

# Avoda Alumni Bugle

## 1-2-3-4, We Want a Color War!!!

By Aaron Agulnek

Color War at Camp Avoda. Does anything more really need to be said? Throughout the soaring highs and the crushing lows of this one-week crucible, Avoda legends are formed and history is made. Avodians of all generations can recite the teams, the Generals and the Captains and their personal statistics. Which team won by the most points? What was the closest Color War? Which general has won three Color Wars? Who on the Blue Devils staff was really responsible for the victory (Spencer for his speech? Rick for being a 2<sup>nd</sup>? Vet for his leadership? Aaron for his Freshman division? Goober for his ??) We can still see the crushing homerun clearing Rob the Tree, we can hear the lieutenants cheering on the struggling back-stroker to claim the precious points, we can feel the rumble of the ground when the bugle blows and the campers stampede towards the flagpole at lineup, hoping to remain anonymous (and clean).

Some Color Wars have been nail-biters decided during the last events and some have been blowouts; but, every Color War is filled with controversy and turmoil. This journal entry will tell the real stories of some of the defining moments in Camp Avoda Color War history. Some of the names have been changed to protect identities and reputations; but for some, reputations cannot be saved.

### 1968 Color of War: Rub-a-Tug Tug

The CW tug-of-war is a true test of grit and endurance. I can hear it now, the General exhorting the team "1-2-3 PULL!!!, 1-2-3 PULL!!!" The Aides demanding that the hefty anchor to "Run to McDonalds." In 1968, the Blue team was the heavy favorite and clearly outmatched the more sleek White Panthers. During the Sophomore Tug, the rope snapped, ending the Tug-of War and preventing the Blue team from collecting close to 100 points. This "accident" ended up saving the CW for the Panthers.

#### What Really Happened?

The night before the big event, goons hired out by bookies in Vegas snuck into the polio shack and frayed the center of the rope, hiding the deterioration with a red sock. You see,

the juice on this CW was heavy on Blue, and the only way to ensure a big win for the "family" was to create a little accident with the tug-of-war rope.

### 1995 Color War: A-Doo-Doo-Doo-Doo-Doo HAH!

The Swim Meet provides the scene for the Waterfront Staff to show off its instructional supremacy on the jewel of the Avoda campus. Every year it is the same, Mr. Davis on his lawn chair in the middle, the 16 length back-stroke worth a total of 9 points, the judge with the onerous "DQ" dance and the photo finishes. In 1995, however, the Swim Meet is remembered for the 9 roster "inaccuracies" perpetrated by White Wolves Lieutenant Eric Shaff. As a result of these "inaccuracies", the Wolves were penalized by over 100 points, sealing their fate.

#### What Really Happened?

This is known as the "Curse of Thriller." Ever since he first conceived the fight song for the Wolves, Shaff was unable to sleep at night. Like the protagonist in the Tell-tale Heart, all Lt. Shaff could hear was "a doo-doo-doo-doo-doo HAH". His mind was corrupted and his senses were gone. Who ever heard of "Billie Jean" swimming the all-camp? "Tito Jackson" would be in the freshman medley? LaToya swimming the junior side-stroke?

### 1997 Color War: Safety First

This Color War was neck-and-neck between the Blue Justice and the White Bulldogs. The teams were battling for each and every point and the whole thing could be decided by any given event. The final day of Color War was overcast and rainy. There were storm clouds, thunder rumblings and rumors of lightning. On the docket for the day was Senior Waterskiing.

Michael Roth

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Seth Fox

Ken Freeman

David Glattstein

Eddie Klayman

Greg Lazaroff

Richard Lefkowitz

Barry Morgan

Larry Rubin

Paul Simon

Jeff Vetstein

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## Color War...Continued

This event was a sure thing for the Bulldogs, who had water skier extraordinaire Scott Goldberg ready to go. General Jeff Vetstein of the Justice knew that his back was against the wall, and that victory could only be achieved by canceling the event. In the name of safety, the decision was made by Head Judge Jeeker and agreed to by both Generals. that the campers lives were at risk and the event could not go on. As a result, the Blue Justice were able to save the 30 or-so points and rest their laurels on what many people call the most brilliant Color War play ever written.

