

# News & Fun Activities

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## Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

**TriValleyCulturalJews.org**

[info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org](mailto:info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org)

(925) 399-8029

**Affiliated with the Cultural and Secular Jewish Organization**

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



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## ***May 8th, 2021***

### **TVCJ Community News**

### **Upcoming Events**



## ***Shavuos***

As this is the holiday in which we traditionally celebrate the Torah - we celebrate other books that have meaning for us. So we get together to share the best books we've read the past year....and with Covid - I am sure those lists are pretty long.... I know I've read more books this past year than in other years. Join us for a secular humanistic Jewish celebration of the books that have meaning for us. Tell us about the best books you've read last year and be prepared to get a few recommendations for your reading list!

**Date:** May 16, 2021

**Time:** 10:30a.m. to 11:30a.m.

**Place:** We will gather on Zoom

**Cost:** Free to members; \$10 suggested donation for non-members.

**If you have questions, please contact Jamie**  
at [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) or call 925-399-8029.

## **IISHJ Shavuos**

After our shavuos book-recommendation event, join our International Institute for Secular Humanistic (IISHJ) Judaism for a "Tikkun Leil Shavuos" - a learning session. Our own Rebecca Ireland will be talking about her initiative to help young people get involved in the current issues they care about.

**Date:** Sunday May 16, 2021

**Time:** 1:00p.m.-5:30p.m. PT

**Topic:** Our Torah: How Learning Leads to Action

Secular Humanistic Jews celebrate Shavuos with Jewish literature and ideas from all eras, not only the Torah, and we agree with the Talmud's sages that "study leads to action." Join Leaders and Rabbis in Secular Humanistic Judaism as they turn our Tikkun Leil Shavuos [Shavuos Eve Study] into Tikkun Olam ["repairing the world"] through learning experiences with organizations and people doing good here and now! For the list of speakers and more information: **Click this link:** <https://iishj.org/ourtorah/>

There will be short 15-20 minute learning sessions, varied topics, many

presenters and all free (with advance registration).

[Click Here to Register](#)

## **Leah Morrison and Isaac Passovoy's Farewell**

**Date:** Saturday, May 22nd, 2021

**Time:** 3:00p.m. to 4:00p.m.

**Place:** Mission Hills Park - 600 Junipero St Pleasanton, CA 94566

We're sad to say goodbye to our hike leader Leah Morrison and her son, Jewish Culture School graduate Isaac Passovoy. They are moving to Canada at the end of May! Come see them and say goodbye. **Please wear a mask if you have not been vaccinated by May 9th!**

## **Philosophers' Cafe**

We've had a lot of fun discussing so many varied topics at our monthly friendly discussion group led by members. Last month we talked about genealogy and our family histories, a program led by Paul Grabowski. Everyone had interesting stories to tell about their ancestors and some had found relatives through DNA matching. Our topics are sometimes timely current events, sometimes personal stories, sometimes ideas and issues. Join us the first Thursday of each month for a new topic! And of course, we'd love any of our members to lead a session - just think of something you'd like to hear people's stories or opinions about and let us know you're ready to lead. We have discussion leaders lined up for May and June, but the rest of the year is open and waiting for you!

**Day:** First Thursday of each month

**Time:** 7:00p.m.

**Place:** Zoom

**Cost:** Free to members, \$10 suggested donation for non-members.

**If you have questions, please contact Jamie**  
**at [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) or call 925-399-8029.**

## **Jewish Culture School**

Jewish Culture School is still online, but we're hoping to be back in person in the fall. Even physically separated, though, we have a great time learning about being Jewish at home (the younger and middle kids) and Jewish life in Eastern Europe (the older kids). Our April 4th session of Jewish at Home was about social action, in honor of Martin Luther King's yortseit (death anniversary). The kids saw a video about a Jewish girl working for climate equity and sang civil rights songs. On April 11th, we talked about Jewish myths, about weather events and what can and can not be controlled. On April

18th, our Lag B'Omer lesson was about what we want to learn. The middle kids learned why the holiday has the word "lag" in it and found the numerical values of some of their favorite core values (shalom = 376 as compared to tsedek = 194. Does this mean peace is better than justice?) In May, we'll learn about being friends with people who are different from you and we're also planning to cook!

[Click Here for more information about Jewish Culture School.](#)

[Want to know more about our Brit Mitzvah program? Click Here.](#)

**Have questions: contact us at [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) or call 925-399-8029.**

**This video was created by Jewish Culture School student Emma Greenberg, before the pandemic.**

**Play the video to find out more about Jewish Culture School.**



## **Our Lag B'Omer Holiday Celebration**

Our annual Lag B'Omer picnic was celebrated in our own homes once again as a Shabbes evening on Zoom. This year we asked folks to share their favorite watermelon recipes...since watermelon toss is our group's tradition. Most agreed it is a fruit that is mostly just cut up and eaten plain; we had a couple make Aqua Fresca and there was a tasty salsa enjoyed. As we thought about how silly it was for the Jews of yore to get away with using hunting as a cover-up for their studying the Torah when they weren't allowed, we shared stories of our most absurd excuses we got away with. It was a nice time to catch up with each other.

# Interfaith Interconnect Religion Chat

*You are invited to our next Religion Chat!*

Wednesday, May 12th, 5:00p.m. to 6:15 p.m. via Zoom. Zoom room will open at 4:45p.m..

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87417613345>

Topic: In what ways, positive and negative, has the pandemic affected your ability to practice your faith?

Any participants who wish to share a brief response (under 3 minutes) to the topic may do so. Note that we will not be recording this Religion Chat.

If you missed our April Chat with speakers Rev. Ellie Kilpatrick of Unitarian Universalist Church in Livermore and Bishop Roger Persson of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, here is a link to the recording.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AiyOf8qFOyc> . Some of our other Chats are posted on the Videos page of [Interfaith Interconnect Facebook](#).

## CSJO Annual Conference NETWORKING, SUPPORTING, AND GROWING TOGETHER

FRIDAY, MAY 28th (5 PM PT) –

SUNDAY, MAY 30th (7 PM PT)

VIRTUAL (GOTOMEETING)

**Cost:** Members: \$10 for the weekend, Non-Members: \$18 for the weekend

[Download the Conference Brochure by Clicking Here](#)

[Click Here to Buy Tickets](#)

A weekend of virtual lectures, discussions, schmoozing, and getting to know one another. We will start with our Oneg Shabbat Friday evening and conclude the weekend with our famous Talent Show, Sunday evening at 7:00p.m. If you are interested in performing for our Talent Show, please contact Madi Burns [madmonkey38@gmail.com](mailto:madmonkey38@gmail.com) .

### Who We Are

**Rabbi:** Judith Seid

**Madrikha:** Jamie Ireland



### **In May We Remember**

William Roy Hudson  
Chaparral Ireland



### **May Birthdays**

Joey Mogilefsky  
Rebecca Ireland  
Rosita Gorel-Wong  
Peter Grabowski  
Lillian Poxon-Hudson

### **Board Members:**

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski 718-578-7876  
Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404  
Rebecca Ireland 510-888-1404  
Bret Mogilefsky 510-610-1956  
Jesse Pino 925-605-6003  
Mark Shulewitz 510-846-9718

**Newsletter:** Joy Randel 925-362-3245

**Webmaster:** Noah King 925-371-8585

**JCS Teachers:** Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Judith Seid

**Holiday Coordinator:** Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404

**Movie Coordinator:** Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

**Joke:** How can you tell if someone is a good farmer? He is outstanding in his field!



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