From Jacob Cytryn, Executive Director



For the second time in four years, in 2018 Camp Ramah in Wisconsin embraced a summer-long educational theme focused on Israel and Zionism. After pushing staff and campers to engage with "What it means to be a Zionist in 2015," this summer we celebrated the 70th anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel by exploring the very idea of Zion. We learned about the founding visions of Ben Gurion and 2,500 years of

Jewish dreamers who preceded him. And we imagined what comes next: articulating a vision for a thriving Israel 70 years from now and beyond.

עין לציון / Ayin l'Tziyon / "An Eye Towards Zion" borrowed a phrase from HaTikvah and, through the collaborative work of senior educators and our Roshei Aidah (division heads) and madrichim and madrichot (counselors), came to focus on two areas: an exploration of what "zion" has meant and a celebration of the "y" – whose Hebrew numerical equivalent is 70 – years of "Zion," modern Israel.

For our campers, we introduced עין לציון through our epic Zimriyah (song festival) that kicks off the summer. Each eidah sang a song that fit into a broader narrative about Israel past, present, and future which unfolded over the course of the evening. The theme also provided a context for a day-long Israel program for campers in Machon (10th), Tikvah (special needs), and Bogrim (9th). It anchored a Shabbat program in the middle of the summer for each aidah in camp. And, in ways designed and organic, it was infused into the life of cabins, aidot, and the entire camp throughout the summer. Through these programs, in age appropriate and intentional ways, we provided high-level educational experiences for our campers on topics including the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, religious pluralism, and minority groups today, and evaluating the Founders of the State on their expressed goals, through the Declaration of Independence and other core texts, from a distance of 70 years.

Throughout the summer our four scholars-in-residence facilitated discussions with staff that explored ideas related to the theme of



Ayin l'Tziyon, from their diverse perspectives and expertise. We had two optional staff seminars built around the theme, attended by nearly a quarter of the entire staff. Each Friday night a panel of staff members spoke about where their family was 70 years ago and where they dream they, their family, and the Jewish world will be 70 years from now.

Israel, Zionism, and Hebrew are core values of Camp Ramah in Wisconsin. We bring nearly 30 new Israeli staff to camp every summer and approximately 20 veterans. Practically every cabin in camp has an Israeli counselor (or two) who lives with and is an active and engaged part of crafting the summer experience for our campers. Throughout each day our campers are given droplets of Hebrew language, build relationships with Israeli staff members, learn about Israeli culture and language, hear about their American counselors' experiences with and relationships to Israel, and develop their own connections and knowledge base about the land that our tradition teaches us has been both our focal point and too often outside of our reach for more than three thousand years.

In the coming weeks, Assistant Director Adina Allen and I will begin a new cycle for recruiting staff and developing the programmatic components for the 2019 season. We will engage with our senior Israeli staff as we start recruiting new and returning staff from the width and breadth of the State. We will start conversations with our senior educators to begin shaping the summer-long theme for 2019, and for continuing to emphasize and improve upon the core values that define who we are. In those ways I guess, every summer's theme is עין לציון.

Check out our website at www.ramahwisconsin.com to follow our blog, youtube channel and alumni updates and stay connected using the subscription center embedded in the footer of the home page.

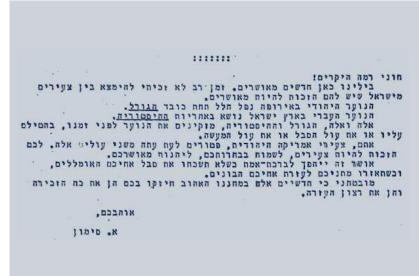
From Rabbi David Soloff, Director Emeritus

During a periodic organizing of material in our downtown offices, we came across a mimeographed booklet distributed to campers and staff at the end of the 1948 camp season. This was the second season of Camp Ramah in Wisconsin, with 100 campers attending from across the United States and 50 educational and support staff.

