

MAY 2012

IYAR-SIVAN 5772



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

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

Please note: all submissions sent by the 20th of each month to Carol Rosenberg (carolrosenberg@pacific.net)

COMING EVENTS

Sunday, May 6, NO SHUL SCHOOL! See you at the campout!!

Monday, May 7, 7:00 pm, Klezmer Music Jam Session. For info call Michael Charnes, 313-5933

Wednesday, May 9, 7:30 pm, 1st monthly Poker night! For info call Steve Levin, 462-3131

Friday, May 11, 6:30 pm, Kabbalah Shabbat hosted by Sherrie Ebyam, vegetarian potluck supper to follow

Sunday May 19, Feeding the hungry. Call Dan Hibshman to help: 462-7471

Saturday, May 21, 7:30 pm, Movie night at the Shul: *Watermarks*, a documentary (see page 8)

Friday, May 25, 6:30 pm Kabbalah Shabbat service , vegetarian potluck to follow.

Friday-Sunday May 25-27 Shul School and Congregational Camp Out.

Save the dates: Aug 9-12 for this year's Jewish Women's Retreat sponsored by the Coastal Congregation.

KHE CAMPOUT

FRIDAY, MAY 25--SUNDAY, MAY 27
at CLEARLAKE STATE PARK
SHABBAT/SHAVUOT
CELEBRATION FOR ALL
with special program
for all of our
B'NEI MITZVAH
See page 4 for details

Isa and Amunka Davila are asking for your healing prayers

Amunka has been diagnosed with stomach cancer. He and his wife, Isa, ask that the community join in sending healing prayers envisioning the tumors and metastasized areas as shrinking, dissolving, and healing. Also please envision him healing and living long and and strong..

Thank you!

If you are able to provide more services than prayers, call Karen Rosen at 462-0661 or [<nkrosen@pacific.net>](mailto:nkrosen@pacific.net)

Opportunities for Tzedakah

Kol HaEmek (the Voice of the Valley) is funded by your member dues as well as your generous contributions to a **number** of funds including

- 1) Building Fund
- 2) Religious School Fund
- 3) Scholarship Fund
- 4) General Fund
- 5) Memorial Board Fund
- 6) Tzedekah Fund
- 7) Rabbi's Discretionary Fund
- 8) The Marion and Sanford Frank Fund for feeding the hungry in Ukiah and Willits
- 9) Congregation Eshel Avraham in Beersheva, to build a bomb shelter for their nursery school. Make out a check to KHE or you can send your own check to: Masorti Foundation for Conservative Judaism in Israel, 475 Riverside Drive, Suite 832, New York, New York 10115

Question?

Call:

David Koppel, 485-8910

send checks to:

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

Portion of the Week and Holidays

May 5 - Achare/Kedoshim

May 12 - Emor

May 19 - Behar/bechukotai

May 26 - Erev Shavout Bamidhar

May 27 - Shavuot

We Remember

Joel Green Yossel - May

Jim Rowland - May

Ben Rosenberg - May 1

Janet Fisher - May 2

Harold Koppel - May 6

Harriet Libby Domas - May 14

Nancy Brooks Miller - May 22

Julius Markowitz - May 26

Jessica Anne Doctors - Iyar 7

Beatrice Starosta Coren - Sivan 3

Harry Stanten - Sivan 6

Harry Rothchild - Sivan 7

KHE community members needing healing prayers, visits and/or services.

Jim Hecht--Redwood Cove

Karen Rifkin--391-9299

Michael Kisslinger--home after
hospitalization

Amunka Davila--visit 338 Washington St.,
Ukiah

Dear KHE Chaverim,

Today is my last full day in Israel before I fly out tomorrow. I sit here in Ramat Aviv listening to the cooing of the doves mentioned in the Song of Songs. When I walk through the nearby park, I often see poking in the grass a dukifat, a strikingly unique bird with brown and white stripes on its body and a pointed comb on top of its head. And this is the time of the great spring bird migrations from Africa to Europe, when one can see hundreds of thousands of birds flying along the Great Rift Valley which in Israel includes the Dead Sea, Jordan Valley, Kinneret, and Hula. Truth is that, except for a visit to the hot springs of Tiberias, which I wrote about talmudically in last month's column, I haven't spent time in these parts of Israel on this trip.

