



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

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

January 2008

Tevet-Shevat 5768

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

Visit our web page: www.kolhaemek.org

Coming Events

Friday, January 4-6:30 pm, 1st Friday Kabbalat Shabbat - Shoshanah out of town at Rabbi's Conference, Community-led service by Robert Klayman & Carol Rosenberg + dairy potluck.

Tuesday, January 8, 6:00 pm, at the Koppels' - annual Board of Directors meeting and election of officers. Call 485-8910 for directions.

Sunday, January 13, 10:00-12:15 Shul School

Friday, January 18, 6:30 pm, 3rd Friday Kabbalat Shabbat. Gather round the table for blessings, songs, stories and a family-style Shabbat celebration.

Sunday, January 20, 10:00 am our annual Community Brunch - We welcome new members and old friends for a get-acquainted session with a bit of future planning for this community. Our theme is Tu B'Shevat - the festival of trees - planting ideas for the future of KHE. To RSVP please call Carol at 463-8526 or e-mail Robert Klayman <atwailingwall@yahoo.com>

Sunday January 27, 10:00-12:15 Shul School

Wednesday, January 30, Men's Group

Friday, February 1, 6:30 pm, R. Shoshanah will lead the Kabbalat Shabbat service with pot-luck to follow.

Sunday, February 3, Shul School 10:00-12:15

Sunday, February 10, Shul School 10:00-12:15

**KHE Invites One and All
New and Returning Members
to Our Annual Brunch
JOIN US!!**

**Tree Planting for Tu B'Shevat
and
Planning for the Future**

Introduction of old and new members
Great food

Opportunity to review the year
Hear new program plans & ideas

**At Our Shul
(next to Eagle Peak School)
West Road, Redwood Valley
January 20, 2008
10:00 a.m.**

For more information call Carol at 463-8526
Please RSVP



Portion of the Week & Holidays

January 5 - Vaera
January 12 - Bo
January 19 - Beshalach and Shira
January 22 - Tu B'Shevat
January 26 - Yithro
January 27 - Shul School Tu'B' Shevat
February 2 - Mishpatim

Congratulations & Mazel Tov!!

- To Lynne Anderson and Bernard Weingart on their recent marriage. They are now living at:
17 Blaisdell Rd, Stetson, Maine 04488
We are so pleased they want to be connected to our congregation. We all wish them many years of happiness together.

- To Danny Katz for graduating from high school in New Mexico, and a welcome back home to Mendocino County and KHE.

Friendly voices needed!

Thankfully, Avram and Bela Goldberg are feeling better! They have both had a nasty bout of the flu. Telephone calls and personal visits from members of the community would further aid their recovery .

They live three miles up Mill Creek Road, so before a visit, please call 468-0201 first.

KHE Board to Hold Yearly Election

Our yearly Election Meeting will be January 8 at 6:00 p.m. at David and Linda Koppel's home in Redwood Valley. The meeting is open to the KHE Community, as are all Board of Directors meetings. There is one seat open this year, and others open periodically. Are you interested? Contact Carol Rosenberg if interested. Our regular (monthly) Board of Directors meeting will be held immediately following the election. Call 485-8910 for directions to the Koppels.

Donations to Kol HaEmek Make a Difference

Kol HaEmek is grateful for all contributions to our various funds. The following is a list of some of them:

- 1) Building Fund
- 2) Religious School Fund (Kalifornia Memorial)
- 3) Scholarship Fund
- 4) General Fund
- 5) Memorial Board Fund
- 6) Tzedakah Fund
- 7) Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- 8) The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund
for Feeding the Hungry in Ukiah & Willits
- 9) Caring for needy Jewish and Arab people in Acre, Israel*
- 10) MEMBERSHIP

Questions? Call David Koppel 485-8910

Please mail your contributions to:

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

*Make your check payable to PEF:

Israel-Endowment Fund and earmark it to the Association for Community Development - Acre; HaAsif program. (There is a \$25 minimum requirement for checks to Israel).

PASSINGS

Our congregation will say Kaddish on the anniversary of your loved one's death. Call Rabbi Shoshanah at 467-0456 with your concerns about the loss of a loved one and/or the name and either the Hebrew or English calendar date of death.

We Remember:

Jannett Allinikov - January 1
Raymond Glickman - January ?
Jacob J. Borkan - January 16
Tom Lowenstein - January 21
Joshua Edelman - January 30
Nathan Zorkowitz - 3 Shevat
Sudharma Kumari - 30 Shevat

Announcing: Summer 2008 Taglit-Birthright Israel Trip with ALEPH

Go to Israel for Free with ALEPH and Taglit-Birthright Israel! Experience Israel and Jewish Renewal like never before. RENEWAL IN ISRAEL is a 10-day trip designed especially for ALEPH members and friends.

