

# THE REAL JEWELL

YMCA of Greater Hartford



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT®  
FOR HEALTHY LIVING  
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

CAMP JEWELL YMCA  
ALUMNI  
ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER  
Volume 1, Issue 1  
Summer 2013

## What's Inside:

- Volunteer of the Year
- Lewis Fox Corn Roast
- What's Up with Alumni
- Strong Kids Campaign
- Summer Camp



# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAMP JEWELL YMCA



## THANKS • GRACIAS • GRAZIE MERCİ • DANKE • OBRIGADO

Jay Aronson's involvement with Camp Jewell has spanned more than two decades. As a camper (a Norseman to be precise) beginning in 1976, then a counselor, and for 23 years as a member of the Board of Managers, he's always had a real passion for recreating the experience he had here for other people. But he doesn't just say it, he does it. Jay Aronson always shows up. If there's a camp event, he's there. He and his wife, Stacy, and their kids, Noah and Leah, have come to Memorial and Labor Day Family Camps for several years along with friends they've introduced to Jewell. After years as a camper, Noah will join the staff this summer and Leah will return as a camper.

Jay works as a lobbyist and there's nothing he seems to lobby for more than Jewell. He talks to everyone he meets about camp, and we can't tell you the number of families and campers who've come here because of him. He's our best ambassador—he tells the story of camp every day. And he talks to us about camp, too. He consistently reminds us about the things that made the biggest impact on him when he was a young man here. As we move forward, he continues to work to ensure, more than anything else, that we are preserving the magic of camp for current and future generations.

It's for all these reasons and more that Jay was presented at the Annual Meeting in May with this year's Volunteer of the Year Award. So, thanks Jay. We're lucky to have you and we appreciate all you do to support and promote Camp Jewell!



Jay Aronson was recognized as Volunteer of the Year at Camp Jewell's Annual Meeting. With him are his wife, Stacy, and their children, Noah and Leah.

## WHAT'S IN A NAME?

When we were brainstorming a name for this new and improved alumni newsletter, we wanted to be sure it resonated with alumni from all different Camp Jewell eras. We considered naming it after one place or another at camp; then we considered naming it after one camp activity or another. But none of the choices we came up with seemed to be all-encompassing enough.

Then we came across a short story titled "The Real Jewell" that was included in our most comprehensive history collection to date, "A Century of Spirit: Camp Jewell YMCA 1901-2001." Though we don't know the exact date when the passage below was written, we do know it was when Jewell was headquartered in Swanzey, N.H., so it dates back to before 1955. Though it reflects a time when only boys came to camp, and when the program options were much more limited than what you'll find at camp now, the heart of the story is as alive today as it was when it was written, and when each and every one of us were here.

We hope you'll connect with this the same way we did, and that it will reawaken in you the spirit of the YMCA camp experience you had here.



Here is that piece of Camp Jewell literature entitled "The Real Jewell. In it, a group of campers ask their leader exactly what the Real Jewell happens to be. His response is wise.

## "THE REAL JEWELL"

"As you fellows get older you will look back upon these days in memory pictures, and I assure you that there is no other experience in the world that will leave upon your life such unspoiled pictures as these, all cheerful in retrospect and all good. I realize that this is a poor sort of an explanation, but you will understand after you have been here awhile.

"There are some things that can be explained, and I want you to tuck these things away in your mind. When the REAL JEWELL is unfolding to you, it will be easier for you to answer for yourselves. One of them is this: The REAL JEWELL is IN YOU. That means a great deal, fellows! There is something here at Camp Jewell that is more than the work, more important than the ribbons won in athletic games and more important than other distinctions and honors awarded. It is more important than the beauty of the lake and more important than leadership and games. It pervades them all! It is the JEWELL SPIRIT, the most important thing of all! And it is something you can take out into the real world with you to be used afterwards back in your home, your school and your play. It helps to make misfortune count less; it helps to make school worthwhile. It will help a boy to love his country and other lands! It helps to make us all think of the other fellow and to be more reverent to God. All of this constitutes the REAL JEWELL to me, fellows, and if I have helped you see it just a little as I see it, I shall be glad."

## RAY'S ROUNDUP

"Summer camp is finally upon us, and it's important to pause and reflect on why we do what we do here at Camp Jewell. Because summer is so all encompassing, we need to make it a priority to really think about how special it is, or we risk not appreciating it while we are in the heart of it. I often think about this, and try to help kids appreciate their time here while they're here.

I was 13 the first year I came to Camp Jewell's Ranch Camp; it was 1990. I'd been to camp before, with my dad and the Indian Guides of my local YMCA in Trumbull, CT, as a family camper, and as a regular summer camper just one year before. But this Ranch Camp year was different. I lived in a community with about thirty 12- to 14-year old kids and not one time, in two weeks, did a kid put another kid down. It was like nothing I had ever experienced, it was what I imagined heaven must be like. When I got back home, where it was typical to hear other kids harassing each other, I thought about camp every day and couldn't wait to come back again the next summer.