This year I spent a week at a Jewish meditation retreat at Kibbutz Hannaton, which is nestled on a hillside in the Galilee just above the reservoir from which water is piped down to the Negev. The kibbutz is surrounded by hills dotted with Israeli Arab villages, some of them Bedouin. (Yes, there are Bedouin who live in the green Galilee and not the desert; Ismail Khaldi, who came to speak to us as vice-consul of Israel for the U.S. northwest a few years ago, hailed from here). On my walks, I came upon Bedouin women in traditional dress gathering wild plants in big sacks. I also saw male Bedouin shepherds, both young and old, with their goats and sheep. In fact, one shepherd was tending his sheep right on the grounds of the kibbutz. Relations are obviously friendly, and kibbutzniks told me I could safely walk in the countryside outside the kibbutz fence on my own.

The meditation retreat was held within a large white tent (made in South Africa, I noticed, the kind used for weddings or other such events). For three of the days there were strong rain storms, with gusts of wind and thunder. It was very dramatic to sit in the silence of the group and experience the rain and wind buffeting the tent. One night, while in silence, we suddenly heard a few rounds of automatic gunfire. It turned out to be from a village nearby in celebration of a Bedouin wedding. On the last afternoon of our week together, we had the opportunity to speak with each other for the first time. Many of the participants were young, in their twenties or thirties. How fortunate for them to discover these skills of centering, awareness, and cultivating compassion relatively early in their lives!

One thirty-year-old told us he was orthodox and thought he'd signed up for an orthodox week of meditation, and was disoriented to discover soon enough that this was not the case. (The Jewish flavor of the week was "renewal," while accommodating of people with more traditional prayer practices. Participants covered a wide range of Jewish affiliation. The kibbutz itself is run by the Conservative/Masorti movement. One of the retreat teachers is the founder of Tovanah, the Insight Meditation Movement in Israel which now runs some 35 retreats a year and is based in Buddhist Vipassana practice. Another retreat leader is a rabbi who teaches at Pardess, a well known academic Jewish learning center in Jerusalem.) Anyhow, this orthodox participant told us he was deeply touched during the week by the heartfelt caring and enthusiastic expressions of Judaism he'd experienced. (Not only did the teachers use Jewish themes in their talks, but we had daily shacharit/morning, minchah/afternoon, and ma'ariv/evening, sessions. This young orthodox man and I had a long conversation after the week was officially over, and when he eventually discovered that I serve as a rabbi, he immediately asked me for a blessing! I was very touched, and obliged him, of course.

Rabbi, continued:

This visit, when staying with my family, I found myself going to the local mizrachi (Jews of mideastern and north African background) synagogue, rather than the masorti one I'd frequented in the past. I happened upon it by accident while taking a walk on my first Shabbat afternoon here. Yes, I sat in the women's section, which was full, as was the men's area below. I asked if something special was happening, and was told, no, it's this way every week, which I discovered to be true. I loved the enthusiastic davvening, both on the part of the men and women. The women definitely knew and followed the service in their prayer books.

It was also interesting for me to note differences in the nusach (prayer practice) from that with which I am familiar. Not only were tunes different, but they held the open Torah up for viewing before reading from it rather than afterwards, as I am accustomed to seeing. At havdalah time, everyone was handed a sprig of fragrant lemon geranium or myrtle to sniff and take home. While most women wore skirts and head coverings, no one said boo to the few who wore pants and had uncovered heads. Among the men, there was lots of kissing both cheeks as greetings. I'd heard over the years about auctioning off aliyot to the Torah, but I'd never witnessed it before. At a Bar Mitzvah Shabbat morning service, right there in the midst of the Torah reading, they auctioned off the last two aliyot and raised quite a lot of money for the synagogue! It's considered a big honor to be such a donor. I learned from a woman named Shoshanah who looked to be about my age and was born in Morocco, that the synagogue had been built by a wealthy but childless Lebanese Jewish couple, who'd also donated money to the children's department of a big hospital in Tel Aviv.

