

September 12, 2023 --- 26<sup>th</sup> of Elul, 5783



The Shema-elah of Kol Ha'Emek (Voice of the Valley)  
Physical address 8591 West Road - Mailing address PO Box 416, Redwood Valley, 95470  
Phone: 707-468-4536

## SCHEDULE OF HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

**Friday, September 15, 7pm** Erev Rosh Hashanah led by Rabbi Paige Licenberg and Kohenet Rayna Grace. Followed by Kiddush.

**Saturday, September 16:**

- **10am** Rosh Hashanah Service led by Rabbi Paige Licenberg and Kohenet Rayna Grace
- **10am** Rosh Hashanah Children's Service led by Shai Schnall
- **1pm** Tashlich with Janae Stephens: Potluck lunch followed by Tachlich. Lake Mendocino, Area B. Look for a balloon or sign to see where we are because we never know what area will be open. Bring a potluck dish to share, and bread to "cast away".

**Sunday, September 17,** Women's Mikvah at Walker Lake, TBA (this is still pending – stay tuned for more info)

**Sunday, September 24, 7pm** Kol Nidre Service, with Paige and Rayna Grace

**Monday, September 25, 10am.** Yom Kippur Service, with Paige and Rayna Grace

- **4pm** Open Torah
- **5pm** Yiskor Service
- **5:30pm** Closing Service, followed by Motzi and Vegetarian Potluck Break-fast on the deck

**Sunday, October 1, 4pm** Sukkot Service led by Kohenet Rayna Grace

**Sunday, October 8, 6pm** Simchas Torah led by the KHE Board

**All Services will be streaming at the following Zoom link:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7196947312?pwd=dDZEYkV4bkVQeGR1aVpuWE9UMmlQQT09>

**Interim Shema & Shema-elah Editors:**

Bob Mandel & Nancy Bertsch

\*If you have an article, news to share or a good idea, contact Nancy at [nancybeth615@sbcglobal.net](mailto:nancybeth615@sbcglobal.net)

Feeding the Hungry  
Sunday September 17, 2:00pm at Plowshares  
Call Dan Hibshman to volunteer 707-463-7471

## **Round The Table Shabbat Gatherings---A Grand Success !**

Kol HaEmek has begun a series of Round-the-Table Shabbat gatherings. These are opportunities for families with children and other members of the inland Jewish community to enjoy a catered meal, to learn Shabbat blessings and songs, and to connect with the community. Each Round-the-Table Shabbat dinner can accommodate 40 guests, and both have reached full capacity of guests young, old and in between.

At the August 18th gathering, we celebrated Shabbat as well as Rosh Chodesh Elul, the new moon and the beginning of the month of Elul. Kohenet Rayna Grace, who led the service, spoke of an ancient practice of observing and communicating the beginning of each Jewish month: if you saw the new crescent moon, you lit a fire on a mountain, and then the neighboring community would see it and light their own fire, and so on and so on. In this way, time was practiced and created communally.

Four year-old Oliver Kravitz' very successful first public shofar sounding (pictured below) was a definite highlight, and a great awakening to the beginning of Elul. The dinner, catered by Grazing Bull Catering, was completely delicious and had plenty of options for all eating preferences. After dinner, Rosalie Sizemore ran in excitedly. "Moon alert!!!" she cried. Sure enough, the lovely, tiny crescent moon was visible in the west now that the sun had set, and we gathered in the parking lot to bask in the wonder. We ended our service by singing out our many gratitudes: for this earth, community, family, the meal, ice cream and more.

Before, during and after the meal, the 15 children present found each other on the play structure, in the garden and in the playroom, and the adults greeted old friends, and welcomed at least 5 newcomers to the Shul. It was an evening enjoyed by all. The next Round-the-Table Shabbat is scheduled for November 10. We are already looking forward to having you at our table again.



