



CAMP JEWELL YMCA UPCOMING EVENTS

- Alumni WinterFest: Jan. 24
- Winter Camper Reunion: Feb. 13-15
- President's Day Family Camp: Feb. 13-16
- Winter Family Camp: Feb. 16-19
- Winter Women's Wellness Weekend: Feb. 27-March 1
- Spring Work Weekend: April 10-12
- Mother/Daughter Riding Weekend: April 24-26
- Spring Women's Wellness Weekend: April 24-26
- Memorial Day Family Camp: May 22-25
- June Family Camp: May 29-June 1
- It's Grotto Ribbon Cutting: May 30
- 5K Fun Run: June 20

THE REAL JEWELL

YMCA of Greater Hartford



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY



CAMP JEWELL YMCA ALUMNI ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

Volume 2, Issue 3
Winter 2015

What's Inside:

- Alumni Winter Fest
- 2014 Donors
- Alumni Spotlight
- Winter Programs

CAMP JEWELL YMCA
A Branch of the YMCA of Greater Hartford
6 Prock Hill Road, P.O. Box 8
Colebrook, CT 06021
campjewellymca.org

The YMCA for **Youth Development**: Nurturing the potential of every child and teen, for **Healthy Living**: Improving the nation's well-being, for **Social Responsibility**: Giving back and providing support to our neighbors. The YMCA of Greater Hartford is a non-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization established in 1852 and is one of the nation's oldest YMCAs. The YMCA strives to serve all regardless of their ability to pay.

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAMP JEWELL YMCA



THANKS • GRACIAS • GRAZIE • MERCI • DANKE • OBRIGADO



Dean Manning; Norm Button, property manager; Ray Zetye, executive director; Kristin Manning & Jim Rollins, contractor.

Sometimes the best gift we can give is inspiring others to get involved. That's exactly what alumni Dean and Kristin Manning have done here at camp. The couple reached out to us more than two years ago to make a permanent improvement to camp in memory of their 13-year-old daughter, Taylor, who unexpectedly passed away. Of all the projects on camp's dream list, the water park—now called Tt's Grotto—is the one they chose to celebrate Taylor's life.

But that's just where the story of Tt's Grotto begins. For the past two years the Mannings have attended the dozen or so work weekends to plan, prepare and actually build the water park. They came not alone, but with teams of family, friends, neighbors and supporters who have worked alongside them to make the water park dream a reality. While they have contributed funds to the project, they have held fundraisers and raised more than \$75,000 toward the project.

Their passion for Tt's Grotto is a testament not only to their daughter, but to their dedication to camp and what camp does for children and families. We are thankful to have them as part of our Camp Jewell family, and we look forward to officially opening the water park for children to enjoy this summer. We hope to see you at the ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 30, 2015.

ALUMNI WINTERFEST: January 24–25, 2015



Come together with your camp friends at WINTERFEST
Camp Jewell YMCA's annual, family-friendly alumni event!

We'll kick things off Saturday, January 24 at 1 p.m. with several program areas open throughout camp, including tubing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, archery, ice fishing, arts & crafts and more. Stay for dinner and join us for an evening campfire. There's no charge for this part of the event.

Alumni and their families are also invited to stay the night and continue the fun on Sunday, January 25 with breakfast, more camp activities and lunch. There's a \$50 per person fee for overnight accommodations and Sunday's programs and meals. RSVPs are only necessary if you're planning to stay the night. Call us at 888-412-CAMP to reserve your spot today!

DO WE HAVE YOUR ADDRESS?

If you aren't getting this newsletter via mail or email it means we don't have your current contact information. For information on upcoming events and what's happening at camp, send us your contact information (including your mailing address) to becky.barton@ghymca.org.

RAY'S ROUNDUP



When you think of Camp Jewell, you very well may conjure up images of hot days, cooling off at the waterfront and warm nights sleeping in cabins or tents. But the face of camp right now is much different from that. Many people assume we shut down during the winter months, but we actually serve thousands of guests from December through March, many of whom come for our weekend recreation programs.

We swap out canoes and kayaks for ice skates and cross country skis, and we put away the basketballs and soccer balls for broomball equipment and snow tubes (we make snow on the hill by the dining hall, making for one of the best snow tubing experiences you could ask for). We also offer ice fishing, along with traditional indoor activities like arts and crafts and leather.

Guests who come to our weekend recreation programs often come as part of a group through their church, Scouts, community organization or with their families. Like our spring and fall programs, spending time at camp in the winter offers groups a way to have a novel, unplugged and quality time together enjoying the great outdoors. The heart of the program is the same as all others we offer, in that our guests are given a high-quality overnight experience, opportunities to interact with our staff, and all meals at an affordable price. The only difference is that they get to see camp covered in a blanket of snow and enjoy the different seasonal activities.

Another great winter activity offered every January is our Alumni Winterfest, to which all of you are invited. On January 24th, you and your families are welcome to come enjoy some of the winter activities we offer, and we hope you will stay and join us for dinner. It's a great chance to reconnect with old camp friends, see camp from a different seasonal perspective and just have a great time with your family. Look for additional information on the event in this newsletter, on our Facebook page, and in your mailbox. I'll be there, and I hope you are, too.

Ray Zetye
Executive Director

ANNUAL CAMPAIGN & MATCHING GIFTS

As many alumni gear up to make their pledge to our 2015 Annual Campaign to bring kids to camp on scholarship, we want to remind you that many employers offer matching gift programs up to a certain dollar amount. What an easy way to make your gift to camp that much bigger this year. Please check with your employer to see if your donation qualifies for a matching gift. Thank you for being part of the camp community that's working to bring more kids to camp on scholarship this summer!



ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT: Paul Berkel



Paul Berkel and his new bike.

