



RE-ECHOES

The official newsletter of the Surprise Lake Camp community

Fall/Winter 2025



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jessica Zalin, *President*
Tess Hamberg, *VP of Fundraising*
Jillian Rauer, *VP of Membership*
Jared Pollet, *VP of Communications*
Joe Goldberg, *Treasurer*
Andrea Zalin, *Secretary*
Celia Baczkowski
Adam Benmoise
Howie Berk
Jenn Davis
Devin Goldberg
David Leibowitz
Julie Levine
Rob Rosenbaum
Bryan Salz
Corey Zbar
Jordana Zbar
Jaime Zuckerberg

PAST PRESIDENTS

Howard Berk
Henry A. Cohen*
Alvin L. Elkins*
Herbert A. Fishman*
Irving Gilbert*
Joe Goldberg
Arthur Jakubowitz*
Joel "Whammy" Kaufman
Phillip Levinowitz
Sam Peyer*
*Deceased

Joel "Whammy" Kaufman
President Emeritus

Surprise Lake Camp
382 Lake Surprise Road
Cold Spring, NY 10516
(845) 265-3616
alumni@surpriselake.org

Please email your
newsletter submissions
or notify us of any errors:
alumni@surpriselake.org

Layout by [James Dinn](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

December 21 – Virtual Hanukkah Candle
Lighting with the SLCAA

[https://surpriselake.org/event/
raffledrawing2025/](https://surpriselake.org/event/raffledrawing2025/)

December 30, 2025 – Florida Reunion

[https://surpriselake.org/event/
flreunion2025/](https://surpriselake.org/event/flreunion2025/)

February 26, 2026 – SLC Soiree: An Evening
of Enchantment & Intrigue

[https://surpriselake.org/event/
slcsoiree2026/](https://surpriselake.org/event/slcsoiree2026/)

May 17, 2026 – SLCAA Family Field Day

Event page under construction

July 18, 2026 – Lawn Fest (Alumni Day Eve)

Event page under construction

July 19, 2026 – Alumni Day

Event page under construction

[Visit our Events page often!](#)
[Surpriselake.org/events](https://surpriselake.org/events)

GOT NEWS?



Share your news with the
SLC community in the
next issue of ReEchoes!
Save and use this URL:
tinyurl.com/slcalumninews
or email:
alumni@surpriselake.org



Mazel Tov to alumnus
Danny Langer on the
publication of his book,
*The Seventh and the
First: Bamidbar
to Devarim.*

HANUKKAH
by Torre A. DeVito

One little candle
on the very first night,
to illuminate the darkness
with its tiny light.

Two little candles;
a hope against all fear
flicker and flutter
as we gather near

Three little candles
burning in a line
and as we come together
our eyes and faces shine.

Four little candles
spark memories:
a days worth of oil
and faithful Maccabees.



Five little candles
as the dreidel spins
add one piece
you landed on shin.

Six little candles
all in a row
light them with the Shamash
and watch them glow.

Seven little candles
see the smoke coil?
Apple sauce and sour cream
and latkes fried in oil!

Eight little candles
on the final night,
eight days of warmth:
a festival of light.

#TorreADeVitoPoetry



SLC NEWS!

Let us know, so we can share
with the entire SLC Family!

We want to hear about new babies, jobs, engagements, graduations, anniversaries, celebrations, reunions, and more!

Email alumni@surpriselake.org at any time to have your news included in a future issue of Re-Echoes.

Also, if you have SLC nostalgia, pictures or anything that could be included in the SLC Museum, please let us know.

Mazel Tov

Births



Adaleigh Ara
born to Brianna
(Morrison) and
Adam Miller on
August 4.



Leila Simone,
born to Alec and
Amanda Zbar.



Ella, born to
Sabrina and
Nadav Shoshani
on November 24.



Mazel Tov to Cindy
Shmerler and her
family on the birth of
her first grandchild,
Riley Parker on
December 5th



Cooper Heyes,
born to Adam and
Rachel Brooks on
December 9.



Apollo James,
born to Sammy
Cosares on
December 10.



Gabrielle
(Gabi)
Golan on her
engagement to
Noah
Rosenthal.



Jacob "Kozi"
Sarkozi on his
engagement to
Zoë Abraham.

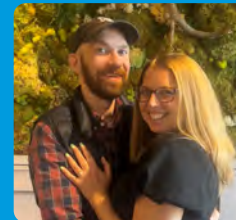


Steve Sails and Judy
Freiser Sails, met at
SLC in the summer
of 1969 recently
celebrated their 52nd
wedding anniversary on
August 12.

Weddings, etc



SLCAA
Communications
VP Jared
Pollet married
Elayne Wang on
December 13



SLCAA
President
Jessica Zalin on
her engagement to
Scott
Lohmeyer.

We Extend Our Deepest Condolences To...

SLC mourns the loss of its long time alumni and Board Member, Moe Bordwin. Moe was a camper at SLC and joined the Board in 1976. We extend our deepest condolences to his friends and family.

Our deepest condolences to Barbra Solomon Klein, Ty, Lara, and Erika on the loss of Barbra's mother, Jean.

Our deepest condolences to Arnold, Linda, and Darryl Hinden on the loss of their daughter and sister, Stephanie.

Our deepest condolences to Jim Meyer and his family on the loss of his wife, Roberta.

Our deepest condolences to Lee Meyer and Andy Meyer and their families on the loss of their mother, Susan Glynn.

Our deepest condolences to Kate (Purdue) Danino and her family on the loss of her mother, Nancy.

Our deepest condolences to Jill (Reisner) Breder on the loss of her mother, Arlene.

Our deepest condolences to Andrew Lobb, Richard Lobb, and their families on the loss of their father, David.