And so this visit comes to a close. This trip I've had email access, and so have learned of the Kol HaEmek folk in special need of healing this spring. You have all been in my prayers, and may those of you who have been ill be blessed with refuah shleimah/perfect and complete healing, refuat hanefesh/healing of soul and refuat haguf/healing of body. And let us all say Amen.

In Gratefulness and Love/B'todah v'ahavah, B'shalom oovrachah/In Peace and Blessing, Shoshanah

KHE CAMPOUT
FRIDAY, MAY 25 to SUNDAY, MAY 27 at CLEARLAKE STATE PARK
SHABBAT/SHAVUOT CELEBRATION for all
with special program for all of our B'NEI MITZVAH

We've got our campsites reserved and paid for,
so mark your calendars NOW to save these dates on
Memorial Day Weekend

We are in a relatively secluded part of the campground, close to bathrooms, the swimming beach and hiking trails, with accessibility to boat rental nearby.

Send in your reservations now to David Koppel. Campground fees have gone way up since last year, but fortunately our costs remain modest: \$75 per family for the campsite, \$36 per adult (13 and older) and \$18 per child (age 4-13) for food.

COMMENTARY by Harvey Frankle

Seven years. Seven years since my Bar Mitzvah and nary a peek into the shul of my youth. It was 1965 and I was 20. A close friend and I were going to hitch across the country that summer and come out to California, to, quite literally for us, the “goldena medina.” Herb dropped out. I, unfazed, would hitch the 3,000 miles myself. Sitting around at dinner one night my mother suggested that I might go live on a kibbutz for the summer. Ordinarily anything my mother would suggest when I was that age would be treif. But, I had read something about kibbutz in a recent sociology class and it grabbed my imagination. I knew I probably would hate it (I mean, look where the idea came from), but I would give it a two-week run after which I would bum around Europe for the rest of the summer.

I arrived at Ben Gurion and was picked up in a bus driven by a kibbutznik who would later become a close friend, and we drove the two or three hours it would take to get to the kibbutz on the Gaza Strip. That bus ride and the rest of the kibbutz experience would change my life. I remember looking out the window as we drove through the streets of Tel Aviv and seeing all these exotic-looking people repairing streets, digging ditches, doing all kinds of manual labor and realizing that these people were Jews but not the kind of Jews who in my neighborhood wore suits and went off to work with a briefcase every day. I eventually realized that the things I didn't like about my religion really had very little to do with my religion. They were part of the bourgeois ethos I grew up with, much of which was unappealing. I didn't have to give up my Judaism just because middle class life was not attractive to me. I was blown out.

Then there was the kibbutz. A place without money, where cooperation, not competition was key; where one worked for the common good, not to earn a buck. I used to joke to myself at the end of the work day by saying: another day another dollar, because it was so untrue; for the first time in my life existence was free. So, rather than wanting to leave two weeks down the, I was hooked by the second day. I had the summer of my life! I became the work secretary for the 30-odd American students, which necessitated my going to the work office every evening to obtain and bargain for a list of the next day's work assignments. I got to know Israelis and how a kibbutz works in every sense of the word and I was blissed out, being useful, accepted and liked by Americans and Israelis alike. It was an experience I would not soon forget, and when I returned home I started reading everything I could get my hands on having to do with Judaism.

