

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews:

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

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<http://trivalleyculturaljews.wordpress.com/>



Affiliated with the Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations

Our mission statement: "A Secular Humanistic community serving those who identify with the Jewish People through family, culture and history, rather than through religion."

Upcoming Events for September 2012

Wednesday Sept 5, 7 pm: TVCJ Planning Meeting. 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Thursday, Sept. 6, 7:30 pm: Ad hoc holiday band and chorus meets. Come learn the songs for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Bring whatever instrument you play. If you let us know your instrument in advance (email CulturalJews@aol.com or call 925 485 1049), we'll write a part out for you. If you participated last year, bring your music – we will be using a lot of the same music. 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton.

Sunday, Sept. 9, 10:30-12:30: First day of JCS, Bothwell Arts Center 2466 8th St, Livermore. Open house event for prospective students and their parents. Parents will have a chance to ask questions and meet parents of students who have been attending. Children will have crafts and a baking project related to this year's theme, Jewish Calendar, Holidays and Life Cycle. A bagel brunch will be provided.

Thursday, September 13, 7:30 pm: Ad hoc holiday band and chorus meets. You don't have to have come to the first meeting. Come learn the songs for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. See above.

Sunday, September 16, 4 pm: Rosh Hashanah Tashlikh. We'll meet at the Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St. in Livermore at 4 and walk down to some running water for a short ceremony. After walking back, at 5 p.m. we'll have a potluck dinner. (Someone will be in the building so it will be open for those who aren't walking down for tashlikh.) Then, at 6 p.m. we'll have our Secular Rosh Hashanah ceremony, with readings and music, followed by a reception with honeycake baked by our Jewish Culture School students, and apples and honey. Children are welcome. Bring a dish to share and, if you like, a donation of canned or boxed food for the food bank. Free to members. \$15 for adult (over 13) non-members. (You can apply the \$15 to your membership if you decide you belong with us.)

Wednesday, September 26, 2-5 pm: Yom Kippur. Location to be decided. We will meet for a Secular Yom Kippur ceremony of music and readings, discussion, and a little bit of fun after which we generally go out to dinner. Free to members. \$15 for adult (over 13) non-members. (You can apply the \$15 to your membership if you decide you belong with us.)

Jewish Culture School

Jewish Culture School begins September 9th! Come join us at the Bothwell Center to participate in the first day and learn about our program. We had our first Bar Mitzvah in April, who will now be an assistant. If you are considering Jewish Culture School, this is a great year to start – learning about the Jewish holidays and life cycle are important grounding in Jewish life and part of a body of shared Jewish experience in every movement. Our discussions of holidays emphasize the historical, national, ethical and seasonal aspects of the events. We cook holiday dishes and create craft items to take home and use for the holidays.

Hello From CSJO

Hello Everyone!

I know that summer is not yet over, but it certainly is winding down. I hope you enjoyed your summer and made it through the high temperatures and higher humidity!

The CSJO Executive Committee met this month in Philadelphia and got lots of work done! All of you will be the recipients of the good work.

From the information I've been receiving, CSJO schools are gearing up for another year of Secular Jewish learning. And I know that the CSJO communities (and schools) are preparing for the celebrations associated with the Jewish New Year. I hope all of your endeavors are successful and my best wishes for a Healthy and Happy New Year.

All the best,

Rifke Feinstein
Executive Director

Message from the President

Even though there is still a month left, summer is winding down. It was busy for me; between Hawaii, Olympics and doing a play, I had little time to do much else before school started at the end of July.

I finished my summer at the J-West Conference in Hayward. This was another wonderful conference with lots of interesting workshops. I just wish there were more people there. I had the conference on my calendar for months. Were you there? Did you know about it? Were you just not interested? Did you have other plans?

This was OUR conference! TVCJ was the host! I encourage all of you to try to make it to Portland, Oregon next year. Our group seems pretty small sometimes, but going to a conference like this makes you realize we are part of something bigger.

Who We Are

President	Kevin Coren 925-240-5612
Board Members	Judith Seid 925-485-1049 Phyllis Looney 925-803-0574 Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404
Newsletter	Marisa Castaldini 925-240-5612 open
Webmasters	Noah King 925-371-8585 Solomon Ireland 510-888-1404
JCS Teachers	Judith Seid, Jamie Ireland
Phone Chair	open
Family Shabbat/Havdalah Coordinator	– Jamie Ireland
Publicity	open
Movie Coordinator	Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

Mishpokha Birthdays and Yortseits

Happy August and September birthdays to:
Jamie Ireland, Sophia Ireland, Ed Looney, Anne Lubran, Wendy Berenson Garcia

In August we remember:
John Gates, Father of David Gates and
Lou Garcia, Husband of
Wendy Berenson-Garcia

Mishpokha (family)

TVCJ Thespians
Emma Greenberg completed a Shakespeare theater camp and was in a Midsummer Night's Dream. Rebecca and Sophia Ireland had their theater debut in Annie on July 27 with a theater camp they participated in. Rebecca played Miss Hannigan and Sophia was Molly. Kevin and Levi Coren were in Brigadoon over the summer with Brentwood's community theater. Levi Coren and Matthew Looney gave presentations at J-West.