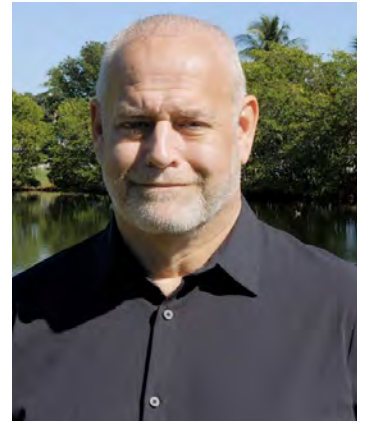
May their memories be a blessing.

Dear Camp Alumni,

Now More Than Ever, Surprise Lake Camp Needs You

As we look ahead to Summer 2026, the excitement is already building. Soon, campers will once again make the familiar drive up Lake Surprise Road, catch that first glimpse of the lake, and feel the unmistakable sense of belonging that only comes from being home at Surprise Lake Camp.

For generations, SLC has been a place where Jewish joy comes alive – through song and laughter around the campfire, through the friendships that last long after the buses leave, and through the values of kindness, gratitude, and community that infuse every part of camp life. It's a place where campers don't just learn about Judaism – they live it, surrounded by nature, friends, and the pure joy of being themselves.



This coming summer, we're thrilled to be adding exciting updates that will make the SLC experience even more magical. Campers will enjoy:

- Another brand-new Challenge Course that encourages teamwork and adventure.
- More inflatables on the lake, bringing laughter and fun to hot summer afternoons.
- A resurfaced Welcome Center/Canteen basketball court, ready for spirited games and big smiles.
- Additional specialty staff in the activities campers love most – from culinary to outdoor adventure.
- Expanded teen trips that inspire independence, connection, and growth.

And we're already looking ahead: 2027 marks SLC's 125th anniversary – a milestone few camps in the world can claim. As we prepare to celebrate this incredible achievement, we're laying the groundwork for big, exciting plans: new camper cabins, our first-ever Teen Israel Trip, and a year filled with special events honoring the generations of campers, staff, and alumni who have made SLC what it is today.

Each of these projects is about more than facilities or programs – they are investments in community, belonging, and the enduring spirit of Jewish camp life.

But as we plan for the future, we must also keep our commitment to access and inclusion at the heart of everything we do. The need for scholarship assistance continues to grow each year, ensuring that every child who dreams of camp can come to SLC, regardless of financial circumstances. Your support of the Annual Drive makes this possible – helping fund both our capital improvements and the scholarship dollars that open our gates wider every summer.

Since 1902, SLC has thrived because of people like you – alumni, parents, and friends who understand how transformative a summer at camp can be. Every generation has stepped up to strengthen this place for the next one, ensuring that SLC remains a sanctuary of growth, friendship, and Jewish identity for all who enter its gates.

Now, it's our turn.

Your partnership will ensure that SLC continues to shine as a home for Jewish joy, belonging, and discovery for generations to come. Whether your contribution supports new facilities, vital scholarships, or both, every dollar directly helps a child experience the power of camp – and helps us enter our 125th year stronger than ever.

Thank you for all you have done, are doing, and will continue to do for Surprise Lake Camp. Together, we can make sure that the magic – and the meaning – of SLC endures for the next 125 years and beyond.

With heartfelt gratitude,

Adam

Adam Bendeson, MSW

Executive Director

President's Message

Hello SLC Friends and Family!

Welcome to the Winter 2025 issue of ReEchoes! This year has flown by – it's hard to believe that another magical SLC summer has come and gone, and that a new year is about to begin.

The SLC Alumni Association has been busy since our last issue! We went hiking at SLC in the spring and fall, held a Sunday Social reunion in NYC in June, and went to a Mets game in August. This summer, we had a great time hosting Alumni Day and the Swim-A-Thon at camp, along with the second annual Lawnfest to kick off the alumni festivities. I want to thank every one of the SLC Alumni Association board members, the SLC staff, and all of our other alumni volunteers and sponsors who pitched in to make these events such a success. I also want to acknowledge all of you that attended – your SLC spirit is what makes days like these so special, and we couldn't have done it without you. Lawnfest and Alumni Day 2026 have already been scheduled for July 18th and 19th, so mark your calendars and I hope to see you all there!

Before then, we have several exciting events coming up this fall and winter. We'll be hosting alumni reunions in New York, Florida, and California – a new stop on our SLC alumni tour! We will also draw a winner of our annual raffle in December, so if you haven't gotten your tickets yet, now is the time – you've got to be in it to win it! We'll have more virtual fun coming your way too, with Holiday Bingo and our annual Super Bowl Squares and March Madness fundraisers in February and March. And of course, our SLC Store is open year-round online, so stop by to check it out before Hanukkah rolls around!

Also this winter, we will be hosting our second SLC Soiree: An Evening of Enchantment & Intrigue at the Hunt & Fish Club in NYC. Those of us who attended this event last year were treated to a captivating performance from SLC Alumni extraordinaire and award-winning psychic and mentalist, Michael Gutenplan. This year, Michael is back with a brand-new show that will keep us guessing all night long. Keep an eye on your email and the Alumni section of the SLC website for more information about these events, and more to come!

We love hosting these events to provide our alumni with opportunities to connect and keep the magic of SLC alive all year round. Your support at these events helps us to contribute to SLC's annual scholarship drive and other programs, allowing us to share the SLC experience with future generations of SLC campers. With that goal in mind, we are pleased to announce that for the second year in a row, the SLC Alumni Association will be matching your donations to SLC's Annual Drive on Giving Tuesday, December 2nd. As we enter the holiday season, we encourage you to think of SLC in your year-end giving, and consider making a contribution on that day.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out to share your news, reminisce about camp, or discuss how to get more involved with the Alumni Association. I'd love to hear from you!

Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season!



Jessica Zalin
President, SLC Alumni Association
jessicazalin@surpriselake.org





Learning
STARTS WITH
SURPRISE

**Get free Jewish storybooks
for your family!**

Enroll at
pjlibrary.org/surpriselake



Ways to Give...

ONE-TIME DONATIONS*

- Make a Donation:** Online* or by mailing a check.
- Show Gratitude:** Make a tribute gift* in someone's honor.
- Create a Fundraiser:** Solicit donations to celebrate your birthday or anniversary.

LIFETIME GIFT

Join the 1902 Legacy Society:

Continue your legacy of giving. Plan with your financial advisor for a

Bequest Charitable Gift Annuity Retained Life Estate

or name SLC as a beneficiary of your

Life Insurance or Retirement Account

then complete SLC's form.

SUSTAINABLE GIVING

- Make a Recurring Donation:** By credit card or bank account monthly.
- Pledge Now, Pay Over Time:** By credit card or bank account monthly.*
- Non-Cash Giving:** Avoid capital gains taxes with Donor Advised Funds, Stocks, Securities, or Qualified Charitable Distributions.



*Contact your employer to see if they support a matching gift program!



RSVP TODAY!

3RD GENERATION PSYCHIC

MICHAEL GUTENPLAN

MAGICIAN ENTERTAINER MENTALIST

SLC Soiree

An evening of enchantment and intrigue.

AN ALUMNI ASSOCIATION FUNDRAISER TO BENEFIT SURPRISE LAKE CAMP

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 26 @ 7 PM
HUNT & FISH CLUB NYC

SURPRISE LAKE CAMP
SINCE 1961
ALUMNI ASSOCIATION



AL'S SLC CAMPER MEMOIRS

June, 2016 (Part 1)

“Nestling ‘neath the shady trees lies our camp so dear.” All of us have fond memories of our days at Surprise Lake Camp, whether as a camper, a staff member, or both. Now that I am a permanent resident of Lakeland, Florida, with my wife, Louise, those good old camping days that I spent at SLC mean so much to me as I look back on that special time of my life.

In as much as I am a charter member and Past President of the Surprise Lake Camp Alumni Association, I thought it might be interesting to look back at some of the wonderful nostalgic recollections I have of the days when I was a camper at SLC. Although I was a camper for six years, between the years of 1947 to 1952, I still remember some of the staff members during my first year at SLC like it was yesterday. I hope that some of our older Alumni members might remember them as well.

I first came to Surprise Lake Camp in August 1947, at the age of eight. As the bus arrived at camp we all sang: “We welcome you to SLC.” I was assigned to the “East” division. My Counselor’s name was Bob Greenberg; my Division Head was Jack Middleman; our Head Counselor was Henry “Henny” Cohen; and the Camp Director was Max Oppenheimer. Bob Greenberg and I stayed in touch with each other for many years, and when I became a counselor in the mid-fifties, it was a big thrill for me to introduce Bob to the boys in my group. My campers asked Bob if I was a good camper. Of course, Bob refused to answer that question.

I have so many wonderful memories about my days as a camper at SLC. I still remember the cheer of the “East” Division: **“Little dog, big dog, floppy-eared pup, come on East, let’s beat ‘em up.”** That cheer was recited on many occasions; when we went to the lake for our swimming sessions, played ball, or when we had our meals at the mess hall. Every division had their own cheer; the Midwest, the West, and so on.

The Waterfront Director was Stanley “Doc” Maslin, who was known for wearing his leopard “Speedo” swim trunks. Doc was very strict when it came to all waterfront rules, and whenever he spoke, you could hear his deep voice resounding throughout the camp. We used to have the buddy system, and when Doc blew his whistle, you had better put your hand and the hand of your buddy up high, with absolutely no talking until that whistle blew again. At least once every summer, somebody hoisted Doc’s leopard “Speedo” swim trunks up on the flagpole. However, when Doc sang his famous signature song at any camp show, “If I were a Millionaire,” everyone assembled always cheered wildly. When I reached my early teens I remember Doc introducing us to his new assistant waterfront director, Harry Vogel. Needless to say, Harry has now been a vital part of SLC for many years, and I think he still has the same “Speedos.” he wore back in the fifties.

Another person who meant so much to SLC was “Mama K” (Anna Kosoff), our camp mother. She was a special, wonderful human being, who simply made campers and staff feel like they were at home, and took care of sewing clothing, lost & found, and many other vital domestic details. Every Friday evening, before our Sabbath dinner, the entire camp assembled in front of the mess hall, dressed in white shirts, and sang Shalom Alechem. This was followed by “Mama K” reciting the blessing over the Sabbath candles before we enjoyed our dinner. By the time I became a counselor at SLC, “Mama K” could no longer walk around camp as she used to, due to her advanced age. Instead, she maintained her position as camp mother in the Infirmary, making all the patients feel good, despite their illnesses.

The campers always enjoyed running into our Head Counselor, Henny Cohen. He used to do his disappearing coin trick with his hands, finding the coin in a camper’s hair, or in their ears. I also remember that Henny could hit a softball quite soundly, especially when he would hit a ball into the woods on the left side of the ballfield. Although Henny did hit many homeruns, I recall that we lost several softballs due to Henny’s hard hit foul balls in the woods.

During the late 1940’s when I was a camper, we had an illustrious chef by the name of Karl Kitzel. I recall many stories that were told to us about Karl and his magic potato peeler. Karl’s many adventures were supposed to be true. One such story involves a time capsule that was secretly hidden by Karl in the library, on the second floor of the mess hall building. Although I happen to remember where that time capsule was hidden, I wouldn’t want to upset the memory of Karl Kitzel by divulging that secret.

