Every Shabbat, we read “We call the Torah our Tree of Life because it teaches us good ways of living, and helps us know who we are” in the Camp Wise siddur. While we read this only once a week, we understand that as we spend our summer at Camp Wise, we learn how to become better versions of ourselves. Last summer, we focused on one of our six core values at Camp Wise, b’tzelem Elohim (in the image of God). B’tzelem Elohim teaches us how we can better treat ourselves and how we can honor and respect everyone around us. While we incorporated b’tzelem Elohim into camp through various ways last summer, one way that we really brought this value to life was through welcoming a new Torah into our Camp Wise community.

Through a generous and meaningful gift from Stuart and Marilyn Cole, both of whom are Camp Wise alumni, we were able to retire our old Torah and introduce a new Torah to camp during second session. Both Marilyn and Stuart had been campers at The Home of Happiness as teenagers, and Marilyn even worked as Chalutzim Supervisor one summer! Though they hadn’t visited Camp Wise in many years, it was a true blessing to reconnect with Stuart and Marilyn and welcome them with open arms back to Camp Wise, where they were able to meet and celebrate the new Torah with our current generation of Camp Wise campers and staff.

Though the Torah was new to us, we learned that it was nearly two centuries old and that it was originally from Germany. We also learned that if we had not had the opportunity to bring this Torah back to life by repairing it with the generous support of the Cole family, the Torah may have been buried with all the memories and stories of people who interacted with it over the last 200 years. When the Torah arrived during second session, we had the opportunity to learn with the Torah’s sofer (scribe), Rabbi Druin. Rabbi Druin explained that the Hebrew word for “letter”, ot, also means “wonder”, “miracle” and “sign.” Just like every human being is created b’tzelem Elohim and the world would not be the same without each one of us present, every letter of the Torah holds deep meaning and purpose. And so, the new-to-us Torah would not be the same or fit for use without every letter being restored to its highest quality, otherwise known as its best self!

We learned that every person, across ages, genders, and many other identifying qualities should be able to fulfill the mitzvah of writing in the Torah. And throughout the course of a few days, that is just what occurred. We learned and wrote in the Torah alongside Rabbi Druin to finish restoring it and to bring it back to life in the sacredness of the Camp Wise community. This new Torah, with its history and connections to Camp Wise alumni, and now Camp Wise, has linked a new generation of campers and staff to Camp Wise and to each other. No matter where we go, our stories will forever be intertwined with this experience, and we know that we will always have a home at the Camp Wise.

The Camp Wise chapel sits under a canopy of trees and I believe it was placed there knowing that each week we would read from the Torah. A Torah which is known as the Tree of Life. While the roots of Jewish identity may start at the chapel, they grow with every new person we meet and with every new experience we have. In the chapel, and across all of Camp Wise, we let the lessons of Torah soak in and ground us in our Jewish identity and camp community.

Be in touch!

Fall, Winter & Spring:
26001 South Woodland Rd.
Beachwood, OH 44122
216.593.6250

Summer:
13164 Taylor Wells Rd.
Chardon, OH 44024
216.593.6250

www.campwise.org
wisekids@mandeljcc.org
**Camp opportunities for everyone!**

The energy of the summer briefly faded before August programming rolled around at the Home of Happiness! Camp Wise welcomed several new programs for participants of all ages: Camp Chi, Women’s Weekend, and Family Camp. As soon as they arrived, these groups were ready to hit the ground running, soaking in all that CW has to offer in August!

**Camp Chi**

With a boisterous rendition of the Welcome Song, we greeted our Camp Chi campers for a week-long overnight camp experience filled with activities. Camp Chi, our program for adults with diverse needs, is an opportunity to expand our typical summer activities to a terrific group of adults. Throughout the week, participants were able to swim in the pool and the lake, create art in the Art Shack, roast marshmallows over the fire, and conquer the climbing wall. The annual Talent Show was a hit as was the cookout at the pool! A closing campfire brought everyone together for singing and awards to celebrate the wonderful week. The Camp Chi experience is special for participants and staff alike, and we hope to see our friends again in August 2020.

