

South Tea Echo



THE VOICE OF CAMP TAMAKWA • ALGONQUIN PARK



- The *South Tea Echo* celebrates its first decade
- String training: Campers strum away to euphoria
- What Tamakwans want to be when they grow up
- Who are the most hilarious people at camp?
- Between dreams and reality: The day after
- Kermit, Fozzie and Co. beef up Tamakwa staff
- Women in the wild: A male canoe tripper tells the tale
- Standing tall: Seeing the trees for the forest at camp
- Sending a South Tea neighbour off to Olympic glory
- Culinary bliss in the bush: Canoe trip dining at its best

THE BEST OF SUMMER 2012



EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT

The Echo celebrates its 10th anniversary

In the first issue of the *South Tea Echo* in 2002, the first sentence in my column reads, “When Robert Sarner proposed a name for this newspaper, the *South Tea Echo*, we said, “Could you please repeat that?” That year, Robert (affectionately known by many as “Robaire”) and his entire family spent their first summer at Tamakwa, far from their then home in Jerusalem.

One evening early that summer, he witnessed the reverberating echoes during Tamakwa’s famed Woof Woof cheer by the entire camp on the Slope. Impressed by the experience, it inspired him on what to call the camp newspaper he sought to publish – the *South Tea Echo*. The idea of an annual camp newspaper bringing to life the stories, events and personalities of each summer was well received by me and then Senior Director Dave Bale (a professional journalist in his own right as is Robaire.)

In the ensuing decade, the *Echo* has joined the ranks of Tamakwa’s many revered traditions. I can’t say we predicted the *Echo* would endure the test of time or so fully capture the essence of camp in its pages. But it has, and then some. Through an incredible array of articles, its coverage vividly reflects not only each summer, but also explores time-honoured traditions and historical Tamakwans, some dating back to the camp’s early days in the 1930s.

After I decided to devote this year’s column to the *Echo*’s 10th anniversary, Robert suggested I peruse the previous nine issues. Not only did I read them, I was so captivated and enamored with them

that I framed them. Indeed, they will adorn a wall in the camp Dining Hall or some other special place at Tamakwa for the ages.

The *Echo*’s appeal has proven broader than I first expected. Initially, I envisioned each issue would resonate only with those Tamakwans who were at camp during the summer featured in a particular issue. Interestingly, the *Echo* has also reconnected 77 years of alumni who often tell us how much they enjoy receiving the paper each year. It has enabled Tamakwans everywhere to relive their own memories, fascinated by the myriad articles, including those that delve into Tamakwa’s history and many “ageless” stories. An added bonus: it’s also proven a great introduction to camp for new families and staff members.

Indeed, while we were confident the *Echo* would be another great Tamakwa “schtick,” it has become a very professional, polished newspaper that engages the thousands of campers and staff who have plenty of Tamakwa DNA left in their system, who often tell us their “Tamakwa summers were the happiest days of their lives.”

It’s uncanny how Robert, for a decade, has been able to uncover a hidden goldmine of stories, and subjects about Tamakwa and even “taken-for-granted-routines” of camp life and develop a colourful story about even the most obscure points of interest at Tamakwa. Especially in the early years, many brainstorming sessions took place in the Directors’ office at camp, resulting in a list of suggested article topics by Robert, followed by articles he’d write and place on the Directors’ desk. Invariably, it evoked the same reaction from myself, Dave, or Craig, being, “Wow, I never thought of it that way.”

On behalf of now four generations of Tamakwans (that’s right, 7-year-old Caitlin Hillman, will be Tamakwa’s first fourth generation camper this summer), I wish to thank Robert for creating a spectacular keepsake for all Tamakwans everywhere for 10 years running. He has somehow overcome countless challenges and a minimal budget to produce this incredible showcase of camp life.

The *Echo* continues



Editor and Project Manager
ROBERT SARNER
Design/Production
OLEG LEIKIN
Photography
LIBBY SADICK VON NEUMANN
Senior Director
VIC NORRIS
Camp Director
CRAIG PERLMUTTER
Associate Director
DAVID STRINGER

The *South Tea Echo* is published every year by Camp Tamakwa. Summer Address: P.O. Box 10008, Huntsville, Ontario, Canada P1H 2H3. Tel: (705) 633-5561. Michigan: 1760 South Telegraph, Suite 300, Bloomfield Hills, MI. 48302-0183. Tel: (248) 335-6400. Fax: (248) 335-2540. Toronto: 161 Eglinton Ave. East, Suite 501, Toronto, Ontario M4P 1J5. Tel: (416) 924-7433. Fax: (416) 924-5822. Email: howhow@tamakwa.com www.tamakwa.com

All issues of the South Tea Echo are available at www.tamakwa.com/archives



- ISSUE 1 - 2002**
- Democracy in action, camp style
 - Voyageur canoeists paddle to glory
 - *Indian Summer* 10 years later
 - Jerusalem orchestra performs on the Slope
 - Tamakwa’s leading role in Spiderman film
 - Libby, Marilyn and Stringer mark camp milestones
 - All quiet on the nocturnal front with Fiddes
 - Ada B. returns to Tamakwa
 - Former Tamakwans stay in the ‘hood
 - Earning camp’s most prestigious award



- ISSUE 3 - 2004**
- Romance on the Slope
 - Moose stew anyone? A Scot’s take on camp cuisine
 - Les Hartsman makes history
 - Unca Lou’s legacy 30 years after his passing
 - Campers’ favourite places at camp
 - The definitive guide to Tamakwa traditions
 - Craig becomes new Director/Co-owner of camp
 - Former Tamakwans take over Hollywood
 - You can’t stop the Green Machine
 - Quotes from summer 2004



- ISSUE 5 - 2006**
- Getting fit proves a hit at Tamakwa
 - New camp landmark gets a name
 - The big M factor: Margot takes over from Marilyn
 - A man named Jeff: In praise of Mr. Personality Plus
 - Heard in Main Camp: Choosing the highlights of ‘06
 - Getting around: Tamakwa in the fast lane
 - Stepping up: Doing camp proud in intercamps
 - Why did Unca Lou name camp ‘Tamakwa’?
 - Saluting camp’s most versatile and dedicated staffer



- ISSUE 7 - 2009**
- All the news that fits... on a biffy wall
 - Mr. Schelberg-Miller solves it all
 - Pranks for the memories
 - Live from South Tea Lake, it’s... Saturday Night Live
 - Triplets break new ground at camp
 - Franchi gets above it all
 - New look at Dining Hall plaques
 - Celebrating 60th anniversary of the arrival of girl campers
 - The making of a pointer boat
 - Maiden voyage: A staffer’s first-ever canoe trip



- ISSUE 9 - 2011**
- A star is born: Wally, the new camp mascot
 - Son of Sam: Staffer obsesses over Mr. Raimi
 - Camp in motion: Tamakwa hosts first flash mob
 - World exclusive: Ken Elder speaks!
 - Finding the way: New tripper shines
 - Searching for Wakonda
 - Does technology have a place at Tamakwa?
 - Cracking up: Campers’ funniest moments
 - Model behaviour: Camp’s most ubiquitous staffer



- ISSUE 2 - 2003**
- Rookie staffer bikes 875 km to camp
 - Caught in the act: Kitchen raid exposed!
 - Baffled by the biffies and other camp enigmas
 - How Vic Norris got his start at Tamakwa
 - Pioneer girls join in Algonquin Park birthday
 - New Tamakwans come from abroad
 - First 18-day canoe trips break new ground
 - Listen up! Sounds of camp captured in print
 - Making waves with Tamakwa’s flotilla



- ISSUE 4 - 2005**
- Celebrating the venerable Tuck Shop
 - The 70 best Tamakwa memories of all time
 - New landmarks enhance camp skyline
 - The journey and the destination: Driving to Tamakwa
 - Behind the scenes of the camp nerve center
 - Up north, from down under: Aussie discovers camp
 - Names that shtick: Guide to camp nicknames
 - Surviving the annual Survivor Challenge
 - Cool it! When camp heats up



- ISSUE 6 - 2008**
- The littlest Tamakwan’s big presence
 - Inside camp’s new recording studio
 - Barnes brothers win over camp with their voices
 - Adam van Koeverden’s right stuff at camp
 - How much of Tamakwa is timeless?
 - Justice for all in People’s Court
 - Tamakwa makes nautical history
 - The dirt on camp laundry
 - WW2 letters between Lou and Omer



- ISSUE 8 - 2010**
- Protesting campers take to the barricades
 - Tuff Beavers win big over Taylor Statten
 - Tastes good: Foreign flair in the kitchen
 - Vic Norris reflects on his multiple milestones
 - Fact vs. fiction with Temagami trip
 - Campers on lessons learned at Tamakwa
 - Confessions of an incurable camp doctor
 - Order on the court: New volleyball facility makes impact
 - Campers expound on their favourite wildlife at camp



- ISSUE 10 - 2012**
- String training: Campers strum away to euphoria
 - What Tamakwans want to be when they grow up
 - Who are the most hilarious people at camp?
 - Women in the wild: A male canoe tripper tells the tale
 - Standing tall: Seeing the trees for the forest at camp
 - Canoe trip dining at its best
 - The greening of Tamakwa
 - When the winds of change blow heavy
 - Making tracks on Girls Hill
 - More than meets the eye: Camp as a year-round gig

to bond the extended Tamakwa community as each issue exudes the feel, the smell, the touch, the schticks, and magic of Tamakwa. Its entertaining, informative articles captivate all of us, reinforcing what we all know... that Camp Tamakwa remains ageless.

On the visual side, every issue has been enhanced immeasurably by the magnificent colour pictures taken by our multi-faceted and talented resident photographer extraordinaire, Libby Sadick von Neumann. Many thanks as well to Dave Bale and Craig Perlmutter for their many

contributions to the *Echo* and to the various graphic artists who’ve worked on the paper over the years.

Finally, I want to thank not only all campers and staff who have contributed articles, ideas, and quotes for 10 years running, making this milestone possible, but I also extend a huge

How How and thank you to all Tamakwa parents, campers, and staff for creating such great memories during this last decade. Like everything at camp, reading the *Echo* is pure fun. We hope you enjoy this 10th anniversary issue!
Vic Norris
Senior Director



THE SUMMER AT A GLANCE

A selective listing of the many major events and other main highlights that took place at camp in 2012

JUNE

- 20 Wed. – Head Staff Arrive for Pre-Pre-Pre-Camp
- 23 Sat. – Activity Leaders and Trip Staff arrive for Pre-Pre-Camp; Ice-Breakers
- 24 Sun. – Activity Leaders Schooner Soiree
- 25 Mon. – Activity Leaders Procedures Sessions, Trippers' Trip departure
- 26 Tues. – Staff arrive for Pre-Camp; Ice-Breakers
- 27 Wed. – Staff White Caps, Safety Training, Trippers' Trip returns, Sports Twilight, Tamakwa's Most Extreme Elimination Challenge Evening Program
- 28 Thurs. – Morning Fitness Class; First-Aid Training; Baggage; Shore Lunch; Canoe Trip Skills Session; Directors' Block Party evening program
- 29 Fri. – Cabin assignments; Emergency drills training; Ropes course training begins; Staff Night Out at the Portage Store
- 30 Sat. – Morning fitness class; Programming sessions; All-staff paddle after dinner; Staff Show; Section campfires

JULY

- 1 Sun. – July session campers arrive; Cabin Night
- 2 Mon. – Lice checks; White Caps; Jordan Wagman Presents: Out of the Box Canoe Trip Food; Block schedule; Canoe Regatta/Ball-derdash/Parachute Games
- 3 Tues. – Block schedule; Additional White Caps; Beaver Council elections; Staff Show
- 4 Wed. – Individual Choice begins; Can/Am softball game; Ballfield lunch; Muppet Clue evening program
- 5 Thurs. – Voyageur cookout; Floating Lunch, Ranger BBQ, Caveman evening program
- 6 Fri. – Waterfront afternoon; Algonquin Park alumni and neighbours Friday night dinner; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs; Camp-wide campfire
- 7 Sat. – Decades Theme Day; Decade skits evening program
- 8 Sun. – JT Triathlon, Section Night
- 9 Mon. – Of Mice and Tamakwans all-day program; Creatives Presented as evening program
- 10 Tues. – Outdoor Fun hikes; U12 Intercamp at Camp Manitou
- 11 Wed. – Buffet brunch; 15-day canoe trips depart; JT overnights depart; Cabin cookouts; Camp-wide campfire
- 12 Thurs. – JT overnights return; CIT Fear Factor evening program
- 13 Fri. – Tamakwa Teaser Day; U16 basketball tournament at Camp Northland; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs; Camp-wide campfire
- 14 Sat. – Individual Choice periods; Camp musical: Cinderella
- 15 Sun. – U16 Intercamp at Camp Walden; JT changeover; Cabin Night
- 16 Mon. – Buffet brunch; Cabin cookouts; Camp-wide campfire
- 17 Tues. – U16 Intercamp: Camp Manitou at Tamakwa; Constellations evening program
- 18 Wed. – Section Night
- 19 Thurs. – Survivor All-Day; Survivor Finals evening program
- 20 Fri. – Camper triathlon; Friday night services; Hobby Hubs; Camp-wide campfire
- 21 Sat. – Super Fly presents "The Voice" all-day program; Short Shorts day at sail docks; "The Voice" Finals evening program; Camp-wide dance
- 22 Sun. – The Harvey Deutch Camper Triathlon; Cabin Night; Activity Leaders depart for rafting trip
- 23 Mon. – Buffet brunch; Cabin cookouts; Chief-O-Chief; Camp-wide campfire
- 24 Tues. – All-Day Surf and Sail; Photo Scavenger Hunt evening program
- 25 Wed. – Wimbledon Tennis Tournament; Air Bands evening program; Late night mini-Colour War break/intro
- 26 Thurs. – Mini-Colour War: 2012 Olympic Games; Event finals; Closing ceremonies
- 27 Fri. – Packing day; Senior Girls present "Starry Night" mini-banquet; Camp musical: Putnam County Spelling Bee
- 28 Sat. – Visiting Day; July camper departures; Co-Pro Show evening program
- 29 Sun. – August session campers arrive; Cabin Night
- 30 Mon. – Lice checks; White Caps; Game Show Night
- 31 Tues. – Individual Choice begins; Beaver Council elections; Section Night

