



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

January 2007

P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470 Phone # 707-468-4536

Tevet-Shevet 57647

Please note all submissions preferred by the 15th of each month to carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net

See our website: www.kolhaemek.org

Events in January

Tuesday, January 2, 6:30 pm at the Koppels' home, KHE Board meeting; Kashrut (kosher) policy at the Shul will be discussed

Thursday, January, 4 & 11, 5:30 pm - Linda Posner's class in Torah reading

Friday, January 5, 6:30 pm - Shabbat service led by Linda Posner and dairy potluck supper

Sunday January 7, 10:00 - Work day at the Shul

Friday, January 19, 6:30 pm - Shabbat service led by R. Shoshanah and dairy potluck supper.

Sunday, January 21, 10 am - Prepare sack lunches at Ukiah United Methodist Church (call Cassie, 468-5351)

Sunday, January 21, 1:00 pm - New Members Luncheon, followed at **3:00 pm** by general meeting of all members

Wednesday, January 31, 6:30 pm - Men's meeting, includes a Dairy potluck supper and a discussion led by Dan Hibshman (the director of the recent staged reading) of David Mamet's play "American Buffalo"

Sunday, January 28, 2-4 pm - "Making the Most of Our Wisdom Years" the first in a series of classes led R. Shoshanah and Margo Frank (see page 6)

Friday, February 2, 6:30 pm - Tu B'Shevat/ Shabbat service and potluck

New Members Luncheon Sunday, January 21 at 1:00 pm

Each January KHE has enjoyed a traditional brunch at which new members and potential new members meet the Board of Directors, the Rabbi and others in an informal setting. This gives people the opportunity to talk with each other and to have their questions answered.

This year's luncheon will be prepared by Board members and served after Sunday school on **Sunday, January 21**, at 1:00 pm. All participants in our community are welcome as well. (Unlike newcomers, they may bring a potluck dairy or parve dish to share.)

We have also scheduled a general membership meeting at 3:00 pm, following the meal. If you are unable to come to the luncheon, please come afterward; we need your creative ideas, and suggestions for fund raising and program development. We want to hear your complaints as well! Your Board is planning a retreat in February, and we want to know your priorities and wishes so we can better meet the community's needs.



Torah Portions of the Week

January 6 - Vayechi

January 13 - Shemoth

January 20 - Vaera

January 27 - Bo

February 3 - **Tu B'Shevat** Beshalach Shira



Garden Report

I'll be taking a few weeks off from gardening, but the plants keep growing! You probably noticed that I started the windbreak/privacy screen by the south parking lot. I purchased many more drought-resistant plants at the Sonoma County Jail, and I'm gradually putting them in. My plans for the winter include: Etrog on south side of building; carob, etc, in winebarrels in front of the building for shade; more drought-resistant shrubs and groundcover in front; and start making the mound for the "Peace Garden" in back.

It's been GREAT to have some money to pay a kid to help. When the grass starts growing, I will employ someone to keep it under control.

Please let me know if you have other ideas about the landscaping, or if you think I'm getting excessive.
Shalom, Louisa

Mark your calendar

Reb Zalman Schachter and his wife, Eve Ilsen, will lead a west coast Shabbaton on the weekend of April 13-15, at Rabbi David Zaslow's congregation, Havurat Shir Hadash in Ashland, Oregon. Fees and details to follow.

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) Feeding the Jewish and Arab hungry 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.

We remember:

Marion Frank - Tevet 20
Pearl Turovitz - Tevet 14
Jannett Allinikov - 1/1
Tom Lowenstein - 1/21
Joshua Edelman - 1/30
Jacob Borkan - 1/22

Purpose, Mission, and Policies of Kol HaEmek:

(The following is both a reminder of what is published each month in the *Shema* as well as comments about how the KHE Board is currently interpreting our purpose, mission, and policies.)

