

# **The Schmooze** **Stories with a Yiddish Twist**

**CAMP RUNAMUCK - PRESS "EYNS," "TSVEY," AND "DRAY"**

**by**

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**Syosset, New York**

Camp Runamuck is an American sitcom which aired during the 1965 - 1966 television "sezon" (season). It aired for 26 episodes. Viewers saw the wacky and witty ("vitsik") goings-on at the boys' "zumer" (summer) camp...and at Camp Divine ("getlekh"), its girls counterpoint across the "ozere" (lake).

The competitiveness between the camps included missing kids, people falling into the lake, food poisoning, etc. Note: The Yiddish word meaning "to poison" is "farsamen."

Runamuck was run by Commander Wivenhoe, a man who couldn't stand kids, and senior counselor Spiffy (Dave Ketchum), his assistant. Some of the characters on that show were based on some of the names described in the song, "Hello Muddah, Hello Fadduh" by Allan Sherman.

IF Camp Runamuck and Camp Divine was in business in 2015, the directors would discover that the most expensive ("tayer") gift on earth is the gift of gab. They might even adhere to the "KISS" method of communicating with mames, tates, bobes, zeydes and campers--KEEP IT SO SHORT.

Perhaps we should expect voice routing, with a thicket of options:

YOU HAVE REACHED CAMP RUNAMUCK. ALL THE LINES ARE BUSY.  
Press "eyns" (1)

Muzak: "Hello Muddah. Hello Fadda."

THANK YOU FOR WAITING. IF YOU ARE CALLING THE CAMP DIRECTOR,  
Press "tsvey" (2)

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK WITH YOUR "KINDERLEKH,"

Press "dray" (3)

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO ENROLL YOUR CHILD IN A SAT PREP COURSE AT  
CAMP, Press "fir" (4)

IF YOUR "KIND" (CHILD) IS HOMESICK AND HAS WRITTEN ONE OF THOSE  
FAMOUS "PLEASE RESCUE ME" LETTERS, HANG UP "TEYKEF" (IMMEDIATELY).  
"Alts vet zikh oysglakhn." (Everything will smooth itself out.)

IF YOUR CHILD HAS SCHLEPPED 65 LBS. OF CLOTHES AND SPORTING  
EQUIPMENT AND IT HASN'T ARRIVED AT HIS BUNK, "A dayge host du." (You  
shouldn't worry.) Press "finf" (5)

IF YOU ARE CALLING A COUNSELOR OR A CIT, "mach es shnell!"

(Make it fast.)

Press "zeks" (6).

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO THE BOOKKEEPER REGARDING AN  
UNANTICIPATED CASH FLOW PROBLEM, "Ni fa dir gedakh!" (May it never happen  
to you!), Press "zibn" (7)

IF YOU WISH TO BE CONNECTED WITH THE CAMP PHYSICIAN ("DOKTER")  
REGARDING A SEVERE CASE OF SWIMMER'S EAR, BLUE-JEAN NICKEL  
BUTTON DERMATITIS, BIKINI BOTTOM, FLIP-FLOP DERMATITIS, INTERNET  
ADDICTION DISORDER, OR THE CURRENT DISEASE ("KRANKAYT") OF THE  
WEEK, Press "akht" (8)

IF YOU ARE CALLING THE CAMP LOST AND FOUND REGARDING A MISSING  
RETAINER, A LEFT NIKI SNEAKER, LEO Di CAPRIO POSTERS, ETC.,

Press "nayn" (9).

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S ALLERGIES,

Press "tsehn" (10) + AH-CHOO.

FOR THE RESULTS OF COLOR WAR,

Press "elf" (11).

FOR COMPLAINTS TO OUR CAMP “MOTHER” REGARDING THE FACT THAT OUR WASHING MACHINES HAVE JUST TWO SETTINGS: “VERY SMUTSIK” AND “DO NOT BREATHE,”  
Press “tsvelf” (12)

TO CHECK THE BALANCE IN YOUR KINDERLECH’S CANTEEN FUND,  
Press “draytsn” (13).