AUGUST

- 1 Wed. – Tetherball tournament; Spider-Man vs. Batman Capture The Flag evening program
- 2 Thurs. – Ranger baseball game; Talent Show evening program
- 3 Fri. – Camp Bar Mitzvah Night of Danny Bittker, Sol Klein, Hannah Kowalsky, Hannah Manson, Rachel Schneider, Josh Schostak, Chad Schram and Zach Weinerman
- 4 Sat. – U12 Intercamp: Camp Manitou at Tamakwa; Beach party afternoon; Beaver Council presents: Around the World evening program
- 5 Sun. – Winter all-day program; Creatives/Results evening program
- 6 Mon. – Canoe race with Taylor Statten Camps; JT triathlon; Cabin Night
- 7 Tues. – Buffet brunch; Cabin cookouts; Camp-wide campfire
- 8 Wed. – U16 Intercamp with Camp Arowhon; 4 am Rec Hall gathering to watch Algonquin Park kayaker Adam van Koeverden win Silver Medal at London Olympics; Section Night
- 9 Thurs. – U16 Intercamp at Camp Timberlane; Carnival evening program
- 10 Fri. – U16 Intercamp at Camp Manitou; Friday night services (JSBs: "What If?"; Hobby Hubs, Camp-wide campfire
- 11 Sat. – Rainy day programming; Puddle jumping; Camp musical: Seussical
- 12 Sun. – JT changeover; Staff triathlon; Cabin Night
- 13 Mon. – Buffet brunch; Cabin cookouts; Chief-O-Chief, Camp-wide campfire
- 14 Tues. – Adventure Valley campers arrive for 4-day mini-session; AV White Caps; Can/Am hockey game; Section Night
- 15 Wed. – JT triathlon break; Casino Night evening program; Head staff rib roast for Staff Rec
- 16 Thurs. – Can/Am volleyball; Reptile Show and Tell in camp; Staff Show evening program
- 17 Fri. – A.V. Olympics; A.V. campers depart, Friday night services; Hobby Hubs; Camp-wide campfire
- 18 Sat. – Harvey Deutch Camper Triathlon; Saturday Night Live evening program
- 19 Sun. – Long trip returns; Judge Jeff evening program; Tamagama ceremony; Late night Colour War break/intro
- 20 Mon. – Colour War - Crisis of the Crown, Day 1; Medieval Marketplace evening program
- 21 Tues. – Colour War - Crisis of the Crown, Day 2; Dinner feast in Loon Lodge; Creatives/Results evening program; Staff BBQ
- 22 Wed. – Packing and cleaning day; CITs present: Titanic Banquet; End of summer services/videos; Camp-wide campfires
- 23 Thurs. – 2012 summer ends as Tamakwans leave for home

KERMIT, FOZZIE & CO. HEAD NORTH

The Muppets make their presence felt at Tamakwa BY PETER VOOYS

Tamakwa's summer of 2012 will be remembered for many things, including an unlikely addition to the programming team. In an unprecedented move, Co-Program Directors Peter Vooy's and Scott Graham introduced four Muppets as part of the usual squad of programming specialists. It didn't take long for Tamakwa to prove itself a puppet-friendly environment.

A few months before camp began, the Muppets made their Tamakwa debut with starring roles in the camp's Walk With Israel fundraising video and the



Muppet-themed Clue evening program.

During the summer, the monster puppets proved a big hit with campers, especially during bedtimes with the JTs. Given their popularity, they'll be returning to camp next summer.

As a result, Tamakwa management feels it only fitting to give to each of the four puppets a proper name. Readers are invited to send in their suggestions to the *South Tea Echo* at howhow@tamakwa.com. The person suggesting the best names will win a 2013 Tamakwa T-shirt.



ON THE HORIZON

We asked campers: What do you want to be when you grow up?

ADAM RAAB, 14, Voyageur, Farmington Hills, MI, 7th year at Tamakwa

"Maybe I'll work in sports management such as being an agent or working for a professional sports team. But I'll probably go into business, hopefully something related to sports because I love sports."

DAVID HERMELIN, 10, Ranger, Bingham Farms, MI, 4th year

"I'm not really sure at this point but maybe I'll get into the food business, such as being a chef at a big restaurant."

LIA WEINER, 12, 49er, Washington, DC, 7th year at camp

"I want to be a police officer so I can help people and help my community. If not that, I'd like to be a teacher. I like to teach kids stuff and help them learn new things. Or maybe open a bookstore or start working at Apple selling iPads."

RYAN KOHN, 10, Ranger, Miami, FL, 4th year

"I'd love to be a professional athlete in baseball or basketball. Next choice would be to be a sports agent, negotiating contracts and stuff like that. My third choice: Maybe be a lawyer as there are many lawyers in my family."

NOA OFFMAN, 9, Trailblazer, Toronto, 2nd year

"A veterinarian, because you get to help animals and I love animals. Especially dogs and guinea pigs. I hope to study to become a veterinarian. I've already been thinking about this for a couple of years."

BEN GOLDFARB, 13, Voyageur, Toronto, 1st year

"I'm not sure but I guess something like being an author of fantasy/action/thriller books or a musician playing guitar or maybe a game programmer."

JILLIAN LESSON, 9, Trailblazer, W. Bloomfield, MI, 3rd year

"I want to be a fashion designer because I like fashion. The hardest part must be to make the clothes come to life. I'd like to start my own fashion company and have my own label."

JAMIE BLATNIKOFF, 11, Ranger, West Bloomfield, MI, 4th year

"An engineer. I like creating stuff and inventing and building things. If not that, I'd like to be a doctor, maybe a pediatrician so I can help kids."

ALLISON BEALLOR, 14, 49er JSG, Toronto, 7th year

"I'm not really sure. I think I'd like to

study drama and maybe get into acting or singing."

LUKE ANDREWS, 8, Forester, Toronto, 1st year

"I want to be a speech pathologist because that's what my dad used to do and I think it's a good job."

JONAH LEVITE, 11, Ranger, London, ON, 1st year

"I want to be an engineer. I like to build stuff and I think it's a cool job. My second choice would be to be a lawyer."

SYDNEY HANOVER, 14, 49er/JSG, Los Angeles, CA, 6th year

"I don't really know but as I really love sports, maybe I could do something in the athletic field. I horseback ride and run and maybe it could be something to do with that."

MILOSH LISZNIANSKI, 8, Forester, Geneva, Illinois, 1st year

"I want to be an astronaut because it would let me to step on the moon. Second choice would be to be a firefighter or a police officer."

MALCOLM LONGAKER, 9, Forester, Ithaca, NY, 2nd year

"I want to be a drummer in a rock band because I play drums and I'm really good at it. If I couldn't do that, I'd want to be a singer in a rock band, or maybe an NBA basketball star for the Knicks."

BEN SAUNDERS, 9, Forester, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1st year

"I want to be a baker, because that's what my dad is, or maybe I'll be a chef at a restaurant."

ARI STERNBERG, 14, JSB, West Bloomfield, MI, 8th year

"I want to be a doctor. I'm not quite sure what kind but I like to help people so being a doctor appeals to me."

SLOAN NELICK, 9, Trailblazer, Carmel, Indiana, 3rd year

"I hope to be a fashion designer because I like clothes. I'm serious about it and want to study how to design clothes for girls and kids."

CARLEIGH SAUNDERS, 13, 49er, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1st year

"I want to be a pediatrician. I've always been interested in medical things and I love kids. My second choice would be to be a singer."

- Interviews by Robert Sarner

INTO THE MYSTIC

This year's plaque takes its inspiration from Van Morrison's acclaimed 1970 album BY PETER VOOYS

A hallowed, time-honored Tamakwa tradition, the summer-end plaque is always the focus of great anticipation ahead of its unveiling on the last night of camp. Adding to this heightened sense of expectation every year is the secrecy surrounding its creation. Only a privileged few are a party to the theme of the plaque before it's shown at the final banquet.

This summer, music was a catalyst behind the plaque, now hanging prominently in the Dining Hall. Inspired by singer Van Morrison, the 2012 plaque "Into the Mystic" doesn't necessarily "rock your gypsy soul," as it does

suggest "that it's a marvelous night for a moon dance."

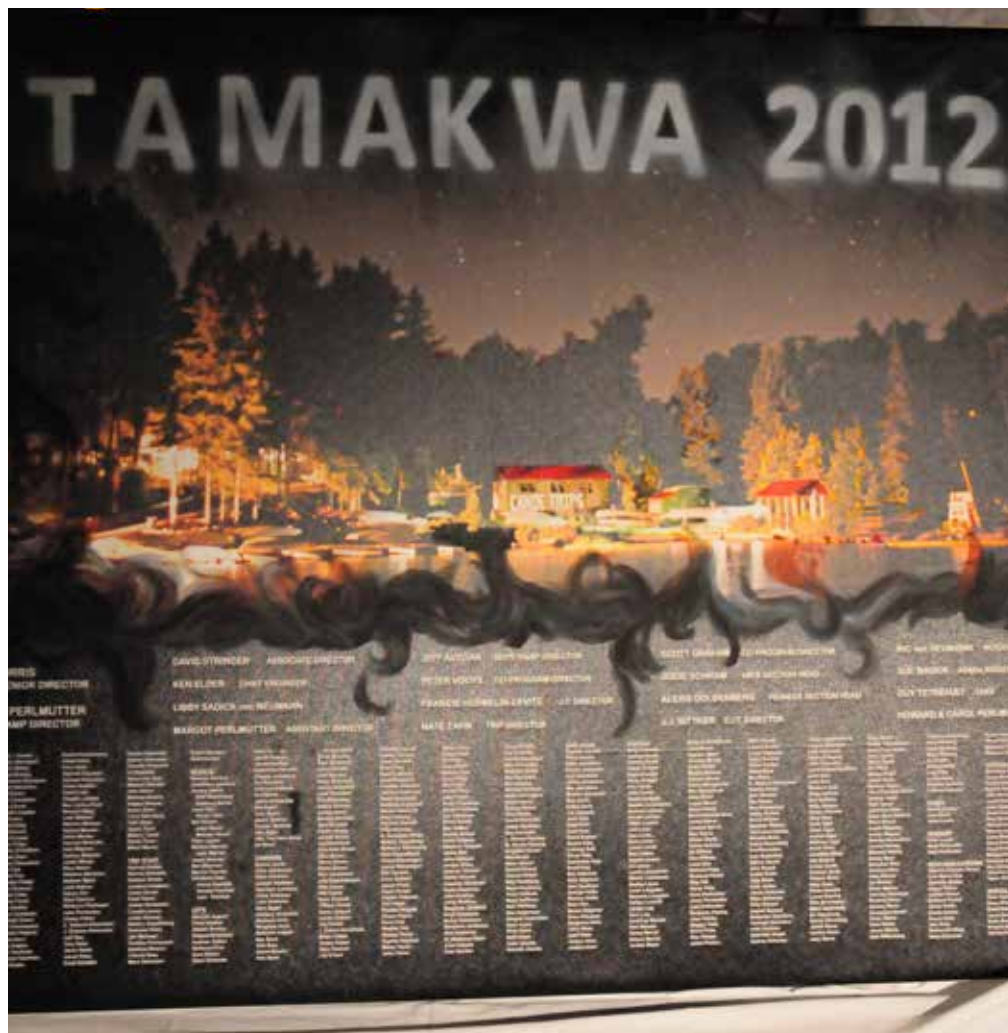
Blending a nighttime photograph taken by Tamakwa alum Robin Spencer-Arms, and the acrylic paintings of Art Director Holly Southby, the image seems surreal. Glowing Tamakwa buildings are surrounded by paths and hills that melt into flowing rivers.

The idea behind this year's concept piece came to camp directors Vic Norris and Craig Perlmutter during a late-night listening of Morrison's acclaimed 1970 album *Moondance*. Struck by the album's smooth, jazz-infused melodies and ethereal lyrics, Vic

and Craig were moved to create a visual evocation of the album's themes of love, spirituality and nighttime. The plaque's warm and hazy depiction of Tamakwa at night, complete with imagined rivers, is derived directly from Morrison's repertoire.

A few minutes after the plaque's presentation at the banquet, an astute Morrison aficionado was heard asking his female companion, "Can I just have one more moon dance with you?"

The plaque now has pride of place amid the hundreds of other creative works produced by Tamakwans over the past 77 years.



THE GREENING OF TAMAKWA

True to the heritage of Unca Lou, camp steps up its commitment to be even more eco-friendly BY MARGOT PERLMUTTER

Although I never had the pleasure of meeting Unca Lou over the course of my 17 years at Tamakwa, I feel I understand what he set out to do 77 years ago when he created camp. One Unca Lou saying I've always taken to heart is "Leave each campsite better than you found it." As such, I strive each day to make Tamakwa a better place and to instill important life lessons among campers.

Unca Lou's adage reflects a value that applies to so many areas in life. Whether you take his words literally by removing all garbage – even that which is not your own – from your canoe trip or cookout site, or figuratively by bending down to pick up a candy wrapper lying in the bushes or even a discarded coffee cup on a city sidewalk, you are helping make this world a cleaner place.

Throughout 2012, Tamakwa tried to make our planet a little greener. No, this doesn't include painting our bodies green for intercamp competitions or

painting a few extra buildings green. It means doing more to reduce, reuse, recycle.

In 2011, we started Phase 1 of Tamakwa's recycling project: recycling all paper products used in the office and in the kitchen. Nowadays, everyone recycles and we've often been asked why we hadn't done so ourselves. Well, believe it or not, for a long time it was a tall order. While many camps are fortunate to have provincial recycling bins on site with weekly pick-ups, Tamakwa must collect the paper, transport everything across the lake by barge, load it into a van and then drive a few kilometers to empty the truck. Not necessarily a fast or easy process but something our hard working transportation/maintenance crew was 100% on board with doing.

This past summer, we set our sights a little larger and moved forward with Phase 2 – camp-wide recycling. Every day, after breakfast, campers are given 30-40 minutes for cabin

clean-up during which they learn the art of making beds, folding clothes, sweeping the floor and yes, even scrubbing toilets (for those lucky enough to have bathrooms in their cabins). Daily and weekly scores are tabulated and three lucky cabins are awarded pop at lunch each week, a reward that's always more coveted than I could ever imagine.

This year, to make life more interesting, we added a new twist to cabin clean-up – bonus points for recycling! Every cabin received a clear plastic bag, which they could fill with as many paper products as possible to earn bonus points throughout the summer. While pop might be the main incentive behind campers recycling, I'd like to believe it also instills a small sense of ownership and the notion that every little bit helps.

Now onto Phase 3 – reducing the amount of Styrofoam used at camp. I can still hear my predecessor, Marilyn Mendelson, yelling "NO MELMAC OUTSIDE THE DINING HALL!" and



yes, I admit I, too, can now be heard yelling the same thing.

