

# The Bugle

## PANDEMIC EDITION

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE AVODA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

### CANCELLATION, CARING, CAMARADERIE, AND COMMUNITY

By Ken Shifman

Summer 2020 was completely different from my prior 12 summers as Director. As I think about it, it's different from any Camp Avoda director's for the past 93 summers. For the first time since 1926, our Athletic Field, Hoops Courts, Bunks, Mess Hall and more were not be used to serve Camp Avoda campers.



When we made the video announcing cancellation of camp, it was strange and difficult to utter the words. We are certainly living in strange and challenging times. The decision was not an easy one. The board and camp leadership took time and did analyses. As we watched camps around us close it became harder to opt to open. So many unknowns and risks. Ultimately, we

decided it was our responsibility to cancel. Summer camp is the antithesis of social distancing. Safety is a top priority every summer and this one is no exception in that regard. **CONTINUED PAGE 2**

- JEFF VETSTEIN  
PRESIDENT
- INCOMING CHAIRMAN  
DAN GOLLINGER
- SETH JACOBS  
SECRETARY
- BARRY MORGAN  
TREASURER
- NATE COHEN  
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- AARON AGULNEK
- JAKE ALEXANDER
- ANDY BRAMSON
- EDDIE BERNSON
- DAVID CHELLA
- SETH FOX
- DAVID GLATTSTEIN
- MARK GOLDBERG
- SAM MIRKIN
- BEN RUBIN
- LARRY RUBIN
- ANDY STONE
- SAM WATMAN

HELPING KIDS GO TO AVODA

#### IN THIS ISSUE



AVODIANS IN THE WILD



WE WILL BE BACK STRONGER



D.C. ALUMNI UPDATE

In the midst of this we had the foresight to put together a campaign to sustain (some might even say “save”) Camp Avoda. Even in the best-case scenario we were trending toward financial hardship. And the “no camp” scenario was one of five for which we created financial models. As you can imagine, having to spread out two years of expenses with only one year’s income is a challenge for any business. Of course we save a lot from excluding summer expenses, but there are many more costs that do not stop. And we also have to refund money back to many families.

In any case, we mobilized: we set up a hierarchy of committee members, development teams, decade generals and bunk captains. The team kept growing as more and more people joined the cause. When all was said and done we had engaged more alumni than ever. I hope you were lucky enough to join your Bunk 14’s Zoom calls. We held them for most age groups’ Bunk 14’s from 1970 to 2014. These Zoom video chats were a huge success by raising awareness and alerting everyone to our situation.

Equally if not more importantly, the Zoom chats really served our community-building mission by bringing people together and engaging so many wonderful alumni, many of whom had been out of touch for decades! The stories, the memories, the regrets, the

trophy winners, the jokes, the urban legends, and more were all incredibly recollected as if they were yesterday. Avoda indeed makes a lasting impression. And by the way, we met our goal of \$360,000. This is truly amazing. We were a model for other camps. Thank you!

As someone on the frontline “selling” camp to new camper families, I often mention the incredible alumni and community we have. The boys will certainly create unique and special memories. In my introduction letter I write, “And your son will likely make friends that he feels closer to than those from other aspects of his life. When he is in his 20’s, 30’s, 40’s and further on he will probably get together with his camp friends and brothers to share laughs about their camp days, share good times and be there to support one another through tough times.

If you’d like that for your son, give us a call!” This could not be more applicable.

So thank you for stepping up in our time of need. Thank you for connecting with one another. Thank you for being an integral member of this special place, program, history, and community that is Camp Avoda.

## President's Letter by Dan Gollinger

This is my first President’s Letter and an honor. It coincides with the beginning of significant changes for the Avoda Alumni Association, the Camp Board, and strangely enough, the entire world.

Hardly anyone could have imagined a global pandemic derailing humanity in 2020. It is absolutely surreal and has changed life for all of us in so many ways: sports and concerts cancelled, offices moved home, mask wearing, minimal social lives, parents turned teachers, and now parents turned camp counselors.

No summer this year at Camp Avoda for the first time in its history, for the first time since 1926. It sucks. No Color War, no Avoda Tournament, no flagrush, no 14 vs 12 rivalry, no field trip to the Red Sox or Water Wizz, no League or snack time, and for us elder statesmen, no Alumni Weekend. However, when we get run over in flagrush (or Thanksgiving football), we get back up. In tough times we learn to adjust and rise to the occasion. And that’s exactly what we did...

Alumni from across the country, spanning all ages, pitched in what they could to surpass our lofty goal of \$360,000. We all rose to the occasion. Our accomplishment was in large part thanks to many volunteers of alumni.

On behalf of the greater Avoda community, THANK YOU.

