



CAMP RAMAH IN CALIFORNIA

At the Max & Pauline Zimmer Conference Center

A Journey for a Lifetime

News from Camp Ramah in California - Summer 2006

Session 2 - Week 3

August 11 - 17 Av, 5766

Dear 2nd Session and Gesher E Parents,

What a week! It has been a very busy and very special week at Camp Ramah in California. This week we said goodbye to two very special groups of campers – our fun, spirited group of Gesher D campers and our amazing and wonderful group of Israeli kids entering 8th grade from the FIDF (Friends of the Israeli Defense Forces). (To see a recent newspaper story, go to:

[Ventura County Star](#))

Both of these groups were very special to our community and we're sad to see them go but we look forward to welcoming them back in many future summers at Camp Ramah in California.



Welcome!

This week we also have two special welcomes to our kehillah. First, on Thursday, our Gesher E campers arrived. This group is off to a great start and on Sunday, during our Yom Kehillah, they'll be enjoying a fun day at the Lake Casitas water park and playing at some of the local parks. In addition to Gesher E, we also welcomed someone very special to our camp community: famous Jewish musician, Rick Recht! Rick is joining us for 8 days as an artist-in-residence. (See [Rick Recht](#)) Rick has been touring Jewish summer camps for years, including ours!, but when he and his family decided that they wanted to spend an extended period of time together as a family in a Jewish summer camp this summer, of all the Jewish summer camps in the country, Rick and

summer camp this summer, of all the Jewish summer camps in the country, Rick and his family chose Camp Ramah in California! We've been very lucky to have Rick and his family with us: in addition to performing on Yom Kehillah this Sunday, and doing a concert for our younger campers that night, Rick has been joining different edot for creative services each weekday morning, doing hargaat (bed time activities) with various tents, and has been teaching in different ways all over camp.

Camping Trips!!

Many edot had their camping trips this week including Amitzim at nearby Lake Casitas, Giborei Yisrael, Tzophim and, of course, Machon, making their famous muddy entrance to the hadar ochel (dining room) just a few hours ago.

Maccabiah!!

Tuesday was Maccabiah which included swimming races, track and field, fun games, musical entrances and a fun time for all. Mazel Tov to team Adom (Red) for their victory and yashar Koach to all for a great day!

Yom Kehillah (Community Day)

Sunday is Camp Ramah in California's Yom Kehillah – Community Day – a day on which we welcome our entire community to come visit our beautiful camp, our campers, our staff, and each other! Buses will depart Nordhoff High School at noon and will make many trips into camp before the kids finish up lunch at 1pm. We officially conclude the day at 4:30pm. We look forward to seeing you there!

The War in Israel

First of all, though for most of the campers, the war in Israel feels very far away, our extended Ramah family has felt its effects. Close to home, some members of our staff community suffered a loss last week as Ramah Poconos alumnus, Mike Levin z"l, died in Lebanon. Mike was a friend of some members of our staff community and here at camp, a small group honored his memory with a memorial service last Thursday. Jewish Journal editor, Rob Eschman, wrote about Mike and his relationship to our community in his recent column at: [Jewish Journal](#)

Second, many of you may not know that Ramah has an overnight camp in Israel affiliated with Noam – the Masorit movement's youth group. Sadly, that Ramah camp was forced to close due to the war in Israel and our hearts are with the campers and their families whose Ramah summer was cut short. To read more, go to: [Jerusalem Post](#)

Finally, just days before 2nd session began, I sent a short email asking for donations of supplies for Israeli soldiers being called up for service. The response was overwhelming and we sent 10 duffle bags of supplies with people on a recent mission to Israel. While below is a letter of thanks from those soldiers, it is we who thank them for their service and devotion to Israel and the Jewish people.

Letter from Israel

Dear Camp Ramah in California,

Although we were informed that the army has a separate department that handles thank you notes on behalf of the soldiers, we wanted to thank you directly for the

thank you notes on behalf of the soldiers, we wanted to thank you directly for the various encouraging food goodies and toiletries you have provided us with. It is very encouraging to see that besides the bad press we seem to be making abroad we do have some support, as well.

We are stationed on Har Dov (Muzav Dalia), which is on the border to Lebanon right next to the Chermon mountain chain. We have all been called away from our families just about three weeks ago on a Friday afternoon and have not returned home since then. The protection of the border and the constant threat of infiltrations and additional kidnapping of soldiers keep us up around the clock. Yet, we all do it with a clear understanding of the importance of the mission in order to restore security to the citizens of the Northern parts of Israel.

The camp is fairly isolated and supply reaches us on irregular basis. None of us thought we were going to enter the fourth week of absence from home and since there are no laundry services available in any reasonable radius, we are glad to receive from various generous donors, as yourselves, simply new underwear, soaps and shampoos. The goodies are sure to keep us awake during the long hours of guard duties we have (and remove our last hope to experience a successful diet during which we were all hoping to lose a couple pounds.)

From all of us (Golani Miulim footsoldiers, tank crew, and intelligence core) a hearty Thank You and Yeyasher KoChacha

Soldiers of Muzav Dalia

Shabbat Shalom,

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The signature on the left is 'Dan' and the signature on the right is 'Zach'.

Rabbi Dan and Zach
Camp Ramah in California

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