### *What Really Happened?*

General Vetstein played the Inigo Montoya to General Freeman's Vizzini in this monumental battle of the wits. Vetstein knew that the storm had passed and that there would be no risk. He also knew that Bubbles 2.0, with his long hair, morning calisthenics, and "chillness" would never want to be associated with risky behavior. Vet was so able to manipulate Freeman's feeble mind that Kenny actually ended up advocating canceling the event and unwittingly handed the Color War to the Justice. Editor's Note: Recent decisions (involving cold turkeys and cranking) in the life of Kenneth Freeman have resulted in a strengthening of the mind and resolve.

### **2000 Color War: A Judge or a Pawn?**

In 2000, the White Warriors "forgot" to submit their rosters for Sophomore Basketball and Ping Pong. Without a roster, the games would have to forfeited and the Warriors were saddled with 200 points in "sportsmanship" violations. This 200 point penalty was the turning point in the 2000 Color War and crushed the momentum of the Warriors and allowed the Blue Dynasty to eke out a victory.

### *What Really Happened?*

Judge Benny Cohen had always wanted to be close to Blue Dynasty General Spencer Kimball. Cohen had always admired Kimball's Machiavellian "by any means necessary" philosophy and wanted to be a part of the "dark side" led by Kimball. Sensing this desperation, Kimball presented Cohen with an offer he could never refuse; steal the rosters from the OD Shack and testify to the fact that the Warriors never submitted the rosters. In return, Kimball would ensure that Cohen would get a good role in the Dynasty play, and would be included on Kimball's staff the following year (Both of these promises turned out to be false).

Recently Camp Avoda tragically lost one of our own. Alumnus Steven Camiel, 46 years old, died suddenly following a heart attack on Sunday, April 26.

While Steve was only at Avoda for a short time he made an indelible impact. He and his brother David came to camp in 1980 as staff members and stayed until 1982. In 1981 he was a Color War general and in 1982 he was a bunk 14 counselor. His nickname at Avoda was "V" which was derived from the spelling of Steven and used to distinguish him from his co-counselor, Stephen "PH" Aronson.

In recent years Steve attended various alumni events and his nephew,, Jason Camiel, currently attends Avoda. A 1984 graduate of Clark University he was a former roommate of Mike Roth and the two remained close. Steve graduated from Medford High School in 1980. A resident of Wayland, Steve was Vice President of Greenpark Mortgage Company. He is survived by his wife Heather and three children Hannah, Jonah and Talia as well as his parents Pearl and Joel Camiel, and his two brothers Barry and David. All of us on the Avoda Alumni Board of Directors and Camp Avoda Board of Directors extend our deepest sympathies to the entire family.

Steve will be greatly missed.



## President's Letter

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the collective year-round dedication of the Camp Avoda Alumni Association Board. Having gone through a recent transition, we have a number of alums that have stepped forward to join the board in the last few years. Their involvement gives me confidence that our Alumni network will remain strong for years to come.

These guys have a great appreciation for the Avoda community and have been known to say, "I don't need a pat on the back...I'm just glad to be involved." Well, that's fine, but I feel the need to tell you that they are involved because they care a lot about you, the Avoda 'brotherhood". I can tell you that recognition is not important to these guys...but they are deserving of recognition.

Scholarship fundraising has been a special passion of the Alumni Association since its inception. Jeff Keselman and Eddie Klayman have been in charge of this effort for some time. Jeff is now on the Avoda Board, and his responsibilities relating to our scholarship efforts are now in the capable hands of David Wertheim and Eddie. These are tough economic times, yet their fundraising efforts have brought in the necessary funds to reach our annual scholarship goals. We are proud to say that we have supported a number of happy kids again this year.

Many of you have stepped into the Avoda Archives at camp to get back in touch with your Avoda past. Jeff Blocker, the committee chair, and Barry Morgan are your contacts who keep things organized on this front. Call either of them if you have something to contribute or have an idea for a special event involving the archives.

Our "active" Alumni membership is growing every year. Jeff Vetstein heads up the membership committee. He, along with Greg Lazaroff and Aaron Agulnek, work throughout the year to update the membership list and keep people in the fold. These are the guys you need to contact if you know of alumni that want to be added to the database.

Social committee...this one is easy to take for granted, 'cause all you need to do is show up. Ken Freeman heads up this effort and is the driving force behind our Alumni Weekend. Others such as Ed Klayman, Paul Simon, and Jeff Vetstein put in hours throughout the year to make sure you guys have events like the Avoda Pats game, Avoda Night at the Red Sox, bowling, billiards or the race track. Jai Alai can't be too far down the road.