I tell this story to the summer camp kids at the beginning of every session and the place gets silent. I say "Imagine if, for two weeks, you didn't have to worry about anyone picking on you, a friend or anyone else. That is what is possible here at camp. The counselors can only do so much on their own to create that; that experience is created by all of us as a group buying in together. Each of us buying in to the idea that the next two weeks could be the best of our life, if right now each of us commits to wanting that and striving for that."

Camp has had more impact on me than any other place. Who I am and what I do is based on the values my parents taught me, reinforced by the values I learned here. Camp is where I learned, figuratively as well as literally, to get back on the horse not if, but when I fell off. It's where I learned hard work and the value of discipline, it's where I learned to be comfortable getting up in front of a crowd of hundreds of people, and it's where I learned about caring for other people. It's also where I met my wife, Julia.

Every time I've left camp, even when I was in college, something didn't feel quite right. I worked at another Y camp for a year, and there, too, something was missing. Coming back to Jewell just felt right for me and I knew this was where I belonged.

I've worked a lot of different jobs here at camp: counselor, dining hall and cabin cleaner, maintenance staff, program staff, Ranch Camp Director, Outdoor Education Director, Summer Camp Director, and now I'm the Executive Director. When I was in college, Paul Kamin, the summer camp director at the time, chose me to create a new Ranch Camp at Hide-a-Way, an area on the other side of the lake. I don't know why Paul felt confident in me, it's not like we sat down and he told me what to do. He put his faith in me, put me in charge, and told me to do what I thought was best. That's my biggest professional achievement at camp, because I learned from it what I'm capable of and it set the foundation for me to feel comfortable with being innovative.

When I went for the Executive Director job, I wanted to be sure whoever was hired would provide a value-driven direction and vision. What Paul taught me about always doing what's right, along with my family values and the experiences my family had here, are what drive how I want camp to be—and how I go about doing my job.

At the end of each camp session we have a candlelight ceremony. I talk to the kids again and I bring it back to the story I told them at the beginning of the session. I say "Maybe what happened for me as a kid at Ranch Camp did or didn't happen for you this session. Regardless, it's the exercise in trying to make it happen that matters. We had a goal that we all set out to achieve together. Hopefully you caught a glimpse of what is possible in this world in these last two weeks. The way to be truly successful, however, is to take that goal and the values you learned here and apply them to your life at home. If you have an opportunity to raise yourself up by putting someone else down and you don't do it, then this experience has been a success. The only way we make the world more like Jewell is by taking camp with us and wearing it on our sleeve through life."

I look forward to seeing you at Corn Roast, or feel free to give me a call and you can come visit anytime. You are always welcome!

Ray Zetye,  
Executive Director



## JOIN US FOR THE LEWIS FOX CORN ROAST

August 10 starting at 1 p.m.

Bring your family for an afternoon of boating, archery, arts & crafts, and other fun camp activities. Join in an all-camp game of capture the flag, take a tour with our C.I.T.'s to see what's new at camp, and stay for dinner. The corn roast starts at 7 p.m. when you can relive your favorite council ring campfire memories, and create some new ones!

**This year's Doug "Scoobie" Ahrens Award will be given to:**

Paul Berkel, Camp Director • 1976-1983

Gordon Hodne, Assistant Camp Director • 1977-1988

Archie "Pal" Knowles (posthumously), Camp Director • 1923-1945.

1993 Rangers—it's your 20 year reunion! Featuring a special appearance by the Ortinator.

# WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CAMP JEWELL YMCA



## THERE'S CHANGE COMING, AND IT'S FOR THE BETTER

By Rusty Everett, Board Chairman

We change lives at camp, and if you're reading this there's a good chance yours is one of them. We're about to make some big changes to camp in an effort to further impact the children and families who visit us every year. Two years ago we embarked on a Capital Campaign effort to upgrade Camp Jewell's facilities while maintaining the beauty and peacefulness of the property. Approximately 70 stakeholders participated in a number of activities designed to figure out what should be done to upgrade the facilities while maintaining our focus on Camp Jewell's mission and the experience our guests leave with after visiting. One of our last activities was the Charrette Weekend, where a large group of Camp Jewell's community got together to design the physical property of camp with an eye on mission and program.

Much has been done since that time, in large part as a grassroots effort. The alumni committee has worked hard on identifying past campers, counselors and other staff going back to 1955. You, our alumni, are critical to our success, and we want your voices to be heard, to be sure we continue to offer those camp experiences that foster self-development. Alumni will also play a significant role by providing much of the funding needed to complete this project. The property committee has focused on the key issues and challenges we will face as we get closer to building and remodeling the facilities around camp. Our association--President & CEO James Morton and his team at the YMCA of Greater Hartford along with the Jewell leadership--continues to stay focused on this effort, and together we have committed to becoming even more engaged as the project moves forward.

