



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley) October 2010  
P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470 Phone # 707-468-4536 Tishri -Cheshvan 5771  
Please submit articles by the 20th of the preceding month to carolrosenberg@sbc.global.net

## Coming Events!

**Sunday, October 3,** Shul School 10:00-12:15

**Friday, October 8,** 6:30 pm, Kabbalat Shabbat with Shoshanah, followed by veggie/dairy potluck, hosted by Judy Corwin at our Shul Rosh Hodesh Cheshvan

**Sunday October 10,** Shul School 10:00-12:15

**Saturday, October 16,** Morning Service with Shoshanah and all Shul School Families.

**Sunday, October 17,** Shul School 10:00-12:15

**Sunday October 17,** KHE feeds the hungry; call Dan Hibshman 462-7471 to volunteer.

**Monday, Oct 18,** 7 pm, *Chevra Kadisha* meeting conducted by Norm Rosen for all those already serving in our Sacred Burial Society and all those who are interested in finding out more about doing this holy work.

**Friday, October 22,** 6:30 pm, Kabbalat Shabbat with Shoshanah followed by veggie/dairy potluck hosted by Sherrie Ebyam at our Shul

## Condolences to All of Us

on the death of Tal (Terry) Sizemore on September 11, 2010. Our prayers and blessings to his family: Helen, son Max & wife Teresita Bazan Beltran, daughter Marisa & husband Alex Schulz.

**On Saturday, Nov. 6, at 4:00 pm, there will be a memorial for Tal Sizemore at the Mendocino Lake Clubhouse on Lake Mendocino Drive.**

## STARS OF WATER CONSERVATION: A GRAND TOUR!!

**Saturday, October 2, 8:30 a.m.– 1:30 pm**  
Visit four amazing examples of water conservation!

Including the KHE Biblical Garden!

For MAP TO THE STARS:

RSVP to [midnite@pacific.net](mailto:midnite@pacific.net)

or arrive for carpooling & maps at

Raley's parking lot – N. State St. – south end – 8:30 am

Bring a brown bag lunch for picnic & water chat at our last stop.

*sponsored by Ukiah Valley Water Commons & Master Gardener Program*  
info: Louisa 485-1290

## Portion of the Week

October 2 - Bereshet  
October 9 - Noach  
October 16 - Lech-lecha  
October 23 - Vayera  
October 30 - Chayet Sara

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### Candle Lighting

10/1 - 6:36  
10/8 - 6:25  
10/15 - 6:15  
10/22 - 6:06  
10/29 - 5:57

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### We Remember:

Minne Sorkowitz - Tishr i 8  
Bonnie Ann Springer - October 7  
Sylvia Glazer - October 8  
Stan Showers - October 14  
Shirley Ann Kisslinger - October 22  
Nancy Parker Orton - October 26  
Sanford "Fritz" Frank - Cheshvan 25

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**Congratulations to Aaron Brennan, who is starting college at UC Santa Barbara this fall. Aaron is the son of Mari Rodin & Clay Brennan.**

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**Congratulations to Harry Bistrin. The Ukiah Democratic Club is honoring him with a dinner on October 6 at Walter Cafe in Ukiah. Tickets are \$50.**

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### Mazal Tov!

**To new grandmother Janet Mendell, and to new mother and father Audrey Bertsch and Malcolm Marshall, on the birth of Ida Violet on August 28 at home in Oakland.**

## 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.

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### Condolences to

Cassandra & Bruce Andich on the death of Cassandra's father, Alex Clune.

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**Best Wishes** to Molly Andich, daughter of Cassandra & Bruce Andich, on beginning nursing school in Washington, D.C.



## **Yom Kippur Reflection** by Amy Wachspress

If there is a design to life, to the sequence of events that occurs in the known world, and it is a design orchestrated by a deity or omniscient spiritual entity, then that deity or entity must be both infinitely good and wretchedly evil at the same time. That would be the only way to characterize our experience since the same entity that produced the giant majestic Redwoods also produced the Holocaust. And if there is a design, then our actions are meaningless since they have been pre-ordained. That is why I don't believe in fate, destiny, or god. Perhaps it is comforting to assume that everything happens for a reason and that there is a greater meaning to all things, a meaning that we humans just don't understand. I find that too simplistic.

