



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

September 2008

P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470

Phone # 707-468-4536

Elul-Tishrei 5768-5769

Please note: all submissions preferred by the 20th of each month to [caroldrosenberg@pacific.net](mailto:caroldrosenberg@pacific.net)

## **KHE September & Holiday Calendar 5769 - 2008/9**

**Friday, September 5, 6:30 pm**, Kabbalat Shabbat at Shul.

**Sunday, September 7**, First day of Shul School,  
10:00 am-12:15 pm

**Saturday, September 13**, 7:00 Movie Night  
“Rashevski’s Tango” (see page 2)

**Sunday September 14**, Shul School 10 am -12:15

**Friday, September 19, 6:30 pm** - Kabbalat Shabbat  
at the home of Carol Rosenberg, 501 Jones St. (at the  
corner of Spring St.) in Ukiah

**Saturday, September 20, 8:00 pm** - Slichot Service

**Sunday, September 21**, Shul School 10 am - 12:15

**Monday, September 29 - 7-9 pm**, Erev Rosh Ha-  
Shanah

**Tuesday, September 9/30, 9 am Rosh HaShanah:**

*10-10:45 am, Children’s Service;*

at about noon, after reading the Torah and the first  
round of shofar blowing, we will break for Kiddush.  
We will resume at about 12:30 to continue the tradi-  
tional Rosh HaShanah service and shofar blowings  
and finish about 2 pm. This plan will enable those  
who want to experience a full Rosh HaShanah service  
to do so.

*2:30 pm, potluck picnic with Tashlich* at Lake Men-  
docino, Pomo Day Use Area B. Use Highway 20  
to reach the northwest part of the lake. Go past the  
Pomo roundhouse to the second parking lot, park near  
the bathrooms and walk toward the lake.

## **Preview of Our October Calendar**

**Friday, October 3, 6:30 Kabbalat Shabbat at Shul**

**Sunday, October 5**, Shul School 10:00 am

**Saturday, October 18**, 10:00 am Zachary Calvin Bar  
Mitzvah (Zachary is a cousin of the Koppel Family.  
We as a congregation will have the Mitzvah of help-  
ing this boy enjoy his special day! We are all invited  
for services and Kiddush.)

**Sunday, October 19**, Shul School 10:00 am

**Tuesday evening, October 21**, Simchat Torah

**Sunday, October 26**, Shul School

**Sunday, October 5** - 1 pm Women’s and 3 pm Men’s  
Mikve’ot at Pennyroyal Lake; meet at parking lot of  
Parducci Winery

**Wednesday, October 8, 7-9 pm**, Erev Yom Kippur  
(Kol Nidre)

**Thursday, October 9, 10 am - 2 pm** Yom Kippur  
morning service; afternoon/evening 4 pm till 3 stars  
appear, Yizkor remembrance and concluding Yom  
Kippur service, followed by break-the-fast potluck

**Sunday, October 12**, Shul School

**Tuesday, October 14**, first day of Succot

**Friday, October 17**, Succot / Shabbat



## Holidays and Portion of the Week

September 6 - Shoftim

September 13 - Ki Teze

September 20 - Ki Tavo

September 27 - Nitzavim

**September 29 - Erev Rosh HaShanah**

**September 30 - Rosh HaShanah**

---

### We Remember:

Dinah Godfrey - Elul 7

Tina Marans - September

Ida Mann - September 11

Jacob Goll - September 17

Viola Faber - Elul 28

Philip Kam - September 21/Elul 28

Jerry Horowitz - Elul 29

Rae Stanten - September 22

Dorothy Corwin - September 29

---

### Thanks to our Community!

Several years ago Spencer Brewer donated a piano to KHE. The very generous Laurie Spence and Dale Harrison, winners of the piano, donated it to the new Shul. A wonderful gift, unfortunately it developed a gimpy leg and a sign that said DO NOT MOVE THE PIANO! Finally, thanks to Tony Melville and Hillel Posner and Hillel's woodworking shop, the piano has strong new legs and can be moved! The piano was repaired by these talented carpenters in time to be played at Jordan Osborn's Bar Mitzvah.

Also, I remember sitting at the table at Sara & Tony Esserman-Melville's home and having Sara's mom and dad ask what our Shul needed.

