



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

February 2007

P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470 Phone # 707.468.4536

Shevet- Adar 5767

Please note all submissions preferred by the 15th of each month to [carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net](mailto:carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net)

Check our website: [www.kolhaemek.org](http://www.kolhaemek.org)

### Coming Events:

**Friday, February 2**, 6:30 pm, Tu B' Shevat seder, Shabbat service, dairy/veggie potluck supper

**Sunday, February 4**, 10-12, Religious school & tree planting

**Sunday, February 4**, 10-12, Rabbi & parent discussion, "Blessings of a Skinned Knee"  
*Please read Chapters 1 and 2 for the first class.*

**Sunday, February 11**, 2-4 pm, "Talking About the Hard Stuff" with Margo Frank and Rabbi Shoshanah -- tools for discussing end-of-life scenarios for our parents and ourselves.

**Tuesday, February 13**, 7:00 pm, theatrical presentation "By the Well of Sarah and Hagar" by Dorit Bat Shalom and her Palestinian friend (see page 3)

**Friday, February 16**, 6:00 pm, Family-friendly Shabbat, candle lighting, blessings and dairy/veggie potluck

**Sunday, February 18**, 5:45 pm, Rosh Hodesh at the home of Nancy Moilanen - call 459-4039 for information and directions (see page 4)

**Sunday, February 18**, Preparing supper to be served at the Buddy Eller Shelter

**Sunday, February 18**, 10-4, KHE Board retreat

**Wednesday, February 22**, 6:00 pm, Men's group, veg/dairy potluck supper followed by meeting

**Saturday, February 25**, 6:00 pm, third in series on end-of-life; supper honoring Chevra Kadisha, film on burial practices (see page 2)

## Shushan @ The Shul!

**Saturday Evening, March 3**  
**8:00 pm**

*Belly Dancing, Music, Delectable Treats*  
*Costumes*  
*Prizes & Surprises*

**Fun & Games for Adults**  
**of all ages**  
**Silent and Live Auction**



*This is our major fundraiser for the year!*

*To help, call Nancy, 459-4039*



**Sunday, March 4, 1-4 Purim Party**  
**Hamantashen, Raffle,**  
**Games for children**  
**Music and**  
**Megillah Reading**  
Please volunteer to help us  
with both events:  
call Carol, 463-8526

## Portion of the Week & holidays

March 3 - Beshalach

March 10 - Yithro

March 17 - Mishpatim Shekalim

March 24 - Terumah

March 1 - Fast of Esther

March 3 - Tetzaveh

March 4 - PURIM

March 5 - Shushan Purim

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### An Opportunity for Tzedakah

The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund was established a few years ago by Margo Frank to honor her parents. Margo's mother had been active in community organizing and the open housing movement, and her dad enjoyed serving food at the shelter meals here. Every month our congregation sponsors either a sack lunch or shelter dinner for the hungry in Willits and Ukiah. It costs about \$120 each month to buy the food for these meals, which are prepared by our community members. Unfortunately, the donations do not keep pace with the expenditures, so the general fund helps cover these expenses. Margo would like to encourage everyone to consider donating to this fund. It's a lovely way to honor a birthday, Bar or Bat Mitzvah, wedding or other special event. Many congregations encourage annual donations to these funds at the High Holidays or at Pesach. Margo urges you to please consider how you might help support this social justice work in our community.

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### Supper for our Chevre Kadisha

As Jews, it is our long standing tradition to invite the members of the Chevre Kadisha to dinner on the yearzeit of Moses. We will share this meal after the third meeting of the 'aging and saging' discussion group and will be followed by a short video taped lecture from the annual Chevre Kadisha conference. The message is an articulate remembrance of excellent work, grounded in our tradition, where we serve the needs of those who have suffered the loss of a loved one. Please share your favorite dish with those who faithfully serve the community. *Helen Sizemore*

## 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:

Sudharma Kumari - Shevat 22

Nathan Horowitz - Shevat 3

Tom Shine Mapp - February 22

Louis Klayman - February

Rachel Faigin Bleicher - February 12

## **Rosh Hodesh-New Moon gathering for Women**

Women's *Rosh Hodesh* group (for the month of Adar) will be meeting at Nancy Moilanen's home 5:45 pm Sunday, Feb. 18th, 160 West Mendocino St. in Willits (tel: 459-4039). Bring something to share for a potluck. At the first meeting of the group in January (month of Shvat), it was decided that a different woman will lead each gathering at a venue of her choosing. New people are welcome to join.

