

- On June 22, 1928, David P. Wohl gave a gift of \$10,000 for the YMHA to start a residential summer camp away from the city.
- Camp Hawthorn's first season was in 1938 with 332 campers! The first camper was Harvey Gershenson.

CAMP HAWTHORN IS BORN

The "Y" Story

A Chronicle of the Jewish Center Movement in St. Louis

June 22, 1928, witnessed another straw in the wind toward acquisition of a resident camp when announcement was made of a gift of \$10,000 from David P. Wohl for a summer camp. This generous offer could not be further developed at the time, though, and it was not until 1938 that the "Y" was able to embark on a real resident camping program.

Camp Hawthorn, operating as an autonomous agency, with Irvin Bettman, Jr., as its first chairman, announced its first year of operation on April 15, 1938. The first camper to enroll was Harvey Gershenson, and the first director Stephen S. Bauman. The camp group had been fortunate in securing a campsite which had been built as part of a federal project of the Civilian Conservation Corps. It was subsequently turned over to the State of Missouri,



Camp Council



Irvin
Bettman, Jr.

The first director of Camp Hawthorn was Stephen Bauman.
It only cost \$10 a week to attend!

THE CAMP HAWTHORN STORY



THE CAMP HAWTHORN-SABRA STORY

It was the summer of 1938. For the first time, children in St. Louis were on their way to a beautiful, new, Jewish residential summer camp operated by the then Jewish Community Center and located at Missouri's Lake of the Ozarks State Park. Named for the state flower, Camp Hawthorn came to life in '38 and was to provide over 30 years of unforgettable experiences and memories.



In 1939, Benny Kessler first opened Camp Wah-Kon-Dah to provide a place for young boys to learn about increasing their self-esteem and work on self defense. The camp was located in Brumley, Missouri.

CAMP WAH-KON-DAH AND BENNY KESSLER

BENNY KESSLER 1903-1988

GOD FIRST - YOU SECOND - ME THIRD. This is what anyone saw upon entering the Mess Hall at Camp Wah-Kon-Dah. It was staring at you from a cross-beam on the ceiling. It was Benny Kessler in microcosm. It was what he taught in countless ways to thousands of children (and adults, also) who had the privilege to fall under his influence. He instilled in all of us good citizenship, how to live in harmony with others, how to stand up for whatever cause in which one believed. He taught us to fight hard and fairly, whether in the boxing ring or on the ball field, in Red & Black competition or in the annual watermelon fight. He showed us how to cut the watermelon so that it fit in the palm of your hand and you could swipe it across the counselors' faces. My eyes still sting from watermelon juice!

He was Camp Wah-Kon-Dah. Every other camp had a director who sat behind the scenes and let the head counselor run the operation. Uncle Benny was the real head counselor. He knew every child and especially those with problems. He could be stern, angry, kind, gentle, funny, stimulating, but most of all loving--and never, never out of control. He had a wisdom which enabled him to take instant command of any crisis.

If you were a little girl sitting on his knee unknowingly being cured of homesickness, you loved him. If you were a staff member at a nightly meeting, you admired his analytical ability. Whoever you were, you knew he cared deeply for his fellow human beings. He left his imprint on all of us, and no one who ever knew him will ever forget him. GOD FIRST - YOU SECOND - ME THIRD.

Ellis Lipsitz



"Uncle Benny" Kessler (front row, center) with pals at a Camp Hawthorn men's weekend.

In 1945, after returning from a tour of duty during WWII, Benny Kessler moves Camp Wah-Kon-Dah to a peninsula in Rocky Mount, Missouri – the current location of what is now Camp Sabra.

CAMP WAH-KON-DAH
MOVES TO
ROCKY MOUNT, MISSOURI



The LODGE at CAMP WAH-KON-DAH, Lake of the Ozarks
PRIVATE BOYS - GIRLS SUMMER CAMP - ROCKY MOUNT, MO.

A GLIMPSE BACK AT HAWTHORN IN 1957



CAMP HAWTHORN

STORE PRICE LIST 1957

Batteries	\$.20
Bulbs	.15
Candy Bars	.05
Cigarettes regular	.20
Cigarettes filter, kingsize	.22
Combs	.15
Envelopes	.01
Paper	.01
Cards	.02
Flashlights	1.95
Palmolive soap	.12
Kleenex	.20
Pencils	.05
Tide medium	.35
Toothbrushes large	.29
Toothbrushes small	.20
T-Shirts Med. & Large	.90
T-Shirts Small	.75
Shoelaces	.10
Pen	.30
Pen refill	.15
Flashlight bulbs	.15
Toothpaste, Ipana	.25

Items may be purchased after lunch and after supper each day in a thirty minute period.

"SO LONG ITS BEEN GOOD TO KNOW YOU"

The 21 days of camp has slipped away very quickly---its already time for us to say goodbye to you. Some of you have joined the Hawthorn family for the first time, others are old friends. The staff has enjoyed being with each of you and helping you plan your fun at camp. Hawthorn looks forward to your return.

Be sure to visit the Camp Hawthorn office in the city after camp. Our offices are at the YMHA on Union Blvd. and Delmar. The office will be decorated with pictures and other remembrances of camp. When you are in we will be able to again talk over our summers fun together.

Join with your friends and continue camp friendships in the other JCCA programs available to you. The County program and the YM-YWHA offer many interesting activities for you. Club groups, athletic activities and other activities meet during the school year.

It has been wonderful being with you, and the Hawthorn Staff will be looking forward to seeing you at Hawthorn reunions.

Murry Raim *Ham Markowitz*

MURRY RAIM, CAMP DIRECTOR

Ham Markowitz, Program Director

Fern Stewart, Nurse
Myrtle Mitchell, Dietician
Chuck Gold, Truck Driver

Alfred Sherman, Doctor
Ray Johnson, Maintenance

OFFICE

Gene Curtis, Manager
"Ditto" Missler, Secretary
"Bunni" Williams, Office Asst.

BEAR VILLAGE

"Woody" Epstein, V.L.
"Dutch" Mayer
"Flex" Fogel
"Soc" Morgan
"Gip" Wolf
"Sam" Raben

BLUEBIRD VILLAGE

"Doc" Bromberg, V.L.
"Lash" Millner, Asst. V.L.
"Penny" Greenberg
"Frosty" Cupples
"Jaygi" Gottlieb
"Swish" Hausfater
"Toni" Henschel

MARK TWAIN VILLAGE

Mickey Rosen, V.L.
"Pick" Ticknor
"Mofo" Rubin
"Navi" Inger
"Swampy" Ostfeld
"Pusher" Morris

INDIAN MOUND VILLAGE

Ginny Sudholt, V.L.
"Candy" Stitz, Asst. V.L.
"Ivy" Shartsis
"Cookie" Schneider
"Terry" Rothman
"Beaver" Muller

SPECIALISTS

"Duz" Gamble, Nature
"Hila" Williams, Arts and Crafts
"Barf" Solomon, Tripping
"Lefty" Portman, Boating
"Yo" Eason and "Squeak" Carafiol, Swimming

KITCHEN

Cooks

Mary Burse
Helena Shaw
Elsie Swink
Ollie Lewis

Kitchen Asst.