Next steps include reaching out to you further by hosting small alumni gatherings across the country to ensure your participation in keeping Camp Jewell a preeminent camp. We are also looking to share some of the design plans, enlisting your feedback regarding what our buildings should look like. Watch for more information on a grand kick-off to the project where you can come celebrate all of our efforts to realize these improvements.

Our goal, in support of our outstanding camping and outdoor programs, is to create an environment that not only promotes those programs, but makes Camp Jewell a recognized leader in the growth and development of our youth. Together we will continue to build strong families and strong communities. Camp Jewell has been doing this for 112 years, and we will continue to be a trailblazer in the camping industry for at least as many more!

You will be hearing more about the Capital Campaign Project over the coming months. It is our hope to continue to partner with each of you to make this project come alive. I look forward to seeing you at camp or an alumni event soon.



Like these photos? Find us on Facebook for more images of camp from yesterday and today!  
[www.facebook.com/campjewell](http://www.facebook.com/campjewell)

## WHAT'S UP WITH ALUMNI

**Dan Bridgeman** took a new job this year with the Sierra Nevada Brewing Company, as a Systems Analyst for their new brewery, currently under construction in Mills River, N.C., He's working out of the original brewery in Chico, CA for now, but sometime over the next couple of months he'll be moving to Asheville, N.C.

**Seren Levinson Cepler** and her husband, Craig, recently welcomed Emily Mattea to their family. She joins big sister Belle Shoshanna, who is 2 1/2. They live in Westchester N.Y. where Seren teaches English and theatre and directs the school plays at a public high school. Seren writes: "My toddler knows the Prune song, the Birdie Song, and the Alice song, which we sing frequently. Camp Jewell certainly stays with us..."

**Whitney Reese Giannelli** got married in 2010 and had a baby, Hunter Reese Giannelli, on January 24.

**Paul Kamin** is still managing Eastsound Water Users Association in Washington, and **Ethna Flanagan** is returning to massage after 4 years of teaching followed by 4 years of social work. Peter Kamin recently celebrated his 17th birthday, and is on the college hunt with a lean toward Industrial Design. Ethna writes: "All is well in the Pacific Northwest; we still think of our camp friends often and have a huge place of love in our hearts for Camp Jewell YMCA."

**Susie Keane** got married over Labor Day Weekend last year and moved to a small farm outside Johannesburg, South Africa. She writes: "I'm very grateful for all the time spent at Camp Jewell's farm! Our sheep, guinea fowl, and dogs keep us busy. Loving the adventure!"

**Annie Grabowski Moore** is currently living in Cambridge, MA where she attends business school at MIT. Her husband is an in-house counsel at Sovereign Bank and they welcomed their first baby, Max, in August 2012. Annie writes: "Max is already looking forward to when he is old enough to be a Bandit, and I am excited to relive my Camp Jewell experience through him!"

**Zoe (Keefer Norris) Thomas** married Josh Thomas on March 11.

**Dave Pilon** works at Universal Properties at Keller Williams Realty of Greater Hartford ([www.connecticuthomesnow.com](http://www.connecticuthomesnow.com)) He helps make people's dreams come true with caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. You can contact him at [david@universalpropertiesct.com](mailto:david@universalpropertiesct.com).

**Abby Polglase Lynch** married Patrick Lynch on June 15, 2012. They bought their first house in Scituate, MA and moved in March 1. Visitors are welcome anytime!

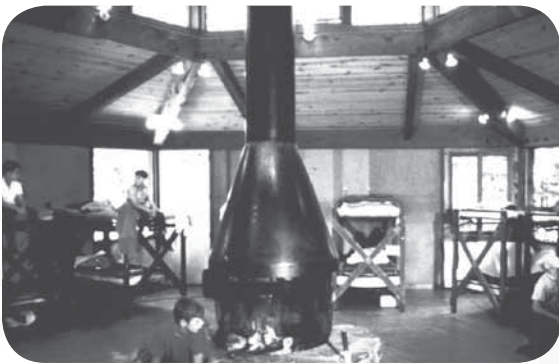
**Jami Silver**, her husband Chris Lett, and big brother Simon welcomed a new baby, Holden Max Lett, on December 19--another Bandit in the making!

**Cristina Salmastrelli** is engaged to JP Grace and they are getting married next year. She is an art fair director with Ramsay Fairs where she directs the NYC edition of the Affordable Art Fair, and manages PULSE contemporary art fair in NYC and Miami. She gets to be with art all the time, and she thinks that is fabulous!