One of the many popular activities that occurred every evening right after dinner was a period called “Free Play.” As soon as dinner ended, we were able to go anywhere in camp to participate in any camp activity we wanted to participate in, as long as

we were back in our units at 7:30 P.M., in time for the evening activity. There was always so much to do during the “Free Play” period, and we always enjoyed doing something different every night. Every Friday night after dinner was a special time at SLC. We always had Sabbath Services, stories, and discussions within our respective units.

During the six years I was a camper at SLC we went on many terrific hikes, including, the Revolutionary Trail (where George Washington once walked), Mt. Beacon, the Fire Tower, Sugar Loaf, the Bald Spot, and to the picturesque town of Cold Springs. I will never forget the many exciting camp activities, like going to the Little Playhouse on rainy days, arts & crafts, Israeli dancing, learning lots of camp songs, the overnight cookouts, and the all-camp shows that we had. Even bedtime was a special time of the day at SLC. Every night, at 9:00 P.M., we used to hear three lines that were loudly echoed across the lake: **“All campers pipe-down; All lights out; All quiet!”** This was followed by the melodious tones of the camp bugler playing taps. With that, another exciting day at SLC came to a close.

I would like to end this article by mentioning a famous person who visited us at SLC during the summer of 1949, and that was Eddie Cantor. I am proud to say that I have pictures of Eddie when he spoke to all of us by the waterfront, and once again in 1955, when he dedicated the Eddie Cantor Theater.

I find it hard to believe that so many years have passed since I first came to Surprise Lake Camp as a camper, and as soon as I can jar my memory once again, I will look forward to sharing some additional memories with you of the days when I was a counselor and bugler at SLC, and my eventual involvement in the formation of the Alumni Association in 1961.

Al Elkins, Past President

SLC Alumni Association

AL'S STAFF MEMOIRS AT SLC November, 2016 (Part 2)

In my last article I reminisced about my days as a camper at Surprise Lake Camp. In this article I would like to share with you some of my memories of the days when I was a CIT, a Counselor, and Bugler at SLC. I recently celebrated my 78th birthday on November 4th. It gives me great pleasure to reminisce at this time of my life about the wonderful days I spent at Surprise Lake Camp many years ago. (I will be 85 on 11/04/23.)

I was hired by the Camp Director, Asher Melzer, as a counselor in training for the summer of 1955. During the remaining summers of the 50's, through 1960, I was a counselor, as well as the bugler. One of the CIT's I met during the summer of 1955 was Jack Levi. We still maintain a friendship with each other after all these years. Jack, who is a Charter Alumni member, has been an endodontist in Teaneck, NJ for many years. One fond memory I have of Jack occurred in 1955 when we had a hurricane that produced a lot of heavy rain, with lots of water that cascaded down the hills toward the lake. Some of the nine-year old boys in my group got together and built a dam behind their cabin that caused a big flood to develop in front of the staff cabin in the unit below. Jack Levi was one of the staff members in that cabin, and it was some time before the staff members were able to get out, to go to the bathroom, as well as to the mess hall to have their meals. Without going into a lot of detail, it was a very humorous situation, except for the staff members in that cabin.

When “Doc” Maslin retired as Waterfront Director, Harry Vogel succeeded “Doc” in that position. In addition to his summer responsibilities, Harry worked as a camp host



Louise (left) and Al (right) Elkins, taken in 2021.
May their memories be a blessing.

most weekends during the fall, winter, & spring months, along with Asher Melzer, and Ray Berger, our Assistant Camp Director. Different groups from various community centers and organizations, in the New York City area, spent weekends at camp throughout the year, enjoying a variety of activities. However, when Harry went into the Paratrooper reserves, Asher asked me to pinch hit for Harry during his absence. Although I worked quite hard every weekend as a camp host, it was an enjoyable experience that I will never forget. I still remember Ash practicing playing his guitar, while singing different Hebrew and camp songs. On the other hand, I practiced playing the bugle, which was in addition to being a counselor during the summer. Some of the staff at camp thought I was practicing everyday when I was the camp bugler. They just didn't have any music appreciation.

When I started writing my memoirs of my days at SLC, I wanted to include as many names as possible, in the event that some of our older Alumni members might remember some of the people who were an important part of the history of Surprise Lake Camp back in the '50's. In addition to the people I have already mentioned in my previous article, as well as in this article, I remember several Division Heads, such as, Dick Titan, Max Fuchs, Stan Opas, Moe Cohen, and Bob Gottesfeld. Herb Gross was the Office Manager at SLC every summer, and in addition, showed wonderful movies to the staff every Saturday night. Herb has been a resident of San Diego, California for all of his adult life, where he is a retired school teacher, as well as a Charter Alumni member. I can never forget Tess Cohen, Henny Cohen's wife, who was the Canteen Manager for many years back in the 50's, and of course, she was also a Charter Alumni member.

One person I will never forget is Ronald Kerstein, who was a counselor with me back in the '50's. In addition to our duties as fellow counselors, we played a lot of Ping Pong, and Black Jack in our free time. Ron, who was a Charter Alumni member, married Naomi, became a CPA. We kept in touch with each other for many years. However, I'm sorry to report that Ron recently passed away. I will always remember Ron when we were buddies at SLC.