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

To further the purposes and goals of this organization:

We will encourage and support individuals and groups with similar values to use our facilities at no or nominal cost. (Since our congregation could not have survived were it not for the generosity of other faith-based organizations and churches allowing us to use their facilities at nominal or no cost, we will extend the same generosity of spirit to other faith-based and community groups.) We will encourage and provide for persons with additional resources of Jewish teachings and supporters of tikkun olam the use of our facility to teach and study. The Board of Directors will be responsible for deciding whether a teacher is responsible and has reasonable credentials and is able to maintain the safety of the participants and the building. The teacher(s) will sign out a key for a specific period of time and return the key at the close of the classes or event. All persons using the building will be given instruction in its use and informed that only food that is vegetable, dairy or fish with scales is to be brought into or eaten inside the building.

The Board because of its duty of fiscal responsibility to the Kol HaEmek community will require all groups using our facility to name us as second insured for the period of time they are using our building.

Teacher(s) or groups may ask for nominal donations to support their work. The board may also ask for minimum donation for utilities or other maintenance costs.

Since the definition of socially just actions, education, and even mitzvot may be open to interpretation, the Board requests that persons will (as much as possible) present a balanced view as they bring important and current topics to the attention of their audiences and be respectful of views and opinions different from their own.

Approved by the KHE Board of Directors December 5, 2006

In My Opinion:

Being the Chair of the Board isn't any fun! Or at least it hasn't been pleasant recently. A couple of weeks ago I had to remind people to pay their dues. Yesterday I had to send e-mails to the men's group reminding them of the food policies of the Shul. Today I had to remind a teacher that if you don't start on time people come later and later, and also I had to tell a most valued and appreciated volunteer that their priorities may not be best for the building. It seems it's my job to do what others don't want to do, and do by acting as soon as possible.

It's a good thing that most of the roles I filled in this life have taught me that the only way to do something unpleasant is to do it as soon as possible. This allows the healing to start promptly as well. I do try to put myself in the other's shoes so the person I'm speaking to can hear what I'm saying without putting up a defensive wall. I'm still trying to always bring the issue to the person directly involved, not to ask others to deliver a painful message for me. Since I have been a wife, a mother, a "petty bureaucrat" and a supervisor of reluctant kitchen workers, I guess I have been trained for this job. I do, however, ask your help. If I step on your toes, or if the policies your Board sets do not meet your needs or your interpretation of Jewish values, CALL! I can place your concerns on the agenda and then you may come before the Board and tell us what you think will be best for the community. We might not agree with you, but at least you will know what is our thinking and that you stood up for yourself and your values.

Sincerely, *Carol Rosenberg*

A Message from Charlie Seltzer,

Senior Prevention Coordinator,
Mendocino County AODP (Alcohol and
Other Drugs) Program

Underage and binge drinking are serious problems in Mendocino County. In a 2005 survey conducted in our county, 60% of high school respondents reported drinking alcohol in the past 30 days. Almost half said they had 4 or more drinks at one sitting--that's binge drinking.

Report on a Talk by Audrey Bertsch

What a delight it was to hear Audrey Bertsch, at Shabbat services on December 1, share her experiences this summer in the Adamah program. Adamah means earth, and this earth-based program takes place at what she described as a very beautiful and spacious Jewish retreat center in Connecticut. The center also hosts Elat Chayyim, which offers round-the-year mini-retreats on varied topics of Jewish spirituality, and so the Adamah folks had the added benefit of meeting with teachers from Elat Chayyim (until this year, Elat Chayyim was located in New York State).

Audrey, who grew up locally, is the daughter of Janet Mendell; she currently lives in the East Bay with housemates she met through Adamah. At Shabbat she shared with us how she was looking for what was next in her life (she's 24) and discovered this program of Jewish spirituality, ecology, and farming by searching the Internet. Living rustically in tents, Adamah participants spent time each morning meditating, praying together (renewal style, with lots of chanting,) and in *hitbodedut*, a practice encouraged by the chasid Reb Nachman which includes talking to God each day on a one-to-one basis. Often these morning disciplines happened in the beautiful woods of the retreat center. Afterwards, daily efforts turned to organic farming.

Audrey made it clear that she thrived in this program, and she would be glad to talk with anyone wanting to know more about it. It's open to folks in their twenties, and this past summer, at least, they were paid a stipend to attend.