## **Celebration of Life for Nancy Merling**

There will be a celebration of life September 17, 2023 at the Muse, 34 East San Francisco Avenue in Willits, from 1 to 3 pm. Bring food to share, stories and pictures in honor of Nancy. Contact Ileya Stewart, 707-354-2473

### **Nancy Merling**

Nancy Merling passed away just shy of her 86th birthday, on July 9, 2023. She was born July 12, 1937 and grew up



on the East Coast, the oldest of three girls. She told stories of her early life on a farm during the Depression and how her family made ends meet by the food they grew. The family later moved from the farm to an urban setting, her father pursuing a career in the interior decorative arts, eventually developing a business specializing in wallpaper and paint products.

After achieving a bachelor of science in home economics, Nancy followed her passion for food by co-creating a successful catering business with a friend. Upon retiring, she sold her business and her home in Jersey, and moved to Willits in the mid-1990s to be close to her sister, Marlana River. She then became an integral part of Marlana River's and Ileya Stewart's ceramics businesses, by painting and developing beautiful floral patterns.

Nancy loved to share her detailed knowledge of the culinary arts gained from years of experience and was always up for an adventure. She traveled to China with her sister Harriet, and to the East Coast regularly to visit her daughters and grandchildren.

Nancy enjoyed spontaneous excursions, such as spa days in Calistoga, culinary experiences in Napa and Sonoma, and trips to the Mendocino coast. In support of local chefs, she regularly attended cooking classes with her friends.

Nancy is preceded in death by her parents, Aaron and Florence Shames, and her sister Marlana River. She is survived by her three daughters, Wendy Ward, Jodie Waltzer, and Devorah Merling; five grandchildren, Jack, Skylar, Ethan, Emery, and Levi; her sister Harriet Weitzman; nephews Shannon and Jeffrey, and nieces Debbie, Lisa, and Simone.

There will be a celebration of life September 17, 2023 at the Muse, 34 East San Francisco Avenue in Willits, from 1 to 3 pm. Bring food to share, stories and pictures in honor of Nancy.

Contact Ileya Stewart, 707-354-2473.

*Thank you to the generosity of Norm and Karen Rosen whose contribution makes the Round-the-Table Shabbat series possible.*

## **TODA RABA AND LEITRAOT TO OUR BELOVED CAROL ROSENBERG**

By  
Karen Rifkin

*If I'm not for myself, who will be for me, if not now,  
when; but if I'm only for myself, what am I?~~Hillel*



Carol got behind the wheel of her car in the early spring of '79 and, with her daughter Deborah, drove cross country from Union, New Jersey, to relocate and run NCO's Nutritional Program for Lake and Mendocino Counties.

When they arrived where I-5 intersects Highway 20 and saw the green-covered hills dotted with cows, she says, "we thought we were in a fairyland."

She settled in Willits, helped Jan Moore incorporate the senior centers, making sure they had stoves, refrigerators and sinks, traveled the county and loved it.

"People paid me to drive in the most beautiful country in the world."

Talking with her at home among boxes ready for moving, she reminisces about the famous Hanukah of '80 when a friend helped her and Nancy MHB, who lived in the old church behind her house, make "zillions of latkes." They put an ad in the paper, Hanan came over from the coast and all the folks from the hills came down to celebrate.

"We did a number of holidays in my tiny cottage. We had visiting rabbis doing services at people's homes."

In '82, the first community Seder took place in Willits with over 100 people in attendance.

The same year, Norm Rosen helped to incorporate the coast and inland Jewish communities; Carol was one of the initial directors.

In '83, as secretary of the board and in the absence of Board President Harvey Frankel, she conducted one of the first meetings at the Boonville Hotel

Soon after, she went to work for the Sonoma Council on Aging and subsequently moved to the Bay Area to head up the Nutrition Program for the City of Berkeley for the next 13 1/2 years, running kitchens, doing social work and as an analyst for Solid Waste.

"I went from kitchens to garbage," she says with a smile.