The booklet, entitled Teruat Ramah, (The Call of Ramah) and written entirely in Hebrew, included pieces from Camp Director Henry (Hillel) Goldberg along with several key staff members and senior campers. Each of its ten articles can be read for insight with an eye to Ramah history. I want to share one article from the booklet that can be read as a document of Jewish history.

Camp Ramah brought Professor Akiba Ernst Simon to serve for two months as professor-in-residence in 1948. Ernst Simon, as he was known, was an educator, religious thinker, and writer born in Berlin in 1899. He became an active Zionist in 1918, and co-edited Der Jude with Martin Buber. He began his work as an educator in Germany and continued it after settling in Palestine in 1928. In 1935 Simon joined the staff of the Hebrew University, where he became professor of philosophy and history of education, and, finally, director of the School of Education.

This is Prof. Simon's letter to Ramah campers, included in the 1948 end-of-season booklet.



Dear Ramah campers,

We have spent enjoyable months here. It has been a long time since I have merited to be among Jewish youth who have had the privilege of being happy.

The Jewish youth in Europe fell as a corpse under the weight of fate.

The Hebrew youth in the land of Israel carry <u>historic</u> responsibilities.

Together, fate and history cause these youth to age before their time by placing on them the burden of suffering or the burden of action.

You, the youth of Jewish America, are currently free of these two burdens. You have the privilege to be young, to rejoice in your adolescence, to enjoy your happiness. This happiness will become a true blessing if you do not forget the suffering of your unfortunate brothers and if you prepare yourselves to help your brothers, the builders.

I am sure that these two months in our beloved camp strengthened your power to remember and the desire to help.

Yours truly,

A. Simon

Here are some parts of the letter that I found fascinating:

"Dear Ramah campers" – the term honim, from the same root as machane (camp) was used in the early years to refer to campers. Today we use the term hanichim, which comes from the same root as hinuch (education).

"Noar Yehudi and Noar Ivri" (Jewish youth and Hebrew youth) - Beginning in the first decades of the 20th century well past the founding of the State there were debates about defining Jewish identity. Among many Zionists the term Ivri connoted the new Jew in Israel and Yehudi connoted the old Jew in the Diaspora or Galut. Note that Prof. Simon does not use either term to describe the campers. Instead he refers to the campers as the youth of Jewish America. Today the term "Israeli" supersedes both earlier terms for many in Israel.

Prof. Simon is writing these words during the summer of 1948, the same year the State of Israel was declared!!

He finishes his remarks with a charge to action – the campers must remember their brothers, both those who have suffered and those who are still in peril as they build anew.

This is a framing document for the Ramah mission and a challenge for us today to articulate how we define ourselves. What term describes us? How are we known to ourselves, to Israelis in Israel and to Jews worldwide? In what way does our Ramah experience today strengthen our power to remember and our desire to help?





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

2019 Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Sessions

For current 2nd graders: Ruach Ramah (June 16-20 or July 24-28)

For current 3rd graders: Kochavim (June 24-July 8 and/or July 10-22)

For current 4th graders: Garinim (June 13 – July 8)*

For current 5th graders: Halutzim (July 10 – August 5)*

For current 6th-10th graders: Full season (June 13– August 5)

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 2019 (see page 16 for details)

Questions about 2019 sessions?
Contact Assistant Director Adina Allen at aallen@ramahwisconsin.com or 312-690-8321 or our new
Engagement and Marketing
Coordinator Annie Glasser at aglasser@ramahwisconsin.com.

Givah Campaign Expansion



Todah Rabbah! The Givah Campaign surpassed its original goal of raising \$6 million in three years about nine months ahead of schedule! Your generous support has provided need-based scholarships for the 2016, 2017, and 2018 seasons at both Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and Ramah Day Camp, funded capital improvements including the Nivonim Givah campus, supported innovative programming and helped grow the Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Endowment Corporation to nearly \$3 million.

