The Voice of Camp Tamakwa • Algonquin Park

- Amy Sky puts Tamakwa in tune
- Democracy in action, camp-style
- Head Chef takes on a tall order
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- New twist in intercamp rivalry
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The Best of Summer 2002
Camp Tamakwa, Ink.
All the news that’s fit to print

When Robert Sarner proposed the name for this newspaper, South Tea Echo, we said, “Could you please repeat that?” (South Tea Echo, try saying that seven times fast.)

Then we said, “Robert, you obviously have an astute journalistic mind. Having witnessed for the very first time our age-old tradition of 400 Tamakwanos on the Slope chanting ‘Woof Woof’ at the top of our lungs in unison hoping that our collective voices will cause an echo to reverberate from one distant shore to another, you saw in that the opportunity to cleverly play on the word echo which is a common newspaper title. Good for you, good man.”

What we really thought was, “Schicket, why didn’t we think of that?”

So the name for a Tamakwa newspaper is a natural. And so is Robert when it comes to creativity and marrying journalism to camp fun. He did so at another camp for several summers in the form of Kol Ramah, the voice of Camp Ramah. When we saw their newspaper, we were smitten with jealousy. (Some may debate whether it was out of jealousy.) Little did we know then that fate would bring Robert and his whole family from Jerusalem to Canada to have a peek at the camp of 2002. We are delighted with family ties can be.

The South Tea Echo was published against considerable odds. The closest we ever came to the dentist, pick up supplies, to drive to town was once a day. No wonder that you now hold in your hands, is the product of control. This summer, I feel the Staff and Robert had other duties at camp, often called upon at the drop of a hat to drive to town, take someone to the dentist, pick up supplies, fetch someone at the airport, or all of the above in one day. No doubt many of his stories were culled in his mind while winding his way along scenic Highways 60 and 400 in the camp van. (That explains why many of the characters in his upcoming novel are named Dwight.)

Despite the conflicts inherent in trying to write and create while constantly being torn away from his luxurious South Tea Echo newsroom in the Yellow Post cabin, Robert took it like a mensch and in true Tamakwa style showed PMA, a positive mental attitude.

This paper has a lot in common with Robert and his family: interesting, friendly, colourful, fun, and a wonderful addition to Tamakwa 2002.

We’ve enjoyed the children Ariv, Shani and Etye. We’ve enjoyed the Hobby Hubs which for the first time brought to Tamakwa a taste of the Middle East...not only in the form of Galya’s culinary delights but also her and Robert’s enlightening insights from their homeland.

Through his columns in the Canadian Jewish News and his Postcards from Tamakwa on our website, Robert put Tamakwa on the map. For Robert’s contributions to camp life this summer, they put Israel on Tamakwa’s map...and put this keepsake in your hands. Don’t worry, the ink shouldn’t rub off. We’re proud to be the publishers of the first issue of the South Tea Echo. Happy Reading.

Vic Norris and Dave Bale, Senior Directors, Camp Tamakwa

JORDAN WACHLER, 12, (Ranger 1), from Huntington Woods, Michigan, 3rd year at Tamakwa.

“I had more fun this year than I did in the past. I made many new friends. I started to enjoy different things, like half-court, fishing and water sports even though I used to mostly land sports. I learned to enjoy going into the water more, maybe because the weather was better this summer. We could do all our activities outside. The first month, we didn’t have even one Z-machine. One of the best things was our day canoe trip which went to Linda Lake.”

DAVID GOTTESMANN, 11, (Ranger 4), Los Angeles, 2nd year.

“This summer, I made more stuff in woodworking such as a miniature paddle and a box and received more awards than last year. I had a pretty good cabin but I think I had a little more fun in my cabin last summer. We did a few things that were very similar but this year it was different. Most of the activities were the same. The all-day Halloween Day and Disco Day were fun.”

ELANA FOLBE, 9, (Trailblazers 3), Huntington Woods, Michigan, 2nd year.

“Last year, I didn’t really understand many things at camp, like the mini-colour War. But this summer I understood camp a lot better. Last year, I knew everybody in my cabin. This time, there were a lot of new people in my cabin, so I made many new friends. The cabin itself was bigger and more comfortable. The canoe trip was one day longer this year and even better. The intercamp was great. I was on the girls softball team for the first time. During one of our two weeks of camp, the food tasted better than last year but then in the last two weeks, I didn’t like it as much.”

JESSE GOLD, 8, (Forester 1), Toronto, 2nd year.

“This summer, I made many new friends, including weird CTIs who I will not name. You were just being weird. I really liked wood because I made three projects – a mug holder, my name with sticks and a picture box. I thought the Colour War was good, the theme was great, and I liked it a lot. I went on a canoe trip. I liked our cabin, it was big and the beds were nice.”

MARC CRANE, 15, (CIT), Farmington Hills, MI, 5th year.

“This summer was different. As a CIT, you get the best of both worlds, as a camper and staff. You don’t really have the responsibilities of staff but you get some of the privileges of staff. There are less boys than in Senior Boys and they smush us together with the girls. We were a group of 19 CTIs and we bonded so much and become such a tight unit, much more so than in years past. I feel like I’ve come to know the other CTIs so well and we’ve gotten along so well. It’s been one of the best summers of my life. I believe we’re going to stay friends for a very long time.”

LAUREN KEPES, 11, (Pioneer 2-3) Bloomfield Hills, MI, 3rd year.

“The girls in my cabin were one of the highlights. Last year, a lot of the girls in my cabin were a year older than me so it was harder but this summer we were all the same age. Also this cabin this year was never a lot more comfortable. The activity leaders also were a lot better this summer, nicer and more flexible and seemed to have more fun than those last year. I went on a 10-day trip and that was one of the highlights. The only disappointment was that the leaders for the mini-colour War had less spirit and seemed to have done less planning than last year.”

MADISON DIAMOND, 16, (CIT), Toronto, 8th year.

“This summer things seemed a lot happier, especially compared to last year, when camp was a bit out of control. This summer I felt like the whole camp was a more of a unit, a lot closer. For me personally, I was much closer to my friends. As a camp, there were totally any huge problems. It was really great. The programs were awesome. One of the big things was being a CIT and bounding as a unit, the boys and the girls together, unlike in the past when there was competition. The food too was better, probably because I signed up for veggie this summer.”

IAN GOLDBERG, 13, (Voyageur 2), West Bloomfield, MI, 5th year.

“I think the summer was much better because I explored more activities, trying new things and going for more awards. It was one of my best summers ever. My cabin was great. I met a lot of new people. Certainly the two canoe trips were big highlights for me. I enjoyed the all-day programs, especially the Iron Chef. Also I just started canoeing and really got into it and got my 3rd award. The weather was awesome. We only had a few rainy days.”

- Interviews by Robert Sarner

Memories take hold
We asked campers how they perceived Summer 2002 especially as compared to previous years.

When people said they planned to move on to the next stage of their lives, the veteran CITs had a delayed reaction. “Last year, I didn’t really understand many things at camp. I could do all our activities outside,” Jordan Wachler, 12, said. “This summer, we could do a few things similar but this year it was different.”

Some campgrounders said they were quite nervous about returning for a second summer. “I don’t know why I’m here,” Marc Crane, 15, said. “Maybe it’s a little bit of self-doubt.”

As the former leader of the Pastimes, Jesh Gold, 8, said he was looking forward to the first half of the summer. “I’m hoping that I’ll have a choice of activities,” he said. “It’s been a little bit hard to choose this year.”