"Lachs" Lachman
"Frenchy" Rothschild

- In 1957, Camp Wah-Kon-Dah became co-ed and welcomed 200 campers that summer.
- Activities included Sadie Hawkins, Color War Day, Campfires and treks to Low Gap for overnights – activities very similar to what campers do at Camp Sabra today!

CAMP WAH-KON-DAH GROWS

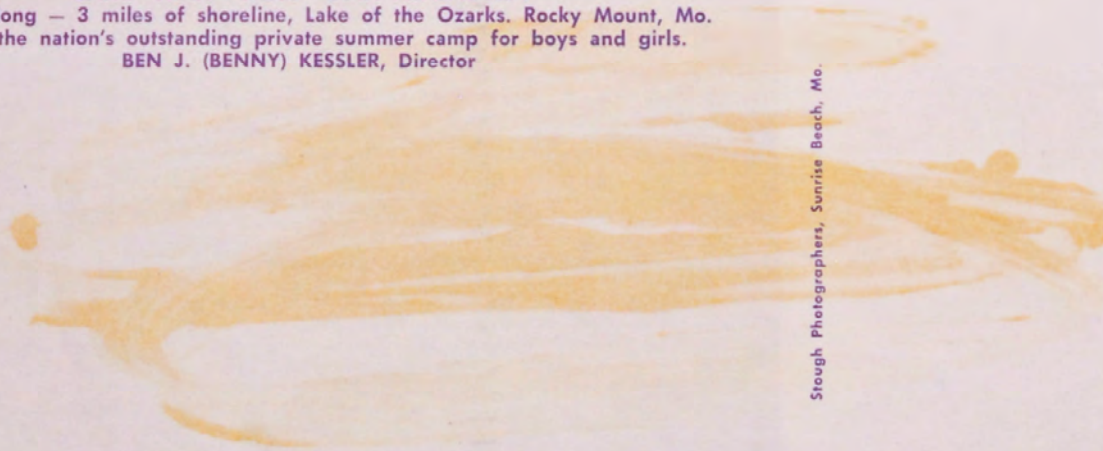


CAMP WAH - KON - DAH PENINSULA

1½ miles long — 3 miles of shoreline, Lake of the Ozarks, Rocky Mount, Mo.

One of the nation's outstanding private summer camp for boys and girls.

BEN J. (BENNY) KESSLER, Director



Stough Photographers, Sunrise Beach, Mo.

IMPRESSIONS ARE MADE AT CAMP HAWTHORN

August 31, 1968

Mr. Mike Lainoff
J.C.C.A.
11001 Schuetz Rd.
St. Louis, Mo. 63141

Dear Mr. Lainoff:

Mere words cannot express our thanks to you and your staff of
Camp Hawthorne.

Our daughter, Renee, attended the third session and since her
return home we have heard constantly of her wonderful experiences
at Camp. We know she has been returned to us a better individual
with a new awareness of religion, fellowship and life in general.

We just had to thank you for a job well done.

Sincerely yours,

Mr. & Mrs. Don Lamberg
1121 Orchard Lakes
St. Louis, Mo. 63141

P.S. Being slightly prejudiced as her parents, we always thought
she was a good swimmer but after one month at Camp Hawthorne, each
stroke has been so perfected we are considering the next Olympics.

Thank you -- all of you.

The year 1969 marked the last summer at Camp Hawthorn. Benny Kessler sold the 940 acres of Camp Wah-Kon-Dah, on the peninsula in Rocky Mount, Missouri, to the JCCA of St. Louis for \$875,000. This allowed the J's popular camp the opportunity to expand and welcome more campers.

THE END OF AN ERA...

Vol. XVII—No. 6

Jewish Community Centers Assn.—St. Louis, Mo. Friday, Oct. 24, 1969

New Overnight Summer Camp Presented to Jewish Community

Camp Wah Kon Dah on the Lake of the Ozarks, considered as one of the outstanding campsites in the nation, has been presented to the Jewish Community Centers Association by a small group of St. Louisans.

The 940-acre facility, situated on the Gravois Mills Arm in the northeast part of the lake, contains three miles of shoreline and is equipped with a variety of modern buildings, cabins and athletic facilities. Separate boys' and girls' villages can accommodate more than 250 youngsters.



The camp was purchased from Ben and Dorothy Kessler of St. Louis, who have operated it as a private facility, attracting campers from 17 states. The purchase price was \$875,000.

Robert L. Wolfson, president of the JCCA, said, "This superb camp facility will enable the JCCA to provide a more extensive summer camping program than has been possible in Camp Hawthorn, located in the Lake of the Ozarks State Park.

"For 32 years the State Park Board has been wonderfully cooperative in making Camp Hawthorn available to the St. Louis Jewish community. The future State recreational and development program in the Ozarks would of necessity somewhat curtail the scope of the Hawthorn camping program.

"The new camp will make it possible to serve over 600 children in the summer of 1970 as contrasted with the 452 children served in the summer of 1969 at Camp Hawthorn.

"The entire Jewish community is truly indebted to the community minded individuals whose generosity made possible the acquisition of Camp Wah Kon Dah."

The camp complex includes a rustic combination lodge and dining hall that seats 300 persons comfortably. It contains modern kitchen facilities and food storage utilities.

Sixteen cabins comprise the boys' village and 16 the girls' village. All cabins are furnished with bunk beds, lockers, tables and chairs. Each village is served by a separate central wash room, outfitted with complete shower and toilet facilities.

There are, in addition, quarters for permanent camp personnel and instructors, an arts and craft shop, trip house and canteen, guest house, residence building, infirmary and several trailers. The entire camp is serviced by electricity and telephones, plus a connecting intercom system.



In 1969, the 960-acre campsite on the Lake of the Ozarks that was Camp Wah Kon Dah was purchased from Ben Kessler by the JCCA with the help of a dedicated group of individuals. Under the leadership of President Bob Wolfson, and Executive Vice President Bill Kahn, Camp Sabra was born. The size of the camp, its location on the lake, and the fact that the JCCA could now make any renovations and additions it wished, made the Sabra site ideal. It was the best place for the next generations of campers who would be heir to the Hawthorn tradition.



CAMP SABRA WAS MADE POSSIBLE
THROUGH THE GENEROSITY OF A
GROUP OF DONORS FROM THE JCCA

Vol. 23, No. 21—October 22, 1969

The Newspaper of the Jewish Community of Greater St. Louis

\$3.50 Per Year, 15 Cents Per Copy

940-ACRE CAMP TO REPLACE HAWTHORN

Camp Wah Kon Dah Acquired As Gift To JCCA



The Camp Wah Kon Dah peninsula, jutting onto the shoreline of the Lake of the Ozarks, one and one-half miles long, only a portion of the 940-acre facility which has been acquired for the JCCA. The camp has a total of three miles of shoreline along the lake.

Small Donor Group Completes Purchase

Camp Wah Kon Dah, on the Lake of the Ozarks, recognized as one of the outstanding camp sites in the nation has been presented to the Jewish Community Centers Association by a small group of friends of the JCCA, in what has been termed "an historic breakthrough for the St. Louis Jewish community." The plans for the purchase were reviewed by the Federation Board of Directors and approved at its meeting of last week.

