



TOHKOMEUPOG

summer camp for boys

ALUMNI
ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER
OFFSEASON
2023

EST. 1932

.....2023 Camp Tohkomeupog Preview.....

Within our 92-year history of Tohkomeupog, we have shared many adventures, created many memories and, I believe, enhanced the lives of many individuals of all ages. After these past few years dealing with the continued presence of COVID, it has become even more obvious just how important and impactful camp can be in the lives of our campers.

Kids need outside time; away from the mesmerizing appeal of technology. They also need safe, social environments in which to interact with their peers. We all know this is true. Camp provides all of this in such a powerful way. While Tohkomeupog continues to build enrollment for the coming summer, and we do still have space available, it has been wonderful to see so many of our Tohko boys return.

While we are still fine-tuning remaining staff for camp, there will be many familiar faces: Andrew Mahoney as Co-Director, Don Barton as Assistant Director, John Sexton at the Waterfront, John Petersen at Riflery, Sean Petersen at Archery, Jason Cicero at Tennis, Helen Crowell and Bob Burton both returning to the Infirmary, and of course, Dawn Petersen as Manager of the Camp Office.

For leadership in the Clans, we will be welcoming a blend of transition and tradition this summer. Mark Conklin will be returning for his 3rd summer as Bear Clan Director, with a very enthusiastic camper at his side. After 22 years enjoying the basement of Wildcat, I am stepping down as Deer Clan Director. I would like to welcome Bill Webster as my replacement this summer.

Although Bill did not attend Tohkomeupog himself, he did send his son to camp for many summers and certainly appreciates the positive impact of the Tohkomeupog experience. I would also like to welcome back to camp, Andrew Krugman, (CIT 84), who will be reprising his role as Panther Clan Director. Complement this with a fine group of counselors and CITs, and we will be ready for a fantastic summer.

Kestay,

Stevo Harding
Tohkomeupog Co-Director



Above: Deer Clan on trip at Spruce Point.
Below: Deer Clan on trip atop Mt. Crawford.



WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? KNOW OF SOME TOHKO ALUMNI NEWS?
EMAIL THE ALUMNI BOARD: TOHKOALUMNIBOARD@GMAIL.COM OR

See WWW.TOHKO.COM for information about Camp and the Alumni Association.

