

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews:

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

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Tri-ValleyCulturalJews.org

CulturalJews@aol.com

<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 December 2012

Upcoming Dates for December:

December 2, 10:30 am -12:30 pm, Jewish Culture School: The Ireland's, 19663 Fremery Ct, Castro Valley.

December 2, 10:45 am- 12:15 pm, Philosophers' Café/Culture Chat: Cafe Rumi, 4799 Heyer Ave., Castro Valley. This month's topic, "Who is responsible for moral education in our society?"

Wednesday December 5, 7:00 pm, TVCJ Planning Meeting: 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Saturday, December 8, 6 pm, Family Havdalah: at Coren home, 720 Willow Creek Ter, Brentwood. A little ceremony, pizza and hanging out. Everyone gets home in time for bed. \$7/adult (for pizza) kids free. Call 510-888-1404 for more information.

Sunday, December 16, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Chanukah party and JCS: Bring a potato and a gift card for the family in the article on page 4 below. A ceremony, games, music, and crafts for the kids.

Winter Coat Drive

Dear Parents:

Each year the Castro Valley Mothers' Club works together with the East Bay Community Law Center to collect coats and jackets for those who are in need of warmth in the winter. Last year we collected and distributed over 400 coats. Donations of new or gently used coats and jackets in ALL sizes (but especially in children's sizes) are sought from members of the Castro Valley community. If you have any outgrown or outdated coats in the back of your closets, please consider donating them to the CVMC One Warm Coat Drive. Every coat that is collected will be distributed directly to a family that needs it most.

Donating your coats could not be easier. You can bring your donation to the next Jewish Culture School meeting in Castro Valley on December 2nd or to Judy's house in Pleasanton by Wednesday, December 5th and Jamie will make sure it gets to where it needs to go. Or contact me (Jamie Ireland) and we can figure out how to get your donation.

Thanks

Message from the President

I had the opportunity to go to my first CSJO board meeting on November 10th and 11th. It was quite the whirlwind trip, arriving in Detroit at 6:15am, being ready for the meeting that started at 9:00 and leaving the next day.

We covered a lot during the meeting, including important work on the restructuring study. Our board is trying very hard to make CSJO relevant to all of its affiliates. There are resources available and the conference committee is working very hard to make next year's conference a great one. I highly encourage people to get involved. The more involved you are, the more you get out of the organization.

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	– Amy Greenberg
Publicity	open
Movie Coordinator	Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

HELLO FROM CSJO

Hello Everyone!

SAVE THE DATE! The 2013 CSJO conference will be held on the U.S. Memorial Day week-end, May 24-27, 2013 in Philadelphia, PA. At this time, we do not have the exact place, but we will have that shortly. However, we urge you to save the date and join long time and new friends at this wonderful annual CSJO event.

Shalom,

Rifke

Mishpokha (family)

In December, we remember:

Alice Calder, mother of Jacky Poulsen
Sue Greenblum and Irving Shapiro, aunt and uncle of Phyllis Looney
Celia Zuckerman and Yossel Seid, grandmother and grandfather of Judith Seid

Happy December birthday to Ella King.

Jamie and Judy are recovering from their surgeries and thank everyone for their good wishes.

Ella and Adam King are in The Nutcracker at The Bankhead Theater in Livermore. Evening Performances are at 7:00pm, December 8, 14, 15 & 16. Afternoon Performances are at 2:00pm, December 8, 9, 15 & 16. All performances are at the: Bankhead Theater 2400 First Street Livermore, CA, Tickets may be purchased by calling 925-373-6800 or by going to: <http://tickets.livermoreperformingarts.org/single/psDetail.aspx?psn=2903>

CSJO Newsletter

Dear CSJO Affiliate Newsletter Editor/Officer: As the new editor of the CSJO Newsletter, I want to introduce myself and encourage you and your affiliate members to become regular contributors to the newsletter. My editorial philosophy is that the newsletter is a publication of, for, and by its readership. If you are editing your affiliate newsletter, I would like to be able to publish those items that other affiliates would want to know about. My professional experience includes many years in the field of technical editing and writing. Until recently—and for several years—I was editor of the Jewish Secular Community Newsletter(Cleveland). My vision for the CSJO Newsletter is that it will be a source of information and entertainment, as well as a forum for opinion about the Jewish community in general and the secular Jewish community in particular. The aim is to make the newsletter a periodical that members will look forward to reading. I want it to be a medium for binding the secular Jewish community closer together. Newsletter issues will be published quarterly beginning in mid-December.