Benches, I thought, for our soon-to-be-created meditation garden. Keeping their promise, the Essermans have given us a charming pair of benches for the garden. Louisa Aronow is working to create the meditation garden as money, time, and water permit.

---

### Attention, All Who Wish to Blow the Shofar!

Bruce Andich is our official coordinator for Shofarim. Please call him at 459-4855 or e-mail <brucea@saber.net >

## Donations to Kol HaEmek

### Make a Difference

Kol HaEmek is grateful for all contributions to our various funds. The following is a list of some of them.

- 1) Building Fund
- 2) Religious School Fund (Kalifornia Memorial)
- 3) Scholarship Fund
- 4) General Fund
- 5) Memorial Board Fund
- 6) Tzedakah Fund
- 7) Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- 8) The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund  
for Feeding the Hungry in Ukiah & Willits
- 9) Caring for needy Jewish and Arab people in Acre, Israel\*
- 10) MEMBERSHIP

Questions? Call David Koppel 485-8910

**Please mail your contributions to:**

**Kol HaEmek, P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470**

\*Make your check payable to PEF: Israel-Endowment Fund and earmark it to the Association for Community Development - Acre; HaAsif program. (There is a \$25 minimum requirement for checks to Israel).

### PASSINGS

Our congregation will say Kaddish on the anniversary of your loved one's death. Call Rabbi Shoshanah at 467-0456 with your concerns about the loss of a loved one and/or the name and either the Hebrew or English calendar date of death.

---

### Film Of the Month September 13, at 7:00

#### "Rashevski's Tango"

Director Sam Garbarski explores the complexities of Jewish identity in contemporary Belgium in this uplifting tale about family relationships, romance, religion and interfaith marriage. Matriarch Rosa - who puts more trust in the tango's curative powers than in God - seems to be the glue holding the family together. When she dies, her baffled brood strives to find meaning within their religious and ethnic heritage. Do they??

## ASK JCI & R

Q: The New Year 5769 looms on the horizon. I would like to better understand the traditions connected with the holidays.

A: The New Year begins with Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot. These holidays are exceptional opportunities to celebrate with family and friends. The Tishrei holidays have many symbols and traditions associated with them. We can explain the traditions, including tashlich, gathering at a body of flowing water and ushpizin, the custom of inviting honorary guests to the Sukkah. If you want to buy or create your own Shofar, we can direct you. We can also tell you Rabbi Sa'adiah Gaon's ten reasons to hear the Shofar. Please let us know if you want to know more about the Fall Holy Days, from A to Z. Shana tova!

For more information about connecting to Jewish life, call JCI & R at 415/777-4545 or local toll free 877 777 5247 (JCIR).

Jewish Community Information and Referral is a free and confidential service of the San Francisco based Jewish Community Federation.

<http://www.sfjcf.org/resources>

---

## Dear Members of Kol HaEmek,

During the last new members brunch it was brought to my attention that several members feel that the Shul School and the children should be a high priority.

I agree with this statement and want to give everyone a chance to honor this idea. Please E-mail me if you have a skill or if there is an activity that you would like to share with our children. I will be happy to send you a schedule of classes.

### **We could also use another classroom assistant teacher !!**

You may send your ideas to me at 1275 Knob Hill RD, Ukiah, or bring them to me any Shul School day. You can also e-mail me at:

[saramelville@pacific.net](mailto:saramelville@pacific.net) or call (463-2247 home, 818-486-4235 cell

Thank you,

*Sara Esserman Melville*

## TWO VIEWS:

### **Contemporary Jewish Museum**

*by Karin Wandrei*

I recently visited the new Contemporary Jewish Museum in San Francisco and I'm trying to figure out if I liked it. Has anyone else gone and what did you think? It's not your normal museum with regular exhibits.

### **Contemporary Jewish Museum**

*by Andrea Silverstein*

I wanted to share the wonderful time I had in SF this week by recommending to all to visit the brand new CJM in SF as soon as their schedules allow.

I went there with Bella and the ACC (American Cantorial Conference) group this week and it touched and inspired me greatly.

