

Oorah Camps Weather The Storm With Spirit ...

BY SUSIE GARBER

"Who wants to stay an extra day at camp?" Rabbi Avraham Krawiec asked the campers at the Zone-boys' division and then girls' division, on Sunday night when Hurricane Irene hit Gilboa, New York, with a vengeance.

Unanimous clapping and cheering answered his question. The campers were thrilled to stay one more day.

"We were so proud of our campers," said Rabbi Krawiec. "No one complained even though in the Zone girls' division there was no running water and no electricity from Sunday night until Tuesday morning. *B'chasdei Hashem*, the boys' camp was not affected. The entire city of Gilboa was under a state of emergency. The bridge out was impassable. The Zone boys' and girls' division camps are located high above the city so they were spared major damage.

On the extra night of camp after the hurricane, campers were served roast and Chinese chicken for dinner. The camp was well stocked and well prepared.

The popular singer Lipa Schmeltzer had spent Shabbos in the boys division. When he heard about the power outages at the girls' division, he presented an impromptu concert Sunday night to cheer the girls. A dark room illuminated by flashlights was lit by the girls' shining faces and Lipa's songs. Many girls commented that it was one of the most uplifting events they ever attended.

This isn't just a wonderful camp experience. "The Zone girls' and boys' division foster relationships that continue through the rest of the year," said camp direc-

tor Avraham Krawiec. Each staff member connects with a Torah Mate. They meet each day and this relationship continues once a week throughout the whole year. Oorah provides *Shabbatonim*, and holiday programs for Yamim Tovim. This year, campers came from Brooklyn, Queens, Toronto, Calgary, Chicago and many other locations.

The highlight of the summer is the last Shabbos, called the Shabbos revolution. The girls are awarded candlesticks, and boys a *kiddush* cup, as a gift for keeping the last Shabbos in camp and resolving to try to continue to keep Shabbos all year. The boys receive a framed photo with themselves and Rabbi Chaim Mintz, founder of Oorah. The girls receive a framed photo of themselves with Rabbi Avi Davidowitz, the Rav of the Zone girls division.

Two experiences are typical of this not-typical camp: A parent wrote: "Emily [not her real name] has been home for not even 24 hours and cannot stop talking about when it's time to come back to camp. Can't wait to light Shabbat candles in our home this coming Friday for the first time in these beautiful candlesticks."

A counselor from the boys' division had to miss the wedding of a close friend due to the flooding. "At about 9:30 p.m. when we got together to *daven Maariv*, my Torah Mate got up to lead *Maariv*. This is something I would have never dreamed of happening for this boy. That he was so willing to lead us for *Maariv* brought tears to my eyes. Suddenly it struck me why Hashem had made me miss the wedding.... and put the finishing touch to a tremendous summer of growth."

National Daf Yomi Guide Being Updated

BY CHANIE FRIEDMAN

Going on a trip and looking for a *Daf Yomi shiur* in Worcester, Mass.?

Buffalo Grove, Ill.?

How about Birmingham, Ala.?

For thousands of traveling *lomdei hadaf*, the place to turn for information regarding the time and place of *shiurim* in cities across the United States and Canada is the National *Daf Yomi Shiurim* Directory, published and distributed by Agudath Israel of America's *Daf Yomi* Commission.

And now, in time for the August 1, 2012, 12th *Siyum HaShas* of *Daf Yomi*, the Commission is preparing the seventh edition of the directory. The last edition was printed in November of 2008.

"The number of *shiurim* has, *baruch Hashem*, grown substantially during the current cycle,

and there are undoubtedly many that are not listed in the sixth edition," says *Daf Yomi* Commission coordinator Rabbi Eliyohu Simcha Bamberger. He points out that the Commission also publishes a popular *Directory of Daf Yomi Services* — a compilation of *Daf Yomi* study aids and resources that have proven invaluable to the many *lomdei hadaf* who learn individually, as well as those who are members of groups.

"Our goal is to facilitate the study of *Daf Yomi*, wherever and however the daily *daf* is learned," explains Rabbi Bamberger, noting that the Commission fields scores of calls asking about *shiurim* and study aids before the start of each new *masechta* — and even each new *perek*. "If we are kept informed regarding new *shiurim* or study aids, we can respond to those calls more easily and efficiently."

