

Kinkeegwan:

The camping season is half way through and all reports from the big chiefs are positive.

Alumni weekend falls on Labor Day this year so make your plans early.

Questions? Call 1-800-414-2267 or send an e-mail to tohko@tohko.com.

To book a room, call 1-800-373-3754.

See www.tohko.com for information about Camp and the Alumni Association.

July, 2008



Camp Tohkomeupog Alumni Association

My brief stint in the wild world of Competitive Eating

by Keith Berman

On May 17, 2008, at a Sam's Club parking lot in Matteson, Illinois, my life as a competitive eater ended almost as quickly as it began. I entered a Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest qualifier, with hopes of winning and moving on to compete in the main event at Coney Island on July 4 against such living legends as Takeru Kobayashi and Joey "Jaws" Chestnut, men who could put down over 60 hot dogs in 12 minutes. So what could have possibly possessed me to enter such an event???

Ever since I can remember, I have had a passion for eating. This passion was nurtured over many summers in the Tohkomeupog valley during lunches where endless platters of Grilled Cheesh were served or eating generous portions of Chicken Montana on trip. Moreover, Tohko possessed big-time eaters such as John Wilmot (the French Toast eating record-holder at Tohko), Bill Carpenter, and Russell Scherwin, who served as great mentors. By the time I was a counselor, my eating skills had elevated to another level: I won a pie-eating contest in Color Wars, ate Twinkies by the box, and almost put McDonalds out of business the summer that they gave Tohko Staff a 25% discount.

After I saw last year's epic hot dog battle, I was inspired and decided to visit the International Federation of Competitive Eating (IFOCE) website and signed up. Most of the pros extensively train for contests, stretching their stomachs by chugging gallons of water and devouring a plethora of cabbage. My training essentially consisted of going to a couple Chinese food buffets and doing a trial run of 6 hot dogs.

I showed up to the qualifier and learned that the two favorites were Tim "Gravy" Brown, the national potato wedge eating champion, and Patrick Vandam, a soft-spoken but big-eating rookie from Minnesota. Brown looked like a ruffian of sorts, given away by his untucked shirt and lack of a belt, despite clearly having belt loops – John Nute would not have approved! He was also carrying a container of bug juice; I was told that soggy buns in bug juice don't taste *as* bad as buns in water. While Eminem's "Lose Yourself" blasted on the speakers, the competitors were introduced one by one.



That hot dog had no chance.



Keith in the midst of battle.

The contest began, and everyone started stuffing their face with hot dogs. After two minutes had passed, I was chewing on my fourth hot dog and feeling pretty good about myself until it was announced that Vandam had finished his 10th hot dog! Many competitors, myself included, quickly realized the futility of trying to win. We spent much of the remaining 8 minutes watching Vandam and Brown battle it out, while we continued to eat our hot dogs at a more leisurely pace. Brown was making a huge mess and his white t-shirt was drenched in red bug juice, like he had just encountered the hairy buffalo. Clearly he had never sat at the Kelly brothers' table for a meal.

Vandam held on and edged out Brown, 31 hot dogs to 28.5. I only ate 7 and ¾ hot dogs myself. I decided to announce my retirement from competitive eating, effective immediately. Nevertheless, I still had fun, was able to eat almost 8 hot dogs free of charge, got a t-shirt, and can now be found on google under "Keith 'The Bermanator' Berman".

Camp Update from the Big Chief

Tohkomeupog opened for its 77th season on Sunday June 29th. We had more registrations for this season than the last two, however we also had a lot more cancellations this year so the overall number attending will be off a bit. We have assembled another fantastic staff with all but two counselors having come up through the CIT ranks. Returning directors include Don Barton (assistant camp director), John Sexton (Panther Clan), George Croft (Bear Clan - with Colin McKaig pinch hitting for two weeks Mid July), Dan "Digger" Bowers (Wolf Clan), and Jon Quade (Waterfront). Chris Siddell (Sunderland, UK) is the Chief of the Deer Clan, returning after a stint in the Bear Clan in 2005. Stevo has moved on to a role as director of "Tribal Relations". John "JP" Petersen is running the riflery program and his dad Ken returns to the archery center as well as overseeing flint and steel and wet weather fire building. John Nute continues to accrue mileage on his Mule and keeps us all in line. As always we encourage Alumni to visit us throughout the summer and we are recruiting qualified Staff Alumni to inquire about joining us on an overnight trip or two this season. If you would like to receive our weekly newsletter via email please contact us at tohko@tohko.com. ~KESTE, Andrew



The Blue Team makes it 2008 Color Wars entrance.