She can be contacted at audreyjb@gmail.com.

You can find out more about Adamah and other programs of the center at www.isabellafreedman.org

(Charlie, cont'd)

38% said their parents don't know about their drinking. The Mendocino County Public Health Dept. has a new website that can help parents:

www.stopteendrinking.org

Here you will find tip cards for parents, downloads, TV spots, brochures, pamphlets and local resources to help you talk to your kids about underage drinking and binge drinking.

Charlie's e-mail: seltzer@co.mendocino.ca.us

From: Karin Wandrei <kwandrei@pacific.net>
Re: Bruce's comments, Shema 12-06

I would like to respond to Bruce Andich's remarks in the December newsletter. I have worked for 30 years in the nonprofit sector and currently am the director of a nonprofit. I am very familiar with the issue he raises about nonprofits and political discussions. The law is quite clear that as a 501c3 (a private nonprofit tax exempt organization) KHE cannot endorse candidates for office. That doesn't mean that individuals can't as individuals. They can also state their affiliation for identification purposes only (you will often see this statement on political endorsements). The law does not limit political discussions or even endorsing legislation. Legally we are not jeopardizing our nonprofit status and I agree with Bruce that we may be violating the Constitution if we disallow such speech. We only would go over the line, for example, if we were discussing the war in Iraq and then we, as an organization, said that people should vote for (or against) certain candidates based on their record.

Now whether or not we want to is a whole other issue. But frankly, I think it is hard to not do so. How can you show "An Inconvenient Truth" (the Al Gore movie) without talking about political issues? Shoshanah has also taught classes where it would have been hard to not talk about political issues (for example, on Jews and the environment, or on anti-Semitism). And of course, as Bruce says, what is a political discussion? Who determines what this is?

So all I can suggest is that we be mindful of how we interact with other members when we have political discussions. We need to remember that what brings us together is Judaism but there are many differences within our community. As a community, we need to be respectful of these differences, and know that sometimes we will need to agree to disagree.

Karin Wandrei

GETTING THROUGH THE ROUGH SPOTS OF PARENTING WITH A LITTLE HELP FROM JEWISH TEACHINGS

Six sessions with Rabbi Shoshanah

After receiving emails and then reading articles recommending "The Blessing of a Skinned Knee" I bought this paperback which focuses on Using Jewish Teachings to Raise Self-Reliant Children. Author Wendy Mogel is a child psychologist, who after 15 years of clinical practice discovered that Jewish tradition offers much-needed wisdom and guidance in child-rearing. As she says, "My purpose...is to help mothers and fathers develop a spiritually based parenting philosophy that will enable them to handle the rough spots in their children's development themselves rather than turn to an expert every time a child veers off track" (p. 31).

Using the book as a guide, we will follow her study outline and meet for 6 sessions to discuss the down-to-earth parenting practices she recommends.

To make this convenient for parents, we will meet at the Shul during Shul School hours. This means we will not meet on consecutive Sundays, due to school breaks and days when I am scheduled to be with the kids.

So our schedule is to meet at the Shul from 10-12 on the following Sundays: **Feb. 4, March 18, March 25, April 1, April 22, April 29.**

Please come with your own copy of the book, and for our first gathering on Feb. 4, please have read chapters 1 and 2.

The books may be ordered from Amazon.com. The Mendocino Book Co. in Ukiah has ordered a few copies and can get more in a day or two.

Kol Ha Emek Focuses on End(s) of Life

Announcing the first two in a series of three gatherings on Sunday afternoons at the Shul between 2 and 4 pm:

Jan 28th - MAKING THE MOST OF OUR WISDOM YEARS with Margo Frank and Rabbi Shoshanah. As we are getting older, how do we harvest our lives, and move from “Aging into Saging”? What are our optimum tasks and options as we age?

How can Jewish tradition and wisdom inform our direction and choices?

Feb. 11 - TALKING ABOUT THE HARD STUFF with Margo Frank and Rabbi Shoshanah - tools for discussing end-of-life scenarios for our parents and ourselves. How do we honor our parents and ourselves “when the time comes”? How do Jewish law and tradition inform decisions around dying, including questions about pulling the plug, prolonging life by extraordinary measures, and assisted suicide?