Almond Paste Tart (Crostata di Pasta di Mandorle)

7 oz. almond paste, grated

½ C sugar

1 stick unsalted butter, softened

3 large eggs

½ C flour

Zest of one lemon

Beat the almond paste, sugar and butter with an electric mixer on low speed. Add the eggs, one at a time, until well incorporated. Add the flour. Beat on high speed for 3 minutes. Mix in the zest. Pour into a well greased 8 inch tart pan.

Bake for 35 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool at room temperature and serve. (Freezes well but just let thaw and serve. Do not reheat.)

KHE Donations for February and March 2012

Bruce and Cassandra Andich
Louisa Aronow and Sandy Turner

Ace and Satoko Barash

Lynn Coen and Charles Hott

Judith M Corwin

Rachel Elkins and Dana Thibeau

Steve and Nan Frenkle

Judith Fuente and David Nelson

Jay and Jennifer Joseph

David and Linda Koppel

Nancy Horowitz Moilanen

Linda Posner

Steve and Carol Park

Norm and Karen Rosen

Helen Sizemore in appreciation of the Chevra Kadisha and Rabbi Shoshanah

Helen Sizemore with Mazel Tov to Jessica, baby, and Grandma Elise Wilkins

Helen Sizemore Congratulations to Miriam and Casey McNamara and Baby and to Grandparents

Linda and David Koppel

Helen Sizemore Prayers of healing to Carol Rosenberg and Eva Rosen.

Laurie Spence and Dale Harrison

Lillian Vogel

Tonia and John Wilder

Marian Loewenheim

Sally Emeson and Mally Arad

Stuart and Tara Lesley Marcus

David Rapport

Marilyn and James Katzel

Andrea Silverstein and Dennis Patton

Carol D. Rosenberg in memory of Helen Sizemore's mother

Darline Bergere and Josh Bergere

Alan Sunbeam

Susan Juster

Shoshanah Devorah

Andy and Yvonne Coren

Carol Orton

Sherrie Ebyam

Sigrid White

Leslie Levitas

Janice Berman

Lee Wachs

Vergilia Dakin

Chronicles

PART III: ISAAC

So, Isaac grows up. Gentle and kind, his name means "he laughed" for the reaction Sarah and Abraham had when G-d told them they would have a child when they were both in their nineties. It could also mean "may G-d laugh", a phrase asking that the Lord look upon Isaac with affection. Isaac would not change his name as the other patriarchs had, because he had been named by G-d before he was born.

Isaac is different from the other patriarchs, Abraham and Jacob - he does not wander from place to place, he meditates in one place. In fact he is doing just that when he first meets Rebecca. An interesting thing. When it comes time to choose a wife Abraham sends for one from the ancestral home in Haran where his brother's family resides. This is where Jacob also receives his wives. The distaff side of the family, Ishmael and Essau, marry Canaanite women, but the ones who are destined to be patriarchs of the race must marry only from the original clan from which Abraham and also Sarah derive.

The tribe is now settled beside the terebinths, the oak trees, of Mamre, the Amorite, close by to Hebron. Sarah at 127 passes on. It is here that, embedded within the pages of Torah, one of the earliest and certainly the widest read real estate transactions is recorded when Abraham purchases the field and cave of Machpelah outside Hebron from Ephron the Hittite for 400 silver shekels in the presence of the people of the land. Patriarchs and Matriarchs are to be buried here except for Rachel whose own tomb is at Ephrat on the road to Bethlehem. 4,000 years and we know where our ancestors are buried! Abraham at 175 breaths his last and is gathered to his kin.

After finding water in the desert three times all attempts by the Philistines to expel Isaac from the Land come to an end, and Abimelech, king of the Philistines, realizing that Isaac is blessed by G-d, journeys to Beersheva to swear an oath of peace with him, recognizing Isaac as the patron of the surrounding countryside. The clan now is established in the Land, Isaac becomes a poet and writes the Minha service and settles down to a long, happy, righteous existence. At the end of time, say our sages, G-d will tell Abraham: Your children have sinned, and Abraham will reply: Let them die to sanctify Your name. Then G-d will turn to Jacob and say: Your children have sinned, and Jacob will reply: Let them die to sanctify Your name. Then G-d will speak to Isaac: Your children have sinned, and Isaac will answer: My children? Are they not also Yours? Yours as well?