The Givah Campaign is now approaching the \$7 million mark, with over 5,300 contributions made by Ramah Wisconsin alumni, parents, and friends. This is truly cause for celebration, and we are so grateful to the Ramah community for the personal generosity that has propelled us to this milestone.

We are proud to announce that the Givah Campaign will continue with an expanded goal to raise \$9 million – an additional \$3 million – by the end of September 2020. These funds will continue to support scholarships, excellent programming and facility upgrades. We have no doubt that together we can continue to position Camp Ramah in Wisconsin and Ramah Day Camp for continued success.

New for 2020! With the support of challenge grants from JCamp180 and another national foundation, the next facility focus of the Givah Campaign is the construction of a **new arts complex to be ready for the 2020 season**. The new facility will be built on the site of the current Omanut/Nagarut (Arts/Woodworking) building, which was constructed in 1982. The new arts complex will support many more opportunities for artistic expression and connection to Jewish identity through the arts.

For more info go to givahcampaign.org or contact Sam Caplan, Chief Development Officer, at scaplan@ramahwisconsin.com or 312-690-8332.

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 purchased in 2017 and 2018 are now part of the Nivonim walkway 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 www.givahcampaign.org to pave the way forward for Ramah and leave your name and a message for generations to come. **You can even dedicate**



a brick in recognition of Rabbi Soloff becoming Director Emeritus! Go to www.givahcampaign.org for details.

From Jonathan Sherman, President



Each summer, I look forward to my visits to Camp Ramah in Wisconsin. The day starts early with a long drive and excitement builds as the lakes and tall trees of the Northwoods come into view. Arriving at camp, and pulling into what is now known as Ramah Circle, always feels the same. It feels like returning home.

Within a few minutes I am walking toward the kikar where I am greeted by

smiling faces, bouncing basketballs, green grass, and the incredibly beautiful waterfront. Soon I hear Hebrew conversations and, if I arrive before lunch on Friday, I get to watch and occasionally join in lively kikar dancing.

Why does our appreciation of camp grow the more we are there? For those of us who were campers or served on staff, camp brings back wonderful memories. Perhaps we remember a friendship that began decades ago and continues to this day, or the words to a song in a musical, or a great (or so we like to think) athletic achievement. But even for those who first experienced camp later in life, there is something special that keeps drawing us back. Like studying Torah, each return visit brings greater awareness and understanding.

What distinguishes Ramah from other camps that offer beautiful sites, robust sports programs, and the arts, is Ramah's ability to provide all of those experiences within the context of vibrant Jewish living. Davening, enjoying the delightfully different pace of Shabbat, and embracing the values of inclusion are only the beginning. At camp we live according to Jewish time and practices. We study with leading scholars in the Jewish world and form bonds with shlichim who bring their love of Israel all the way to Conover. The result is a home away from home that builds the foundation for a life-long love of Judaism and an enduring connection to Israel.

This fall marks the beginning of a new era at Camp Ramah in Wisconsin. A few weeks ago, Jacob Cytryn assumed the role of Executive Director. Jacob has spent the past 27 summers at Ramah as a camper, staff member, Rosh Aidah, program director,



and director, and he brings great leadership and vision to his new position. Jacob succeeds Rabbi David Soloff, our longtime director and Chief Executive Officer, who continues to serve as Director Emeritus. On May 5, 2019, our community will honor Rabbi Soloff for more than 40 years of devoted service to Ramah. We hope you will join us for this very special evening.

In recent years, through the remarkable generosity of our community, we have been able to provide many camper families with need-based scholarships, enhance programming, improve our physical site, and strengthen our endowment. Your support, along with the dedicated work of our professionals, helps us build a camp that is rich with meaning, a sense of community, and Jewish life. It is the place we long to return to every summer.



Highlights

of Summer 2018!