### **"By the Well of Sarah and Hagar"**

- a Traveling Multi-media Art Installation & Ritual Theatre Creating a Sacred Space for Dialogue and Peace Work

Save the date - Tuesday, February 13, at 7 pm at our Shul - for a special showing of the play "By the Well of Sarah and Hagar".

Its two actors, one Jewish, one Muslim, hail from Israel/Palestine. One of them, Dorit Bat Shalom, lived in our area for several years. They traveled across the U.S. with the play a year ago, and are back on the road with it again. Entrance is by donation (we'll have a basket handy).

Publicity at their website, [www.toornet.co.il/bythewell](http://www.toornet.co.il/bythewell), tells us that Dorit Bat Shalom and Ibtisam Mahameed enable us to look into their hearts and minds and experience the peace in a war-torn land. Together they journey into the past and present, reflecting a much larger and ancient story in their personal narratives as Sarah and Hagar struggle, becoming seekers as women, as mothers, and as human beings.

This theatrical event leaves the audience crying, laughing, and feeling a sense of intimacy and responsibility to contribute to the pursuit of peace.

There is a forum for open discussion at the end of the play.

**You are invited to share in our joy as we witness...**

**Herron Jordanna Spence  
as she becomes a Bat Mitzvah  
Saturday, March 24, 2007  
at ten o'clock in the morning**

**Ukiah Valley Conference Center  
200 South School Street  
Ukiah, California**

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**Laurie Markowitz Spence  
and Dale Harrison**

**A luncheon follows  
Please call us at 462-2755  
to RSVP**

Dharma Realm Buddhist University at the City of 10,000 Buddhas, 2001 Talmage Rd., is offering "**Perspectives on Islam**," a six-session class beginning in early February for information or to register:  
<[dru@drba.org](mailto:dru@drba.org)> or call 462-5486

### **Some Thoughts on Tu B'Shevat**

*If you are planting a tree and they come to you saying, "Come and greet the Messiah," first plant the tree, and then go and meet the Messiah...*

*Redemption is the very act of planting*  
Rabbi Yochanan ben Zakkai

*The earth is the word of God;  
The Torah is it's Commentary*  
Rabbi Tsadok HaCohen



## ***In Memory and in Honor of Donation Report 10/9//05 -1/27/07***

*Bruce & Cassandra Andich in memory of Michael Finegold*

*Judy Corwin & Stan Showers in memory of Max*

*Linda & David Koppel in honor of R. Shoshanah's 65th birthday*

*Zena Marks & Jim Hecht in honor of Eliana Ruach Gitlin on the joyous occasion of her Bat Mitzvah*

*Eva Strauss-Rosen in memory of Michael HaKohan Selah*

*Margo Frank & Marc Levine in honor of the Birth of Adam, grandson of R. Shoshanah*

*Margo Frank & Marc Levine in memory of her father, Fritz Frank*

*Margo Frank & Marc Levine on the yartzheit of her mother, Marion Frank*

*Margo Frank & Marc Levine in honor of the birthday of Leslie Kirkpatrick*

*Donna Kerr in memory of her father, Melvin Ronkin*

*Kurt Ackermann in memory of Dr. Michael Finegold*

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### **For your Information:**

In an effort to streamline our local Jewish community events and to avoid scheduling conflicts, the new central calendar will be <http://bayarea.PlanitJewish.com>. Like the community calendar kept by JCRC, we encourage people to utilize the PlanitJewish calendar as a mechanism for checking out potential dates for events before they schedule something.

