

Foreign Exchange

Tamarack Camps mark eight years on the Israeli Camper Program.

In 2002, as the second Palestinian intifada raged in Israel and youth travel to Israel was curtailed, the Detroit Jewish community reached out to a group of Israeli teens living under the constant threat of suicide bombings. Some 325 Israelis campers were offered a no-cost Jewish summer camp experience Tamarack Camps' Camp Maas in Ortonville.

Not only was camp a place where they could move freely and just be kids again, but the program became another way of keeping the Detroit Jewish community connected with its Partnership 2000 region in the Central Galilee.

After eight years, nearly 1,000 Israeli teens have spent a month living, interacting and enjoying a safe American camp experience at Camp Maas.

A total of 80 campers from the Central Galilee spent a month at Maas this summer.

"For me, and the nine other staff who are returning here after being campers a few years ago, the experience at camp and being part of the community and building relationships with our friends at camp and host families has changed our lives," said Simona Librov, 16, of Nazareth Illit.

"We are now all active youth leaders in our local communities, and really understand what it means to be part of a bigger Jewish community and the



Enjoying a Detroit Tigers' game are Lin Raveh, Simona Librov, Margo Goodman of Bloomfield Hills, Noga Beeri and Shaylee Coibin.

responsibilities that this entails."

Ten junior counselors were returning campers from the Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Detroit's youth leadership program called Mercaz Maaseh and invited to return.

Sherri Ketai of Franklin, Israeli Camper Program chair, said, "I have served as a host for this program. I have reconnected with the campers I have hosted when in Israel. The relationships formed between my family and our campers continue today."

Jonah Geller, Tamarack Camps executive director, called the program, "one of the most special aspects within our agency."

"To observe the transformation that the Israeli teenagers have undergone with their American counterparts, especially with respect to their social and religious exploration has been truly remarkable," said Geller.

The Israeli campers this summer were hosted by 40 local families, an experience that significantly enhanced their stay, he said. "I've also witnessed the reunions of camp friendships and families coming together during Detroit's family missions in Israel, further exemplifying the meaningful connections initiated at camp."

Federation and Tamarack Camps sponsor the program. □



Program chair Sherri Ketai hugs Jada as she prepares to return to Israel.



Nivi Levy and Alexandra Seledts were hosted by Warren and Carol Ann Rose of Birmingham.

Brown Program Celebrates 10 Years



Staff members of the Dorothy and Peter Brown Jewish Community Adult Day Care Program gather to celebrate 10 years.

Over the summer months, the Dorothy and Peter Brown Jewish Community Adult Day Care Program proudly celebrated its 10th anniversary. Festive events were held at both Brown Centers of Metro Detroit: operated by JVS in Southfield and by Jewish Senior Life in West Bloomfield.

These events honored the special contributions made by sponsors, donors, participants and their families.

One contribution was an employee recognition party to honor individuals for their dedicated work, which has made this program such a huge success over the past 10 years.

The Brown Program allows older adults with Alzheimer's and related disorders to reach their highest level of functioning and independence in a safe and caring Jewish setting. The program is an award-

winning model providing respite and support to family caregivers. It enables their loved ones to continue a satisfying quality of life in their own home.

"The pillars of the Brown Program have always been a caring, innovative staff, a close partnership with family caregivers and vibrant community support," said Peter Ostrow, program director.

"This includes not only generous donor gifts, but also a wealth of volunteers who enrich program services. The nearly 700 participants and 1,400 family members served over the past 10 years often tell us the program has been a 'godsend and life-saver for their families.'"

For more information and to contact the Brown Program, call social worker Dorothy Moon in Southfield, (248) 233-4000, or Fran Cook, family life coordinator in West Bloomfield, (248) 593-5032. □