

# Kol HaLev Happenings

*Newsletter of Cleveland's Reconstructionist Community*

March 2011

## News from JRF

The board of the Jewish Reconstructionist Federation (JRF) and the board of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (RRC) have voted overwhelmingly to approve a proposal to create a unified organization that will guide all facets of the Reconstructionist movement. The board of the Reconstructionist Rabbinical Association (RRA) unanimously endorsed the proposal.

The agreement is subject to the approval of the JRF-affiliated communities who will vote on it at a special meeting on April 10, 2011.

The agreement envisions a united board made up of lay leaders and rabbis, a united professional staff and a single chief executive. The organization will be designed to include additional broad participation by lay leaders and rabbis.

The goal of the united organization will be to cultivate, enhance and promote Jewish leadership, learning and living. It is expected that by consolidating financial resources the new organization will generate significant savings. Its strengths will be greater than the sum of its parts.

The new organization will be unique; no other Jewish denomination has this type of united structure. The Reconstructionist movement is creating a new category of organization designed to respond to the changing Jewish landscape of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## Purim: Just a Children's Holiday?

Is Purim just a chance for adults to express their inner child? Is there more significance to celebrating in costume?

Does Purim have any relevance to our lives today? What lessons can we learn from it?

Thoughtful answers to these and other questions can be found in the many *divrei Torah* available on the JRF website (<http://jrf.org/purim-resources>)

As one of the commentators sums it up, Purim shows us that life is random, solidarity is important, the world looks different when it is upside down, and we should have fun. (<http://jrf.org/showdt&rid=504&pid=107>)

So join the fun with Kol HaLev, Saturday evening, March 19. Details on page 8.

## Bar Mitzvah

Please join us as our son  
**Gabriel Joseph Segar**  
is called to the Torah as a Bar Mitzvah  
Saturday, March 26, 2011 at 9:45 a.m.

The whole Kol HaLev community  
is invited to join us  
for a kiddush luncheon following the service.  
Please RSVP for catering purposes to  
[andygetz@bepure.com](mailto:andygetz@bepure.com), 216-658-9996

Rabbi Steve Segar and Andy Getz

**DIRECTORY**

<b>Office</b> 2245 Warrensville Center Road, #215 University Heights, OH 44118, <a href="http://www.kolhalev.net">www.kolhalev.net</a>		<b>Office Manager</b> Judy Herdering 216-320-1498
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<b>Deadline for the April newsletter is Wednesday, March 16, 2011</b>		

**Women’s Retreat: There’s Still Time to RSVP**

**What:** Using this year's theme "**Everyday Courage**" as a focus for discussion, we will have the opportunity to share laughter, insights, and stories, making new discoveries about each other and our lives.

**When:** Sunday, March 6, 9:45 a.m. to 3:45 p.m

**Where:** The home of Donna and Dick Weinberger, 32090 Woodsdale Lane, Solon (very near the S.O.M. Ctr. entrance to the South Chagrin Metropark)

**It is NOT too late to RSVP and attend for all or part of the day!**

**Questions???** Contact Happy Wallach at HappyHKW@aol.com or at 216-283-4058. We hope that you will join us!

## **Rabbinic Corner – Rabbi Steve Segar**

The dramatic events that are taking place throughout the Middle East, especially in Egypt, have stimulated much energetic conversation and debate within the general American and Jewish communities.

On one hand, we have watched as powerful grass-roots movements have emerged and forced the resignation of deeply entrenched autocratic leaders. Furthermore they have done this with a level of courage and composure that can only be admired by those of us living in one of the oldest democracies on the planet.

On the other hand, the uncertainty about which voices might come to the fore in a more democratic Middle East has engendered concern among many within both our Jewish and secular communities. The concern is focused especially on the potential for a strong emergence of those with a traditional Islamic orientation. Some commentators have explicitly worried that Egypt in particular could be heading down the same road that led to the creation of the Iranian theocracy several decades ago. But others have been careful to point out the many differences between the Iranian experience and the current Egyptian revolution.