The anticipation of a summer at camp is enormous among the campers. “I’ve been thinking about it for months,” Robert Barth, 14, said. “I can’t wait to see how my cabin and new friends will be this summer.”

Many campers are looking forward to the first half of the summer. “I’m looking forward to the first part of the summer,” said Lauren Kepes, 11. “I don’t have to worry about the Colour War and can focus on the other stuff.”
The summer at a glance


Mon., June 17 – Head Staff arrive at camp.
Wed., June 19 – Activity Leaders arrive at camp.
Fri., June 21 – Counselors and Specialists arrive for Pre-Camp.
Wed., June 26 – Campers arrive; Noon Way; Cabin Night.
Thurs., June 27 – White Cap tests; Beaver Council nominations; Staff Show (evening program).
Fri., June 28 – Friday Night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., June 29 – Beaver Council Elections.
Sun., June 30 – X Games 2002 (All-day program). Sony PlayStation, Microsoft Xbox (winner), Sega Dreamcast, Nintendo Game Cube.
Mon., July 1 – First Monday cookouts and camp-wide campfire.
Wed., July 3 – Section Night.
Fri., July 5 – JT Triathlon; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., July 6 – Treasure Island swim; Pack-out day for 1st-month campers; Mini-banquet (Senior Council) Theme: Valentines Day; Presentation of the play Bye Bye Birdie.
Tues., July 9 – JT changeover; Section Night.
Thurs., July 11 – All-day Surf & Sail; Beaver Council presents Sadie Hawkins (evening program).
Fri., July 12 – Treasure Island swim; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., July 13 – Amy Sky songfest night.
Sun., July 14 – Caribbean Cruise (theme day); Star Search (evening program).
Mon., July 15 – Cookouts and camp-wide campfire.
Tues., July 16 – Intercamp with Tamakwans at Tamakwa; Tamakwa’s Guinness Book of Records (evening program).
Wed., July 17 – Section Night.
Thurs., July 18 – Camper/Staff Triathlon; Tamakwa Unplugged.
Fri., July 19 – Camper and staff roller hockey games at Camp Manitou; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., July 20 – Long canoe trips return.
Sun., July 21 – JT changeover; Section Night.
Mon., July 22 – Pack-out day for 1st-month campers; Mini-banquet (Senior Girls) Theme: Valentines Day; Presentation of the play Bye Bye Birdie.
Tues., July 23 – Visitors Day; 1st-month campers depart; Staff Bar-B-Q at Bonita.
Thurs., July 25 – White Cap tests; Section Night.
Fri., July 26 – Bar Mitzvah ceremony for six Tamakwans on their 13th summer at camp.
Sat., July 27 – Beaver Council elections (Pioneer Section); Who Wants to Go to the Portage Store? (evening program).
Sun., July 28 – Tamakwa Fun Fest 2002 (CIT evening program).
Mon., July 29 – Cookouts and camp-wide campfire.
Tues., July 30 – Great Egg-Spectations (evening program).
Thurs., Aug. 1 – Visit of Jerusalem Youth Orchestra to Tamakwa; Gender Wars (evening program).
Fri., Aug. 2 – Friday Night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., Aug. 3 – Intercamp with Camp Arowhon at Tamakwa; Presentation of Saturday Night Live.
Sun., Aug. 4 – JT Triathlon; Intercamp with Tamakwa; Youth Orchestra to Tamakwa; Gender Wars.
Mon., Aug. 5 – Cookouts and camp-wide campfire.
Tues., Aug. 6 – All-day program: The Iron Chef; JT changeover.
Thurs., Aug. 7 – Intercamp at Camp Tamarack; Halloween (evening program).
Thurs., Aug. 8 – Camper/staff triathlon; Beaver Council presents “Air Bands.”
Fri., Aug. 9 – Treasure Island Swim; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs.
Sat., Aug. 10 – Talent Show.
Sun., Aug. 11 – Treasure Island swim; Disco Day; Dance with Xtreme Entertainment (evening program).
Mon., Aug. 12 – Cookouts and camp-wide campfire.
Tues., Aug. 13 – Casino Night (evening program).
Thurs., Aug. 15 – Tamakwapalooza.
Fri., Aug. 16 – Friday night services; Presentation of the play Oklahoma; Colour War break at ballfield.
Sun., Aug. 18 – Final day of Lights Out; Staff Bar-B-Q at Main Camp.
Mon., Aug. 19 – Pack-out Day; Closing Banquet The Big Top; Slide-show; Showing of Spider-Man.
Tues., Aug. 20 – Camp ends as Tamakwans leave for home.
Tues., Aug. 26 – Alumni Post Camp ends.
Hats off to Craig Perlmutter, Tamakwa’s new Camp Director.

By DAVE BALE

I was a Forester and a dirty one,” says Craig Perlmutter, explaining how he came to be known as “Shmutz.” In his first year as a camper, he introduced himself to his brother Lloyd as a comment on what seemed to permanently cover Craig’s face and clothes: namely dirt or shmutz. That was 1981. Lloyd was on Head Staff and his brother Murray a CIT. Murray promptly called him a counselor. Both knew their little brother was devoted for one reason: if only he’d wash up and put on a clean shirt.

CIT duties for Craig include: his act – and his shirt – and he returned in 2002 for his 14th summer at Tamakwa after an eight-year hiatus. Craig was camp’s As- sistant Director last summer, but says in 1991 he has ascended the ranks from camper to CIT, counselor, Landsports Director, Assistant Boys Camp Director and Program Director. Even since 1993, he never strayed too far from Tamakwa, always lending a hand during his routine visits, being a valuable resource in the off-season, and keeping the tradition alive. (With Matt Egrin) our alumni administration, Craig has worn many hats. In recent years, John has taken over as camp adminis- tration, Craig has worn many hats. He made good use of his years away from Tamakwa, getting an economics degree from the University of Pennsylvania in 1994, then working in sports marketing for pro hockey teams and later in the brand marketing industry in his hometown of Toronto. “My eight-year hiatus,” says Craig, “allowed me to see ‘supposed reality’ while working in ‘real’ jobs, but nothing compares to being at camp.”

Until this past summer, Craig says his biggest camp thrill was winning the water boiling as a Colour War captain. “I can still remember jumping around with my co-captain Melanie Peltz and teammate Scott ‘Psycho’ Watson after our water had risen above the top of the can,” he recalls.

Being Assistant Director in 2002 was a new kind of thrill. “It was an incredibly fulfilling sum- mer returning every camper and staff member home safe, sound and in better condition than when we found them,” adds Craig. “Well, there may be some who lost pieces of their clothing, or just lost some hair, like me.”

By all accounts, Craig shares much of the credit for the success of Tamakwa 2002. And it was because of his leadership and for helping ensure a smooth transition that he has been promoted to Camp Director. He will work from the Toronto office on the year-round camp operation, com- municating daily with Associates Director Marilyn Mendelson and working alongside Senior Direc- tors Vic Norris and Dave Bale.

“I grew up with them as my directors,” says Craig, “and it’s hard to see them in any different way, other than close friends, even though Vic still yells at me when I give up the pack during staff hockey games.”

So, is it disrespectful to call the Camp Director “Shmutz”?! Nah, it’s OK; it’s camp. Craig now cleans up pretty well, but just to keep the tradition alive, at the final banquet in August he initiated what he calls “the new annual Shmutz Award” for being just that, dirty and a bit crazy like this year’s inaugural recipient. Burt Binder. When you meet Burt, you’ll know.

Tamakwa’s new Camp Director. Hats off to Craig Perlmutter.