IF YOU’RE CALLING--AND IT’S SHABBOS--HANG UP. “Es iz a shandeh far di kinder.” (It’s a shame for the children.)

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PARENTS’ WEEKEND,  
Press “fertsn” (14).

TO RESERVE SEATS FOR THE CAMP PERFORMANCE OF “DE MEISEH EIN POCAYENTA” (The story of Pocayenta),  
Press “fuftsn” (15).

TO ORDER A 4-WEEK SUPPLY OF ‘BUBBEGUM’ (a Joseph & Nash term for “candy one’s mother gives to her grandchildren that she never gave to her own children),  
Press “zekhtsn” (16).

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT OUR “TSELULARER TELEFON” (cell-phone) REGULATIONS, PLEASE NOTE: CAMPER’S ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BRING CELL PHONES OR ANY OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES TO CAMP. IF A CAMPER BRINGS A CELL PHONE TO CAMP, IT WILL BE HELD IN THE CAMP OFFICE UNTIL THE END OF THE CAMP SEASON. WE WILL NOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY DAMAGE OR LOSS OR ANY CELL PHONE AT CAMP.

FOR INFORMATION ON THE FALSE RUMOR THAT SIX CAMPERS HAVE TAKEN ILL AFTER EATING POISONOUS MUSHROOMS, PLEASE HANG UP. IT’S A “BOBE MAYSE”--OLD WIFE’S TALE.

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT “DOUGHBOY”--FOOD PREPARED BY COOKING DOUGH ON A STICK HELD OVER A CAMPFIRE (AKA, “A STICK BISCUIT”),  
Press “zibetsn” (17)

TO RECEIVE A PERMISSION SLIP FOR YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN ZIP LINE--WHERE CAMPERS CONNECT TO A PULLEY THAT SLIDES DOWN A SUSPENDED INCLINED STEEL CABLE--  
Press “akhtsn” (18)

REGARDING THE LOCAL “VASER” (WATER) SHORTAGE, THE STAFF HAS FOUND ANOTHER WAY TO FILL THE NEWLY-CONSTRUCTED SWIMMING POOL. DON’T WORRY!

FOR A LIST OF CAMP VOCABULARY, INCLUDING “STORE THE GORE” (clean up - Mom and dad are coming), “SKUNKS IN THE BUNKS” (cabin inspection), etc. Press “nayntsn” (19)

TO ENROLL YOUR KINDERLECH FOR NEXT “YOR,” (“A SHAINEN DANK”), Press “tsvantsik” (20)

FOR INFORMATION ABOUT OUR CAMP REUNION IN DECEMBER, Press “eyn un tsvantsik” (21)

Zei(t) gezunt.

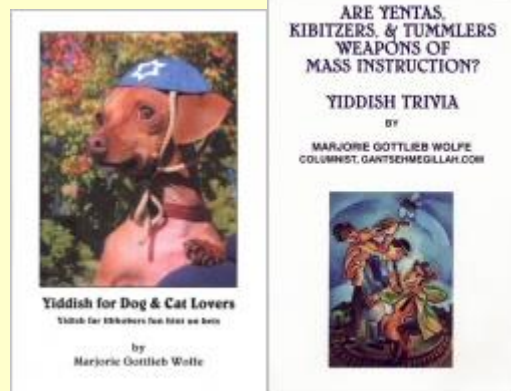
MARJORIE WOLFE and her late husband, Howard, worked as camp counselors at Camp Leonard-Leonore in Kent, Connecticut, in 1959.

Perhaps you’ve heard this story: A man walking down Manetto Hill Road in Plainview, New York, asks a Jew where the Mid Island Y JCC Camp is. The Jew is carrying parcels, and hands them over to the other man to hold. Then he spreads his hands out wide and shrugs, “How should I know?”

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**Marjorie Gottlieb Wolfe is the author of two books:**



"Yiddish for Dog & Cat Lovers" and  
"Are Yentas, Kibitzers, & Tumblers Weapons of Mass Instruction? Yiddish  
Trivia." To order a copy, go to her  
website: [MarjorieGottliebWolfe.com](http://MarjorieGottliebWolfe.com)

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