

TRAVELS IN IRAN

with Richard Kuehn and Dorothy Gregor

Thursday, October 24, 7:00 p.m.

Admission is \$5

Iran appears nightly in the news but is also one of the earliest civilizations. The *Travels in Iran* lecture will offer a personal point-of-view from Mendonoma residents who have recently returned from there. Richard Kuehn and Dorothy Gregor collaborated to candidly share their experiences from separate trips each took last year to this controversial country.



Kuehn says, "We decided to jointly present this talk to provide diverse perspectives and impressions. I have travelled in at least 134 countries and as a gay individual was interested in how I would be received. Dorothy has studied Persian antiquities and art."

They visited both archaeological sites and urban centers such as Yazd, a center of Zoroastrian culture with a population of over 420,000 in the center of Iran. Founded over 3,000 years ago it has unique architecture that has escaped the ravages of warfare and time because of its location.

Although the group may have been followed on occasion and did have Iranian guides, Kuehn felt free to go anywhere without restrictions. His group visited three nuclear facilities and was invited into more homes than they could visit. He added, "The love of Americans by the Iranian people astonished both me and other members of our group. They may have been critical of our government, but not of Americans."

Their talk will cover both the ruins of Persepolis, built by the emperor Darius, and the Celebration

of Norooz, the Iranian New Year. One of the many cultural curiosities was the use of separate door knockers for men and women. Each possessed a distinctive tone so the woman answering the door could know whether she should be veiled or not.



Part-time Sea Ranch resident Dorothy Gregor is a docent at the Asian Art Museum in San Francisco and quite knowledgeable on Persian art. Her group focused on the art and history of Iran's past as the seat of the Persian Empire. Both Kuehn and Gregor are avid birders who have been friends for many years.

The presenters have combined their extensive photographic materials and plan to allow time for discussion after they conclude their comments.