The right light at night

All quiet on the nocturnal front this summer according to John Fiddes who keeps watch over camp after hours. By ROBERT SARNIER

Tamakwa’s veteran night watchman John Fiddes knows a good flashlight when he sees one. You would too if your work kept you up all night, much of it outside in the dark. While the rest of Tamakwa sleeps, John watches over camp un- til dawn. During the summer, he burns a lot of shoe rubber making the rounds. Without a strong, de- pendable light at his side, he’d be courting trouble.

In recent years, John has taken to using what he calls a night beam that he purchased in Hunts- ville. Made by Brinkmann, the Q-Beam is a powerful, hand-held light with a dark body whose beam can be seen from a mile away. It is so strong that John doesn’t dare shine it in someone’s eyes. He’s also taken a shine to his current model because it’s rechargeable, so as to avoid the need to often change batteries. Until he acquired his night beam two years ago, John depended on a more basic, conventional flashlight for his lonely vigil. It required batter- ies and was not as bright.

John started working at Tamakwa 26 years ago. Since then, he hasn’t missed a summer. At camp during that time, he has caught many a camper or staffer after hours where they don’t belong, greeting them with his trade- mark command: “Freeze, you’re busted!” They better have had a good explanation for their noctur- nal wandering or else they’d face the music and the Tamakwa trun- gal in the morning.

“I just love being at Tamakwa,” says John, whose night patrols this summer were ex- actly the way he likes them – uneventful. Even after all these years, it is still a great feeling to see the sun rise over South Tea Lake. The peacefulness and beauty are special.” And at that hour, he no longer needs his Q-Beam. Not to mention it, that’s when he gets to go to bed.
Defining leadership

Many aspired for positions on this year’s Beaver Council but few were chosen. Democracy in action, Tamakwa-style. By TYLER BURKE

Everything at Tamakwa has a story. Some go back only a few days; others—such as the Beaver Council—predate the memory of everyone at camp, even David Stringer. Like a Students’ Council, the Tamakwa counterpart is an elected group of campers who represent the entire camper body, with a rich history.

“It’s a big honour to think the camp would choose me to represent them,” says Brandon Tobin, Beaver Council president. Being a member of the council brings with it both prestige and hard work. Members prepare evening programs and events for the camp, act as role models for younger campers, and help to keep the campers’ spirits up. To that end, this year’s Beaver Council organized the Sadie Hawkins Night in mid-July with great success. The evening went off without a hitch, other than those made by “Rabbi” Les Hartman at the marriage booth.

For the three executive members of this year’s council (Brandon Tobin, President; Dylan Optican, Vice-President; and Mike Katchen, Secretary), the hard work is rewarded by their annual invitation to Tamagama, a group of former Beaver Council executive members. Tamagama is itself another venerable Tamakwa tradition dating back to the early 1940s.

The initiation tasks that the members perform always trigger great curiosity. They take place on Adventure Island and, to this day, no Beaver Council member will speak about the details. As a result, speculation is rife among campers and staff about what really happens during the initiation, giving way to new rumours every year.

“It’s all for show, for the crowd,” says Lee Feldman, 10, of the Tamagama ceremony. An elder camerawoman who wishes to remain nameless adds: “It’s not as bad as people think.”

Certain venerable camp figures say that while being a member of Beaver Council gave their Tamagama career a shot in the arm, its impact shouldn’t be overstated. “Believe me,” says Senior Director Dave Bale, “both Vic and I have been members of Tamagama for years and despite the mystique, it’s basically another camp stuck with a meaningful one for the participants—mainly a unifying one for the whole camp.”

What is public is the elaborate and quite beautiful ceremony for the entire camp on the Slope. By the light of simple torches, the ceremony on the Slope when the senior-most Chief (Libby) asks for a sign from Wakonda, the native god. Being the good spirit that he is, Wakonda answers with a spontaneously-ignited campfire. The bricks (industries) are put to a couple of tests including having to define words like “humility” or “cooperation” or “responsibility.” Once they have passed the tests, each is given an Indian name depicting their character. For example, Brandon, Dylan and Mike were named Great Blue Heron, Tame Turtle, and Smirking Squirrel respectively.

With such a storied past, the Beaver Council will no doubt have an equally illustrious future, providing for many more Tamagama ceremonies to inspire the campers and staff. If Beaver Council is one of Tamakwa’s longest-standing traditions, Tamagama remains one of its best-kept secrets. And we all know how most things remain a secret at camp.

Plaque and bright and read all over

Freshly minted symbol of the 2002 summer takes its rightful place in Dining Hall.

I f your mom told you one day your name would be up there in lights...well, she was half right. We don’t know about the lights, but your name is certainly up there...on the 2002 camp plaque. It will forever hang from the dining hall rafters alongside plaques from every camp season going back to Tamakwa’s first in 1937.

Each year’s plaque is a highly valued piece of history, documenting every camper who attended that year. Each is also a piece of artwork; typically the project of the art director. 2002 is no exception; this one was the creation of Vicky Mann (with help from Woodwork Director Ric von Neumann), who used wood sculpting to depict an aerial map of camp.

You can see everything from Voyager Point to Robbie’s Point…but don’t strain your eyes; there are no skinny-dippers.

New wings of welcome

The latest in a long line of Indian-inspired thunderbirds greets all those approaching Tamakwa’s shores. By DARA GALLINGER

As you round the bend on South Tea Lake and approach camp, it’s hard not to notice a solid red, yellow and blue figure perched on top of the boathouse. Though new this summer, the 6-foot high wooden thunderbird actually has deep roots in camp history.

Its predecessor presided over the same hallowed site since 1992 but had started to show its age. Last winter, it was replaced and reconstructed by the artful hands of Ric von Neumann, Len Giblin, and Ken Elder.

“The Thunderbird represents a certain image as people approach camp,” says von Neumann, head of wood working and a talented craftsman. “The old rotten thunderbird was a hazard to the boathouse and an eyesore.” Ten years earlier, the producers of Indian Summer had it made and installed on the boathouse for the filming of the movie.

South Tea Lake has long been home to such an icon. As far back as anyone can remember, there has always been a Thunderbird at Tamakwa peering out to greet everyone, staff and visitors. In the 1960s it was a mere two thin sticks painted to look like a Thunderbird. The design has certainly come a long way. Ric, Len, and Ken carved the new Thunderbird out of two by eight cedar boards laminated together. Ric’s wife, Libby, painted the body and Brandon Boyle painted the wings. The design came directly from the creative mind of Ric who insists that it does not represent anything specific.

Native Indians however see the Thunderbird as a personification of the energies in nature and the bird is considered highly desirable all over the world. Given the beauty of Tamakwa’s site on South Tea, it’s no wonder the Thunderbird has chosen it as his permanent home.
Feeding 450 hungry Tamakwans three times a day, seven days a week is no simple operation. But thanks to Guy Tetreault and his devoted team, dining at Tamakwa is a positive experience. By LAUREN MALLIN

8:50 pm and after a long day of activities, campers and staff congregate outside the Dining Hall porch. They eagerly await Tamakwa’s traditional four-word call to dine: “COME AND GET IT!” As soon as a senior staffer utters the command, Tamakwans invade the Dining Hall. Each person rushes through the porch doors to find a seat at their cabin table. After “grace,” servers emerge from the kitchen, their food carts laden with food. The feasting is about to begin.