It’s a changing time for the Alumni Association too, as we have now merged with the Camp Board. The idea is to align volunteer efforts, initiatives, and resources so we can maximize our impact. We are still the Camp Avoda Alumni Association and we have the same goals we had before, which, generally speaking, are to organize social events for alumni, to grow the active alumni base and keep alumni connected, and to raise money for camper scholarship. The main difference is we’re not a separate entity anymore. As a result, we have a seat on the Camp Board, filled by Sam Mirkin, giving our association a voice to weigh-in on Camp operations. We’re excited about the joint collaborations ahead.

When I joined the Alumni Board in 2011, I was happy just to be keeping in touch with friends and giving back to Avoda. In fact, a lot of the crew when I started are still on our committee today – Dave Chella, Jeff Vetstein, Seth Fox, Sam Mirkin, Dave Glattstein, Aaron Agulnek, and Larry Rubin. And a lot of the Camp Board are former Alumni Board members. The consistency over the years is impressive and speaks to the dedication of these volunteers. **CONT on Page 3**

President's Letter...continued  
by Dan Gollinger

My hopes and personal ambitions for the Alumni Association during my time in this role include a more complete alumni database, increased professional networking amongst alumni, and new social events. I'm looking forward to meeting more alumni and staying better connected to the Avoda friends in my life.

Meanwhile, during this pandemic pause, we can use this time to reflect and reset. We can be thankful for being a part of this incredible Avoda community, thankful for our time spent there, and thankful for our future together ahead. We know that whatever this moment calls for, individually and collectively, we'll be able to adjust and rise to the occasion.

From the Hall of Camp Avoda to the Shores  
of...the Potomac  
DC Dispatch...by Mike Alter

**My** fellow Avodians. I am pleased to report that the state of the Avoda Nation in the District of Columbia is strong. Regardless of what you might read in the (fake) news, DC isn't only about impeachment, political polarization and a do-nothing congress. In fact, the Nation's Capital is also all about Avoda.

Fact. DC is home to the legendary Satloff crew (Rob, and his three sons). Fact. The Satloffs, the (Ariel) Waldmans and the (David) Yarkins all live right around the corner from my team (Team Alter), and Lee Kaiser lives in close proximity/south of the Mason Dixon line. Fact. Current Avodians living in the DMV are strong in number and growing. But that was not always the case.

And it all started about ten years ago with a Shabbat dinner and a snow storm.

As I remember it, Ken (Shif) and Tom (Leavitt) were coming to town to meet with potential donors. They reached out and ultimately agreed to join my family for Friday night dinner. There are two things you should know about the DC winter. First, it never actually snows in DC. And second, we still manage to get more snow days than Boston. But this particular weekend was different. Ken and Tom brought the real stuff down from the North. A legitimate blizzard. The city shut down completely. Ken and Tom were trapped. And so there we were, sitting around the table (I think Tom wearing a beanie), talking about camp with my wife and kids, my only son Adam curious but still too young for Bunk 1. Ken and Tom shared the challenges facing camp, including recruiting. The Needham/Newton/Sharon markets, consistently a huge source of Avodians, were tapped. And camp needed more boys, more boots on the ground. Ken suggested that we consider hosting a DC open house. His plan - Light food and beverage. A living room slide show followed by Q&A. Avoda nerf footballs for the boys to chuck in our back yard. A few counselors would come in from the local colleges (GW and Maryland). And my oldest daughter was a Pembroke girl. Solid.

We invited our kids' friends -- from school, synagogue, soccer team, baseball. The first year, we had a few indications of interest but no one bit. Round 2. Ken came back a year later for another open house. And the strangest thing happened. A few DC-based kids actually signed on. And all of a sudden we had real live campers to talk about Avoda at subsequent DC open houses. Two Avodians became three, and three became six. Before we knew it, four of the starting five (on the 2019 Junior Hoops team) were DC guys. The list reads like a current who's-who of Avoda: Davidson, Frumkin, Goldberg, Hasenberg, Satloff, Schreiber, Steindecker, Veksler and Alter, just to name a few. All in, approaching 30 Avodians. Southerners during the off-season, but Middleboro-bound once school lets out. I can only imagine the horror of being on the Southwest flight that so many of them fly home after camp ends.

Last summer, Rob Satloff lost his wife Jennie (z"l) after a courageous battle with cancer. Camp was in session. David, the youngest Satloff, was already at Avoda. The DC Avoda contingent mobilized. David travelled home for the funeral (and then back to camp) with the support of Ronni and a group of his Avoda brothers. It illuminated for me what camp means but it also highlighted how far we had come from that Shabbat dinner on that snowy night.