There is much about this unfolding story that certainly transcends my own understanding, but I do have a strong sense that it would be a mistake if we allowed our most fearful expectations to drive our response to these events. The freedom and the opportunities that have been available to us in the Western world are now being claimed by citizens of countries where these basic human rights have been denied for generations. For us to ground a sense of security, whether for Israel or for the West, in the continuity of an authoritarian and repressive regime cannot be seen as a wise or far-sighted policy. This point seems especially resonant to me as we enter the part of our sacred year that is so focused on our own stories of collective liberation. Rather it seems that what will be needed is the willingness to engage with the new political structure as it emerges. May we and our political representatives have the vision and the resolve to make that a possibility.

*Rabbi Steve*

## **Lunch and Learn**

The Lunch and Learn program originally planned for March 19 has been postponed.

Programs scheduled for the rest of this year:

April 2: The Sacred Time and Space of Shabbat - teacher Mark Davidson

May 7: A Contemplative Approach to Shabbat - teacher Judy Vida

June 4: Family Additions to Your Shabbat Practice - teacher Jeffrey Schein

<p>Rabbi Steve is available to meet with Kol HaLev members on a range of issues by appointment on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings. Please contact him by phone at the office (216-320-1498) or by email (<a href="mailto:rabbisteve@kolhalev.net">rabbisteve@kolhalev.net</a>) to schedule a meeting time.</p>
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## From Our President – Greg Selker

In my business life I have learned that pretty much anything can be measured. The trick is figuring out what to pay attention to and understanding the correlation between what you are measuring and how it ultimately impacts a sought-after outcome. Just as a business measures its revenue, we measure our income gained from dues payments and fundraising. As I wrote in my February message, this is one measurement of our community's health and vitality, but it does not give a complete picture. I postulated that there are three fundamental pillars on which a sacred community is built:

Creating a culture wherein we have the opportunity to explore our individual and collective relationship to the creative force in the universe.

Creating opportunities for us to engage in, learn about and explore our Jewish tradition in ways that bring it meaningfully into our lives today.

Providing opportunities where, as individuals and as a community, we can take actions that can tangibly make a difference in the lives of our families, our community, our region and the world.

I'd like us to begin a discussion on how we could measure these three sought-after outcomes.

From the first pillar you can see that this describes a community actively engaged in exploring its relationship to the sacred, the divine. Perhaps if we were a Reform or Conservative community, we would more simply say "creating a culture of worship." But as a Reconstructionist community we focus on defining our relationship to the divine, giving it a context in both individual and community actions.

What then are the ways in which we could begin measuring our effectiveness at bringing this initial pillar of building a sacred community into existence?

Certainly we could look at the overall participation in our Shabbat services, as well as our participation in services on other holidays. Knowing the number of participants and their level of participation would measure the degree to which our total community is engaged in the first pillar, i.e., exploring their relationship to the sacred and divine by participating in our communal celebrations. While we have not begun the process of counting the number of participants at Shabbat services, I have to say that, as a regular attendee, my experience is that we have a solid and growing group of individuals who regularly attend Shabbat services. This "core" is also augmented nicely on a weekly basis by other members and guests.

We also could look at the diversity of our Shabbat programming itself. Unlike most other synagogues, we have different types of Shabbat service offerings, ranging from more or less traditional services based on our siddur (*Kol HaNeshama*) to meditative services using silence, yoga and chanting. Because a certain percentage of our services are lay-led, there is often greater opportunity for the individual leader to bring her or his interpretation and influence to the overall themes and characteristics of the Shabbat service. By this measure alone, it would appear that Kol HaLev is well on its way to creating an overall culture wherein we have the opportunity to explore our individual and collective relationship to the creative force in the universe.

The Religious Practices Committee (RPC), one of the longest standing and most active committees in the eighteen-year history of Kol HaLev, has had tremendous impact on defining the character of our community with respect to this fundamental pillar. While the RPC has had strong leadership over the years (now very ably chaired by Bill Scher-Marcus) and strong participation by individual committee members, there is room for new members and new voices.

Under the guidance of Barb Truitt, the Spiritual Values Team Leader, the RPC is investigating what measurements will give us insight into our effectiveness at creating this pillar of a sacred community. I have described several potential areas to measure in this article, but these are by no means the only or the best measurements. In the process of determining what to measure, new ideas, programs and initiatives to drive greater effectiveness will arise.