**The website is: <http://www.thecjm.org/>**

Hope everyone can get there to enjoy soon.. Someone may want to organize a carpool trip and tour? It's really fantastic!

---

### ***Possible Trip to Europe,***

***with Rabbi Shoshanah !***

Rabbi Shoshanah is looking into the possibility of leading a trip next spring to Pisek, Prague, Theresienstadt, and Budapest. Stay tuned, and please contact me with any helpful information or ideas. Let me know if you might be interested in joining this trip. *Thanks, Shoshanah*

---

### **Up dated Website**

Karin Wandrei has updated the web site she developed on her mother's shtetl that is in the Carpathian Mountains of what is now Ukraine but formerly was Czechoslovakia and the Austro-Hungarian empire.

The site is:

[http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Verkhnyaya\\_Bystra/](http://www.shtetlinks.jewishgen.org/Verkhnyaya_Bystra/)

## In My Opinion:

I'm a very fortunate woman. My very own body warned me that I had to take evasive action for a potentially deadly situation. Reluctantly I listened and paid attention. I really didn't want to: I did try to ignore abnormalities, heck, I have things to do, trips to take. All this, as many of you know, resulted in breast surgery and a period of healing. It also resulted in what I always try to avoid, dependency and inaction. It also helped me to realize how blessed I am to live where I do. We have the services of excellent medical doctors and nurses who really care about their patients, and a Cancer Resource Center staffed by the most helpful and wonderful people. How special it is to look up before surgery and know that you and your nurse shared a journey together, or that you are known by your name and your face to people who provide you with care. How rare this is in this world, and how it helps to know you are in competent loving hands.

Fortunately, my daughter and granddaughter were able to take care of me and make me laugh when I needed the most comfort and care. So many of you came to my aid. Members of our community did my errands, brought me needed items from "milk of magnesia" to paint and a water filter; many kept me company and brought food, plants and flowers and a very special person spent days repairing my house! Friends watered my garden, washed my dishes and floors and generally kept me happy and made it possible to follow the doctor's instructions.

This summer I was forced to take an inward journey, equally exciting as any other journeys I have made in my lifetime: the decisions, the choices, the need for research, the indecision and the self-learning, the wonderful opportunity to see people in a whole new way, including myself. Thank you to all of you, those that helped and those that offered to help and I had to decline your kind offers because I needed the space and the quiet of time to heal.

As we individually and as a community prepare for the new Jewish year I may offer some of the reflections I had this summer. Community, even the way news travels, is a blessing. I found we really care about each other and can feel each other's pain. We all need others and some times accepting help can be difficult and problematic. Great helpers ask first and don't assume they know what another needs.

My main prayers to the almighty will be of thanks for strength, the strength of my family and my community and for acceptance of what is. I will also continue to ask Hashem for the ability to be of use to myself and others, in my view truly a blessing.

Thanks & Love,

*Carol*

---

### CONTEMPORARY JEWISH MUSEUM

connecting art, people, and ideas

736 Mission Street (between Third and Fourth streets) San Francisco, CA



## Dear KHE Chaverim,

This month's column continues the chronicling of what we know of the Jews of Pisek, starting with the Eighteenth Century. We already learned that the local Jews prior to 1700 were prohibited from wearing certain clothing and jewelry. In 1701, the Prague Castle stated "We have been receiving news that Jews of both sexes are again daring to wear garments embroidered in silver, and also chains and pearls covering thus their Jewish collars, and becoming undistinguishable from Christians which enables them to have their roguish ways. Therefore we would like to enforce this ban."

The Town Council in 1716 rejected the request of a Prague Jew name Aron Berles to commute to Pisek to run a shop therein order to help his mother-in-law, Regina Ochsova. The Council asserted that "the Jewish race is harmful causing the destruction of poor craftsmen, and it should be eradicated and not allowed to reproduce." The applicant "should go back where he came from as he had not [sic] business here"; his mother-in-law was warned that she would be expelled if non-local Jews were found staying with her.

In 1723, a decree was passed forbidding non-local Jews from coming to town apart from specified public markets. Four years later, the Council issued a new decree allowing outside Jews into town only on Tuesdays and Fridays "so that they could buy goods here for their need," but they could enter Pisek on other days by paying a set toll and passing an inspection on the way in. In 1743, Benes Ochs "applied for an approval to get married which was not granted till 1749 although his ancestors had lived in Pisek for a long period of time."