Focus on sports skills and teamwork with visiting coaches





Artists-in-residence





Fitness opportunities

teaching kitchen





Fun campwide events



5 Hebrew musicals accompanied by a camper orchestra



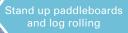
8 weeks of joyful Judaism



Proud 2018 "mensch award" winners



Cool cookouts and









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We are grateful for the generous support of 1,800 donors for scholarships, innovative programming and state-of-the art facilities that served over 1,000 campers and staff members during the 2018 season!

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Thank you, Margaret! On Visitors Day we recognized Dr. Margaret Silberman for 20 years of dedicated leadership as Chair of Ramah Wisconsin's Special Needs Programs. A crowd of parents, campers and staff filled Moadon Tikvah to listen to Jon Sherman, Rabbi David Soloff, Jacob Cytryn and Margaret's grandchildren Lauren and Drew Scott describe the immeasurable contributions that Margaret has made over the last two decades.

Here are excerpts of that program:

From Rabbi Soloff: "The Tikvah program of Camp Ramah in Wisconsin was established 45 years ago in 1973. Early on Margaret worked closely with founding Tikvah Chair Janet Robbin, and together they worked to establish a learning disabilities professional advisory committee. When Janet stepped down from the position in 1998, Margaret became our Tikvah Chair.

As the special education field evolved, Ramah Wisconsin's Tikvah program began to focus on providing opportunities for children with learning, social and communication difficulties, including those who are higher functioning on the autism spectrum. In 2004, after modest experiments with a pre-vocational program, Margaret spearheaded the efforts to formalize a vocational track for high school graduates, now known as Atzmayim.



Margaret and Alan Silberman and Family

Margaret helped recruit professional leadership for the Tikvah programs and worked closely and collaboratively with each Tikvah director in coordination with our camp directors. She encouraged us to refine the Tikvah program as special education services evolved in the campers' schools. Margaret joined the Ramah Wisconsin directors in successfully lobbying to include eligible graduates of the Tikvah programs in Ramah Israel Seminar.

Since 1998, Margaret has been a constant voice on the Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Board for investing resources in upgrading facilities and training staff. She has been actively involved in fundraising for scholarships, program and facilities, and together with her husband Alan has been incredibly philanthropic. Most recently they supported the construction of the Atzmayim building in 2008, dedicating the facility to all Tikvah program participants, past, present and future.

Margaret, you have been our mentor and we know you will continue to be our mentor, and we thank you."

From Margaret: "In 1957 I wandered into this camp as a camper and didn't speak Hebrew. I had a friend who taught me to say *hema botnim v'riba* – peanut butter and jelly – and she told me that if you know that the rest will follow.

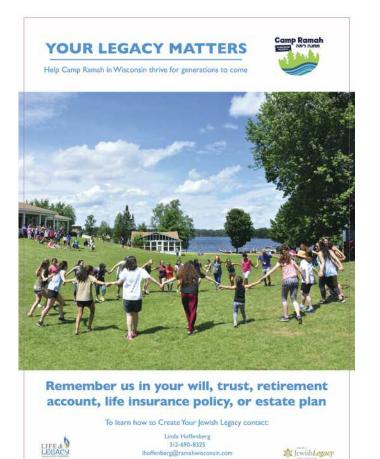
One of the things I learned as a camper was the Shema, which included the words, "you shall teach it unto your children." Every time I read the Shema, I'm aware that it doesn't say which kids we should teach. They don't have to meet criteria – they are all our children.

Rabbi Soloff likes to talk about the history of the Tikvah program and I remember it too. Years ago we spoke about making the Tikvah program an integrated part of camp. Rabbi Soloff said, "But I don't know anything about special needs." I replied, "And I don't know anything about running a camp." It was a perfect match! Of course now he knows an incredible amount about special needs, and I still can't run the camp! If it wasn't for this partnership, this program would not have come to where it is today. The support that the camp gave those of us working in the Tikvah program was incredible.

