



The Newsletter of Kol HaEmek (Voice of the Valley)

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

Phone # 707-468-4536

August 2009

Av - Elul 5769

Please note: all submissions preferred by the 20th of each month to carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net

Visit our web page: www.kolhaemek.org

Coming Events

Saturday, August 8, Melanie Katz's Bat Mitzvah, (see opposite)

Wednesday, August 12, 7:30 pm
San Francisco Mime Troupe at
Todd Grove Park, Ukiah (FYI)

Thurs-Sunday, August 13-16,
Jewish Women's Retreat, Mendocino Coast

Saturday, August 15, 7:30 pm Movie Night:
"Schmelvis," a comedy including an orthodox impersonator, an eccentric rabbi and a film crew in Memphis + beer and popcorn

Sunday, August 16, "Feed the Hungry"; call
468-5351 or 462-7471

Friday, August 21, 6:30 pm
Round-the-table Shabbat, blessings, a potluck
veggie meal, songs & stories.

Wednesday August 26, Men's group

Sunday, August 30, 10:00 am
!st Day of Shul School!!!!



The Katz Family
invites you to join them as

Melany Margaret Katz

is called to the Torah as a
Bat Mitzvah

Saturday, August 8,
at 10:00 am
at Brooktrails Lodge, Willits

Please respond to 459-0488
or kbkcostumedesign@gmail.com



LOOK FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR 2009-2010

It will be coming in the mail - Please fill out and return as soon as possible.

Our congregation relies on our volunteers but we still need your membership dollars to support our Rabbi, building, and activities.

Portion of the Week

August 1 - Vaetchanan/Nachamu

August 8 - Ekev

August 15 - Rech

August 22 - Shoftim

August 29 - Ki Tetze

We Remember:

Meda D. Newlan 8/1

Gertrude Sussman 8/1

Elena Castaneda 8/9

Norman F. Feldheym 8/15

Fay N. Borkan 8/28

Herman Greenwald Av 23

All good wishes to Vicki Patterson

She leaves August 27 for a year as a volunteer teaching English in Ecuador as part of a Harvard program called World Teach. Vicki, may you go in peace and return in peace.

We Need 19 TORAH READERS !!!

For Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. If you have read before, or would like a small part to be your first B'nai Mitzvah occasion, call or e-mail Bill Ray at 459-5950 or <wjray@sonic.net>

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.

Write Write On for Israel Teen Fellowship!

http://www.bluestarpr.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=27&Itemid

This program is for teens entering their sophomore or junior years of high school.

The program is free.

If you are interested and have any questions, please feel free to call Samuel Rothmann, (415) 543-6300 between the hours of 9:30am - 3:30pm Monday-Thursday

P.S. The Write On for Israel Fellowship is hosted in San Francisco by BlueStar PR. They try to portray Israel to the Bay Area in a positive light.

To see an example of some of the work that they have done, go to:

<http://www.youtube.com/>

High Holiday Schedule 2009-2010 (5770)

Slichot: Saturday, September 12, 2009 (Saturday night)

Rosh HaShanah: Friday & Saturday, September 18 and 19, 2009

Yom Kippur: Sunday, September 27 and Monday, September 28, 2009
Mikveh at Pennyroyal Lake, Sunday, September 27,

Sukkot: Friday, October 2, Kabbalat Shabbat and Sukkot celebration
Sunday, October 4, at the Shul: dessert in the Sukkah and an Israeli movie

Simhat Torah: Saturday evening, October 10, celebration!

Kabbalat Shabbat, 3rd Friday, October 16 (Shoshanah)

. . . and looking ahead:

Hanukkah (1st candle), Friday, December 11

Hanukkah Faire and candle lighting: Sunday, Dec 12 (2nd day of Hanukkah) late afternoon party
so as to be able to light candles after dark

Hanukkah Shabbat celebration-last night of Hanukkah - 3rd Friday, December 18

2010

Tu Bishvat: January 30-31, 2010 (*Friday-Saturday*)

Purim: February 28, 2010 (*Sunday*)

Passover (Pesach): March 30, 2010 (*Tuesday*)

Holocaust Remembrance Day (Yom HaShoah): April 11, 2010 (*Sunday*)

Israel Memorial Day (Yom HaZikaron): April 18, 2010 (*Sunday*)

Israel Independence Day (Yom HaAtzmaut): April 19, 2010 (*Monday*)

Lag B'Omer: May 2, 2010 (*Sunday*)

Shavuot: May 19, 2010 (*Wednesday*)

Tisha B'Av: July 20, 2010 (*Tuesday*)

Please let us know your thoughts!!!