If you are interested in being a part of this inquiry, please get in touch with Barb Truitt or Bill Scher-Marcus. We welcome your ideas, input and participation as we engage in this important work of creating our unique culture wherein we are empowered to explore our relationship to the creative force in the universe.

As always, I also welcome your thoughts and comments and am available at [president@kolhalev.net](mailto:president@kolhalev.net).

*Greg*

## **Hug HaSefer – Book Discussion Circle**

The next book group meeting will be Thursday, March 24, at 7:30 at the home of Muriel and Abe Chasin. Abe will lead a discussion on *The Cross and the Pear Tree: A Sephardic Journey* by Victor Perera, which chronicles the history of Perera's Sephardic family from his parents' generation back to the family's Spanish origins in the fourteenth century. Perera finds many noteworthy ancestors and discovers Christian branches, too. The Library Journal says that this book "is a worthy addition to the growing literature on the Sephardim."

The book for April is tentatively Graham Greene's *Orient Express*.

All KHL members are welcome to attend. For more information about the group and being added to the group's e-mail list contact Kevin Weidenbaum ([KJW@oberlin.net](mailto:KJW@oberlin.net)).

## **Hesed**

Condolences to Gil and Marcia Goldberg, on the loss of Gil's sister, Helene.

*Refuah shleymah*, a complete and speedy recovery, to Brenda Goodman who is healing from a recent fall.

*Refuah Shleymah*, a complete and speedy recovery to Sam Kelman

## **Kol HaLev Kvells**

*Mazel tov* to Joanne Federman, executive director of Family Connections, which received the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Award from the Shaker Heights Human Relations Commission. Family Connections offers support to multi-national families making the transition from their home country to this area.

*Mazel tov* to Rachel Davidson, whose essay took top honors in the 12<sup>th</sup> grade category of the 2011 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Art, Essay, & Multimedia Contest sponsored by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission. You can read her winning essay at [http://crc.ohio.gov/pdf/12-Rachel Davidson.pdf](http://crc.ohio.gov/pdf/12-Rachel%20Davidson.pdf)

## **Board Report**

The February 14 Board meeting began with the exercise introduced at the November Board workday, talking about KHL attributes in personal terms. For February the word was “abundant.”

The treasurer’s report noted that there is a significant amount of money yet to be collected, and he anticipates that we will most likely have a \$3,000-\$4,000 deficit at the end of the fiscal year.

Regarding the Ratner negotiations, there are certain issues to address about sharing the building with the Japanese Language School. The primary concern is the potential overlap between the JLS lunch and the KHL kiddush. Greg briefed the board on items for the contract negotiation.

There has been a planning meeting for the Mock Trial fundraiser scheduled for November 12, 2011. Planners have begun contacting people for the clergy panel, and Avery Friedman has agreed to be the prosecutor. The trial, to be held at Ratner, is an hour; the entire event two hours. The trial will be “The People v. King David, A Man of God or Not?” Plans are underway to seek sponsorships. The hope is to raise as much as \$30,000.

The Values Team Leaders met and began to review the strategic plan to see what has been accomplished and what priorities will be set for the future.

The board agreed to participate in Federation’s 2011 Campaign for Jewish Needs. The date is February 27, 1p.m.-3 p.m. at the Federation building.

The next Board meeting is March 14 at Robin Shell’s house. All members are welcome to attend.

*Molly Berger*

## **Adult Education Series Offers a Look at Zionist History**

The first session of this year's Israel study group met on February 20 in spite of the freezing rain. Using portions of Arthur Hertzberg's book, *The Zionist idea: A Historical Analysis and Reader*, Mike Armin and Art Biagianti provided a summary of the Zionist movement and its intellectual leaders. The discussion focused on the various ideas within the movement.

The Adult Education Committee will be offering the second of this four-part series about Israel on March 20 at 7:30 p.m. The second meeting will use sections of the book, *A History of Israel: From the Rise of Zionism to Our Time* (3rd ed) by Howard M. Sachar, as a starting point for this and future sessions. The New York Times review said "...Sachar has provided the overall picture of the Jewish movement to statehood and since statehood."