The benefit of using planitjewish is that you may now post events yourself and access this tool anytime. Some of you may have attended training sessions last year to learn how to use this calendar; now that planitjewish.com is replacing the JCRC Calendar, it is imperative that you familiarize yourself with how to post events if you want your events known to the public. To that end, planitjewish trainings will be offered in the near future, information on which will be forthcoming.

Gail Green of Jewish Community Information & Referral at JCF is the Bay Area administrator for planitjewish. If you are not currently using planitjewish and would like to begin immediately, please contact Gail for your organization's account information (user name and password) and user guide. This information will also be provided at the training sessions.

Gail Green

[gailg@sfjcf.org](mailto:gailg@sfjcf.org)

(415) 512 6233



*When The Holy Blessed one created the original Adam, God took him around to all the trees in the garden of Eden and said "Observe how lovely and excellent my creations are, and everything that I created, I created for your sake; take heed not to damage or destroy my world, for if you do, there will be no one to repair it for you".*

*Midrash Kohlet Rabbah (#7)*

**The 22nd Jewish Music Festival,**

**March 8 - 25, 2007**

**Box Office:**

**[www.jewishmusicfestival.org](http://www.jewishmusicfestival.org)**

**Or [www.brownpapertickets.com](http://www.brownpapertickets.com) 24/7**

**phone sales: 800-838-3006**

**Tickets go on sale**

**February 1**

## **Reborn Again**

*By Bodhi Sunbeam*

*January 20, 2007*

About 5 weeks ago, I found myself hanging upside down from my seatbelt in a drizzly ravine in the middle of nowhere. The Canterbury Tales were playing on the tape deck like nothing had happened. One minute my car was hydroplaning straight into oncoming traffic, the next minute the car reversed direction and plunged over the cliff into a ravine. And there I was, hanging upside down.

I loosed the seat belt and didn't have far to drop in the pancake-flattened Camry. I had a bump on my head and my neck was a little stiff, but I seemed to be all in one piece. I found my cell phone on the floor ceiling, and called 911. No network coverage. Again and again I tried, and then gave up.

The doors were stuck and I had visions of welding teams climbing down the cliff to cut me out of the steel. These images were followed by visions of the gas tank exploding. I decided to scurry and find a way out. I turned my stiff neck around and saw daylight straight out the back. The impact had popped open the trunk and there was a small passageway between the headrests of the front seats. It seemed like the rear seat had been flung forward and there was a little door through the cabin into the trunk. And there is where I saw the dim gray sky of a drizzly day.

I slithered like a reptile between the headrests, through the rear cabin and out through the trunk. The hood of the trunk was open about a foot and constricted by a web of branches. Thankful for no thorns, I found the branches easier to push aside than I had expected. Using both hands, I pushed open a passageway through the thicket and wriggled out.

Halfway out, I heard some hurried footsteps on the loose soil and voices calling, "Is anyone there?" Immediately followed by, "Are you alright?"

They helped me over to a flat rock to sit down. The joy in the air was palpable. I was struck with the irony of so many glad faces over a terrible accident. I was shaking all over. My voice was very, very soft. They asked me many questions and I could answer them all. When I stopped shaking, we all mounted the rock wall to climb out. The guys let me go first. Using all fours, finding handholds and footholds, we climbed up the cliff. A woman was waiting up top who took me to her truck to sit down out of the drizzle. Forty-five minutes later, the paramedics arrived. The Highway Patrol arrived even later. The paramedic assessed me, squeezing my ribs to test for fractures. He beamed with joy when he gave me ice packs for my head and neck. By that time, my voice was close to normal.

The tow man climbed down the cliff with a cable and chains and flipped the Toyota onto its wheels. The Highway Patrolman up above operated the tow-truck winch and they towed it up the cliff. I called my children once the tow vehicle drove the wreck and myself into a cell network. My old buddy Waldron came to pick me up in Clearlake at the tow yard. Having heard from the children, my ex-husband called me with tears of joy in his eyes that I was still alive.