In all of the years I was a counselor I had only one homesick case. His name was Joel, and his homesickness was so serious that he had to have his meals at the Infirmary under the supervision of our camp mother, "Mama K." One day I noticed that one of my fingers had swelled up and really hurt. I went to the Infirmary to have my finger checked out, and the nurse informed me she would have to lance my finger in order to relieve the swelling. I asked the nurse what lancing meant, she told me that she would freeze my finger, and then cut the swelling with a razor blade. When she walked out of the examining room to get the necessary medical tools, I ran out of the other door because I was afraid of the lancing. However, the following night I was unable to sleep due to the pain in my finger, and I went back to the Infirmary the next day to see the same nurse again. This time she asked my camper, Joel, to watch me, to make sure that I didn't leave again. When she came back to do the lancing Joel asked the nurse if he could stay to watch. After the nurse froze my finger, I started to cringe, which is something I still do today whenever I get any injection. Joel laughed so hard due to the look on my face, as did the nurse. As a result of my finger problem and bravery, that incident seemed to have cured Joel of his homesickness for the rest of the time he was at camp.

Another memorable event that I recall was a Friday night Sabbath Service in our unit, which happened to be Unit C. After we concluded reciting the Sabbath prayers, which I had officiated over, I then told the campers a biblical story. We then had a very interesting discussion with the campers that started around 8:00 P.M. However, that biblical discussion that had started with the campers around 8:00, continued with all the counselors, in front of the Unit C lodge, until around 11:30 that night, long after all the campers were asleep. Although I don't believe we came to any conclusion, it was a fascinating night that I have never forgotten.

In September, 1955, the Eddie Cantor Theater was dedicated, and Eddie, and his wife, Ida, came to camp to celebrate the erection of this wonderful building. Needless to say, many programs and entertainment events have taken place at the Eddie Cantor Theater during the past sixty-one years, which has been an important part of our camp's history.

Although I recall many other memories of the days I spent as a counselor at SLC, I would like to conclude this part of my memoirs as a Staff member. In the next and final segment of my SLC memoirs, I would like to share with you my involvement in the formation of the Surprise Lake Camp Alumni Ass., and how we evolved into the fantastic organization we are today.

Al Elkins, Past President

SLC Alumni Association



AL'S SLC ALUMNI ASSOCIATION MEMOIRS: February, 2017 (Part 3)

This third and final segment of my SLC memoirs pertains to the founding of the Surprise Lake Camp Alumni Association, which is proudly celebrating its' 56th year in operation. In the fall of 1960, I received a postcard from Henry (Henny) Cohen, who had retired as the Head Counselor of SLC, as well as Dean of the Boys and Basketball Coach at Seward Park High School. He wanted to have a meeting with a few former staff members and campers to discuss organizing an Alumni Association. It was decided to have a kickoff banquet in early 1961 to invite as many former SLC'ers as possible. I wish I could describe to you what a wonderful event that was, and what a thrill it was to see so many people who I had not seen in several years. The banquet was a big success, and as a result, the SLC Alumni Association became a reality.

When the SLC Alumni Association was organized in 1961, I was the youngest member at that time by approximately ten years. I was also married to Louise on October 22nd 1961, and I was proud to have Asher and Shirley Melzer at our wedding. As the years went by I assumed several positions in the Alumni Association, including Editor of the Re-Echoes, Third, Second, and first Vice President, and finally President.

There were many former campers and staff members who were an important part of the Alumni Association in those early years. Several Alumni members went to winter camp or summer camp as far back as in the teens, 20's, and the 30's. Henny Cohen, who was our first President for seven years, successfully guided us as we planned and organized many events for the benefit of SLC. We used to have Alumni Board Meetings every month, at the SLC New York City office, 31 Union Square West. Before every meeting, many of us enjoyed getting together for dinner at a local restaurant, at the corner of 16th Street & Broadway. In addition, we also had frequent Alumni get-togethers at the Federation Building on East 59th Street, or at the 92nd Street "Y." One of our biggest fundraisers every spring was our annual weekend at one of the well-known hotels in the Catskills. Those of us who got together always enjoyed this wonderful social event every year. Of course, the one event we always looked forward to every year was Alumni Day, which was usually on the last Sunday in June. During our first ten years, the Alumni Association contributed many physical and monetary donations to the camp, and we celebrated our tenth Anniversary by erecting Alumni Hall, which still proudly stands by the main waterfront.

If there was one objective that I always had in the early years of Alumni Association, it was to be able to attract many new, younger Alumni members than we had when our organization was first chartered. It is so gratifying to see that we now have so many former campers and staff members as members of our Alumni Association. I know that Henny Cohen, and all our Charter Alumni members, would be proud to see how our current Alumni Association has grown, and how much we have accomplished since we first started back in 1961.

When we first started back in 1961, Asher Melzer was the Camp Director, and a vital part of the founding of the SLC Alumni Association. However, I would like to conclude this article by thanking Jordan Dale for all he has done to keep the spirit of Surprise Lake Camp alive in the thirty years he has served as Executive Camp Director. We can all be proud of how far Surprise Lake Camp, and the Alumni Association has come in working together to serve the children of the New York Metropolitan area.

I would also like to thank Celia Baczkowski for her encouragement in writing about my memories of Surprise Lake Camp. In addition to serving as Editor of Re-Echoes, Celia is the Director of Retreats and Communications for Surprise Lake Camp, and also does so much for our Alumni Association. I can't think of a better way to end this segment than to repeat the first line of my first article, and that is, "Nestling 'neath the shady trees lies our camp so dear." Surprise Lake Camp will always have a special place in all our hearts.

