



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley) November 2010
P.O. Box 416, Redwood Valley, CA 95470 Phone # 707-468-4536 Cheshvan - Kislev 5771
Please submit articles by the 20th of the preceding month to carolrosenberg@sbc.global.net

Coming Events

Tuesday November 2, 6:30 KHE Board meeting, all invited

Saturday , November 6, 6:00 Memorial for Tal (Terry) Sizmore at the Mendocino Lake Clubhouse on Lake Mendocino Drive

Sunday , November 7, 10:00-12:15
Shul School

Friday, November 12, 6:30 Kabbalat Shabbat with Shoshanah, followed by veggie/dairy potluck, hosted by Margo Frank in honor of the of the Yahrzeit of her father, Fritz

Saturday, November 13, 7:00 Folk dancing with Gary Relin at the Shul--fun for everyone!

Sunday , November 14, 10:00-12:15
Shul School

Sunday November 21, 10:00-12:15
Shul School.

Sunday November 21 KHE feeds the Needy. For info call Dan Hibshman, 462-7471

Friday , November 26, 6:30, Kabbalat Shabbat with Shoshanah, followed by veggie/dairy potluck

Wednesday, December 1, Hanukkah begins

Dancing with the Stars of David!

**Folk-Dancing Evening
with instruction by Willits's own
Gary Relin
Saturday Night, November 13
at the shul!**

**Sunday, December 5, 2:00 - 5:00 pm
KHE Hanukkah Party
and Crafts Show!
Candle Lighting at 4:34**

We invite you to share our joy as
our daughter

Melissa Rose

is called to the Torah as a
Bat Mitzvah

Saturday, December 18, 2010
at 10 am

Kol HaEmek 8591 West Road
Redwood Valley

Kiddush and luncheon to follow
Dana Thibeau and Rachel Elkins

RSVP by November 15
707-263-1331 or danaat@pacific.net

Portion of the Week and Holiday

November 6 - Toldot

November 13 - Vayetzei

November 20 - Vayishlach

November 25 - Thanksgiving

November 27 - Vayeshev

Candle Lighting

Nov. 5 - 5:49

Nov. 12 - 4:45

Nov. 19 - 4:38

Nov. 26 - 4:45

Dec. 3 - 4:33

Dec. 10 - 4:33



**Calling all Crafts Persons
and Latke Makers!**

December 5th 2-5p.m.

**Our splendid Annual
Hanukkah Party and Crafts
Sale.**

call Carol at 463-8526

to volunteer

Musicians, Performers etc.

All needed &

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:

Fritz Frank - Cheshvan 25

Dorothy Corwin - Tishrei 7

Maurice Marans - November

Lillian Rothchild - November 2

Doris Rogers - November 16

Solomon Glazer - November 19

Robert Leo Kisslinger - November 27

TIME TO TALK TURKEY

From Harvey Frankle

We've got real expenses, from the bag lunches we provide to the homeless to the school we teach our children, from the holidays and holy days we celebrate together to the P G&E bill, from the Rabbi's salary to this newsletter you're reading.

We do not raise funds the way our parents did. We do not shame you or tell you you cannot attend the High Holy Days without an expensive ticket, or set up a high-pressure bidding competition. We have rightfully rejected these strategies as unmenschlikeit. We have chosen instead to treat you as adults. But as adults you must know that bills are due. Sure, we have our share of shnorrers. We also have folks who genuinely can't afford membership fees, or who pay what they can. There will always be shnorrers, there will always be freeloaders who will willingly let the other guy pay, there will always be people who will use all we have to offer and feel that they don't have to pay for any of it. We can't seem to do anything about them-- our services are open to all.

But what about you? Because your children were bar/bat mitzvahed shall we just cease to exist? What about all the other children? Because you only need us once in a while should we tell PG&E to send us a bill every so often? It's the old are-we -only-out-for-ourselves or are-we-all-in-this-together controversy.

We provide genuine services that don't come free. Not for us, not for you. Asking for your support shouldn't be like pulling teeth. We recognize these are hard times. We have always, always said pay what you can. But if you want to maintain a viable community, we need to have contributing members.

So take some responsibility. Be an adult. Don't depend on the other guy. At this point we are out of other guys. This time it's up to you. Pay your dues. Do it now. Don't put it off any longer. Write a check. Send it in. Now.

“Outwitting History”

a book review by Nancy Merling

We are the people of the book. So— read a good Jewish book. You can find one in our newly organized Shul Library.