The 940-acre facility, located on the Gravois Mills Arm of the north-east part of the Lake, contains three miles of shoreline, and is equipped with a variety of completely modern buildings, cabins, and recreational facilities. Separate boys' and girls' villages can accommodate more than 250 youngsters.

The camp was purchased for \$875,000 from Ben and Dorothy Kessler of St. Louis by a small group of Friends of the JCCA. The Kesslers had operated it for years as a private facility, and Ben Kessler will continue his association with the camp as a consultant.

The new camp will replace Camp Hawthorn, which the JCCA has leased from the state of Missouri for the past 32 years for its camping programs. The area surrounding Camp Hawthorn is soon to be converted to a public leasing area, which would have made it difficult to continue the present program. The JCCA has been exploring alternative sites for the past 10 years.

Robert L. Wolfson, president of the JCCA hailed the acquisition and said, (See CAMP, Page 17)



Robert L. Wolfson

These People Cared - So Camp Sabra was Created

M/M Lewis T. Apple
M/M Charles Baron
M/M David Baron
M/M Morton Baron
M/M Paul H. Berwald
M/M Julius Cohen
Teamsters Joint Council #13
Mrs. James M. Dreyer
M/M Irving Edison
M/M Simon Edison
M/M Milton Ferman
M/M Ben Fixman
Dr./Mrs. I. Jerome Flance
Louis D. Beaumont Foundation
Max & Thelma Manne Foundation
Morton J. May Foundation
M/M Meyer Frank

M/M Bennet Frelich
M/M Albert J. Gerber
M/M Solon Gershman
M/M Joseph Glaser
M/M Israel Goldberg
M/M Milton Greenfield
M/M David Hearsh
M/M Howard Hearsh
M/M Tilford Hearsh
M/M Ben Kessler
M/M Harry Kessler
M/M Sam Krupnick
M/M Irvin Lerner
M/M Morris Lazaroff
M/M Morton D. May
M/M Roswell Messing, Jr.
M/M I.E. Millstone

M/M Harry E. Milton
M/M Charles Morgan
M/M Dan Morgan
Mrs. Jean Sacks
M/M William S. Seltzer
M/M Morris A. Shenker
Mrs. Mildred B. Simon
Mr. Abe Tober
M/M Harold Tober
M/M Irwin Tober
M/M Lester Tober
M/M Millard A. Waldheim
M/M Robert L. Wolfson
M/M Richard L. Yalem
M/M Louis Zorensky
M/M Milton Zorensky



HOW SABRA BECAME SABRA

New JCCA Camp Called Camp Sabra

The JCCA's new 940-acre camp on the Lake of the Ozarks will be called Camp Sabra, it was announced by Ben and Marilyn Fixman, who represent the group of St. Louisans who recently purchased the camp as a gift to the JCCA.

Fixman said the name Sabra was deemed especially fitting for the new camp because of the rich symbolism the word carries in Jewish life. Sabra, he pointed out, is the Hebrew word for a spiky, but deliciously sweet cactus fruit and is also the term applied to the native-born Israeli, whose qualities of outward strength and inner kindness are likened to the fruit.

"The word connotes the youth of Israel — strong, resolute, determined, resourceful, but at the same time, compassionate, kind and warm-hearted," Fixman observed. "Indeed, the Sabra has come to personify the spirit and essence of modern Israel."

Similarly, he said, "it is the purpose and aim of the new JCCA camp to build strong and sturdy bodies, to help youngsters develop the capabilities for positive, wholesome relationships, and to nurture and encourage a sense of spiritual unity with our brethren in Israel."

The camp, situated on the Gravois Mills Arm in the northern part of the Lake, contains three miles of shoreline and a variety of modern buildings, cabins and recreational facilities. It was purchased for \$875,000 from Ben and Dorothy Kessler, St. Louis, who had operated it as a private facility.

The word *sabra* carries rich symbolism in Jewish life. *Sabra* is the Hebrew word for a spiky, but deliciously sweet cactus fruit and is also the term applied to native-born Israelis, whose qualities of outward strength and inner kindness are likened to the fruit.

1970: THE FIRST SUMMER AT CAMP SABRA!

St. Louis Globe-Democrat

Aug. 1-2, 1970

Camp Sabra: A JCCA Dream Becomes Reality



By SUSAN GROCE KELLY
Globe-Democrat Staff Writer

"We had dreamed about buying this camp for so long," said Ben Fixman, "that after we bought it we had second thoughts. We wondered if it would turn out to be real. But look around..."

And everyone did. From where the 200 kids sat on the side of a grassy hill they could see a lot. They looked across the tops of hundreds of Missouri oaks and beyond the trees to patches of the dark green Lake of the Ozarks. A white fishing dock floated in the cove at the base of the hill and just up from the water a row of canoes were upturned on a gravel beach.

What the young people were looking at was Camp Sabra, St. Louis' new Jewish Community Center Association's (JCCA) camp on the Gravois arm of the Lake of the Ozarks.

In front of the campers and counselors in their white Sabra T-shirts and white shorts, stood an impromptu podium flanked by long benches where more than 40 people sat — adults who had been responsible for the birth of the new camp.

"THE PEOPLE WHO made it all possible" had come into the hilly Ozark camp in cars, by chartered bus and by plane for a first official look and the recent formal dedication of Camp Sabra.

After a picnic lunch under the trees the visitors gathered for the dedication and campers took an hour out of their activity-packed day to listen to some of the men who had amassed \$975,000 last fall (without a land drive) in order to buy the camp for the JCCA.

They had a chance to listen to Fixman, who himself had given \$250,000 and in whose honor the dining hall has been renamed, and Robert L. Wolfson, recent past president of the JCCA — the man with the "s-s-s" to promote the purchase of the camp. Howard R. Hirsch, current JCCA president under whose leadership the camp must grow during the next two years, Stuart Symington Jr., Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton and JCCA executive

director William Kahn all stood on the hillside and told the kids how lucky they are to have Camp Sabra and what a wonderful place it is.

BUT THE YOUNG people already knew that.

"It's great!" beamed 12-year-old Benjie Baron, a first session camper who had come back with his parents for the dedication.

"My favorite part of the whole time was a three-day canoe trip," he continued, although he also admitted to liking waterskiing and arts and crafts. Benjie went on to explain that before going home from Sabra, every camper gets to go on an overnight or a longer canoe trip.

"My 11-year-old granddaughter, Lisa Fields, has been here for three weeks already," said Al Smith, a white-haired man who had come to Sabra with the busload of St. Louisans. "She loves it, especially the waterskiing." He smiled. "I didn't ask her, but by the way she talks about camp I know she hasn't been homesick."

THE CAMP IS integrated both racially and religiously. Most of the children are Jewish, however, and the camp staff is careful to stress the Jewish background that does exist. "Our kids have a 3,500 year link with a peoplehood," explained William Kahn, JCCA executive director, "and since camping is a time for minds to grow as well as bodies, we want to help the kids understand their cultural background and to build a pride in their heritage, both Jewish and American." For this same reason Camp Sabra observes Jewish dietary laws — so that Orthodox children can come to the camp without compromising their religion.