Appearances to the contrary, dining at Tamakwa has a certain charm to it. As a rookie staff member, my first regular meal at camp proved quite an experience. Tired from an afternoon helping my campers unpack their bags, I expected to sit down to a nice, relaxing dinner with my new kids. Foolish me. Dinner was anything but tranquil. Amid the shuffling of food carts, passing of food trays, constant calls of “Pass the ketchup, please” and requests for seconds, came loud chanting and cheering from each section of the Dining Hall. With slight variations, that’s pretty much what I quickly came to anticipate every meal.

If the full-spirited ambiance is inviting, the food itself is no less enticing. Head Chef Guy Tetreault and his staff of 15 work tirelessly, much of it in the hot kitchen, to keep Tamakwans well fed. To that end, they spend several hours preparing each meal, and cleaning up afterwards.

“It’s no easy challenge to feed a camp for an entire summer and to keep everybody satisfied,” says Guy. “There are more than 400 different reactions to this fine blend of food.”

The food is generally quite tasty and the kitchen’s efficiency was impressive, to say nothing of the lively atmosphere in the Dining Hall. Looking ahead to life back in the city, a meal without the buzz of the Dining Hall is going to be mighty lifeless compared to camp.

What a feast!

Just think, it all had to come over first on the barge.

It takes a lot of food to feed a lot of hungry Tamakwans. During the two months of camp, here is what campers and staff consumed, among other things:

- 2,000 liters of milk
- 2,050 boxes of cereal
- 16,000 eggs
- 12,800 chicken balls
- 6,000 grilled cheese sandwiches
- 1,600 kilos of mashed potatoes
- 390 kilos of margarine
- 1,120 kilos of flour
- 22,400 homemade cookies
- 840 liters of bug juice
- 260 liters of ketchup
- 150 liters of jam
- 4,800 oranges
- 3,200 bananas
- 2,300 popsicles
- 160 liters of ice cream
- 80,000 napkins

One of my favorite dishes was the Greek salad. I also appreciated that staple food items such as salad and peanut butter and jelly were always just a call away from any server. To break up the schedule, both cookouts and shore lunches added another appetizing dimension to the menu.

Guy, 42, made his debut at Tamakwa in the mid-1980s, working as a chef for the camp’s previous catering service. He left Tamakwa to open his own restaurant in Huntsville and near North Bay before returning to Tamakwa’s kitchen in 1999 when he formed his own company, West Bay before returning to Tamakwa in the mid-1980s, working as a chef for the camp’s previous catering service. He left Tamakwa to open his own restaurant in Huntsville and near North Bay before returning to Tamakwa’s kitchen in 1999 when he formed his own company, West Bay Catering. Now he’s owner, operator and on-premises chef at his one and only summer client – Camp Tamakwa.

Growing

It was six years ago, during my first summer at Tamakwa, and I distinctly remember sitting on the Slope in awe as I watched the Senior Girls deliver their speeches at the Friday services. I thought that the Senior Girls were the coolest people on earth. I looked up to them and admired everything they did. They were the oldest and wisest, the ones who all the girls wanted to be.

To think that I am now a Senior Girl shows how fast time has flown by and how much we have grown. Tamakwa has played a huge part in the growing up process in my life. Returning here every year has allowed me to make friendships and experience things I never thought possible. The people I have met here have profoundly influenced my life and helped me grow to be the person I am today.

- Alana Faintuch, 15, Cabin 49-6

First Experiences

Sitting on my bed at Rest Hour, I tried to think of what to prepare for my Friday service speech. For inspiration, I thought of the speeches I had heard in previous years. Things like “Hello, my name is so and so and this is my 8th year at Tamakwa,” or “When I was told about our topic, I was stunned...” were of no help. This was my first time writing a Friday-night speech.

Thinking back to my early years as a Tamakwan, I realize that I never paid much attention at the Friday services. But as I grow older and my time as a camper dwindles, the importance of reflection dawns on me. I now realize that Friday evenings are not merely a meal at which we are not allowed to cheer but a time for looking back on our experiences of the summer and elsewhere, and thinking of the week to come. This being my first time writing a speech for the Friday service, I hope that what I have said inspires you to reflect and thought, and not on the path I previously took.

- Solomon Klein, 15, Cabin V-5

Kindness

Kindness is kind; kindness is fun. In your priorities, make it number one. If you’re unkind, you won’t succeed. You’ll be in the back, not in the lead.

Kindness is something you should practice throughout your life. When you are kind, you get it all back. Being unkind is very rude. Try to be kind with a good attitude.

Have an open heart and an open mind. And always remember to remain kind. Being kind can get you far.

That’s the way to be no matter who you are. Be kind at Tamakwa, be kind at home.

Thanks for listening and Shabbat Shalom.

- Alana Romoff, 13, Lauren Diamond, 13, and Stephanie Good, 13, all from Cabin 49-23

Goo-oo-ood morning, Camp Tamakwa!

Or rather “Good afternoon...” Everyday after lunch, campers and staff get a rest. And so does the decibel level, as camp empties and the kitchen’s efficiency is put on hold. But the airwaves of Tamakwa at that hour are filled with more than just the yodel of loons and the squawk of a raven. If your radio is tuned to 100.1 FM, you’re likely to hear the Voice of Tamakwa announcing, “You are listening to C.A.M.P. Radio, the Beaver.”

This summer, in keeping with a grand old tradition, veteran on-air host David Stringer (right) and Jamie Kudlats, along with various camper DJs, started up a daily broadcast of news, interviews, comic repartee, music and assorted camp sitcom from the studio near the Half Court.

How how

Every Friday evening, campers chose a different theme and spoke about it as part of the Shabbat service. Here is a selection.

6th year at Tamakwa,” or “When I was told about our topic, I was stunned...” were of no help. This was my first time writing a Friday-night speech. Thinking back to my early years as a Tamakwan, I realize that I never paid much attention at the Friday services. But as I grow older and my time as a camper dwindles, the importance of reflection dawns on me. I now realize that Friday evenings are not merely a meal at which we are not allowed to cheer but a time for looking back on our experiences of the summer and elsewhere, and thinking of the week to come. This being my first time writing a speech for the Friday service, I hope that what I have said inspires you to reflect and thought, and not on the path I previously took.

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Kindness is kind; kindness is fun. In your priorities, make it number one. If you’re unkind, you won’t succeed. You’ll be in the back, not in the lead.

Kindness is something you should practice throughout your life. When you are kind, you get it all back. Being unkind is very rude. Try to be kind with a good attitude.

Have an open heart and an open mind. And always remember to remain kind. Being kind can get you far.

That’s the way to be no matter who you are. Be kind at Tamakwa, be kind at home.

Thanks for listening and Shabbat Shalom.

- Alana Romoff, 13, Lauren Diamond, 13, and Stephanie Good, 13, all from Cabin 49-23
Half a century high
Every camp should have a David Stringer but Tamakwa is lucky to be the only one that does. By Robert Sarnar

He is Tamakwa’s eldest statesman, if for no other reason than having spent far more summers at camp than anyone else. David Stringer is many things to Tamakwa — including creative maven and technical whiz — but this year he added an impressive new credential to his camp bio.

Sure, Marilyn and Libby each have just chalked up summer number 30 at Tamakwa, and the camp paid tribute to six Tamakwans who marked their Bar or Bat Mitzvah here but all that pales next to David’s feat of endurance on South Tea.

Since age 2, David has been at Tamakwa every summer except one, but who’s counting? We all know, of course. Otherwise we wouldn’t be giving him so much ink in this issue. After completing his 50th summer at camp, we figured we could devote a half-page to him.