Here is a great opportunity for KHE's 18-26-year-olds to visit Israel this summer. At least three of our younger generation have already participated in Taglit trips to Israel; Amethyst Raybee really praised the trip she joined. ALEPH is the umbrella association for Jewish Renewal. If you have questions, address them to ALEPH (there's a link below).

From ALEPH's publicity:

We will pray at the Kotel, float in the Dead Sea, participate in a traditional Bedouin feast and tour Jerusalem. Our plan is to go during the LAST TWO WEEKS OF JULY. Our special Jewish Renewal focus will add visits with Israeli Jewish Renewal teachers and peacemakers, an ecstatic welcome of Shabbat, the mystical energy of Sfat, chanting, drumming and singing niggunim on the bus, ecological teachings and visits, rituals at the Holocaust Memorial Museum and at the Kotel, sunrise prayers at Masada and more. Israel Outdoors brings an active, engaged focus to the trip that will add memorable components like kayaking, water hiking and dancing on the Galilee. RENEWAL IN ISRAEL is truly a once in a lifetime opportunity.

First-trip participant Amanda Feinstein said: "I secretly hoped I would encounter at least one life-altering moment that would bring me back to my heritage. I was not prepared to be having these experiences on a daily basis. Never before have I gone on a trip where all of my needs felt so met (except for sleep, of course). We were offered prayer and meditation services every morning, tons of exercise during the day, vegetarian food, wonderful leaders and 38 new friends. Although there were so many amazing and memorable moments on this trip, the most meaningful aspect of my experience has been finding a sense of belonging with the Jewish people for the FIRST time in my entire life. Thank you so much to all of the people who made this trip possible, for me and for all of us."

If you or someone you know is Jewish, 18-26, has graduated from high school, and has never been to Israel on an organized trip, fill out ALEPH's showing-of-interest form at:

http://www.aleph.org/al_event.taf?_function=detail&event_id=9

In addition, you will need to register at www.israeloutdoors.com between February 12 and February 28 for the ALEPH Jewish Renewal trip in the drop down menu. First come first served, so go to the site on February 12 if you can.

Jewish Men's Weekend Retreat 5768

Coming soon to a neighborhood near you early in 2008 - A Weekend Retreat
Under wise and joyous leadership - Great moments will eventually occur

Imagine your participation, your break from routines - with a wonderful time at Shambhala Ranch
Look for further announcements - Talking amongst is OK - Contacting Harvey 707.459.9235 / hfrankle@pacific.net
or Tal 707.462.1595 / tsizemore@att.net - is also OK

Shambhala Ranch is conveniently located mid - City of Ukiah/Town of Mendocino
www.shambhalaranch.com/

In My Opinion:

As part of my recent preparation for leading the discussion for Torah study I went to Google and typed in the name of the parsha. For the portion “Va’vigash” out popped 11 pages of sites to visit. I explored just a few, which ranged from strict interpreters of the Torah to the most liberal and secular authorities.

The richness of both the differences and similarities of opinions is one of the things that delights me about this kind of study. Many of the themes of the comments are similar but expressed with different references and vocabulary. Some of my favorite themes are from very different points of view.

Rabbi Cheryl Peretz creates a new New Year’s resolution; she adds to her list “learn from Joseph to find an alternative to revenge.”

A second theme is Joseph’s instruction to his brothers not to quarrel on the way. One rabbi sees this as instruction not to become so lost in discussion that we become divided and lose sight of our shared existence as Jews living in a rich multi-layered cultural community. Another rabbi sees that the brothers’ recriminations for what they should or should not have done in the past might make their journey longer, or lead them astray.

A third theme, maybe my favorite, is about how doing what feels right at the time can have incredible consequences.

As I was enjoying this rich source of Jewish learning in the privacy and comfort of my own home, I remembered that last month I listed a way to learn Hebrew on your computer.

Wow! Suddenly I realized it has become easier and easier to be Jewish in isolation! No need to put up with the cost or politics of a congregation. You can be an informed Jew living on a mountaintop as long as you have the Internet! You won’t have to pay a rabbi, or the utility bills for a synagogue. You can educate your own children! No need to listen to a voice or opinion that you don’t like, or sit through a service that isn’t exactly what you would prefer. No need to spend gas money going to Shul. Besides, there are so many other community activities--who has the time or inclination to bother unless there is a life cycle event or a tragedy?

