

From Jacob Cytryn, Director

This summer we celebrated our 70th anniversary by embracing our summer-long theme: פנינת תפארה / p'ninat tifarah / beautiful gem. We explored how this phrase, from our himnon (anthem), can refer to four core aspects of Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, each beautiful and valuable in their own way: every individual child, the community we find at camp, the educational institution that is Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, and our breathtaking campus and environs in the Northwoods. One of the key emphases of our programming was urging our campers and staff to be the best versions of themselves, to take advantage of the nurturing and loving community camp provides to expand their horizons and find their inner greatness.



Chaviva, fourth from right, with waterfront staff

As part of the theme and broader celebration, we invited a number of special guests to camp. Two scholars of American Judaism joined us from the Jewish Theological Seminary, Professor Shuly Rubin Schwartz, whose master's thesis sorted through dusty boxes from Ramah's early years and began to craft a historical narrative of those first summers, and Chancellor Arnold Eisen, who, in addition to expertise in other fields, helps us understand today's generation of Conservative Jews and what Judaism will look like in the coming decades.

With all due respect to the luminary scholars, the highlights of the summer were visits from four Ramahniks of the first generation: Chaviva (Vivian) Jacobson, Lee and Judy Shulman, and Arthur Elstein. Distinguished professionals one and all, their visits to Conover were p'ninot tifarah in and of themselves. Their observations



from left, Jacob Cytryn, Arthur Elstein, Judy and Lee Shulman

matched each other nearly word for word: "The camp as a physical space is unrecognizable, but the core values of the institution - the ruach (spirit), the yiddishkeit - they are exactly the same." One noted that the "only things that never change are the clothing the kids wear and the smiles on their faces."

So much has changed in seventy years, from the rituals of Zionism as the founding of Israel was in doubt and into its first years; the sense of investing in a generation of Jewish leaders who would establish a new Judaism in the wake of the Holocaust; the radical educational philosophers who impacted the design and function of the Ramah program through its first decades. And yet, so much has stayed the same. Each of our four esteemed visitors was wowed by the passion, knowledge, and insight of our campers and staff. Each was inspired by the institution that had shaped them for the last seven decades, watching it influence new generations today.

Our camp-wide educational themes provide a lens through which we can frame events during the summer that influence the entire camp, specific aidot and tzrifim, and our staff and camper populations. The celebration this summer was the conclusion of a three-year cycle exploring Ramah's connection to Israel and Zionism, and the realities of being Jewish in America. Next year we embrace another monumental milestone as we will celebrate the 70th anniversary of the founding of the State of Israel with our theme of עין לציון / ayin l'tziyon / an eye towards Zion. The word עין, meaning "eye" is also a pun, as we pronounce it the same way we pronounce the letter ע, whose numerical equivalent is ... 70.

Experience Camp Ramah in Wisconsin!



Questions about 2018 sessions? Contact Assistant Director Adina Allen at aallen@ramahwisconsin.com or 312-690-8321.

2018 Sessions

For current 2nd graders:

Ruach Ramah (June 24-28)

For current 3rd graders:

Kochavim (July 10-23) and/or (July 24-August 6)

For current 4th graders:

Garinim (June 12-July 9)*

For current 5th graders:

Halutzim (July 11-August 7)*

For current 6th-10th graders:

Full season (June 12-August 6)

Taste of Tikvah (4 weeks), Tikvah and Atzmayim Vocational Program

For current 11th graders:

Ramah Israel Seminar

**current 4th and 5th graders may participate in both sessions*

In the Chicago area:

Ramah Day Camp for children entering K – 6 in fall 2018 (see page 16 for details)

**Live Outside
the Midwest?
Camp Ramah in Wisconsin
programs are available
to children of alumni
regardless of current
residence**

Family Camp

In August we welcomed 40 families to the beautiful Northwoods for our five-day Family Camp! Adults and children enjoyed a taste of the Ramah experience and had tons of fun boating, playing sports, singing around the campfire and celebrating Shabbat together.