I recently read “Outwitting History by Aaron Lanky, an amazing adventure of a young man who rescued a million Yiddish books. It's an adventure story, an historical novel, and a heart-warming story of struggle and true Jewish heart.

Did you know the word Yiddish means Jewish? Lanky and a few friends were enrolled in 1974 at college near Boston taking a course in Yiddish. They could not find books. In 1975 they were told to go to the lower East Side of Manhattan that there must be Yiddish books there!

So started their adventure, which eventually led them all over the world rescuing Yiddish books from dumpsters to mansions. His group's efforts, along with many, many more, resulted in the national Yiddish Book Center one of the fastest-growing Jewish cultural organizations in the world.

With sorrow we inform you of the sudden death of Todd, son of Dale Harrison. Our deep condolences to Dale, and Laurie, and the Harrison and Spence families

Mazel Tov! to Staci Barr and Ayel Segal on their recent marriage

For a Jewish connection for events in Sonoma County

Check out

“Wake up & Smell the Challah”

at < smellthechallah.org>

Jewish Family and Children's Services
1360 N. Dutton Ave, Suite C, Santa Rosa
707 571-8131

Dear Shoshanah,

I would like this to be included in your KHE newsletter. I want to express my gratitude to all of you for welcoming me, a perfect stranger, into your midst as if I were an old and dear friend when I desperately need that kindness. Just one week before your Tal took his fatal misstep off his roof my dear wife of 34 years suddenly died while I held her in my arms. She took two gasping breaths and, as I helplessly watched, the light in her eyes went out. Desperate efforts to revive her were to no avail.

I never met your Tal. I wish I had. However, because of my loss I feel a very acute empathy for the expressions of loss I have heard and read about Tal. My Jan too was a very central light in the lives of all that knew and associated with her. And now, suddenly, with no warning, also at the young age (these days) of 65 she is gone.

Shoshanah wrote in the last newsletter. "Soon after word went out of Tal's, z"l, death, a member of our community called in shock with the plaint: "I don't understand!" Do you understand? What did this person want to understand? Why we die? Why a healthy, not-old person dies? Why an experienced, sure-footed builder falls off his flat garage roof? Why this happened to a person who has done so much good in the community?"

We heard and asked such questions a week earlier. But from my grandson Branden, Jan's step-grandson, it became a desperate cry along with the plea to G-d to please let it not be so. Such was the power of her kindness and gentle support to this child of a broken home now just coming of age that it seemed for a time that it would consume him utterly. And for me too. This woman that I have loved with such enduring passion that I hardly noticed her ageing these 37 years since we met and I fell in love with her. For now at least, it seems that I will live out the remainder of my days in despair.

Reb Shoshanah refers to "circumcising the heart." Circumcision, the cutting off and casting away of this most animal aspect of the male anatomy. It is an act through which we are to become open to a "covenant with G-d." So, Shoshanah asks, "can we use this sensibility to guide us to what is really important to us in our lives?" Already Branden and his brother Chris are opening up to the presence of G-d in their lives, as a result of losing their Grama Jan, in ways they never have before. For Chris it is not a day too soon as he has now deployed to Afghanistan expecting to enter into battle in a matter of days after his arrival. I can't even begin to think about those what-ifs.

But what if we never had to die? Not just, why here or why now? If there ever comes a day that we would not desire more life, then couldn't we just stop breathing? Indeed, as the sobbing overtakes me, as it does at times, I have to remind myself to breathe. Even Moses, the greatest among us, I am sure wanted to know why the complaint "that he broke faith at Meribath-kadesh" meant that "now was the time."

No, I think if we didn't have to die we wouldn't appreciate life, and whether the timing is serendipitous or not must be left to G-d.

With love,
Glenn King, aka Shmuel Ben Abraham

SHALOM CHAVER *

As the ten of us joined together for the Tahara ritual, the cleansing of the body, my mind flashed back to when most of us who were here today, welcomed this lovely man as a Jew into our community.

I was deeply honored when Tal asked me to be one of the three Rebbes to oversee his conversion ceremony and was in holy company with Steve Berman, Rabbi of Ashland, and our own Rabbi Hanan Sills, as the other two Rebbes. We had lots of holy company, namely 30 men in a sweat lodge at Shambhala Ranch. The sweat lodge was homemade, built and run by a Native American friend of Stuart Marcus. Thus, the ceremony was a mixture of Indian, Jewish and New Age lore probably exceedingly pleasing to the Great Holy One. I know we all were totally taken by the event.

Truthfully, I don't remember much as this kind of event is of the moment, most of it occurred in total darkness, and it was 15 years ago. But it moved us all.