Because of the book's comprehensive approach, our discussion leaders will prepare summaries of portions of the book to stimulate your thoughts on Israel, its development, and struggles of the modern Jewish state. Information on the following sessions will be announced as we proceed. If you are interested in attending any of the forthcoming sessions, please send your name and e-mail to Mike Armin ([rmarmine@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rmarmine@sbcglobal.net)) so you can be put on the mailing list.

## Hagiga Happenings

Due to the overwhelming demand, our unit of learning about Shabbat has been extended! If you walk around Hagiga on Shabbat morning, you will hear a buzz. “What is all this excitement about?” you might wonder. It would be none other than Shabbat itself!

We are so fortunate to have an incredible group of educators working with our young people at Kol HaLev. Not only are they talented and educated, they are passionate, dedicated and driven to create the very best experience for our children. Last spring during a focus group on the Long Range Educational Plan, the madrichim shared that they felt that the current interpretation of the Principles Governing Our Educational Programming was being narrowly construed and were leaving certain learners at a disadvantage. (*Editor’s Note: To view the Principles document go to [http://kolhalev.net/learning\\_principles\\_governing\\_educ\\_programming](http://kolhalev.net/learning_principles_governing_educ_programming)*)

To investigate the Principles Governing our Educational Programming and how they might be interpreted, the madrichim worked with both Rabbi Steve and Rabbi Shawn. Rabbi Shawn also led our learning about Values-Based Decision Making, the process which led to the creation of the Principles document. This knowledge has enabled the madrichim to help our children use Values-Based Decision Making in deciding on Shabbat practice during Hagiga.

All their hours of studying have made the madrichim incredible leaders for this project. They guide the youth of Kol HaLev through a process of studying about Shabbat, both from traditional and modern texts, investigating Kol HaLev practices, exploring what elements are important to their communal practice, as well as going through a Values-Based Decision Making process. This has been a long process, but the Bonim (3<sup>rd</sup>- 5<sup>th</sup> grades) and Magshimim (6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grades) are presently formulating their outcomes and recommendations for this process. We look forward to sharing them with you when they are completed.

While we have been keeping the parents of the Zorim (Kindergarten–Grade 2) abreast of the process that Hagiga is undergoing, our youngest children are focused on learning about Shabbat, rather than decision making. Through a hands-on project to enhance the joy of Shabbat, they have created their own Shabbat kits for home use, including candlesticks, challah cover, kiddush cup and tzedakah box, all nicely contained in a uniquely designed bag. May the Shabbat kits bring more light and sweetness to Shabbat celebrations.

*Robyn*

## Volunteers STILL Needed

Translate your commitment to Kol HaLev into participation. Volunteers are needed for several important roles in our community:

Event Coordinator - **Filled**

Holidays Coordinator

Adult Education Co-Chair - **Filled**

Tikkun Olam Co-Chair

Assistant Treasurer

Sound/Audio Setup

If you are interested in finding out more information, please contact Judy Vida, 440-646-1390, Leah Kamionkowski, 216-464-2940 or Greg Selker, 216-406-4789. **Thank you to all Kol HaLev members who volunteered during this past month!**



You'll need a siesta  
after this fiesta!

# Fiesta Shushan



Saturday, March 19, 2011/14 Adar II 5771  
6:30 pm at the Ratner School

Cabaret Following the  
Megillah Reading!

Looking for 3 to 5  
minute performances.

Anything goes!

Music, dance, comedy,  
improv...

Sign up with Peggy  
[sugerpeople@adelphia.net](mailto:sugerpeople@adelphia.net)

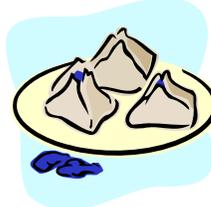
Please note there may be  
PG 13 material

Join us for an oneg following the  
megillah reading! Assignments:

A-H Hamentashen

I-P Drinks

Q-Z Treats



Pick up your  
mishloach manot  
before the megillah  
reading.

