

News & Fun Activities

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Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

TriValleyCulturalJews.org




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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July 31st, 2021

TVCJ Community News

Upcoming Events

Farewell Wendy

Our TVCJ member, Wendy Berenson-Garcia, is moving to be near family in Cleveland, Ohio. We gathered in the park on July 24th to say goodbye to her.

August Havdalah - In Person

Date: Saturday, August 21st, 2021

Time: 3:00p.m.

Place: Creekside Park, 5601 W Las Positas, Pleasanton

Cost: Free to members, suggested donation \$10.00 per non-member adult if you are able.

There will be a short Humanistic ceremony and lots of schmoozing. Look for the invite to RSVP or email Jamie at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions.

August 5th Philosophers' Cafe

The July Philosophers' Cafe discussion leader was Ellis Goldberg, who proposed a novel procedure for electing members of Congress. It sparked a lot of thought, a lot of questions and a lot of discussion - exactly the goal of Philosophers' Cafe! Philosophers' Cafe meets the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. on zoom. We discuss topics timely and ancient, serious and lighthearted. There are no rules and there's no homework! If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please let us know by emailing culturaljews@gmail.com and we'll schedule your session. Join us!

Day: First Thursday of each month (next one is August 5th)

Time: 7:00p.m.

Place: Zoom

Cost: Free to members, \$10.00 suggested donation for non-members.

**If you have questions, please contact
Jamie at culturaljews@gmail.com or call 925-399-8029.**

Jewish Culture School

Looking for a secular/cultural Jewish experience for your kids? Join us for another joyful year of [Jewish Cultural School](http://www.trivalleyculturaljews.org)! We'll be singing, dancing and cooking our traditions as we explore this year's topic of Jews in America, Colonial Times through Modern Day. Instruction provided for Kindergarten through Brit Mitzvah (ages 5-14). Outdoor, masked meetings until further notice. Centrally located in Pleasanton. Bi-monthly lessons begin August 29th. You can find us at www.trivalleyculturaljews.org.

[Click here for more information on Jewish Culture School.](#)

[Click Here if you would like to know information about our Brit Mitzvah program.](#)

If you have questions, please contact us
at culturaljews@gmail.com or call (925) 399-8029.

Thanks in advance,
Jazz, Judy and Jamie

Interfaith



Elsa and Jamie represented TVCJ at an Interfaith event co-sponsored by the 3 local Interfaith groups (We are members of Eden Area Interfaith Council and Tri-Valley Interconnect) to remember those lost to COVID-19 and to celebrate our collective rebirth and renewal as the vaccines have given us the freedom to move around a bit more. It was a touching evening as we heard of people's losses and how many groups helped those in need this past year as they dealt with the effects of the pandemic. It was fun to see our Interfaith friends in person and we were happy to welcome and hear from Rep. Eric Swalwell whom the Eden Area Interfaith Council gifted a couple shirts for him and his wife.

Elsa shared a lovely poem that the youngest class at JCS wrote:

A Year Like No Other

During this year like no other
We have been learning at home
We've been struggling through this feeling all alone
But more together than ever before
We got to cook purple soup and sing on zoom
We got to Zook special treats
Not together, but it was sweet
Seeing faces on zoom is fun
But seeing friends in person shines as bright as the sun
We tell the stories then retell
Not in person, but together as well
Creating stories of today
Carrying them forward everyday

Tisha B'Av

August 2, 1492. The date by which all Jews in Spain had to leave the country.

OK, maybe it was July 31st – the historical record is not exactly clear, and our calendar-keeping has changed since then. Either way, it was close enough to Tisha B'Av for the event to be associated with the date.

Tisha B'Av is our all-purpose mourning day. The early rabbis assigned all manner of disasters that befell our ancestors to that date, beginning with the destruction of the First Temple in Jerusalem, and then the Second, and the crushing of the Bar Kochba rebellion by the Romans. The expulsions of the Jews from England, France and Spain were assigned to this date, and it also commemorates various destructions of Jewish communities during the Middle Ages and later pogroms. Most recently, the bombing of the AMIA (Jewish community building) in 1994 occurred the day after Tisha B'Av and is remembered on Tisha B'Av.