Even the name of the camp is important. "Sabra, a sweet tasting, prickly cactus plant that grows in Israel, has come to be the term used for any native-born Israeli," related Fixman, who chose the name, "and connotes especially the youth of Israel, trained to be strong yet with inner gentleness."

WHEN ST. LOUISANS Ben and Dorothy Kessler decided to sell their 940-acre Camp Wah-Kon-Dah last fall, it was purchased by individuals and given to the Jewish Commu-



nity Center to replace Camp Hawthorn.

Hawthorn, operated by the JCCA for over 30 years, was located on the grounds of the Lake of the Ozarks State Park and leased from the state.

"The big thing now is that Camp Sabra is our own, and we can do anything we want to improve the facilities," Richard Wolff told Sen. Eagleton. And the campers have already decided on their first improvement. Some of them had been to Camp Hawthorn, some had been to Camp Wah-Kon-Dah, and some were first-time campers, but during the June 24-July 14 session they all decided that the new camp needed a recreation hall. A representative was duly chosen and during their picnic lunch visitors were confronted with a request to build the rec hall at the same time they were being thanked for purchasing the camp.

DEDICATION DAY was also a time of orientation for the campers. Most of the kids had just arrived the morning before for the start of second session and were busy visiting points of interest on the main campgrounds, learning about the canoeing, waterskiing, fishing, archery and other activities open to them during their stay.

"We want to give these a chance to see everything at least once," explained camp director Harold (Mike) Lissouff. "Otherwise, they might get involved in two or three activities and never do anything else."

Guests, equally eager to see the camp facilities, inspected the wooden screened-in cabins and log dining hall and took a quick bus tour across camp—from the waterski dock at the far end of the girls' cove to the canoeing and sailing dock on the point near the boys' cabins.

IT WAS A BUSY day, but for a few moments Bob Wolfson, who had donned a Sabra T-shirt with its blue and green crest, found time to sit on the hill in front of the dining hall and gaze over the landscape. "You know, everything has been worthwhile," he said, referring to his years of work for the JCCA and the last hectic year of acquiring and organizing Camp Sabra. "To be able to just sit here now and look at all of this, it's great!"

Mr. and Mrs. Ben Fixman and Robert L. Wolfson admire the Camp Sabra sign at the entrance to the JCCA's new Ozark camp.

Photos by
Denny Silverstein



A cage of white pigeons captures the attention of Sen. Thomas F. Eagleton as he inspects one of the boys' cabins.



Benjie Baron (left) sits with Sharon Pollack and Michael Edlin Jr., the two youngest campers. Sharon and Michael were presented with symbolic keys to Camp Sabra at the dedication ceremonies.



After lunch, campers get an introductory lesson in the parts of a paddle and canoe.

CAMP SABRA VILLAGES ARE RE-NAMED

FROM...

Bear Village
Younger boys' village

Mark Twain Village
Older boy's village

Champs
Teenage program for
boys and girls

Bluebird Village
Younger girls' village

Indian Mound Village
Older girls' village

...TO

Golan
The youngest boys village,
named for the Golan
Mountains in Israel

Almagor
Second youngest boys village,
named for the Hebrew word
for "fearless"

Habonim
The Hebrew word for
"builders", "Hab" is the village
for campers entering
8th and 9th grades

Soosim
The Hebrew word for "horse",
the horse camp is
appropriately titled

Sharone
The youngest girls village,
named for the Sharone Valley
in Israel

Ayelet
The second youngest girls
village, named for the
beautiful female deer

Masada
Named after a fortress in
Israel, this village includes boys
and girls entering 10th grade

MASADA TENT VILLAGE WAS CONSTRUCTED AND DEDICATED TO ISRAEL & YETRA GOLDBERG IN 1972

August 2, 1972

ST. LOUIS JEWISH LIGHT

Page Seven

JCCA Camp Sabra Emphasizes Character Development, Group Participation for Youths

By CAROL LUNDGREN
Light Assistant Editor

Traveling down the gravel, treelined road that winds through the backwoods of the Ozarks, one immediately becomes imbued with a sense of the outdoors and a desire to return to nature, forgetting about the pollution and bustle he has left behind.

And it is in this setting that the JCCA's Camp Sabra is located. Situated on 940 acres, 750 of which are wooded, on the Lake of the Ozarks, Camp Sabra is a "group centered camp, with the cabins eating, working and playing together," Ed Robbins, Camp director, told a group of Jewish community leaders who recently visited there.

He described Sabra as "a place where children can learn the pain and the pleasures of living



Relaxing as she tops off her lunch with an ice cream bar is this Camp Sabra youth.

together in a peer family situation and discover that they can make it together living as a group."

The Camp encourages character development, in addition to the usual camping skills, in an atmosphere of fun and spirit. And from the youths carrying their fishing rods to the children singing in the dining hall after a meal to the counselors in training camping in tents in Masada Village, it is clear that the campers have established a rapport with each other and an overwhelming enthusiasm for Sabra.

The staff members also bring

with them a "rich Jewish background that they can inculcate in the children," Robbins noted. This summer, in addition, Rabbi Alan Bregman of Temple Israel is spending time at the Camp to create a sense of joy about being Jewish in the campers, through living, rather than a lot of direct teaching.

Located on the Gravois Mills Arm with three miles of shoreline, the clear Lake provides the perfect setting for a variety of water sports. The Camp grounds form a large peninsula, and one youth recently made Sabra history by swimming around the site in a record one hour and 40 minutes, with another camper coming in close behind at one hour, 40 minutes and 35 seconds.

The Camp actually has two waterfronts, Robbins explained, one for swimming and water skiing, and another for small crafts, where the campers enjoy canoeing and sailing. Four nearby rivers provide the natural setting for canoe trips, and for these excursions, in all water activities, utmost precautions are taken. Youths must first learn such basics as canoe rescue and what to do, for example, if the canoe should overturn.

Land sports are also popular at the Camp, and three tennis courts as well as a combined basketball and hockey court are part of the Sabra facilities. Baseball is also included in the camping activities, and a corral with 16 head of horses is available for campers who wish to learn riding skills. In addition, arts and crafts are an integral part of the camping day at Sabra.

Children from 8-17 are eligible to take part in the Camp Sabra activities, and are divided into villages according to age: Sharon Girls Village, for girls completing grades 2, 3 and 4; Golan Boys Village, for boys completing grades 2, 3 and 4; Ayelet Girls Village, for girls completing grades 5, 6 and 7; Almagor Boys Village, for boys completing grades 5, 6 and 7; Habonim Village, for boys and girls completing 8th grade, and Masada, for boys and girls completing 9th grade. In addition, teenagers completing the 10th grade attend a preparation for specialist-counselor in training program, and SCTs who have finished the 11th grade also come to the Camp.



Campers presented skits at the recent dedication of the Israel and Yetra Goldberg Masada Village. The Goldbergs were on hand to hang the Mezuzah on the structure.