David was born into one of Tamakwa’s founding families 52 years ago. His father, Homer Stringer, grew up with Lou Hanlder when the family moved to Harwood, Michigan. Libby first came to Tamakwa in 1973 as a camper followed by her brother Bill and sister Sue and has spent every summer here ever since. As a staff member, Libby has held virtually every position at camp short of being camp director. She has been a counselor, selection head, tripper, tripping director, photographer, boat driver, gopher, main tenance assistant and even helped run the kitchen one summer. No less important, she was also a secretary of the Beaver Council. This year in addition to being Pioneer Section Head, Libby prepared the slide show based mostly on her photos, many of which she also supplied to the Tamakwa web site and the South Tea Echo.

At Tamakwa, David has performed countless duties over the years. He is most famous for his technical wizardry and the Hollywoodian special effects that he creates for Colour War breaks and other special events. David is also the main man behind the camp’s radio and a talented musician, often playing guitar or piano at camp functions. His talents as a TV and video producer are evident in the many movies he’s made of camp life. Last year, he produced Tamakwa’s first-ever CD-ROM.

In honour of his benchmark summer, David agreed to answer a few questions about his illustrious first half-century at Tamakwa, much of it as Associate Director.

What is your oldest memory of being at Tamakwa?
There is a big rock in front of the Condo at the gateway to Boys Camp. I can still remember playing on that rock when I was about 3. The earliest picture I have of myself at Tamakwa is when I was 2 in 1952.

What is your favorite spot at camp?
The Slope. It’s the lake that I’ve been looking at all my life. There is something special about the view from there — the sky, the trees, the lake, even if the highway wrecks it a bit.

What is your favorite activity at camp?
Sleeping, but I don’t get enough of it. I am not really paid for any specific activity. I’m paid to be here and to take the blame for anything that goes wrong. That’s my job description.

What is your claim to fame at Tamakwa?
Being the first piano player without a Royal Conservatory degree and the first piano player at camp to not play something classical for Meditation.

What is your favorite Colour War break?
In recent memory, it would have to be in 1998 when we sank the Titanic across from the Slope. It was a beautiful thing. Ken Eldon built us a fantastic Titanic, with half of the ship facing straight down into the lake, with its propellers and portholes lit. We had people in the water with old life jackets screaming in agony for their lives, with lots of fog. All the camp was brought to the Slope a little after midnight.

They then saw the Titanic go down while we played a very creepy soundtrack including a metallic ripping sound to simulate the rivets breaking loose in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. There was also a floating thing with a twirly light that went round and round.

After checking the calendar, Marilyn and Libby realized that the 2002 summer had special meaning for them — but kept the media guessing. By Robert Sarnar

It’s one thing to be at Tamakwa long enough to enter the exclusive Bar Mitzvah-club — no small feat, actually. But it’s another thing altogether to celebrate being at camp for 30 years. This summer, two Tamakwa women, both pillars of camp life, marked this rare milestone with little fanfare. Just think of all the camp food they’ve had to consume all those years.

After three decades on South Tea, Marilyn Mendelson and Libby Sadick von Neumann have earned their bragging rights. Truth is both are too modest to want to draw attention to themselves. That’s where I come in.

I twisted their arms, I begged them, I threatened them. I appealed to their spin-doctors, I promised obscene amounts of money if only they would agree to speak to the South Tea Echo on the occasion of their historic year. Finally, they could take it no more and relented. Their only condition: that the interview be limited to ten questions.

Given their prominence at camp, Marilyn and Libby need little introduction. But for the record, and for those readers new to Tamakwa, Marilyn is the Assistant Director who first began working at camp in 1969 as a secretary before becoming CIT Director and then Assistant Camp Director. In the early 1980s, she received several years off for good behavior. A Detroit native, she returned to Tamakwa in 1986 as Assistant Director and since then, whether at camp during the summer or in the Michigan office during the off-season, Marilyn is indispensable to the running of Tamakwa.

Originally from Trenton, Michigan, Libby first came to Tamakwa in 1973 as a camper following the lead of her brother Bill and sister Sue and has spent every summer here ever since. As a staff member, Libby has held virtually every position at camp short of being camp director. She has been a counselor, selection head, tripper, tripping director, photographer, boat driver, gopher, maintenance assistant and even helped run the kitchen one summer. No less important, she was also a secretary of the Beaver Council. This year in addition to being Pioneer Section Head, Libby prepared the slide show based mostly on her photos, many of which she also supplied to the Tamakwa web site and the South Tea Echo.

Camp would not be the same without Marilyn and Libby. Their tireless devotion to Tamakwa, both its campers and staff and to the site itself, are so intrinsically linked to the heart and soul of Tamakwa.

After yielding to the enormous pressure from the South Tea Echo, Marilyn and Libby separately answered the following 10 questions.

By ROBERT SARNER
In truth, it's been a long time since living at Tamakwa does that for you. Be- about the Senior Counselor. for Candi but we really didn't care
sessed children in that cabin. One
sor of skills I would not have
days, it's a good feeling. It means
've been fun. You meet new people
that makes sense. And I love being in
is so rationalistic at camp. Everything
you and everyone who are campers did at camp and what we're doing with them.
more activities, more trips and more
about them never knew before. That's a
te to say, I helped them get over that bad
t to Tamakwa? Marilyn: 
's so ritualistic at camp.
the help of Roger Brown
called it Woodstock Day. It was an all-day program created in about 20 minutes
with the help of Roger Brown and Ed Saches. Ron Sherman was also involved. He played the doctor
anging and laughing a lot. Both the campers
what Tamakwa is actually Lou's last. I remember his way with children, his love of this place and his strong
deeply rooted. In 1985, with the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. The Bar or Bat Mitzvah, symbolizing the transition from childhood into early adulthood.

Marilyn: How to cope while living with 400 other people. Be-
ing and escargots. My favorite regular
happened amid such beauty. The people, and all

Libby: Besides Rest Hour, which is self-explanatory, I love Twilight, free-play just after dinner. As a camper and staff member, it's literally free play, your time, your half-hour or however long it is to do your own thing. I've had some very intense conversations at that time with campers and staff because people are less rushed then. It's a nice time of day. What does it mean to you to be a Tamakwan? Marilyn: Give me another summer to think about that one.

Libby: At this point, my parents think it's all a bit much. Seriously, that's a tough question. On most days, it's a good feeling. It means enjoying nature and learning all sorts of skills I would not have learned in the city. It also means that as a staff member, and even as a camper, helping that one per-

"It really meant a lot to me that my family could see how Tamakwa has such a special pres-
sence in my life," says Lesley Bishin, about this summer's cer-
manship. It was important that they could be at the Slope and see camp

Every summer has its highlights. In 1974, I was in 49er-1 and Candi Sherman was my counselor. We loved Candi but we could have argued with her about the Senior Counselor. We were in the old Opeongo, which was a “possessed” cabin, and we were possessed children in that cabin. One night while they were gone, we hopped over the Counselors’ quarters wall, locked the door from the inside, and proceeded to toilet paper the hell out of their quarters. Then we hopped back over the wall so when they got back to the cabin, they couldn’t get in to their room. It was a riot. We felt badly about the Senior Counselor.

Libby: My playing the violin. Uncle Lou’s passion was his violin. He didn’t play it well but it was just a pleasure to watch him enjoy trying to play it. He played it several times during the summer and would make the children listen, “make” being the key word.