Movie of the Month: Saturday, May 19, 7:30 pm **2004 Documentary Watermarks**

In 1909, after the Austrian government passed a law known as "the Aryan Paragraph," which forbade sporting clubs from accepting Jewish members, a group of Jewish athletes responded by forming a sports organization of their own. Known as "Hakoah Vienna" (from the Hebrew word for strength), the club sought to give Jewish athletes a place to turn to, and to confront stereotypes that Austrian Jews were intellectual giants but physical weaklings. Hakoah Vienna's members were champions in a number of sports in Austria and Europe (and their soccer team defeated Britain's legendary West Ham United in a 1924 exhibition match), but their most famous athletes were the members of the women's swimming team, who soon came to dominate competition throughout the nation.

Director Yaron Zilberman reunited eight of the Hakoah Vienna swimmers for the documentary *Watermarks*.

Leila Achtoun's Dvar Torah

Everyone, thank you so much for coming. This is a very big day for me, and I am so glad to be sharing it with all of you. My Torah portion is Exodus Yitro, and the section I chose to mainly focus on is the Ten Commandments. This was an ambitious project but I enjoyed myself along the way and it was an experience I will never forget.

The Ten Commandments are the laws of the Jewish people. Other religions follow them as well. They were not meant to be broken. Their purpose is to protect people, to keep them safe and happy.

The commandment that I have chosen to focus on is the tenth and final one: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shalt not covet your neighbor's wife, nor his male servant, nor his female servant, nor his ox, nor his donkey, nor anything that is your neighbor's."

But how can we control something that is deep inside us, a longing or desire for something we see? The Ten Commandments are the most common section of the Torah for commentary, and sages have shared their opinion on these rules for thousands of years. Ibn Ezra was a rabbi and one of the most famous Jewish commentators. He was born in Spain during the Middle Ages. He had many brilliant ideas and theories and excelled in philosophy, poetry, and astrology. He refers to a famous saying, "The wicked are ruled by their hearts, but the righteous rule their hearts." The quote is saying that we must go within ourselves and discover why it is that we want what we do. Is it because we are jealous, and we think what we are longing for will make us happy? Having it would not necessarily make us content. The amount of stuff we own is not the only factor in enjoying life. It has more to do with what is inside our hearts.

Is all longing wrong? Admiration is a good kind of wanting; it is healthy to aspire in your life to emulate the positive aspects of someone else's life. Wishing you were as kind-hearted and loving as they are and then trying to obtain these qualities is a positive kind of wanting, the desire for self-improvement. When someone inspires us by their amazing talents or unconditional love or good deeds, it is only natural to admire them. Heroes inspire us every day to do great things, save lives, and be loving people, and we should strive to follow in the footsteps of those whom we admire.

But it is unhealthy to constantly want things. It causes us to be distracted from the wonderful things we do have. In today's world we are overwhelmed and surrounded by so many things that it is hard not to want them. Do we really need those things we think are so important? Ibn Ezra tells a story about a lowly, meek peasant who falls in love with a beautiful princess, but she is married to a prince and he knows he could never have her. The moral of the story is if we waste our time wanting things that we can never have, then can we ever truly be happy?

Rambam, a medieval Jewish philosopher, rabbi and physician, connects this commandment with a previous one, "Do not steal," saying, "Desire leads to coveting, and coveting leads to stealing." What he says is true; this commandment is a basic law that all humans should obey. The cause behind most crimes is jealousy, a desire for something that is so strong that it causes one to sin. All people could prosper if they accepted what both they and others have and did not try to obtain others' belongings.