In the Community

San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society

Topic: A Torn Family Reunited through Discovery of an Ancestor's Diary
Speaker: Frederick Hertz

Sunday, September 9, 2012
Rhoda Goldman Plaza
2180 Post Street
San Francisco 94115

Doors open 1:00 p.m.; program begins 1:30 p.m.

David Blumenfeld, a Latvian Jew who immigrated to Minnesota in 1884 at age 20, wrote a semifictionalized story of his family's life in Latvia, their decision to leave for America, and the first thirty years of their life in their new world. The discovery of his "diary" by a great-grandson brought together his Jewish and non-Jewish descendants.

Light kosher refreshments will be served. Meetings are free and everyone interested is welcome to attend. For more information visit <http://www.jewishgen.org/sfbajgs/>.

African Refugees in Israel

Right Now! is a campaign to help African refugees in Israel who are in danger of being deported or imprisoned and have been physically attacked, prevented from working and not allowed to attend school, even though they have international refugee status and are legally entitled to decent treatment. While most Israelis recognize that Jews have a special obligation to refugee peoples, having been refugees ourselves so many times over the ages, the current government is politically indebted to a bigoted radical minority, and has ignored the legal and moral rights of these refugees from South Sudan, Ivory Coast and other dangerous countries. In recent days, the government, in contravention of law and in defiance of a ruling by the Israeli Supreme Court, has decided to house African migrant children in prisons. Maya Paley, an organizer of Right Now! is collecting funds to help these refugees attend school. A tax-deductible donation can be made to TVCJ – if you put “Right Now” in the memo line, we will forward the money to Maya. You can also read more about the plight of the refugees and sign a petition to the Israeli government at <http://www.change.org/petitions/right-now-jewish-americans-advocating-for-asylum-seekers-in-israel-and-our-allies>.

This month in Jewish history

Jewdayo (Free every day from Jewish Currents at <http://jewishcurrents.org/blog/jewdayo>) tells us that September 3 is the birthday of Edward Filene, who, with his father, founded Filene's department store. Filene was an enlightened capitalist who shared profits with the workers, gave paid vacations and treated women workers fairly. He supported collective bargaining and the 1911 Workmen's Compensation law. He was also instrumental in the creation of credit unions and an activist for world peace.

J-West Conference

Secular, Humanistic and Cultural Jews Celebrating Jewish Culture and Social Action.

J-West was a great time full of good workshops and good company. On Saturday morning, union organizer Julie Gilgoff drew parallels between the life of her activist grandfather and the lives of activists today. Prof. Joel Schechter shared a hilarious secularist Yiddish play (in translation) and we performed a puppet show based on it. In the afternoon, former ACLU worker Elaine Elinson shared the lives of two radical Jewish women who changed American history. Rochelle Goldman told us about Jewish women writers. We were able to buy Julie's book about her grandfather and Elaine's book about civil rights in California after their talks. Finally, Jerry Zwick introduced us to Philosophers' Cafe. All the workshops sparked interesting discussions. During the lunch break, we had a chance to get to know each other by trying to find something each one of us had in common with another participant. There were some funny and surprising results. Two people found they grew up in the same neighborhood and went to the same schools in Chicago! In the evening, we amused ourselves with music, poetry and dance performed by the participants.

Sunday was another very full day. In the morning, Matthew Looney presented a talk about Jews in all facets of the movie industry. Janice Sellers told a packed house how to research your family history when you think you can't. Sasha Goldberg and David Bauer presented images from film about Jewish cross-dressing and sexual identity. At lunch, we broke into discussion sessions about the future of J-West, rethinking Chanukah, and expressing what we, as secularists, do believe. In the afternoon, Maya Paley told us about African refugees in Israel and sparked our interest in helping them to attain proper refugee status and treatment there. Levi Coren and Kevin Coren talked about Jews in the comic book and superhero industry. Gerry Tenney told us about the history of klezmer music, with recorded examples. Again, the discussions were lively.

Next year's J-West is in Portland. Plan to be there!



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