Libby: My first summer at Tamakwa was actually Lou’s last. I remember his way with children, his love of this place and his strong desire for everyone to have the Tamakwa experience and appreciate the outdoors. I miss the box- ring ring. Thanks to Lou, I learned how to box at camp and the im-
morale of self-defense. Your favorite time of day at camp? Marilyn: Between 6 and 8 o’clock in the morning. It’s a quiet and tranquil time. The serenity of the world at camp is sleeping and the lake is so peaceful and pretty at that hour.

Libby: It’s the best way to spend a summer, that’s for sure. It was very intense. Bottom line: It’s always fun. You meet new people and make new friends. Every summer is different yet the same, that makes sense. And I love being in Algonquin.

What is your favorite aspect of Algonquin Park? Marilyn: Let’s put it this way. Tamakwa is probably the only as-
pect of Algonquin Park that I re-
ally know. During the summer, I don’t get to leave camp very of-
t. But it’s really pretty here.

Libby: Just the Park itself – the woods, the trees, the lakes, the history of it, everything. It’s a wonderful place. Just being able to go around the Park in a canoe and not see a vehicle for days. There are very few places left on earth where that can happen amid such beauty.

What is your favorite food at camp? Marilyn: My favorite staff dining room food is fresh salmon and escargots. My favorite regular camp food is a barbecued hot dog, which is my dinner every day.

Libby: I don’t have to say it here. It’s always just right and if you’re feeling really good you’ll have a lot of Popsicles than back then.

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The one and only

Living legend Ada Bandalene and her incredible exuberance and love for Tamakwa make the summer complete. By ROBERT SARNER

Ada Bandalene has a way with Tamakwas – a special touch that has long earned her their respect and affection. Few people can trigger the enthusiasm from campers and staff that Ada does. This year, like most summers since 1949, Ada was at camp. Though not here for long, she quickly captured everyone’s hearts through her various activities and warm, lively presence.

Whether it was in the Dining Hall, at Main Camp or on The Slope, Ada often led the camp in a rousing chorus of singing, cheering, dancing or exercises during her 8-day stay. Every morning before breakfast, Ada conducted her trademark Walk and Talk tours of Tamakwa, the workshop provides 10 new songs and then assisted them in rehearsing the songs for an evening performance that was as memorable as it was melodious.

For all the pleasure campers have learning at the hands of a pro, Amy says she too is a winner in the process. “It’s amazing what I learn’, and that is absolutely true at camp.”

Amy derives satisfaction from the songwriting workshop on several levels. “When I’m at Tamakwa, the workshop provides a window into the minds of campers,” says Amy, whose daughter Zoe was a Pioneer camper this year, has lots of links to Tamakwa. Her mother, Sandra Shiner was Swim Director in the 1950s, as were Amy’s sister and brother in the 1970s and 80s. Amy first came to Tamakwa in 1975 when she worked as a babysitter for then musical and drama directors Paul and Estelle Steinhauer.

Amy said several participants noticed in previous years. She plays an important role in the musical workshop. Since she first introduced the program to Tamakwa three years ago, it has proved increasingly popular. This time, Amy helped various cabins and staffers write 10 new songs and then assisted them in rehearsals.

T

here’s something about campers and staff joining in a song that makes everybody feel so nice and warm all over. No more so than when the songs are original ones written at camp and performed in such ear-pleasing harmony under the direction of Amy Sky.

In July, Amy took time away from her career as a successful Toronto-based singer/songwriter to come to camp to lead a 4-day musical workshop. Since she first introduced the program to Tamakwa three years ago, it has proved increasingly popular. This time, Amy helped various cabins and staffers write 10 new songs and then assisted them in rehearsing the songs for an evening performance that was as memorable as it was melodious.

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She did not return until 1996 when Dave Bale asked her and her husband Marc Jordan, also an accomplished singer/songwriter, to put on a concert for the entire camp. The concerts eventually led to Amy’s songwriting workshop and performance, which has now become an annual fixture on the camp’s programming schedule. It is a recent Tamakwa tradition, one that we hope will continue well into the future.

Amy Sky. A gifted performer.

Raising their voices: Campers join Amy Sky in a memorable evening concert that was the culmination of the 4-day songwriting/musical workshop she conducted at Tamakwa in mid-July.
A decade down the road

Film director Mike Binder revisits Tamakwa and discovers that ten years later Indian Summer’s impact on camp lives on.

By Julie Eisen

As anniversaries go, it’s admittedly not the biggest one taken on the 2002 Tamakwa calendar. Still, several people at camp noted that August marked exactly 10 years since a troupe of Hollywood actors, technicians and assorted hangers-on disembarked on the shores of South Tea to make Indian Summer.

A decade later, not only does the movie live on in video rental stores around the world but there are also still many traces at camp of what the left-behind characters did in October 1992 after two months of filming.

The JYO’s tour began at Tamakwa and will conclude in Bonita lakeside. In between, it included Montebello, in the Eastern Townships of Quebec, and Algonquin Park – the site of Tamakwa – for a final concert. With concerts in Algonquin and Montebello, the JYO’s 37 members performed at venues both familiar and foreign to them.

The audience was unusually silent during the concerts. Veteran staff members, who conferred with their part.

BY ROBERT SARNER

A decade ago, when donning a felt hat and a pair of sunglasses, Mike Binder showed up at Tamakwa to start filming his first feature-length movie, Indian Summer. Arcady, a young American at his summer camp's summer camp, and his friend, a young Israeli girl, set out to find an ancient Iroquois burial ground to make Arcady a more developed character. The movie, shot in a few weeks, starred Sarah Polley and Ben Stiller.

With Arcady's help, the movie was finally completed and released in 1993. It was nominated for an Academy Award and became a cult classic. However, the movie had a controversial impact on real-life Tamakwa.

Tamakwa's staff and campers were both thrilled and concerned that the movie would change what they knew and loved about their camp. They were especially concerned that the movie would make them appear as stereotypical and offensive.

The camp decided to launch a campaign to raise awareness about their camp's true history and culture. They organized a movie screening at the camp and invited the movie's director, Mike Binder, to speak at the event. Binder was moved by the turnout and the camp's strong stance on identity.

Over the years, Tamakwa has continued to grow and evolve, embracing its diversity and celebrating the traditions of its many cultures. The camp has hosted a variety of events, including cultural festivals, musical performances, and educational programs. Tamakwa has remained a place of learning and growth for all who visit, and the campers continue to be a source of inspiration and pride for the wider community.

A decade down the road, Tamakwa is still standing strong, with a vibrant community and a strong commitment to its values and traditions. The film's impact may have been controversial, but it has also served to strengthen Tamakwa's identity and its place in the world.
N othing beats good neighbors, especially when they are Tamakwa alumni. Although their days at camp ended long ago, they are never far from South Tea in their hearts. When summer comes, it’s not just in their hearts.

Collectively, they spent decades at Tamakwa and that’s where their love affair with Algonquin Park began. That passion never ended as they have spent most of their adult summers at cabins and cottages in the Park. We’re glad they’ve stayed by and amenable to their continuing support of camp and warm friendship.

In August, many of these Tamakwa alumni and Algonquin aficionados got together at Bonita to share some old tales over dinner. It was a first-class reunion. From left to right in the photo below they are:

GERRY “HERK” COOPER

In the most Algonquin introduction possible at Tamakwa, Herk’s first summer at camp was as a tripper in 1963. His last year at camp was in 1969 and by then he was incurably hooked on the area. In the mid-1970s, he started coming regularly again to the Park, staying at a friend’s cabin until 1987 when he acquired a cabin on Smoke Lake.

