

BT Alumni Newsletter



Volume 2

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Welcome Back!

We can't believe a year has gone by since the last newsletter! The summer of 2004 was another great camping season at Birch Trail where the camp traditions and spirit you remember continue to live on.

It was great to hear from so many of you after the last edition of the newsletter, but it wouldn't be Birch Trail without a technological glitch. Due to some computer errors (okay, and maybe a bit of operator error), we have lost both our alumni email list and our inbox with updates you sent to us last winter. We apologize if you sent us information that is not reflected in this newsletter. We now need your help by passing this newsletter on to your friends. The last page of the newsletter is an information form, please please please fill it out and send it in to become part of our new alumni database.

In the meantime, enjoy this latest installment of the BT Alumni News and remember to always **Color Your Days Bright!**

Jan Kaplan Moody (1968-'73, '75, '97-'04)

Jamie Lake (1986-'90, '92-'93, '96-'04)

Greetings from Minong

By Barbara Chernov

I wish you could all be in Minong with me now to see how spectacular Birch Trail looks in the fall. Everywhere I look there are the most gorgeous reds, yellows, and oranges on the trees. The grass is greener than ever from all the rain we have had. For those of you who haven't been up here in a while, the entire airstrip is now covered with lush green grass. Every year we plant a little more grass and landscape another area of camp. This is not easy to do in the sand that still can be found throughout much of camp.

We have also continued to make improvements in many of our buildings while still keeping that rustic feel. We have a brand new, state-of-the-art commercial kitchen as well as matching tables and benches in Baer Lodge. As of this fall, every cabin in camp (other than BLT and TM) has been remodeled or updated. All of the cabins, except those in Tamarack Village, have brand new twin-sized bunks and plenty of shelf space. We will give BLT and TM new beds, but, don't worry, we won't cover up any of the names on the walls and those cabins will remain the same. This spring, Pixley Shelter will get a much-needed makeover on the inside and outside. All of the plaques will look much nicer when displayed on the new light-colored, wood walls. The

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Greetings from Minong (continued)

Tamarack Washhouse will get brand new toilets and sinks to become as beautiful as the Maple and Linden Washhouses. We are also in the process of remodeling three of our staff buildings.

While we have been busy renovating facilities, we would never dream of changing anything about the philosophy or spirit of Birch Trail. We all treasure the special place that has been created here and would never want to tamper with what we hold so dear. Our past and present campers and camp families are what keep this spirit alive. I hope you have looked at the pictures on our website from last summer and seen in the campers' eyes what you remember in your heart. Amy Wurtzburger shared this beautiful thought with me after looking at her daughters' faces when they arrived home from Birch Trail this summer. I hope you will continue to be involved with Birch Trail, whether that means coming to the next reunion, joining us for Family Camp, spreading the word about Birch Trail to friends and neighbors or, hopefully, sending your own daughters here to continue the legacy. It warms my heart to see that indescribable and unique love of camp in a second generation camper's eyes. You can just see that she "gets" what camp is all about and is loving it just as her mother did.

Remember that this is YOUR newsletter and our goal is to keep you updated on news from camp and also to keep you informed of news from your cabinmates and friends. So please keep in touch, keep checking the website, come to the reunions when we are in your city, and please try to get up to camp for a visit.

Sleepaway: The Girls of Summer and the Camps They Love

Remember that feeling of nervousness you had the night before you first left for camp? And how at the end of the summer, you cried because you didn't want to leave your best friends? Author Laurie Susan Kahn has captured the magic of girls' summer camps in her book, *Sleepaway: The Girls of Summer and the Camps They Love*. She writes, "I've always believed there are only two kinds of American and Canadian women: those who gave camp a try for a summer or two but refused to ever go back and those of us who never stopped cherishing those summers and who only ceased going because of a double-digit birthday beginning with three, or marriage or our parents' suggestions that 'maybe it's time you had a real job, with a real income.'" If you fall into the second category, you should check out her book, which is available from www.amazon.com.