In Memoriam

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of two beloved members of the Hoyt family.

Laura Hoyt Mahoney, 63, died Monday, April 14 at her home in East Madison, N.H. The cause of death was pancreatic cancer, which she fought valiantly for nearly two years, supported by her husband Jack, sons Andrew & Kevin, and family & friends. Laura's familiar smile and presence welcomed generations of guests to Purity Spring Resort and she will be greatly missed.



Jeff Hoyt enjoying a laugh with deer clan campers, including your correspondent

Jeffrey Hoyt, age 38, died Sunday May 18, after a long illness. Jeff was a very loving father and is survived by his sons Byrnack, age 8, Collin, age 4 and his wife Christine. Jeff had spent 12 years at Tohko, including several as a counselor in the Deer Clan. We will all remember Jeff for his generous spirit and kindness.

3 Day Alumni Weekend!

Alumni Weekend falls on Labor Day weekend this year and activities are planned through Monday. Anyone staying at camp for 3 nights will receive free lodging Sunday Night.

As always, we will kick off the festivities on Friday with the Alumni Golf Tournament. This great event, now in its 13th year, will be held at the pristine country club at Province Lake. Come enjoy good friends, good golf and support a great cause with your involvement in this years tournament. The weekend will continue with traditional favorite activities and some new ones too, including an All Camp Trip. Is this the year that the Young Team finally dethrones the Old Team in softball?

For lodging reservations, call 603-367-8896 or 800-373-3754. Commuters needing to RSVP about meals should e-mail Andrew: amahoney@tohko.com. Golfers should contact Phil or Andrew Porter: pp_keste@yahoo.com, aporter@hinckleyyachts.com.

Fear not! "Great Moments in Camp History" will return next edition.

Camp News & Notes

☞ **Will Darling** (CIT 1995) and **Tammy Tobin Darling** got married in Whitefield, NH on May 10th. A 5K race was held during morning activity on the day of the wedding, followed by tennis and golf options in the afternoon. A beautiful view of Mount Washington served as the perfect backdrop to their outdoor ceremony. Numerous camp alumni were in attendance to help the newly weds celebrate.

☞ The **Barton Family** has been busy creating news the past few months. First, **Mike Barton** (CIT 1997) proposed to **Allison Stoddard** this past December (she said yes, of course). They are living outside of Portland, ME and getting ready for the big day. Then in January **Katie** and **Trevor Dodge** welcomed the arrival of their first son, **Cooper Barton Dodge**. All members of the Dodge family are healthy, happy, and loving life in New Hampshire. Lastly, patriarch **Don Barton** hung up his chalk and slide ruler this June, retiring from a 33 year teaching career. Don spent 28 consecutive years at the Windham Schools in Maine, teaching math and coaching XC, track, basketball and golf.

☞ **Patrick Van Boven** (CIT 1992) has started his own trekking company, Meru Mandala Tours. Patrick is splitting his time between finishing a masters degree in Eastern Religion in San Francisco and running trips in the Himalayan region. No doubt you will be in good hands with this former director of the Adventure Clan. Check out his website: merumandala.com

☞ **News and Notes Submissions:** Got an update to share? Know of a noteworthy achievement by a camp alumnus? Curious about the exploits of an old bunkmate? Send a note in to the Alumni Newsletter Editor in Chief, Nick Todd: nicktodd99@yahoo.com.

The Alumni Association Board: Kevin Thomson (kt_keste@yahoo.com), Tobin Kelly (mtqkelly@yahoo.com), Philip Porter (pp_keste@yahoo.com), David Banister (dbanister@fessenden.org), Steve Harding (kalhousit@adelphia.net), Todd Gochman (todd_gochmen@carneysandoe.com), and Nick Todd (nicktodd99@yahoo.com)

