



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

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

Phone # 707-468-4536

April 2010

Nisan - Iyar 5770

Please submit articles by the 20th of the preceding month to [carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net)

Visit our web page: [www.kolhaemek.org](http://www.kolhaemek.org)

## Coming Events:

**Monday, April 5**, 7 pm, Study Talmud (Pirkei Avot) with the Rabbi. See article at right ----->

**Friday, April 9**, 6:30 pm, Kabbalah Shabbat with Rabbi Shoshanah, followed by a dairy potluck supper.

**Sunday, April 11**, 4 pm, Yom HaShoah

In addition to lighting memorial candles in honor of those who died, we will feature the songs and life story of Hannah Senesh. Born in Hungary, she moved to Palestine as a teen, became a kibbutznik, then volunteered to parachute behind Nazi lines, and is best known for her songs "Eli, Eli" and "Ashrei HaGafur" (Blessed is the Match). We will view the new biographical documentary film "Blessed is the Match," and hear her songs as sung by our reborn KHE choir. Also Joel Cohen on the cello!

**Saturday, April 16**, 7:30 pm, Movie Night *A Serious Man*, see page 3 for details

**Friday, April 23**, 6:30 pm Home Shabbat, dairy potluck supper at the home of Carol Rosenberg, 501 Jones St. Ukiah

**Fri-Sun, April 30-May 2** Shabbat/Lag B'Omer Campout at Clearlake State Park--\$50 covers camping spot and parking for 2 nights plus \$25/adult or \$12/child 12 or under for food. Contact to reserve and pay David Koppel, 485-8910 or [davekoppel@yahoo.com](mailto:davekoppel@yahoo.com)

## SAVE THE DATE

**We'll be celebrating Shavuot on the evening of Tuesday, May 18.**

See page 3 for details.

**Pirkei Avot: 7 pm, successive Mondays at the Shul with Shoshanah: April 5, April 12, April 19, April 26, May 3, May 10**

The period between Passover and Shavuot, known as the *Omer*, is traditionally the time for communal study of *Pirkei Avot*\*, and we shall follow this tradition. We'll meet weekly on Monday eve at 7 pm from April 5 (the last night of Pesach week) through May 10 to peruse readings together. Before each class, I'll send out to our KHE email list the reading for that week. Those who want to can print out their own copy to bring to class (or you may have your own edition of *Pirkei Avot*, with commentary, that you'll want to bring from home). And so we shall become students of Talmud together.

\**Pirkei Avot* (Sayings of the Fathers) is a compendium of teachings and maxims spanning some 400 years, from 200 B.C.E to 200 C.E., when they were written down for the first time. Until then, texts had been memorized and passed on orally from one generation to the next. Unlike many Talmudic tractates, *Pirkei Avot* does not focus on *halachah* (issues of Jewish law), but rather on guiding principles and insights for living well. Thus *Pirkei Avot*, which literally means "chapters of the fathers/ancestors," is often rendered into English as "Ethics of the Fathers." Some of the sayings are anonymous, but many come with their author's name attached. So in reading the sayings, we also can often get a feel for the person who coined them.

## Holidays & Portion of the Week

March 31 - Begins the Counting of the Omer  
April 3 - Yom Tov Reading  
April 5 - Pesach ends  
April 10 - Shemini  
April 11 - Yom HaShoah  
April 17 - Tazaria-Metzor  
April 20 - Israel Independence Day  
April 24 - Achare Kedoshim

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## We Remember:

Pearl Rene Horowitz - Nisan 18  
Charles Sorkowitz - Nisan 28  
Marvin Guthartz - Iyar 7  
Jessica Anne Doctors - Iyar16  
Regina Klayman - April  
Dorothy Waterman - April  
Sidney Epstein - April 1  
Nanette Tver - April 1  
Allen Micah Rosenberg - April 1  
Milton Coren - April 7  
Edward Sessler - April 7  
Joan Bistrin - April 10  
Elenor B. Miller - April 12  
Arthur B. Miller - April 12  
Saul Ginsburg - April 13  
Leah Frankle - April 16  
Allen Dale - April 17  
Rose Cecelia Ray - April 21  
Nathan Pelner - April 22  
Beatrice Hecht April - 2  
Michael Kohan Selah - April 29