Don't forget to bring *Matanot L'Evyonim* - gifts for the poor!  
Canned goods will be collected for the Heights Emergency Food Center.  
Questions? Contact Robyn, [robyn@kolhalev.net](mailto:robyn@kolhalev.net) or 216-320-1498

## **KHL Men's Group to Meet at The Schvitz**

The Kol HaLev Men's Group has now met twice. The next meeting is planned for Saturday, March 12, at The Schvitz, Cleveland's own traditional Jewish bath/steam house. For those of you who have been to the Schvitz, you know what it is, its unique character, and its incredible heat and steam from two massive ovens heating up river rocks with buckets of water thrown on them.

For those who have not yet been to The Schvitz, what are you waiting for? The plan is to meet at The Schvitz at 4 p.m. We will congregate in the steam room where we will schvitz and begin a conversation exploring Judaism and the Body, facilitated by Rabbi Shawn Zevit and Rabbi Jeffrey Schein. Over the next several hours you can continue conversation, schvitzing, get a playtzah (a traditional rub down with a brush made of oak leaves and scented soapy water administered on the top shelf in the steam room), take a Shabbas nap on one of The Schvitz's many comfortable cots, get a massage, or have a snack in the dining room. At 7 p.m. we'll have Havdalah and then continue our schvitz experience over dinner. We will be reserving The Schvitz for our own private use; it should be a remarkable, memorable and even spiritual experience.

The cost for the Kol HaLev Men's Group Schvitz experience is \$65/person and includes entrance fee for The Schvitz, unlimited beverages, salad and steak. Massages and playtzahs are extra. A 20 person minimum is needed to reserve The Schvitz for a private event. If you are interested in participating, please RSVP to Greg Selker (<mailto:gselker@selkerlead.net>). Additional information can be found at <http://www.acontinuouslean.com/2008/12/29/the-schvitz/>.

## **Traveling Abroad? Take Your KHL Credit Card Along and Save**

In addition to all the benefits that the KHL credit card provides for both you and the congregation, there are many other features that you can take advantage of:

- When traveling, whether abroad or just to Canada, use the KHL Card for an added benefit when you make overseas purchases
- Travel accident insurance is included with your card
- 24-hour roadside and travel and emergency assistance is included in case you find yourself in need of help
- Zero fraud liability for lost or stolen cards

Plus, you are showing your support for KHL every time you use your card!

Open a Kol HaLev card today and start showing your support. It's easy! Go to our Kol Halev website ([www.kolhalev.net](http://www.kolhalev.net)), click on the "Supporting Kol HaLev" tab on the far right, scroll down to "Support KHL – Affinity Credit Card" and click for more information about our card, especially the benefit in using this card when traveling.

Please note: applications for this card must be done on-line, not by telephone.

(Credit approval required. Terms and conditions apply. Offered by Capital One, N.A. © 2010 Capital One.)

## Contributions

Kol HaLev gratefully acknowledges the following contributions from:

- Barry and Barbara Epstein in memory of Shahin Afnan's father, in memory of Maxine Collin's mother, in honor of Elaine Millas' bat mitzvah, and in honor of Hagigat Limud
- Josh and Beth Kuritzky to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund as a thank you to Rabbi Steve
- Abe and Muriel Chasin in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Abe's father, Israel Chasin
- Michael and Irene Immerman in commemoration of the yahrzeit of Irene's father, Samuel Gold
- Mario and Roberta Tonti in celebration of Mathew's 35th birthday and Mayira's 4th birthday

## Yahrzeits

*They are now a part of us as we remember them*

Members of Kol HaLev will mark the following yahrzeits during March:

**Marvin Abrams** – father of Sue Pelleg

**Freida Ruth Brooker** – mother of Lee Brooker

**Israel Chasin (Israel)** – father of Abraham Chasin

**Samuel Gold (Simcha)** – father of Irene Immerman

**Donald J Goodman** – father of Bruce Goodman

**Della London Gorovitz** – paternal grandmother of Heidi Gorovitz Robertson

**Aaron Kopstein** – father of Ami Kopstein

**Herman Weinberger (Nehemiah)** – father of Irwin Weinberger

Kol HaLev members may include the yahrzeit of family members in KHL Happenings by submitting the name of the deceased, the relationship to the member and the date of death, including the year, in either the secular or Jewish calendar to <a href="mailto:JudyHerdering@kolhalev.net">JudyHerdering@kolhalev.net</a> .
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## MARCH 2011 KOL HALEV CALENDAR