Sorry, folks! I differ with what I suspect is a growing attitude in our community. Judaism is a religion that was created to be lived face to face with others. It’s tribal in nature, it thrives on discussion and the exchange of ideas. Torah is supposed to be learned as a joint effort.

Our children need to grow in their attachment to other Jewish children. They need, especially in a community where being Jewish is the exception, to feel close and accepting of the other Jewish kids, rather like a community of cousins. They need to know they are not the only family that has these ideals and practices. We need each other; it’s the nature of being human and it’s essential to being Jewish.

Sorry for the rant! I would just like to see more of you in the coming months.

With all good wishes for the secular year,

Carol

Please send prayers

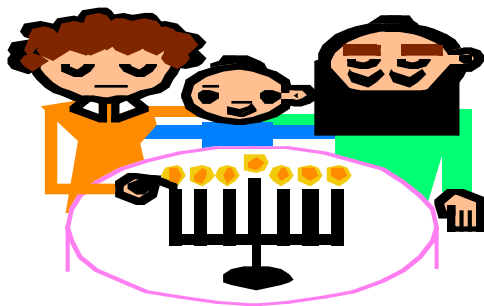
Yvonne Coren is recuperating from very major back surgery. Please keep her in your prayers for refuah shleimah, perfect and complete healing, refuat hanefesh and refuat haguf, healing of soul and healing of body! Her Hebrew name is Chaya Ruchel bat Bernice and Feitel.

Also, if you are traveling between Ukiah and Rohnert Park and can give her and Andy's son Philip a ride, please call the Corens.

A Wonderful Hanukkah 5768

Friday night, December 7, Rabbi Shoshanah led our congregation in a joyful Hanukkah celebration. Participants provided a delicious Shabbat dinner, the children played dreidel, and we ended the evening with a meditative service that celebrated light.

On Sunday the 9th, we had our traditional craft fair and Hanukkah party. Fortunately, the weather cooperated and we could utilize our deck. Deborah Edelman and her committee did a great job; they planned and conducted continuous and entertaining children's activities. Our own musicians--Michael Charnes, Alan Sunbeam, Tony Melville, and Eric Idarius--provided great music. R. Shoshanah told the story of Hanukkah and Michael Kisslinger read two charming books for children of all ages. Many KHE members provided great food. The cleanup committee (Dan Hibshman, Dan Waterman and Steve Levin) did a wonderful job, too. Many thanks to all of you who made that day so special!!!!



Q & A for JCI & R

Jewish Community Information and Referral is a service of the San Francisco-based Jewish Community Federation.

Q: I am concerned about my elderly parents, and would like to explore options for senior activities and housing. Can you tell me where to start the search?

A: Yes, of course we can help. The number of options for housing has grown in recent years. Let's start by sending you senior housing guides and *Seniors and the Law*. We can refer you to many senior services provided by our Jewish community, including medical support, senior transportation; meals on wheels, cultural and social activities, Holocaust survivor services, long-distance senior care, and help at home.

For more information about senior services and connecting to Jewish life, call JCI & R **415/777-4545** or toll-free within the Bay Area **877-777-JCIR (5247)** or e-mail to:

Info@JewishNfo.org

Also visit:

www.sfjcf.org and www.JewishNfo.org

For Your Information:

The National Union of Jewish Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, and Intersex Students (NUJLS) is the only national group dedicated to ensuring space on all college and university campuses for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning and intersex (LGBTQQI) students to feel proud of and affirmed in their identities.

The group's annual leadership conference will be held February 8-10 in New York City at Columbia University, with the participation of Barnard College and the Jewish Theological Seminary. The conference will provide a non-judgmental atmosphere where students of diverse religious backgrounds as well as diverse sexual and gender identities can gather to discuss and learn. NUJLS is a fiscally sponsored project of Keshet, a 501c(3) organization.

Spielberg Film To Be Shown at Special Interfaith Event

Mark 5 pm, Sunday, January 27 on your calendar for a veggie potluck to be followed by a showing of the Stephen Spielberg film, “The Last Days” at the Seventh Day Adventist Community Center, 151 Cherry St, Ukiah. Kol HaEmek, the Seventh Day Adventists and the Mendocino County Martin Luther King, Jr. Organization (McMLK) are co-sponsoring this evening in connection with Martin Luther King Day (January 21) to provide evidence of what can happen when racism, prejudice, and discrimination hold sway.