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## Condolences

to Andrea Silverstein on the recent death  
of her beloved grandmother, Leona

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### Rock & Soul Music Camp

Summer Arts and Fantasy Camp  
Academic tutoring and Music lessons  
Anthony and Sara Esserman Melville  
For more information call 463-2247

## 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) **Association for Community Development-Acre**, serving low-income Jewish and Arab Israelis living in Acco/Acre\*
- 10) **Orr Shalom** programs throughout Israel for disturbed children and youth from troubled homes\*

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

### 11) MEMBERSHIP

Questions? Call David Koppel 485-8910

**Please mail your contributions to:**

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

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The KHE Chevra Kadisha (Burial Society) is in need of plain white sheets. Might you have some at home that you no longer use? If so, please leave them at the Shul next time you come. Thank you.

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## Smart Shop

*High Quality sharpening by hand  
Eric Cinowalt*

Call 845-1025 or Sharpensmart@gmail.com

## Community Campout!

Last year's congregational campout was such a resounding success that the consensus was we must do it again this year. And so we are, just 4 weeks from now, from Friday afternoon, April 30, through noon, Sunday, May 2. And we picked a closer location and one that is more likely to be sunny and pleasingly warm: Clearlake State Park. (The entrance to Clearlake State Park is 3.5 miles northeast of Kelseyville on Soda Bay Road.) We'll be celebrating Shabbat and Lag B'Omer and shmoozing and eating delicious food (once again in the hands of our master chef Hillel Posner). Last year the kids had a grand time playing while the adults enjoyed being able to relax and getting to know one another outside of official KHE contexts.

We'll arrive Friday afternoon, set up tents (we have some extra tents for those without-let us know if you need one), and gather for Shabbat dinner and celebration. Saturday morning we'll have a leisurely breakfast, enjoy Shabbat together, and after lunch have free time in the afternoon. Then, after supper, comes Lag B'Omer with a rip-roaring fire and the traditional roasted potatoes and smores, stories and songs and drumming that go with it. Sunday morning we'll have fun with Lag B'Omer games including ancient fighting practice with boffer weapons (provided by Tony Melville-were you there for our Chanukah battle at the Shul in December?). Sara, Tony, Hillel, and Shoshanah, who organized last year's campout, are once again the planning team for the this year's venture.

**The costs (which are simply to cover expenses) are campsite and per car expense of \$50/family (covers both nights - and not as was listed in the February Shema), and for food: \$25 per adult and \$12.50 per child 12 or under. Please contact David Koppel, 485-8910, [davekoppel@yahoo.com](mailto:davekoppel@yahoo.com), now to reserve and pay for your spot. You may send your checks (or info for paying by credit card) to David Koppel, KHE, PO Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470. Please make sure to provide David with your email so we can send you our "what to bring" list and any last-minute information.**

If you would love to participate but don't relish sleeping in a tent, contact Leslie Levitas <[leslielevitas@yahoo.com](mailto:leslielevitas@yahoo.com)> who lives in Lakeport and graciously writes, "If anyone is uncomfortable camping out or unable to for health or other reasons, they are welcome to sleep over at my house that weekend, which is about a 20 min. drive to the state park on Soda Bay Road. I have a guest room which can accommodate 2 and a small (rather rustic) studio behind my house which can accommodate 2. Please extend my housing offer to any participants and feel free to give them my email and phone # (263-6981)."

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### April's Movie of the Month

Saturday, April 16, at 7:30 pm

A Serious Man (2009)

Larry Gopnik (Golden Globe nominee Michael Stuhlbarg) has hit a "rough patch," according to a colleague, and it would seem so: people are dropping dead all around him, his wife (Sari Lennick) wants a "get" and his whining kids (Aaron Wolff and Jessica McManus) only add to the heavy load. Larry is just looking for some help. Can a few rabbis guide him to life's answers? Richard Kind co-stars in Joel Coen and Ethan Coen's 1960s-set, dark Jewish-culture send-up.