This year, we introduced a few acceptable exceptions (shhh, don't tell Marilyn!). For years, Styrofoam cups could be seen floating around Main Camp after a shore lunch or Monday brunch. Days later, I'd see a cup under the Slope, beside the Eye-Full Tower or even down at Transportation Dock. It drove me crazy. Now, with enormous help from our tireless kitchen staff, we have replaced all Styrofoam cups with Melmac for all

meals. Yes, this means a bit more dish washing and most definitely a few extra steps by all campers and staff to return cups to the Dining Hall but I think we can all stand a bit taller and feel a bit better about ourselves knowing that we, too, are doing our part to make Tamakwa life a bit greener.

I'm not sure what Phase 4 will entail but if it were up to me, it would be to stop filling landfills every August with miles high of wasted egg crates, or for that matter, just miles high of garbage. Alas, I fear that

might be a larger battle than we can fight.

A week after camp ended last summer, I received an email from a Tamakwa mother who wrote, "What have you done to my son? He's now making his bed every morning!"

Is this the greatest accomplishment a camper can achieve at camp? Probably not but I'd like to believe it's a small step in making each campsite better than we found it. I'd like to believe if Unca Lou were to return to camp today, he'd fully approve of our new green orientation.

RAISING THE BAR

Kitchen facilities undergo a much-needed major upgrade BY PETER VOOYS



As the time-worn saying goes, the squeaky wheel gets the grease. In recent years, due to the ever-growing demand for special diets, more food allergies, along with the demands of camper/staff vegetarians, chicken vegetarians, omnivores and carnivores and turnip carnivores, Chef Guy Tetreault

had sought an expanded food preparation area and storage facility.

This past summer, his prayers were answered. Guy Tetreault and his West Park Catering team revealed in their new facilities. And just in time, too. In 2012, special diets accounted for 23% of the staff and camper food intake –

meaning the kitchen staff had to make an average of four to five different meal options per sitting. Additional space was desperately needed.

In the off-season, to meet this demand, the year-round crew of Ken Elder, Ric von Neumann, Libby Saddick von Neumann, and Jared Barnes

created a new kitchen prep area and installed a new larger fridge and freezer. The old fridge and freezer were left in place, with the result that cold food storage has more than tripled at Tamakwa.

To make room for the kitchen expansion, the Head Staff Dining Hall was torn down, and its porch pulled with chains to a new location outside the maintenance building. The old maple tree outside the Head Staff Dining Hall had to be cut down, leaving a stump that's now home to the glorious Tamakwa Beaver statue.

The bathrooms and clothing room located at the north end of the Dining Hall/kitchen complex were kept intact and moved further north to be attached to the new structure and given a second lease on life.

Along with the kitchen expansion, the space was filled with a newly built Head Staff Dining Hall, complete with the best pine tongue and groove. The vaulted ceiling and spacious buffet room, to say nothing of the jokes exchanged in this new setting, proved critical to the success of head staff during the summer of 2012.

STRING TRAINING

Inspired by Eric Clapton and Jory Nash, new guitar-teaching program proves popular with campers BY PETER VOOYS



Move over Don Ross! Tamakwa is now home to a guitar-teaching program. A collection of 14 guitars was brought from Toronto to meet the demand. From first-time strummers to rock stars in the making, campers responded enthusiastically to the introduction of semi-private guitar lessons.

Craig Hunter, Music and Recording Director for July, helped initiate the program and spearheaded

the launch of Tamakwa Records. The first in the collection was a compilation of original ear-catching songs written and performed by campers.

Throughout the first-month session, thanks to the program, different guitar-playing campers were featured at the beginning or close of evening program, and a CD release gala closed the session.

We can't wait to see who the next Tamakwan Jory Nash will be.

MAKING EVERY WORD COUNT

Condensing 13 summers of memories into a three-minute speech is no easy task for those special Tamakwans honoured at the much-appreciated Bar/Bat Mitzvah event. BY J.J. BITTKER

As one of last summer's Bar Mitzvah jacket recipients, I know how special that first Friday evening of August is for the honoured individuals. The entire camp seems to understand the importance of this event. Long before I took part in it, I've felt that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration is the most entertaining and memorable Friday night service of the summer.

To commemorate and celebrate 13 summers of memories, the camp hears embarrassing comments from the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's parents, and even more embarrassing anecdotes from their friends who speak at the event. The reality is that each Bar/Bat Mitzvah honoree standing at that podium has spent two months each year at camp, for more than half of their lives. Each understands what it means to dedicate himself/herself to a place that is so special to them, their peers, and their family.

In early August, the eight staff members honoured at the 2012 event had collectively influenced the lives of a significant number of the campers sitting on the Slope in front of them. It was an uplifting, if not challenging, experience.

What has the time-honoured Tamakwa Bar/Bat Mitzvah night become? As I reflected on my own



memories, I contemplated another question: How can one condense 13 summers of memories into a compact three-minute speech? This year's group was particularly special to me. My brother, my girlfriend, and my past campers from a 15-day canoe trip all came in for recognition on this night. So many memories to share with each other, the honorees attempt it each summer, knowing full well this feat is near-impossible.

Landsports Director Zach Weinerman took ad-

vantage of his time to joke about his peanut allergy and its subsequent impact on camp. According to Zach, he was the "original peanut boy" at Tamakwa before Jamie Perlmutter, Craig's nephew, arrived with his omnipotent Epi-pen in hand.

What has the Bar/Bat Mitzvah night become? A chance for the honoured staff members to use their 13 years of experience to share with campers the best advice they wish they had received themselves years earlier. That is the

method adopted by Sail Director Josh Schostak, in his blunt yet humorous assertion, "To all of the campers who complain...don't." A few chuckles proceeded up the Slope. But what if the campers who complained actually listened to Josh?

What has the Bar Mitzvah night become? Considerations of the experiences that drive us back here. Last summer, when I stepped up to the podium, cleared my throat and said, "Hi. My name is J.J. Bittker and this is my 13th summer at Camp Tamakwa," I knew

that it was my opportunity to relay to everyone in attendance how much I truly care about this place.

My brother Danny did pretty much the same. He preached about the miraculous nature of his return to camp after considering multiple directions for the next chapter in his life. The Bar Mitzvah night ultimately led Danny back to this place that he credits with shaping him into the person he is today. And to think that if Danny had stayed in Rabbinical

School, he would have lost the role of Camp Rabbi to Hershel Dorman.

Chad Schram, Hannah Kowalsky, and Rachel Schneider thanked their respective friends and family, shared their respective memories of their cabins and canoe trips, gave advice to their campers and, most importantly, they cited what it truly means to be a Tamakwan.

Hannah Manson, who also adopted the guidance role, concluded: "Remember to take advantage of the moments of subtlety and live each day like it's your last day as a camper."

Who knows? Maybe some of the campers who might typically skip their first activity period have changed their tendencies after hearing what the Bar/Bat Mitzvah honorees had to say.

What has the Bar/Bat Mitzvah night become? Whatever it is, I like it. It was inspiring to hear the other honorees, all with whom I grew up, convey their unwavering love for the place we all return to each year. I hope that the readers, parents, campers and staff alike can relate to this feeling too, for if they do, then clearly the Bar/Bat Mitzvah night still has meaning and importance.

I believe Vic when he expresses astonishment at the growing number of Bar/Bat Mitzvah honorees every year. I doubt Unca Lou ever imagined what the Bar/Bat Mitzvah night has become over the years, but I'm sure it would be the source of great satisfaction for him.

WHEN THE WINDS OF CHANGE BLOW HEAVY

A veteran Tamakwan argues that certain staff and campers should lighten up in the face of new things introduced to camp life. BY TY DIAMOND

The sunny shores of South Tea are a place largely stuck in time. A venerable place where little seems to change, old Tamakwa spirit springs eternal, the echoing of Woof Woof persists, and Roots clothing is always in style.

Perhaps the most stubbornly constant aspect of Tamakwa is the resistance to change altogether. In a place where tradition is hallowed, the prospect of new practices and customs frightens certain longtime Tamakwans. To be sure, these self-appointed guardians of historical truths and defenders of the-way-it-was-always-done-at-Tamakwa mean well but can kick up a storm when they perceive a transgression of the-way-it-should-be.

As a result, the introduction of a new building,

song, or activity is not without collateral damage to those who identify with old Tamakwan ways. In fairness to them, their resistance stems from a deep respect for and unwavering loyalty to our camp's heritage and core values. Still, there's no escaping the irony of it all.

Camp, of course, is forever evolving, just like any living community. Each year, Ken, Libby, Ric and the team erect new structures, while the number of camp activities and other innovations has not flat-lined in 77 years. And yet, there will always be many who are ill-disposed to the new and unfamiliar.

Each year, it seems there's a new outcry to some new addition to Tamakwa. Mostly recently, this was evident in the reaction to Pulled Porch. During the

opening weeks of the past summer, many lamented Pulled Porch, denouncing it for supposedly getting in the way or not belonging to the Tamakwa landscape.

Such opposition inevitably passes. For something new to become something of tradition is merely a question of time. One decade's alleged new monstrosity is the next decade's well-loved fixture. One generation's Loon Lodge is the next generation's Yellow Pointer Productions.

We've seen it all before. In the past, there was initial resistance to the Plat-Forum, the Beachers, and other mainstays of 20th century north shore of South Tea. Even Alligator Anchor and Main Camp Fireplace were not without their detractors who claimed these new additions were out of keeping

with Tamakwa tradition. Such dislike of change has probably been one of the most consistent, time-honoured traditions at camp.

Equally intriguing is the ambivalence toward new-old traditions. Elements of Tamakwa life that have fallen by the wayside over the years but brought back to life later on only to be met with a lack of understanding by some. Tamakwans treating "Mabel Brown from Kokomo" without the same respect as "Young Folks Old Folks" are merely victims of their own strict interpretation of certain Tamakwa customs. The revival of various old traditions is no less important than keeping existing ones alive.

Tamakwa's greatest asset is its rich history in Algonquin Park, and thankfully there's always been a



devoted group concerned with keeping it so. But well-conceived change and innovation should not be automatically received as a threat to our old Tamakwa

spirit. The introduction of such new infrastructure and activities does not undermine the essence of what it means to be a Tamakwan.

OF RIB TICKLERS AND LAUGH FESTS

We asked campers: Who were the funniest people during the summer of 2012? BY ROBERT SARNER

JOSHUA KOOLIK, 10, Ranger, Boca Raton, FL, 2nd year
“For me, the funniest character at camp is Jeff Avigian because he makes lots of funny jokes. He pretends to be mean but he’s actually nice. He makes jokes to make himself come across as mean but he’s not. He makes a lot of crazy comments in the Dining Hall and around camp that often makes me laugh.”

ADAM RAAB, 14, Voyager, Farmington Hills, MI, 7th year
“For me, Billy Hochberg is the funniest camper. He’s always goofing around, always putting smiles on campers’ faces. The funniest staff member is Josh Schostak, the sailing instructor, who’s always telling jokes.”

JILLIAN LESSON, 9, Trailblazer, W. Bloomfield, MI, 3rd year
“Scott [Graham] and Peter [Voos] are incredibly funny. As for campers, my pick would be Chaz and Dex Frank and Ari Zamler. They’re just crazy and make people laugh.”

SCOTT KATZ, 10, Ranger, Detroit, MI, 2nd year
“Scott Graham because he makes a lot of funny jokes, especially for evening program and for skits. Even his announcements at meals can be funny. Sometimes he also wears funny costumes. Once at the Beachers, he did this really hilarious thing about cowboys. Scott makes summer better because he makes people smile. Peter [Voos] is also funny but Scott is even funnier.”

ALLISON BEALLOR, 14, 49er JSG, Toronto, 7th year
“(Camper) Mara Soverinsky is always telling jokes and making people laugh. She has a great personality, a positive attitude and is just a funny person. On staff, Jeff Avigian has a great sense of humour. The way he teases campers is very funny. I don’t think they take it the wrong way as we all know his personality and that’s the way he treats all campers and it’s not meant to cause offense.”

BEN GOLDFARB, 13, Voyager, Toronto, 1st year
“My counselor Ethan Raduns-Silverstein is incredibly funny. He’s always making jokes out of almost every situation. Unless it’s something serious, he’ll make light of it. He’s fun to hang around with.”

DAVID HERMELIN, 10, Ranger, Bingham Farms, MI, 4th year
“The funniest camper is Alex Bean because of the crazy stuff he does including his funny dancing. In terms of the staff, I’d say Peter [Voos] and Scott [Graham] because they’re CoPro and it’s their job to be funny, tell cheesy jokes and do wacky things, like doing funny accents and explaining the announcements in slow motion.”

RYAN KOHN, 10, Ranger, Miami, FL, 4th year
“Jeff Avigian is the funniest Tamakwan because he just makes you laugh. He says weird things and does stupid stuff. Like if we’re in the Dining Hall, he’ll make funny noises out of the blue. Sean Kim is probably the funniest camper. He makes funny faces and he hugs people a lot.”

BLAKE ZAMLER, 10, Ranger, Franklin, MI 4th year
“It’s tough to choose the funniest camper but I have a few in mind: Alex Bean, Ryan Kohn or Sean Kim. For staff, probably Scott [Graham] or Peter [Voos], because they put a lot of time into their jokes and do a lot of funny stuff. They often dress up in funny outfits and speak in funny accents.”

SLOAN NELICK, 9, Trailblazer, Carmel, Indiana, 3rd year
“The funniest camper is Jane Rosett because she always wears crazy makeup and crazy clothes. I’d choose Scott [Graham] as the funniest staff member because he always does funny stuff, and plays funny games, even when he makes announcements.”

NOA OFFMAN, 9, Trailblazer, Toronto, 2nd year
“Scott [Graham] and Peter [Voos] are the funniest staff at camp. They want you to have fun and to do that, they tell good jokes all the time. They’re equally funny. For me, Mia Haddad is the funniest camper. She tells really funny stories and does funny stuff. Everybody in my cabin gets to laugh so much because of her.”

SYDNEY HANOVER, 14, 49er JSG, Los Angeles, CA, 6th year
“My vote for funniest camper is Mara Soverinsky because she has a lot of unique talents, such as doing a very funny opera voice and she’s always light and positive and makes

funny comments about things at camp. She keeps our cabin laughing and everyone wants to be around her because she makes you laugh and happy. In terms of staff, Jeff Avigian is really funny but I don’t know if he’s the funniest at camp. Scott [Graham] and Peter [Voos] are funny but more for the younger campers.”