Alternatively, if there is no method to the madness, no plan, and no design, then what we experience is random chaos. The sequence of events is a cause and effect progression with no significance and we are at the whim of chance. Once again, this renders our actions as meaningless. If our existence was set in motion by a higher entity, which then withdrew, then we are basically a failed science experiment, which I suppose is possible (anything is, really), but not likely. In any case, our actions are still meaningless. In a random universe, we can only celebrate with and console each other as we pass through the delights and tragedies of life. If events occur randomly then we have good cause to rise to anger at some of the pointless tragedies of the world. But I don't believe the world functions in utter chaos and that we have no impact on it. I find that too easy.

It is certainly possible that both a divine design and random chaos co-exist in a tension or balance that is beyond the comprehension of my feeble human mind. That lets me off the hook. I can press the autopilot button and go on faith, not a bad option.

What if there is a design of sorts, but it is changeable? What if there is a way to influence the course of events? If fate does not exist, if all things are not necessarily "meant to be," if the progression of events is mutable, then despite the tendency toward random occurrence or loose adherence to some mysterious design, we have a way to change the course of events and steer things to a different course from the one originally set in motion. How do we do that? I believe that everything, seen and unseen, here now and here in the past, living in this world and present at another level, has spirit and spiritual energy can never be destroyed. It can be changed and moved. It can never be uncreated. The universe is laced with spiritual energy, which interpenetrates our lives as spiritual beings, throughout the course of events. We can make an impact by the interpenetration of spiritual energy. We have the opportunity and the potential to change the course of events with the energy we create, channel, invite, elicit, emanate, and conjure. So then our actions do have meaning. In which case, at Yom Kippur I pause to contemplate the fact that I am an imperfect being and to set for myself the improvements I wish to make in the coming year so that my impact is more positive and so that I can do a better job of connecting with spirit.

I will end with a true story. During the last summer of her life, when she knew she was dying, my friend Nan called me up on the night before our family left for our annual vacation at Manresa Beach in Watsonville. She said to me, "Say hello to the dolphins for me." I promised I would. Sitting on Manresa Beach, I remembered her words and laughed about it since I had never seen a dolphin at Manresa in ten years of family vacations there. But I went to the ocean's edge and called out, "Hello Dolphins. Nan says hello!" Later that day, you guessed it, a school of dolphins swam past the beach, jumping high out of the water so that they were clearly visible. Astonished, I called to them, "Nan says hello!" And from that time to this, I have seen dolphins at Manresa on every single visit I have made to that beach. Although Nan is no longer living, I always send the dolphins her regards.

## Donations to KHE in August 2010

*Bruce Andich and Cassandra Andich  
Louisa Aronow and Sandy Turner  
Ace Barash and Satoko Barash  
Leslie Batz and Daniel Wentworth  
Darlene Bergere and Josh Bergere  
Lynne Coen and Charles Hott  
Mina Cohen and Jeffrey Berenson  
Judy M. Corwin  
Sherrie Ebyam  
Reid Edelman and Deborah Edelman  
Stanford Elberg  
Ariana Elster  
Sally Emeson and Mally Arad  
Harvey Frankle and Jackie Pelner-Frankle  
Steve Frenkel and Nan Frenkel  
Dan Hibshman and Leslie Kirkpatrick  
Jay Joseph and Jennifer Joseph  
Glenn King  
David Koppel and Linda Koppel  
Steven Levin and Joan Levin  
Maralyn Lowenheim  
Robert Mandel  
Zena Marks and Jim Hecht  
Nancy Moilanen  
Carol Orton  
Esther Pelner and Valley View Skilled Nursing Facility  
Val Perez  
Linda Posner  
Bud Roseman and Silvana Roseman  
Norm Rosen and Karen Rosen  
Jo-Ann Rosen  
Carol D. Rosenberg  
Charles Seltzer and Lark Letchworth  
Andrea Silverstein and Dennis Patton  
Laurie Spence and Dale Harrison  
Jan Stephens and Gary Stephens  
Amy Whachspress  
Penny Walker and Irwin Feldman  
Daniel Waterman*

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## **In My Opinion:**

On a recent visit, my son Michael said, "All the people I love seem content and are doing well." I asked "And you?" "Of course I'm happy, Insuring the well being of loved ones is what it's all about." Meanwhile his shoulder ached, his thesis had yet to be approved and his former home had not yet been sold. I immediately believed that we/I had taught him that "happiness" was insuring the well-being of others.