Since you are reading my letter in our biannual newsletter, it seems appropriate that I also mention our newsletter team of Sam Mirkin and Jeff Vetstein. Every six months (OK, roughly every six months), these guys put out a quality newsletter that keeps the entire alumni community connected. Plus, they provide untold hours of quality bathroom reading, and who can put a price on that type of contribution?

Lastly, on the technology front, David Glattstein has stepped in to take the reins and modernize our website and database. He now works in concert with Ken Shifman and Jeff Keselman to tie together "Camp" and "Board" related projects. The long and the short of it is that we are working towards creating a more accessible and interactive web portal for Alumni, campers and parents to make information about Avoda more accessible in general. I, unfortunately, still have no clue what a portal is...and am ok with that.

Lastly, there have been some comings and goings from the board. Andy Spear has decided to move on, and we are very thankful for all his hard work over the years. Rib is the kind of guy who is vital to any board—always willing to take on work and diligent about seeing things through to completion. Plus, he did a great job running the Poker Tournament. The board is adding four new members—Larry Rubin, Barry Morgan, Seth Fox and Richard "Lefty" Lefkowitz. We are excited to bring these new contributors on board and put them to work.

Obviously these guys are not in this for a paycheck. They want to feel good about the work they do for this association. They are an important part of the Avoda spirit, and I believe that people who put in the hours should be occasionally recognized for their efforts and contributions. So please join me in thanking these guys for the work they put in...THANK YOU!

*Mike "Morty" Roth*

## A Friend of the Temple... ...Is a friend of Mine

By Ken Shifman

You know that song right? Well I am getting to know it very well and it's true.

This has been a busy winter for me working from my home, and one main effort has been to recruit new campers. We have tried many "channels" of meeting new families. One successful avenue of reaching prospective camper families has been with the help of local temples and synagogues. We have been fortunate to work with rabbis and other congregational leaders kind enough to let us display Avoda material, advertise, and/or to introduce Avoda directly to members of their congregations.

The Foundation for Jewish Camp and other Jewish organizations have recognized that Jewish summer camps are one of the leading "links" to maintaining Jewish identity as kids grow to be young adults, enter marriage, and raise families. In conjunction with the CJP, they have been providing the Camper Incentive Program where first time families to Jewish camps receive \$1000 stipends.

As Jews it is our responsibility to keep our religion, people, history and culture growing. I would urge you to send your kids to Jewish summer camps. Obviously, Avoda is a great choice—I have connections if you need them! Some of those congregations that have been very supportive of Camp Avoda include:

Temple Beth Abraham in Canton, MA

Web: [http:// www.templebethabraham.org](http://www.templebethabraham.org)

Rabbi David Paskin

Ahavath Torah Congregation in Stoughton, MA

Web: <http://www.atorah.org/>

Rabbi Jonathan Hausman

Congregation Sha'arei Shalom in Ashland, MA

Web: <http://www.shaareishalom.org/>

Rabbi Sonia Salzman

President Jon Plotkin (Parent of Avodian Josh Plotkin)

Temple Beth Shalom in Needham, MA

Web: <http://www.tbsneedham.com>

Rabbi Jay Perlman

I thank everyone for their hard work and support!

## Heard it Through the Grapevine— Avoda Happenings

### Births

Larry Rubin—Baby Girl—Sadie Simone—4/15/2009

Matt Zuker—Baby Boy—Michael—11/22/2008

Mike "Qua" Cohen—Baby Boby—Asher—2009



Asher Cohen

### Weddings

Mike Wollman—Married Alumni Weekend

### Passings

Dee Sutcliffe—Long-time Camp Avoda Nurse

Steve Camiel—Avoda Counselor, 1980-1982



Sadie Simone Rubin

## Blast From the Past



1992 Athletic Staff

Top Row (R to L): Bryan Malamut, Sam Mirkin, Dan Reiser, Dave Wilkov, Rick Hyman, Andy Bramson, Stu Glass, Ethan Sobol, Larry Rubin, Ken Berman, Jeremy Agulnek, Mystery Man, Adam Udell, Al Goldman, Jason Kaplan, Bobby Zuker, Andy Steiner

Bottom Row: Mystery Man II, Jeff Vetstein, Ken Freeman

### Note From the Editor:

Blast From the Past is a new Bugle feature. We would like to include old, funny, embarrassing, poignant or otherwise notable photos of Avodians through the years. So break out your bellbottoms, mutton-chop sideburns, rattails, flattops, tie-dyes, sweater vests and ruffle tuxedo shirt photos, scan and email them to: [campavodaalumniassociation@hotmail.com](mailto:campavodaalumniassociation@hotmail.com).