“The Park was always a real refuge for me,” says Herk, 58, a lawyer in Toronto. “The ambiance, the canoe tripping, everything about it struck a chord in me. Unca Lou was definitely influential. In 1964, when I was a Swim Director, he made a special effort to take me with him when he went to visit various places in the Park. He knew and understood that I was interested in the Park and he encouraged me.” Herk’s son Mark was a tripper at Tamakwa this summer while his daughter Rebecca was CIT director.

MICHAEL BUDMAN

Michael spent 13 summers on South Tea, starting in 1956 as a Forester camper and ending his Tamakwa career as a section head in 1969. “Being at Tamakwa was one of the most important things that ever happened to me,” says Michael, 56, co-owner of Roots. “I really loved it but when my time was up then it became more of a love affair with Algonquin Park.”

In 1968, on a tip from Unca Lou, Michael bought a small cabin on the eastern shore of Smoke Lake, which is still his home away from home in the summer. In 1996, Michael and his partner Don Green acquired a lease on nearby Bonita Lake and created a guest facility that they often make available to Tamakwa for camp functions. This summer, Michael’s son Matthew and daughter Alex were both at Tamakwa.

BERNIE GOLDMAN

As a Forester counselor in his second summer at Tamakwa in 1956, one of Bernie’s campers was a 10-year-old from Detroit. His name was Michael Budman. Thirteen years later, Michael played a key role in helping Bernie get his own cabin on Smoke Lake. “After I was at Tamakwa, I could not get Algonquin out of my system,” says Bernie, 66, a top-cardiac surgeon in Toronto. “I was determined to keep spending my summers up there and thanks to my cabin I’m still in Algonquin every year.” Bernie spent four summers at a Tamakwa staff member in the 1950s before returning as the camp’s doctor for a few seasons in the early 1960s.

RENAH BARDENSTEIN

Along with her husband Max, Renah has a strong affinity for Algonquin Park. She was only at Tamakwa for two summers (a pianist and counselor in 1950 and 51) but it was enough to kindle a lifelong passion for the area. “Before coming to Tamakwa, I had never been to a place like Algonquin Park,” says Renah, 71, a former piano teacher and the mother of four. “The area is so beautiful, so special, almost mystical, that it gets into your system and you just want to keep coming back here.” Since Renah and Max built their cabin in 1968 next to Unca Lou’s former cabin on the Oxtongue Channel, they have spent all of their summers close to Tamakwa, and are frequent visitors to camp.

MAX BARDENSTEIN

Of all of Tamakwa’s neighbors, Max can say his history in the area goes back the farthest. He first came to South Tea in 1947 when he worked as Land Sports Director. He returned in 1949 as a section head and in 1950 and 1951 he was co-Head Counselor. “I fell in love with the Park from the first day that I saw it in 1947,” says Max, 74, a retired orthopedic surgeon in Detroit. “One of the things that stood out on staff was that I was not sure how to deal with one day have our place in the Park.” He finally realized his dream in 1968 when Unca Lou offered Max and his wife a place for a cabin near his on the Oxtongue Channel not far from camp. To this day, Max and Renah spend their summers there and often visit camp to say hello.

GARY TAUERK

Starting in 1965 when he was a CIT until 1969 when he was a tripper, Gary spent five consecutive summers at Tamakwa. It would be another 20 years before Gary was to have a summer base again in Algonquin Park. In 1989, he bought a cabin on Smoke Lake where he still spends as much time as possible with his family.

“Tamakwa played a seminal role in my love for the Park,” says Gary, 53, a psychiatrist in Toronto. “Being in Algonquin is a state of mind. It also brings back memories of a special time in my life. Being up here helps perpetuate and nurture those positive feelings. I am thankful to have been able to introduce my wife and children to Algonquin.” This summer, Gary’s son Evan was a tripper at Tamakwa.

DON GREEN

Little did Don know when he was a camper at Tamakwa in 1963 and 1964, that it and Algonquin Park would eventually lead him to leave his native Detroit and move to Canada for good. A dream summer job as Water Boy for the Detroit Lions kept Don away from camp until 1969 when he worked on the water skiing staff. For the next 12 years, he spent summers at Smoke Lake with his friend and future partner Michael Budman at the latter’s cabin. That’s where they laid the groundwork for Roots in 1973. In 1987, after renting a place for several years in the area, Don and his family bought their current cabin on Smoke Lake.

“I really fell in love with Algonquin Park and nature in 1969,” says Don, 53. “Since then, Algonquin has played an important part in my development, leading to many good things. There is a very strong connection between Tamakwa, Algonquin, Roots and my life.” This summer, Don’s daughters Sophie and Deeva were at Tamakwa, the first as a counselor, the second as a camper.

* * * * *

Absent from the photo but also present in the neighborhood:

Charles “Husky” Tator and Carol Tator met at Tamakwa, eventually married and raised three children who went to Tamakwa. They have a cabin on Smoke Lake next to Bernie and Fran Goldman and visit camp every summer. Husky, 65, a top neurosurgeon in Toronto, worked as a counselor and section head in 1956-58 and then returned in 1966 as camp doctor. Carol, 62, a race relations consultant and professor in Toronto, began her Tamakwa career as a camper in 1949, the first season Tamakwa accepted female campers), and spent the next three decades on South Tea before retiring with the rank of senior counselor.

“My love of Tamakwa was transferred to my love for my wife and together we have loved the Park ever since,” says Husky.
D’oh, Raimi

From Ranger 1 to Hollywood, Tamakwa alumnus Sam Raimi – like Spider-Man – scales new heights. By DAVE BALE

When Sam Raimi was a camper at Tamakwa 30 years ago, he had his counselors climbing the walls. Now he has done the same thing counselors climbing the walls. You’ve probably seen it. If so, did you notice the familiar beaver-cutting-wood emblem up there on the silver screen? You don’t have to look too hard to spot the Tamakwa sweatshirt in Peter Parker’s pad. (Hint: in true Tamakwa camper tradition, look on the floor. The scene must’ve been shot before cabin cleanup.)

A Tamakwa prop hidden somewhere in his pictures is Sam’s way of “winking” to all his Tamakwa alumni – Ivan who co-writes with Sam, and Tamakwa alumnus – Ivan who co-writes with Sam, and Tamakwa alumni – Ivan who co-writes with Sam, and Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam. (Hint: in true Tamakwa tradition, look on the floor. The scene must’ve been shot before cabin cleanup.)

I magine being at camp and you’re allowed to drink pop and eat candy anytime you want. Every period is individual choice... or you can just have a 2-machine picture. You phone booths are open and you can call your parents or whoever you want. There’s campfire every night. No ETBs. No cabin cleanup. No need to wake up early for a morning run. It’s just for adults – Tamakwa alumni and friends of alumni.

After camp, 80 of these lucky folks reunited on the shores of South Tea for the third year in the revival of this post-season ritual. Post Camp started in the early 60s when a group of loyal alumni convinced “Uncle” Lou Handler to let them spend a few days at camp in late August reliving their childhood. Post Camp is a yearly reunion and a display of Northern Lights put on their edges of our log seats. Now, he does the same for mass appeal. The only difference is, now the darkened movie theatre is his campsite – and the seats are more comfortable.

For some, Tamakwa memories seem like a lifetime ago...until you think it’s quiet when the campers and staff leave Tamakwa in late August, you’re right, it is very quiet. But not for long.

When the leaves start changing, colours, the bugs are gone, and the Northern Lights put on their best show. That’s September, one of the finest times to be in Algonquin. Tamakwa’s doors are still open to groups that rent the facility. We’ve done it all: school groups, recreational clubs, conferences, corporate retreats, and even weddings.

