



TOHKOMEUPOG

summer camp for boys

Alumni
Association
Newsletter
Offseason
2025

EST. 1932

2025 Camp Tohkomeupog Preview

I have been asked by the esteemed members of the Alumni Board to share some thoughts regarding camp and the upcoming season. Reflecting upon this, a few words that immediately pop into my head are: dedication... enthusiasm... optimism. I believe 2025 is going to be fantastic year for Tohkomeupog!

As has been previously mentioned, the COVID years were challenging for camp. Trying to provide our campers with a traditional Tohko experience while at the same time maneuvering through health guidelines and restrictions intended to keep everyone safe? Well... it required a huge effort. Tohko staff at all levels rose to that challenge with patience and remarkable positivity. Everyone worked together to create the best possible camp experience, even during the toughest moments. These past few years, our main focus has been to restore the Tohko experience to its former awesomeness. While there have been some bumps along the way, the effort is definitely having the effect we were striving for. The goal is to ensure that the experience we are providing campers is meaningful – and personalized for each and every boy. The hope, of course, is that our campers will choose to return to camp and embrace Tohkomeupog as a steady component of their cherished, childhood years. Ultimately, one of the best markers I can use to measure success is to look at our camper return rate. Thanks to the commitment of our staff, the return rate for campers this year is incredible – off the charts – pushing 90% throughout camp as a whole. This is the dedication to which I refer, and I am truly grateful to all of our staff over these past years for their tireless effort on behalf the campers. Enthusiasm for camp is on a high, especially with current camp families. Things are moving in a positive direction. With that said, we still have spaces to fill, and welcome alumni support with spreading the word – referrals have always been an important source of nourishment for a strong enrollment.

Thanks in part to an incredible gathering held in honor of Andrew Mahoney last year, there has also been a notable increase in enthusiasm expressed by alumni – a powerful rekindling of camp spirit! We are fortunate to have so many wonderful people in our Tohkomeupog Family! In support of this renewed spirit, I am excited to announce that Alumni Weekend has been moved on the calendar back to its traditional place, between the end of boys’ camp and the beginning of Family Camp. The specific dates for Alumni Weekend in 2025 are Friday, August 8 – Sunday, August 10. This change to the summer calendar has been made in response to ongoing encouragement by a very enthusiastic group of alumni. I know that the Alumni Association will be actively inviting alumni to participate – to return to this beautiful little valley and “remember the times you’ve had here!” (continued on next page)



Above: The mighty Bear Clan hikes no matter what the weather! Tohko's talented staff ensure a good time for every camper.

Below: A view of the beautiful waterfront, float, and Pine Point. This is just one of many incredible vistas to be found around camp.



A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD

Visit Tohkomeupog this summer!

- Alumni Weekend: August 8 - 10.

- 50th Anniversary Family Camp Weekend: August 15 - 17.

- Annual Golf Tournament: August 8 at 9:30 AM (breakfast sandwiches are included!)

To reserve your spot, please contact Purity Spring Resort at 603-367-8896.



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This year, we will also be celebrating our 50th anniversary of Family Camp! For those of you who are less familiar with the Family Camp experience, I can assure you that when it comes to levels of enthusiasm, Family Camp is overflowing. Thanks to current Director Jeff Mehlman for sustaining this tradition. In recognition of reaching this landmark, we will be inviting Family Camp Alumni back for a special weekend of fun and reminiscence. The specific dates for the Family Camp 50th Anniversary Weekend are Friday, August 15 - Sunday, August 17. With so much energy and enthusiasm surrounding Family Camp right now, we have decided to initiate a second week. We expect the second week of Family Camp to develop a program and personality of its own. I will be looking for staff to help bring this new camp experience to life. Details regarding dates & rates for Family Camp are located on the Tohko website.

Speaking of the website, with support from The Hoyt Family and Highway West Vacations (Management Company), the Tohko website is being redesigned, with a goal of launching the new site sometime in 2025. In preparation for this summer, we have a couple projects being focused on. The largest project will be a renovation of Carrigain, to include more garage storage space along with enhanced outdoor shower facilities and a wannigan washing area for the Mighty Bear Clan. The lookout tower is also being rebuilt.