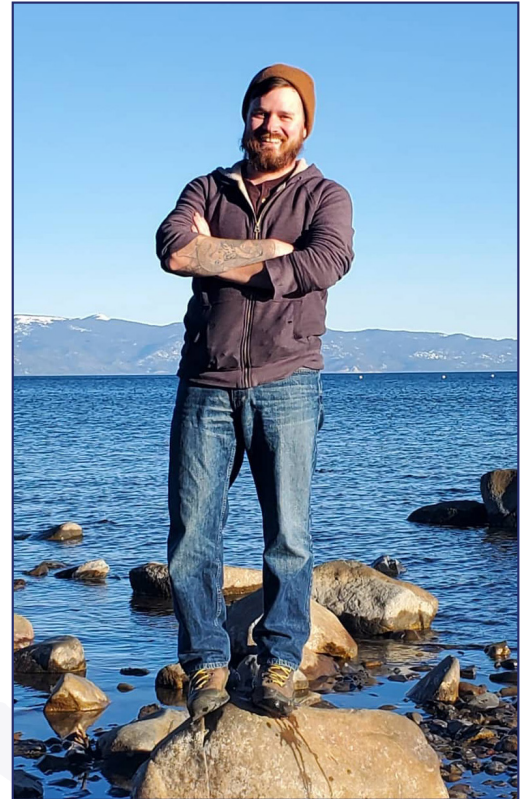


..... *From the Valley and Beyond: Protecting Wildlife*

By Brett Gelin

I worked at Camp Tohko in the summer of 2011 as a counselor for the ‘Wolf Clan’. This was my first time working as a counselor, it was actually my first job where 95% of my time was spent outdoors. At the time I was attending UMass Amherst majoring in Natural Resource Studies, the goal was to pursue a career as a game warden. But working at Tohko really jump started my interest in working more in the field of conservation/preservation instead of the law enforcement. To protect and help manage unique species and habitats for future generations. Without conservation, many of the cool and unique species that kids enjoy and interact with may not exist in the future. The summer following Tohko I landed a job working with kids and volunteers on removing aquatic invasive species from the Connecticut River Valley Watershed. I specifically remember one of the major reasons why I got the job was because of my experience the previous year working at Tohko. So in reality, Tohko really helped jump start my career not only in what I wanted to pursue but in helping me land a job that would solidify my career path.

Since Tohko I have traveled the world working to preserve/protect endangered species and promote native ecosystems. In 2015 I moved to the south Pacific, a little island called Rota (just east of Guam). There I helped protect a critically endangered bird called the Marianna crow, hunting and trapping predators found in their nesting areas. After spending a year in Rota, I moved to the Big Island in Hawaii where I worked to remove invasive vertebrates that were destroying the native habitat. There I flew over 30 helicopter missions doing aerial surveys for invasive ungulates and flying into remote sections of the island to camp and conduct surveys out in the jungle. After 4 year of being the invasive vertebrate coordinator for the Big Island, I decided I wanted to move back to the mainland and ended up moving to California for a job working to help protect critically endangered species found on military bases. I do this through spatial analysis and management of GIS databases for 2 bases located in Northern California. Though, after 2 years and the pandemic, I was able to negotiate my job into a permanent teleworking gig which allowed me to move back to western Massachusetts, where I currently reside.



*Brett in Lake Tahoe for a recent work trip. (Above)
Brett with campers as counselor in 2011. (Below)*



WOOLEGAN!
Congratulations to the C.I.T. Class of 2023:
LEON COOTWARE, CHARLIE KOONS, CHRIS MYERS, CHARLIE PORTER,
WYATT PORTER, FINN RABBETT, PAUL STAFFORD



Distillation of a Story

By Jon Quade

“Distilling is a slow, philosophical and silent occupation. An experience that allows one to think as ametamorphosis occurs, from liquid to vapor, and from this once again to liquid; but in this double journey, up and down, purity is attained, an ambiguous and fascinating condition, which starts with chemistry and goes far beyond.”

I’ve always loved the quote above said by the legendary chemist and writer Primo Levi when discussing the beauty of the distilling process. However, Dr. Levi never had the privilege to distill with John Sexton.

If he had, the quote may have read something along the lines of, “Distilling is a timeless, mathematical and boisterous affair. An experience packed full of classic stories, old jokes freshly packaged and belly laughs as we hardly pay mind to the metamorphosis of alcohol vapor pressurized in a copper can, indoors, over open flame, as the Budweiser flows.”

In all honesty, I prefer the latter.

my nine years since uprooting from Boston to try my hand in the world of distilling up in Maine I have had my fair share of adventures. One never forgets their first solo distilling run, especially if it is overseeing two 250 gallon hand hammered Portuguese stills situated over two industrial gas burners firing at over 300 degrees, churning out 160 proof spirit in a 120 degree room. Or the first time you taste an original recipe right off the still and share the obligatory “This isn’t half bad” look of total shock with your friends. As always, camp has been woven through it all with life lessons and priceless experiences. There was the Al MacLean bachelor party at New England Distilling which consisted of 10 plus boisterous retired camp counselors asking borderline inappropriate questions while simultaneously getting chased out of the bathroom for attempting to “CrosH”. The famous tour in which we learned that Tom Latronico may be the only human in existence with no reaction to carbon dioxide as he calmly stuck his head above a 900 gallon active fermentation for longer than any mortal should be able to endure. And then there are the multiple trips to the Sexton House for a replenishing of a dangerously dry gin cellar. Those trips have been the real highlight of the intersection of camp and distilling for me.