**Women’s Weekend**

Who doesn’t love a weekend of relaxation and connection with friends, old and new? Women’s Weekend, this year’s theme for adults with diverse needs, is an opportunity to create mini-cabin sets while campers participated in a Lake-a-Palooza event down at the lake. Throughout the weekend, the adults had a blast playing, laughing, and experiencing Camp Wise alongside many other families. We are looking forward to Family Camp 2020, and we hope we see many old and new faces next August.

**Camp Chai**

Camp Chai was a summer camp experience designed for a week-long overnight camp experience. After a camp-wide Shabbat community dinner on Friday night, the two groups remained together, creating a unique family vacation experience. After a camp-wide Shabbat service, families sat down to a meal together and prepared for the evening’s Mini Macka cabal activities, prior to the Family Camp competition! The days were filled with outdoor cooking (banana boats & cinnamon crescent rolls – YUM!), giant swing, lake time, archery, zip line, Battle Ball, and more. In the evenings, the younger campers went to bed, to the “twosies” ran around camp finding where the antics hid the snacks while the adults competed in trivia and a Cake Decorating Showdown. Our parents had an opportunity to create mini-chouette sets while campers participated in a Lake.a-Palooza event down at the lake. Throughout the weekend, the families had a blast playing, laughing, and experiencing Camp Wise alongside many other families. We are looking forward to Family Camp 2020, and we hope we see many old and new faces next August.

**Our CW volunteers**

Todah rabah to our wonderful volunteer families who share their time with camp each summer. Our volunteer doctors helped keep camp healthy, and our host families warmly welcomed our international staff to Cleveland on days off! We are always looking to include new families and doctors to our volunteer list. If either of these opportunities sound like something you’d like to do in 2020, please let us know by contacting us at wisekids@mandeljcc.org!

**2019 Volunteer Physicians**

Regina Dorman
Stacey Ehrenberg
Arnie Feltoon
Kim Reaick
Chad Dirman
Robby Zimmerman

**2019 Host Households**

Anna & Steve August
Giny Baris

Barbie & Drew Bamhotz
Harriet & Fred Bauer
Jennie & Ben Becter
Cori & Jason Bloch
Stu & Adam Cohen
Evan Conlin
Jennifer & Jason Drazer
Elizabeth & Andrew Elia
Marty Friedman
Naomi & Jeremy Grunzwieg
Karen & Dole Hopkins
Michelle & Evan Hirsch
Cheri & Alex Isaacson
Rachel Kabb-Elffon & David Elffon
Cindy Kaufman
Shanna and Stephen Langerfeld
Rachel Leonhould
Michelle & Matt Levy
Amanda & Haim Mayan
Robin & Bill McCann
Hannah & Cliff Mandelschon
Lindsay & Josh Mintz

Cheryl & Ken Miller
Jamie & Jeff Rindfahl
Kelly & Gil Rubenarko
Becky Sebo
Kathy & Rommie Sebo
Stacey & Steve Shore
Deb & Scott Singer
Darby & Jon Singer
Anne & Kevin White
Beth & Chris Young
Dress up in their wigs to introduce the “fairies of Chalutzim” and singing the “Beaver Song”! From pool parties to bonding with Solel buddies, our Chalutzimers’ days were intense and hilariously debated whether 1 trillion lions would beat the sun and whether fire was actually, indeed, on fire! All in all, the Noar village had an epic summer!

**Solol**

In Summer 2019, our Solol campers started to understand the concept “what they give is what they get.” From meaningful conversations about what they will take away from their summer experience, they will explore Israel alongside teens from two other JCC camps: Camp Livingston and Pinewoods. From snorkeling in the Red Sea to hiking Masada at sunrise to sleeping in the Bedouin tents, surfing in their Chalutzimmers buddy program where participants of all ages: Camp Chi, Women’s Weekend, and Family Camp. As soon as they arrived, these groups were ready to hit the ground running, soaking in all that CW has to offer in August!