# Avoda Alumni Bugle

## Al Goldman is Luggage, Lee Kaiser is Money

By Al Goldman

I suppose every decade had them. Select words chosen by camp elders to be designated as indicators of some type of unfit, uncool, and generally unacceptable behavior or persona. While many of us can pinpoint the derivation of even the lesser known nicknames, no one is usually quite sure how this particular verbiage gets started. The two that defined my Avoda generation were "Luggage" and "Money".

Money I never quite got. Money is good. It makes the world go around. Having it helps everything. But, my trusty leaders deemed so many of my peers "money" or "monec", and I joined in with glee.

Now luggage is easy to understand. It's bad. It's heavy, full of stuff you probably don't need, hurts your back, and slows you down. You know you don't want to be luggage. I am proud to say I don't remember being assigned this dubious distinction at any point in my Avoda career. However, I was rather free-spirited in assigning this moniker to others. Be you awkward, weird, or unusual in some way I deemed unsuitable. I guess this is where the karma comes in.

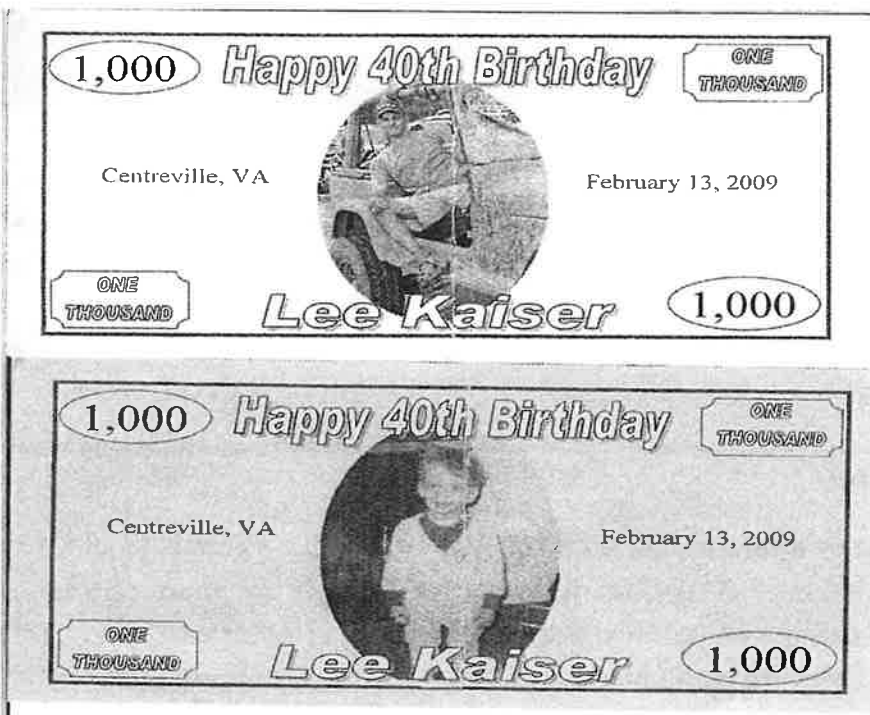
My senior year of college, I interviewed for a position with one of the best brands in world. You know them. The salary was good, great benefits, and they wanted me to move to Los Angeles and start to work right away. I eagerly accepted and worked for this wonderful company for 5 years, eventually running their New England operations. Alas, my friends, the joke was on me. For I was an employee of Samsonite, the world's biggest luggage manufacturer. My fellow Avodians mocked in fervor doing a joyous dance that only the finest of irony can bring.

So you see, next time you see that geeky newbie that you made fun of, just know that Avoda can have its own karma, and that karma can be a bitch.

(Ed. Notes):

Over the winter one of our esteemed Alumni, Lee Kaiser, celebrated his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party. His wife Nadine was nice enough to throw him a surprise Casino style birthday gala. What was even better was the fact that Nadine had fake money printed out (monopoly style) with Lee's likeness on the counterfeit bills. I've attached a few of the fine parcels here so that everyone can laugh at Lee, in the Avoda-only style of "Monec and Money."