What was one of the most profound experiences of my life was in the aftermath of the sweat, after the bathing in the cold waters of the stream, when Tal blessed each one of us with a unique blessing that was sensitive, kind, and insightful enough to bring tears to our eyes. It felt like he was channeling Elohim and giving each of us a special touch of the holy. It was a day we will always remember with deep joy and reverence, as I see him sitting on a rock by the stream in bright sunlight after emerging from the darkness of the cave-like environment, murmuring words of encouragement and love.

That was how we welcomed this wonderful human being into our community and this was how we were helping him to leave us behind.

Until another time, my friend, until another time.
*The title of newspaper editorials after Yitzhak Rabin's death, meaning "good-by, friend."

September Donations to KHE

Darline Bergere and Josh Bergere

Janice Berman

Joel Cohen

Andy Coren and Yvonne Coren

Judy M. Corwin

Reid Davidson and Marjorie Davidson

Rachel Elkins and Dana Thibeau

Shari Epstein and Tom Jacobson

Sara Esserman-Melville and

Anthony Esserman-Melville

Margo Frank and Marc Levine

Jay Joseph and Jennifer Joseph

David Koppel and Linda Koppel

Linda Lane

Mark Levin and Kathy Crosby

Leslie Levitas

Adina Merenlender and Kerry Heise

Other and Other

Carol Park and Steve Park

Stephen Pasternak and

Elizabeth Pasternak

David Rapport and Charlotte Rapport

Elizabeth Raybee and Michael Charnes

Muhasibi Shalom and Antonio Andrade

Susan Sher and Hattie Sher

Josephine Silva

Leon Springer and

Nancy Marotta Springer

Richard Yusem and Rachel Arama

Donations to KHE have been made in memory of a wonderful person, Tal Sizemore, by Linda and David Koppel; in memory of Tal by Carol Rosenberg and Deborah Rosenberg; and In memory of Tal by Sequoya and Antonio Lazo, of Seattle, WA

Dear KHE Chaverim,

Thanks to all who took the time and effort to give feedback on our High Holiday services this year. A newcomer to KHE told me he was touched by the intensity and directness of the comments, and how people were not afraid to express what was on their minds.

One email responder raised a question about synagogue practice not specifically tied to the holidays: “Another point – although just for discussion – I was once at a Torah study in Santa Rosa at a Reform synagogue and the topic of discussion was not to worship ‘idols’ and there was a lot of discussion about what that meant. The rabbi leading the discussion (cannot remember who he was) told a story about how an older rabbi who was his mentor had always refused to stand up when the Torah was ‘up’ because he felt it was like worshipping an idol to do that since after all it is just a scroll, not a god, and not The God (even if you accept that there is The God). This hit home with me – I have always had a hard time, even when younger, ‘worshipping’ the Torah. What is the difference between kissing the Torah and bowing to a statue? (Other than because ‘we’re right.’) So, I guess what I’m saying is that when you explain to everyone at our services that all who can stand ‘should’ stand when the Torah is ‘up’ – maybe there is another way to look at this and those people who feel that they should stand should do so, regardless of whether or not they can, and for those of us who don’t want to – that’s OK too. What do you think?” When two more folks from KHE then emailed me wanting to know my response and suggesting opening up the topic for discussion, I decided to address it in this column.

I had already dashed off the following email reply to the initial inquiry: “Standing up for the Torah should certainly NOT be idolatry. More honoring the Torah, the way it was in practice when I was a kid to stand up when a teacher or principal entered the classroom. I have a friend in Jerusalem who grew up orthodox and is very attached to Judaism, but refuses to stand up and sit down whenever that is the practice (on and off during the service for various prayers). When I lived in Israel, there was a very well known scholar named Yeshayahu Leibowitz who was orthodox and claimed the practices around the Western Wall are idolatry.” The topic arose at our recent Saturday Shabbat service, and one child suggested that standing for the Torah is like the custom of standing for the U.S. pledge of allegiance; an adult offered that by standing up we are honoring not the physical Torah itself, but the words within. No one in the room saw it as worship.

Googling “Torah etiquette-standing and sitting,” I found that MyJewishLearning.com, under “General Expectations for Synagogue Behavior,” states that “...standing and sitting in a Jewish service does not constitute any affirmation of religious belief, it is merely a sign of respect. There may also be instructions to bow at certain parts of the service, and because a bow or prostration *is* a religiously significant act, feel free to remain standing or sitting as you wish at that point....When the Torah scroll is removed from or returned to the ark, it is carried in a procession around the synagogue, accompanied by song, to show the love and reverence in which Jews hold its teachings. In more traditional synagogues, congregants kiss the Torah as it is carried around.” In similar fashion, it is also traditional for some to kiss a mezuzah upon entering a house and to kiss a prayer-book, especially after it has accidentally dropped to the floor.