As Ken will tell you, camping is a competitive business. Avoda needs campers if it is going to continue to thrive. There are so many choices and outside pressures pulling kids away. But we have a product at Avoda for which there is "none that can compare." It remains a timeless place where boys become brothers, form life-long friendships, and learn about who they are through gritty competition. We can all help the Administration and the Board open up a pipeline to potential recruits. In my view, that's the only way to ensure that all of our sons, and future generations of boys, will be able to write their own Avoda legends on the shores of Tispaquin, just as we all did. Let's go!

# AVODIANS IN THE WILD ZOOM REUNION

**B**unk Captains of Bunk 14s from the 70s through the present organized zoom reunions to unbelievable success. Some Bunks attended over 90%. The pandemic has caused incredible changes to our lives, but one benefit was having everyone home and able to attend these on any given night. Thank you to all who participated!



1971



BUNK 14



1974



1975



CABIN 14



1976



1979



1980



1985



1988



1984



BUNK 14



1989



1992



## Alumni Happenings

### Marriages:

Eddie Bernson '0814 to Molly Flavin June 1, 2019  
 Jeff Nathanson, '9914 to Danielle Shusterman, May 26, 2019  
 Mike Singer '0014 to Jamie Brod, October, 13, 2019  
 Rob Shanfeld '0414 to Martha Beltz September 21, 2019  
 Cory Brine '0214 to Joanna Field, October 26, 2019  
 Jay Lukoff '9914 to Alexandra Colton, November 10, 2019



Ty Scheiner, Adam Van Dam, Dave Fine, Dan Gollinger, Lee Brine, and Cory Brine at Cory's wedding.

### Births:

Dan Scudder 0114, baby girl, Ruby Sage, 12/21/2019  
 Barry Morgan, 9414, baby girl, Cameron Alexis, 4/20/2019  
 Greg Lazaroff 9714, baby boy, Dylan Seth, 7/16/2019  
 Jared Shalek, 0314 baby girl Eden Caroline, 6/7/2019  
 Matt Katz, 9714, baby boy, Logan Katz, 5/22/19  
 Zach Abrams, 0214, baby girl Lillian Amelia, 11/7/2019  
 Erik Silevitch, 0014, baby boy, Brady Liam, 3/31/2020  
 Jesse Fanueil, 9614, baby girl, Ella Sarah, 12/16/19  
 Nate Cohen, 0014, baby boy, Joey Ezra, 5/4, 2020  
 Dana Isaacson, 9714, baby girl, Sloane, 1/4/2020  
 Matt Abrams 0014, baby girl Dayla Ruth 5/31/2019  
 Scott Davis, 0514, baby boy, Blake Ryan, 2/2/2020  
 Dave Charton, 9515, baby boy, Tucker Quinn, 8/11/2020



Jeff Nathanson, Jonny Singer, Mike Singer, Jim Singer, and Todd "Tibba" Miller at Mike's wedding weekend.



Mr. and Mrs. Jay Lukoff



Dylan Lazaroff



Eden Shalek



Sloane Isaacson



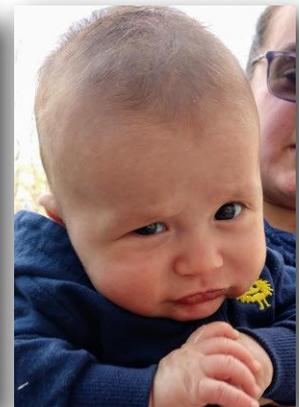
Brady Silevitch



Logan Katz



Ella Fanueil



Blake Davis

## Alumni Weekend 2019 June 21-23, 2019

**A**lumni Weekend 2019 was a raging success. Avoda Alumni Weekend 2020 has been postponed due to the pandemic. If you've recently reengaged with Avoda, join us at the next Alumni Weekend, for as long as you want to stay. It's full of sports, sun, and relaxation. Sit on the Shores of T'ispaquin or take a canoe to the cove. Shoot hoops or lounge on the field! We'll see you at the next one.



### Avoda Hacks on Quarantining

BY: JEFF VETSTEIN, SAM MIRKIN, AND STEVE PETERS

10. Sign your kids up to be waiters and sweepers for 6 months
9. Dutch Zoom Auction
8. Trash Liners should not be used as masks
7. Beanies may be used as face masks
6. Lazy (every) Mornings
- 5-4-3-2 - Drive Thru at DQ
4. Call family members to the kitchen via intercom when an Amazon package arrives
3. No futzing around with Alexa, only use it from announcements and spying only
- 2c. Use your bare hands to make Tuna Salad
- 2b. Wake your kids up at midnight with seven slices of pizza
2. Shabbat orange knishes, note not limited to quarantine or shabbat
1. Make sure you have the keys to the walk-in





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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.