Laurie Kahn has two new projects. First, she is looking for former campers who attended camp post-1980 to share their memories and pictures for her sequel to *Sleepaway*. Also, she is accepting articles for her new *Sleepaway Magazine*. This is your chance to share your BT experiences and, maybe, even get published! For more information, visit Laurie Kahn's website at www.sleepaway.net.

Who, What, When?

Each newsletter will contain a picture or two from days gone by. Can you identify who, what, and when? Send your responses to btalum@hotmail.com.

A Big How to Dana Lappin for correctly identifying one of last year's pictures as some of the JCs from 1992 dressed up for an evening program!



Announcements, Announcements, Announcements

Calling all alums... Send us your updates for the next newsletter at btalum@hotmail.com.

Bibi Pasternack (1962-'67) lives in Montclair, New Jersey with her husband, Ted, and two kids, Peter (16) and Clara (13). She writes, "I speak to one of my old BT friends, Judy Fell, weekly, and see various alums at Nebagamon Family Camp each summer. Somebody find me!" bbmephis@comcast.net

Mary Jo (Joie) Slosburg Ward (1963-'69) operates Brookside Toy and Science in Kansas City with her husband. In August, she and **Debra Sax Annes** spent a few days reminiscing and reenacting BT on the shores of Lake Michigan. Both received many awards at the Final Banquet. JoeyMo@aol.com

Diana Lieb (1971-'76, '79) recently bought a new home in Ashville, North Carolina, where she has lived for 12 years. Diana writes, "Since the 2000 Reunion, my broken ankle has finished healing, but I've had my share of other physical challenges to deal with." djlieb@charter.net

Julie Adler Kappelman is living in Baltimore with her two kids, Jay and **Caroline**. She works in pharmaceutical sales and is planning on doing a trip to Yellowstone next summer. She writes, "I am not as woodsy as when **Emily Dreifus** and I went for Voyageur in 1974, but I still love sunsets over the water and being outdoors." She also has loads of memories... Secret Pal Day; Pow Wow Day (politically correct or not!); Quetico once, Quetico twice; Rose Quartz, the Light Brigade (1969); Emily, Nancy, Sally, Laura and Kathy; Jerry Baer doing the Itsy Bitsy Spider; and forging unbreakable friendship bonds. Juliekappelman@aol.com

Esther Schak (1974-'79, '82) has a new email address at ers@schak.com. She'd love to hear from her camp friends.

Ilene April-Leavitt (1975-'80, '82) lives in Highland Park, Illinois with her husband, Josh, and 3 daughters. Two of her daughters, Ariel and Mollie, will be starting BT next summer. She keeps in touch with many BT friends and is looking forward to her kids having an unforgettable camp experience. jleav907@aol.com

Nikki Shores Friedland (1984-'90) has been living in Miami for almost 15 years. She and her husband, Jon, have 2 little boys, Gabe (2 years old) and Zachary (4 years old). She works from home as a public relations consultant. nfriedla@bellsouth.net

Amy Cohen (1984-'88) has lived in San Francisco since 1999. She works in community economic develop with the Bay Area Local Initiative Support Corporation (LISC). She just bought a house with her husband, Guy.

Deborah Schneider (1985-'86, '88-'90) is making her way across the country to promote her new book, *Should You Really Be a Lawyer? The Guide to Smart Career Choices Before, During, and After Law School*. While on her book tour, she has visited two of her old campers, **Wendy Paget** in Boston and **Jamie Lake** in Chicago. Deborah's book should be available on Amazon.com this winter. deborah_schneider@hotmail.com

Lori Cohen (1986-'92) has made her debut on the East Coast and is now living in Brooklyn with her boyfriend, Michael. She is the Director of HIV Services at Callen-Lorde Community Health Center. Every couple of months she has a recurring camp dream - and every once in a while she can be heard singing camp songs! explori@yahoo.com

Congratulations to the TM of '91 new moms — **Amy Schaff Antonacci** (1986-92, '94) had a baby girl, Jamie, this summer. She has recently moved back to Highland Park, Illinois. amyantonacci@yahoo.com Fellow TM of '91 camper, **Erin Tatel Stein** (1986-'91, '97) and husband, Brad, welcomed a baby boy, Jacob, this summer as well. Erin and her husband are both teachers in the Chicago area.

The Way of the Wilderness

By Jan Kaplan Moody (1968-'73, '75, '97-'04)

It's 3:00am and the counselors wake you from a dead sleep. It takes a few minutes to realize why they would be oh so cruel, but then you remember... you are heading out on your first Quetico canoe trip! You stuff those last minute items into your waterproof - your toothbrush, camera and maybe an extra T-shirt - and then you lug the bag up to the Trip House Parking Lot where some really cool trippers are wide awake and finalizing the packing of the various Duluth packs. You wonder...do they have enough food? You trudge over to the Lodge for a quick bowl of cereal, which in itself is a chore to stomach at that hour. And then you climb into the van for the 8 hour journey "up north" to what seems like the edge of the world. While the first part of the journey is passed with slumber and quiet thoughts, the anticipation builds as you approach the put-in point. And then you see the previous week's trip approaching the shore from across Nym Lake, and you hear the hoops and hollers, the singing and laughing and you see the paddles splashing through the water. Finally, you see the smiling faces, hear the endless cross-chatter, and most of all, you smell the wilderness!



How many of you remember your first canoe trip, or other wilderness trip at BT? For me, it was an amazing experience. My parents weren't "campers" per se (unless you considered a Marriott without a swimming pool to be camping) so my exposure to camping would never have happened without the Birch Trail trip program.

I remember my first van trip (actually it was a station wagon trip since there were only 6 kids in my cabin) in 1968 to Pattison State Park. I also vividly recall my first Nam/St. Croix trip. I remember honing my skills and finally getting to go on a Quetico trip as a lower Tamarack and three more after that. I learned so much on those camping trips - not just the hard skills of canoeing, fire-building, outdoor cooking and the like, but the life-long skills of working together as a team, of helping each other out, and of patience and caring. Sure, it's great to learn how to set up a Baker or a Barnard tent. (Can you believe that when I was a tripper in 1997 those tents were still in the Trip House!?! To quote a BT friend - they were grossnoxious!) But how many times since then have you been in a meeting at work and utilized those skills. The tripping program was about more than just going camping; it really gave me a sense of confidence, of being willing to try new things, and to understand that the goal is met only when the last person completes the portage. These are the skills that I use every day in my life, whether it is at work, with my friends or my family. Yes, this is why we go the Way of the Wilderness!

Announcements, Announcements, Announcements (continued)

Betsy Brafman (1990-'94, '96-'97) is living in Mexico City while she teaches English as a Fulbright Scholar. In January, she will return to Atlanta to continue teaching high school Spanish. She recently got engaged and is planning a 2006 wedding. brafy@aol.com

Barrie Gordon (1990-'97, '99-'00) works in the creative department at Miramax Films. Her roommate is **Suzie Cohen**, her M-2 cabinmate! Suzie and Barrie have pizza every Tuesday night with **Ann Goldenberg**. She writes, "Birch Trail is all over this city!" barrie_gordon@yahoo.com

Ann Goldenberg (1990-'99) is living in New York and working in advertising. Ann has a new email address: ann.goldenberg@gmail.com.

Announcements, Announcements, Announcements (continued)

Sara Golob (1990-'97, '99) graduated from Syracuse University last may with a civil engineering degree. She is now working at an architectural/engineering firm in Ann Arbor, Michigan as a project engineer. She writes, "My place is always open for visitors and I am only a 4 hour drive from Chicago!" sgolob@bria2.com

Janet Lawson (1992-'97) is currently living in Paraguay serving as a Peace Corps volunteer. She recently graduated from Georgetown University. jklawson7@comcast.net

Lindsey Lewis (1992-'97, '99) graduated from Purdue University last May and is now working as a fourth grade teacher in Palatine, Illinois. Her sister, **Lisa Lewis Paul** got married in August 2004 and is a pilot for Coca-Cola in Atlanta. purdueteach82@yahoo.com

Beth Miller (1992-'98, '02-'03) is a senior at New York University, majoring in politics and journalism, and working at the Overbrook Foundation, a progressive family foundation that funds human and civil rights programs around the United States. She is still proud to wear lots of Puma attire while she practices hanging bear-bags on NYC telephone poles. She'd love to hear from all of her former campers. em732@nyu.edu