Meanwhile, over the years, the Pisek Jews did gather together to pray and study. A one room wooden building built by the Town Council was rented to Kavka (a name already mentioned in Pisek's pre-1700 history; in 1742 the Council declared, regarding Jewish inhabitants, that Pisek "is obliged to have only the Kavka clan in the town, and not anyone else") and used as the synagogue and school. the Jews were not to allow any strange Jews to join them."

Here too, there were objections calling for the building to be rented to poor Christians instead. The Council replied (1722) that "as Jews had always had prayer rooms in the town, the Council could not prevent them from carrying out their religious duties, but of the building itself, only the courtyard loggia, which was the entrance to the women's section, is extant today, but a parochet (the curtain of the Torah ark) from 1725 (5486 in the Hebrew calendar) is preserved in the town museum with the inscription: "in memory of the husband and wife Mordechaj and Sendi Luriovi" [note: this history was compiled in the 1930s, so it is not clear if the parochet is still there today].

On July 18, 1744, Empress Maria Theresa of Austria (then ruling the Czech kingdom) issued an eviction decree regarding provincial Jews. But on May 15, 1745, the vice-regent amended the order, stating that "Jews may be tolerated in our lands for another period of time...." A 1747 order called for a census of all Jewish families. Twenty couples, sixty adults, and thirty six children were listed as living in "the Pisek and Putim settlements."

In 1760 the County Administration Office issued an order to Jews to observe Catholic holidays [close shops on Sunday, etc] and reminded them that they must not hire Christians to work for them and that they must observe the order to wear a yellow circle on their clothes." We have a list of the names of 12 Jewish families living in Pisek in 1785, as well as the name of the rabbi, Baruch Muneles (who resided in nearby Breznice) and the local teacher, Gerson Lobl, who was succeeded in 1786 by R. Jehuda Kohen, who was the great grandfather of a future mayor of Pisek, Izrael Kohn.

continued on next page

**Pisek continued:**

Jewish vocations in Pisek by 1799 included potash making, shop keeping, and dealing in wool, wine and second-hand goods. In the early 1800s, some 63 Jews would come to Pisek from a variety of other towns in order to participate in the local market. Along with the local Jews they occupied three rows of fixed stalls. We learn that in 1809, Marek Kavka was called up as part of a huge military conscription, but “exercised the right to send someone else in replacement covering the cost.”

A contract from 1824 which still existed in the 1930s set forth who sat where (men, of course) in the local synagogue, with the first seats reserved for “a noble guest, then for a representative of the Authorities and the County Rabbi,” the last seats reserved for the teacher and shamash (“servant” custodian), and the rest assigned fixed seating in between. In 1831 “the County office of the town of Pisek prohibited entry of Polish Jews to Bohemia. The reason was the cholera epidemic and Jews, especially from Poland, were blamed for spreading it.” In 1832, the county doctor “informed the Jews in his ward that [because of the cholera] it was not advisable to fast “on Yom Kippur. So a “fee for dispensation” was collected from each member and was then used to buy Passover matzoh and wine for the Jewish poor, “and the remaining 4 gold pieces were given...to the Town Hall for the ‘poor Christians.’”

When in 1828, a list of the Jewish communities in Bohemia was drawn up, the Jewish population of Pisek was included under the neighboring village of Mirovice (where Pisek Jews were buried), for a total of 15 families and 90 individuals. In 1837 (post-French Revolution with its ideas of egalite, fraternite and liberte), “a heated discussion took place in the Council,” with one Pisek burgomaster arguing that “it is only humane and just to give these well meaning Jews the same rights as enjoyed by other citizens.” In 1841, the council accepted several Jewish families into the town. By 1845, local Jews had begun purchasing agricultural buildings and grazing fields. But application of an 1842 ruling that “Jews were allowed to acquire domicile land only if they themselves cultivated the land or used the help of other Jews” caused several of these acquisitions to be cancelled.