I never realized there was any issue about whether or not to stand while the Torah is being read, but my googling led me to a video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-R8CqV-8I4> of a rabbinical talk on just this question. Apparently it is still the practice in some yeshivas and congregations for some to stand while others sit during Torah readings, and this difference goes back hundreds of years at least. The Shulchan Aruch, the standard guide for halachic behavior, which was composed in the 1500s, states that general practice is to sit during Torah reading, but that some, who are stricter in their observance, choose to stand. Apparently, the rationale for standing for Torah reading is related to our standing at Mt. Sinai when we first received the words of Torah.

So it seems to me that custom and kavanah (intent) have most to do with standing for the Torah and kissing it.

Note that none of the various “takes” on standing for or kissing the Torah suggest we are to be worshipping the Torah. Even the orthodox view that the Five Books of Moses are the word of God does not mandate, or even advocate, worshipping the Torah. My understanding is that congregations belonging to the Society for Humanistic Judaism (which eliminate God from their practice) relegate copies of the Torah to their libraries, rather than making “dressed up” Torah scrolls a focal element in the geography and liturgy of the synagogue.

I don't think I have ever been in a congregation which venerates a Torah scroll more than we do our Pisek scroll here at KHE. I sense deep love and care for our Torah, and a desire to remember those who wrote and held and heard this scroll before they died and it came to us after its own perilous journey from Pisek. That doesn't mean that we worship the scroll itself or the words written on it. It does acknowledge that this Torah scroll is a living link in our Jewish heritage, and that by treasuring it and reading from it and holding it and housing it in a beautiful ark, we affirm our living connection to our heritage. And it's hard to imagine the deep sharing that happens during Open Torah on Yom Kippur without folks holding the physical Torah in their arms. May we continue to discover deep wisdom and guidance and humor and passion and discernment and what is precious in our lives through our ongoing connection with Torah. Your thoughts?

B'shalom oovrachah, *Shoshanah*

Helen Sizemore has placed unclaimed food-sharing items on her front porch.

Please claim your containers:

large & deep glass-faceted bowl
large stainless spoon
2 round aluminum trays
clear glass salad plate
clear yellow plastic bowl
medium stainless-steel pot without handle
clear pint glass with lines
reading glasses, 2.75, black frame w/white trim
small copper vase,
Stainless water bottle, 27 oz, with black top, U
turn 2 tap brand
brown wicker basket, casserole size with wooden
handles
Divora's sweater
Wendy's soup pan and plastic storage containers

Thank you all for your generous contributions of food.

Helen

KOL HaEMEK PROUDLY PRESENTS:

**DANCING WITH THE STARS
(of David)**

Back by Popular Demand

**The Maven of Movement
The Gribinis of Greek
The David of Dance**

**GARY RELIN
WITH HIS FAMOUS**

RELINETTES

**To Teach You International Folk Dance
Taverna Nite at the Shul**

**So Wear Your Dancing Shoes, Peasant Shirts
& Jeans**

**It's Just Like Being in Greece, Without the
Shlep**

Saturday Nite, November 13, 7 pm

**pot luck snacks / drinks
otherwise free**



Kol HaEmek/MCJC-Inland
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 provide and support the following

- 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

707-468-4536

Board Members:

Carol Rosenberg, President	463-8526
David Koppel, Treasurer (Financial committee)	485-8910
Alan (Acorn) Sunbeam (Library)	463-8364
Judy Corwin	462-4661
Divora Stern	459-9052
Nancy Merling (Rabbi's Council)	456-0639
Harvey Frankle	459-9235
Steve Levin	462-3131

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 Maurer, M.D. (463-8000),

Chevra Kadisha (Jewish Burial): Eva Strauss-Rosen (459-4005); Helen Sizemore (462-1595).

Community Support: *If you need help (illness, family crisis) or can be called on when others need help,* in Willits call Divora Stern 459-9052, in Ukiah Margo Frank 463-1834

Editor of the Shema: Carol Rosenberg (e-mail caroldrosenberg@sbcglobal .net)

Jewish Library at Kol Ha Emek 8591 West Road Redwood Valley. Call for an appointment 463-8364

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.

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

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