To learn about Family Camp 2018, contact Robin Rubenstein, Family Camp Director, at r rubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com.



From Rabbi David Soloff, CEO

It was an exciting summer in which I experienced Ramah in different places and in many ways.



Rabbi Soloff with Jody and Herschel Kahn at the base of the new Nivonim campus

During staff week in early June I traveled to camp to spend some time with Chaviva Jacobson, an alumna who was known as Vivian Bassett when she attended camp starting in 1947. Chaviva was invited to speak at the Rahr-West Art Museum in Manitowoc, Wisconsin, at the opening of its Chagall Le Cirque exhibit and arranged with Jacob Cytryn to visit Ramah Wisconsin for a few days prior to her lecture. While at camp she shared stories about Ramah's early

years with the staff. She said that Lake Buckatabon was where she first learned to swim and Ramah was where she fell in love with the Hebrew language.

In mid-July I was back in camp when Jody and Herschel Kahn, alumni from 1950, came to visit. On that Thursday evening I took them to the sifriyah (library – also known as the Mishkan Torah) for the weekly Mishmar. On Thursday evenings, after evening activities, campers in the three oldest aidot are invited to come to the library to sing and listen to stories to get ready to welcome Shabbat. Each week about 50-75 campers join in the festivities. On this Thursday night, about an hour into the program, Herschel asked to speak. He shared that 67 years ago he had been a Ramah camper and met his wonderful wife Jody and dear friends who he is still in touch with today. Herschel said it was a privilege for them to sing with the campers and staff gathered that night.

It is especially inspiring to know that alumni across the seven decades of our history continue to step forward to significantly support the work of Ramah.

I traveled with Alumni Coordinator Robin Rubenstein to the Twin Cities and caught up with many alumni at our annual Ramah Family Fun Night. It was terrific to see so many young parents and their children singing songs around a campfire, embarking on a renewed Ramah journey.

In July, Jon Sherman and I Skyped from the Kikar with nine members of Nivonim 1974 who reunited at the home of Charlie Yawitz in Tel Aviv. These dear friends, some living in Israel, some visiting from around the world, weren't able to attend our

70th anniversary celebration last February in Chicago, but wanted to connect to camp and say Shalom.

That night I was in the audience when the Solelim (7th grade) presented *The Wizard of Oz*. (Yes – some classics you may remember are still performed in Conover along with a rich variety of more recent musicals – all in Hebrew!) One of my favorite parts of every play comes at the very end, when 700 campers, staff, and visitors stand arm-in-arm and sing *Himnon Ramah*, the camp song – it never gets old!

Back in Chicago, I welcomed families to the Ramah Day Camp Zimriyah song festival. Moms and dads and grandmothers and grandfathers came to the performance. What a thrill it was to greet so many people I first met when they themselves were campers at Ramah Wisconsin or parents sending their children for the first time. It was just as exciting to meet the many families joining the Ramah community themselves for the first time and experiencing the wow of a day camp festival.

I returned to Conover for our post-season Family Camp and helped welcome 160 parents and young children to Ramah. Among the 40 participating families, there were 14 alumni. All the participants immersed in their own Ramah experience, singing, dancing, swimming, davening, playing sports and celebrating Shabbat with old and new friends. They studied, climbed the ropes course, ate s'mores and sang by a campfire on the beach, watching a meteor shower after Havdalah on Saturday night.

In this, our 70th anniversary year, we see that Ramah stories continue to unfold. The experience that inspired campers in our first seven decades continues today with renewed energy, excitement and meaning. May Ramah continue to go *mi'hayil l'hayil*, from strength to strength.



Rabbi Soloff and Jon Sherman chat with members of Nivo 1974

From Jonathan Sherman, President

Givah



Jon Sherman speaking to camp families at the dedication of the new Nivonim campus in July.

