

From: "Rabbi" <Rabbi@tbehollywood.com>

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Subject: Camp Miriam

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As you might recall, my family's connection to the Jewish community, when I was growing up, was tenuous at best. Yet, I sensed there was something beautiful and significant in being Jewish. Habonim, and Camp Miriam in particular, provided me a warm, nurturing, and thoroughly accepting environment in which my Jewish identity blossomed into a lifelong commitment to Israel, Judaism, and the welfare of the Jewish people. Camp Miriam embraced me as one of its own as I learned to embrace the Jewish people as my extended family. I, like so many young Jews, could easily have ignored or abandoned by Jewish roots. Instead, those wonderful summers I spent at Camp Miriam resulted in my living in Israel for three years, earning graduate degrees in Jewish studies, and serving as congregational rabbi for the last thirty years.

The most daunting challenge facing those charged with the task of passing on our Jewish heritage to future generations is to maintain those institutions that instill in our young people pride in their Jewish heritage and a commitment to live as Jews. Camp Miriam accomplishes that task as well or better than any institution I know of. I hope and pray that future generations of young Jews will have the same opportunity as I had to learn what it means to be Jewish at Camp Miriam. Count on me to support you in any way I can in this sacred work.

B'shalom - Rabbi Allan C. Tuffs, Temple Beth El Hollywood, FL.