**At My Mother's Table**  
© 2009 Amy Wachspress

There was always room at my mother's table for another chair. Educated as a social worker, she was fascinated by people and the cultures from which they came. For this reason, she signed on as a placement coordinator for the Experiment in International Living. That is how I became the "little sister" to a Taiwanese brother, a Palestinian brother, and a Turkish brother, and shared my dinner table with countless other foreign students from around the world while I was growing up.

Mom placed foreign exchange students in host homes for one month before the students went off to attend college in America. The host home placement was meant to assist the student in adjusting to American culture. One of the greatest challenges, of course, was providing students with familiar food. It should come as no surprise that a key contributing factor to homesickness for foreign students is the adjustment to American cuisine. They yearned for their mother's and grandmother's cooking.

One of Mom's greatest successes was her ability to accommodate an African student who could not find anything to eat in America that even vaguely resembled the food he ate at home. (This was in the 1960s, when international cuisine was not as prolific as it is today.) He was a picky eater to begin with and he was utterly miserable until Mom did some research and instructed his host home mother to feed the young man steamed spinach and peanut butter with a baked sweet potato. Further trial-and-error visits to the grocery store resulted in other food combinations that reminded the young African of food from home.

When my Taiwanese brother first arrived stateside, he was an adventurous eater. Unlike the African who wanted familiar food, my Taiwanese brother was game to try whatever Mom cooked. Unfortunately, he was so polite that he refrained from telling her if he didn't like something. He ate it and declined the next time. If you knew how polite he was, you would understand the enormity of his response when Mom attempted to feed him cottage cheese. He took one taste and set his fork down, gagging. Mom apologized, so did he, both of them embarrassed. He blurted, "That stuff tastes like glue."

Although she was an excellent cook, Mom didn't particularly enjoy cooking. It was a task she did to nourish and care for her family and her household. She did, however, enjoy pleasing our foreign students by discovering food familiar to them and preparing it for them, often with their help. Certainly this injected more fun into the task of cooking for Mom.

When my parents took in my Palestinian brother, it caused quite a few raised eyebrows in our community. Our family is Jewish and the synagogue to which we belonged was loaded with avid supporters of the State of Israel. Some of my parents' friends and acquaintances questioned their decision to open their home to a Palestinian. My parents were not concerned with public opinion. They did what was right. My Palestinian brother was the youngest of seven children from a Christian Arab family in Beirut. His older sister lived in our home town, taught English at the high school, and spent two years laying the groundwork to bring her little brother out of Beirut before he was conscripted into the army. Only weeks before his arrival, his sister was forced to emigrate to Canada by the INS. Before her hasty departure, my parents arranged for her brother to move in with our family. He lived with us for over a year, then went to college nearby (coming home often), and finally emigrated to Canada to be near his sister. While he stayed with us, Mom learned how to cook an assortment of Lebanese dishes. She discovered an import store in a nearby town and took my Palestinian brother there to seek out foods familiar to him. Thus, she had a good source for imported food when she took in my Turkish brother. My Turkish brother lived with us for only a month; however, he returned to us for part of the summer and during most of his college vacations while completing his master's degree because he couldn't afford the airfare to return to Istanbul.

Mom's open door policy and involvement in the Experiment in International Living led to her most challenging culinary moment, which occurred when I was a freshman in college and I returned home for the Jewish Passover holiday. Mom kept a kosher house, meaning she would not cook meat and dairy together in the same meal and she did not prepare un-kosher meat or fish (such as pork or shellfish). She had painstakingly trained the Taiwanese, the Palestinian, and the Turk in how to keep kosher so they wouldn't accidentally mix up her meat and dairy dishes or silverware and un-kosher her kitchen. For Passover, she removed all her plates, cups, and silverware from her cupboards and drawers and replaced them with her Passover kitchenware (a meat set and a dairy set). She taped many of the drawers and cupboards shut, covered others with plastic, and she removed all prohibited food from the house. For one entire week, her kitchen produced only foods deemed kosher for Passover in the Ashkenazi tradition, which forbade any foods made from grains (except matzo) or legumes. No wheat, rye, barley, rice, pasta, beans, lentils, peas, soy, soy oil; the list goes on.