The Board of KHE is considering changing our schedule of Friday Evening Services after January 2010 to the 2nd and 4th Friday of the month.

Would this make it easier for your family to participate in services????

Please respond to <carolrosenberg@sbcglobal.net>

THIRD SATURDAY THEATER



AUGUST 15



SCHMELVIS (2002)

Convinced that Elvis is part Jewish, an orthodox Jewish Elvis impersonator, an eccentric rabbi & a film crew set out to Memphis & Israel to trace his routes. As they lobby, among other things, to give the King a proper Jewish burial their journey takes them to hilarious heights and pathetic lows in their stuffy Winnebago.

SEPTEMBER 12 (SECOND SATURDAY)



USHPIZIN (2005)

A heartwarming and humorous Israeli drama set in the customarily closed world of ultra-Orthodox Jews, Ushpizin is the story of Moshe and Malli, a married couple, who are suffering through a financial crisis. Naturally they pray for help, but instead of a miracle, two suspicious strangers with criminal pasts appear on their doorstep. The couple believes their guests were sent to them by God as a test of faith. The film is reportedly the first made by members of the Israeli ultra-Orthodox community

OCTOBER 17 **YELLOW ASPHALT** (2002)



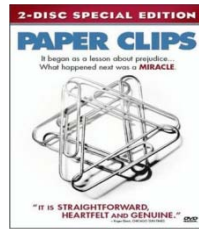
Israeli filmmaker Danny Vereté trains his lenses on the ancient tribe of the bedouins, who are forced to confront the march of time and modernity through three vignettes. First, a young bedouin is mowed down in the middle of the desert on a lonely road. Next, a bedouin man and his German wife find difficulty navigating their unusual partnership. And last, a bedouin woman takes up, against all odds, with her Israeli boss.

Questions?: Steven Levin 462-3131

THIRD SATURDAY THEATER



NOVEMBER 14



PAPER CLIPS (2004)

Whitwell Middle School in rural Tennessee is the setting for this documentary about an extraordinary experiment in Holocaust education. Struggling to grasp the concept of 6 million Holocaust victims, the students decide to collect 6 million paper clips to better understand the enormity of the calamity. The film details how the students met Holocaust survivors from around the world and how the experience transformed them and their community.

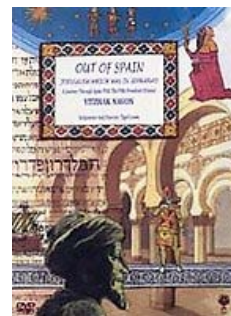
DECEMBER 19



THE BIG DIG (1970)

Tel Aviv mental patient Blaumilch (Bomba Tzur) escapes from an asylum and begins to dig a giant hole down the middle of one of the city's busiest intersections. Evidence of urban bureaucracy shines as the madman's antics not only go uninterrupted but receive support from construction crews and local officials. Director Ephraim Kishon's scathing satire received a Best Foreign-Language Film nomination at the 1970 Golden Globes.

JANUARY 16



OUT OF SPAIN (2006)

Join Israeli president Yitzhak Navon for this fascinating, in-depth documentary series about the Sephardic Jews and their eventual ouster from the Iberian Peninsula. Navon travels to Spain, Portugal and Majorca to visit key religious sites that reveal the Jews' troubled history during the Spanish Inquisition and beyond.

Questions?: Steven Levin 462-3131

Dear KHE *Chaverim*,

I remember the first Saturday morning service I led at KHE, back in early 2003. I was here as a visiting Shabbat rabbi, and we met in the clubroom of the senior housing in Willits. It was time to sing “*Hodoo l’Adonai ki tov, ki l’olam hasdol*” Thank Adonai who is good, whose loving kindness is forever.” In the moment, I decided to sing this line from Psalms to a catchy calypso tune familiar to those from the Belafonte era. Afterwards I heard protest from a “regular” that I had not used the traditional melody, but had cheapened the prayer with the popular folk tune.

This memory surfaced with a smile earlier this summer, while participating in a walking tour of the Nachlaot neighborhood of Jerusalem. Nachlaot is actually a contiguous collection of some 30 minuscule neighborhoods (some simply a square of houses built around a courtyard) that developed as the city spread beyond its ancient walls in the 19th and early 20th centuries. I was here as part of my in-service training to keep my Israeli tourguide license up-to-date. The leaders of the tour included a guide who lives in Nachlaot as well as Rabbi David Menachem, of Iraqi parentage, who’d grown up in Nachlaot and lives and works there today. A central topic of our outing was the various religious melodies heard in the local synagogues.