In her work life, Margo is a clinical social worker. She has worked extensively with elders and their caregivers. Margo worked in the Jewish community in San Francisco for over 10 years, serving as a social worker at the Jewish Home for the Aged and with the Seniors at Home Program of Jewish and Family Services. In her private psychotherapy practice, Margo has specialized in working with issues of caregiving, grief and loss. She currently leads a support group for Adults with Aging Parents and is a Renal Social Worker at DaVita Dialysis Clinic.

Margo says, “I love to work with issues of growing old and dying. It used to be more theoretical but when my parents were at the end of their lives it became much more personal. Now it seems to be what calls to me. I hope these workshops will generate much more discussion within our community.”

Shoshanah was a founding member of the Boulder, Colorado, Chevra Kadisha and went on to become its rabbi several years later. As a certified chaplain, she has worked with the dying and their families in hospitals in Boulder, Denver, and Seattle, and currently serves as the interfaith chaplain for Hospice of Ukiah. As rabbi of KHE, Shoshanah aims to support community members in all phases of the life cycle.

Chevre Kadisha film & community potluck supper

The birthday of Moses is the day traditionally identified to honor the Holy Committee of the Jewish Community. The Chevra Kadisha, Kol Ha Emek's active Holy Committee invites you to a showing of the film - Chesed Shel Emet “Kindness of Real Truth” with Rabbi Jeremy Kalminovsky (from Anshe Chesed, NYC) on February 25, 2007, at 2pm.

The film is an inspiring conference talk and explains that the Chevra Kadisha, like the sixty mighty heroes helping us face the terrors of the night, is noted for its devotion, diligence and generosity. The Chevra Kadisha helps the community by enhancing the communal life of service, sharing the observance of mitzvot, providing radical hospitality, and increasing spirituality.

The community is invited to honor the Chevra Kadisha for the holy work they perform by sharing the film and a potluck supper.

It is not too soon to learn about your Jewish future.

Thank you,
Helen

Last year's objective
is it or is it not done?
yes, we will do it

by David Vilner



Dear KHE Chaverim,

Last month's *Shema* included a letter calling for a clarification of "the relationship between our 'non-profit' status and 'political discussions' that were forbidden post-flic [Gore film: An Inconvenient Truth] last night. That is, my understanding from being on non-profit boards is that the organization cannot use its name to endorse any partisan political candidate publicly. That makes sense. Since I was the person asking that our discussion stay non-partisan, I want to respond to these comments. First of all, I never called for staying away from political issues. I like how the writer asks, near the end of his letter, "Lastly: who determines what discussion is 'political'?" He answers by quoting Aristotle, who, he says, originally defined the term to mean something like "the art of people deciding how to live together."

What I did request was that we stay away from partisan comments on this particular evening, which was during the time of election campaigning. Now I can honestly admit that I was not clear about the law, and I thought we needed to avoid comments pro or con particular candidates or party leaders in order to be in legal compliance. Several people soon after the meeting let me know that members of a non-profit can; it is the organization itself that cannot endorse a pro or con partisan position. Individuals may legally express any partisan opinions they want to during a meeting. Thus, it would be unwise and probably illegal for me, as rabbi of KHE, or the Board, to take a partisan stand. I double-checked this with one of our lawyer members, who confirmed this understanding. So I stand corrected.

Having resolved the legal issue, I want to address the letter writer's "possible argument" that "the shul, being a sanctified space, shouldn't? lower? its holiness by allowing potentially inflammatory discussion. Perhaps we could run amok and things could degenerate into a Rush Limbaugh/Fox News kind of thing?"

Our community, and as individuals within our KHE community, might address these issues on a practical level. It was on my initiative that we showed the film, and I was not interested in it becoming a vehicle for assigning blame, but rather for generating helpful behavior. And I am gratified that so many people attended and participated in the discussion afterwards. Truth is, I wanted the discussion to focus on the issues raised in the film, and how we as a group of interested persons has continued to meet by email and in person to promote eco-conscious practices in our KHE community.

