



**Camperships
For
Nebagama**

Making Camps A Place of Welcome For All

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NebagaNotes

AS CAMPERSHIPS TURNS 20, A LOOK BACK

By John Sawyer

2015 has been filled with markers of the 50 years that have passed since the March on Selma and passage of the Voting Rights Act — events that changed the landscape of our country for millions, and set in place a vision of progress that we still work toward today. This year, CFN celebrates its own more modest anniversary — 20 years since the creation of the Muggs and Janet Lorber endowment. Your NebagaNotes editor was enjoying his

9th grade summer in 1995, and while I knew of CFN's founding, one of the pleasures of joining the Board has been getting a better sense of how the organization came to be, and how it has progressed. To tell a bit of that story, I spoke with Roger Wallenstein, who along with his wife Judy co-directed Camp at the time, and with Bob Nefsky, who served as President of the original CFN Board.

When asked about CFN's origins, both Nefsky and Wallenstein are quick to point out that since its founding, Camp has helped boys attend when their families couldn't afford the tuition.

"Nebagama under the direction of the Lorb-ers and Steins had a history of reaching out to Camp families who for various reasons fell on hard times and found that paying tuition was out of their reach," says Wallenstein. "Many of these campers continued at Nebagama through the generosity of Janet, Muggs, Sally, and Nardie."

Nefsky points out that in addition to financial assistance, the importance of diversity has also been a value at Camp since the beginning. "Starting with the Lorb-ers and the Steins, there was a sense that Camp Nebagama would benefit from diversity in the camper population. Both concepts became further institutionalized during Roger and Judy Wallenstein's tenure."

The idea of creating an endowment was brought to the Wallensteins by a number of

former Nebagama campers and counselors. One was David Heller, who had himself benefited from Muggs and Janet Lorber's generosity when he was able to attend Camp after losing his father as a young child.

"One day in 1995 the phone rang in the Camp office. It was David Heller. He was a no-nonsense guy who got straight to the point," recalls Wallenstein. "A close friend was his Nebagama counselor Lloyd Schermer. Heller said that he and his beloved counselor would each make a major contribution to a camper-ship fund on the condition that the original Board of CFN would raise the remainder for a Muggs and Janet Lorber Endowment of \$1 million. Tough as David was, he gave the Board five years to do it."

Nefsky was asked to serve as President of the Board. "Roger and Judy asked a broad cross-section of former campers and counselors from various eras to join the initial Board" he says. "Buzz Neusteter, Skip Rosenblatt, Bob Chukerman, Mitch Semel, and myself, we were the first Board — Joe Hirschhorn joined the Board later."

Getting to a million dollars at first felt like a steep climb, says Wallenstein. "However, we found that the Camp community, with a few exceptions, embraced the idea of having campers from various backgrounds. Having the backing of Sally and Nardie (*Continued on p. 3*)

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

By Adam Braude

Many readers may have seen a recent op-ed piece in the *New York Times* that suggested expressing gratitude is not just a nice thing to do, it actually makes one happier. With this in mind, I'd like to use this column, my first as CFN President, to offer my thanks to those who have most significantly shaped Camp Nebagamom for eighty-seven years and counting. First to Muggs and Janet, who set the standard of excellence for all who followed in their footsteps. To Nardie and Sally, who in so many ways built Camp into the remarkable place we know today. They will always be "my" Camp directors, as they are for thousands of other CN alumni. To Roger and Judy, for whom I worked for thirteen

summers (and five off-seasons). On a personal note they treated me like a member of their family; in broader terms, their leadership made the founding of Camperships for Nebagamom possible. And to Adam and Steph, who continue to serve as wonderful stewards of a tradition that means so much to so many.

Finally, I'd like to extend my sincere gratitude to all of CFN's generous donors, both past and present. Your contributions over the last twenty years have literally changed the face of Camp. During this season of giving, I invite you to renew your support so we can ensure the positive impact of CFN far into the future. Happy Holidays.

WATERWAY FUNDRAISER

By John Sawyer

Nebagamom Alums Mike Goldman, Bob Dubinsky and Henry Dubinsky are part of the leadership team at Waterway, a chain of full-service car wash, gasoline and convenience stores with locations across the Midwest. The team at Waterway opened their first Chicagoland location this fall, in Northbrook, and last month used that occasion to host a joint fundraiser for CFN, the Camp Nebagamom Scholarship Fund, and Camp for All Kids.

The event, which Goldman describes as a "mini-reunion" attended by the likes of Alex Gordon, Andy Kaplan, Jim Koretz, Bud and Hazel Herzog, Jim Hensel and Charlie Portis, raised \$10,000 for the three organizations. And Camp alums all came away with clean cars — a success on many fronts!

Have an idea for a CFN fundraiser? We'd love to help. Email CFNDonations@cncharities.org.

CAMPERSHIPS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Every year, Camp's directors give the CFN Board a short rundown of what the summer was like for kids who attend Camp with assistance from CFN. It's gratifying to get a sense of the impact Camp has as a result of CFN. We have shared a sample of these comments below:

"He took it upon himself to make others feel welcomed and a part of things"

"He is uniformly looked to as a leader by his peers and they unhesitatingly respect him."

"He has matured immensely over the course of the years."

"Having created a tough guy image for himself, watching him choke back tears on departure was truly moving"

A LOOK BACK

(Continued from cover)



CFN has helped Camp build upon its founding principle that “This Shall Be a Place of Welcome for All.”

and so many thoughtful and supportive alumni made the job of the CFN Board so much easier.”

Hirschhorn also helped organize the celebratory event marking the achievement of the million-dollar goal: a dinner for 50+ at Eleven Madison Park (named earlier this year the Best Restaurant in America), owned by Nebagamom alum Danny Meyer.

Since meeting that endowment goal, the work of CFN has continued to evolve, though the principles have been clear from the beginning. Wallenstein recalls: “it was important to us that the campership kids were not just a means of saying, ‘Look what wonderful liberals we are by having these African American (and other) kids at Camp.’ We didn’t want things to stop there. We looked to have dialogues at Camp to celebrate our differences. We also made it a priority to attract families of color who were able to pay our tuition.”

That evolution continued with the addition of Camp WeHaKee for girls as a designated recipient of Campership funds. That change was spurred by the mother of a CFN camper, who remarked to the Wallensteins that she wished her daughter could have the same experience. “In this way, CFN is able to help families,

not just the sons of those families,” says Wallenstein.

Today CFN works toward our goal of supporting 15 percent of Nebagamom campers in some way. Our conversations as a Board continue to focus not just on meeting numbers, but on helping Camp make that experience as positive as possible for each boy. That starts with the challenge of recruiting, and extends to smaller details like supporting diversity training for staff and ensuring all kids can access high-quality equipment for wilderness trips.

Along with all of the alumni who have supported CFN in the last twenty years, Wallenstein feels pride in having helped make the camp experience a reality for more kids. “Walking into the Rec Hall and seeing a noticeable number of faces of color was among the greatest feelings we had during our time directing Camp. In addition, seeing how the lives of former campers who received CFN support have evolved is especially gratifying.”

Nefsky puts it succinctly: “CFN has changed the world for the campers it has supported.”

On behalf of the CFN Board, as we look ahead to the next 20 years, we thank each of you for your role in changing the world.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



INSIDE...

- 20 Years of CFN.
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- Thank you, Waterway.

"This Shall Be a Place of Welcome for All."