On Visitors Day this summer, under brilliant sunshine and a clear blue sky, we had the privilege of dedicating our new Nivonim campus. Hundreds of campers, parents, and alumni gathered as we inaugurated the new home of the oldest campers in camp.

As anyone who has attended camp knows, the Givah—the hill where the Nivonim campers reside—has an almost mythic status. Generations of campers have spent a summer on that hill, enjoying Jewish time and space

with their closest friends and contemplating their role in the larger Jewish world. Nivonim campers spend the following summer on the Ramah Israel Seminar and many return on staff, nurturing the next generation of campers.

Rebuilding the Nivonim campus was a necessary decision, but not easy. The old cabins were relics from before Camp Ramah opened in 1947, when the site was home to a fishing resort. They were small and rickety—and full of charm. Every square inch of the walls was filled with graffiti, with campers' names often scrawled next to those of parents who had spent a summer in the same cabins decades earlier.

Through your support of the Givah Campaign, this year scholarships were provided for nearly half our campers and innovative programs enhanced their experience. Last but not least, thanks to YOU the new Nivonim campus was ready for the 2017 season!

Through careful planning and the efforts of our professionals and volunteers, the new campus began to take shape. A committee of lay people and staff reviewed drawings by architect and Ramah alumnus George Sarfatty. Director Jacob Cytryn and Assistant Director Adina Allen envisioned the educational possibilities for the new campus. Chief Operating Officer Benji Bearman visited camp countless times to supervise the project, and Tom Merkel guided the team who completed the project in a tight time frame.

The result: a stunning new home for Nivonim that looks like it has always been there. The cabins are spacious while conforming to the scale of the site. For the first time, our Rosh Aidah lives on the Givah with campers and staff. Nivonim now has its own moadon (lounge), a separate building with open, airy space for davening, studying, and hanging out. The outdoor space is equally beautiful, with lots of room for conversations and relaxing.

We are indebted to everyone who contributed to the Givah Campaign and helped make this dream a reality. We could not have built this beautiful new space without you. To those who may be contemplating a gift, it is not too late. Please join us in supporting the new Nivonim campus and other important projects.

Standing on top of the Givah offers a spectacular view of the rest of camp. It also feels as though you can see into the future. On Visitors Day, we shared a sense of gratitude for those who came before us and built the foundation for a strong and vibrant Camp Ramah. We also enjoyed a wonderful sense of optimism about what the future holds for Nivonim and Ramah for the next 70 years and beyond.

On October 1 we kicked off the third and final year of the Givah Campaign, with the goal of raising \$2 million for scholarships, program innovations, our Tikvah programs, capital projects, operations and maintenance. Dedication opportunities are still available! For more info go to givahcampaign.org or contact Sam Caplan, Chief Development Officer, at scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com or 312-690-8332.

Campaign – Year 3 Underway!



Boys cabin dedication – Arnie, Jonah and Nina Harris



Girls cabin dedication – Richard, Veronica and Rebecca Warner



Boys cabin dedication – Josh, Steven, Marc, Susan and Daniel Sacks



On Visitors Day, 12 benches were dedicated on the new Givah – shown here: Faye Kroshinsky and Bennett Kaplan with children Golda, Shaina, David and Aviva



Leave Your Mark!

For decades campers wrote their names in the Nivonim cabins and now a new tradition has been established! Hundreds of dedicated bricks and pavers were in the ground this past summer, for campers, staff and visitors to see. It's not too late for you to leave your mark on the new Nivonim campus. Go to givahcampaign.org to pave the way forward for Ramah and leave your name and a message for generations to come.