**Allen Weaver** and his wife, Pam Weaver, and their son Alex, welcomed new baby boy Miles on January 30.

**Phil Zetye** was married at Hide-A-Way Ranch Camp's Chapel to Stephanie Corvo on August 4, 2012.

Have news to share? We'd love to hear from you! Email your update to our Alumni Committee Co-Chairs Makenzi Hurtado at [makenzi.hurtado@gmail.com](mailto:makenzi.hurtado@gmail.com) or Jami Silver at [jamisilver@hotmail.com](mailto:jamisilver@hotmail.com).



Like these photos? Find us on Facebook for more images of camp from yesterday and today!  
[www.facebook.com/campjewell](http://www.facebook.com/campjewell)



## HELP US BUILD STRONG KIDS

Hi, my name is Shelby.

What does camp mean to me? Everything! It has become my home away from home, the place where I can be myself and have the best time ever. It has been an awesome experience in my life. I've made a lot of great friends over the years and I meet them back at Camp Jewell year after year. Oh, the awesome lifetime memories I've made from all of my camp experiences...starting from when I was about 8 years old as a day camper feeling a bit uneasy and anxious, but that only lasted a day, maybe two. I loved it so much I decided to start resident camp and last year I finally had the great opportunity of being a CIT. I learned the ins and outs of being a part of camp staff which was a great experience. And it helped me decide even more that I wanted to work at Camp Jewell this year. I wasn't ready to leave camp so I went through the application process and I am happy to say I will be a part of camp staff this summer! I think camp is a great positive life experience and I'm glad to have been so lucky to attend camp year after year, and I really want to say thank you. I am so grateful to the Strong Kids Campaign for helping me get there. It's really been an important part of my growing up, and I find myself again counting the days until the fun begins!

This year Project 236 will bring 236 kids like Shelby, who otherwise wouldn't have the life-changing Jewell experience, to camp this summer. Thanks to the generosity of staff, alumni, and friends we are halfway to our Strong Kids Campaign annual goal of \$200,000. And we know—with your help—we'll get there.

Be a part of Project 236. If we each give a little, our kids will get a whole lot. To make a tax-deductible donation visit [www.campjewell.org](http://www.campjewell.org), call us at 888-412-2267, or mail a check made out to Camp Jewell YMCA Strong Kids Campaign to P.O. Box 8, Colebrook, CT 06021.

## SUMMER CAMP IS HERE!

When people think about summer camp they often think about the cool activities we have like archery, canoeing, or climbing the wall. It's true that camp includes many amazing activities. But it is so much more than that. Camp is truly about making friendships that last a lifetime. This summer's theme at camp is the "Summer of Big Fun," we have lots of exciting spins on existing programs to help ensure that this year will be even bigger than ever.

While it might sound cliché, the truth is that time and time again, when former campers contact or come to visit camp, they talk about those special memories they have of their time spent here. For some the stories include bits about a hike up Sunrise Mountain, or making the perfect s'mores during an overnight, but what they remember most are the friendships they made with other campers during their time at camp. And they weren't just summer friendships, they endured during the seemingly never ending time between summers, and then as they grew older throughout the years. Sound familiar? Then you'll likely agree this is what truly makes summer camp extraordinary. Like the fireflies that zip across the athletic field during July and burn so brightly, the time spent with friends at camp is so magical because it only lasts for a short time—any longer and it would lose its uniqueness.

Each summer we ask our campers "Did you make a new friend while at camp?" It's kind of our quick and easy way of finding out if we are doing our job well or not. We are proud to report that in 2012 we heard a resounding "YES!" with 99.99% of our campers saying so. As we kick off this summer, we know that friendships will be rekindled and even more new ones will be made. We will once again be eating family style to help foster that friendship building, and of course eating some of those famous giant pancakes. We hope to see you at camp soon!



## 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  
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### Leadership Staff

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### Camp Jewell Board of Managers

Rusty Everett, Chairman  
Jerome Alper  
Jay Aronson  
Dawn Baker  
Ed Boiczuk  
Mike Cahill  
Neil Domer-Shank  
Tom Eng  
Makenzi Hurtado  
Tom Lincoln  
Colin Mahon  
Charlie Miller  
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Jami Silver  
Bob Stearns  
Ray Weaver

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.

**[campjewellymca.org](http://campjewellymca.org)**

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## CAMP JEWELL YMCA UPCOMING EVENTS

Corn Roast • August 10  
Summer Family Camp • August 23-26  
Labor Day Family Camp • August 30-September 2  
Women's Wellness Weekend • September 6-8  
Columbus Day Family Camp • October 11-14  
Wine Tasting & Auction • November 16  
Halloween Family Weekend • October 25-27  
Halloween Harvest Festival • October 26  
Woodcutters Weekend • November 8-10  
Pre-Thanksgiving • November 10  
New Year's Family Camp • December 29-January 1



PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE