

LUBAVITCH OF N. C.

The Camp Gan Israel Day Camp

Once again, Camp Gan Israel was a smashing success. More than forty-five children participated in the camp program. The session, which lasted two weeks, was the most fun-packed and exciting camp ever.

Every morning the children arrived at the Lansdowne School playground. The day started with line-up. Campers were selected to lead in the singing of Jewish songs and verses. This was followed with special learning classes conducted by the counselors. The children learned about Mezuzah and other Mitzvot.

After the study session, the children hopped on to the vans and off they went on exciting trips. The trips ranged from educational tours to fun filled adventures. This included a visit to Reed's Gold Mine, Discovery Place, Carowinds and Riverbanks Zoo in Columbia.

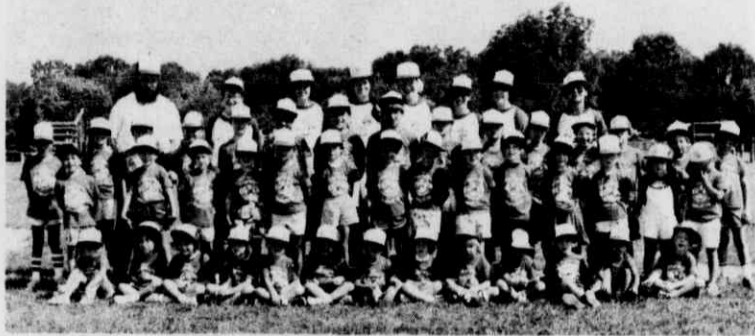
The older campers discovered the art of communication, when they visited the WTVI studio, Charlotte's public TV station. The campers had a hands on experience as they sang and performed under the lights and cameras at the recording studio.

Every day the children returned for a hot nutritious lunch, which was served at Beth Shalom. During lunch the children would hold singing contests; they were so loud that they rocked the building. Some days the camp held a cookout and picnic at one of Charlotte's parks. The most interesting one was at Hornet's Nest Park, as the camp gathered for lunch after playing exciting games. The food was being prepared on grills, when suddenly they were surrounded by quacking ducks who wanted a piece of the action. Lou Doctor, who volunteered to help with camp, had some job keeping the ducks away from gobbling up all the food. The children did share some of their food with the ducks.

The campers were led by excellent counselors, who came in from New York. They are Nechama Rosler, Esti Shemtov, Chanie Marozov and Rivkie Plotkin. The four are students at Beth Rivkah teaching seminary in Brooklyn. The juniors also had an excellent staff: Peggy Davis, Mickie Salyer and Chanie Wilson.

The campers were fortunate to have some very good volunteers, who helped make the camp the success it was. They are Eleanor Weinglass, Ziva London and Lou Doctor. The volunteers accompanied the campers on all the trips and really gave of their effort and time.

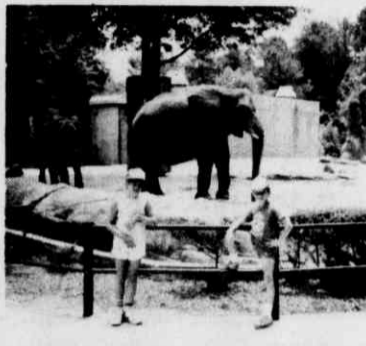
After lunch the children demonstrated their skills at arts and crafts. They made mosaic tile candy dishes, beeswax Havdallah candles and foil sculptures.



Campers and staff of Camp Gan Israel.



Mariashi Groner (L) talking to Amy Wallace about camp activities.



Seth Pickholtz (L) and Chad Klein (R) at Riverbanks Zoo.



Campers kneading the challah dough.



Enjoying a day at Carowinds: (Starting upper left clockwise) Counselor Chanie Marozov with group of exuberant campers; riding the Carolina Gold Rush; cavorting on the swings; the "rides" were enjoyed by all.

The campers enjoyed swimming at two pools: the Klein pool for the girls and the Wojnowich pool for the boys. Each group had their own life guard who ensured safety and fun. The tiny tots swam at the Lubavitch pool under the supervision of the counselors.

During the trips on the vans, the children sang camp songs and learned new ones. Their favorite was "Heniah Mah Tov" and "We Want Moshiah Now". Each child received a camp shirt and hat which displayed the camp emblem in Hebrew and English.

A kosher label contest was

held. The camper who brought in the most kosher labels with a recognized kosher symbol (like "O.U." O.K. "CHOF K") was declared winner. There were two winners: Ruth Meyers, was number one, having brought in 9 large bags of labels; Sloane Muller brought in 98 labels. They both received educational prizes.

The activities and trips were cleverly arranged by Mariashi Groner, director of camp. The main emphasis was on quality and substance. This resulted in an excellent camp which the children will remember for the rest of the year.

Thoughts From The Lubavitcher Rebbe

Tish'ah B'av

By Rabbi Yossi Groner

The Hebrew month of Av (which begins this year on August 6) is one of extreme holidays and observances. First we have Tish'ah B'av (9th of Av), which commemorates the destruction of both temples in Jerusalem. This day is observed with fasting and abstaining from pleasurable activities. It is considered the saddest day of the year.

Following Tish'ah B'av, we celebrate one of the most joyous holidays in the year. This holiday is Tu B'av (15th of Av), which according to the Talmud, is likened in importance to Yom Kippur. Tu B'av, commemorates the end of the plague that killed Jewish men between the age of twenty to sixty.

According to chassidic philosophy, since Tish'ah B'av is the saddest, it causes that the following days should be the most joyous.

This teaches us an important lesson: Although we are in the darkness of exile, we need not be depressed, for the 15th of Av teaches us that the ultimate purpose of this darkness is the lofty levels of the future. Thus this holiday also serves as inspiration to be positive, and should last the rest of the year.

The main theme of the holiday is Jewish unity through

love. Ahavat Yisroel — love of a fellow Jew — is to be increased to the level of true unity amongst all Jews. This is expressed in the particular events of the day itself. On the 15th day of Av, the daughters of Israel would go out and dance in the vineyards; they would be dressed in white, so not to embarrass anyone.

This emphasizes the love respect expressed, to the extent that all the girls borrowed from another, solely to avoid embarrassing anyone.

Indeed, Torah considers "Ahavat Yisroel" one of the greatest principles in Judaism. As the famous sage Hillel said: "That which you hate, do not do to your friend (true expression of love), this is the entire Torah, the rest is its elaboration, go and learn." This principle of love and unity gives one the strength and inspiration to learn and fulfill the rest of the Torah.

Simply put, the greatest and best act a Jew can do in the spirit of "Ahavat Yisroel" is to cause a fellow Jew to come closer to Judaism.

In addition to the above, the 15th of Av emphasizes increase in Torah study. The Talmud states that from the 15th of Av on, the nights become longer and the days shorter; and since "the nights were created only for the study of Torah," one should increase in learning Torah into the nights.

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