ABBEY BLENDER, 15, 49er, Bloomfield Hills, MI, 7th year
“I’d have to choose Ben Canvasser as the funniest camper because he’s always making lots of jokes. On staff, it would probably be Jeff Avigian because he always has funny comments when he sits with us, makes good jokes and gives people nicknames.”

JONAH LEVITE, 11, Ranger, London, ON, 1st year
“The funniest person on staff is probably Jeff Avigian. He has a dry sense of humour. He makes hilarious jokes but keeps a straight face and acts as if everything is normal which makes it even funnier. Ben Jerris, who’s in my cabin, is really funny. He loves baseball and likes his baseball glove a lot and sleeps with it and talks to it. He has a big dream about becoming a professional baseball player. When you tickle him, he does a monkey laugh and screams and it’s really funny.”

CARLEIGH SAUNDERS, 13, 49er, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1st year
“Lia Weiner always makes everyone laugh, especially during cheers. She’s not afraid to be herself. As for the funniest staff member, all my counselors – Aly Seel, Hannah Kowalsky, Hannah Klayman, and Claudia Leshok – make us laugh all the time.”

MILOSH LISZNIANSKI, 8, Forester, Geneva, Illinois, 1st year
“My brother, Lucas, is the funniest camper I know. He tells such funny jokes. Also, Oliver Drigo, my counselor, makes me laugh all the time.”

BEN SAUNDERS, 9, Forester, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1st year
“Jack Allen, my counselor, does incredibly funny faces and voices, and in the morning when he wakes us up, he’s really something. The funniest camper is Matthew Gross, who’s in my cabin. He tells the craziest jokes.”



ARI STERNBERG, 14, JSB, West Bloomfield, MI, 8th year
“If I had to pick one camper, it would be David Dar-

mon. He’s a naturally funny person. It’s just something about his personality. He’s often telling jokes, making faces and funny voices. For staff, I’d say Ethan Raduns-Silverstein. He’s naturally funny, tells good stories and is always the source of good energy.”

TACKLING A TIMELESS CHALLENGE

Homesickness has always been a part of camp life and Tamakwa knows how to address it BY OLIVER DRIGO

On the first day of camp this past summer, one of my campers, a 9-year-old boy, threatened to jump off the swim dock and swim across South Tea Lake so he could hitchhike home to be with his parents. Despite his tear-filled homesickness that afternoon, he was later thankful we did not grant him his wish to leave camp.

When I was much younger, I was the kid who suddenly seemed distant in the middle of an activity because I missed my parents. I was the kid who cried at the babysitter because my mom was dropping me off before school. I was the kid who did whatever I could to delay the departure of my parents before camp. I was a homesick camper.

Now I'm 19, I've been to various camps and have a phenomenal group of people supporting me. Do I still get homesick? Heck, yes but I've grown to overcome it. Maturity, practice and reassurance all help

keep it at bay.

In this technology-driven age of extreme interconnectivity, upon arriving at Tamakwa, the initial juxtaposition between home and camp life can be an awful shock. Today, the contrast is greater than ever. The impact is felt most acutely by young campers who are most prone to homesickness. Suddenly finding themselves cut off from the familiarity of their daily lives can be quite a jolt. Being in a 'foreign' environment where they lack those people of comfort in their lives – parents, family and friends – can result in an alienating culture shock.

The technological divide is a huge part of familiarity. Young people use technology to do almost everything, from communication to school work to keeping informed and entertained. So going from maximum technological connectivity to none whatsoever at camp, kids must adjust to a markedly different reality – not being



able to talk with parents on the phone, via internet, or other technology (apart from snail-mail) for an extended period of time.

Key moments of togetherness, at a meal and before bed, are times of vulnerability at camp and remind kids of their

parents and those who comfort them. Having interviewed both campers and staff at Tamakwa, and drawing from my experience working at other camps (and having been a homesick camper myself), I can say homesickness is an intrinsic part of camp,

especially for young campers. It's a culmination and means of expressing alienation or loneliness in a new environment, most often through confused crying and repetitive asking for one's parents.

Max Gelber, 8, told me that "homesickness is when you miss your house, parents, and friends."

For Carly Saunders, 13, it's "a strong feeling of wanting to be home or in my own bed instead of at camp."

Their comments reflect what others told me – how homesickness is more than simply missing one's parents; it's missing one's routine, and the habits and lifestyle to which one is so accustomed. It's a feeling all campers go through at some point.

At Tamakwa, there's an incredible support base of head staff, counselors, and even siblings who understand homesickness. They know how to help campers every step of the way in forgetting their loneli-

ness and sense of culture shock through immersion into camp life and fun. If they can't get a homesick camper to talk, then they talk, and talk and talk until the camper laughs. Laughter gets the child out of his/her funk and enjoying the good life to be had at camp.

Parents shouldn't fret about their children's homesickness. It's an inseparable part of camp for young (especially first-time) campers. It's to be expected. We all deal with it differently and that's what camp is for: learning how to thrive in new, challenging situations. To see the effect that camp can have on a homesick camper is something to behold. When that same stereotypical homesick camper tries to delay his parents taking him home from camp because he wants to keep enjoying the place he grew to love, there's no better proof it's worth working through those early days of homesickness to reach the other side.

BETWEEN DREAMS AND REALITY

Sometimes things are not what they seem BY HANNAH MANSON

There's a fine line between dreams and reality at camp. During the summer, seemingly real experiences can strike you as too good to be true, rendering them remote from reality. Throughout the year, dreams of Tamakwa feel so real you could almost reach out and touch them. This sometimes difficult-to-discern situation is at once awesome and frustrating. The hazy overlap of the real and the imagined can play havoc with our memories and how we recollect many occurrences at camp.

Witness what happened this past summer. This sense of fuzzy recall seemed to bamboozle my Trailblazer cabin in late July. One morning, I was surrounded by a group of JTs demanding my account of alleged events of the previous night. Although I professed not to know what they were referring to, there was no let-up in their questioning. Other staff members they had previously interrogated told the JTs that they must have had some kind of crazy dream; perhaps a communal dream shared between

friends. I was curious about their story so I inquired further into the supposed events of the night before.

The JTs claimed they were woken from their sleep by a magical fairy. It apparently led them through the darkness to an area that resembled Main Camp but hosted fantastical buildings, pirate ships and storybook characters foreign to Tamakwa's shores. The campers insisted that they saw Little Red Riding Hood, Peter Pan and pirates, Goldie Locks and the Three Bears, Rapunzel and her prince,



the Three Little Pigs, and others.

If that wasn't hard enough to believe, they went on to describe an edible candy house where the Tuck Shop usually stands. The JTs of 2012 may never know whether their experience was real or whether it was part of an equally extraordinary shared dream. In either case, the alleged event serves as a particu-

larly pertinent example of the blurred boundary between dreams and reality that exists when living and recalling camp experiences.

As I listened to the JTs' recollection of the previous night's supposed events, I realized how microcosmic this event would be in their future reminiscing of camp highlights. In future recollections of their youthful years at Tamakwa, camp-

ers' take on reality may become so increasingly creative and unfocused that they will ultimately question whether certain memories really happened. Such camp-based dreams will follow them long after they leave South Tea Lake for the last time. These scenarios will feel as real as the night's events and will lead them to feel as if they were back at camp.

For now, as the JTs continue to wrestle with this mystery, I would encourage them to relish the fact that it doesn't much matter whether storybook characters came to life or appeared in their dreams. Camp's true magic is felt most upon embracing the unknown and appreciating that such memories are precious, whether they're real or imagined.

OLYMPIC MAGIC

It's not every day Tamakwans and other Algonquin Park campers and staff get to paddle with a world champion kayaker BY PETER VOOYS

Every two years, the world's finest athletes meet in a celebration of sport and culture, otherwise known as the Olympic Games. This past July, in honour of a local Olympian and in tribute to paddle sports and good neighbourliness, members of Algonquin Park camps gathered on the shores of Bonita Lake to send off one of their own to the Summer Games in London.

To mark the occasion, Tamakwa, along with

Arowhon, Wapomeo/Ahmek, Tanamakoon, Northway/Wendigo and Pathfinder, were all represented by their strongest paddlers at the first ever Beaver Canoe and Kayak Regatta at the Roots compound on Bonita Lake. The guest of honour was Tamakwa friend and South Tea Lake neighbour Adam van Koverden, world champion and Olympic Gold Medalist kayaker. A few days later, he was leaving for London to represent Canada at his

third Olympics.

In the spirit of camaraderie, the regatta began with a mix-and-mingle as campers and staff met other Park residents as well as Adam and his friends and family. He was clearly taken back by the number of people who turned up to wish him well. Among the biggest surprises for Adam was the giant painted card presented to him by the Tanamakoon delegation.

The mix-and-mingle continued on the lake with



every kayak and canoe in sight filled with people. Adam then joined in the leisurely paddle around Blueberry Island that proved a great way for people from the camps to connect with fellow paddlers on the water before posing for a large group photo at the end of the paddle.

For the main event,

campers and staff and Park friends faced off in mixed boats in a tandem canoe race from the dock of Bonita around Blueberry Island that included more than 20 canoes of various colours, representing Algonquin camps. Tamakwa's very own voyageur canoe was sterned by long-time Algonquin resident Linda Leckie.

The 36' vessel, powered by 20 paddlers, led for most of the race. In the end, Taylor Statten staff prevailed. After working up a sweat in the strenuous race, participants partook in a refreshing dip in the lake.

The event served as a positive send-off for Adam and no-doubt helped inspire him to win a Silver Medal for Canada in London. It was also a great opportunity for staff and campers of Algonquin Park camps to meet one another and exchange stories. Hopefully the magic of the day can be captured again this summer on the shores of Bonita, even if there are no Olympics in 2013

SEEING THE TREES FOR THE FOREST

The Director of Outdoor Fun spotlights her five favourite trees at Tamakwa BY SNAIGE JOGI

Growing up in rural Ontario, forests were my playground and their trees the skyscrapers. When I went to the city for the first time as a child, I emerged from a subway station onto the street, looked up at the buildings and exclaimed, "Whoa, they're bigger than trees!"

Coming from various cities from around the world, first-time campers must experience a similar sense of wonder when they step off the bus and arrive in one of the most beautiful, tree-filled places in Canada. Tamakwa's trees are one of its main distinguishing attributes and have more of an impact on camp life than we realize. Here are my five favourite Tamakwa trees, all of which influence our camp experience and daily lives.

40m tall white pine near Crow Lake that only the boys on 15-day experience. So the next time you gaze out along the shoreline, be grateful for the Lone Pine. Not only for the nostalgic feelings it evokes but also for its rareness and all it gives to Tamakwa.



THE PAPER BIRCH

Whether it's the verdant leaves of summer, the golden leaves of autumn or the purple halos the branches give off in winter, the paper birch's brilliant white bark stands out in any forest no matter the season. On canoe trips, this is usually the first tree campers learn to identify because of its excellent fire-starting capabilities. Sadly, most campsites have been stripped of any birch bark for fire starting; so campers learn to pick it up along portages throughout the day. At camp, Tamakwas appreciate the shade cast by the large birch beside the Slope during fishing activity or when listening to long-winded speeches there by camp directors. Like children, paper birches grow best when not in the shadows of their parents. This shade-intolerant species thrives and grows best in sunlight, of which Tamakwa has plenty.



THE SUGAR MAPLE

This tree is one reason I love coming back to Ontario from the predominantly

coniferous west coast. The sugar maple's famous autumn colours make the Park especially spectacular starting in the late summer. Unlike the white pine, sugar maples grow well in the moist, well-drained soils of the Park's west side. Their decomposing leaves enrich the soil by reducing acidity and increasing mineral content.

Tamakwa is full of sugar maples and they were one of the main reasons why there were so many mice at camp this past summer. Since maple seeds are the rodent's main food, you can tell it was a good year for the sugar maple due to the presence of so many mice.

Sugar maples also provide a generous amount of shade for Tamakwas. For example, tetherball valley is in constant shade and provides the JTs with ideal conditions to play even on a sunny day. The summer's heat brings an early change of colours for the maples, and being up at camp in the fall, I was one of the lucky few who got to sit on the shores of Tamakwa and watch them fully turn.



THE WHITE CEDAR

At Tamakwa, you don't have to go far to find white cedar trees as they have pride of place in Main Camp, where they provide shade to the nok hockey tables and Main Camp fireplace. These trees prefer swampy areas with underlying limestone rock where soil is consistently moist. However, the cedar tree's wide spreading root system instead sucks the moisture from the already dry ground creating the kicked-up dust so prevalent in Main Camp. This summer, not only were we wishing for rain to end the fire ban, but I'm sure the cedars were also eager for a damper environment.

It's quite the catch-22 for the cedar. One of the main reasons we wish for rain is to have a decent water boil-

ing competition in which we burn dry cedar and yet it's the cedar that thirsts for rain for its survival.



THE BLACK SPRUCE

Standing tall and somewhat unacknowledged at the top of the Slope, it's often used by people as a leaning post. They rarely give thought to the fact that someone else realized its value and chose not to cut it down. That spruce tree is my favourite place to go and think. I enjoy leaning against it while looking out and appreciating that I'm in my favourite place in Canada – Algonquin Park. I have caught others leaning in the same place throughout the summer, whether it's writing letters home, reading, or just staring out meditatively at South Tea Lake.

I've long had a passion and appreciation for trees, the greatest expression and storehouses of life in the wilderness. They are too often taken for granted, even though they blanket the landscape and help define its character. Tamakwa would not be the same without its trees.

If you look at Tamakwa, from one perspective, you can easily see the daily lives of campers – trying different activities, cheering, dressing up for programs, etc. But if you look beyond that, you'll see life-long friendships developing, character building, and lots of learning. If you walk through a forest, you notice that trees are tall and green. But stop and take it in more deeply. Look and listen. Breathe in the air the trees create for you. Listen to the wind blowing through the branches and leaves. Watch the wildlife frolic about. Like a forest, life is richest deep inside if you take the time to appreciate it.



RIGHT TO PLAY

My idea of quality time at Tamakwa and the true spirit of a children's village BY TOBY LECKIE

Twilight is among my favourite times of the day at Tamakwa. It's one of the only times at camp that children have free reign over their own entertainment. No commitment to other things. No pressure to participate in something specific. It's when, just by observing, you get a feel for the true spirit of the children's village, hearing laughter from the nok hockey tables or tetherball valley without the direct guidance of a staff member.

"Campers are able to tap into the fun and relative freedom of downtime without much encouragement whatsoever," says long-time counselor Max Levine-Poch (alias Boathouse). "They know what they enjoy. Whether it's cards, reading or inventing a game such as 'rafterball,' kids embrace being able to relax and do as they please in the unstructured free times."

