

Tamarack Reunions

Camps take alumni efforts on the road.



Jacob Korenstein, Justin Ben Zvi, Talia Salei, Jen Feinberg and David Fichman, all of New York City



Randy Topper of Staten Island and Janet Loesberg of Warren, N.J., at the New York event

Tamarack Camps held its first out-of-state alumni event in New York City on Nov. 8 and its second annual Thanksgiving Alumni Bar night in Southfield on Nov. 29.

The two events were coordinated by Rachel (Grey) Ellis, Tamarack board member and alumni committee chairperson, and Carly Leipsitz, development associate.

In New York City, 50 former Tamarack campers and staff of all ages turned out at Legends in midtown Manhattan. Participants shared camp stories and memories, reconnected and caught up on Tamarack and Michigan current events.

Ellis, along with Tamarack board member and nurse Kathi Moss, traveled with their spouses to New York for the event.

"What is so wonderful about bringing alumni together is that it doesn't matter what generation you represent. Our Tamarack experiences are all very similar so we all share a very special connection," Ellis said.

"The alumni committee's mission is to provide meaningful opportunities for our alumni to connect with each other and Tamarack. Hosting reunions for our alumni who no longer live in Michigan shows that commitment."

The second annual Thanksgiving Alumni Bar Night took place at Mr. Joe's in Southfield, attended by 200 former campers and staff. Alumni came from Las Vegas; Wilmington, Del.; New York City; Los Angeles, San Diego, Louisville and all around Michigan. Jeff Metz and Lenny

Newman, both past directors of Camp Tamarack, Brighton, attended the event.

"It was really wonderful to reconnect with people who shared a very special time in our lives," said Metz, who came into town from Wilmington.

"It is always great seeing the gang; there is no gang like the camp gang!" said Newman, director of Brighton from 1972-77 and 1982-84.

Metz and Newman were part of the 50 Brighton staff alumni who came to Mr. Joe's.

Both events are part of a series that Tamarack Camps has initiated to enhance its strong alumni base. More than 1,300 people attended last summer's Alumni Family Fun Day when Camp Maas in Ortonville was open for the community.

"Tamarack has an extremely strong and vibrant history," said Executive Director Jonah Geller. "There's nothing more special for alumni than to reconnect and share memories that have shaped their Jewish identity. The added bonus is when family members and friends from multiple generations come together to share their experiences." □



Andy Krasfur of El Paso, Nita Cohen of Birmingham, David Cohen of Bingham Farms, and Laynie and Michael Langnas of West Bloomfield at Mr. Joe's in Southfield



Jessica Topper of Farmington Hills, Kate Bush of Detroit and Rachel Engel of Chicago

On tap are a Chicago Alumni Event on March 7, Alumni Family Weekend on May 22-24 and Alumni Family Fun Day on June 21. Check tamarackcamps.com or e-mail alumni@tamarackcamps.com for information and to be added to the alumni mailing list.