Al Elkins, Past President

SLC Alumni Association - (Currently 62 years young)



Fall Hike Day







SINCE 1902

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Charles Jainchill, President
Michael Zbar, Immediate Past President
Matthew Grosshandler, Vice President
Mark Levine, Vice President
Eve Rubinstein, Vice President
Cindy Shmerler, Vice President
Jordana Zbar, Treasurer
Michele Mark Levine, Assistant Treasurer
Blair Klaff, Secretary

Margery Arsham
Peter Baum
Gayle (Hoffman) Doyle
Joseph Goldberg
Amy Grinberg
Dayle Henshel
Joy Henshel
Patti Henshel
Peter Hirsch
Alan Hoffman
Alan Kleiman
Linda Markowitz
Jerry Meyer
Laurence H. Rubinstein
Eliot Senor
Seth Stein
Bret Tenenhaus
Jessica Zalin

Jordan Dale, Special Advisor
Michael Herson, Honorary
Ruth Messinger, Honorary

Adam Bendeson, MSW
Executive Director

Sheryl Kirschenbaum
Camp Director

ADDRESS

382 Lake Surprise Road
Cold Spring, NY 10516

To our Dear Fellow Alumni,

Earlier this year, we invited you along with us on a journey throughout 2025 to implement a widespread initiative that blends the tradition of Mitzvot, along with legacy and impact. We launched a special campaign to affix beautiful, kosher mezuzahs to the doorposts of Camp's buildings and rooms, and while many friends far and wide have taken part in this project, there are still plenty of opportunities to purchase one and leave your mark on SLC (surpriselake.org/mezuzah).

Now, as we enter the last few months of the year, we encourage you to continue your journey with us to spread Mitzvot throughout the SLC community through your tzedakah. Tzedakah, often considered the greatest mitzvah, is referred to many times throughout the Torah, including "You shall support him, the stranger, the resident... so that he may live with you," (Leviticus 25:35). Surprise Lake Camp, our shared home away from home is a place of refuge, sanctuary, joy, peace, and happiness. It holds both sacred memories of the past and bold opportunities for the future, and through you, our dedicated community, these camper experiences are unlocked for all, regardless of one's ability to pay.

For 123 years, Surprise Lake Camp has ensured a high-quality summer program for any and every interested family, and we look to you to help us continue this tradition of tzedakah into the next century. Your longstanding support of the Annual Drive ensures that each child will enjoy every benefit that SLC has to offer, creating the ultimate camper experience.

While time brings us closer to reveling in Surprise Lake Camp's landmark achievement of 125 years of impact, legacy, and unforgettable summers, we look forward to your sustained partnership in both continuing to spread Jewish tradition and impact, and to share the incomparable Surprise Lake Camp experience with all who seek it.

Sincerely,

Charles Jainchill

Chuck Jainchill
President, Board of Directors

Adam Bendeson, MSW
Executive Director

PS - The enclosed form empowers you to support the Annual Drive - Complete & send or scan to donate online.





2025 Donation Form



Scan to Support
SLC's Annual Drive

We are so grateful you have chosen to partner with us to provide even more life-changing experiences!

Use this form or give online at surpriselake.org/donate

Your Full Name _____ Name(s) as you'd like to appear in donor list or "Anonymous" _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Preferred Phone _____ Date of Birth _____ Email _____

Our Gift	
	\$ _____ Annual Drive Donation
*If purchasing a Mezuzah:	\$ _____ Wherever my gift is needed most
Please choose a door from the online list, then select the corresponding option to the right.	\$ _____ Mezuzah Donation*
Be sure to list your specific location, as well as the Mezuzah Display Name (limited to 30 characters including spaces).	Location: _____
	Name: _____

I'd like to join **CHA18** and give monthly:

Monthly gifts** of \$ _____ each month for # _____ of months for a total gift of \$ _____
**Credit card required. SLC will establish monthly gift installments upon receipt of this form.

Please contact me about joining the **1902 Legacy Society**:

I'd like to consider joining the hundreds of families who are including Surprise Lake Camp in their estate plans.

I'd also like to renew my **Alumni Association** membership:

If paying by check, please remember to add in this amount: Annual: \$50 Lifetime: \$360

I'll pay by:

Credit Card Visa MC Disc. AMEX Card #: _____

Exp. Date: ____ / ____ Credit Card Security Code: _____ Billing Zip: _____

Cover the credit card company's transaction fee. Please add 3.5% to my gift.

Bank Routing Number: _____ Bank Account Number: _____

Enclosed Check: Payable to Surprise Lake Camp. Mail to 382 Lake Surprise Road, Cold Spring, NY 10516

Thank you for your generosity!

1902 Legacy Society Letter of Intent



The 1902 Society was created to help fulfill our mission of providing the magic of summer camp to every child, regardless of ability to pay.

This is critical to who we are and the vision of our founders. Through the Society, we acknowledge the philanthropic intent of individuals who have made provisions in their estate plans, or other means, to benefit Surprise Lake Camp, which was founded in 1902.

"Just as my parents planted for me, so do I plant for my children."

To fill out this form online go to: <https://surpriselake.org/ways-to-give/1902-legacy-society/>

I/we would like to be listed as a member(s) of Surprise Lake Camp's 1902 Society today!

There is no minimum planned gift amount to become a member. Your membership will be completed with this signed and returned form. *You may decide at a later date how you wish to fulfill your Letter of Intent.*

I/we intend to include SLC in my/our estate plans in the future. Please contact us with more info.

There is no minimum planned gift amount to become a member. We will contact you soon to begin planning.

I/we have already made provisions for the following planned/deferred gift(s) to SLC:

(check all that apply)

- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bequest in a Will | <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Gift Annuity | <input type="checkbox"/> Retirement Plan/IRA |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Insurance Policy | <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Lead Trust | <input type="checkbox"/> Charitable Remainder Trust |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Real Estate | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ | |

The amount of my/our planned gift is \$_____ OR _____ % your estate or appropriate planned gift.