My daughter, on the other hand, maintains that each of us is responsible for his or her own well-being and "happiness or contentment" and to be really helpful to another one needs to listen carefully to them until they clarify their own goals. Doing too much for others or telling them how to solve their problems is patronizing, enabling, or worse.

It became clear to me that certain parental behaviors influence our children. How they use the lessons we give them may be determined by other influences, their life experiences, and a basic world view.

My older son, Allen, told me when he was 16 that I was responsible for a mere 13% to 20% of his behaviors and his character. He enumerated, "I have two parents with differing ideas and standards, I went to three schools that influenced me, I choose friends that help determine my values, my own way of seeing things has a lot to do with my choices--so get over yourself, Ma!"

As parents and community members, how do we influence others? I recently told someone who said, "You do too much for KHE--let the others do more!" I answered, "I choose to lead by example." The reply was, "That can be misinterpreted. If you are doing it, others don't have to, and they won't!"

We just lost a member of this community who put my level of service to shame. Tal Sizemore always did more than his share, and he seemed to enjoy the doing.

Yom Kippur night he wasn't there in body, but his spirit was, and many others pitched in. Bless them, they did more than their share. Thank you all.

May Tal's spirit of community service continue to influence this his community for the good of all of us. May we all feel called on to do more than our share, without being asked. May this be a year of giving, in memory of Tal.

With love, Carol

*With what shall I come before the Lord, And bow myself before God on high?  
Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old?  
Will the lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil?  
Shall I give my first born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sins of my soul?  
He has showed you, O man, what is good; And what does the Lord require of you  
But to do justice, love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?*

*Micah 6:6-8*

**Dear Chaverim,**

Soon after word went out of Tal's, z"l, death, a member of our community called in shock with the plaint: "I don't understand!" Do you understand? What did this person want to understand? Why we die? Why a healthy, not old person dies? Why an experienced, sure-footed builder falls off his flat garage roof? Why this happened to a person who has done so much good in the community? Why this happened on the Shabbat of Return between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur? One could keep spinning out questions regarding why. The person who phoned me ended our conversation by suggesting that our talk would make a good rabbi's column in the Shema. Truth is, I don't remember anymore the details of our particular conversation. I've had quite a few talks since then with individuals for whom Tal's death raised issues they wanted to discuss.

You may or may not come up with your own answers to these questions. Or the questions may remain just that: questions. Either way, Tal's death has held up a mirror to our own individual lives and the fate that awaits us all. So how does this affect and inform our lives, our very being? Grief is a very natural response--mourning those we lose is something we share with our primate cousins, as well as other animals who have been observed to be distraught and keeping guard over the dead member of their "tribe." Emotions flow in a visceral response to this loss of life of one to whom we feel connected. We saw in our KHE community how death can bring the tribe together, as people needed the warmth of being with each other to help absorb the shock of the loss. I think this harks back to the animal in us, too, as we need to gather and have the assurance and protection of the larger family around us to give us a sense of safety and continuity as we feel individually bereft.

Our Jewish tradition gives us a framework after a death for people to reach out to make contact and be of help. Performing the mitzvot of taharah (preparing the body), shmirah (sitting with the body), and visiting and bringing food to the mourning family during shiva (the week after the death) gives participants a way of being of value at this time of shock and also serves to strengthen the communal web. Many people felt very tender--this is what the Torah calls "circumcising the heart." The heart is now open and vulnerable. Can we use this sensibility to guide us to what is really important to us in our lives?