The accident occurred exactly a week before the long-awaited 90th Birthday Cruise for my mom. When my mother heard, she said we might have had to cancel the cruise next week and have a funeral instead. We all had a fabulous time on the cruise.

When Linda E. heard, she said there was a special prayer for those who had narrowly escaped death that had to be said before the Torah. I called the Rabbi, and she agreed. She gave me her blessings over the phone that I was still alive.

A month later, I joined the congregation for a Shabbat service. It was the first time I had been to services since the accident. I came late, of course. It was an ecumenical night with visitors from the City of Ten Thousand Buddhas. Since our congregation seldom meets for Saturday morning Torah services, the Rabbi often condenses Torah service into Friday night.

The Rabbi began discussing the parasha in Exodus in which G-d introduces him/herself with a new name, wewi. The Rabbi mentioned one meaning of wewi is "becoming what is becoming." "The similarity between the descriptions of the Buddhist concept of Nirvana and what the Rabbi was describing were striking. I added this thought to the discussion but got little response. The Rabbi went on to say that the Kabbalists spin the 4 letters in wewi to spell G-d's name a different way every month because G-d is so transient and ineffable that you can't pinpoint any meaning or concept to identify him/her/it. I noted that Transience is the key that opens the door to Enlightenment. (continued on page 6)

## **Reborn Again,** *continued from page 5*

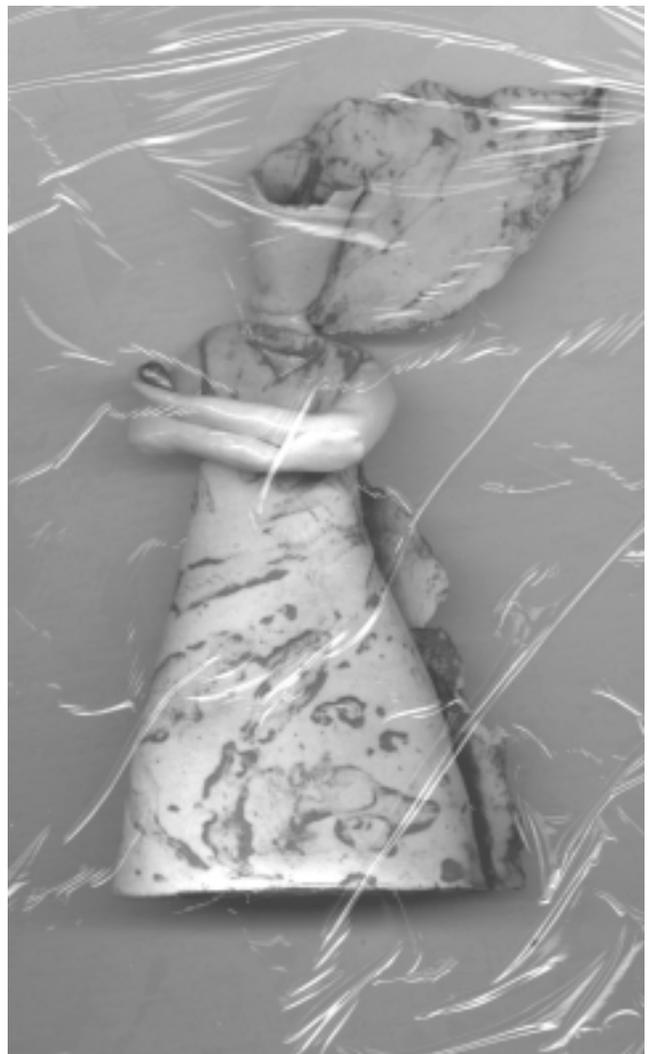
At the end of the service, the Rabbi called me up for the special prayer. She opened the Ark and had me approach the sacred scroll. I laid my hands upon it and felt a profoundly surreal connection to my Creator and I felt blessed. Tears of gratitude poured from eyes. I gathered my voice to repeat the unknown syllables before the Torah. Then I turned to face the congregation, embraced by the Rabbi, and received their prayers. People rushed to touch me as I returned to my seat. I was embraced and showered in kisses by friends who had only just heard.