Are all these dates historically accurate? Probably not. But that's not really why we set this one day aside for mourning. If we had separate days for mourning each tragedy, we'd be fasting in sackcloth and ashes 365 days a year. It was probably one of the wise acts of the rabbis – who were definitely not always wise – to set aside one day for mourning and allowing us the rest of the year to enjoy being Jewish.

Rosh Hashanah

Date: Monday, September 6th, 2021

Cost: Free to members, suggested donation \$10.00 per non-member adult if you are able.

Please join us as we welcome the new Jewish year and bring a potluck dish to serve 8 to share as per the last name of the eldest member of your household:

A-I Main Dish

J-R Side Dish

S-Z Dessert (Please label the ingredients as we do have food allergies in the group)

Place & Time: 4:00p.m. We will gather at the **Bothwell Arts Center**, 2466 8th St, Livermore, CA 94550, (West End Room)

4:15p.m. - 5:15p.m. Tashlich walk to the creek and back

5:15p.m. - 6:00p.m. dinner

6:00p.m. to 7:00p.m. Rosh Hashanah ceremony

Apples and honey to follow

Not child-centered but children are always welcome. Look for the evite to RSVP or email Jamie at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions.

Yom Kippur (Kol Nidre)

Date: Wednesday, September 15th, 2021

Time: 7:00p.m.- 8:15p.m. Yom Kippur ceremony

Place: **Bothwell Arts Center**, 2466 8th St, Livermore, CA 94550, (West End Room)

Cost: Free to members, \$10.00 suggested donation for non-members.

We will have a short Humanistic ceremony with music. Not child-centered but children are always welcome. Look for the evite to RSVP or email Jamie at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions.

Annual Sukkot Building

Date: September 19th, 2021

Time: 10:30 a.m.

Place: **Pino-Akin Household** (Address will be in the Evite)

Cost: Free to members, \$10.00 suggested donation for non-members.

Please bring a potluck brunch dish to serve 8 to share (Please label the ingredients as we do have food allergies in the group), a branch to put on top of the sukkah, and a fruit to hang as decoration.

We will have games and crafts and fun for all. Look for the evite to RSVP or email at **Jamie at** culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions.

TVCJ Board

On July 22nd, the fiscal year 22 TVCJ Board (Brett Mogilefsky, Judy Seid, Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Jamie Ireland, Rachel Rose-Yang, Jesse Pino, and Rebecca Ireland) met for the first time since the annual meeting, and selected officers. Bret Mogilefsky will reprise his role as board president, and Judy Seid will remain as Treasurer. Jesse Pino will be Corresponding Secretary, and Rebecca Ireland will be the Recording Secretary.

Current TVCJ Mask Policy

Thank you to all who participated in our survey about COVID safety and masking at TVCJ events. The survey revealed that:

- About half of respondents were comfortable with indoor events.
- Three-quarters of respondents wanted everyone masked indoors regardless of vaccination status.
- Only a quarter of respondents were comfortable with masks being optional, even outside.
- A majority of respondents were only comfortable with food if the event is held outdoors or with social distancing.

Our events bring together people from different geographical areas and include many young, unvaccinated, and vulnerable people. Based on the survey results as well as growing concerns over the Delta variant and changing government guidance, the TVCJ Board has decided on the following policies for upcoming events:

- Events will be held outdoors; in poor weather, events will be held virtually.
- All event attendees must wear masks except when eating.
- Family groups will maintain 6' distance while eating.