An interesting sidelight is that the son of a non-Jewish tobacco producer from Pisek went on to become a famous preacher named Veit in the St. Stephen’s cathedral in Vienna. “When Jews were accused of a ritual murder in 1840 he stood up in their defence. He lifted up the monstrance in front of the altar in the presence of thousands of people and made a sacred oath that accusing Jews of ritual murders and consuming blood was an impudent lie.”

Under Izrael Kohn as mayor in the mid -1800s, Pisek was modernized with a train connection and grammar schools. The popular Dr. Kohn, as he was called, was re-elected by the Pisek citizens as mayor for several terms. A wealthy member of the Jewish community, he also kicked off the fund-raising for the new synagogue which was completed in 1870. We have a description of how, as a cohen (priest), he was called for the first aliyah to the Torah, when he donated several thousand gold pieces for the new building. His example was soon copied by other large donors, and then followed by more modest donations till the total cost of 14,000 gold pieces had been collected. When the mayor died in 1874, he was buried in the Jewish cemetery in Mirovice with the following inscription on his gravestone: “This is a place of rest for the wonderful Israel, a priest of the highest God,... a scholar and expert on the Script, popular with the Town Council, the people and the court.” The Kohn descendants were still living in Pisek in the 1930s.

A number of important Jewish doctors have worked in Pisek since 1855....” The first listed, Mojzis Klepetar, who worked there till his death in 1868, had an excellent reputation and “was loved by the poor who[m] he treated free of charge, even providing medicine for them.” He is mentioned specifically for carrying out a difficult caesarean operation on a forester’s wife with the help of a shepherd. A later Dr. Robert Kohn, who worked in the district hospital and was appointed town doctor in the early Twentieth Century, also served as head of the Jewish religious community.

In 1860, a Jewish school was founded in Plsek with German as its teaching language. Plsek Jews are listed as being active in the Czech national movement which gained momentum in the second half of the 1800s, and by 1893, the Czech language replaced German in the local Jewish school. For the 1896-7 school year, there were 44 students in attendance. As we see from this contemporary quote by Karel Frank in 1893; the Jewish school taught a secular as well as religious curriculum, yet not all Jewish children attended the Jewish school: "Plsek Jews made a decisive step forward turning their school into a Czech school in 1892. A school where foundations, science and religion will be taught in Czech will produce people who will consider the Czech language to be their dear and only mother tongue even if the future brings in other tongues. There were always 16-20 Jewish male youths at Plsek grammar school and the same number attended the local Secondary School. They are assimilated and no differences are made in terms of their nationality between them and their Christian colleagues. There were also no cases of denationalisation of Plsek students at universities."

Bylaws for the Plsek Chevra Kadisha (burial society) date back to 1876, but it is assumed that the association was much older. In 1879, the Jewish community opened its own cemetery in Plsek and no longer needed to bury its dead in neighboring communities. This cemetery can be visited today. Gravestone inscriptions at first were written in German, and later Czech.

By 1890, there were 10,478 Catholics (95.75%) and 408 Jews (3.68%) living in Plsek, so we see that the number of local Jews greatly increased during the later decades of the 1800s. Involvement in local life is exemplified by the "respectable citizen" Marek Spitz, who in the 1880s and 1890s served as a member of the town hall, the Municipal Saving Bank, the management of the Municipal theatre, the District Council and the board of the Municipal Brewery, as well as other public institutions. "The most famous Plsek rabbi" over the years was Dr Moric Grunwald, who was born in Moravia as the son of a rabbi and studied Philology at Vienna University, Oriental Languages, Classical and Modern Languages at Leipzig University, lived for several years in Paris, and then taught at a theological seminary before coming to serve in Plsek in the 1880s. He was "a keen promoter" of the Association of Czech Academic Jews and published various articles, including one on the history of the Jews of Plsek.

Looking backwards, we see a shift in attitudes and policies from the 1700s, when Jews were still battling for permission to live and work in Plsek, to the 1800s when barriers came down between Jews and the broader community. Yet despite this flourishing situation for the Plsek Jews in the latter part of the 19th Century in terms of population, modernization, and participation in secular communal life, the 20th Century, at least post WWI, witnessed a dwindling in numbers of the Jewish community to the extent that the Plsek Jews could no longer retain their own rabbi. "This seems to be the fate of so many Jewish communities in southern Bohemia."