This freedom gives kids space to breathe after a full day's activities, and also allows them to gain independence. With a little assistance from staff, the Ranger section sourced materials, designed and constructed a den in Boys Camp that they could return to in the future. This was their place, one that they could call their own.

Structured activities are a fundamental, relished aspect of camp. Only at a place such as Tamakwa can a child be exposed to such a varied range of engaging pursuits that allow for personal growth in so many ways. Talented staff offer instruction in multiple activities, as well as a plethora of organized programming – stage shows, evening programs, all days, and everything in between – that's a crucial part of camp life.

As much as this is a good thing, as children need order in their lives to learn practical skills and make their time at camp worthwhile, one of the most precious aspects of growing up, and indeed camp, is the freedom that's an inherent part of childhood. The

abundance of ready-made entertainment in today's society, via computers, television and video games, results in the rampant passivity in the life of most children. Not only does it keep them inside and away from the outdoors, it inhibits the natural talent children have for designing their own fun. When left to their own devices, the engagement from the fun and games children can imagine surpasses anything generated by a pre-organized evening program or Colour War event. Just give a Forester a swim noodle and proclaim it a sword and you'll see what I mean.

Coming from an outdoor education background, I favour the benefits of the experiential – the best way to learn is not through books or demonstration but by children becoming fully involved with the task at hand. On the ropes course, even though I ran structured sessions during the summer (especially for those seeking awards), I felt less guilty allowing campers – especially the younger ones – the chance to play on the low ropes course. It became a prominent part of sessions, giving the campers a box full of materials and allowing them to invent their own games.

Through experimentation and cooperation, the children's natural imagination shone through, creating games I couldn't have found in a resource book or imagined myself in my wildest dreams. By giving children responsibility for creating their own rules and adhering to them, they can realize the impact of their actions on others, learning fairness, maturity and respect – important life skills that will serve them well in the future as they grow up.

In an age when so much of life is governed by organized activity, it's worth remembering that a child's innate sense of freedom and creativity is a gift that should be cherished. Say yes to play – our children deserve it.





FUTURE CONSIDERATIONS

We asked campers: Why do so many campers at Tamakwa come back on staff and would you like to work at camp when you're older? BY ROBERT SARNER

JAKE PIAFSKY, 11, Ranger, Toronto, 3rd year at camp
“A lot of campers come back on staff because they really like it at camp and as their parents sent them here every summer, they feel obligated to return to work here and keep the tradition of being at Tamakwa. I'll probably come back on staff because I like it here, and for Staff Rec. My first choice would be as a Program Director because they get really good meals, they probably get paid a fair amount and they've got a lot of power.”

JOSHUA COHEN-ARCAMONE, 13, Voyageur, W. Bloomfield, MI, 6th year
“Many campers come back because they love Tamakwa and want to impact children's summers, just like counselors impacted theirs, by showing them different stacking games, and traditions, such as Hiding from Fiddes. Just like counselors did to them, they want to encourage kids to try new things, like to be in a play, to try windsurfing or sailing, maybe encourage them to go on a long trip.

Tamakwa is a beautiful place, so just being at camp is a huge benefit as a staff member. My first choice would be Junior/Senior Boy counselor because that's the best age. They know a lot and you can talk to them and get closer to them, more than you could with Foresters or Rangers. Older campers are too rowdy and do stupid things.”

CARLEIGH SAUNDERS, 13, 49er, Virginia Beach, Virginia, 1st year
“I think the main reason is that after having a great experience as a camper at Tamakwa you want to give other kids the same thing. The hardest part is you don't get to do all the fun activities that campers do. You have to work at the activities. You have to be strict at certain moments but you also get to have fun. As a camper, maybe you were homesick but now you must deal with the homesickness of your campers and make them feel ok. I'd like to be a 49er counselor but also work on clay or arts and crafts. Even if I could make more money in the city, I'd want to work at camp. You have your whole life to work in the city. Also, working a few summers at camp looks good on college applications and on your resume.”

ZACK LERANBAUM, 16, CIT, Toronto, 8th year
“I think so many campers become staff because they



love being at Tamakwa and love the people. It gives you the chance to spend more time at the place you love with good friends and allows you to get away from the city. The hardest part must be having the responsibility for the campers. You must take everything into account when you're trying to influence someone's summer as every action can affect it. I think I'll be back on staff and look forward to have a positive influence on kids and their summers. My first choice would be as a counselor, second would be fishing or hockey. Tamakwa is a really great place to be but you have to spend your summers wisely because your time here is short. You have to enjoy it while it lasts.”

CORA THORNTON-SILVER, 14, JSG, London, England, 3rd year
“Tamakwa is really great and people want to keep coming back every summer and the only way to do that when you're older is being on staff. The main attraction is all the fun you can have and all the friends you make here and all the activities you can do with the kids. You get to enjoy Tamakwa from a different perspective and do other things. Having the responsibility of a staff member is a good thing but it can also be difficult. The hardest part is you have to be a role model for your kids. I want to come back as either a

counselor or activity leader such as on windsurfing.”

ROSE JACOBS, 13, 49er, Chicago, IL, 6th year
“The moment you step onto the shores of Tamakwa, a special kind of connection forms and you never want to leave. Everybody says it's their home away from home and they want to come back every summer so they can take a break from their city life, relax and have fun for two months. Part of the attraction of being staff is also your friends. Being on staff with them allows you to experience a whole new chapter of friendship. The transition from camper to staff must be hard. As a camper, you're here to have fun, to play games, to experience the magic of camp. But on staff, you're here to work. You're in a professional environment. You have a lot more responsibility because the camp is paying you to work. So you have to do everything right. The best part is looking at your campers and thinking: I can influence their lives like my staff influenced my life when I was a camper. I haven't really delved into my future yet because I'm only 13 but if I'm on staff, I'd like to start as a junior counselor because you have to start somewhere and get in the swing of being on staff before you can become the boss of everybody. Eventually, if I'd stay here, I'd want to be a Senior Girl

counselor or Clay Director and maybe a 49er/Pioneer Section Head.”

ADAM RAAB, 14, Voyageur, Farmington Hills, MI, 7th year
“Tamakwa is such a beautiful place campers fall in love with it and it's natural they want to come back on staff. The biggest difference is the responsibility of taking care of campers, and making sure they are on time. The best part are the privileges: you can go to Staff Rec every night, you can use the pay phones, you get a day off to go into town or stay at camp sleeping. I hope to come back either as a counselor or hockey director.”

DAVID HERMELIN, 10, Ranger, Bingham Farms, MI, 4th year
“So many work on staff because they love the environment of Tamakwa. The biggest difference is you're no longer paying for it and you're not the one being told what to do but rather the one telling others what to do. The most difficult part is if your campers don't listen to you or having to attend the GSMs (General Staff Meetings). My counselor groans every time he hears there will be a GSM. Staff Rec must be the most fun. You get good food and use the Staff Rec lounge. That's one of the reasons I hope to work on staff. Also, I want to help kids experi-

ence what I've experienced at camp. My first choice would be as camp director, and if not, starting as a counselor with the goal of becoming camp director.”

ABBEY BLENDER, 15, 49er, Bloomfield Hills, MI, 7th year
“When you have a great experience as a camper, you want to come back and help other campers have an amazing summer like you did. I'm sure it's not all easy. When you're a camper, you get to choose your activities and what interests you. But on staff, you stay at the same activity the whole day and can't really partake in a lot of activities. That's a big change. Controlling campers can be hard, especially if you have difficult kids. What's best is probably that you have a lot more freedom, Staff Rec, you can stay up later with your friends, and you can phone your parents and friends.

I plan to be on staff because I've had such a great experience as a camper. My preference would be as a counselor for a 49er or Pioneer cabin as I like looking after children. Even if I could make more money in the city, I'd still be here because there's no place like Tamakwa.”

RYAN KOHN, 10, Ranger, Miami, FL, 4th year
“People love Tamakwa so much and want to come back every year, and share it with campers. The hardest part is having to do stuff you don't want to do, such as cleaning toilets, serving in the Dining Hall, land duty, tower duty and night duty. It's a big responsibility.

Most campers our age get a bit hyper and start running around and make it difficult for staff. The main benefits on staff must be Staff Snack, Staff Rec, you get food before everybody else, and you get to do stacking games. I'd love to be on staff because camp is so much fun and you get to spend time with your friends, and working in the city is harder labour than at camp. I'd want to be Landsports Director. If not that, then Program Director or Boys Camp Director, or I'd like to have Libby's job, taking photographs, being friends with lots of people and cutting people's hair and stuff like that.”

BEN GOLDFARB, 13, Voyageur, Toronto, 1st year
“The best way to stay connected to camp is to be on staff. It's great to have control over a bunch of campers and being able to make their summer as amazing as possible, knowing you're the middle man between the campers and their having fun. Also to have Staff Rec, Staff Snack and to

choose what campers do for Cabin Night. The biggest challenge is having more restrictions because as a camper, with the counselor's permission, you can do a lot of stuff. On staff, you have to keep your campers in check and follow all the guidelines that Craig and Vic set for you. Or else things can happen and you can be fired. The responsibility might be difficult but I think I could handle it. If I was in debt and needed money, I'd take a city job, but if I just wanted to have fun, help kids out and do something more satisfying, I'd work at camp. My first pick would be anything connected to landsports or music.”

ALISON BEALLOR, 14, 49er JSG, Toronto, 7th year
“Growing up as a camper, you really look up to your counselors. They show you how to be a proper camper and have the best time and fulfill everything you ever wanted at camp. So it's always expected that after you're a camper you come back on staff to experience getting closer with a bunch of campers and showing them the tradition and spirit of camp.

I imagine it can be hard at first because as a camper you're so used to being told what to do, but when you're on staff, you must instruct your campers on what to do. I'd like to be a counselor and even if I could make more in the city, I'd rather work at Tamakwa because I know I'd be happier at camp and that's what's important.”

BLAKE ZAMLER, 10, Ranger, Franklin, MI 4th year
“A lot of people come back on staff because they want to be honoured for their Bar or Bat Mitzvah in their 13th summer at Tamakwa. It's also the best place on earth to be, even if you have to work. On staff, you get the power to do stacking games in the Dining Hall and it's pretty cool to talk to campers as a counselor because you only knew it as a camper listening to your counselors. Also, you get Staff Rec, and you get paid, even if most staff come here more for the joy of camp than the money.

The hardest part, if you're a counselor, is probably the canoe trips. You have a lot of responsibility, you have to do a lot of paddling, you have to stern the canoe, you have to pitch the tents and build the fires on time. At camp, the worst is getting everyone to the activities as you don't want a Missing Person Drill. I hope to return on staff to be Program Director, Landsports Director, or a Senior Boys counselor. I don't care about the Bar Mitzvah, I just want to be at Tamakwa for as long as possible.”

VISITING DAY REVISITED

For one former Tamakwa, returning to the sunny shores of South Tea on V-Day proves his retirement from camp is now complete BY JAMES ROBINSON

Camp memories will stay with you forever. I believe it says that somewhere in the Tamakwa brochure, as it should because they positively do. Beyond being a great time during camp, Tamakwa endows its campers and staff with rich memories that make us better people in the real world. Instead of reading the news when I'm bored at work, sometimes I stare into space and think about camp.

Combine enough of these reveries with googling Algonquin Park, and then you read articles by the Friends of Algonquin, and then you friend them for their weather reports of the Park, and suddenly Josh Freed has made the call to the Portage Store to reserve a few packs and a canoe... and lo and behold, you're going to Tamakwa in late July for Visiting Day!

After God knows how many years at camp – just kidding, it was nine – you're finally returning there. But be forewarned (as my mother warned me): Visiting Day can be bittersweet.

This past summer, I had the fortune to pull into camp from a bona fide canoe trip, on Visiting Day no less. Waking up early on Burnt Lake for a quick fish and paddling across glassy Smoke Lake, past the quiet landing (no thronging masses this year), all to be greeted by our old camp friends put me back a few

summers ago. Except once I stepped on to the gravel and Craig reminded me to put some shoes on, I felt oddly apart. This is not to say that I didn't experience a warm welcome; I certainly did, but as a guest.

Let me explain. You walk up to Main Camp and everything seems exactly the same as I remember it – the kids playing nok hockey or a game of land; the older kids shuffling along moodily with their friends; even some of your old friends are there. You're relieved that they have carried on without you, though a bit disappointed.

Initially, conversation with the old gang is excited – you get the facts: this person is with this person, that person with this person – but it's not the same. It can't be, because that quality of intimacy comes only from spending weeks together. And former campers now morphed into staff baffle you. The whole day is like roaming around the living world as an invisible ghost.

I left Visiting Day exhausted. The few hours in camp stuck with me awhile, as I went over in my mind what had changed. It no longer feels like I'm leaving camp. After two years away from Tamakwa, the retirement is complete, a fact I'm having trouble squaring with my vow to return next summer. Bitter? Sweet? The day was a miniature summer.



GOING THE DISTANCE

What does it mean to go from being a Trailblazer struggling with a paddle to being a Senior Girls counselor carrying a heavy canoe? BY GABI STONE

Sweat poured down the sides of my face. My arms were lifeless limbs. My legs buckled under the weight. And my neck...80 pounds of an incredibly large and extremely heavy Grumman canoe pressed on the nape of my neck as I trudged through the forest on an 1,800-meter portage on the river from Otterslide to Happy Isle. It was, I thought to myself, like nothing I'd ever been on before. Then again, I'd never carried a canoe either.

Canoe trips have always been the highlight of my summers at Camp Tamakwa. From overnights as a Trailblazer to my 15-day trip Senior Girl summer, I loved paddling the crystal-line lakes, sitting by the crackling fire and laughing with friends.

There was only one thing I dreaded: portaging. As I would collapse under the weight of the pack on my back, I would look to my counselors for inspiration. They carried the much-heavier canoes as if they were as light as feathers. At the end of a portage, they would flip the canoes off their backs and give us huge smiles, as if carrying that beast of a canoe was no big deal.

This summer, on my five-day canoe trip with the Senior Girls, I was the one with the canoe – and I was struggling. I quickly realized that carrying the Grumman halfway down the ballfield path is nothing compared to a true portage on a canoe trip. The upper body strength I thought I had? Nonexistent. The fellow staff member walk-

ing alongside me, ready for a teepee? She had her own canoe. On that portage, it was just Algonquin Park, the canoe and me, a situation I found less than enthralling.