Areas of general interest to readers would include: Important affiliate events, (Secular) Jewish personalities in the news, holiday-related articles, national and global news items about Jews, news from and about Israel, Jewish humor, opinion pieces, educational articles about Jewish history, philosophy, languages, and scientific Biblical studies, reviews of books, film, and theater of special interest to the Jewish community, and letters to the editor.

In the coming days and weeks, I look forward to contacting you by phone or email. Meanwhile, I hope you will feel free to contact me. Your comments and insights will be invaluable in putting together, collectively, a first-class product.

B'shalom, Steve Shucard (330) 425-3234

One Person's Opinion

As I write this the weekend before Thanksgiving, Israel and Gaza are engaged in an armed conflict that has Jews worrying about Israel's survival as well as Israel's sense of morality. There is no doubt that Israel has suffered from rockets from Gaza, but there is also no doubt that the Gazans have been suffering from the current Israeli government's reluctance to come to terms with the existence of a self-governed Palestinian country. It was not always this way - lovers of Israel remember other governments that made strides towards a more peaceful coexistence and fear that the upcoming elections in Israel may have encouraged the belligerence of the current right-wing government. (Remember the 2004 US election?) Israel has more power than Gaza, but Gaza has powerful allies, most notably Iran, supplying them with war materiel and encouraging them to keep the conflict alive rather than negotiating in good faith for fair and reasonable borders. There is wrong and right on both sides. I encourage everyone to continue to try to see the whole picture and to influence the conversation towards moderation. Although it may seem unfair to try to influence Israel towards peace when the rest of the middle east encourages aggression, we have to recognize that as Jews, we have no control over the greater middle east's attitude towards Israel, but we do have some influence over Israel. We need to be seen to encourage peace in order to allow others of good will to help steer the rest of the middle east in that direction.

~Judith Seid

Help a Family in Need

JFCS/East Bay is an official Resettlement Agency. We help newcomer refugee and immigrant families get set up with local services, health care needs, find a place to live, etc. **JFCS/East Bay will be resettling an Afghan mother with her 2 children -- all of whom have been through extreme trauma and will be resettling as refugees in our community.** This family has no relatives or friends in the United States and will be relying *entirely* on our agency's help for their every need....until they can get settled and adjusted. Usually there is a family contact who is there to assist a newcomer relative or friend. In this case, there is no family support.

This is a 32 year old woman, Naria, and her 2 children: 14 year old girl, Zira, and 9 year old, Alib.

Naria and her family lived under the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, and the family suffered much war and loss. A few years ago, Naria's husband went missing in Afghanistan. Naria thinks he was either kidnapped or killed by Taliban forces in their area. Soon after his disappearance, Naria and her 2 children escaped Afghanistan to an Iranian refugee camp, and eventually made it to Turkey. They have been waiting there, accepted by the UNHCR and the US government to enter the US as refugees. The only piece of the puzzle that has been missing is the local agency to take on the duty of resettling them.

That's where we come in. It wasn't a hard decision to make to take Naria's case -- although it is a large financial one. While we do receive some funding to cover costs of staff, resources and essentials for this family, it is *not enough* to pay their expenses while Naria and her children settle in.

We are well equipped in many ways to help them. We have Dari-speaking staff to work with them on logistics, and to provide counseling for their trauma, and we have the volunteer and community support to make this happen. The family will receive a monthly amount from refugee benefits but it is not enough to pay for a one-bedroom apartment and expenses.