And thus we take leave of our Plsek Jewish community in 1931, with the publication of the lengthy article upon which this and our last column are based: [Plsek, Contribution to the History of Jews in the Czech Countryside](#), by Jaroslav Rokycana.

For those of you who are motivated to peruse the original and learn more about the history of Plsek and its Jews, check out <http://www.icpisek.cz/docs/en/zidhistorie.xml>.

It is estimated that some 300 Jews were living in Plsek on the eve of World War II. The U.S. Army liberated Plsek on May 5, 1945. Three former Jewish inhabitants returned to Plsek after the war.

May the memories of the Jews of Plsek be blessed each time we read from our beloved Plsek Torah scroll.

*B'shalom oovrachah, Shoshanah*



**Kol HaEmek/MCJC-Inland**  
**P.O. Box 416**  
**Redwood Valley, CA 95470**



**Our purpose** is to create an environment in which Jewish culture, religion and spiritual life can flourish; to perpetuate and renew our Jewish connections with ourselves and our homes, within our community and the world.

**Our Mission** is to express and support Judaism in the following ways:

- To provide a space for religious study and prayer
- To share life cycle events through meaningful Jewish traditions
- To offer and sponsor Jewish education for all ages
- To be inclusive of all partnership and family configurations
- To include interfaith families and Jews-by-choice
- To network with other Jewish communities
- To educate and share our culture with other Mendocino County residents
- To be a foundation for *tikkun olam* (healing of the world) as a community through socially just actions and education, and by mitzvot (good deeds)
- To offer membership in exchange for financial and other contributions, and allow all to participate regardless of ability to pay

## **Kol HaEmek Information & Resources**

<b>Kol HaEmek</b>	<b>468-4536</b>
Board Members:	
Carol Rosenberg, President	463-8526
David Koppel, Treasurer (Financial Committee)	485-8910
Nancy Merling (Rabbi's Council)	456-0639
Divora Stern	459-9052
Alan Acorn Sunbeam	463-8364
Steven Levin	462-3131
Robert Klayman	391-6114
Jan Stephens	459-1207
Karen Rifkin	462-2789

**Address changes (e-mail, etc):** contact David Koppel [davekoppel@yahoo.com](mailto:davekoppel@yahoo.com) or call (485-8910)

**Brit Milah:** Doctors willing to do circumcisions in their office or in your home: Robert Gittlin, D.O. (485-7406);

Sam Goldberg, M.D. (463-8000); Jeremy Mann, M.D. (463-8000); Sid Mauer, M.D. (463-8000),

Chanan Feld, Certified Mohel (510-524-0722). **Assistance with the ceremony, contact the Rabbi** (see below)

**Chevra Kadisha (Jewish Burial):** Eva Strauss-Rosen (459-4005); Helen Sizemore (462-1595)

**Community Support:** If you need help (illness, family crisis) or you can be called on when others need help;

in Willits, call Divora Stern (459-9052); In Ukiah, Tal Sizemore (462-1595): Lake County (Volunteer needed, call a board member)

**Editor of the Shema:** Carol Rosenberg, Dan Hibshman & Tal Sizemore ([carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net))

**Interfaith Council:** Cassie Gibson (468-5351) (Food preparation for homeless in Ukiah)

**Jewish Community Information and Referral:** Bay Area activities and services (415) 777-4545 or toll free at (877)777- 5247.

**Library:** At the Kol HaEmek shul, 8591 West Road, Redwood Valley; open at shul events and by appointment

**Movies-at-the-Shul:** Steven Levin 462-3131 [stevenL@pacific.net](mailto:stevenL@pacific.net)

**New Members:** Carol Rosenberg (463-8526)

**Rabbi's Council:** assists with community and calendar planning; **liaison** - contact Nancy Merling, [grandnan@saber.net](mailto:grandnan@saber.net) (456-0639)

**Rabbinical Services/Special Ceremonies:** Rabbi Shoshanah Devorah, 467-0456, [sdevorah@gmail.com](mailto:sdevorah@gmail.com)

**Use of Torah/Siddurs:** Schedule ahead of time with a board member.

**Tzedakah Fund (Financial Assistance):** David Koppel (485-8910)