Thanks for the laughs Nadine! It's a gift that keeps on giving.





## Night at the Races

By Jeff Vetstein

This year, the voters of Massachusetts decided to get rid of a much endeared activity reserved for counselors on a "Long Night." During the summer, counselors would often make their way to the Raynham Taunton Greyhound Park, to blow off some steam and spend a some of their well earned (ahem) money. The track allowed counselors the perfect mix of gambling, camaraderie, competition and general debauchery.

The excitement of the track often spilled over into everyday Avoda life during the summer. Color war track meet and freshman three legged races would take on additional excitement every year. Who can forget Color War lineups? The sound of Waiters Call is the same bugle tune for the Post Time at the Track. "Here comes rusty!!," was often exclaimed during a flashrush or whenever Russ Sherman was around. "Win, Place, Show" titles took over swim meet ribbons.

When signing up for electives, counselors often got on the microphones and said, "We have 3 spots left in 2<sup>nd</sup> period Waterskiing, DON'T BE SHUTOUT!" And, League Competition teams were named after counselors' favorite dogs like "The Bohemian Duchesses" and "Tracy's Fantasy."

So when the voters of this great state decided to delete the place of many of our childhood memories (and over 1000 jobs) in exchange for the better treatment of Greyhounds, the great minds of the CAAA said, "Let's go back to the track!! It's post time!"

When all was said and done we had close to 50 Avoda Alumni gathered in our own private lounge area of the track. Dinner (for lack of a better word) was served and adult beverages were aplenty. This all took a backseat to the handicapping of greyhounds.

Everyone had an ear to the grindstone

trying to find out which puppies the wiseguys had going in the races. Al Goldman and Andrew Bramson had many a discussion with one eye on the track, one eye on the Flagler simulcast, and two hands on the chicken fingers.

Al said to Brimma, "The layman can not understand what is going through my mind. The six is going to be in the mix."

Ken "Bubblehead" Freeman and Ken Shifman couldn't believe how many times the 1-8 Quinella came through, and how many times they missed out on betting it.

In the end, the Track will be destroyed, but our memories of when we were counselors and alumni losing our hard earned shekels will live on in infamy.



## Jeff Keselman—An Appreciation

As many of you know, Avoda Alumni Board member Jeff Keselman recently left our group to join the Board of Directors of the camp. What you may not know is just how much Kess has done over the years to make the alumni association the thriving organization it is today.

As the Treasurer for many years, Kess had the job of making sure our finances were kosher and that our budgeting was right. Funding of scholarship initiatives, building the Archives, paying for the newsletter and paying for our myriad of great

social activities—Kess always took care of these things without a hint of worry for any of the rest of us.

Beyond his formal role as Treasurer though, it is the countless other things Kess did always for which he is owed a great debt of gratitude. You may not know this, but without Kess keeping me on track, I don't think a newsletter ever would have gone out. Kess also stepped to the fore and managed some difficult scholarship situations with quiet aplomb. He was responsible for the alumni association mail box, a thankless and constant job.

He always prompted board members to get their stuff done, and held us all accountable for doing what we said we'd do.

Beyond all that, though, Kess was always there when something, anything, needed to be done. He is the most dependable person I think I've ever come across. For that, the Camp Board is far better off for his having joined them, though the Alumni board is the lesser for it.

*Sam Mirkin*

If you would like to make a pledge to the Alumni Association Annual Fund to support scholarship and infrastructure improvements, please see below.

Mail to: Camp Avoda Alumni Association, PO Box 465, Needham Heights, MA 02494

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Address \_\_\_\_\_

Bunk 14 Year \_\_\_\_\_

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**Annual Fund Giving Levels**

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Lake-O (\$2,000 +)

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\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Betty Grable Commando (\$500-\$749)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Rec-O (\$250-\$499)

**If you missed Alumni Weekend 2009,**

**you missed the best weekend of the year.**

**Friends, ballgames, brews, bands, laughs,  
showering in the shower house, swimming in  
beautiful Lake Tispaquin, Friday Night Tailgate,  
etc., etc., etc...**

**Shouldn't You Be There Next Year?**

**Well, shouldn't you?**



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