What I am most excited about is the roster of staff. We have gathered an incredible group. Personally, I am looking forward to continuing as Camp Director, and I am grateful to have Andrew Mahoney's continued support and guidance at camp. Dawn Petersen is returning as Office Manager and Photographer Extraordinaire. John Sexton will be returning to the waterfront, John Petersen to Riflery, and Sean Petersen to Archery, We are fortunate to have both Helen Crowell and Bob Burton returning to the Camp Infirmary. Mark Conklin will be returning for his 5th summer as Bear Clan Director. Mark and his wife Allison (Croft) Conklin are helping keep the Croft family tradition strong, with two very enthusiastic Bear Clan campers at their side. Ryan Johnson will be returning for his 2nd summer as Deer Clan Director. I am very excited to welcome Jonathan Matsko (CIT 2018) as Director of the Panther Clan. Jonathan will be representing the current generation of Tohko Tribe from his seat at Council. Rounding out the Director ranks will be Tom Romary (CIT 1981), returning for his 2nd summer as Wolf Clan Director. Tom will be acting as Director for the first 4 weeks of the summer, and I am grateful to Andrew Krugman (CIT 1984) for agreeing to complete the summer as Director of the Wolf Clan. We are also looking forward to working with a very capable group of counselors this summer. At this point, we can honestly say that 100% of them have come up through the camper ranks and are now providing the positive leadership that our current campers look up to. There is much to appreciate - optimism for a fantastic year is high. Cheers to 2025!

Kestay,

Stevo Harding



Above: Stevo makes his famous stick biscuits for a campout!

Below: The Wolf Clan summits Katahdin, the northern end of the AT and one the most anticipated trips at camp.



WOOLEGAN!

Congratulations to the CIT Year of 2025:

Alex Blake, Gaston Gautrot, Brooks Haskins, Danny London, Joey London, and Charlie Lucas!



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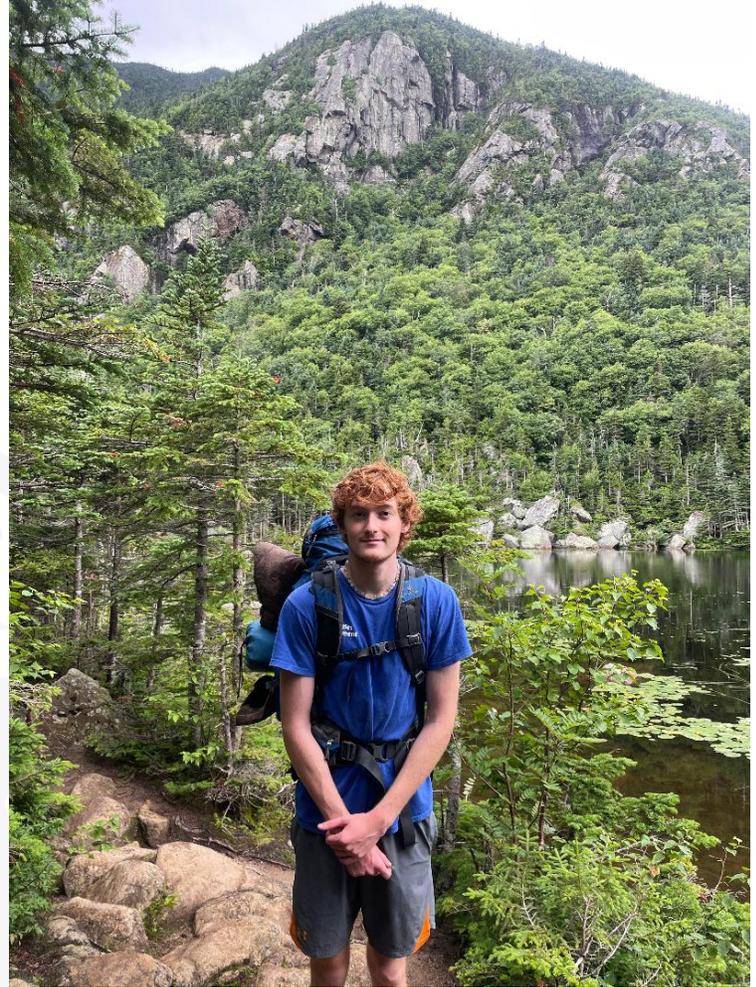
Tohko As a Sandbox