“The Last Days” is a documentary which features the true stories of five people who experienced the Nazi roundups of Jews in Hungary toward the end of World War II. In addition to Jews who suffered through this period, the film presents the first-person testimony of a German concentration camp doctor. The photography is at times quite graphic, and visual and verbal witnessing make it nigh impossible for anyone to see the film and deny that the Holocaust happened.

The film was made by the Shoah Foundation, set up by Stephen Spielberg to record eyewitness testimonies of what happened to the Jews of Europe during WWII. Due to its explicit content, the documentary is not recommended for children, but is highly educational for teens and adults. Rabbi Shoshanah will participate in a panel to help give a context for what is shown on the screen.

The initiative for this event comes from Brian Wells, a Seventh Day Adventist who has attended various of our KHE functions. He has been motivated to cut our grass, donate a table and chairs for our deck, purchase the DVD of “The Last Day”, and organize this special showing.

Dear KHE Chaverim,

Studying texts together is a classic form of Jewish learning. I have even heard folks say that this is the quintessentially Jewish form of meditating, although it is certainly not a silent practice. I can recall walking by a cheder (primary religious school) or yeshivah in Jerusalem and being struck by the din of voices emerging from the classrooms. Studying out loud with someone else (“chevruta partner” is the classic term) is not at all the same as learning a text by oneself. The very dynamic of reading out loud, word by word, line by line, and then chewing and deliberating together on what you have just read, is a very different process from silently reading down the page on your own.

I am currently studying two different Jewish texts with rabbinical colleagues in two different states, one in Colorado and one in North Carolina. (I’m not aware of anyone local who has the facility in Hebrew and is interested in studying Jewish texts together. If you fit the bill, please contact me!) We do this by setting aside time to call each other, and then, on the phone, we take turns reading the Hebrew text out loud and translating, and comparing our own translations with the one in hand. Authors often incorporate allusions to other sources in their comments, so then we need to check out the original quotes as well. And then begins the fun of wrestling with the text, and sharing what we understand from it on various levels, and what it prompts in us, and off we go.

Dear KHE Chaverim, (continued)

How much you read is not the essence of the practice. With one partner, we are about midway through our slim volume, and I can't recall when we began, but I wouldn't be surprised if it was two years ago! We are learning (the Hebrew verb *lomed* means both to study and to learn) "Tomer Devorah", "The Palm Tree of Devorah" by R. Moshe Cordovero, who lived in the 16th Century and whose family came from Spain (making him a Sefardic Jew). He spent most of his life in the northern Israel town of Sfat (also known as Safed), known as a holy center of kabbalah. He studied with R. Yosef Caro, author of the classic *Shulchan Aruch* guide to living the mitzvot, and then with R. Alkabetz, author of the beloved "L'cha Dodi" song that we sing on Friday eve to bring in the Shabbat.

In "The Palm Tree of Devorah", Cordovero works his way down through the sefirot of the Tree of Life, guiding us to act in the world in accordance with the God qualities which manifest in each sefirah. For a small taste of his approach regarding *chochmah*, the sefirah of wisdom, he writes: "One's compassion should extend to all creatures, and one should neither despise nor destroy them, for the supernal *chochmah* extends to all of creation--inanimate objects, plants, animals, and humans" (based on pp. 74-5 of the Targum/Feldheim edition). Cordovero calls on us to seek compassion and blessing for the world, and to regard those afflicted with suffering as if they are our own children (pp. 72-3).

We need to jump three centuries forward to meet the author of the second text I am studying, the Hasidic rebbe known as the Ishbitzer, based on the eastern European locale in which he served as rabbi in the 1800s. He is also known as the Mei HaShiloach, based on his book of the same name, which means "waters of the Shiloach". This name resonates with me, since I have a great fondness for, and familiarity with, this underground spring, which is the original water source of Jerusalem.

The Ishbitzer follows the very popular and classic model of writing commentaries on the weekly Torah portion, and so my chevruta partner and I study the appropriate sections for the week we are in. In fact, we are part of a larger network of rabbis all across the country studying these same writings. We receive weekly e-mails of the relevant Hebrew text, along with a new translation, and commentaries by the translator. When we finished the book of Beresheit (Genesis) last week, we had a conference call open to all of us with the translator, so we are now part of a virtual yeshivah! And the translator is himself a serious (silent) meditator, so his commentaries tend to focus on cultivating awareness and personal insight via silent meditation. And thusly is text study adapted to our modern world of the 21st century, bringing together, via computer and telephone, souls who are thousands of miles apart to meditate noisily on this centuries-old text and then to meditate silently on its meaning in our lives.

B'shalom oovrachah,

Shoshanah





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
(open seat)	
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)

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)

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)