

Habonim Dror
Camp Gilboa
Coming Home at Last





Habonim Dror Camp Gilboa is a Jewish and Zionist summer camp and year-round youth movement. At Camp Gilboa, campers develop and reinforce their connection to Israel and their Jewish heritage through fun, youth-led activities designed to inspire their lives and build up their own leadership potential.



Camp Gilboa – A Vibrant Jewish Community of Youth



Camp Gilboa fills a critical need in the Jewish community. While the western U.S. boasts several good Jewish camping options, Camp Gilboa reaches many unaffiliated families who might not otherwise be connected to Israel and to the Jewish community. Camp Gilboa provides a unique youth-led program that offers a nurturing setting where friendships and creativity go hand in hand with building Jewish identity and a commitment to the community.

In recent years, Camp Gilboa has flourished, outgrowing its rented campsites, and seized an opportunity to move into a permanent home with room to grow: Camp Bluff

Lake in Big Bear, California. We have moved into our new home, and have been given five years to complete the purchase of this \$2.5 million facility.

At our new camp, we are nurturing the future committed leaders of the Jewish Community, and we welcome you to join us in supporting this worthwhile endeavor by becoming a part of Camp Gilboa's capital campaign.

Habonim alumni end up becoming involved in the leadership of the Jewish community in one way or another, and so I think the influence of Habonim is felt disproportionate to the actual numbers of kids... involved.

Jonathan Krasner, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (L.A. Jewish Journal, November 3, 2010)

Fostering Young Jewish Leaders



Habonim Dror is known for its success in fostering the development of generations of proud Jews and lovers of Israel. At Camp Gilboa campers explore the Jewish values of social justice and equality in a supportive camp setting, and are offered a unique opportunity to become young adult leaders. By sharing with its campers responsibilities beyond those offered in a typical summer camp experience, Camp Gilboa helps its campers mature and thrive as conscientious and involved young Jews.

Habonim Dror Camp Gilboa attracts Jews from diverse financial backgrounds and a range of synagogue and other Jewish affiliations. Camp Gilboa also reaches many children of Jewish immigrants who would not otherwise gain exposure to Judaism and Israel. By offering year-round activities and by providing scholarships for those who may require assistance, Habonim Dror keeps young Jews engaged in Judaism and Israel, and in many cases, creates an affiliation to Judaism that had not previously existed.

Nourished by the intellectually open, respectful and joyous environment at Camp Gilboa, campers go on to become extraordinary alumni, enriching their communities and the world at large. The camp and youth movement's focus on promoting Individual responsibility, creativity, self-confidence, and a passionate belief in social justice has drawn our alumni into public service, the arts, socially responsible business, academia and the environmental movements – both here in the US, in Israel and around the world.

As the research suggests, Jewish camping plays a critical role in the long-term survival and flourishing of the American Jewish community. And, as Camp Gilboa staff and parents have experienced, there are large numbers of young people in California and the West who can be drawn into the circle of Jewish life and inspired to contribute, if given the chance to be part of the Camp Gilboa experience.





I love Gilboa, because it is a place where you can always feel welcome no matter what. It is a place where you can go to, to be with people you love but still be out of the house—to be with your other family! It is just the place you need to be to complete yourself.

— Harel, camper, 2009

The Need for a Home in the West



In rented campsites, Camp Gilboa grew steadily to its current number of 135 campers a year. Over the years Camp Gilboa became a close-knit community with a dynamic, thoughtful program led by youth, for youth, under the supervision of a supportive Camp Committee.

But rented campsites limited the number of campers we could serve, and restricted our ability to fully implement a Habonim Dror program. In Summer 2011, our

first at Bluff Lake, we saw our children and our staff blossom in their new environment, with a summer theme based on developing community and taking responsibility for our home. Our challenge now is to gain support from those in the wider Jewish community who value the affordable, inclusive Jewish and Israel-centered programming that Habonim Dror Camp Gilboa offers. In a permanent, stable environment, Camp Gilboa is now able to grow and thrive.

Camp has been an inspiration to the way I want to live my life. I changed my views of everything for the better. I have made friendships that will last forever and connections to my heritage that I couldn't imagine. I don't know what I would be like without Habonim.

— Nitsan, camper 2009

Our New Home: Camp Gilboa By the Shores of Bluff Lake



Capital Campaign Goal: \$2.75 million to complete the purchase of Camp Bluff Lake and provide a maintenance fund.

We could not have found a more suitable facility to become the new location for Camp Gilboa. This historic YMCA camp, where the original "Parent Trap" was filmed during the 1970s, was purchased and extensively renovated by the Wildlands Conservancy. Located

fifteen minutes from the center of Big Bear in California's San Bernardino Mountains, Camp Bluff Lake features:

- 40 acres of forested land providing opportunities for youth to commune with nature by the shores of Bluff Lake;
- A newly remodeled lodge and kitchen;
- 15 beautifully rebuilt cabins that can accommodate 180 campers and staff;
- A staff and infirmary building with rooms to accommodate 20 staff members;
- An amphitheatre suitable for Shabbat, Havdalah and theatrical and musical performances;
- A swimming pool, sports field and kayaks for use on the lake;
- Nearby hiking trails;
- A private water source and generator; and,
- New restroom buildings located close to the cabins.

The property's price, substantially reduced from its previous listing, and the agreement to stretch the purchase over a five-year period, reflected the Wildlands Conservancy's desire to sell to a summer camp that shares Wildland's commitment to conserving open space and promoting environmental conservation. Wildlands is now Gilboa's partner at Bluff Lake and we share the goal of teaching the next generation to respect nature and make conservation and sustainability a way of life.





Our Strategy



Camp Gilboa is harnessing the skills and passion of its Camp Committee, youth movement and community of parents, alumni and supporters to complete the purchase of the Bluff Lake property.

- The Camp Committee is currently identifying supporters who share Camp Gilboa's core values and mission to foster the future leadership of the Jewish community.
- As of October 2011, \$900,000 have been raised towards our overall campaign goal.
- Gilboa's Young Alumni have launched a campaign and raised pledges of more than \$30,000 from former campers now in their twenties who are thrilled to see Gilboa in its own home.
- Donations at every level are coming in from the supportive Gilboa community. Pledges of \$1,800 or more are matched by the Grinspoon Foundation's Chai Match.
- In order to increase camper enrollment, we are focusing efforts on strengthening and expanding our year-round activities in our "kenim" or branches in Northern and Southern California and in Las Vegas.
- Beginning in 2012, there are plans to bring in additional revenue through leasing the camp to other groups during Gilboa's off-season.
- For the long-term sustainability of Camp Gilboa, the Camp Committee is partnering with the Grinspoon Foundation, with the goal of receiving 100 Legacy bequest intentions from individuals to be pledged to Camp Gilboa for the on-going needs of operating a campsite.

This strategy will ensure that Gilboa thrives at our new home with an ever-increasing number of campers, develops an endowment sufficient to maintain Camp Bluff Lake in the decades ahead, and grows its community of active, involved supporters.

How Can You Help?

Camp Gilboa is seeking cash as well as in-kind contributions to its capital campaign. Please contact us about gifts of stock and property which may afford you additional tax advantages. Camp Gilboa is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. To become a part of this important endeavor and to help fill a gap in Jewish and Israeli programming in the western U.S., please contact Joel Epstein of the Development Committee at (310) 728-0640 or joel.epstein@gmail.com. Thank you for your support of Camp Gilboa's mission to build a love of Israel and to promote Jewish continuity among young people in the West.



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