What do we need from you? Aha! Here it is:

1. Financial donations or gift cards: While we receive funds to provide initial rent, food and transport to Naria, it is not enough. Financial donations would *go directly* to helping Naria for the next months to come -- until she herself learns English and gets a job. **Purchase a gift card** to any of the following stores: **Safeway, Target, or Trader Joe's.** **Donations can be made to: JFCS/East Bay** for any amount, in the memo part of the check, please state "for resettlement". You can send checks/cards to: JFCS/East Bay, 1855 Olympic Blvd #200, Walnut Creek, 94595.

2. Do you know someone who owns or manages an apartment building in Walnut Creek or Central Contra Costa? They need a safe neighborhood and low rent. Our agency can write a letter explaining our role in resettlement and our support of the client.

3. Furnishings for an apartment: We are *entirely* responsible for furnishing every need in Naria's apartment (once we find one for her): all furniture, bed, linens, kitchen items, utensils, cleaning supplies, even food in the cupboards! It all needs to be in perfect condition, very clean and with no damage or obvious wear.

5. Volunteer Help: Here are some of the many duties that are needed....ESL/Lifeskills tutoring, helping to drive to appointments, tutoring and helping the children, helping to furnish the apt and making it all nice for them upon arrival, being a coordinator for all items needed to furnish the apt (so our staff can work on other aspects of this).

So, to all of you, our special volunteers, past donors, helpers with the holiday program, etc -- it is with great honor I get this task of the asking....because almost any other time I have written for help to those *really* in need in our community, **you** have come through in some giant way. Thank you for reading, and please pass on to those who you think might be interested.

You can reply to me with any questions, and I will be happy to answer. And, you can also reply with just which tasks you'd like to help with, and I will assist!

Kathryn Winogura

Coordinator of Volunteer Services, Jewish Family and Children's Services of the East Bay
1855 Olympic Blvd. #200, Walnut Creek, CA 94596, 2484 Shattuck Ave., #210, Berkeley, CA 94704
(925) 927-2000, ex. 529, (510) 704-7475, ex. 529, kwinogura@jfas-eastbay.org

In the Community

klezcalifornia.org/events

Saturday, December 1, 7:30pm, Kugelplex with Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir's 27th Anniversary Holiday Concert. At Paramount Theater, Oakland. Tickets: \$12 - \$42 advance / \$17 - \$47 day of show / \$5 discount for 62+. More info: 510.465.6400, http://www.paramounttheatre.com/nojsched.html#12_1

Sunday, December 2, 6:30pm, The Oy Way: Following the Path of Most Resistance, with author Harvey Gotliffe. At The Greek Restaurant, Santa Cruz. See klezcalifornia.org

Tuesday, December 4, 7:30pm, Hava Nagila (The Movie). Filmmaker Roberta Grossman will speak and answer questions after the screening. See November 18 event above for more about the film. At Rialto Cinemas, Sebastopol. Part of 17th Annual Sonoma County Jewish Film Festival. More info: jccsoco.org.

Sunday, December 9, 2:00pm, Chanukah Concert with Ellis Island Old World Folk Band. At Pleasanton Public Library, Pleasanton. No charge. More info: 925.931.3405, <http://ci.pleasanton.ca.us/>

Sunday, December 9, 4:00pm, Kugelplex with Oakland East Bay Symphony's Let Us Break Bread Together Holiday Celebration. At Paramount Theater, Oakland. Tickets: \$25 - \$50 adults / \$15 under 18. More info 510.465.6400, http://www.paramounttheatre.com/nojsched.html#12_9

Sunday, December 9, 7:30pm, Nigunim Chorus' 4th annual Hanukkah Community Celebration. At JCC East Bay, Berkeley. With the Nigunim Community Chorus, Veretski Pass, Achi & Jan of Adama, and Yiddish singer Diane Wirtschafter. Bruce Bierman will lead dancing. Tickets: \$15 general / \$10 children. http://www.paramounttheatre.com/nojsched.html#12_9

Thursday, December 13, 9:00pm, Subterranean Arthouse's 3rd annual Chanukah party in collaboration with Hungry for Yiddish! A Mitzvah Project. At Subterranean Art House, Berkeley. Yiddish song with Heather Klein's Inextinguishable Trio and Anthony Mordechai Tzvi Russell. Klezmer dance party with Saul Goodman's Klezmer Orkestar and dance leader Bruce Bierman. Watercolors by painter (and Yiddish student) Margaret Sloan. Suggested donation \$10-\$20; no-one turned away, <http://subterraneanarthouse.org/>

Friday, December 14, 8:15pm, Klezmer Shabbat Service, Congregation Sha'ar Zahav. San Francisco. With dance leader Bruce Bierman. No charge. More info: shaarzahav.org.