Snapshot of



creating new Jewish art



proud 2017 "mensch award" winners



making a splash



Playing Frisbee on the new Givah



Zimriyah Music Festival



new Hebrew musical "Matilda!"



awesome Yom Sport



July 4th carnival



Tikvah Arts Festival

Summer 2017!



exploring the beautiful
Northwoods



Tikvah and Machon rebrand
themselves as "Mikvah"



hanging out on the ropes
course



Eight weeks of joyful
Judaism



72 entering 3rd graders have a
blast at Ruach Ramah



softball under the lights



amazing Mishlachot
from Israel



kayak race

Success with Vocational Education at Ramah

By Renee Ghert-Zand

Excerpted from The New York Jewish Week, May 2, 2017

Sam Busis has many responsibilities as a teacher's assistant at the preschool at Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El in Wynnewood, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia. He makes sure the children play safely in the classroom and out on the playground, sets up the room for nap time and passes out snack. He also packs up the lunches, pins notes on backpacks and does many other jobs.

"The teachers notice a big difference on Tuesdays when I'm not there," Sam said proudly. Sam, 30, gained many of his childcare skills through the vocational education program at Camp Ramah in New England in Palmer, Massachusetts. Four Ramah camps—California, Canada, New England and Wisconsin—run vocational education ("voc ed") programs for campers who have aged out of the camps' Tikvah programs for campers with disabilities. Vocational education programs are being piloted in several other Ramah camps as well. Each summer, approximately 60 young adults between the ages of 18 and 30 participate in these programs, with some working as paid and unpaid staff at camp, and others employed in businesses in neighboring towns.

Josh Klein, 28, of Minneapolis, feels his experience in the Atzmayim vocational program at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin in Conover, Wisconsin, was essential to his landing his job at



Josh Klein

Lunds & Byerlys, an upscale supermarket in the Twin Cities. While in Atzmayim, Josh worked for two summers as a bagger at Trig's grocery store in Eagle River, Wisconsin. A letter of recommendation from Trig's helped him get a position working as a bagger and in parcel pickup at Lunds & Byerlys. He held this position for seven years before being

promoted last October to cashier.

"At camp I learned how to coexist with others, and I use

those skills every day," Josh said. Josh, who attended Camp Ramah in Wisconsin for eight years, is still in touch with his camp friends. He has also enjoyed going back to camp in the summers to visit his younger brother Jordan, who was also an Atzmayim participant.

Some vocational education participants stay in touch with one another and with Ramah during the non-summer months through weekly "Shabbos Is Calling" and "Shavua Tov" video chats. Additionally, a number of camps hold in-person reunions during the year, such as Camp Ramah in Wisconsin's biennial reunion for its Tikvah and Atzmayim participants and alumni.

Camp Ramah is proud of Sam and Josh—but not only for the critical employment skills these individuals have gained. Sam's mom emphasized the other reason why the work Ramah does with young adults with disabilities who age out of traditional summer camp programs is so important.

"Ramah has provided our son with a unique opportunity to mature and grow in a loving environment that stresses and practices Jewish values," she said.



Atzmayim on the job this summer in Eagle River

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October 1, 2016 – September 30, 2017

*indicates 2017 Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Committee member

♦indicates my.ramahwisconsin.com peer-to-peer fundraising campaign

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Summer Family Fun Day at
Ramah Day Camp



Summer Family Fun Day in the Twin Cities



Jump into Ramah fall event at Ramah Day Camp

Looking ahead:

November 9

11th Annual Wear Your Ramah T-Shirt Day #RamahShirts

November 10

Shabbat Across Ramah / Reshet Ramah Shabbat dinners
in Chicago, Twin Cities and New York

March 5-13, 2018

Ramah Women's Trip to Israel *details at rii.ramah.org.il*

June 15-17, 2018

13th reunion of Nivonim 2005

July 20-22, 2018

25th reunion of Nivonim 1993

August 8-12, 2018

Ramah Wisconsin Family Camp *see page 2 for details*



We are excited to welcome alumna Elana Pure Tennenbaum (Nivo 1997) as the Chicago Reshet Ramah Coordinator. Reshet Ramah, the national Ramah alumni network, now has coordinators in New York, Baltimore/Philadelphia, Washington DC, Chicago and Atlanta. In this part-time position, Elana will work with National Ramah and Alumni Coordinator Robin Rubenstein to create programs for Ramah alumni and their families. With this new focus, we will transition away from the Kikar Ba'ir brand (previously used to refer to Chicago alumni events) and will advertise all our alumni programs as Reshet Ramah events. Check out the programs offered across North America by Reshet Ramah at reshetramah.org or contact Elana at etennenbaum@ramahwisconsin.com.