I wasn't even close to finishing the portage, and the canoe – more than half my weight – grew relentlessly heavier with each step. As I slowly walked the path, I remembered my counselors, and thought of how they would act in this situation.

As a camper, I would watch as my counselors carried canoes, but I never thought how difficult it might be. I never realized how much effort was needed to keep such a heavy thing stable on one's neck, much less walk long distances with it. What's more, I never once saw any of



them complain. My counselors masked the pain with a smile. They maintained a positive attitude through the portage and encouraged their campers to reach the end of the trail.

As a counselor, it was now my turn to flash that post-portage smile. I was going to show my positivity

and help my campers to the portage's finish line – just as my counselors had done for me.

While I only staffed a five-day this summer, it proved one of the most memorable canoe trips of my camp career. It's incredible to think that a little Trailblazer like me, who

could barely carry a paddle on the Joe Lake portage, could, 10 years later, carry a canoe around the Park. Growing up through canoe trips – the good and the bad aspects – is an integral part of Tamakwa culture – and it's something I wouldn't trade for all the golden days in the sky.

IN GOOD TASTE

A tripper shares the recipes for some of his greatest culinary creations in the bush BY MATT ROSNER

Being a tripper at Camp Tamakwa means you wear many different hats over the course of a trip. These include guardian, comedian, pseudo-doctor, fire builder, teacher, and sterner. One role for which I had a particular passion for was that of trip chef.

Cooking is something I've been passionate about since I was in my single digits and it's something I do for myself and family on a regular basis. No matter how bad the food turns out, they still pay the chef compliments.

In contrast, as a trip chef, you are not allowed to mess up a meal. Campers have no problem letting you know how bad your food is. This summer was my time to step up my game with new ingredients, spices, and getting back to the basics.

Throughout the season, I learned many new recipes and techniques that helped make trip food one of the highlights of my camping experience. Thanks to the feedback from my campers this past summer, I wanted to share two of my recipes with readers of the *South Tea Echo*.

Fortunately, you don't need to be on a canoe trip in Algonquin Park to appreciate these tasty dishes. A firepit in your backyard will suffice. Call up your local camp friends, get out there with some pots and pans, a fire grate, all of the ingredients you'll need, get cooking, and pretend you're on a canoe trip, having a feast next to the majestic waters of Opeongo Lake.



Spaghetti and Meat Sauce

(Serves 6-12 depending on age of campers)

- 2.5 lbs. ground beef
- 1.5 generous handfuls of long grain pasta
- 4 white mushrooms
- 1 large carrot
- 2 green peppers
- 2 large white onions
- 2 tbs. minced garlic (fresh)
- 1 small Nalgene of tomato sauce (3-4 cups)
- oil
- salt
- pepper
- paprika
- basil
- thyme
- oregano
- brown sugar
- cinnamon

Pre cooking

1. Have campers collect lots of wood
2. Make a fire in the fire-pit, and let it burn down to embers
3. Put more wood in for desired heat level and begin cooking

To cook noodles (15 minutes)

1. Bring billy pot of water to a boil
2. Once boiling, add one tsp. salt, oil, and noodles. Keep

stirring noodles so they don't stick or burn to the pot.

3. Taste noodles often until they taste ready to eat (10-15 min)
4. Drain billy pot and set off to the side until sauce is ready.

To make sauce (25-30 minutes)

1. Finely chop all vegetables and throw into well-oiled hot pan. Sauté vegetables until the carrots lose their crunch.
 2. Add the ground beef to the vegetables and keep tossing and stirring until the beef has browned. While stirring, add 1 tsp. of pepper, 1 tsp. of paprika, evenly sprinkle a mix of basil, oregano, garlic, and thyme to taste.
 3. Add the tomato sauce to the pan and continue to toss and stir it.
 4. To finish the sauce, add a pinch or two of cinnamon (not enough is better than too much, so be conservative), one or two tbs. brown sugar, and salt to taste.
- Lastly, combine the noodles and sauce, serve... and enjoy.

Creamy Mac N' Cheese

(Serves 6-12 depending on age of campers)

- 6 cups elbow macaroni
- 15 slices of Kraft Singles processed cheese
- 2 tbs. butter/margarine
- 1 onion (finely chopped)
- 1 cup of milk
- Lawrey's Season Salt

To cook noodles (30 minutes)

1. Bring billy pot of water to a boil
2. Once boiling, add one tsp. salt, oil, and noodles. Keep stirring noodles so they don't stick or burn to the pot.
3. Taste noodles often until

they taste ready to eat (10-15 min)

4. Drain billy pot, and add milk, butter over a medium heat fire. Begin mixing in cheese slices until melted and evenly distributed in pot.
5. Remove from heat and serve.

Personal favourite: Sprinkle Lawrey's Season Salt to taste, and add one tbs. of chopped onions to your serving for a nice crunch and spice. Happy cooking!

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WOMEN GONE WILD

What a intrepid male tripper discovered about the opposite gender when he took out several all-girls canoe trips BY MARC SOBERANO



Campers and staff frequently say to me, “I love going on canoe trips but I would never be a tripper...YOU SMELL!”

Then, after people get to know me better, they often say, “Oh, I get it. Marc’s just a weirdo.” While I may not disagree with that assessment of me, I don’t believe that’s why I still find it incredibly fun to be out on trip all summer long.

After three summers at the stern of my beloved

Grumman ‘Maria’ and more than 100 Algonquin Park campsites behind me, I still love being a tripper more than anything else in the world. For me, every trip is its own adventure and source of satisfaction. Every journey brings its own set of challenges and twists that as trippers we are forced to unravel and turn into positive memories.

This past summer, my main challenge – or, should

I should say, mandate? – involved a new responsibility for me. At times, it was frightening. At times, it was engaging. At times, it was educational. At times, it was more mystifying than any twist I’ve ever been asked to untwist. The assignment? Being in charge of girls trips.

Of my 37 days on trip during the summer, my only trip with boys camp was an overnighter. In late June, when I received my

schedule, I believed one of the main dividends of my work was going to be discovering the secrets of the female mind. Two months later, I came to the conclusion it would take a ninja with far more wisdom than I possess to fully understand my opposite gender. That’s not to say I didn’t learn a few things on these trips, which I’m glad to share with you.

On my first trip of the summer, a first year 49er 5-day, I was taught the term ‘trip-pretty’. There was a time in my life when I believed prettiness had no boundaries. Now I understand that no female is truly pretty unless she can maintain her status as a ‘prettysman’ (one who is pretty) after five days of sweat, mud, and impetigo.

My second trip was the Senior Girls’ 15-day. If I were to tell you everything I learned on this adventure, I would be a marked man at camp. Nevertheless, here are a few revelations I experienced that may serve as tips to help you survive in the woods with 15-year-old girls.

Firstly, sunbutter is never safe. While no tripper could ever pack enough salami to fill up nine boys’ bellies, the girls skip the protein and fight for sugary, allergy-friendly alterna-



tives. In the future, I will fill a full food barrel with sunbutter to avoid any potential stabbings over the last scoop.

Secondly, I learned that girls are far more boy-crazy than I had previously been led to believe. For all you fathers of Foresters: chicks dig swimmers. Drop what you are doing and sign your children up for lessons now!

The second session brought about the JSG 8-day Temagami trip. For newcomers, the G in JSG stands for girls. Much like my 15-day girls a couple of weeks earlier, the JSG girls reminded me there really is a difference between men and women as they kept me in an almost perpetual state of confusion and wonderment. But I was terribly

moved by the way they took me in and treated me like a friend. No less impressive was the way they supported each other through the silver days, and chuckled through the golden ones.

What I really learned during the summer is that somewhere beneath (make that deep beneath) the bickering, pinching and hair pulling, girls just love to talk. Both the campers and staff just want to chat, hear about your life, talk about their own and really just be friends.

My position as ‘Female Tripper’ this summer allowed me to make friends with a whole side of camp I had hardly met before 2012, and I now feel more a part of the Tamakwa family than ever. Thanks girls, we made it!

NO SMALL DETAIL

Due to the fire-ban resulting from a lack of rain, canoe trips faced the challenge of a flame-free experience BY JAMES HUMPSTON



Good canoe trips are the sum of small pleasures. They are long days of hard travel followed by a meal cooked over a firepit, stories told around a campfire, hot chocolate and toasted marshmallows savoured late at night, and maybe a handful of green leaves thrown on the fire to smoke away the mosquitoes.

Notice what these things have in common? But the summer of 2012 was different. Much of it was just too damn hot and

dry for a campfire. Weeks of high temperatures and very little rain made just about everything in Algonquin Park highly flammable.

Ontario’s Ministry of Natural Resources – rightfully afraid the resulting tinderbox would go up in a giant inferno at the mere suggestion of a spark – issued a fire ban for the entire area. For anyone traveling in the backcountry, it meant absolutely no campfires at all. Instead, after a hard day of paddling

and portaging, trippers had to cook over a small propane stove.

As simple as they are, these stoves are frustrating to use. Valves jam or break, propane runs out at inconvenient times, and a strong wind will take enough heat off the flame to render it effectively useless. Water takes forever to boil and a careless misstep can send the entire night’s dinner toppling into the dirt.

I would never say the fire ban ruined our trips, but it did change the campsite dynamic. Pulling a can of propane out of a utility pack is not the same as heading out among the trees in search of firewood. Turning a valve and holding a match to an invisible stream of gas is far less satisfying than skillfully arranging strips of birch bark and dry twigs to create the elusive one-match fire.

And standing around a small stove hissing out an angry blue flame pales in comparison to standing around the warm glow of a campfire. Sure, the end result is the same: both can

be used to cook a hot meal for a group of hungry travelers, but the experience is vastly altered.

I enjoy a good campfire as much as anybody, but it took the ban to make me realize just how much a fire brings a group together. It draws people out of their tents on a cold evening and becomes a campsite’s central focus, a natural gathering point of literal and figurative warmth. It’s a place to sit around and share stories and jokes, or even just something to stare at and occasionally poke with a stick. Regardless of what we did around the fire, at least we would do it together.

Without our fires, we tended to scatter to our sleeping bags as the evening set in and the mosquitoes set out. The inside of a tent is a much more attractive option than the dark open ground of a fireless campsite.

The simple tradition of ending a hard day with a hot fire was lost to us. Our days were still full of adventure but our nights



seemed a little empty.

The fire ban was not without justification. Shortly after it was announced, a forest fire raged dangerously close to the northeast

border of Algonquin Park. I was close by, leading a trip at the time, close enough to warrant a special visit and a warning from the rangers in the Park plane.



MAKING TRACKS ON GIRLS HILL

A walk on some hallowed ground reminds three staffers how their formative years at Tamakwa not only shaped them as campers, but as people, too BY SKYE OPTICAN, DEVYN OLIN AND SASHA STAHL

This is a tale unique to Camp Tamakwa, one that has written itself time and time again over the years. This latest version involves an often overlooked yet telling transitional timeline that extends from the infant steps of Radiant to the senior strides of Sunbeam.

On a casual Tuesday twilight stroll this past summer, we embarked on a route negotiated by many, but acknowledged by few. Standing on the picnic table

that's encircled by the three Trailblazer cabins (Radiant, Namakootchie, and Opalescent), we observed the daily lifestyle of Tamakwa's youngest ladies. The sense of timeless déjà vu was profound.

The fresh scent of recently applied sunscreen, the high-pitched giggles and the latest Top 40 tunes escape through the mesh-screened windows. The littlest girls, obedient to their counselor's requests, waddle out of their cabin doors

with all the necessities that ensure a successful day at camp: water bottle, hat, lifejacket, towel, and a raincoat – just in case.

The sight and sounds of these campers trigger a strong feeling of nostalgia among us as we reminisce about our youthful days as Trailblazers. It was a charmed, carefree existence where only tuck, passing your white cap, and twilight nok hockey tournaments matter. Overcoming the challenges of homesick-

ness and adapting to the cabin dynamic were the first steps that enabled us to flourish as young Tamakwans.

We then proceed to Pioneer territory after taking 15 careful steps, maneuvering through the uneven terrain of jagged, slanted rocks. This brings us to Bert, Opeongo, Lavielle and Ernie: home to the tween-aged campers. A musical mix of show tunes, pop, and rap provide a score that exemplifies the diverse

tastes of Pioneers. Littering the area are errant pages of Archie comics and ripped envelopes left over from recently received mail from family and friends.

Chatting about last night's evening program and individual choice sign-up, the girls make their way to third period promptly at 2:25 pm (after a non-restful Rest Hour). The clashing scents of bug spray and perfume for Friday night symbolize the contrast between young and old.

Looking back, we remember this transitional phase as one that helped teach us to be more independent. Adjusting to life without first servings of Monday's brunches and pointer rides to cookout, we were introduced to bunk beds, cheers about Rangers, and the importance of striving to reach high awards.

Toward the end of Girls Hill, the oldest campers traipse along the path, floating in and out of Eustache and Sunbeam, confidently holding court in their home away from home. These girls dress in borrowed and exchanged garb as they sing the lyrics to borderline explicit songs. The stench of long-trip sleeping bags hanging over porches and the aroma of freshly applied deodorant contrast nicely with one another. The campers' dialogue is always louder than necessary and their teenage confidence shines through. Between reminiscing about last night's campfire and anticipating the ever

popular camp dance, the 49ers are "A-W-E-S-O-M-E; they're awesome, they're awesome, like totally. Their "awesomeness" is admired by their counselors and younger campers alike, as they serve as role models for the rest of camp.

Thinking back not that many years ago, we now realize that being leaders in camp was not only a responsibility but also a privilege. Being a 49er was more than being a Colour War captain and cheering the loudest in the Dining Hall, a realization that unfortunately comes usually with hindsight. As the oldest campers, our true purpose was to keep traditions alive, enhance Tamakwans' rich spirit, and set a positive example for our peers.

Our walk draws to a close when we arrive at Robbie's Point, a communal space for all those who dwell on Girls Hill. The evolution from Trailblazer to 49er is integral to one's camp experience. Traveling along the Hill, we acknowledge how our formative years at Tamakwa not only shaped us as campers, but as people too.

The much-loved dock at Robbie's Point, shared by young and old and the site of so many great memories, marks the end of our journey. We take great satisfaction in knowing that the path behind us continues to be explored and experienced by present-day and future girls of Tamakwa. Long may it nurture and inspire them.

A MAN OF MANY ROLES

Michael's Kaufman's history at Tamakwa dates back decades and covers a number of key positions at camp, especially on stage. BY SKYE OPTICAN AND SASHA STAHL

For many Tamakwans, Michael Kaufman is an elusive figure. That's largely because he's only at camp for a couple of weeks each summer, much of which he spends inside the Rec Hall working on a new drama production. The fruit of his labour is much better known than he is.