Jen Phillips (1992-'97, '99-'01, '03) graduated from Michigan State University and is now student teaching in a second grade classroom in Detroit. Jen enjoyed a relaxing Thanksgiving Vacation in Florida with **Kim Waxman**. Sparty324@aol.com

Abby Grodnick (1992-'98, '00) is excited to graduate from George Washington University with a major in sociology and a communications minor in May. She has no idea where she is heading next, but she might stay in DC or join other BT alums in New York City. Grod15@aol.com

Rebecca Ward (1994-'99) is in graduate school studying English at DePaul University in Chicago. wardra23@aol.com

Sara Ward (1994-'99) is a junior at the University of Denver and is currently studying abroad in Seville, Spain for the semester. saresy@aol.com

The Return of BT Family Camp!

Birch Trail's legendary Family Camp is back by popular demand! Are you interested in reliving your camper days and sharing them with your family? Do you miss seeing beautiful Pokagema sunsets? Then join us at camp from August 13 - 18, 2005.

At Family Camp, each family lives in its own cabin, dines in the Lodge, participates in camp activities, and enjoys special programs and trips. Each day you can choose to take part in a number camp activities, including water skiing, canoeing, tennis, climbing, and crafts, just relax with friends, read a book while swinging in a hammock, or go on kayaking or shopping outings. Every evening includes a special program designed for the entire family, such as talent shows, sing downs, campfires, and much, much more.

Parents are responsible for the supervision of their own children while at Family Camp so there is no minimum age for children to participate. Several key BT staff members will remain at Family Camp to lead activities and provide kid programs and child care at specially designated times.

For more information about Family Camp, including fees and registration procedures, send an email to directors@birchtrail.com. Space is limited so reserve your spot right away!



Giving Back for a New Generation of Campers

By Barbara Chernov

I want to share some news with you about two programs that Birch Trail is proud to be involved with.

Camp Kids Foundation

For those of you are not familiar with Lou and Renee Rosenblum, let me take a moment to tell you about them. Lou and Renee were true pioneers in camping when they started North Star Camp in 1945. The values they taught and the community they created has impacted thousands of campers and staff throughout the years. The camping community lost one of its greatest role models when Lou passed away last winter. One of the many legacies that Lou left behind is the North Star alumni who went on to direct their own summer camps. These directors are Robert & Sue Leiby at North Star Camp, Mike & Leslie Cohen at Camp Timberlane, Tom & Pam Adler at Chippewa Ranch Camp, Mike & Kathy Jay at Camp Kamaji, and Richard and myself at Birch Trail. The values that Lou and Renee instilled at North Star have been spread through the world to thousands of campers through the efforts of these camp directors who got their start at North Star.

We were all reminded of the strength of the camping community by the outpouring of love and support expressed after Lou's death. After considering many ways to honor Lou's memory and legacy, the five camps decided to do something unprecedented in the world of camping. We merged our respective camp scholarship funds into one super-fund that will work cooperatively to honor Lou and Renee's life work. We will do this by making the Birch Trail-like experience available to as many children as possible who, historically, have not experienced the joy of camping. To that end we have established *The Lou and Renee Rosenblum Endowment Camping Fund* which will provide camp scholarships to deserving, disadvantaged children who would not otherwise benefit from the summer camp experience. In order to accomplish this, we have chosen to coordinate with Camp Kids Foundation, a 501c(3) non-profit organization.

The Camp Kids Foundation was created twelve years ago with the goal of providing scholarships for disadvantaged children to attend private summer camps for at least one month. One of the best aspects of the program is that the children given scholarships are allowed to return to "their" camp for as many summers as they like thereby reaping the benefits of a long term camping experience. Participating camps provide a discounted tuition to all scholarship recipients. We are very excited to have teamed up with the Foundation. We know that everyone in our Birch Trail community will benefit from the enthusiasm, positive attitude, and diversity that these campers bring to camp. Last summer 75 boys and girls attended one of these five camps through this scholarship program. Birch Trail was fortunate enough to host 6 of these campers during first session. The experience was incredibly positive for all of the campers and our camp.