Yom Kippur afforded us an opportunity to come together as a community as we each tackled this big quest/question. The tenderness in the Shul felt palpable to me. So many people commented that this was the "best" Yom Kippur ever. Might that not be at least partially due to our circumcised hearts and need for communal warmth and a renewed sense of meaning and guidance in our lives? And our liturgy is helpful, too, reminding us of the ever-present mystery, the depths and breadths and heights we cannot fully "understand," but of which we are an integral part, both in the micro and macro realms. Is this not the essence of the Mourner's Kaddish, which never mentions death per se but carries us from our own grief and limitations to a cosmic realm of intimacy and blessing?

It's so easy to forget what opened up for us during an experience of high emotional/spiritual intensity. Now our task is to keep our hearts open, and our minds awake, and take the best care of our bodies and souls that we can as we go about our daily lives.



Can you find ways to express in practical terms the gratitude you have felt for the very existence of our Jewish community, especially at a time like this? And know that mourners often appreciate support a few months down the road, and not just at the beginning of their journey. Life is full of mitzah opportunities.

May you see God's face wherever you turn, and may others see God's face in you. May you dwell in God's house all the days of your life.

*B'shalom oovrachah, Shoshanah*

**Monday, October 18, 7 pm, Chevrah Kadishah meeting** conducted by Norm Rosen for all those already serving in our Sacred Burial Society and all those who are interested in finding out more about doing this holy work. We'll review our protocol at the time of a death, working with volunteers who may not have received prior training, and what it means to do shmirah (watching over the body) and taharah (cleansing and water purification, and preparing for burial) in someone's home. It is a great mitzvah to serve as a member of a *Chevrah Kadishah*.

## Losing Tal

I'm still trying to wrap my mind around the fact that Tal fell off his roof and died. When I heard the news on Sunday, I realized that it was the first morning since his birth that he did not wake to see. I saw him Friday night at synagogue, the night before he died. We sat next to one another, close enough that I could hear him singing some of the tunes with his lovely voice. I enjoyed hearing him lovingly chant the Rav's Nigun that he so loved. We ate dinner together later. We laughed at the fact that half the potluck dishes on the table were tomatoes from our gardens. It's that season. Fortunately we both love tomatoes. My heart goes out to Helen and her children. I can't imagine trying to cope with such a sudden loss. No illness or preparation. No time to get used to the idea, just having the finish arrive. Her husband is abruptly gone. Tal worked in construction so much of the time that he would likely be one of the most sure-footed people on a roof. I don't know the details of what happened, yet I wonder that one misstep, one off moment, one blip, could send a good man beyond the reach of those who love him. Ironically, he and Helen had just moved her mother, who is in her 90s, to Ukiah to be near them. So how does one person live into their 90s while another falls off a roof and dies at 65? Contemplating this during the days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur weighs heavily on me. My meditation on death of late is: Love, Remember, Let Go. Loving is easy, what we do every day. Remembering will happen on its own, whether invited or not, and will often break our hearts. The letting go is the tough one.

A virtual altar for Tal has been set up. Here is the address: <http://rememberingtal.blogspot.com>  
If you would like to post words or images on the altar, email your contribution to me at [amy@wozabooks.com](mailto:amy@wozabooks.com)

Instructions for how to send me altar contributions appear on the virtual altar page.

—Amy Wachspress



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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

**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>	468-4536
<b>Board Members:</b>	
Carol Rosenberg, President	<b>463-8526</b>
David Koppel, Treasurer (Financial committee)	485-8910
Judy Corwin	462-4661
Divora Stern	459-9052
Nancy Merling (Rabbi's Council)	456-0639
Harvey Frankle	459-9235
Steve Levin	462-3131

**Brit Milah:** Doctors willing to do circumcisions in their office or in your home: Robert Gitlin, D.O. (485-7406); Sam Goldberg, M.D. (463-8000); Jeremy Mann, M.D. (463-8000); Sid Mauer, M.D. (463-8000).

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

**Community Support:** *If you need help (illness, family crisis) or can be called on when others need help,* in Willits call Divora Stern 459-9052, In Ukiah Margo Frank 463-1834

Editor of the Shema: Carol Rosenberg (e-mail caroldrosenberg@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.

**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)