Michael's involvement with Tamakwa dates back decades. He began his camp career in 1973 at the age of 10 and has since played diverse roles there (no pun intended).

His passion for the stage first manifested itself when he performed in *Jungle Book* in 1973. The next summer, he was a chorus member in *Finian's Rainbow*, the first time he performed in a play directed by the legendary Paul Steinhauer. He was also in Paul's next three productions – *Oklahoma*, *The Pajama Game* and *How To Succeed in Business Without Really Trying* – in which he had major roles and overcame any

semblance of stage fright.

Since then, Michael's interest in and love of drama steadily intensified, leading him to earn a Bachelor in Fine Arts from the University of Michigan in musical theater and to make his career in that field. Today, when not at camp, he's the Director for the Performing Arts, and the TV and Broadcast Media Teacher at the Pankow Center in L'Anse Creuse Public Schools in Clinton Township, Michigan where he also directs musicals at a local high school.

During a break from overseeing rehearsals of *Seussical the Musical* that he directed, Michael sat down for an interview with *South Tea Echo* reporters Skye Optican and Sasha Stahl.

Q: Let's begin with a brief overview of your Tamakwa career.

A: I was a camper from 1973 to 1978, and after skipping a summer to participate in a production of *Fiddler on the Roof* at



Southfield Lathrup High School, I returned in 1980 when camp asked me to be Drama Director at the premature age of 18. I really think I was the youngest activity leader at that time. Paul Steinhauer was my mentor, so I tried to emulate his expansive plays.

After I was Drama Director, I decided to be the Canoe Director because canoeing was my way to relax during stressful rehearsals. I received my

Voyageur canoeist in 1982 and became Canoe Director the next year. I left camp for a bunch of years, but then came back as a senior counselor in 1989. I did everything completely backwards (laughs).

In 1990, I was the Assistant Program Director with Gary August, and Program Director in 1991 and then I left camp for 20 years. After the 75th anniversary reunion in 2010, Vic and Craig asked me if I wanted to come back to camp and do something, but they didn't know what. We agreed that I could come back to direct the play for a couple of weeks as a guest director, pulling a Paul Steinhauer.

What's the biggest challenge facing Tamakwa theater today?

I think what's happening to Tamakwa theater is that it's competing against 16 - 20 other activities, thus creating a smaller staff. It's now harder to make drama a top priority at camp. On top of all that, the abun-

dance of canoe trips leads to more kids being out of camp, making it more difficult to get a full and dedicated cast.

What was it like directing *Seussical the Musical* this summer? Did you think the performance was a success?

Back in 1982, *Godspell* was a similar production, where we had a roving show that moved from the Dining Hall outwards. The band was located on a truck that the audience followed. With *Seussical*, I felt that the jungle scene should be recreated in an outdoor setting, so we performed it in Main Camp. Doing something that hadn't been done in a while made it more interesting and fun for the cast of campers. It was something different and fresh. We had a great group of kids, and we all had so much fun working together. *Seussical* will stand out as one of my favorite plays at Tamakwa.

What other productions have been your favourites?

I think *A Chorus Line* in 1982 and *You're A Good Man Charlie Brown* were among my favourites. They were easier to rehearse due to the smaller, intimate

cast. The actors were better prepared and the final product was incredibly polished.

Do you have any suggestions for the current theater program?

Retaining a director for more than a summer would be helpful because the person needs to also understand how to be a part of the camp shtick. It's very difficult to work in this environment. Secondly, drama needs to be a priority again for the campers and staff. It would be great if counselors got involved in the audition process, as their enthusiasm would be contagious for the kids.

What do you predict your future at camp will look like?

I don't know. When you leave camp for 20 years not knowing that you're going to come back, you just take it a day at a time. At this point, I don't know exactly what next summer has in store for me but I hope to be at camp for at least a part of the summer to help in some fashion. I've worked at camp for almost every decade since the 1970s, so if I can keep the streak going, that would be really awesome.

READY FOR ANYTHING

Reflections on the best nursing job in the world after three satisfying summers as a Tamakwa nurse BY CHRISTINA LAWRENCE, RN

Two months of the year, I am a much-in-demand mom with my hands full. I have about 400 children of all ages. Their needs cover the range of medical afflictions attended to by a mother; from nosebleeds to minor scrapes to bruised egos. I tend to all my children – even if I think some might be faking it.

When I first came to Tamakwa to be a nurse, I had no idea what it actually entailed. As a young nursing student, I was afraid I would not get enough work experience at a children's summer camp where the campers are reasonably

healthy.

Boy, was I wrong! Pneumonia, dislocated bones, fevers and oh so many rashes of unknown origin.

Being a camp nurse has given me more experience than I could have hoped for as a student. It has taught me patience and tested my patience...a lot. Over the past three summers, I have successfully become an expert lice picker, a boo-boo care specialist, and a whiz at the infamous homesick tummy ache. I always know to have extra ice ready for all-day programs and Colour Wars. I have Tums and Pepto-Bismol sitting out



after chicken wing night, and of course hugs prepped for after parents leave on Visitors Day and drop off days.

I learned that when a child says he has a stick in

his foot, it really means he has a splinter in his toe. Unless, of course, you are Nate Zahn who literally had a stick in his leg. So whether you call me camp nurse or camp mom, I

would accept either of those with great pride.

I've heard it said that camp nurses get a lot of free time, and although I won't completely deny this, there's a lot to the job that most people don't see. For starters, there are numerous campers with varying daily medications that must be handed out once, twice, even three times a day. Also, with 17 long trips going out this past summer, we had to pack so many daily and as-needed medications in addition to a very comprehensive first aid kit. Let's I forget: There are ever-lasting clinic calls and the late night sick visitors.

We are on call 24/7 for more than 250 campers and 130 staff. Perhaps the most tiring aspect of all is that in the back of our heads we are constantly

thinking about the health and safety of everyone at camp. Being a returning nurse, the pressure becomes more intense every year as you grow attached to the children. With all of this though, I cannot think of a better nursing job in the world. One summer day I am tanning on the swimming docks on South Tea Lake and the next day I am having lunch with Mitchell August in Huntsville on a hospital trip.

Although I will likely not be able to return to Tamakwa in 2013, the three summers I've spent as camp nurse will always be among the best times of my life. I will always have my memories of the great time in and out of the Clinic and know that they will eventually lead me back to Tamakwa one day.

WHAT IT'S ALL ABOUT

Some people say, "Camp isn't like it was when we were there." According to one Tamakwa doctor, nothing could be further from the truth BY DR. PETER LIPSON

She didn't even look back. For the first time, my daughter, Ali, was taking the camp bus to Tamakwa, and as she and her friends climbed up the stairs, we became invisible.

It was not her first summer going to Tamakwa. I've been bringing Ali up to camp during my week as camp doctor, so this was going to be her fifth sum-

mer, but it's different when you go up without Daddy – different and better.

As I ate breakfast before Clinic call, she walked past the Staff Dining Hall with some friend I'd never met, waved, and kept going.

Being the doctor at Tamakwa is a chance to be an uncle to everyone. I can spend a morning taking out splinters, an afternoon teaching canoeing, and an



evening reading by a fire. Watching the kids break free from the Dining Hall

is incredible – their energy never ends. And when I'm with them, neither does mine.

I've heard people say, "Camp isn't like it was when we were there," or, "the kids are different these days." As far as I'm concerned, nothing could be further from the truth. When I look at these kids, the faces have changed (a little... I went to camp with

a lot of their parents) but the experience, skills and friendships are the same.

That's why I wanted so badly for my daughter to love camp as much as I did and do. Tamakwa is about many things – most of the people who stood up at my wedding were Tamakwas, friends I had made during my first or second year as a camper.

Just as important, I want my daughter to learn independence and self-confidence. Where better? Any tripper will tell you, "Everyone carries something." Campers

learn quickly, on trip and in camp, that they have to cooperate to succeed, and that they have the strength and ability to do so. When they succeed, the more confident they grow. Kids learn just how much they can really do, and they become more independent.

Independence, cooperation: these things help create a mature and friendly child who grows into a successful adult, and at camp, they learn this from the day they step off the boat. And they'll carry this and their friends with them for the rest of their lives.



WHAT IT TAKES

Many things, big and small, go into a winning summer. The Tamakwa Museum exhibits a new collection of items that evoke the 2012 season

The Tamakwa Museum serves a vital purpose. As the official repository of seminal artifacts generated each summer, it has an historic role in helping preserve the ongoing story of camp. Recently, after great deliberation, the curators of the Tamakwa Museum, all

members of the 2012 Head Staff in good standing, made their much-anticipated selection of objects to preserve for posterity. The curators will be taking turns giving tours of the museum in its underground shelter on Adventure Island every day except Good Friday and Schlect Tuesday.

1. Peter's moustache
2. Scott's orange toque
3. The hat from Cat in the Hat
4. Fran's knit toque
5. Mitch and Koen's wet clothing from their tipped canoe adventure
6. Carly Sternberg's backpack



7. Avigian's Trip-O-Meter listing the chances he'd actually go on trip (and get evacuated)
8. A PFD life jacket
9. One of Big Nate's and Jared's morning protein shakes
10. A photo of the epic new deep end ladder at the swim dock
11. Some fox poop from one of our three foxes
12. A candle from one of

- the Coffee House Staff Rec progrms
13. The sound of skateboarding coming from Bayview
14. A bear trap
15. Meat from Deli Night
16. Two halves of Joey Wolberg's front teeth
17. A bag of Shayni's sunflower seeds from Israel
18. A Hebrew National hot dog
19. One lice treatment
20. A mouse trap

21. A group photograph of each of the 17 long canoe trips
22. A list of campers from one of eight Intercamp days



23. Hoedaddy's canoe neck
24. The missing drum from Tamagama
25. Francie's black wig
26. One Transport Canada-approved boat first aid kits
27. The sound of jewelry being made at Pulled Porch
28. One new propane stove for canoe trips
29. One of the three Tiger Suits worn by Ropes staff



30. "My heart will go on" on a continuous loop
31. The iceberg from CIT Banquet
32. One "DJ Add Audio" sticker
33. The branch that went

- through the windshield of Tamakwa!
34. Little Nate's roller skates
35. One video of the P-Store staff closing out Karaoke Night
36. A piece of Sue's yummy kugel
37. A piece of the sword that injured Zach Weinerman's eye
38. One of many glow sticks from the Survivor break
39. The dock map/plan for organizing all of the boats on Visiting Day
40. Vic's bugle
41. Pete's impression of Vic bugling



42. A button from Colour War
43. One feather from Skippy, the one footed pigeon, R.I.P.
44. A picture of Jeff's car in Main Camp on Departure Day



45. A whisker from James Humpston's beard
46. A pair of jean shorts from Tobias Tuesday
47. A video of one of Peter's one-man shows
48. Our tipped staff canoe from the canoe race with

- Taylor Statten Camps
49. An ember from the post-fire ban eternal flame in Main Camp Fireplace



50. Another introduction of Andrew Carr
51. Tika's and Snaige's blossoming friendship
52. The pack left on the Joe Lake portage
53. A 5-foot long boa constrictor from the in-camp presentation
54. The softball from Asher Raduns-Silverstein's incredible 12-and-Under grand slam
55. Chaz Frank's ukulele



LEAVE IT TO FRANCIE

As Director of the Junior Tamakwan program over the past two summers, Francie Hermelin has proven an exemplary leader of the JT campers and staff **BY PETER VOOYS**

Francie Hermelin Levite is an accomplished woman.

A fast perusal of her curriculum vitae will easily confirm this to any skeptic. Author, publisher, entrepreneur, graphic designer, producer, philanthropist, community organizer, political organizer, family organizer, food allergy specialist, and mother of three, FHL has her hands in a lot of pies.

Add Junior Tamakwan Director to that already formidable list of titles. In charge of all the youngest Tamakwa campers, their counsellors, and their concerned parents, Francie approaches the job like she does all her endeavors: with passion.

Francie is celebrated for her high energy, passionate care giving, respect and concern for her staff, innovative children's engagement, constant creativity and truly honest approach to everything she touches. There can be no better qualities for the director of the youngest age group in camp. Many in the camp community refer to

her as "the Best".

Not to mention that Francie is in a word: Cool. New York magazine even featured her and husband Adam Levite (Tamakwa Windsurf Director in 1987) in an article about cool parents (Grups) finding success in raising passionate kids. (See "Up with the Grups" in the March 26, 2006 issue of New York). She is the epitome of the old saying, "It's cool to care," and quite the opposite of the saying "too cool for school."

"We want passionate kids," Francie tells New York. "And I think that by us doing the things that we love to do, that models that passion for our kids."

She was referring to her own children, but could have just as easily been referring to her camp kids. Francie never missed a swim period – complete with bathing cap – never missed a bedtime, never missed an evening program, never missed an opportunity to dress up and be silly, never missed opportunities to catch up and get to know her staff.



Francine was always busy, and much like her life outside camp, always engaged in 1,000 things at once. She is one to look for opportu-

nities to become involved in, to make sure her section is involved in a way that is meaningful for them. This summer was

her 14th at Tamakwa, the sixth on staff after being a camper for eight summers. She began as a Trailblazer in 1976 and since then has worked her way up the Tamakwa totem. 2012 was her second season as JT Director, a position that has proven especially gratifying for her.

"I love meeting each child and decoding what makes them feel great and secure and what excites them at camp," says Francie. "Of course, it's the staff in the trenches who really bring that to light, but I enjoy the opportunity and privilege to brainstorm, guide and encourage them in that process."

When she returned to Tamakwa in 2011 after a 20-year hiatus, she was struck by how much it had changed and by how much it hadn't.

"Remarkably, much about camp remains the same," says Francie, 43. "From the sense of community and continuity to the celebration of kids' personalities and accomplishments and the sense of humour, there's still so much similarity to how camp was when I was a camper and young staff member."

But Francie is quick to cite certain improvements. "The breadth of activities now is unbelievable,"

she adds. "There are so many choices of things for kids to do. There simply isn't enough time in a summer to get it all in. Also, the tripping program has evolved. Kids love their canoe trips. When we were growing up some kids loved them. Now, practically all of the kids, if not all, love them. The kids experience their life at camp as a progression from one long trip to the next longer one. I think the first girl 13-day trip began during my 49er years. I may have even seen the first 15-day trip take off. These trips are now common and some go as far as Tamagami. The tripping culture at camp is extraordinary and I feel lucky as JT director to sit as a fly on the wall during campers' post trip debriefs and hear the stories. From mapping their route and designing their menu to campfires and sleeping in tents, kids love their trips. Most of the time, kids who left feeling homesick or afraid come back filled with pride and confidence."