Each of the mini neighborhoods had originated as an ethnic (e.g., Greek, Syrian, Iraqi, Yemenite) or religious (e.g., particular brand of *ashkenazi* ultraorthodox) enclave, and so today’s synagogues still reflect those identities. This gave our rabbi the opportunity to give us a sample of Iraqi religious singing, which he characterized as very sad, the sadder-sounding, the more appreciated, said he; and Moroccan style, which he demonstrated as sliding up and down the scales with much dramatic expression; or Turkish, which emphasizes a deep baritone voice, or *Mizrachi* (Eastern) style, which reflects the Arabic music of the Middle East. And the coming together of these diverse communities over the last century in *Eretz Yisrael* has created what is today called the “mixed Jerusalem *sefardi*” style common in many of the country’s non-*ashkenazi* congregations. All of these traditions are based not on our 8-note “do-re-mi” scale, but rather on the *makam* scale which uses quarter notes. Can you recall *Yedid Nefesh* as sung by the former KHE choir? We were treated to renditions of *Yedid Nefesh* as each of the above communities would sing it, none of them similar to the KHE version.

Our tour-guide rabbi not only loves to sing himself, but is the brother of a *hazzan* (cantor) in the biggest of the Nachlaot congregations. And yet he boldly claims that, after much research, he has concluded that there is no such thing today as pure Jewish music. We took from wherever we were living, is how he puts it. Perhaps you have heard of Um Kaltum, the female Egyptian superstar singer from the mid-20th Century? Today the biggest synagogue in Nachlaot, originally built by Jews from Halab in Syria, sings traditional Jewish prayers to her melodies. Rabbi David says you can also hear Jewish prayers sung to the popular tunes from a well-known Arab movie, “The White Rose.”

Rabbi David also pointed out that *mizrachi* trope for Torah chanting differs from the *ashkenazi* (while living in Jerusalem, I once took a course in trope at Hebrew Union College, and the Israeli teacher taught us what he called the *sefardi* trope - from lack of practice, it hasn’t stayed with me). And although *sefardim* and *ashkenazim* intone the standard trope marks differently, I learned that Yemenite Jews use only 3 different intonations in their particular way of chanting Torah. Did you know that Yemenites do not traditionally have a *hazzan*?

Every male would learn to read Torah and be able to chant all of the service. Regarding synagogue roles, Rabbi David explained that the traditional job of the *gabbai* in a *mizrachi* synagogue has been to provide tea, schnapps, and a bit of nourishment to worshipers. One synagogue in Nachlaot has the practice of singing 4 continuous hours of *Bakashot* (requests) each week--congregants break into two groups and take turns--while members of one group sing, the others silently eat and drink.

Over the centuries, Jewish liturgy has been enriched by *piyyutim*--religious poetry, often recited to melody. Today, specific *piyyutim* are often known to accompany the service during specific holidays. According to Rabbi David, who is adept in rendering *piyyutim*, this form first began when authors created poems to substitute for long prayers in the daily liturgy. For example, they would take only the key line at the end of each blessing of the Amidah prayer, and then would create a line of poetry using the initials of each word in that key line. The daily Amidah has 19 paragraphs of blessings, so that means that the lengthy prayer was condensed to 19 lines of poetry, which were then sung in place of the much longer Amidah. I had never heard this explanation of the origin of *piyyutim* before, but it certainly brought to mind current Jewish renewal practices in adapting and “playing” with the classic liturgy (such as chanting one line over and over rather than reading the entire prayer). According to Rabbi David, while the *piyyutim* replaced the traditional prayers at first, the force of the traditional liturgy eventually prevailed, and popular *piyyutim* are today considered “extras” and don’t substitute for the original prayers (and so the prayer service has become even longer...).