Stay connected! "Like" Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and Ramah Day Camp

Community Events



Nivonim 1992 Reunion

Back row from left: Adam Natenshon, Jordan Feldman, Josh Stork, Michael Rosenbaum

Front row from left: Naomi Zuk-Fisher, Deborah Frank, Leah Horwitz Brajer, Rachel Dannen McDowell

Get a onesie for your Future Ramahnik by sending an email to Robin at rrubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com!



Nivonim 2004 Reunion

Back row from left: Jonah Meyerhoff, Syd Berkman, Elan Green, Benji Derman, Joshua Pomeranz, Harry Eskin, Matthew Tepperman, Avram Pachter

Front row from left: Ross Broms, Kashmir Kustanowitz, Jamie Cooper, Avital Otsfield, Becca Vandersluis, Heidi Zimmerman Simons, Samantha Kopin Silverman, Gita Karasov, Shayna Flink

my.ramahwisconsin.com

The my.ramahwisconsin.com platform makes it easy to set up a personal campaign. Are you marking a special birthday or anniversary? Celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah? Organizing a basketball tournament? Running a marathon? Make it an occasion to support Ramah! Encourage your friends and family to give generously. Your investment in the Jewish future will pay dividends for years to come.

**HELP ENSURE A JEWISH TOMORROW:
START A FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN TODAY FOR
CAMP RAMAH IN WISCONSIN**

EVERY DOLLAR MAKES A DIFFERENCE.

Camp Ramah in Wisconsin is a magical place where young people have fun, learn new skills, and build lifelong friendships. But did you know that 50% of our campers receive scholarship support? Hundreds of children experience Ramah each summer because someone like YOU decided to help. It only takes a minute to set up a campaign. Decide what your personal fundraiser is about, pick a fun name, upload a photo, and just like that you'll be ready to help kids get to camp next summer! Are you running a marathon? Marking a special birthday or anniversary? Celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah? Organizing a basketball tournament? Taking a polar plunge? Celebrating a personal achievement? Make it an occasion to support Ramah! Encourage your friends and family to give generously to Camp Ramah in Wisconsin to ensure a strong and vibrant Jewish future.



For information on upcoming reunions and alumni events outside Chicago, go to ramahwisconsin.com or contact Robin Rubenstein at rrubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com or at 312-265-6653.

on Facebook and follow @ramahwisconsin on Instagram and Twitter.



What Does It Mean To Leave a Legacy?

By Jess Levitt, Nivonim 2017

Remarks from Nivonim Campus Dedication Ceremony
July 16, 2017

On the last day of our Machon summer, we were told that we would have an opportunity to take a tour of the givah. The old givah, I should say, all of us knowing that those would be some of the last steps taken in that sacred space. As an aidah, we crossed the line separating the garbage trail and the pathway up to the cabins, taking in all of our surroundings with each step, until we finally reached what had been a mystery for our entire lives at Machaneh Ramah.

Opening the doors and seeing the endless graffiti, countless names, and meaningful messages was a very bittersweet feeling. I can confidently say that most, if not all of us were very heartbroken at the idea that we would not be living in those history-filled cabins. How did we get so unlucky that we would never get the chance to leave a legacy and physically make a mark on those nearly destroyed cabins? “Why us?” we were all thinking. Reading all the names from years ago, reading notes from siblings to younger siblings, taking it all in, I felt that I was being robbed of my opportunity to carry out what Nivo is all about. Nivo is about leaving a legacy, right?