Saturday, December 15, 8:00pm, Veretski Pass in Pomegranates & Figs, a feast of Jewish music. Also Oakland Folkharmonic, Inspector Gadge. At Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse, Berkeley. Tickets: \$22.50 advance / \$24.50 at door. More info: 510.644.2020, <http://thefreight.org/pomegranates-figs-veretzski-pass-oakland-folkharmonic-inspector-gadje>

Sunday, December 16, 2:00-4:00pm, KlezCalifornia Flisik Yidisher Salon. For fluent and native speakers of Yiddish. At a private home in Oakland. Discussion topic: Describe the house in which you grew up. More info: flisik@klezcalifornia.org, 415.789.7679.

**The Subterranean Arthouse's 3rd annual Chanukah party! In collaboration with
3rd Annual Hungry for Yiddish! A Mitzvah Project Co-presented by KlezCalifornia and the
Jewish Music Festival Thursday, December 13th, 2012, 9:00pm until 11:00pm
Subterranean Arthouse, 2169 Bancroft, Berkeley, CA**

**Nigunim Chorus Presents: The 4th Annual Hanukkah Community Celebration
Sunday, December 9, 7:30 PM, JCC East Bay, 1414 Walnut St. Berkeley**

General admission \$15. Children \$10. All ages invited.

Contact: Achi Ben Shalom, mail@nigunim.org, 510-528-8872

On the 2nd night of Hanukkah the community will get together to light candles, sing Hanukkah songs and enjoy performances by Nigunim Community Chorus, Veretski Pass Klezmer Trio, Yiddish Singer Diane Wirtschafter and the Adama Duo. The evening will end with all musicians get together for a grand finalé of dance to live music with leadership by Dance Leader Bruce Bierman. Traditional Hanukkah food will be sold. So far the event is co-sponsored by the Jewish Music Festival, KlezCalifornia, and The Aquarian Minyan, and we expect more organizations to join in.

**Featuring: Heather Kleins' Inextinguishable Trio with Ilana Sherer – Yiddish song
Anthony Mordechai Russell – Yiddish song
Bruce Bierman – Yiddish dance**

Saul Goodman's Klezmer Orkestar – klezmer dance band

\$10-\$20 sliding scale donation, no one turned away for lack of funds

Advance tickets here <http://klezmer.brownpapertickets.com/>

www.facebook.com/#!/events/400805286657576/

For three years local singer Heather Klein has worked together with Bay Area communities, local artists and musicians to present "Hungry for Yiddish; A Mitzvah Project." Several klezmer bands, Yiddish singers, classical, and world musicians pitch in to present a series of concerts to raise money and awareness for the Bay Area's homeless and hungry population. Proceeds from this event will be donated to the Berkeley Food Pantry, which provides hunger relief in Berkeley and Albany.

This Month in Jewish History

December 23 marks the anniversary of the establishment of the Jewish Pale of Settlement. In 1791, Empress Catherine II of Russia required all Jews to move to an area along the western border of Russia. Only the few with special permits were allowed to live outside the Pale. Jews were confined to this area until the revolution of 1917. It became the center of Jewish life, eventually holding five million Jews - almost half the Jewish population at the time. The flowering of Yiddish literature, journalism, theater and song took place in the Pale, along with the establishment of the Secular movement and various other forms of Jewish expression. Thanks to Jewdayo! for the germ of this article. For your daily blast of interesting facts from Jewish history - you can subscribe to Jewdayo! at <http://jewishcurrents.org/blog/jewdayo>.

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