I want to thank Rose Sharon, our special needs program director in the late '90's and 2000's. Rose was the quintessential camp mother. She instituted the Tikvah Kiddush and made brownies and cholent and invited the whole camp to come. It was a fabulous way to connect our program to the rest of camp. I want to thank our current director, Ralph Schwartz, who is the master of integration and inclusion. Last Friday night Ralph gave me a gift better than any you can buy in a store. Alan and I were in camp for Shabbat, and the aidah leading Friday night services was Tikvah. Our campers read Shir haShirim, said the blessing on the candles, and led the camp in Kabbalat Shabbat and Ma'ariv. Here's the most amazing part – it was a non-event. Everyone just commented "oh, it's Tikvah Shabbat." I saw that "non-event" as the culmination of our success.

I want to take a moment to thank the staff. The counselors and young adults who work with your kids are not usually special ed or mental health professionals. I call them neshamot tovot – they are good-hearted people who are giving their all to this program.

And I want to thank all the parents of the participants. You can't imagine how appreciative the staff are that you send your kids here, that you trust us to help them grow and develop, that you partner with us. It's such a huge thing to send your kids away and hope they'll be provided with what they need. It's not me you should thank - it's all the staff working with our children and providing amazing support who have made the last 20 years so wonderful."



Camp Ramah in Wisconsin is proud to be a participating organization in Create a Jewish Legacy, a program of the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and an audit partner in It's Your Legacy, a program of the Jewish Federation of Greater St. Paul and the Minneapolis Jewish Federation, in partnership with the Harold Grinspoon Foundation.



Please use your community Declaration of Intent or the form below to declare your intent to help provide an outstanding Ramah experience for future generations of campers.

If you have already included Camp Ramah in Wisconsin in your will, please let us know. We would like to thank you and include you in our Legacy Society.

Declaration of Intent

In the Jewish tradition of sharing our blessings, I/we take deep satisfa Wisconsin provide for the needs of future generations of Jewish child	
I/We have made provision, or	
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Please add my/our name(s) to the Ramah Wisconsin Legacy Society.	
Print your name as you would like to be listed in the	
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Please mail to Camp Ramah in Wisconsin Legacy Society, 65 East Wacker Place #1200, Chicago IL 60601 or email to LHoffenberg@ramahwisconsin.com.

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

Alumni and Community Events



Professional development workshop for Tikvah Vocational (Atzmayim) alumni in Chicago



Ramah Leadership Initiative kick-off session hosted by Brad Feinberg (Nivo 1990)





Alumni from the 1940's and 1950's learned about Chagall and Chicago with Chaviva Jacobson



Summer Family Fun Day at Ramah Day Camp



Summer Family Fun Day in the Twin Cities

Looking ahead:

November 8, 2018

Annual Wear Your Ramah T-Shirt Day we want to see your photos! #RamahShirts

November 9, 2018

Shabbat Across Ramah

- Chicago Young Alumni Event at Anshe Emet Synagogue
 6:30 pm Minyan / 7:30 pm Dinner
- All Ramah Alumni can sign up to host or be hosted at their own Shabbat meals and receive a beautiful Ramah challah cover!
- Please visit http://reshetramah.org/chicago/ for details on all upcoming events.

April 2-9, 2019

Ramah Israel Bike Ride and Hiking Trip details at ramahridehike.org

June 21-23, 2019

13th reunion of Nivonim 2006

July 19-21, 2019

25th reunion of Nivonim 1994

- * Not your reunion year? Come to camp for a day or overnight visit! Contact Robin at rrubenstein@ramahwisconsin.com for details.
- * Look for more information in the next few months at ramahwisconsin.com about Family Camp 2019 and expanded programming for young families!