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BT Glossary

Do you remember camp lingo? This is just a sampling some of the terms being used at camp now. Email us at btalum@hotmail.com with any memorable terms or words that we are missing.

Maples	The youngest village of campers, 3rd through 6th graders
Lindens	The middle village of campers, 7th and 8th graders
Tamaracks	The oldest village of campers, 9th and 10th graders
TM	Tamarack Mansion, the cabin where the oldest girls live
BLT	Basic Lower Tamaracks and the cabin where the 9th graders live
How	BT applause
Pokegama	Our 452 acre lake
The Scoop	BT's favorite ice cream shop in Minong
Stupee	Camper sets the table, fetches the food, and clears the table
Sphh	Solemn promise. Breaking a sphh results in being thrown in the lake
Repeat	Camper chosen each day to ring the bell
Demiss	Dismissal from the Lodge at the end of a meal

Giving Back for a New Generation of Campers (cont)

North Star Camp has already had an alumni pledge of \$100,000 to kick off this campaign. We are looking for all types of donations, including \$1-\$5 donations from kids, personal contributions, or major donations from family foundations. We know that there are a lot of alumni from these five camps who will want to "give something back" for all that they received from their wonderful and priceless years of camping. What better way is there than providing the same kind of experience for other kids.

What I am asking now is that you open up your heart and remember these kids when you count the blessings in your life. The change of the seasons is a time for renewal, rebirth, and blossoming; let's also make it a time for giving. Checks can be made out to The Camp Kids Foundation and please put Lou & Renee Rosenblum Endowment Fund in the memo section of your check. Please send contributions to The Camp Kids Foundation; c/o Capes, Sokol, Goodman & Sarachan; Attn: David Capes; 7701 Forsyth Blvd., 4th Floor; St. Louis, MO 63105.

Richard Chernov Children's Fund

The Richard Chernov Children's Fund was established in 2001 to honor Richard's memory and legacy. Donations to this fund send children with cancer and other life threatening illnesses to summer camp. Since its inception, this fund has helped support camps that specialize in serving these campers with special needs.



If you would like to make a donation or to contribute by purchasing a long-sleeved green t-shirt with the BT logo and "Color Your Days Bright" on it, please contact Gabe Chernov at gabe@birchtrail.com.

Their Mother's Were Campers Too...

For over 25 years, second and third generation campers have carried on their mother's legacies at Birch Trail. Please email corrections and additions to btalum@hotmail.com.

Daughter

Emily Ackerman
Molly Adler
Alyssa Adler
Amanda Baker
Claire Beatus
Lindsay Berger
Jordan Chaplik
Amy & Lori Cohen
Lauren Conen
Mona & Erin Cooper
Miriam Dresner
Ellen Eichner
Evan Elbein
Elena Finer
Michelle &
Marcy Fischgrund
Alex Friedman

Mother

Louise Ryder
Julie Lansing
Laura Katz

Suzanne Ryder

Susan Loeb
Barbie Bloom
Susie Bamberger

Debbie Farber
Judy Fine
Jan Rothschild
Teresa Brickman

Heidi Balsler
Jane Breyer

Daughter

Lindsay, Paige, &
Valerie Galassini
Brittany Goldfarb
Allie & JoJo Gubin
Lauren Hoffmann
Allison Hoyle
Courtney Jonas
Elle Kaplan
Caroline Kappelman
Alison Karmin
Jessica Kaufman-Fink
Hannah &
Rebecca Kinsel
Heather Klein
Jennifer & Lexi Klein
Julie Klein
Carly Koress
Margot Langsdorf
Dori Lerner
Jessica Leshman
Ilana Libman
Kate Liebman
Jennifer & Emily Luten
Hilary & Ali Marbach
Amy Margolin