Mealtime is one of the high points of the day at Camp Sabra, when all 250 campers gather in the dining hall in an atmosphere of enthusiasm. Following the nutritionally balanced meals, the youths exuberantly clap and stomp to the traditional camping songs. Blessings are also sung both before and after the meal to make Judaism become alive for the campers. Other special activities take place at this time, such as when an Israeli counselor, accompanied by another staff member on the guitar, led the group in song, and the energetic youths joined spontaneously in the hora. Before returning to their camping activities, pertinent announcements are made, like the new record for catching fish by a village, 58 in one hour.

It is the conviction of the leadership of Camp Sabra, according to Israel Goldberg, chairman of the Camp Sabra Committee since its inception three years ago, that no child should be denied the camping experience due to lack of funds. It is upon this foundation that Sabra has implemented a sliding fee scale. After researching the camping population at Sabra, the Committee found that it was comprised mainly of the very high or very low income groups, and that few youths from middle in-

come families were attending the camp. Instead, they discovered, this group was reluctant to seek any aid, and simply told their children, "We can't afford it."

"There is no requirement for proof of income," Director Robbins stated. "And we want to do away with the concept of charity, so we just tell prospective parents

campers, 'If this is your income, you pay this amount.' We have campers enrolled for the full fee of \$95 per week and some for as little as \$5-6 per week. This is the aid, and almost half of those here receive some type of aid."

An extended payment plan is also offered by the Camp, and about 21 percent of the campers come from one-parent homes, some on ADC. Sabra has extended a helping hand so that they are able to have an otherwise impossible opportunity to attend a summer camp.

In addition, according to the staff, camping is an integral part of the overall activities of the Jewish Community Centers Association. If a prospective camper and his family are not JCCA members or cannot afford the full membership fee, they are enabled to join the Center at a reduced rate. "We don't finish with the children at the end of four weeks," said William Kahn, Executive Director of the JCCA, "but we want the children to have this group experience all year round."

The staff members of Camp Sabra reflect a wide variety of backgrounds and experiences. Not only are there Americans, but one is from the Netherlands, one is

(See SABRA, Page 27)



Water sports are popular on the Camp Sabra waterfronts. Campers ski and swim, and also make canoe float trips.

from Israel and several are natives of England. "Our European staff members have been a source of inspiration to the Americans," Robbins related.

Several staff members teach during the school year, and bring their talents to Sabra for the summer. Each staff person has a great deal of spirit and love for the Camp, and as a group, "they are very dedicated people," Robbins said. The counselors hail from large cities and small towns as well, and as one girl from a small community stated, "I was thrilled to be able to worship on Friday night, even at Camp."

Those aspiring to be Sabra counselors undergo three years of training, their first year being at the Israel and Yetra Goldberg Masada Village, which was recently dedicated with Goldberg hanging a mezuzah and many of the charter group of the Village returning for the festivities. Masada youth live in tents nestled in the hills, and prepare their own food, while they learn counseling skills and at the same time gain many lasting friendships.

Following this unique first summer of orientation, youths are prep specialists-counselors in training, and then SCTs, before they are able to become counselors at Sabra.

While Camp Sabra is now providing a quality program of camping, its staff is not content to merely lean back and relax. Instead, Robbins, Goldberg and the Sabra Committee are looking to the future. Operating on the premise that the magnificent setting, which appears in the brochure published by the state of Missouri, should be available to the community at large year around, they are exploring all possibilities for maximum usage of the land. An architect will be engaged to design a long range plan for the grounds, including such structures as family and older adult camping facilities, a chapel and a meeting hall, as well as possible new buildings to replace some of the older structures.

An increased usage of Sabra will be implemented after the regular sessions are over this summer, when about 150 black inner-city children will attend the Camp. The program, in cooperation with the

American Camping Association, federal government and HDC, will provide a nine-day camping experience for these children, and black coaches and counselors will take the place of most of the regular Sabra staff during this time.

Robbins concluded, "We want very much to be a community camp, and to provide an opportunity for people to become people, not just what their name is or where they're from."

And Camp Sabra is clearly doing its job in providing a meaningful summer experience for youths. Walking through the Camp, one can hear more than once one camper saying to another, "Isn't Camp Sabra a great place?"

THE JAMES DREYER PAVILLION IS BUILT IN 1973

Looking Back...

New Pavilion at Camp Sabra Named for James M. Dreyer

The following article was published in the JCCA Journal, March 2, 1973

Israel Goldberg, chairman of the Camp Sabra Committee, and Ed Robbins, director of the camp, jointly announced the receipt of necessary funds to construct the James M. Dreyer Pavilion. This new addition to camp, made possible by the immediate family of the late James Dreyer, and the James M. Dreyer Foundation, will add an entire new dimension to activities at Sabra.

During the regular camping season, the daytime use of the pavilion will be for a new creative dance program, which will accommodate twenty-four girl campers. Along with specialized instruction in creative dancing, the girls will be afforded a full complement of regular camping activities such as swimming, riding, boating, and tripping. The special dance instruction program will be handled by a highly qualified, experienced dance instructor. In addition, the pavilion will be used for many worship services, dramatic

presentations and other skits, and a wide variety of other outdoor programs.

For off-season retreats and other special meetings, the new structure will enable participants to enjoy the serenity and majesty of the outdoors while still participating in conferences and other educational sessions.

During winter months, the pavilion is so designed that it can be used as an auxiliary boathouse and tripping equipment storage center. This will greatly prolong the life of much valuable equipment, and at the same time the task of preparing this equipment for summer usage will be far easier, since it will be stored indoors during the coolest months.

A formal dedication of this very beautiful and much needed new facility is planned for early in the 1973 camp season. The JCCA and the Camp Sabra Committee are extremely grateful to Mrs. James M. Dreyer, her children, Lynn, Jeff and Joe, and the many friends of Jim Dreyer who have contributed to the James M. Dreyer Foundation ... all of whom have made this pavilion possible.

Mission Statement of Camp Sabra

It is the mission of the St. Louis Jewish Community Center to provide and support a quality resident camping facility and experience in a Jewish environment primarily for children and youth. The Camp will serve the Jewish community and include the entire St. Louis community, as well as individuals and groups from other areas.

The mission will be accomplished by:

- Recruitment and retention of quality personnel
- Providing and maintaining the best physical facilities which will enhance the overall camping experience
- Development of innovative programs which will meet the needs of the camp population

SQUARE DANCING EXPERT, BABE, MAKES HIS CAMP SABRA DEBUT

Babe Gross: Calling the Dances for 34 Years

Bow to your partner. Bow to your corner. Now allemande left. Circle left. Circle right. And Do-si-do. Now Promenade. Just reading the familiar names of the traditional square dance calls can bring back memories of the distinctive music and rhythm of the dance style and set your toes to tapping. Square dancing was an important part of Camp Sabra for many years.

Square dance caller and dance instructor Edward "Babe" Gross was originally booked for a single event at Camp Sabra because the usual square dance teacher couldn't do the scheduled night performance. He suggested the camp call Gross who agreed to help out for the one night.

"I said I would come and see what is was like and then stayed on for the next 34 years," Gross said.

Edward Gross grew up in Jefferson City. He was the youngest in his family and everyone called him "baby." Eventually that nickname was shortened to Babe and once he entered school, the name stuck.