After our annual alumni Post Camp, Tamakwa has become a home for so many more people. For Love of the Game, that family business included waking up early for a morning run, aZing in front of a crackling fire in the dining hall buffet, entertaining a gallery of campers and staff... But the shows are over. Time’s up. The Tamakwa spirit. Tamakwa alumni – Ivan who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam. (Hint: in true Tamakwa tradition, look on the floor. The scene must’ve been shot before cabin cleanup.)

They're at the Post...

They’re off! Post Camp that is, home to the real-life Tamakwa. By CRAIG PERLMUTTER

Post Camp organizers Craig Perlmutter and Matt Egrin rain in for the camera. everyone knows, it never wanes at Tamakwa. So, Matt Egrin and I decided to see if we could bring it back. Sure enough, we found lots of interest among Tamakwa alumni for a return of Post Camp.

“Post Camp was a truly wonderful experience,” says Linda Kahan. “It had been 25 years since I had last been to camp and the emotions I felt when we rounded the bend and Tamakwa came into my sight were unbelievable.”

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If you think watching 6-hour marvels of cinema is beautiful, it’s even more beautiful at Tamakwa and now you can still enjoy the seats are more comfortable.

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For some, Tamakwa memories seem like a lifetime ago...until you think it’s quiet when the campers and staff leave Tamakwa in late August, you’re right, it is very quiet. But not for long.

When the leaves start changing, colours, the bugs are gone, and the Northern Lights put on their best show. That’s September, one of the finest times to be in Algonquin. Tamakwa’s doors are still open to groups that rent the facility. We’ve done it all: school groups, recreational clubs, conferences, corporate retreats, and even weddings.

After our annual alumni Post Camp, Tamakwa has become a home for so many more people. For Love of the Game, that family business included waking up early for a morning run, aZing in front of a crackling fire in the dining hall buffet, entertaining a gallery of campers and staff... But the shows are over. Time’s up. The Tamakwa spirit. Tamakwa alumni – Ivan who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam, Tamakwa alumni who co-writes with Sam. (Hint: in true Tamakwa tradition, look on the floor. The scene must’ve been shot before cabin cleanup.)

If you think watching 6-hour marvels of cinema is beautiful, it’s even more beautiful at Tamakwa and now you can still enjoy the seats are more comfortable.
S
stroke, paddle, paddle, paddle, stroke, paddle, paddle... These words are all too familiar at Tamakwa whose strong emphasis on canoe-tripping is legendary. The camp’s location in Algonquin Park is ideal for a great trip to be a program, allowing it to send out trips right from its own shores. Campers spend all of their time tripping as opposed to spending hours traveling to a put-in point and later from their destination back to camp.

“We are so lucky to be in the Par,” says veteran Tripping Director Len Giblin.

“We don’t have to spend extra travel days in a bus or van like many other camps because the park is our back door.”

This summer, Tamakwa had its biggest tripping staff ever, with 14 trippers and four trippers-in-training. They were kept busy, accompanying more than 100 cabin trips and 13 long trips.

“Three of the highlights of the tripping program is its staff because so many are Tamakwans who have come up through the ranks over the years,” adds Len. “This reflects how successful the program is, producing our own staff and not having to look elsewhere.”

Fourth-year tripper Mark Cooper is nothing if not passionate about going into the bush. “As a camper I never had a bad time on a trip, so I knew that tripping was the right job for me at Tamakwa,” says Mark, who has gone on more than 240 tripping days to date and whose father, Gerry, was a Tamakwa tripping director in the 1960s.

“Tripping usually makes or breaks a camper’s summer,” adds Mark. “I’d like to think I have helped make many campers’ summers by showing them a good time on a trip.”

At Tamakwa, tripping is mandatory for campers. “Canoe trips encompass so many of the broader goals of camping,” says Len. “These include teamwork, functioning in peer groups, completing a challenge, spending time with friends and doing something totally different from other activities done at school or cottages.”

This summer, many campers were eager to tackle something more challenging than regular cabin trips. As a result, the four 15-day, five 13-day and four 10-day trips attracted more participants than ever.

Len said he hopes to send out 18-day trips in the future. To that end, first-year 49ers and Voyagers will go on 13-day trips. Junior-senior campers will go on 15-day trips and senior campers will head out for 18 days. This summer the senior campers did not have previous experience of a 15-day trip, so the 18-day trip did not take place.

To gain the coveted position of camper or staff on a long trip, Len and other head staff go over prior trip evaluations. These include comments on camp members’ paddling and portaging ability, enthusiasm, site skills and how the prospective candidate gets along with others on a trip.

The fortunate ones who get the chance to participate can’t stop raving about their experiences after returning from their sojourn in the wilderness. “I learned the experience of carrying a canoe, portage after portage uphill in the moonlight dreading heat with man-hungry bugs,” says two-time 13-day staff participant Gaëlleine Beckerman. “Where else can you get that kind of crazy challenge?”

First-year Voyagers Jason Orley was equally enthusiastic about long trips. “They are like nothing else,” says Jason. “They are fun, the food is awesome and they let me get away for awhile, just me and a few other people. It’s a lot quieter and it tests your abilities.”

These two lovers of tripping summed up the goal of Tamakwa tripping – fun, camaraderie and challenge for the beautiful Algonquin wild.

**Masters of the canoe**

It’s hard to make the grade when vying for the camp’s most prestigious award. In 2002 several succeeded. By Kyle Stone

A
s a newcomer to Tamakwa this summer, it quickly became apparent that this is a place rich in hallowed customs and cherished traditions. Of these, one of the most treasured – and especially meaningful to me – is the Voyeur Canoist award.

For a camp so steeped in Algonquin Park tradition, canoeing has pride of place at Tamakwa, reflecting its origins in the 1930s. Without canoeing and canoe trips, Tamakwa would not be Tamakwa.

To help campers and staff master canoe manoeuvres and to achieve superior canoe knowledge, Tamakwa’s Founding Fathers initiated the Voyeur Canoist test, which, 65 years later, still commands the highest prestige of all such awards at camp.

The Voyeur test dates back to the days when one could find master canoeist and Tamakwa co-founder, Omer Stringer, on the shores of South Tea. Since then, the exact requirements for the award have evolved somewhat, but the basic goal remains the same: to move the canoe showing grace, style and strength while also demonstrating a sound knowledge of canoe theory.

To maintain the high standard and strong sense of challenge behind the test, the panel of judges is comprised of previous recipients of the Voyeur award. “The objective is to move the canoe showing a sense of dominance over the water and the elements,” says Senior Director Vic Norris, himself a Voyeur Canoist and therefore also one of the judges.

When the 2002 summer began, only five people at camp – in addition to Vic – were Voyeur Canoists: Brandon Alexandroff, Leslie Bishin, Max Cherney, Dara Gallinger and Amy Sacks. In subsequent weeks, the club expanded to include three newcomers: Michael Katchen, a 14-year-old camper; Jon Klein, a counsellor; and yours truly. For me, it was beyond a doubt one of the top highlights of the summer.

Likewise for Michael Katchen, attaining the award was an extraordinary achievement, especially at his age. “Becoming a Voyeur canoeist was unquestionably the pinnacle of all my Tamakwa experiences,” says Michael. “That says a lot given all the other great moments I’ve had at camp.”

Nothing beats the thrill and satisfaction from working hard to achieve one’s goal – and joining a distinguished Tamakwa tradition.