On this particular Passover, when I returned home, Mom had a houseful. My paternal grandmother, a diabetic with a heart condition, had moved in with my parents. She was on a restricted diet. My Palestinian brother, a Christian, was in Lent so he couldn't eat meat. The Turk, a Muslim, was in Ramadan, when it is customary for Muslims to fast while the sun is in the sky. I am vegetarian (no meat or fish). If memory serves, at that time a high school friend of mine was living in the basement while she attended a nearby college. An Italian Catholic (also in Lent), my basement-dwelling friend was still learning my mother's kosher house (mainly under the Turkish Muslim's tutelage). And another friend of mine (a lapsed Anglican), visiting from Scotland, was living in the den until he recovered from a medication allergy that had landed him in the hospital while touring the U.S. He had never met a Muslim or a Palestinian before. I was the first Jew he had ever known. He had no idea what Jews ate during Passover and relied on the Muslim and the Palestinian to help him navigate the kosher kitchen because Mom had taught them how to keep kosher. The Taiwanese was not present during this particular Passover season.

Armed with little more than twenty boxes of matzo, dozens of eggs, six jars of borscht, and ten pounds of gefilte fish (an acquired taste to say the least), Mom faced the dubious task of preparing a meal every evening for this eclectic household, which, by-the-way, also included my two younger brothers and Dad. Let me add that one of my brothers has celiac and the other is an extremely picky eater who, at that time, lived on ketchup sandwiches. (Ketchup and matzo?) The food situation was, to say the least, mind-boggling. On my first night at home, Mom called everyone into the dining room where she laid the ground rules. "I have filled the refrigerator and cupboards with food that is kosher for Passover," she informed us. "I am not cooking this week for anyone other than Grandma. The rest of you will have to forage and prepare whatever appeals to you, whatever you are allowed, at whatever time you want to eat or are permitted to eat. Just don't un-kosher my kitchen."

When Mom fell gravely ill in 2003, prayer circles of every religious denomination in places around the globe spoke her name and prayed for her recovery. And when Mom passed away in 2005, my Taiwanese brother drove four hours to her memorial service, my Palestinian brother flew in from Canada, and my Turkish brother phoned from Istanbul to speak with each of us in turn and tell us how much he wished he could be there to break bread with us at my mother's table.

**Dear KHE Chaverim,**

Do you get hungry to study traditional Jewish texts the way I do? Do you love to delve into the language, the meaning, and the context of what you're reading? Some texts may seem arcane or archaic, some may seem foreign and alien to your way of thinking, and some may evoke a grand "aha!"; yes, wonderful back then, and wonderful today! Thus, for me, are the lines of Hillel, from over 2000 years ago: "If I am not for myself, who will be for me? If I am for myself only, what am I? And if not now, when?" Perhaps you first heard this quote in your youth, as I did. These pithy lines have stayed with me over the decades as an apt guide for living well. They are as relevant today as they were back then. Do you have a idea where they're from? Would you have guessed the *Talmud (Pirkei Avot 1:14)*? Although many of our male ancestors just a few generations back probably spent a good deal of their youth studying Talmud, for most of us it has become an inaccessible repository of ancient rabbinic arguments. Have you ever spent time delving into Talmudic text? Have you imagined yourself doing so? Well, you now have the opportunity, in our upcoming series of classes on *Pirkei Avot*.