"Everyone knows me as Babe, it's an easy name to remember," Gross said.



Edward "Babe" Gross called Square and Line dances for four decades!

He started dancing during his stint in the United States Air Force. Gross learned everything from the waltz to the jitterbug when he would go the service center for dances. He met his wife Martha when he was home on leave. The couple has three daughters and will be celebrating their 60th wedding anniversary in December 2007.

Gross has fond memories of his time at Camp Sabra. He said he

especially remembers working with Steve Engel and "got along just fine" with the other camp directors. The campers also hold a special place in his heart. He especially remembers one girl who returned as a camper year after year giving him the opportunity to watch her grow up.

"She even returned to the visit the camp after she graduated," Gross said.

Today the 86-year-old Gross is still in great physical shape. He does 150 sit-ups every day and works out three to four times a week at the gym. Though he considers himself a man of leisure, he is still booked at conventions, special programs and does private lessons and dances two or three times a week.

"I can dance a full two hours and never be out of breath," Gross said.

Martha has also continued dancing and teaches line dance classes with their daughter Rhonda Gail Sherwood. Martha accompanied and assisted Babe at Camp Sabra and has her own fond memories of those 34 years.

"We met a lot of really wonderful people at the camp," Martha said. "It was very easy to teach the campers and they were a lot of fun."



"Let your hands be free - stomp"

IN 1975, THE DINING HALL BURNS DOWN, BUT IS REBUILT BY SUMMER 1976

Beautiful New Sabra Dining Hall a Reality after Six Years of Dreaming

(This article first appeared in the JCCA Journal, on July 23, 1976)

A fire last December destroyed the dining hall at Camp Sabra, and this threatened a delay, or cancellation, of the JCCA's summer camping programs at Sabra.

However, a speedy construction job has produced a beautiful new lodge and dining facility. It was completed in time for the first group of campers, who arrived June 14.

The rustic-style lodge is fully air-conditioned and the dining area is one-third larger than the old hall.

The JCCA Board decided last January to build the \$500,000 new lodge, although the master plan for Camp Sabra called for it not to be built for a few years; after the fire, it became an immediate need.

The big question was, "Could it be completed on time?" Such a building project normally takes six months to a year. A Building Committee under the Chairmanship of Carl Bianco and Dan Iken, was named to oversee the project, and Frank Malone & Associates was hired to manage the design and construction. Camp officials made contingency plans to have field stoves and tents available in case the building was not

ready on time, but these back up measures were fortunately not implemented.

The Camp is on a peninsula that has a 3-mile shore line on the Lake of the Ozarks. The property, acquired in 1969, totals 960 acres and is 175 miles from St. Louis.

The new lodge is several hundred feet east of the site of the old dining hall and it has a commanding view of the water and the Camp's boat dock. There is a large parking lot nearby. The new location eliminates the vehicular traffic that had moved through the middle of the Camp.

The new dining facility has two fully equipped kitchens so that meat and dairy foods can be totally separated. About 1300 meals are served daily to some 300 campers and 120 staff members.

The lodge incorporates a striking blend of wood, stone and glass. It has a large deck surrounding three sides, where persons may gather while awaiting meals, partake of an outdoor buffet, or attend special programs.

The pitched roof is supported by wide span laminated arches and the focal point of the dining area is a giant fireplace - 25

feet wide and 36 feet high. It is really three fireplaces in one. It starts from the large ground-level multi-purpose room, goes up through the dining hall, and extends above the roof. One fireplace is on the ground level, one in the dining room, and the third on the outside of the lodge where campers can gather on the deck. The rock in the fireplace is dark fieldstone that was bought at a nearby farm.

"The new dining hall is the consummation of six years of dreams," said Frank Jacobs, JCCA President. He said it was targeted as the largest single improvement needed after the camp was established.

The new main lodge opens new possibilities for expansion of activities at Sabra. Consideration is being given to using the facilities for year-round programs, such as family weekends, retreats, and conferences for organizations.

After the lodge was opened to the campers, Ed Robbins, Camp Sabra Director, said of Malone, "He did an unbelievable job. It was literally an around-the-clock effort and Malone orchestrated it beautifully."

*Camp Sabra now has a fully
kosher operation in place!*

1979 IS AUBREY HERMAN'S LAST
YEAR, THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF
SABRA AND THE SUMMER TO
"REMEMBER"

COMMUNITY CENTERS ASSOCIATION

Winter Address:

11001 SCHUETZ ROAD, SAINT LOUIS, MISSOURI 63141
314/432-5700

Summer Address:

LAKE OF THE OZARKS, ROCKY MOUNT, MISSOURI 65072
314/365-2591

Dear Sabra Campers and Staff:

We are most pleased to present your
10th Anniversary Yearbook, which
commemorates our exciting summer in
1979.

As you look through the book we hope
your fond memories of camp will be
remembered for many years.
The friends we have made, the trips
we took, the camaraderie of our
community are shown on these pages.

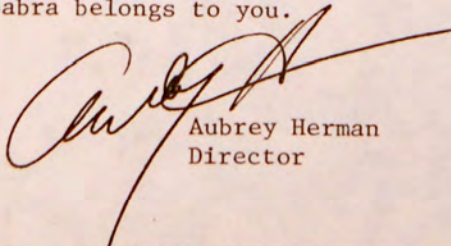
The coming summer will mark a new
beginning for Camp Sabra. With our
new Director, Cary Berg, and new
direction for the 1980's, we know
you will want to be part of our
next 10 years.

As you think about Sabra '80 let the
words of the song, "Remember",
have greater meaning for all of us

REMEMBER the friends you've made here
REMEMBER when you're away
REMEMBER the fun you've had here
And don't forget to come back some day.

REMEMBER the blazing campfire,
The rippling waters blue,
For you all belong to Sabra
And Sabra belongs to you.

Shalom,



Aubrey Herman
Director



1997 WELCOMES THE FIRST YEAR OF MISSOURI CHILDREN'S BURN CAMP TO CAMP SABRA

September 2, 1998—County Star Journal

Camp brightens burn victims' lives

State camp is a success because of donations and efforts of residents and firefighters

By Greg Uptain
Staff writer

North County residents and firefighters were instrumental in helping to send young burn victims to a recent camp.

The weeklong Burns Recovered Support Group/Missouri Children's Burn Camp took place Aug. 10-16 at Camp Sabra at the Lake of the Ozarks. The camp, which is free for any burn victim ages 8-17, was funded in part by a local campaign by

firefighters called "Fill the Helmet."

Firefighters from Black Jack, Florissant Valley, Spanish Lake, Riverview, Community, Berkeley, Maryland Heights, Pattonville-Bridgeton, Robertson, Moline Acres and Jennings collected money at various street intersections in North County in early May.

"The camp was so great," said Linda Hansen, the camp's

director. "The firefighters and I have already received phone calls from the campers telling us what a great time they had."

Last year, 19 children and seven staff members attended the camp. This year, the numbers rose to 31 children and 16 staff members. Hansen said attendees came from all over the state including St. Louis, Kansas City, Columbia, Jackson, Kennett, Kirksville, Winfield and Bonne Terre.