Mother

Julie Loeb

Jill Rothschild

Amy Simpson
Robin Silberman
Jennifer Goodman
Julie Adler
Debbie Schrayner

Ellen Rosenthal

Lynn Silversmith
Sherry Bubis
Lauri Smith

Liz Kahn
Lisa Lane
Jill Greenwald
Susie Frank
Peggy Miller

Daughter

Edie & Emily Margolis
Sophie Mendel
Jori & Maddy Miller
Andrea Morgan
Amy Nadgradzki
Suzanne Novak
Jessica Olt
Mackenzie Pass
Geneva & Cecilia Philips
Olivia & Suzanne Pocost
Melissa Rosenblatt
Marlee Rudman
Jackie Schecter
Sarah Shor
Molly Shubin
Stephanie Sigman
Nisha & Anjali Soni
Ali & Emily Spalter
Sally Stark-Dreifus
Rebecca & Sarah Ward
Ali Wechsler
Jenny, Ali &
Kat Weinstein
Jessy Westmore
Jamie Yohannah

Mother

Weezie Rosenbloom
Soozie Mazer
Donna Barron
Sue Broder
Nancy Goldberg
Anne Wolfson
Vicki Stone

Jan Rothschild
Marianne Baer

Caren Loeb
Betsy Spector
Ruthie Lowenstein
Joanie Mintz

Amy Wurtzburger
Betsy Kaine
Karen Stark
Joie Slosburg

Liz Steinbaum
Jodi Henson

Memories of a Voyageur

By Alex Friedman (1998-'03)



It was incredibly warm for a Wisconsin day, but the sweat forming on my brow was not from the weather. I looked anxiously at the silver canoes, and the feeling of dread that I had been trying to suppress suddenly exploded in my stomach again. Soon, I would try to lift and carry one of those canoes for a half a mile. If I succeeded I would pass the Voyageurs class and receive my paddle. If I failed, well, after all the hard work I had put into the class, this was not an option I wanted to consider.

As doubt was racing through my mind, I had to remember the reason I was attempting to accomplish this feat. For the past three weeks of camp I had worked hard to accomplish the other seventeen skills necessary for completing Voyageurs, donning my blue bikini twice a day, and persevering through various paddling challenges. Portaging was the only skill keeping me from my paddle, and I hoped I would be able to persist through this test as well. However, in my mind this challenge was more difficult than any of the others I had attempted to overcome. Not only was I not particularly strong for my age, but being 4'10", and weighing well under 100 pounds also seemed like a handicap. "The canoe weighs more than I do," I complained to an instructor, "how will I be able to carry it?"

With my chance at portaging minutes away, I watched the first girl stumble off, hunched over by the weight of the canoe, its ends bobbing up and down with each step. I felt like the tottering canoe was inside my stomach, with each bounce of its ends making me sicker and sicker with anticipation. The embarrassment of failure crossed my mind again, and the thought of not achieving my goal formed a large lump in the back of my throat. By the time the canoe was on my shoulders, every possible negative outcome of the experience was planned out in my mind.

But then, amazingly, something I had not expected happened: I took a step. And then another, and another. And slowly, each step added up to yard, and the yard combined until finally, I was back at the canoe shed, done with the portaging. I had taken many breaks along the half mile trail, sweat was dripping down my temples, and my arms were shaking from the exertion they had just undertaken. But despite the sheer exhaustion I felt, I was still filled with an emotion of confidence and self accomplishment. I alone had carried a canoe for a half a mile, and I alone had completed my Voyageurs. It did not matter that I was the shortest girl participating in the class, or the weakest. I was just as capable as any other participant.

Today, many people misjudge my strength because of my size, just as I underestimated myself. Now, however, I am aware that just because the State of South Carolina considers me a legal midget for being under five feet tall, it does not mean I am less capable than any of my contemporaries. This past summer, while backpacking in Ecuador, many of the people on my trip were reluctant to let a "mini-me" as many of them called me, carry an equal share of the weight. However, after convincing them to let me try and carry my part of the supplies, most were surprised to see me accomplish this with ease. While before my Voyageurs experience, I would have readily accepted the idea that my size made me less capable, now I am prepared to meet any challenge with the confidence that I can do anything.

Life's A Birch!

We need your help with the next newsletter.

Please email us the following information at btalum@hotmail.com:

- Updates on your whereabouts and announcements;
- Articles or ideas for articles;
- Pictures of your camping days (.jpg please); and
- Anything else!

You're Demissed!