*Pirkei Avot* (Sayings of the Fathers) is a compendium of teachings and maxims spanning some 400 years, from 200 B.C.E to 200 C.E., when they were written down for the first time. Until then, texts had been memorized and passed on orally from one generation to the next. Unlike many Talmudic tractates, *Pirkei Avot* does not focus on *halachah* (issues of Jewish law), but rather on guiding principles and insights for living well. Thus *Pirkei Avot*, which literally means "chapters of the fathers/ancestors," is oftentimes rendered into English as "Ethics of the Fathers." Some of the sayings are anonymous, but many come with their author's name attached. So in reading the sayings, we also can often get a feel for the person who coined them.

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*B'shalom oovrachah, Shoshanah*

**Pirkei Avot: 7 pm, successive Mondays at the Shul: April 5, April 12, April 19, April 26, May 3, May 10**

### **Counting the Omer:**

The practice of counting the *Omer* is a means of consciously clarifying our personal qualities as we move from a slavery mentality (pre-Pesach) through freedom to our bonding with the divine on Shavuot. Google "Counting the Omer" and see which of the many offerings may appeal to you for your daily practice, which begins on the 2nd day of Passover and runs until Shavuot.

## **In my opinion:**

I have come to a new realization. Perhaps this is true maturity. I don't have to do it all myself. Besides, who said my way is the best it can be?

During the recent visit of my granddaughter Anna, she pointed out that even though I was careful of taking short showers because water in California is not to be wasted, she was more ecologically sound and maybe better at dishwashing. Anna properly scrubs each dish with soapy water and then rinses them all together. Hers is the preferred way. Best of all, she did the work and I loved watching her.

Also I realized that I love having someone else cut the grass, transplant the potted plants, and trim the weeds. My daughter spent a happy morning taking care of my outdoor plants. My arthritic knees cheered. I loved watching my family do my chores. In their absence I will hire out some tasks that are becoming difficult for me.

However, this new maturity doesn't seem to work so well at KHE. We have a small, very committed Board and sometimes it does feel like if we didn't do what ever it is, it wouldn't happen. We need at least two more people to join the Board, with one possibly volunteering to be president, (if not now, hopefully in the near future).

Yes, we have been blessed by people who continue to serve our community. Please check out the Shul garden, it's truly beautiful, thanks to Louisa. However, even Louisa, (at long last ), is supervising a paid gardener. Also the Meal Program for the Hungry: Cassie Gibson's been volunteering at this project forever. She and her helper Dan Hibshman and the loyal monthly volunteers show up the third week of every month to make sandwiches or a hot meal. Tal Sizemore has been sending out the newsletter since Adam was on the mailing list, and Dan Hibshman corrects my spelling and grammar (no easy task) in the Shema month after month.

Now I guess I'm talking about Shabbat. I asked last month why so few have attended recently or seem to want to have a service at their home. No one answered. I wish you would. We can't make things better or meet your expectations unless you tell us what you want.

Actually, it might be because some of us keep doing what we have done for so long that all of you out there have lost interest and feel not needed. If this is so, please come forward, we would love to have you show us your way. It might be much better than what we thought was the only way.

Love, *Carol*

P.S.

We need a crew to take down the old shed behind the Shul before it falls down. Tell me when you are available. We need to plan a work day as soon as possible.

Carol, 463-8526



**Mendocino County Jewish Communities/Inland  
Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)  
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>	<b>468-4536</b>
Board Members:	
Carol Rosenberg, President	463-8526
David Koppel, Treasurer (Financial Committee)	485-8910
Nancy Merling (Secretary)	456-0639
Divora Stern, V.P.	459-9052
Alan Acorn Sunbeam	463-8364
Steven Levin	462-3131
Robert Klayman	391-6114

**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 Gitlin, D.O. (485-7406); Sam Goldberg, M.D. (463-8000); Jeremy Mann, M.D. (463-8000); Sid Mauer, M.D. (463-8000)

**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 468-4536)

**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) and Robert Klayman 391-6114 [rklayman@mhcinc.org](mailto:rklayman@mhcinc.org)

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

**Rabbi's Council:** 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)