As we ate the oneg, Shari Epstein joined us at our table. I assumed she was connected with all the Chinese Buddhists who filled our modest sanctuary that night. She seemed to know a lot about Buddhism from her attitude and responses in the general discussion. Also, she was planning to give a class on Islam and Buddhism.

She asked me if the accident had made me fearful. I described that although I was petrified two days later, I drove down the same road in similar drizzly conditions to go to a 2-day consulting job in Clearlake. I noted that people say I have a lot of courage. I told her that I was a Buddhist nun for about 8 years and became fearless during that time. Her eyebrows rose as she sat back and said, "Fearless, you say! We need to tell the nuns about this!" She simultaneously pointed her head toward the Buddhist nuns at the other end of the room. I retorted that although people see me as fearless, I am jelly compared to the woman of steel, my mother. The woman replied that in Taoist philosophy, water is stronger than iron because it is flexible.

After viewing the joyous photos from the cruise, Linda P. asked me about the accident. I mentioned to her that it has happened to me before, and I recounted two other incidents. I told the story of when Alan and I were driving a You-Drive-It car across the country and we both fell asleep. We awoke abruptly as the car spun out of control and lighted narrowly between two large boulders without a scratch on it! And I described the time I was pregnant with Ari and building the deck in Vallejo. I had been standing on the top wrung of a ladder installing a light fixture when I thought I would sit down and rest. Forgetting I was already on the top wrung, I leaned back to sit, and lost my balance and began to fall. I felt a pressure like a hand upon my bum pushing me back onto my feet. I recognized the miraculous hand of G-d and wondered what kind of special baby was in my womb that a miracle should happen to save his live. Surely, if I had fallen, I would have lost this unborn child.

Listening to my words recounting all these stories, and considering the joyous faces of the men who saw me wriggle out of the thicket into open air, it sounds like a birth story to me. I have been reborn for a special purpose. As I review all the things I do to enhance the lives of my family and the whole community, I couldn't see a singularly special purpose there. As I review my children, maybe it is to prepare them to do a special deed. But if the special purpose is prophesy, then I will tell you G-d's message. G-d wants all the Peaceful and Cooperative people to rise up and conquer tyranny non-violently. This time there will be no charismatic leader like Jesus Christ. By now, everyone has heard the message of compassion and non-violence. It is now time for every individual to rise up to fight for justice!



## **Dear KHE Chaverim,**

Now that I've been serving as KHE rabbi just about 3 1/2 years, I've had the opportunity to officiate at each of our major Jewish lifecycle ceremonies. Whereas I'd already had the experience of being rabbi for local weddings, funerals, and bnei mitzvah services, it took till the end of 2006 for me to be called upon for the covenantal ceremony of a brit. Now it's true I had been invited to a brit down in Cloverdale almost 2 years ago at the home of folks who had come to a couple of Shul events, and the mohel there did ask me to offer a blessing as part of the ceremony. And a couple whom I'd had the pleasure to marry did bring their beautiful baby girl to the Shul for a naming ceremony at a Shabbat service. And we did have a delightful baby-naming ceremony in Ukiah last summer with a KHE family whose baby was around a year of age.

But it wasn't till now that circumstances afforded me the opportunity to help welcome an eight-day-old son of KHE members into our world and our Jewish heritage with a traditional brit. What a joyous occasion!

Family and old friends filled the home, along with a small smattering of KHE faces. The announcement had gone out via e-mail that everyone was invited, but few members of the congregation actually showed up for this midday, weekday event. due not only to the brief notice, relatively impersonal medium of the internet, and difficulties in changing schedules, but I have the feeling that that was so because it's simply not a tradition among our local Jewish community to show up for a brit, i.e., that it's not communal, but just a private, gathering. If my perception is correct, I would hope that attitudes shift in the future. Communal welcoming of a new baby is a way of acknowledging right from the beginning of life that "it takes a village to raise a child."