**Philip**

From laughter at Nappel’s morning assembly to reading a book quietly by the pool, women were able to rest and relax in the way that felt best to them. A true “pick-your-own-adventure” type weekend, Women’s Weekend offered participants the choice to participate in as many – or as little – as they wanted. From Ya’el’s cooking class to working on a Clay project, the opportunities for fun and relaxation were endless! We hope the relaxation found in this weekend is felt throughout the year, and we hope that many more women come join us at Women’s Weekend 2020.

**Family Camp**

Spending a weekend as a family, without modern distractions, is more difficult as time goes on. Family Camp at CW welcomes the entire natural type of distractions – it’s all had something to offer for everyone, whether it be a great history, visit museums and meet with smaller communities in Israel to learn first hand about their experiences. One of their favorite experiences was visiting the Art Shack, roast marshmallows over the fire, and conquer the climbing wall. The annual Talent Show was a hit as was the cookout at the pool! A closing campfire brought everyone together for singing and awards to celebrate the wonderful week. The Camp Chi experience is special for participants and staff alike, and we hope to see our friends again in August 2020.

**We love our CW volunteers**

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**Chalutzim**

Campers and staff brought so much positive energy, silliness, and enthusiasm to Chalutzim this summer! While they may not be your youngest:

**Shalom**

This summer, we collaborated with three JCC programs for participants of all ages: Camp Chai, Women’s Weekend, and Family Camp. As soon as they arrived, these groups were ready to hit the ground running, soaking in all that CW has to offer in August!
Braun, Leia Withee, Matthew Grunzweig and Marcus Leavitt. Their peers who have gone above and beyond to make The Home of Happiness a special place each summer. The staff are known across camp to be supportive, compassionate.

Matthew Grunzweig is currently a freshman at Vanderbilt University studying Biochemistry and Chemical Biology. This was Matthew’s 10th summer at The Home of Happiness! This summer, when Matthew was not starting silly camp-wide trends like “T-Pose Hunting” and dancing to the Education Connector Jingle, we could find him in Ohalim (more specifically in 0-5) where he worked as a counselor and Heged both sessions. He also had a chance to run some of our evening programs! Matthew loves Camp Wise because it is the place where he learned to be completely unapologetic about his one of a kind personality! Matthew’s favorite camp memory is when he participated in the “bash skit” as the bash steiner. Matthew says that camp has taught him so many important life lessons and keeps him returning because he finds himself growing more and more as an individual every year!

Leia Withee is a senior Violin Performance major at Miami University. Leia has been at camp for 12 years and this past summer, in addition to being a cabin counselor, Leia was the Camp Care Specialist. This year she was able to spend time with cabins four times to make sure every camper had the best summer possible. One of her favorite memories from her 12th summer was getting to supervise both sessions in Solel with the campers she had years ago. Leia’s favorite part of camp is her campers creating lasting memories and building strong, trusting relationships with them. She shared, “My counselor’s were some of my biggest influences growing up. I always try to be the same person for my campers that they were for me. Their campers can have the same incredible experience I did.”

Marcus Leavitt is studying Sports Administration at the University of Cincinnati. In Cincinnati this summer, he spent time supporting cabins in Ohalim and Noar as well as overseeing our basketball program. Throughout his 12 years at The Home of Happiness, he always finds his post self at 13164 Taylor Wells Road, always trying to put a smile on the faces of the players he coaches. Marcus shared, “It’s the clients who are there today and I will always care for them that reason!”

Wisdom Award

Jennie & Ben Becker
Meredith & Brian
Inkt Baron
Michael Brenner
Heather Brody
Jesse Bisdorf
Gary Busliger
Hannah Caplan
Brian Cheah
Heidi & Loren Chyla
Jillie Cohen
Leo Coe
Hannah Davis
Amanda & Josh Goldberg
Matthew Golden
Dan Goodman
Lesley Gudzin
Isaac Heyward
Brian Hraban
Adam Josephson
Amy & Netanyahu
Ally Kaufman
Sarah Katz
Amanda & Ken Karleid
David Leb
Celia Lipton
Rebecca Lutten
Amanda Lozier
Zach Mandel
Jordan Marks
Barry Marion
Zach Marlin
Robin & Rit McCann
Evan Meles
Alli & Jinho Miller
Katja Moscowitz
Matthew Newman
Matthew Ortmann
Matthew Polay
Maxwell Pettz
Michael Pose
Celine Rittenberg
Ally Rubin
Jon Rubenstein
Ben Salganik
Alysa Sands
Leah Nas
Shira Saunders
Jessica & Alan Samel
Marty Shanklin
Jersey Slate
Ashley Southard
Jon Steinberger
El Steingraber
Ran Steinbruch
Aaron Terkel
Beth Young
Mirk Young
Ali Zabel