Today in Israel, we were told, *piyyutim* are experiencing a comeback, and there are *piyyutim* concerts and contests in which singers vie for the best interpretive rendering of these melodic poems. One day during my trip, I was riding the public bus from Tel Aviv to Herzliyya when I noticed that the bus’s loudspeaker was playing the kabbalistic prayer *Ana b’coach* as a song with lush instrumental accompaniment. This is considered to be an especially potent, seven-line prayer, one for each day of the week, in which the ostensible words are actually permutations of the Holy Name. I was so surprised to hear this esoteric prayer being sung on the bus, and I asked the driver about it. He couldn’t name singer or CD, but said he’d downloaded it. I came home and told my Tel Aviv daughter the story. She is a folk dance enthusiast, and told me that *Ana b’coach* is one of her favorite dances! She’d never thought about the words, she said, but loves the steps and the music! So you can see how in Israel rarefied prayers become part of the air that you breathe, even unconsciously touching those who don’t frequent the synagogue.

Back to Nachlaot, we learned that a few congregations still have three daily minyanim, but as population has shifted over the years, some of the synagogues are now open only on Friday eve and Saturday. The original, usually poor, inhabitants are moving to newer neighborhoods while students and “hip” families are moving into this inner-city, village-like area right next to the Mahanei Yehudah outdoor shuk (market). But some of the families who have left return to Nachlaot for Shabbat, holidays, and life-cycle events. No doubt they want to participate in a service that sings the prayers to the “right and proper” tunes, just as they remember them!

B’shalom oovrachah, Shoshanah

In my Opinion:

At the recent meeting of your Board of Directors we reviewed the list of chores for arranging for High Holiday services. We do this every July and take turns volunteering for the activities that make a hopefully meaningful religious service for the community; as we did this I couldn't help musing on why I'm a Jew and why I'm even involved in my Jewish community.

There have been times in my life when my Jewish identity was only a very minor part of how I defined myself. As a child I was taught nothing about being Jewish except that twice a year we visited Grandma & Grandpa Goldberg in their synagogue. I was sent to school on Jewish holidays since we didn't observe them.

My husband came from an observant family and the year before our marriage my in-laws-to-be gave me a crash course in Jewish observance and holiday ritual. Even so I was appalled when it was suggested I go to a mikveh before my marriage. The idea of circumcision of my oldest son by a Mohel was equally upsetting.

So how come I'm President of the Board and spend so much of my energy on Jewish "stuff"? Maybe it's because when I first came to Mendocino County I lived in Willits and met Nancy Moilanen and Harvey and Jackie Frankle. They taught me that to be a Jew in Mendocino County thirty years ago really meant you had to work at it. When I lived back East or in the Bay Area I figured going to High Holiday services and an occasional contribution was sufficient. Here it takes effort and commitment or doing Jewish doesn't happen. It takes a long time and a lot of learning to connect to a sense of Jewish identity.

Thirty years ago we believed that Jewish children and young people couldn't decide to accept or reject their Jewish heritage unless they realize what it is and what the benefits of being part of a community of Jews might mean. After all those years, giving our children a sense of their Jewish heritage and identity is still very important to me.

I love our Sunday school. I love your children. I especially feel blessed when I see these children relating to each other with love and compassion and a feeling that they are related. Sara and Anthony Esserman-Melville, Linda Koppel, Rachel Elkins, Herran and Jordan with help from many of you gave our children an incredible sense of warmth, safety and joy in Jewish learning last year. With your continued service this learning will continue.

Planning services and events that bring our diverse community together takes a lot of work. Most of us, myself included, see our Jewishness as only a part of who we are, and the other parts often seem more important, more interesting, or more fun.

If not for ourselves we need to show up and value doing Jewish for our kids. Participating in the larger events of the community adds to our quality of life. But being involved in the Jewish community ties us to our past and future and gives meaning to our very identity.

Sincerely,
Carol

From Shoshanah: *Here are the preparations for the High Holidays. May you find them helpful in your path to personal renewal as we approach this New Year.*

In this year of 5769, the closing month of Elul begins on the night of Thursday, August 20. The next 29 days provide an opportunity for inner and outer work in preparation for Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. This soul searching focuses on tshuvah, which literally means “return,” so this is a time for us to return to our true selves, to return to God, to return to Torah and mitzvot, to the way we are to manifest the precious and unique gift of life which has been given to each of us. The Hebrew letters which spell Elul can be seen as an acronym for Ani L’dodi V’dodi Li, “I am my beloved and my beloved is mine.” These beautiful words set the tone so that our tshuvah work is approached within a context of love, whether our beloved is ourself, our fellow beings, the world(s) around us, or our Creator. The great Hasidic master, Rabbi Levi Yitzhak of Berditchev, teaches, “Whether one really loves God can be determined by the love borne toward others.” The philosopher Martin Buber insists, “If you wish to believe, love! He who loves brings God and the world together.” Our hearts can hold an infinite amount of love. Our job, during the month of Elul and throughout our lives, is to increase love in the world for ourselves, for each other, for the marginalized and forgotten, for creation and for the Holy One. If you wish to believe, love!” (Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson, Vice President at the University of Judaism in Los Angeles)