Nivonim 1993 Reunion

Top row from the left: Josh Lawrence, Dave Rotenberg, Charles Cohen, Josh Sherman, Ben Strauss, David Schach, Corey Iken, Sean Herstein, Dave Hoffman, Eytan Dallal

Bottom row: Jen Neufeld Cohen, Shira Goldenberg Zigler, Shari Dollinger Magnus, Ranisa Rubin Davidson, Sophie Friedgood Homonoff, Robyn Levich Schein, Dawn Sideeman Ferencz, Mara Davis, Leatt Muram Cribbs, Debbie Carlton Sanders, Brandi Cohen Argentar, Michelle Goldenberg White, Dana Gelfeld Hall



Nivonim 2005 Reunion

Back row from left: Justin Mednick, Eli Tempkin, Alex Katz,
Emma Tempkin, Abigail Russo, Brian Pogrund, Richard Brenner, Zach Kagin
Middle row: Matt Gordon, Oren Rasowsky, Menachem Portnoe,
Seth Kennedy, Naomi Kennedy, Jeremy Fineberg, Jonathan Miller
Front middle row: Lily Cahnman, Jackie Friedman, Riki Konikoff,
Sara Gurvitz, Naomi Mann, Dan Rose
Front row: Raquel Brown, Scott Kaplan, Lauren Kaplan,
Lindsay Seidenberg, Abby Miller, Brenda Cole, Debbie Rasowsky,
Hannah Pogrund, Rita Weintraub

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.

My.ramahwisconsin.com

Todah Rabbah to all who are using the my.ramahwisconsin.com platform to raise much-needed scholarship funds! 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 - it takes just a few minutes to set up a personal campaign.



We thank campers Miriam Herstein (left) and Ashley Mason for their generous support in honor of their Bat Mitzvah celebrations.



Madison to Ramah Scholarship Bike Ride



Ramah Runs 2018 - Ragnar Relay Great River



Ramah Runs 2018 - Chicago Half-Marathon / 5K

Ramah Day Camp

From Lori Stark, Director



Lori and friends

A Summer of Celebration

Our 2018 season was like a great big birthday party! During the first week of camp we celebrated Ramah Day Camp's 20th birthday with games, art, music and fun. After talking about the famous quotes of Theodor Herzl and Martin Luther King about dreams, campers shared their own *Dream of Esrim* (20). Their birthday wishes for Ramah

Day Camp included, "to last forever," "to always be sunny," and "to have a lot of candy!" My dream for the 20th season was to build a vibrant Jewish community of campers, staff and families, enhanced by friendship, fun, and excellent programming. And my dream came true!

We celebrated Israel's 70th birthday this summer through our *Kef B'Ivrit* program, infusing the camp environment with Hebrew. We learned Israeli children's songs for the Zimriya song festival and Israeli dances for the Rikudiya dance fest. And our connection to Israel was strengthened every day through the presence of our wonderful Israeli staff members Shir, Danielle, and Sharon. They infused our program with creative energy, especially on *Yom Yisrael* - a day filled with fun activities to celebrate Israel's 70th. I want to share a moment of *Yom Yisrael* that really touched my heart.

When we celebrate campers' birthdays, they sit on a chair and we pick them up and dance and sing. As we celebrated Israel's 70th birthday on Yom Yisrael, our *shlichot* (Israeli staff) lifted up a birthday cake and sang Hebrew songs with wonderful *ruach*. It felt like a beautiful extension of all the Israeli music and Hebrew words we learned all summer. The campers joyfully sang and danced and there was great energy in the room. After a while, our songleader began to play



From left: Shir Mazor, Danielle Sabog, Sharon Livneh

Hatikvah on her guitar and slowly the mood in the room changed. The boisterous energy transitioned to a sense of our deep connection to Israel. Our songleader closed her eyes while she sang and so did Shir, Sharon, and Danielle. I saw tears in their eyes and I too was touched with emotion.

In that moment I felt an electric connection between our camp community and Israel, and I saw the strong bonds that our Israeli staff now have to their new friends at Ramah Day Camp. It was an awesome feeling of mutual impact that I will always treasure.

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.

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