One of the favorite attractions for the campers was the attendance of Jeta, a trained rescue dog brought by Spanish Lake firefighter Pat

Horn. Jeta was dubbed the official camp mascot by the children, who couldn't get enough of her.

"That poor dog," Hansen said, with a laugh. "Other than when she was sleeping, she was constantly being touched, kissed and hugged every minute of the day. She was fabulous."

Activities for the children at the camp included horseback riding, swimming, sailing, water skiing, archery, arts and crafts, a hayride and an overnight camping trip in tents. In addition, there were special events like a clown/magician and an appearance by the Thunderbird Society, which is a Native American group who helped the children do crafts,

dances and have a campfire.

The Missouri Children's Burn Camp is like camps in 23 other states and countries like Canada, New Zealand, Belgium and Australia. The National Burn Camp, sponsored by the International Association of Firefighters, takes place in October in Washington, D.C. One child, age 13-15, and one counselor will be chosen from each state for an all-expenses-paid trip to the weeklong camp, which Hansen said amounts to a grand tour of the nation's capital.

Hansen said children and their families find out about the camp through a variety of sources including hospitals, newspaper stories and even through the "Fill the Helmet"

campaign.

"The firefighters from Community Fire District were collecting money and handing out brochures in front of Schnucks on St. Charles Road and, soon after, I got a call from a man who saw them there," Hansen said. "He told me his child was a burn survivor, and he asked if his child could come to camp."

Hansen said the camp is just what the young burn survivors need.

"These kids have been through so much pain and ongoing surgery," she said. "It's just a week that's life-changing for the children and the counselors. For the firefighters, it reaffirms the job they do is special."

Improvements include: a new aquatic center, major cabin and bathhouse improvements in both villages and new duplexes to house senior staff and guests including rabbis, artists, musicians and other visitors.

JCC IMPLEMENTS A \$2 MILLION RENOVATION TO CAMP SABRA

Sabra Scene



JEFF ROSE, Camp Sabra Director
(2004 - present)

STEVE ENGEL, Associate Executive
Director, JCC of St. Louis
Former Camp Sabra Director (1987 - 1999)

MICHAEL LAINOFF, Former Camps
Hawthorn and Sabra Director
(1963 - 1970)

AMY GALLANT, Co-Chair Camp Sabra
MARC ALPER, Co-Chair Camp Sabra

TODD SIWAK, Chair, JCC of St. Louis

KENNETH WEINTRAUB, President & CEO,
JCC of St. Louis

WINTER ADDRESS:
Camp Sabra/JCC Marilyn Fox Building
16801 Baxter Road
Chesterfield, MO 63005
314-442-3465

SUMMER ADDRESS:
Camp Sabra
30750 Camp Sabra Road
Rocky Mount, MO 65072
573-365-1991

E-mail: info@campsabra.com
www.campsabra.com

Camp Hawthorn - Sabra
Alumni Association
alumni@camphawthorn.com

NEWS AND NOTES FROM THE CAMP SABRA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

Issue 1

JCC Board Makes \$2 Million Investment In Camp Sabra Renovation Projects

The leadership of the JCC is committed to keeping Camp Sabra one of the elite Jewish residential camps in the United States. In 2004, the JCC's Board of Directors invested \$2 million into Sabra for a variety of modernization projects. The funds will update four important components of Sabra for the 2005 camping season - a state-of-the-art aquatic center located in the center of camp, renovated camper cabins with new bedding, renovated bathhouses with new showers/toilets, and new senior staff housing units.

In addition to capital investments, the JCC is continually examining the programs offered to campers, to ensure that Camp Sabra remains a unique place for campers to creatively experience the joys of Jewish culture.

The aquatic complex will have a shallow section for instructional swim, a deep-water diving area, bathrooms, and recreational areas for swim team and pool party activities. The addition of this aquatic center will greatly enhance Sabra's ability to attract campers and keep the camp on a competitive level with other camps throughout the Midwest.

The renovation plan is also focused on improving the campers experience by updating

every cabin and the boys/girls' shower houses. Some of the current camp structures, originally in use at Camp Wak Kon Dah, are 50 to 60 years



old and the newest building is the dining hall, which was constructed in 1975 after a fire destroyed the original facility.

The final improvement will be construction of eight air-conditioned duplex housing units for adult staff. Four of the duplexes will be available for the summer of 2005. The 1,000 square foot accommodations should help attract teachers and their families, as well as other professionals to Sabra, including rabbis, artists, and cantors. If Sabra can bring down more teachers and other professionals, it will provide campers additional adult supervision and allow the camp to import experts to enhance the summer program.

These types of accommodations will also help to facilitate other JCC programs such as BBYO regional conventions, Dad & I weekends, and family retreats. In addition to the 700 summer campers who annually come to Sabra, the venue also plays host



Artist's rendering of Camp Sabra's new aquatic center

continued on page 3

ST. LOUIS JEWISH LIGHT

FOUNDED 1967-24 TISHREI 5744 / OCTOBER 13, 2004

'J' revamps Camp Sabra

BY LINDA HATZ MANTLE
PHOTO BY JEFF ROSE

Calling it the first part of an overall strategic plan to augment Jewish Community Center programs and services, JCC board chair Todd Siwak announced a \$2 million renovation and expansion for the JCC's resident Camp Sabra at the Lake of the Ozarks.

"The JCC board has reaffirmed its commitment to maintaining Camp Sabra as a core and essential program of the JCC," Siwak said in announcing

key capital improvements that will enhance the camp's physical facilities and add recreational amenities.

"First, we're building a swimming pool," said an enthusiastic Steve Engel, JCC associate executive director.

Specifically, an aquatic complex will have a shallow section for instructional swim, a deep-water diving area, cabana, pool house and recreational areas for swim team and pool party activities.

"We are excited we'll be able to offer a sophisticated level of instructional swim to campers of all abilities and ages," Engel said.

Construction on the pool has begun and will be completed for the 2005 camp season.

Engel said the improvement plan also calls for modernizing every children's cabin and the shower house facilities.

Some of the camp structures are 50 to 60 years old

and the newest community building is the dining hall, which was constructed in 1975, Engel said.

"The 'J' has had a residential summer camp program at Lake of the Ozarks since 1938, which operated as Camp Hawthorn until 1969," Engel said. "In 1970, the JCC purchased Camp Sabra, which was the former Camp Wak Kon Dah, and some of those structures are still in use."

The final improvement will be construction of eight air-conditioned, duplex housing units for adult staff.

Engel said the 1,000-square-foot accommodations should help attract professionals — rabbis, artists and cantors.

"If we can bring down more teachers and their families it will give us additional adult supervision and allow us to import experts for the summer," Engel said.

Engel said of a conservative estimate of 20,000 alumni, "There's a lot of talent in that group and we'd love to bring them back to the camp community and now we'll have the housing to accommodate them."

Those accommodations also will be used for such JCC programs as Dad & I weekends, BBYO activities and family retreats.

Engel also noted that along with the 700 campers who attend Camp Sabra each summer, the venue plays host throughout the summer and off-season to the Missouri Burn Children's Camp for a full

SABRA CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

week and provides a residential camp experience for hundreds of day camp children.