A Behind-the-Scenes Look at Torah Umesorah's Summer 'Break'

BY SHAI RIKLIS

July and August spell vacation time for Jewish schools across North America. But summer is also a time of crucial *chinuch* activity.

That is even more true for the cadre of professionals on the executive staff of Torah Umesorah, the largest umbrella organization for Torah *chinuch* in North America.

According to Rabbi Dovid Nojowitz, *Menahel* of Torah Umesorah, "Summer is anything but downtime in the organization. I guess you might say that Torah Umesorah is the organization that never sleeps."

At the top of the list of summer endeavors is Project SEED, which sends *kollel* couples, *bachurim* and young women to dozens of communities to conduct outreach programs. "Every year we get stacks of letters of praise and appreciation," said Rabbi Nojowitz, who was a SEED pioneer himself decades ago.

Another major summer program is the Beis Hamechanchim Teachers' Development Center, headed by Rabbi Yitzchak Merkin. "The courses represent a *kibbutz galuyos* of sorts," according to Rabbi Nojowitz. "I think *mechanchim* are understanding more and more that Beis Hamechanchim provides them with crucial basic training, so they come from across America and Canada to take part."

"We are very proud of the work done by our Community Development division, headed by Rabbi Chaim Nossan Segal," said Rabbi Nojowitz. "*The hashpaah* that his efforts have on tens of *kehillos* across America is hard to imagine."

This past month, Rabbi Segal and a small staff conducted outreach efforts with Jewish youth in New Mexico, an area where Jewish awareness is alarmingly low.

The summer months were also a busy time for Zechor Yemos Olam, the TU division responsible for Holocaust education *al pi Torah* in America. It was the culmination of its first fellowship program, a yearlong course of study that trains individuals to be "teacher-mentors" in the subject. The program ended with a trip to Poland and the Czech Republic.

At the end of August, the second fellowship was launched. At the nucleus of the reading material they will cover over the next ten months is *Witness to History*, Mrs.

Ruth Lichtenstein's *magnum opus* on the Holocaust.

The weeklong Poland trip was supervised by Rabbi Shalom Friedmann, ZYO's director. The scholar-in-residence was Rabbi Shmuel Klein, Torah Umesorah's director of publications and communications; also in attendance was historian Rabbi Yaakov Astor, editor of *Zman* magazine.

As the summer was just getting underway, there was a *yom iyun* in Monsey, under the auspices of Torah Umesorah's "Aaleh" Program. Program coordinators Rabbi Mordechai Reichberg and Rabbi Yisroel Meir Rubinfeld



Rabbi Dovid Nojowitz



Rabbi Yehoshua Levy teaching at the Beis Hamechanchim.



Rabbi Shmuel Klein in the beis hachaim of Cracow

held this session for eighth-grade *rebbeim*, mainly from Monsey's *chassidische* yeshivos. Aaleh is stepping up its plans for similar events.

Mrs. Chaya Newman, director of the Women's Division of Torah Umesorah's National Conference of Yeshivah Principals, conducted her "3+3" teacher training program for *mechanchos* embarking on their first teaching positions. The new teachers were prepped for the task ahead and given a warm welcome into the world of

chinuch.

Needless to say, summer is also a busy time for Rabbi Moshe Possick, who heads TU's personnel and placements offices.

Torah Umesorah's Vaad Roshei Hayeshivos is closely involved in all issues of *hashkafah* and policy. These activities and more, including *hishtadlus* on behalf of young people who have had difficulty gaining acceptance into schools, have made the summer of 2011 a busy but productive "break."

At this time, the Commission is also asking *Daf Yomi maggidei shiur* to submit original *chidushhei Torah* and *he'aros* for publication in the second volume of *Sefer HaMeir L'Olam* (the first volume was published in conjunction with the 11th *Siyum HaShas*). The *sefer*, which is named in memory of the father

of *Daf Yomi*, Rav Meir Shapiro, *zt"l*, will be released in time for the upcoming *Siyum*.

"With this *sefer*, which will also include *Daf Yomi*-related Torah articles, we honor our *marbitzei Torah* and, in particular, the *Daf Yomi maggidei shiur*," says Rabbi Shlomo Gottesman, who will edit the

new volume.

"I can't think of a more wonderful *zechus*."

For information regarding submissions for the directory or the new *sefer*, please contact the *Daf Yomi* Commission at (212) 797-9000, ext. 267 or send an e-mail to torahprojects@agudathisrael.org.