We first check our safety bubble and realize that we are pressurizing and vaporizing a highly flammable liquid over an open flame before understanding that while we trust our training, there really is no safety bubble. After a Budweiser, we elect to proceed. (Tanya if you’re reading this, your beautiful house was never in any danger. We’re “professionals”.) Next is Woodlore as we examine the botanicals consisting of Juniper, Coriander, Bitter Orange and Grapefruit peel, lavender, chamomile and cascade hops. Each will bring its own unique characteristic to the gin to create a softer gin flavor with citrus and flowery complexity. After pondering this gift from nature over a Budweiser, we elect to proceed. Our campcraft skills come in handy as we turn on the big, built in Peak-One and fire up this great experiment. That Camp Know-How comes into play too as we rely on skills picked up along the way and lean heavily on the constitution and reliability of plumbers tape to reinforce our hardy vessel. *(Continued on next page)*



Jon Quade and John Sexton concocting in the lab!

In

KINKEEGWAN!

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MAIL A CHECK (MADE OUT TO “CAMP TOHKOMEUPOG ALUMNI ASSOCIATION”) TO:

STEVO HARDING | 2151 E MADISON ROAD | EAST MADISON, NH 03849

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Alumni gather at Jon Quade's Wedding!

The highlight of the trips usually occur around now with a revolving door of friendly, faces such as Don and Mike Barton, Stevo Harding, Reid Lavoie, Lisa and Digger Bowers, and countless more popping in to see the process. Each share a similar trait that I've come to appreciate runs through the camp family, an inquisitive nature and a joy of learning something new. After numerous questions, and a Budweiser, we elect to proceed. You all can picture how the rest of the afternoon and evening unfold. It is the same wonderful mix of great people, old stories and howling laughs. I leave with my face sore from smiling and my heart full. Sexton has a full gin cellar and we successfully avoided burning the house down; it was a roaring success.

I can't count how many wonderful experiences just like this I've had in my lifetime. At this point they seem to all blend into one. It has been a true privilege to have had Camp Tohkomeupog be a part of my life from such an early age and it is an incredible thought that it will always be a part of my life.

As happens far too often, if it has been awhile since your last visit to camp, I wholeheartedly encourage you to come back for a visit. Whether it has been a few years or a few decades, all are welcome, and I promise you'll find the cabins, dining hall, ball fields and waterfront all in the exact same place. You may even hear some familiar stories. It's perfection ...and if you do stop by, make sure to take the trip up the hill and ask for the Sexton Gin. It's delicious and usually comes with a Budweiser.

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CAMP NEWS & NOTES

NUPTIALS!

- BOB KELLY MARRIED ANA MARIA BEDOYA ON AUGUST 13TH, 2022!
- NATE RICKLER MARRIED EMMA HANSEN ON SEPTEMBER 17TH, 2022!
- ANDREW BAUDISCH MARRIED SARAH KELLY ON FEBRUARY 19TH, 2023!

BIRTHS!

- DANI VICTORIA BERMAN WAS BORN TO KEITH AND LARA BERMAN ON OCTOBER 29TH, 2022!
- JAMESON RICH WAS BORN TO BEN AND STEPHANIE RICH ON MAY 19TH, 2023!



Alumni gather at Doug Belliveau's Wedding in New Jersey!

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HALLOWEEN TOWN RETURNS!

It is with much excitement, and the dedication and hard work of Stevo Harding, that the Laura Foundation is happy to announce that Halloween town will be returning to the valley this coming Saturday, October 21st! We look forward to hopefully seeing some alumni at the event, helping out as volunteers, decorating cabins, and providing donations! Please contact Stevo Harding with any questions you might have regarding the event.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

We are glad to announce that return of Alumni Weekend 2023! It will be hosted during the weekend of Friday, August 25th to Sunday, August 27th. Please contact Phil Porter if you would like to partake in the Alumni Golf Tournament, occuring on Friday, August 25th. More details to follow, and reach out with any questions you might have!

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