Bnei Mitzvah celebrations, on the other hand, are clearly a communal undertaking. No matter what the venue and who the boy or girl coming of age, folks really show up for the occasion and support the young person and the family during this rite of passage. People also pitch in for the preparations, often including bringing food to share, decorating and setting up the chosen venue, serving the food, and even helping to clean up afterwards. And I have always seen this done with great willingness and warmth of spirit.. It's a great KHE tradition.

Weddings are a different story. Classic Jewish weddings of the past are portrayed as communal events to which even the local beggars were invited and fed. Today's local marriage celebrations tend to be private events, and I have yet to officiate at a local wedding to which the entire KHE community has been invited. One thing I have learned to advise prospective brides and grooms is that they should delegate tasks for their wedding day, so that they can truly be present and centered for the ceremony, rather than frenzied while checking at the last moment that all the organizational details have been attended to. Just recently I met with a couple to plan their wedding, and they clearly intended to take care of the details themselves. As newcomers to the area, they don't feel comfortable asking new acquaintances to help out, and their out-of-town guests are arriving just before the ceremony. Would that we had a tradition here of community involvement and pitching in for weddings as we do for bnei mitzvah occasions!

Now death is a situation when our community does rise to the occasion. I have seen how touched survivors have been to see the turnout of KHE folk both at the cemetery and in the home afterwards. They never expected the support they received and are very grateful for the honor such attendance communicates for the person who has died as well as for the bereaved mourners. In such circumstances, people need to show up with little or no prior notice--they get the word and they come. This rallying of our local population, plus the holy work of the Chevra Kadisha (Burial Society) in overseeing the care of the deceased, are essential testimony to KHE's vital functioning as a community.

Throughout life and between these major lifecycle markers, we deal with illness and accidents and events that can be harsh and difficult. When the word has gone out, I have seen folks come to the aid of community members in need. This can only happen when people know of such a need. E-mail and the Shema are ways to broadcast a call for help; if individuals and families would rather not go public, I know that both your KHE president and I are ready to discreetly make contacts for whatever assistance is appropriate.

Those of you in need give everyone else a chance to perform a mitzvah by letting us know. Hopefully, you will feel helped and gratified by the support you receive. This is a true test of community. "To save one life is to save the world." You never know when your showing up for someone else has truly been an act of salvation, but it has always the potential to be just that.

*B'shalom oovrachah, Shoshanah*

## In My Opinion

My daughter, Deborah, is on sabbatical from Southern Oregon University. She said yes to what for her was a scary trip. As a Jewish mother, I want her to have the best possible time with the fewest possible concerns. Knowing how much she cares about her dog, and how she would worry while she was gone, I volunteered to take the dog without being asked or considering the consequence.

Now “our” dog is the best of all possible animals; she comes when called, likes children, doesn’t fight or try to run away. She is particularly fond of swimming and smelling everything in the wide world. She is also incredibly dependent: if I’m in the kitchen, she’s in the kitchen; if I go to wash my face, she awakes from a deep sleep and comes along. It’s rather like having a black shadow. The benefit is I get to take three or four walks a day. With outings to parks, the lake and any place a dog can run free, I get to meet all sorts of new people and discover new dog-friendly places that we explore together.

Why am I telling you about a dog? It’s the first dog I’ve had in 40 years, so it’s a big deal for me. But it’s more. It’s about how a yes without being asked can change a life and an attitude. I walk a dog and my arthritic knee has to walk--it is getting stronger! I get to see the sun come up on crisp mornings as we walk together. After years of living alone I am responsible and feel guilty going away and leaving this creature. For the first time in years I can say no to requests without a smidgen of guilt.

I’m talking about “our dog” because I’m talking about saying yes. What I am recommending is going outside of a comfort zone without figuring out the possible costs. I am recommending saying yes, to animals, to volunteering, to taking classes with the Rabbi, to coming to an event even if you don’t know anyone. I’m recommending saying yes to life. It’s fun!

Please say yes and help us with the Purim events!

Love, Carol

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## Kol HaEmek Information & Resources

<b>Kol HaEmek</b>	<b>468-4536</b>
<b>Board Members:</b>	
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](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),

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:** 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](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)