Attorney/Trustee Name & Contact Information: _____

Custodian Name & Contact Information: _____

Preferred name(s) for display/publication OR write "Anonymous"

Your Full Name _____ Date of Birth _____ Relationship to Camp _____

Spouse's Full Name (as applicable) _____ Spouse's Date of Birth (as applicable) _____ Relationship to Camp _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Preferred Phone _____ Email _____

By signing this Letter of Intent, I/we reaffirm my/our commitment to Surprise Lake Camp. I/we understand that this commitment is revocable and can be modified by me/us at any time.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Spouse's Signature: _____ Date: _____
(as applicable)

Please complete and return this form to:

Surprise Lake Camp • 382 Lake Surprise Road • Cold Spring, NY 10516
Phone: (845) 265-3616 • Fax: (646) 582-0138 • Email: development@surpriselake.org

Current Members of The 1902 Society

We are extremely grateful to the following individuals who have included Surprise Lake Camp in their estate plans. Your commitment may inspire others, making your impact even greater!

Anonymous (5)	Nancy Chanin Collins	Shira & Evan Greenblatt
Estelle & Herbert Adler	Larry Cooperstein	Rob Greenspan
Paola & Ronnie Adragna/Gilbert	Anita Cruso	Aurora Luna Griggs
Michele Albo	Jane Hershey Cuzzo	Harold Grinspoon
Jacob Albrecht	Dave Dale*	Brenda & Matthew Grosshandler
Marcia & Bob Altabet	Jordan Dale	Andrea & Arthur Gruber
Jennifer & Marc Ambrose	Kate & David Danino	Michael Gurman
Walter Arnstein*	Mia Desmedt	Michael Gutenplan
Margery Arsham	Jon Dickie	Gwen & Larry Hamberg
Margie & Bob Atwater	Wendy & James Dinn	Julia Handel
Celia Baczkowski	Michele Mars DiRuggiero	Irving Harris*
Sylvaine Baczkowski	Laurie Dobkin-Helm	Dayle Henshel
Jason Bailis & Jeff Henderson	Jenna Dorfman-Tandlich	Joy Henshel
Marilyn Bailis & Jerry Mark*	Matt Dorter	Patti Henshel
Rachel Bailis	Jill Dosik	Andrew Hess
Tracie & Mark Basch	Mandy Efrati	Barbara* & Stanley* Hirsch
Peter D. Baum	Louise* & Alvin* L. Elkins	Roberta & Peter Hirsch
Pearl & Harry Belkowitz	Amie Ettinger	Thelma & Sanford Hochberg
Janeen Bellafiore Levine & Brian Levine	Michael Fandal	Jennifer Hochstadt
Jennifer Herman Benalt & Adam Benalt	Lori Heitzner Fishman	Margot Hodes & David Rosenstrauch
Karen* & Adam Bendeson	Seth Fishman	Gayle Hoffman
Lauren & Mark Benmoise	David Fleischner	Jason A. Hoffman
Sara & Adam Benmoise	Paulette Ann Forgacs	Nancy & Alan Hoffman
Molly Benton*	Ralph Forgacs	Carol Robin Horowitz
Evie & Jon Berger	Beulah Fox*	Rachel Israel
Blanche Berk*	Gregory Fox	Seymour Israel
Howie Berk	Kenneth L. Freedman	Sharon & Jeff Jacobs
Jeff Berk	Robert French	Suzanne Jacobs & Jeff Borkan
Jennifer & Matthew Berk	Glen Frick	Zach Jacobs
Michael Berk	Marissa Garfinkel	Amy & Bruce Jaffe
Andie Biederman	Rose & Harris Ghersin	Chuck Jainchill
Jake Biederman	Scott Gilden	Susie Jainchill & Tsahi Gelardin
Brian Blaubeux	Allie (Ball) and Jordan Golan	Danielle Johnson
Robbie & Steven Bloom	Amy Goldberg	Erez Jontef
Martin Blum	Dr. Joseph Goldberg	Stan Josephson
Nelson Braff	Rabbi Claire Ginsburg Goldstein	Michael Kall
Amy Bram	Michelle Goldstein	Linda Kane
Elyse Braun	Shira Goldstein	Irwin Karp
Jill Breder	Linda & Ben Gordon	Erica Karron
Mitchell Brenner	Melissa Gordon	Heidi & Bruce Katz
Ezra Cahn	Stephen Gordon	Karri & Joel "Whammy" Kaufman
Justin K. Cantor	Karen Gorsky & Vicky Eggleton	Faith Altschuler Kirkpatrick
Meridee Simon Cole	Jaclyn Greenbaum	Sheryl Kirschenbaum
	Pam & Jay Greenbaum	Alan Kleiman
	Suzy Greenberg	Barbra & Ty Klein