During her absence, in '91 our community obtained a Westminster Torah originally from the Czech shtetl of Pisek; in '92 the inland community incorporated separately and changed its name to Kol Ha'Emek, Voice of the Valley.

Carol retired in '99, needed a home base, moved back to Ukiah and bought her home on Spring and Jones.

“The roof had grass on it and there were holes in the floor.”

She painted it inside and out and worked with a contractor who made it liveable.

“I intended to travel but spent so much time fixing the house, I never got around to it.”

In 2000, Board President Harvey Frankel told her she needed to be on the board; she remained a member until her recent move to Ashland where her daughter Deborah lives.

That same year, “Robbie Gitlin wanted a schul and persuaded 9 other people to put up \$1,000 to begin the process of buying the building on West Road.

“I remember, being on my hands and knees, happily pulling up the staples from the old carpet in that building.”

In 2003 the schul was ready; the community paraded from the Koppel’s house, carrying the Torah to its new home.

That same year, when Elizabeth Raybee was board president, it was apparent that the community needed its own rabbi; Shoshana was hired for High Holidays services and led us for the next 13 years.

She attributes her dedication to the community to the fact that she has no family close by and had more time available than others.

“If you’re having any kind of event, Shabbat service or a major do, you prepare in advance so when people arrive it’s all set up for them. If it means getting to schul 20 minutes ahead of time and making sure chairs are set up, candles are on the bema, tablecloths are set and food is ready, so be it. That’s really important to me and I would make sure that would happen.”

“It’s very important to know that being Jewish is a good thing, especially in an environment foreign to Judaism (i.e., almost everywhere).

“If you know who you are, you can understand and be more accepting of others.

“It’s very lonesome-making if you are the only kid who has Hanukah and everyone else is talking about Christmas. My own kids experienced that.

“We were able to create a cousinhood at the schul so if you saw someone from Sunday School at regular school, you could smile at them and know you’re not alone.”

There were the teachers: early childhood teacher extraordinaire Linda Koppel, Karla Gitlin, Michael Charnes and Sara Esserman (before her marriage to Tony.)

“We had 22 kids, a grant from the Chevra Kadisha in S.F. and people came from Anderson Valley, from Lake County to make sure their kids had Sunday School.

We are wrapping up.

“If you see a need in the Jewish. Community, the homeless community, the political community, it’s your job to help make the world a better place. Go help someone else. That’s what’s important to me.”

**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.

- To provide space for religious study and prayer and sponsor Jewish education for all ages
- To be inclusive of all partnerships 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 as a community through socially just actions and by Mitzvot

**Kol HaEmek Information and Resources - Main Phone Number: (707) 468-4536**

Board Members:

Sherrie Ebyam -President	530-414-1104	<a href="mailto:ebyam@sbcglobal.net">ebyam@sbcglobal.net</a>
David Koppel - Treasurer	707-485-8910	<a href="mailto:davekoppel@yahoo.com">davekoppel@yahoo.com</a>
Sara Esserman-Melville Secretary	707-391-9244	<a href="mailto:sesserville@gmail.com">sesserville@gmail.com</a>
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**If you or someone you know would like to serve on the Board, please contact Sherrie Ebyam**

Community Services:

**Brit Mila** - in doctor's office or in your home  
**Robert Gitlin D.O. - 707-465-7406**

**Chevra Kadisha** - Jewish Burial  
**Helen Sizemore - 707-367-0250**

**Community Support**  
**Willits, Divora Stern - 707-459-9052**  
**Ukiah, Margo Frank - 707-463-1834**

**Outreach Coordinator: Rayna Grace**  
**(707) 703-9189 [rayna.grace.matthews@gmail.com](mailto:rayna.grace.matthews@gmail.com)**

**Interfaith Council**  
**Cassie Gibson - 707-468-5351)**

**Rabbinical Services** - Special Ceremonies are available  
Send your e-mail request to Sherrie Ebyam