs, and to keep the costs manageable.

The Alumni Association has been asked by the Board—and the officers of the Alumni Association have agreed—to promote a dedicated fund raising drive aimed specifically

at raising capital to contribute to this important and worthwhile project.

You will be receiving information on the Rec Hall fund raising campaign shortly. Please read it carefully and give as generously as you can. For now, just look through these pages and see the sad demise of the beloved Fineberg Hall.

An occupancy permit for the new Rec Hall was issued the second week in July. The camp is now enjoying the use of this great new facility.



# MEL'S MESSAGE

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They said "it couldn't be done," but Marty Wolf, President of the Camp Board of Directors, refused to listen. He took on the challenge and with his tremendous effort, proved everyone wrong.

Thanks to Marty, Camp Avoda has a new Rec Hall. Construction of this magnificent building began on May 11 and was completed by the second week of July. He was assisted by Alumni Board member Carl Goldberg, who brought his construction expertise to the project. We now have a beautiful Rec Hall with five activity rooms on the lower level that will serve Avoda well for many years to come.

Now the Alumni Association has accepted the challenge to embark on an ambitious fund raising program to

help pay for this new building. Over the next few months, you will be contacted by a member of the Fund Raising Committee. I ask that you be as generous as you can with your building fund contribution. If we are to be successful, we must receive a contribution of some amount from everyone we contact. Remember, we are a registered non-profit organization, which makes your donation tax deductible. We need your help, and I thank you in advance.

If we, as Avoda alumni, cannot find in our hearts some feeling for the camp and make a donation to the building fund, then we cannot truly call ourselves Avoda alumni. If you haven't visited camp in the past few years, I invite you to stop by and see the new Rec Hall. I'm sure that the sight of the

new building will show you that Avoda is still growing and evolving. Now you can help facilitate Avoda's evolution.

If you enjoy reading this newsletter, let us know. If not, send us your suggestions as to how we can make it better. Drop us a note—we look forward to hearing from you. We also ask your assistance in locating Avoda alumni who are not on our mailing list. If you know someone who was at camp with you and is not getting our newsletter, I ask that you send his name and address to us. I know we are not reaching a large number of loyal Avodians, and we ask your help in finding them.

Maybe this is the summer you will finally come back to camp. Hope to see you on the ballfield, at the waterfront, or in the new Rec Hall!

# EDITOR'S ESSAY

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It gets kind of corny after a while, this "Avoda Spirit." You think back and never remember the ordinary or disappointing moments, only the special and joyous ones. You get caught up in an anecdote and after a while, you wonder if what you feel is real or whether you have created an Eden out of Avoda because your psyche needs the assurance that there is magic left in this world.

And then, you go to an Alumni Overnight, and the answer is clear. Yes, Virginia, there really is an Avoda Spirit. And it is as powerful now as it was when the first two campers met each other in the summer of 1927.

Case in point. An alumnus whose last year was 1978 and an alumna whose Avoda career was, I believe, confined to the 1980s. They met for the first time at the overnight. They played sports together. They congratulated each other when good plays were made, and they supported each other when it was time to buckle down and stay tough. They hung out together, ate in the same mess hall, slept in the same bunks, shared the same Avoda experience. And as they departed, they expressed how much fun they had and how glad they were to have met.

Another example. My fellow Alumni Association

officer, Mike Ross, and I have known each other for many years. He was always a couple of bunk numbers ahead of me and while we saw each other occasionally right through college, we were very friendly acquaintances at best. But during our involvement with the Alumni Association over the past few years, we have established a solid friendship, further cemented by our finally being "bunkmates" at the overnight.

One more example. On Saturday, the first day of the overnight, it rained on and off all day. For long stretches of time, we were all cooped up in our bunks. The Rec Hall not yet ready for occupancy, we had to

# Out with the old, in with the new!

## Fund raising group formed for new Rec Hall

A new bi-partisan fund raising committee has been formed and will soon embark on an aggressive campaign to repay the loan used to construct our new rec hall.

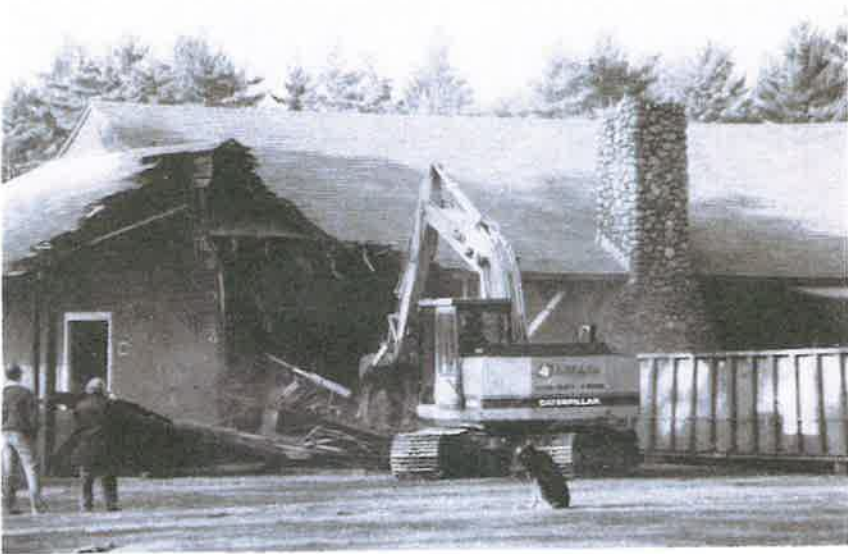
Members of this committee are Joel Horvitz (chairman), David Bamel, Phil Greenspan, and Steve Israel from the Alumni Association; and Marty Wolf and Mel Hyman from the Board of Directors.