Jeff Rose, formerly associate director of the Harry Bronfman Y Country Camp in Montreal, has been hired as camp director. Rose said he looks forward to "re-energizing the spirit of Camp Sabra starting with the younger kids, working our way up."

In 1992, the JCC board authorized

\$225,000 to upgrade children's cabins and improve walkways. All improvements since then — \$36,000 to \$136,000 annually in the past 15 years — have been routine and funded through the camp's operating budget and another fund. According to the board's motion, it will secure financing with competitive terms to fund these projects with the debt to be repaid through funds raised from a future general capital campaign. The board voted to sell about 600 acres of unused land at Camp Sabra and to solicit funds from out-of-town alumni.

ONE OF CAMP SABRA'S FOUNDERS,
BEN FIXMAN, MENTIONS THE IMPACT
OF SABRA IN HIS MEMOIR, *THE BEN
FIXMAN STORY: FROM THE GHETTO
TO THE GOLD*

SELF-MADE MAN

ENTREPRENEUR BEN FIXMAN
by tony DIMARTINO

They don't make 'em like Ben Fixman anymore. Starting with a \$500 loan from his father-in-law, he built a business, Diversified Metals Corporation, into a Fortune 500 company with revenues of \$330 million. Decades before the green movement, he revolutionized the American scrap metals industry by perfecting an environmentally friendly separation method known as the cold process. He has had two happy marriages and raised three daughters. He has been honored for his business and philanthropic contributions, and dined with presidents and other world leaders.

For years, people have been urging Fixman to write a book. With help from journalist and old friend Donald Roth, he finally has. *The Ben Fixman Story: From the Ghetto to the Gold*, tells how this former janitor and junkman became one of the most powerful entrepreneurs in the country.

The secret to his success can be pared down to one word: determination. "I owe my success to what I call Jewish engineering—you either solve the problem or you starve to death," says Fixman, now 85. He's not exaggerating. "I grew up during the Great Depression, in a rat-infest-

ed tenement in the toughest ghetto in downtown St. Louis, at 18th and Carr," he recalls. "There was never enough to eat. I survived on food scraps from neighbors who took pity on me—one lady gave me her barbecue bones to suck on after she'd eaten them for dinner." His mother, a Russian immigrant widow who barely spoke English, cleaned houses for a dollar a day to support five kids. "I never had a childhood," he says. "I started working when I was 7, peddling newspapers on street corners."

Fixman dropped out of high school freshman year to work as a janitor at a ladies' ready-to-wear chain. By the time he quit to join the Army, he was assistant to the chain's president. After the Army he went into the scrap metal business, working 16-hour days until he built it into a multimil-



Ben Fixman shares what he has learned about business and life in *The Ben Fixman Story: From the Ghetto to the Gold*. PHOTO BY JASON MUELLER

lion-dollar, publicly traded company whose stock soared from \$9 a share to \$132. He retired from Diversified in 1991, but still serves as a consultant to Kataman Metals, a metals trading business he started in 1993 with a friend, the late entrepreneur Shig Katayama, and sold a few years ago.

"Ben's word has always been his bond," says Roth. "Poverty didn't embitter him—it opened his heart." Fixman takes a personal approach to philanthropy. After losing his first wife, Marilyn, to cancer in 1980, he funded the Marilyn Fixman Cancer Center at the former Jewish Hospital. Now based at Barnes-Jewish Hospital and known as the Marilyn Fixman Cancer Center Endowment Fund, it supports free education and support services for cancer patients. He also co-funded Camp Sabra at Lake of the Ozarks. "I couldn't afford camp when I was a kid, so I wanted to make sure other kids have a chance to go," he says. "How can you not help others when you've got more than enough for yourself?"

Today, Fixman has found peace with second wife, Elaine 'Cookie' Blumoff Fixman. He has grown reflective with age. "My brothers and sisters are gone—I'm the only one left," he says. "I never set out to build an empire—I just wanted to take care of my family. Now it's time to share what I know with young people. Life is full of trials and tribulations. But you can make it if you apply yourself—and if you never give up." ♦

COVER
STORY

- Camp numbers are growing with 554 campers attending in 2010!
 - The Hawthorn/Sabra/Wah-Kon-Dah Alumni Association is reignited
 - The Forever CAMPAign is initiated in order to renovate the camp.
- This \$6 million campaign will ensure the future of Camp Sabra so the next generation can make their own lifetime of memories at camp!

CAMP SABRA TURNS 40!

LOCAL | JCC POOL PARTY PLANNED

At 40, Camp Sabra reignites alumni efforts

Camp Sabra, a program of the St. Louis Jewish Community Center, is celebrating its 40th birthday this summer and at the same time is re-igniting its alumni efforts. With more than 5,000 alumni across the country, summer camping and the memories associated with the experience at Sabra/Wah-Kon-Dan/Hawthorn stay strong. This summer, the Camp Sabra Alumni Association will host pool parties and a weekend at Sabra so that alumni can connect, reminisce, and get back in the camp spirit, said Debbie Lefton, former Sabra camper and now chairperson for the Alumni Committee.

The first event "A Party at the Pool" is for alumni and current camp families and will be held from 6 to 8 pm Tuesday, June 22 at the JCC's new Siwak Family Recreation Pool at the Staenberg Family Complex. The event is co-chaired by Robin Fox and Stacey Prelutsky.

Interested alumni or camp families can RSVP to Bebe Morgan at 314-442-3151.

The celebrations will continue with the first Alumni Reunion at Camp Sabra the weekend of Sept. 24 - 26. Former camp directors Aubrey Herman and Steve Engel will be joining Sabra, Hawthorn and Wah-Kon-Dah alumni and co-chairs Beth Koritz and Holly Suffian for a fun-filled camp-spirit infused weekend. Campfires, song sessions and all the camp activities will be available. Members of the Alumni Association 25 years and older and spouses/significant others are welcome to attend. More information can be found by visiting the "Alumni" section of the Camp Sabra website at www.campsabra.com.

For more information about Camp Sabra's development or alumni efforts, contact Julie Gibbs at 314-442-3254, or jgibbs@jccst.com.



**ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION**
THE PLACE WHERE
WE BELONG

CAMP DIRECTORS

CAMP HAWTHORN

STEPHEN BAUMAN
1938-1939

BABE LARNER
1940-1942

SPEEDY ALTMAN
1943-1946

SAM KADISON
1947-1950

ABRAHAM KESTENBAUM
1951

BILL WEINSTEIN
1952-1953

LOU BOCKNER
1954-1956

MURRAY RAIM
1957

SAM NEGRIN
1958-1962

MIKE LAINOFF
1963-1969

CAMP SABRA

MIKE LAINOFF
1970

EDDIE ROBBINS
1971-1976

AUBREY HERMAN
1977-1979

BOB GUMMERS
1980-1981

CARY BERG
1982-1983

SCOTT BROWN
1984-1986

STEVEN ENGEL
1987-1999

RABBI RANDY FLEISCHER
2000-2001

RANDY COMENSKY
2002-2004

JEFF ROSE
2005-2007

TERRI GROSSMAN
2008-present

CAMP WAH-KON-DAH

BENNY KESSLER
1938-1969