Ele Klein	Paul Novick	Jenna Sidor
Wendy Kleinman	Sammi Olinsky	Nancy & Lee Sidor
Andrew Kominik	Shelli & Larry Olinsky	Harvey Sills*
Andrew Korn	Emily Palmiotto	Rebecca Solomon
Marc Kringsman	Stacey & Rob Panepinto	Steve Sommer
Robin & Gordon* Krompier	Jerry Person	Susan Namm Spencer
Ellen & Jeff Lambert	Esther Pessin	Randi Sperber
Karen & Stewart Lantner	Nicole Pilevsky & Joseph Osheroff	Jeff Spiegel
Maureen & Howard Lantner	Johanna Pinzler & Avri Klemer	Gary Spielvogel
Moran & Murray Lantner	Julia Pisetsky	Seth Stein
Dena & Elly Levine	Serge Podolski	Charles Stendig*
Galit & Alan Levine	Jared Pollet	Adele & Henry Stern
Janeen Bellafiore Levine	Sheila* & Ken Pollet	Brittany Sternberg
Mark Levine	Lee Posniack	Denis Sternberg
Michele Mark Levine	Jillian & Brian Rauer	Matthew Stollerman
Fred Levy	Marc Rentzer	Elaine & Paul Suchow
Randi & Scott Lieberman	Andrew "AJ" Retig	Joshua Suchow
Ted Liebowitz	Shari Riechelson	Jennifer Sussell
Stacie Lilien	Michael Rieger	Ilana (Lambert) & Michael Sussman
Laura & Carter Mansbach	David Rimmer	Audrey & Mark Tenenhaus
Dylan Marcus	Max Damon Robkoff	Bret Tenenhaus
Jamie Marcus	F. Peter Rose*	Lisa Tenenhaus
Judy & Michael* Margulies	Robert Rosenbaum	Mike Tenenhaus
Lisa Mark	Gail & Dan Rosner	Alice & Steve Terner*
Linda Markowitz	Michele & David Rosner	Jennifer Anne Toback
Marissa Marx	Eve Rubinstein	Allison Tratner
Caryl & Mike Melasky	Mara Rubinstein	Susan & Matthew Tratner
Paul Mermelstein	Robin* & Larry Rubinstein	Jared Tyler
Miriam Messinger & Felicia Hayes	Rebecca Safeer	Marlene & "Ranger" Barry Vegter
Ruth Messinger	Judy Freiser Sails & Steven Sails	Jordan Waldman
Emilie & Andrew Meyer	Alan Saltz	Charles D. Wasserman
Estelle Meyer*	Bryan Salz	Wendy & Stu Waxman
Jerry Meyer	Carolyn & Dave* Samuels	Lisa & Steve Weinberg
Roberta & Jim Meyer	Joshua Sarkozi	Diane* & Allen Weiner
Jodie Meyer & Steven Tuber	Robert Schechter	David Weintraub
Lee Meyer	Talia Schneider	Julie & Neil Weintraub
Jonathan Miller	Meri & Paul Schoenblum	Tommy Wills
Susan Feldman-Miller	Dan Schulman	Jennifer & Benjamin Wind
Barb & Steve Mink	Andrew Schuster	Abbe Wittenberg & Rob Schneider
Jill (Simon) & John Miskanic	Gayle Schwartz	Cheryl & David Wolff
Jake Montberg	Maria & Ken* Seligson	Anne & Joel Zbar
Karen & Jim Morrison	Julia & Michael Seltzer	Barbara & Michael Zbar
Suzanne & Steven Moses	Eliot Senior	Elise & Corey Zbar
Elizabeth Moskow & Ari Kaufman	Isaac Shapiro	Jordana Zbar
Suzanne Moskowitz	Laurie Feldman-Shepherd	Richie Zbar
Alyse Kunkin Murabito	Joanne Sherain	Steven Zbar
Roni & Jason Nadell	Peter Sheridan	Arthur Zilz
Stephen Nitkin	Roy Shirwindt*	Jaime Zuckerberg
Joey Novick	Cindy Shmerler	

List as of December 2025

The SLC Community Corner!

Thanks to our Winter Advertisers.

Michael Zbar, CPA
Jordana Zbar, CPA
Corey Zbar, CPA



Phone: (845) 639-3100
(212) 398-9111
Fax: (845) 639-3180

MICHAEL ZBAR AND PETER M. LEUNG, LLP
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS
225 NORTH ROUTE 303, SUITE 201
CONGERS, NEW YORK, 10920
E-MAIL: info@zbarleungcpa.com
www.zbarleungcpa.com

Office Hours Monday thru Saturday and Evenings

Stewart Lantner, D.D.S.
Joseph S. Goldberg, D.D.S.

General, Cosmetic & Laser Dentistry
Dental Sleep Medicine

(212) 399-8888
Dentist@DrLantner.com
www.DrLantner.com

Suite 800
200 West 57th Street
New York, NY 10019

CHAPTER 1 PHOTOGRAPHY

SPECIALIZING IN FAMILY PHOTOGRAPHY

914-263-2778 • wvhammy@aol.com
www.chapter1photography.com



Donor Advised Funds

Surprise Lake Camp is more than just our summer home. It is a sacred space where countless young Jewish souls have connected to nature, to their identity, and to one another. For so many of us, it's the place where we made lifelong friends, sang beneath the stars at the Eddie Cantor Theatre, and felt the transformative power of our shared traditions.

As alumni of this special camp—our camp—you know firsthand how meaningful these experiences are. You also understand that they don't happen without support from people like you. Gifts from donor-advised funds (DAFs) have become an increasingly important way for alumni to give back while also enjoying financial benefits.

When you contribute through your donor-advised fund:

- Your gift ensures that Surprise Lake Camp continues its mission of nurturing Jewish identity in future generations.
- You can designate your donation to our Annual Drive which makes camp accessible to every child who wishes to attend—just as all of us benefited when we were campers ourselves.
- You might be able to maximize tax advantages while supporting something deeply meaningful in your life.

The Torah teaches us: *"Tzedakah tatzil mimavet"*—charity saves lives (Proverbs 10:2). Through your generosity, whether via a DAF grant or another means, you're not only helping sustain our beloved summer home but also creating opportunities for children who will carry forward our values: kindness (*chesed*), responsibility (*achrayut*), and community (*kehillah*).

We invite you to join other proud alumni in ensuring that Surprise Lake Camp remains strong for today's campers and tomorrow's leaders. If you would like guidance on giving through your donor-advised fund or want more information about other impactful ways to give back—including stock donations or Qualified Charitable Distributions from your individual retirement account (IRA) — we're here to help!

Together, let's ensure that generations of children continue experiencing the magic and meaning only SLC provides. Thank you for being part of this legacy!

development@surpriselake.org • (845) 265-3616





It doesn't need to be summer to shop the

SLC SWAG STORE

Shop year-round at

<https://tinyurl.com/shopslc>

SURPRISE LAKE
SLC EST. 1902 SLC
CAMP