Fast forward to the first day of Nivo this summer, I take my first steps on the new givah with the well-ventilated cabins, plentiful shelving, a beautiful grassy kikar between the boys and girls cabins, not to mention a spacious Moadon to hang out at any point during the day. I asked myself how I could have been so ungrateful the summer before. I had the chance to live in a brand new space along with my aidah mates of Nivo 2017. We have had the opportunity to be the very first ones to explore the newly built givah. Everyone is going to remember Nivonim 2017, because we are the first ones.

Leaving a legacy is not limited to writing your name on a wall. Leaving a legacy is so much more than that. It's inspiring younger campers, spreading ruach, and embracing everyone in your aidah living alongside you. I feel very lucky to be a part of Nivo 2017, the first ones on the new givah. How did we get so lucky?

Nivonim campers and Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society Members planted a tree on the new Givah on Visitors' Day, exemplifying the Talmudic saying, “As my ancestors planted for me, so I plant for my children.”



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 Richard D. Weiner
 Debbie and Adam Winick
 David Wolkin

Declaration of Intent

In the Jewish tradition of sharing our blessings, I/we take deep satisfaction in declaring my/our intent to help Camp Ramah in Wisconsin provide for the needs of future generations of Jewish children.

- ☐ I/We have made provision, or
- ☐ I/We will make provision to include Camp Ramah as beneficiary in:
- ☐ a bequest in my/our will ☐ a deferred lifetime gift ☐ a life insurance gift
- ☐ through a trust fund and/or foundation ☐ through a retirement fund
- ☐ Please add my/our name(s) to the Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society.

Print your name as you would like to be listed in the

Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society _____

- ☐ I/We do not want to be listed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Please fax to 312.606.7136 or mail to: Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, Legacy Society, 65 East Wacker Place # 1200, Chicago IL 60601

Please consult your attorney or tax advisor for professional guidance in this area.

For additional information contact Linda Hoffenberg, Director of Institutional Advancement, at 312.606.9316 ext. 225 or
 LHoffenberg@ramahwisconsin.com

From Lori Stark, Director



Specialty Clinics - more choices than ever!

Every summer campers in grades 3-6 can choose from a wide variety of *bugim* (specialty clinics) and this summer they had more choices than ever: archery, baseball, basketball, big field games, board games, cooking, drama, fused glass, gymnastics, hockey, improv, jazz dance, open art studio, photography, pottery, rocketry, science, soccer, tennis and woodworking.

These clinics grow organically from the interests of the campers. One of our most popular clinics developed because a camper told me he'd love to learn how to cook, and, during the summer of the cicadas, we started a bug collecting activity. It is always so exciting to see children exploring new interests and building skills!



Ramah Day Camp is a warm and nurturing environment where kids come to make great friends, grow socially, learn Jewish values and most importantly - to have fun! Campers entering kindergarten through sixth grade enjoy sports, swimming, music, cookouts, arts & crafts and so much more!

Chicago area campers entering grades 3-6 can experience both Ramah Day Camp and Camp Ramah in Wisconsin in one summer at special rates! **Ruach Ramah** offers entering 3rd graders a 5-day taste of the overnight camp experience. **Kochavim** offers entering 4th graders the opportunity to spend twelve action-packed days at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and the rest of the summer at Ramah Day Camp. Two sessions are available. **Garinim** (for entering 5th graders) and **Halutzim** (for entering 6th graders) offer four weeks at Ramah Day Camp and four weeks at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin.

For details call (312) 606-0444 or email info@ramahday.com.

Camp Ramah in Wisconsin

65 E. Wacker Place, Suite 1200, Chicago IL 60601

Rabbi David Soloff, Chief Executive Officer
Jacob Cytryn, Director, Camp Ramah in Wisconsin
Adina Allen, Assistant Director
Lori Stark, Director, Ramah Day Camp
Benji Bearman, Chief Operating Officer
Sam Caplan, Chief Development Officer
Jonathan Sherman, President

For additional information contact:

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