It was the dead of winter in 1973 when Paul Berkel and his wife, Jeri, first came to Camp Jewell. There was so much snow on Route 183 leading up to camp there were barely two lanes open. They walked around camp with Allen Beavers, executive director at the time, and were shown the apartment on the back of the Boathouse that was to be their home that summer. And, in Pauls' words, "for some crazy reason, we said we'd do it."

Paul didn't go to camp as a kid, and hadn't worked at a camp before coming to Camp Jewell. As a school psychologist in West Hartford, he was looking for something to do over the summer and heard about Camp Jewell from a P.E. teacher in his school district. When he started that first summer, it didn't take him long to get used to the camp environment. As a child in a family with 10 children, he found camp a lot like what home felt like to him as a kid. "Only one thing was hard for me: the camp attire," Paul said. "I was still wearing Bermuda shorts and everyone else there was wearing cut-off jean shorts. It took me some time to get with the program."

As the Norsemen unit director, he was very "with the program" in other ways. He earned an advanced lifesaving and first aid certification before

coming to camp that summer, which came in handy when he assisted with rescuing a camper at the waterfront. "I learned a lot that summer, from counselors and kids who had been campers and were junior counselors," he said. "I was worried about them considering me as someone credible, but what I found was a group of people who were very generous and cooperative with their ideas."

He didn't return to camp in 1974, but Allen asked him to come back as assistant camp director the summer of 1975, and he did. That's the first summer he and Gordon Hodne worked together.

"The connection Gordie and I had was almost instantaneous. We had an automatic connection the day he came up for his interview and we knew we understood each other and could talk openly with one another," he said. "It helped that our wives hit it off right away, too, and that our kids were similar ages. The biggest commonality we had was our belief system in the counseling staff. We believed they were where the rubber met the road and that once summer started 70% of what happened was in the hands of the counselors. So that meant the week of staff training was critical and we needed to maximize what we did with them during that time."

Paul and Gordie met several times over the winter to plan the following summer's staff training. The pair also began attending annual conferences of the American Camping Association to get as much information as they could to make Camp Jewell's program the best it could be. At one conference they presented the summer staff evaluation system they developed for Jewell.

"One of the beauties of the evaluation system was that Gordie and I would walk around camp and grab staff from their duties to conduct the evaluations. We'd sit on rocks or logs, or float in a canoe, and talk with staff. I called that my office. I never once found any part of being at Camp Jewell 'work,' even in the most difficult hours. I just loved the joy of being around all the staff and kids," he said.

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Paul worked as camp director through 1982. He intended to return the summer of 1983, but was offered an assistant principal job that spring that required him to work throughout the summer. He helped with staff training and the start of camp, but couldn't finish out the summer. "That was a very tough car ride down the camp road, the day I left. I was excited about what I was going to be doing, but I had put a lot of time into camp and I was sad to leave."

But leaving did not end the friendships and the connections to the staff at camp. Gordon and Paul, and their wives, bike and cross country ski together. Many former staff stay in touch, and over the years some would unexpectedly show up at Paul's house while on college break. Just remembering some of the "characters" from those days at camp brings a smile to his face.

A few years after Paul left camp, he was invited to join camp's Board of Managers. He poured the same level of commitment into his volunteer post there as he had as a camp director, serving as chairman of the Board of a decade. He'd been working as a principal in West Hartford and in 2001 he was offered an administrative position in Massachusetts that required Jeri and him to move, and he subsequently resigned from the Board. A year ago he re-joined as a Board Member Emeritus.

A lot of Paul's time at camp, as a director and as a volunteer on the Board, was focused on leadership. "Leadership is leadership, that's been my mantra since I started at Jewell. As a school principal I studied leadership, and I've taught it at university; it all boils down to how you lead people, how you treat them and how you understand their strengths and weaknesses and help them do their job."

Paul values what Camp Jewell offered his children during the time they spent here, particularly the camp community's diversity and the exposure his kids had to different people from different walks of life. And, a life lesson he learned from his father, but that was reinforced by his time at camp, is the idea of paying it forward. In addition to the volunteer work he's done at camp over the years, he's also been very involved with Habitat for Humanity, his church and recently became involved in restoring a lighthouse near his home in Madison, CT.

"The point is to give something back to others," he said. "Giving financially is one way, but when you give your own sweat and blood, it feels even better."

Paul Berkel and Gordie Hodne were recognized as two of Camp Jewell YMCA's Scoobie Award recipients in August, 2014.



Paul Berkel



Gordie Hodne & Paul Berkel

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAMP JEWELL YMCA



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as of 12/31/14.*



Camp Jewell Credo:

"We come together for this short time to live simply, close to nature and closer to each other; that we might renew our respect for the world around us, recommit ourselves to family and friends, and rejoice in God's love for us all."

Camp Jewell YMCA

A Branch of the YMCA of Greater Hartford
6 Prock Hill Road
P.O. Box 8
Colebrook, CT 06021
888-412-2267

Leadership Staff

Ray Zetye Executive Director, x223
ray.zetye@ghymca.org

Craig Dawson Associate Executive Director, x225
craig.dawson@ghymca.org

Steve Scott Summer & Family Camp Program Director, x227
steve.scott@ghymca.org

Jodi Gove, Ranch Program Director, x234
jodi.gove@ghymca.org

Rich Krudner, Weekday Program Director, x216
rich.krudner@ghymca.org

Paul Cappadona, Weekend Program Director, x262
paul.cappadona@ghymca.org

Kathie Reese, Office Manager, x221
kathie.reese@ghymca.org

Norm Button, Property Manager, x217
norm.button@ghymca.org

Becky Barton, Assistant Office Manager
becky.barton@ghymca.org

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