We will be contacting all alumni to assist us in reaching our goal. Please respond with as generous a donation as you can afford. We wore out the old one, it is only fair that we help build the new one. It is important for the camp to repay this loan as soon as possible. Your help and your sense of Avoda Spirit is deeply appreciated.





# Death of a Rec Hall



# Scenes from the overnight

Neither rain nor thin mattresses nor unfinished Rec Hall kept dozens of Avoda alumni from enjoying the second annual Alumni Overnight, June 27-28. In fact, in terms of overall fun, activity level, and general comradeship, this year's event was even better than the first.

In the next issue, there will be more information and photos from the weekend. For now, here's a sampling of some of the good times we shared. If you still haven't taken part in an overnight, you really are missing the best opportunity there is to recapture the feeling of what it was like to be part of daily Avoda life.

By the way, a new five-point Avoda trivia question has come out of the weekend:

**Q:** Who hit the first "New Rec-O" and who pitched it?

**A:** Nat Phillips hit it (actually, three of them) and Gary Epstein pitched it. (Score one point if you reversed the names).



# AA News

At the March meeting of the Alumni Association officers, Steve Israel and Louis Dennis were elected to serve as officers and will be involved in helping to plan events for alumni, as well as to help devise programs that the Alumni Association can undertake on behalf of the camp.

One of the most important decisions made at the March meeting was how much the Alumni Association should donate to the camp for scholarships. The officers are pleased to report that more than twice of last year's amount was donated, thanks to the generosity of all alumni who responded to our recent fund raising appeal. The money is donated without stipulation as to how many campers should receive what share; the camp administration makes that determination. Still, you can be assured that your generosity will make an Avoda summer a wonderful reality for a few kids who couldn't have gone to camp otherwise.

As always, your input is valued and encouraged. The Avodians who serve as officers are not chosen because of special ability or expertise in regards to Avoda or alumni associations in general. They merely have been able to make a time and effort commitment. The Avoda alumni mailing list is full of people who have good ideas; perhaps you're one of them. Let us know!

The more you participate in the Alumni Association, the more you are able to cherish the bonds that you have made with your fellow Avodians over the years. Don't be shy, just drop us a line.

# 1992 Camp News

Camp Avoda's 66th season is under way and it looks like another great summer under the Middleboro sun. The camp is full with a waiting list, and the future looks bright for our home away from home.

Aside from some long-time staff members who, because of the realities of growing up, did not return this year, there was a 100% return rate from last year's staff. As I indicated in the last issue of *The Avoda Alumnus*, last year's staff was special, one of the most cohesive, dedicated, and responsible that the camp has seen in many years. All were Bunk 14 alumni, and their enthusiasm for Avoda was infectious. The staff was largely responsible for the success of the camp program last summer, and will be a big part of the success in 1992 as well.

There are a number of capital improvements this year that were approved by the Board. These include:

- New street hockey court behind bunks 7-12
- Paving of volleyball court
- New fences for above-mentioned courts
- New walls and wiring in all the bunks
- Underground sprinkler system for the athletic field (approved but on hold)
- Vinyl tile on mess hall floor
- Resealing and relining tennis courts

As you can see, the Board is committed to keeping Avoda well-maintained and supplied. While Avoda will never become the country club-type of camp like some others we all know well, Avoda is still

a top-notch choice for young boys. If you or someone you know has a child that may be interested in coming to Avoda, call Paul Davis at the camp office at (508) 947-3800.

## Editor, cont.

make the most of our unfortunate situation. Within minutes, there were several groups of conversations happening among people who knew each other well or hardly at all. When there were periods of clear skies, activities resumed. All in all, Saturday turned out to be a great day. It served to remind us that not every day at Avoda was sunny, happy, and wonderful. But in the summertime, being at Avoda is always better than not being at Avoda.

The overnight has been held for two years now. It has not grown in size...yet. Visiting the camp for just a day doesn't give you the perspective on your camp experiences that you may hope for. You need to wake up there, go through a day and a night, sleep again, and rise to a Sunday breakfast. Just knowing that the campers will arrive the day after you leave makes it all seem special. The past hands off to the future, like a spiritual relay race.

Many of you have never taken part in an Alumni event. I implore you to reevaluate your feelings about camp and the role that Avoda played in your life. Thomas Wolfe was wrong. You *can* go home again.

Spending a weekend at Avoda is a great way to recapture the magic of our youth. I hope to see you all next year under the stars at Avoda.



# Camp Avoda Alumni Association

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Bruce Silverlieb  
*Assistant Director*

Michael Jarrett  
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Bruce Hyman  
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