In honor of Jon Steiger’s Milestone Birthday
Anja Frimmelux
Marc Frimuck

Rabbi Shana says:

Great or Small, Let’s Celebrate ALL the Miracles in our Lives!

We look for miracles in the extraordinary, while too often we remain oblivious to the miracles which abound in the ordinary moments of our lives.

Our lives are dotted with miracles. Miracles are all around us — and within us. We are each walking miracles.

When we are blessed, what miracle heals us? When we sleep, what miracle restores us? When we see beauty, what miracle elevates us? When we hear music, what miracle moves us?

When we see suffering, what miracle saddens us? When we feel sorrow, what miracle sooth us?

Every springtime is a miracle; every snowflake is a miracle; every new baby is a miracle. The thoughts we think, the words we utter, the hopes we cherish — each is a miracle.

We live from miracle to miracle. That is why [Shulajai] reminds us: be thankful for God’s miracles which are daily with us.

May your Chanukah be filled with miracles, with gratitude, and with much celebrating! — Rabbi Shana

A very special “Todah Rabah” to our most recent Camp Wise donors!

We are honored to recognize the families, individuals, and groups who have chosen to make thoughtful and generous contributions to Camp Wise. Please let us know if your name was inadvertently left off the list.

Rabbi Shana
We are proud of you, I said we are proud of you...uh! We can't wait to hear from you!

KEEP US IN THE LOOP!

Email wisekids@mandeljcc.org

On CW night, the last night of each session, we recognize staff and campers who have been at camp for 5, 7, 10, 13 years and beyond. Those who have been with us for five years are recognized with a 5-year bag, seven years are recognized with cool 7-year shirt, ten years receive a sacred Camp Wise Crazy Creek Chair, and 13-year staff are honored with a CW sweatshirt blanket. Staff that have been at CW for 15 years or more have a tree planted in a designated area at camp in their honor. The photos below are members of our Camp Wise community who celebrated their 10th summer at camp in 2019, unless otherwise noted.

A Milestone Summer

The 13 summers I spent at Camp Wise have had a profound impact on me and the work I do today at Hillel International. Looking back at my time at Wise, I fondly remember how my transition from camper to staff empowered me to try new experiences with the support of a positive, caring Jewish community of peers and leaders. Across multiple years of interviews for positions at Wise, my favorite question was “So, what do you want to do this summer?” I loved this question because I knew that it was not only a legitimate question, with seemingly limitless possibilities, but also because it almost always turned into a discussion of my aspirations in life, within and beyond camp. This question, this openness of possibilities and belief in my potential, is something I have carried with me into my daily work when supporting Hillel Professionals on their campuses. Those interview conversations enabled me to live out my childhood dream of being called Hillel U’s Center for Engagement, Inclusion and Wellness. My work at Hillel focuses on how we, as a team, can support Hillel Professionals in their careers so that they can better support their students to reach their fullest potential. Also through my work, I have the honor to regularly stay connected to a dynamic group of Wise Alumni across the country in Hillel and Jewish professional positions. We continue to be a support system for each other as we’ve grown since our time together at Wise. I’m so grateful for my summers at CW and the impact the Wise community has had on my life! 🌟
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Torah Dedication
Todah Rabah
A Milestone Summer

A GREAT WEEKEND AT CAMP WISE
WINTER CAMP OVERNIGHT
JANUARY 19-20, 2020 • OPEN TO ALL 5TH-8TH GRADERS

An overnight at Camp Wise topped off with an action-packed afternoon of fun!