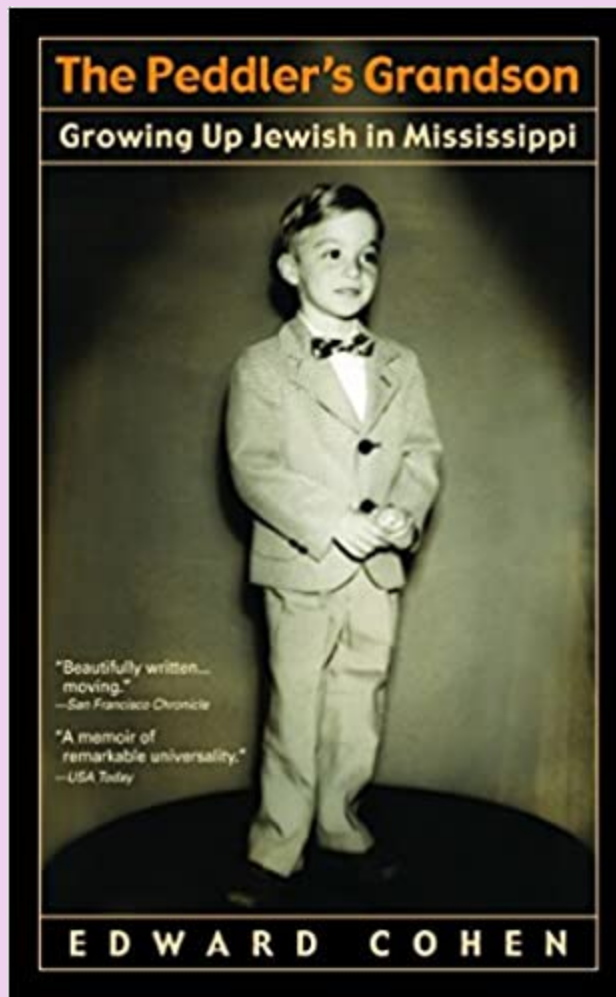
We will continue to monitor new guidance and trends in the pandemic's progression, and will make changes to these policies as needed.

We look forward to seeing you (outside) soon.

The TVCJ Board

BOOK REVIEW **The Peddler's Grandson** **Growing Up Jewish in Mississippi** **By**

Edward Cohen



The author had a perpetual identity crisis throughout his life. His strongly Jewish family immigrated to Jackson, Mississippi from Romania. His was the first Jewish family that most southerners had ever seen.

He was the only Jew in his elementary school class. So early on he knew what it was like to be an outsider. Even during his college years, neither the Christian nor the Jewish fraternities accepted him. He always wanted to be accepted by the Christian community, while not forsaking his Jewish roots.

This feeling of otherness followed him in both worlds. To complicate things further, his father and uncle purchased a clothing store that catered to Black people. This did not sit well with the greater white community, especially during the time of the civil rights struggles in the South.

This nonfiction account reads like a novel. It points out the struggles that many Jewish immigrants faced as they tried to navigate the Christian world. I highly recommend it for all. [The Peddler's Grandson can be purchased on Amazon by clicking here.](#)

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

**Interfaith Interconnect
Religion Chat**

Date: Wednesday, August 11th, 2021

Time: 7:00p.m.- 8:15p.m. via Zoom. Meeting room opens at 6:45p.m.

Topic: How does your community provide for those in need of forgiveness? Hosted by the Muslim Community Center.

[Click Here to go to the Zoom Link](#)

[Click Here for More Information on their Facebook page](#)

Speakers: Rabbi Dr. Laurence Milder, Congregation Beth Emek; and Dr. Abdul-Mun'im Sombat Jitmoud, Muslim Community Center. After the presentations, there will be time for questions, followed by optional participation in break-out groups.



Responding to Hate: Acquiring Tools that Will Empower Us Against Antisemitism

[Register Here for FREE to get the Zoom link.](#)

[Click on the Picture for Additional Information.](#)

About the Event

Our panel will provide valuable tools on how adults, teens and young adults can respond to antisemitism/anti-Zionism. Our three panelists, ADL's regional director Seth Brysk, university student Micah Bloom and educator Matthew Levin from StandWithUs, will tackle the changing types of Jew-hatred from both the far-right and far-left, and how to know when something has gone beyond criticism of Israel to antisemitism. This program is for adults and middle & high schools students as well as those on college campuses.

Admission is free. Upon registration, you will first receive a confirmation email. An hour before the program begins, a reminder will be emailed with the Zoom link to join the event. If you don't see these emails, please check your spam/junk folder to retrieve them. **We suggest you add "notifications@wixevents.com" to your contacts list as well.**



In July We Remember

Allen Lee Coren
Dolores King
Bunny Simmel



July Birthdays

Ben Gross
Solomon Ireland
Noah King
Rick Randel
Mark Shulewitz

Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid
Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

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
Rachel Rose 808-494-8586

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: Bret Mogilefsky 510-610-1956

Joke: What type of sandals do frogs wear? Open-toad!



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