By Griffin Stoddard

A fantastic deal offered by the Tohkomeupog experience goes undervalued, even unrecognized, and I believe this deal is massively valuable for the formative journey of a boy's early years. This deal is simple, and is as follows: "Come here, the young and dumb. Make all your best, most exhilarating mishaps and mistakes. Apologize and be forgiven. Learn. Then mess up again." In my experience, camp offered me a place each summer in which I could live as my authentic self, which for me meant running around bumping into walls, either for the fun of it or to find out what exactly those walls were and where they lay. You can do this outside of camp, yes, but the consequences are bigger and the lessons learned often come from angry adults who don't care to guide you in the right direction; adults who will hold a grudge, preventing you from improving. When you screw up at Tohko, you pay your due (or try to run from it), and then you keep moving.

Every now and then a specific moment creeps into my head. One of them is vivid for me: I am just weeks away from my last summer as a camper and I am clambering into the Katahdin van with my best friends. We are full of excitement and there are six cabbages in my backpack. The lovely Dawn Petersen was, of course, present to snap a photo of us. I, in the corner of her lens, have a certain finger on my hand extended. After returning from trip, Dawn caught me by surprise and reminded me of what I did. Shame and guilt overwhelmed me (and I'm afraid some of it still lingers with me). At the next store, Dawn blessed me with her lovely smile and was happily complicit in the spending of my parents' money for candy and a third headlight that summer. The incident was fixed and we moved on. I'm still not sure why I did that, though, and I'm sorry again Dawn.

This was one of my lighter infringements throughout my career, but like my other infringements, I never felt it held me back from achieving my best self at Tohko. When I messed up at school, it always seemed that my reputation was permanently tarnished with the teacher who caught me red-handed, and so I was compelled to slink around in their presence; thus my self-growth was hindered. At Tohko, your mistakes aren't forgotten, granted, and if your mishap is funny enough it will be told over and over again on the Tecumseh porch for decades. The crucial difference that sets camp apart from other environments in a young boy's life is this: no matter how much they screw up, everyone is rooting them on their journey to reach their greatest potential. In the end, you don't need to apologize for any of it, because you will find yourself supremely transformed. Thank you, camp.



Above: Griffin in 2024, now a counselor in the Panther Clan, proving his idea that Tohko helps you to grow and mature no matter your mistakes.



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Thank you, Don Barton



Above: Don Barton shares some kind words at Andrew Mahoney's celebration weekend. Their leadership has helped shape Tohko into what it has become today.

We want to wish Don Barton a very restful retirement from Tohko! He has put in 45 incredible years of dedicated, tireless service, and he deserves some very quiet, peaceful nights on the porch. For all his humility and modesty, Don has done perhaps the most to help create the warm atmosphere Tohko is known for. His gentle humor, kind advice, and relentless quest to better camp have endeared Don to everyone who knows him. With luck, he won't ever have to fix another Peak 1 or tent again! We wish him a blissful retirement watching his beloved grandkids.

Thank you, Don Barton!

CAMP NEWS & NOTES

Nuptials!

- Emily Bowers married Simon Rollins!

Babies!

- Baby Lucas was born to Myles and Megan Guiler (Macdonald)!
- Baby Idris was born to Kieran and Julia Sexton!
- Baby Weston was born to Kyle and Jackie Haythorn (Belliveau)!
- Baby Callum was born to Sarah and Andrew Baudisch!
- Baby Charlie was born to Andrew and Ruihong Macdonald!
- Baby Romi was born to Keith and Lara Berman!



Above: The grillmasters help prepare a feast for Family Camp. Alumni from all generations gather each year for this special week.

KINKEEGWAN!

Donate to the Alumni Association

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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

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

QUESTIONS? COMMENTS? KNOW OF SOME TOHKO ALUMNI NEWS?

EMAIL THE ALUMNI BOARD: TOHKOALUMNIBOARD@GMAIL.COM

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