Leila's drash continued :

I have often wished I had is straight hair. My hair is curly and tangled and messy and I frequently wish that it wasn't. I have told people with straight hair I wish mine was like theirs, and they say they wish they had curly hair like mine. I finally realized that having straight hair wouldn't solve all my problems, because if I had straight hair I would probably wish I could change something else about myself. So I gave up. Why fight the battle if you know you're going to lose? I accept that my hair is how it is, and that it's not going to change. My hair is a tangled blessing in disguise that has taught me patience and acceptance.

I think the true meaning behind this commandment is really just be content with what you have. Know that others may have bigger and better things, but what you have is truly wonderful and it is plenty, and there are many people with much, much less. As Pirkei Avot, Hebrew for *Ethics of the Fathers* tells us 2000 years ago, "The more possessions, the more worry." It also says, "Who is rich? One who is content with his (or her) portion." These ancient words of wisdom are true even day.

Thank You one and All !

Friday, March 2, was a most interesting evening. It start ed with wine and hors d'oeuvres at a neighbor's home and ended in the emergency room at the hospital, laughing with Judy Corwin. I saw a wonderful art show, fractured my ankle, and learned that we have an efficient emergency room with some delightful and funny staff, and I'm blessed with living in a community of wonderful, helpful people.

Judy taking me to the hospital was the beginning; much of the Jewish community and my friends and neighbors came to help me, and some, especially Judy, are still helping after 6 weeks of my left leg being in in a big black boot and me hopping around on crutches.

Deborah Edelman, Isa, Adyson Ziven Posner, and Divora Stern brought food, Karen Rosen medicine and help with my boot, Margo Frank brought me wool to knit and save my sanity, and Janice Berman helped inside and outside my home. Leslie Kirkpatrick brought flowers and did my shopping, Nancy Merling finished off hamantash, and Helen Sizemore hosted a Purim reading at my home, moving furniture, setting tables and much more. Others like Eva Strauss-Rosen (also without the use of one leg) called with comfort and helpful advice.

Other friends helped too. Ann Kilkenny chose family presents and mailed them. Oni La Goia came daily to do chores such as taking out the garbage and me out to lunch!

The outpouring of help was essential and truly a blessing. There is a good reason Kol HaEmek is called a community--we are blessed to be part of it!

With love and appreciation,
Carol Rosenberg



Kol Ha Emek MCJC-Inland
P.O. Box 416,
Redwood Valley, CA 95470

Our purpose is to create an environment in which Jewish culture, religion and spiritual life can flourish, to perpetuate and renew our Jewish connections with ourselves and our homes, within our community and the world.

- To provide space for religious study and prayer.
- To share life cycle events through meaningful Jewish traditions
- To offer and sponsor Jewish education for all ages
- To be inclusive of all partnerships and family configurations
- To include interfaith families and Jews-by-choice
- To network with other Jewish communities
- To educate and share our culture with other Mendocino County residents
- To be a foundation for *Tikkun olam* (healing the world) as a community through socially just actions and and by Mitzvot (good deeds)
- To offer membership in exchange for financial and other contributions and allow all to participate regardless of the ability to pay

Kol HaEmek Information & Resources

Kol HaEmek

(707) 468-4536

Board Members

Harvey Frankle, President	459-9235 < woodnbooks@wildblue.net >
David Koppel, Treasurer	485-8910 < davekoppel@yahoo.com >
Alan (Acorn) Sunbeam	463-8364 < asunbeam@mac.com >
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Sherrie Ebyam	530-414-1104 < ebyam@sbcglobal.net >

Brit Mila: Doctors willing to do circumcisions in their office or your home; Robert Gitlin D.O. (465-7406), Sam Goldberg (463-8000; Jeremy Mann (463-8000)

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

Community support: Willits, Divora Stern (459-9052), Ukiah, Margo Frank (463-1834)

Interfaith Council: Cassie Gibson (468-535; (415)-777-4545, (887)777-5247

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

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