For Francie, Tamakwa however is not perfect. When asked if there was one thing she could change at camp, what would it be, she answered very matter of factly. "Mosquitoes and mice," she said. "I really don't like either."

**TRY
OVERNIGHT
CAMP
WITH US
FOR
JUST
1 DAY
(ages 6-10)**

TAMAKWA

TEASER DAY

DEJA VU?

Seen any of these people before? Help us place a face

Nothing like a vintage group shot to trigger a rush of nostalgic memories of former Tamakwans, some remembered more fondly than others. But who are they? Can you name any of them? Are you in any of them? Here's a hint this picture dates back to August 1979.

As in previous issues of the *South Tea Echo*, we're including a decades-old photo culled from camp's heavily guarded, temperature-controlled archival vault. It's home to thousands of precious historical images dating back to the earliest days of Tamakwa. Lamentably, there's no indication of who's who in the photos. We want names.

Helps us identify the campers and staffers in this picture for the next issue of the *Echo*. We'd especially like to hear from anyone who recognizes himself/herself in this photo.

Please write echo@tamakwa.com



CONFIRMED SIGHTING

In the previous issue, we published this photo and asked readers if they could recognize anyone. Some did. See letter below.



A SPECIAL TIME IN OUR LIVES

We love the *South Tea Echo*. It's terrific. The photo from yesteryear in Issue 9 is actually our 49er cabin picture from 1957. We were so pleased to see it as it brought back so many great memories and big smiles on our faces!

We were from left to right: Back row: Gail Stein, Jill Finston, Carol Charfoos (JC), Toby Zussman (SC), Rosemary Winbaum (CIT), Linda Smith, Mary Shainhouse, Deenna Kaufman. Front row: Judy Stein, Bonnie Aarons, Linda Gold, Carol Smolev, Sheila Waylen, Sharon Cohen and Linda Dwor.

Thank you for reminding us of that wonderful summer, a very special time in our lives at camp and of the value of enduring friendships.

**Sharon Cohen
Deenna Kaufman Sigel
Toronto**

MORE THAN MEETS THE EYE

Few people work at Tamakwa all-year round. Only those who do, know what it takes during the off-season to get camp ready for the summer BY DANIEL GARFINKEL



On any given day at Tamakwa, staff and campers alike can be seen with enormous smiles while enjoying their favourite camp pursuits. Take a look at the windsurf dock and you may see a Trailblazer balancing on a windsurf board for the first time or take a peek in the art room and you may see a Ranger creating his very first tie-dyed article of clothing. While most campers understand and appreciate that such activities require proper staff supervision, few ever think of what it takes before the

summer to ensure such wonderful experiences year in and year out at Tamakwa.

For a small group of dedicated men and women, Tamakwa is a 12-month a year endeavour. With a multiple skill-set, these full-time Tamakwans work behind the scenes to help make every summer on the shores of South Tea so fun-filled, safe and memorable. Their role is critical to the success of Tamakwa, even if they're never in the spotlight. They're the ones who built and maintain the windsurf docks, ordered all

the tie-dye at the beginning of the summer, refinish the Dining Hall floors and do countless other sundry things essential to the running of a summer camp. I should know, as I've been a full-time Tamakwan for the past two years.

"Waiting-10-months-to-live-for-two-months" is a saying often repeated by campers and staff at Tamakwa. But for those of us who live camp year-round, we are always working to make it better. In addition to Vic and Craig, the full-time Tamakwa staff is split into two groups.

The first, led by Chief Engineer Ken Elder, consists of several tireless individuals who work at camp throughout the entire year. Jared Barnes is the only Tamakwan to live on-site at camp all year and can be found during the off-season keeping the camp's systems and buildings in working order. During the summer, Ric von Neumann is Woodshop Director but spends the off-season enhancing Tamakwa's facilities and being one of the all-around handiest men out there. He and his wife, Libby Sadick

von Neumann, live just across the lake from camp. As one of the most popular and hard-working figures at camp during the summer, Libby spends the off-season working at camp, helping maintain the site so others can enjoy the same experiences she did as a camper. These are the people who have built and maintained Tamakwa in recent years.

During the off-season, the second group of full-time Tamakwans toils far from the frozen shores of South Tea Lake. Instead of negotiating waist-high snowbanks, they work behind desks in urban offices. Sue Binder has done it all as a staff member at camp before becoming a full-time Tamakwan in her native Detroit. Working as Vic's assistant and the administrator of the camp's Michigan office, Sue always has her hands full tending to off-season matters relating to campers and families and staff recruitment.

Last, but hopefully not least, is me. I work in the Toronto office with Craig and Margot. In my role as Liaison to Happiness, I handle myriad duties



including work on staffing for the coming summer and improving camp's social media reach.

Now let's rewind to that typical golden day at Tamakwa where campers radiate contentment as they enjoy the wide range of facilities. For that Trailblazer getting up on the windsurf board to ride the waves, all that may matter to her is the wind. But full-time Tamakwans see the behind-the-scenes factors that helped create this little girl's smile.

From the construction and painting of the windsurf dock to the purchasing of life jackets and the different size windsurf boards and sails, to the maintenance of every board and sail, a lot more goes into each memory created at camp than meets the eye.

How about that Ranger in the art room? It's highly unlikely he's thought about the ordering of necessary supplies for the summer. Or about finding the right art supply company or the time it took to design and build the cabinets and tables in the building. These are the kinds of things full-time Tamakwans deal with on a daily basis throughout the off-season so campers never have to think about them during the summer.

Being able to make a positive contribution to camp on a year-round basis is an opportunity and responsibility full-time Tamakwans take seriously. Although a lot of our behind-the-scenes work may go unnoticed, the smiles on the faces of campers throughout the summer is gratification enough.

ONE SEASON AFTER ANOTHER

For the complete Tamakwa experience, you must live at camp all-year round. Few people ever do. BY JARED BARNES



It's late August and the last morning of camp. Campers are assembled in the Dining Hall for breakfast and their final goodbyes for another year. Bleary-eyed from being up late the night before and a bit dazed from the realization that they're about to reconnect with their usual reality, they make their way down Transportation Hill for the final voyage across Tea Lake. For many, who are sad at separating from camp for at least the next ten months, the moment is rife with emotion.

The campers have reason to already reminisce about the incredible summer they just experienced which is now drawing to a close. Another golden

summer has come to an end and the curtain is closing on it. But if this is the end of another year for most campers and staff, it's also the signal that "Fall Camp" has begun for a small number of Tamakwans.

Fall Camp takes place from late

August to roughly the beginning of October. During this time, Tamakwa hosts a variety of guests. Various school groups come to stay at camp and take advantage of its outdoor educational aspects. Some years, there are also young couples who stage their wedding parties at Tamakwa in order to experience an outdoor event of a lifetime. All groups, weather permitting, are able to take advantage of most activities Tamakwa has to offer, such as the ropes course, climbing wall, canoeing, kayaking and sailing. Some are even brave enough to test the waters for a "Polar Bear Swim."

This is also the time when larger building pro-

jects begin in addition to necessary restoration work to existing cabins. Then the water systems need to be manually shut off to every cabin. All of the "putt-putts" and pointers need to be pulled out of the water before the lake starts to freeze, which is much earlier than most Tamakwans experience in their respective cities.

Fall Camp brings about a radical change of season. As autumn rolls through Algonquin Park, initially ushering in the famed Indian summer, Tamakwa's landscape is transformed into a stunning array of brilliant colours on the countless trees and the temperatures begin to drop.

After every leaf has fallen, the ground begins to freeze. Only a few Tamakwans remain: Ken Elder, Ric and Libby von Neumann and yours truly. There's no shortage of work for us. Throughout the winter, we work tirelessly repairing anything and everything from Tamakwa's cedar canoes and benches to restoration work on the



pointers to creating and preserving the various totem poles around camp.

While much of the local wildlife is in hibernation, we're working away full-time. It's a busy time of year, made more so due to the amount of snow that falls. On average, Algonquin Park gets at least six inches a week. A lot of Tamakwa's buildings need to be reinforced with extra support beams and cabins roofs need to be shoveled clear because of the extra weight strain from the snow. One great thing about the winter is that it transforms Tamakwa into its own variable winter

wonderland.

Fast forward a bit to the beginning of spring as the last remnants of snow continue to melt and the trees begin to bud again. We can no longer walk over the frozen lake to and from camp. Still hard at work are the year-round team members now preparing for the opening of camp now only a few months away. Docks need to be repaired and painted. The water system must be reinstalled and brought back up to par. Many cabins require last-minute maintenance. Boats need to be placed back into the water and that beloved water trampoline needs to

be inflated. All this takes place against the backdrop of all-kinds of materials and other supplies for the upcoming summer being transported into camp. Daylight persists well into the evening. Soon, the kitchen staff and activity leaders begin to arrive.

Once again, almost like an annual law of nature, the sunny shores of Tamakwa host a unique community whose population steadily grows, culminating with the arrival of campers in late June and with them the beginning of the glorious summer months during which we all call Tamakwa home.

SHAKE A LEG

Tamakwans respond to the challenge of intercamp competition and reap the benefits of landsports program BY ZACH WEINERMAN

For a first-time visitor to South Tea Lake, a paddle by Tamakwa on a golden day could easily lead the person to think it's a summer camp with only water-based activities. From the lake, it's tough to see past all the windsurfers, sailors, canoeists, docks and trees to discover the camp's thriving landsports program in action. The variety of landsports is unmatched by any other activity at Tamakwa. With a selection of softball, soccer, kickball, flag football, volleyball, lacrosse, half-court tennis, roller-hockey and basketball, campers involved in landsports are generally passionate about their sports and learning new skills.

The past summer was especially action-packed and full of new experiences. With a blessing from Wakonda, most days were sun-filled, allowing plenty of time for teaching and playing. The exemplary staff members were constantly getting involved with the campers, pushing them hard to achieve new goals each day. Whether it was teaching the fundamentals, rules, or working on awards, the landsports staff members were a large part of the reason that the program ran so smoothly in 2012.

The competitiveness at landsports started immediately during the first

week of individual choice and continued all the way to summer's end. Between the intercamps at Manitou, Walden, Timberlane, Ahmek, and Northland, there was hardly ever a dull moment.

In the U12 intercamps, the coaching staff stressed teamwork and giving full effort. It was special to watch the younger campers gain confidence on the courts as they accomplished goals in the different sports.

The practices for the U16 intercamps focused on strategizing, conditioning, and other important principles required for fair competition. The strong skills and teamwork of the boys and girls led the Tamakwa Tuff Beavers to victory in many of the sports during the intercamps.

In addition to achieving success in the various sports, the campers were great role models off the courts as well. Each camp director had kind words to say about the respectfulness of Tamakwans. It was wonderful that the campers realized and demonstrated the importance of being good sports and gracious visitors.

This short article does not do full justice to the many memories and lessons learned at landsports during the incredible summer of 2012. Both the campers and staff

alike improved their skills greatly over the short two months and it was a pleasure to work with each and every one of them. The competition of sports has the ability to teach many intangible life lessons not learned in a school classroom. The campers involved in landsports learned a great deal about the sports themselves, but also about other principles no less important. It was an unforgettable summer and the countdown has already begun for the first set of games next year.



GIVING BACK

LOU AND OMER WOULDN'T WANT IT ANY OTHER WAY

In giving back to the community, Tamakwa stays true to its original values BY DANIEL GARFINKEL

Starting from the first golden days of Tamakwa in 1936, camp co-founders Unca Lou Handler and Omer Stringer worked diligently to create a community that stressed the importance of caring, compassion and generosity. Today, some 77 years later, that philosophy remains not only an inseparable part of life at camp, but is also taken home by campers and staff who are encouraged to apply these core values in their everyday lives. Collectively, Tamakwans make a huge impact. In addition to the laudable causes that campers, parents, and staff get behind as individuals, Tamakwa supports numerous charities, both local and foreign.

Unca Lou and Omer were known for being generous, selfless indi-



Ride To Conquer Cancer, Toronto

viduals. Incurably positive thinkers, they always tried to be of assistance and to help resolve any "problems" that Tamakwans might be wrestling with. Indeed, Unca Lou could often be heard saying, "There are no problems in life, just challenges."

Inspired and influenced by this heritage of helping, current Directors/

were so comfortable with the warmth and compassion of Unca Lou and Omer that they never hesitated to ask them for help or guidance."

Vic and Craig strive to instill such sound, timeless values in all Tamakwans, and hope that these principals are the ultimate takeaway from being at camp.

"The importance of bringing Tamakwa's core values back home from camp cannot be overstated," says Craig. "There are so many worthy causes and organizations dedicated to assisting people facing their own unique challenges within our communities. We feel it's our duty to help in our way."

This explains why Tamakwa has chosen numerous charities, causes, and organizations in Michigan, Toronto, and overseas to

support.

"Simply put, it's not only what Unca Lou and Omer would want us to do, it's the right thing to do," adds Craig.

There is nothing that Tamakwans take more pride in than the close-knit community both in Algonquin Park and in their respective cities and towns. As each person who steps foot at camp learns what it means to be a true Tamakwan, he or she can't help but think that somewhere both Unca Lou

Handler and Omer Stringer could not be more proud of the caring and generosity demonstrated on a daily basis by new generations of Tamakwans. It's a sentiment clearly shared by Vic.

"I think Lou and Omer would be extremely proud of the level of commitment the whole Tamakwa community demonstrates when helping others in need," says Vic. "It's amazing to see how the ideas of two people have shaped the way so many people give back to their own communities."

DOING RIGHT

The following is a list of a few charities and organizations that Tamakwa has supported in recent years

- Three 2 Be: Stems of Hope, Toronto
- Imagine a Cure for Leukemia (Camp Imagine), Toronto
- Pediatric Oncology Group of Ontario, Toronto
- ORT Camp Hermelin, Bloomfield Hills, MI
- Save A Child's Heart, Israel
- Lilah's Fund, Toronto
- Pablove Foundation, Los Angeles
- Lou Handler-Esta Kraft Day Camp Scholarship Fund, Detroit
- Friends of Algonquin Park, Ontario
- UJA Walk with Israel, Toronto
- Ride To Conquer Cancer, Toronto
- Kids in Camp Charity, Toronto
- Cedarvale Community Events, Toronto
- Mt. Sinai Hospital, Toronto
- Crohn's and Colitis Foundation, Toronto