So within this Elul field of ahavah, love, here are 4 different quotes to help you on your tshuvah path to the new year of 5770 which begins on Rosh HaShanah, Friday eve, September 18. You may want to spend a week musing on each quote while meditating, or journaling, or in tandem sharing and checking-in with a tshuvah buddy of your choice. How do these quotes touch your own reality, your own map of your life up till now, and the route you’d like to take in the new year? What do these quotes evoke for you in each of the Four Worlds that you experience: the physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual realms of your existence?

Elul 1-7 (Aug. 21-27): Embracing the Darkness: “Barchu is a prayer we can say only in a minyan. There is great wisdom in starting our service by praising God together, because all Jews reflect a different face of God and so we really can’t praise God fully unless we do it together in a group. After the Barchu, we praise God for creating light and darkness. I love that image because it means that both the triumphs and the failure are a praise of God since God creates both light and darkness. Life and peace come from recognizing that all experiences, negative or positive, are an opportunity to be Godly. I will try to always remember that even the darkness is a reflection of God’s world so we don’t have to fear it, we can embrace it as part of the journey of life in God’s beautiful world.” (Jacob Artson, a young teen with autism who lives in southern California, is committed to helping typical and special needs people live lives of dignity and meaning)

What has been the nature of the darkness in your life this past year? How has this darkness been a manifestation of the divine in your life?

Elul 8-15 (Aug. 28-Sept. 4): Head Changing Day: “Rosh Hashanah is ‘Head (rosh) Changing (shenah) Day.’ You can’t have a new year with an old head. So if you want a new year, you are going to need to get a new head. A new head is a story-free head. Your stories define you. If your stories are positive and loving then you are optimistic and loving. If your stories are negative and fearful, then you are angry and afraid. Regardless of their emotional charge, however, stories are not reality. A new head is story-free. A new head engages reality with compassionate curiosity, going into what is, without the baggage of what was or what is supposed to be. If you want a new head, identify the stories you carry with you. Ask yourself: ‘Am I absolutely certain this story is true?’ ‘How does telling this story make me feel?’ If you are telling stories you don’t know to be true, stop telling them. If telling your stories makes you anything other than just, kind, and humble, stop telling them. In fact, stop telling stories altogether. Who are you without your story? You don’t know, and not knowing is the key to having a new head.” (Rabbi Rami Shapiro, www.rabbirami.com)

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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.

- 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

(continued from page 7)

Elul 16-22 (Sept. 5-11): Filling Your Vessel?: “The instructor filled an empty jar with rocks. ‘Is it full?’ Then he poured a pitcher of pebbles into the jar. ‘Full now?’ Next he poured sand. ‘Full?’ Finally he poured water. ‘Now it’s full.’ ‘What do you learn from this?’ One student answered, ‘That no matter how busy you are, you can always fit one more thing?’ ‘No, the important thing is: you have to put the rocks in first. If you fill your jar first with the pebbles, sand or water, there will be no room for the rocks.’ Put the rocks in first, those important things that keep you grounded and centered. I’m the one who thought that you could always fit in one more call, one more meeting. Yet when I fill my jar with what seems urgent but not important, there isn’t room for what I really need. Time for my inner life--prayer, study, reflection, and time for my family. A New Year approaches: it is an empty jar. How I fill it up is up to me. Elul is the deep breath I need to get clear about what my rocks are, and to promise myself to put them in first.” (Rabbi Laura Geller, Temple Emanuel, Beverly Hills, CA) What are your rocks for the coming year?

Elul 23-29 (Sept. 12-18) Sacred Gifts: “The High Holidays are not only about our sins--they are about our blessings. We have been given a marvelous world which we celebrate on Rosh HaShanah. On Yom Kippur we think about how in the year to come, we can enhance the sanctity of the many gifts we have been given.” (Rabbi David Wolpe, Sinai Temple, Los Angeles).
What are the gifts in your life which you would like to bring forward into the new year? Can you see your gifts as holy offerings? How can you enhance the sanctity, the sacredness, of life, your life and the life around you, via your gifts?

May the month of Elul help you return to what is essential in your life. May you examine your life in the Elul spirit of lover and beloved.