I have seen public meetings degenerate when inflammatory discussion causes folks to lose the common focus and become purely accusatory, derogatory, and factional. One way to keep the sanctity of a group (whatever group wherever, and not just in the Shul), when divisive opinions are likely to tear a group apart, is to honor each person's voice with a listening circle, in which participants have the opportunity to express themselves one after another without any cross-conversation.

This past Tisha B'Av, after reading the Biblical Lamentations traditional to the day, we had such a listening circle so people could express whatever they needed to about the Israel/Lebanon conflagration which was then at its height. A diversity of opinions were heard and held by the group, without commentary on what others had said. This format is very helpful for respectfully defusing potentially explosive and combative situations, but didn't seem appropriate or necessary for our post-film discussion. But it's a tool to remember if needed in the future.

The KHE Board, at its most recent meeting on December 5th, adopted a policy for use of our building. I was not a party to designing or commenting on the statement which follows, but it's relevant that it came forth at this time, and so I share it with you:

"Since socially just actions, education, and even mitzvot may be open to interpretation, the Board requests that persons will (as much as possible) present a balanced view as they bring important and current topics to the attention of our congregation and be respectful of views and opinions different from their own."

In accordance with Talmudic tradition, may our Shul be full of lively discussion and may each person's voice be welcomed as we aim to bring holiness and healing to our earthly endeavors. Thank you, Bruce Andich, for writing your letter quoted above. Further opinions are welcome....

B'Shalom oovrachah, In peace and blessing, *Shoshanah*

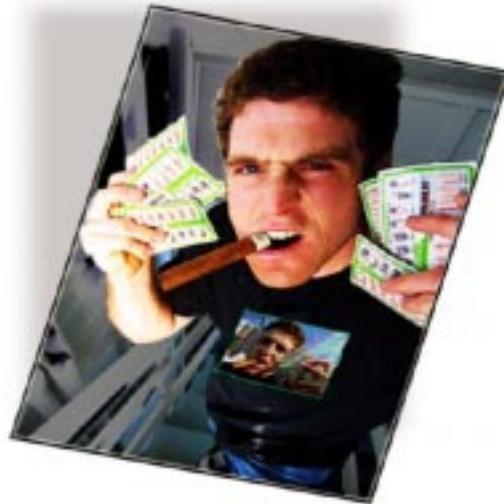
Boonville's own born and bred Mo Mandel,
alias Mohahn Mandelbaum, brings
***A NIGHT OF STAND-UP
COMEDY TO BOONVILLE***

At Laurens

Saturday January 13, 2007, 9pm



Joe Klocek has appeared on Comedy Central's "Laugh Riots" and is a national headliner who has worked with Dave Chappelle, Robin Williams, and even Mo Mandel.

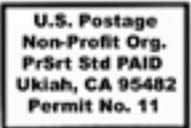


Mo Mandel recently placed third in the San Francisco International Comedy Competition 2006 and is thinking about entering this year's sheep dog trials.

**GET YOUR TICKETS EARLY! A FULL HOUSE IS EXPECTED.
TICKET PRICES: \$15 ADVANCED \$18 AT THE DOOR
ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE AT ALL THAT GOOD STUFF IN BOONVILLE,
OUT OF THIS WORLD IN MENDOCINO OR CONTACT BENNA: 895-3883**



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

Kol HaEmek	468-4536
Board Members:	
Carol Rosenberg, President	463-8526
Dan Hibshman, Vice President	462-7471
David Koppel, Treasurer (Financial committee)	485-8910
Bill Ray, Secretary	459-5850
Nancy Merling (Rabbi's Council)	456-0639
Divora Stern	459-9052
Alan Acorn Sunbeam	463-8364
Steven Levin	462-3131
Robert Klayman	462-5067

Address changes (e-mail, etc): contact David Koppel 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),

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

Chevre 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)

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: Bill Ray (459-5850)

New Members: Carol Rosenberg (463-8526)

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

Rabbinical Services/Special Ceremonies: Rabbi Shoshanah Devorah, 467-0456, sdevorah@gmail.com

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

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