Friday 4            5:45 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. – **The Ratner School and Kol HaLev Shabbat Experience** at The Ratner School

Saturday 5            10:15 a.m. – 12:15 p.m. - **The Ratner School and Kol HaLev Shabbat Experience** at The Ratner School; *Pekudei*; Service leader: Rabbi Steve; Discussion leader: Rabbi Steve; Kiddush co-hosted by Vicki Sussman, by Dan Klein and Nancy Rubel in honor of Sarah's Sweet 16, by Sue Wolpert and Ray Lesser in celebration of a milestone year that includes 25 years of Funny Times and 30 years of marriage and by Julie and Louis Handler

Sunday 6            9:45 a.m. – 3:45 p.m. - **Women's Retreat** at the home of Donna and Dick Weinberger, 32090 Woodsdale Lane, Solon; **It is NOT too late to RSVP and attend for all or part of the day!**  
**Questions???** Contact Happy Wallach at [HappyHKW@aol.com](mailto:HappyHKW@aol.com) or at 216-283-4058. We hope that you will join us!

Tuesday 8            8:00 a.m. – **Schmooze With the Rabbi** at the Stone Oven on Chagrin Blvd.

*(continued on page 11)*

## MARCH 2011 KOL HALEV CALENDAR

(continued from page 10)

- Saturday 12 4:00 p.m. - **Kol HaLev Men's Group will meet at the Schvitz, Cleveland's own traditional Jewish Bath/Steam House** (see article on page 9)
- Monday 14 7:30 p.m. – **Board Meeting** at the home of Robin Shell, 4111 Linnell Road, South Euclid, 216-658-0658; All Kol HaLev members are welcome.
- Saturday 19 10:15 a.m. – **Shabbat Service** preceded by Torah Discussion at 9:30 a.m. at Ratner Chapel; *Tzav*; Service leader: TBA; Discussion leader: TBA; Kiddush co-hosted by Larry and Jodi Solomon, by Bill and Michal Scher-Marcus in appreciation of the Kol HaLev community and by Brent and Kate Weinstock
- Saturday 19 10:15 a.m. – **Hagiga**  
10:45 –Tot-Parent Shabbat Program for families with children in preschool and under in Rooms 113 & 114. The program is about a half an hour, led by Rachel Williams. Babysitting is available before and after Tot Shabbat, also in Rooms 113 & 114
- Saturday 19 **Purim Celebration** at The Ratner School  
6:30 p.m. – Megillah Reading  
7:30 p.m. – Refreshments  
8:00 p.m. – Cabaret  
Join us for an oneg following the megillah reading!!  
Assignments:  
A-H – Hamentashen  
I-P – Drinks  
Q-Z – Treats
- Sunday 20 7:30 p.m. – **Israel Past and Present** (second of four meetings); location TBA
- Wednesday 23 7:30 p.m. – **Mindful Jewish Practice** at the home of Lynn Liebling, 32582 Springside Lane, Solon, 440-248-7266
- Thursday 24 7:30 p.m. – **Book Group** at the home of Muriel and Abe Chasin, 120 Fox Hollow Drive, #403, Mayfield Heights, 440-646-9959
- Friday 25 6:00 p.m. – **Musical Kabbalat Shabbat** at The Ratner School; Kiddush co-hosted by Arthur Lieberman, Karal Stern and by Allen Binstock in memory of his father, Henry
- Saturday 26 9:45 a.m. – **Shabbat Service and Bar Mitzvah of Gabriel Segar; Shmini**; Service leaders: Rabbi Steve and Gabe; Kiddush luncheon hosted by Rabbi Steve Segar and Andy Getz in honor of their son Gabriel's bar mitzvah

See our website calendar and weekly email for additions and changes

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## **Kol HaLev Happenings**

2245 Warrensville Center Road, #215  
University Heights, Ohio 44118  
216-320-1498

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### **Kol HaLev**

#### **Cleveland's Reconstructionist Community**

An egalitarian, participatory spiritual community

*Library hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday- 9-5*

*Visit our website at [www.kolhalev.net](http://www.kolhalev.net)*