


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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June 25th 2022

TVCJ Community News

Like and share our FaceBook page:
<http://facebook.com/trivalleyculturaljews>

Upcoming Events

If you need more information or have questions about anything in this newsletter, then please email culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029**.

July 7th Philosophers' Cafe Monthly Friendly Discussion Group

Date: First Thursday of each month (next one is July 7th)

Time: 7:00p.m.

Place: Zoom (**The Zoom link will be in the evite you should receive soon.**)

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

"Don't talk politics with your dental hygienist." That was the lesson articulated by Jerry and Leslie Zwick, who led June's Philosophers' Cafe, our monthly friendly discussion group. The conversation dealt with various ethical dilemmas that had been presented to the New York Times' Ethicist columnist. A lively discussion ensued - as always! Philosophers' Cafe convenes the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. on zoom. We talk about issues serious and lighthearted and we never know the topic until we arrive - so there's no homework! We're hoping more members and friends of TVCJ will join us next month on July 7th. Look for the evite for the zoom link.

We need new topics - they can be either serious or lighthearted. If you have an idea, please let

us know! 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. If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please let us know by emailing culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** and we'll schedule your session. Join us!

July 16th, Shabbos Gathering

Golf anyone? Frisbee Golf! Join TVCJ at beautiful Robertson Park in Livermore on July 16th to play through their Frisbee Golf course. We'll meet at 10am before it gets too hot, but bring water and sun protection. Please bring a mask for when social distancing is not possible. More info to follow in the Evite. [To find out more about Frisbee Golf click here.](#)

Our Calendar

2022:

August 28 - JCS first day/open house

September 11 - JCS

September 25 - Erev Rosh Hashanah gathering

October 4 - Kol Nidre (evening) gathering

October 9 - Sukkah raising party

October 23 - JCS

November 6 - JCS

November 20 - JCS

December 4 - JCS

December 18 - Chanukah party (first light of Chanukah)

2023:

January 1 - JCS

January 22 - JCS

February 5 - Tu B'Shvat

February 19 - JCS

March 5 - Purim

March 19 - JCS

April 2 - JCS/Passover Open House

April 8 - Community Passover Seder

April 16 - JCS

April 30 - JCS

May 7 - Lag B'Omer

“Justice, Justice, Shall You Pursue”: A Call to Action for the TVCJ Community

As Jews, we have known oppression. Knowing our history and present, how can we ethically turn a blind eye to the hate and oppression faced by the various communities in the U.S. today? “Don’t say gay” laws, anti-trans laws, anti-abortion decisions, white supremacists preventing progress, mass shootings, and state-sanctioned violence are all too prevalent in our current society. Even with Pride celebrations, climate strikes, Black Lives Matter protests, and vigils, it is still too easy for our politicians and leaders to sweep the intertwining systemic issues at the root of all these oppressive fights under the rug.

As Jews, we say: no more. We call on our senators, representatives and state and local officials to stand up to these horrific acts of violence not with “thoughts and prayers” or speeches, but through real action:

The [Religious Action Center \(RAC\)](#) is the Reform movement’s social action center. It is aligned with TVCJ’s and our Secular and Humanistic Jewish movement’s progressive values and ethics. They’ve made it possible for you to [read about these issues and use the links provided](#) at the bottom of each page to contact your Senators and Representatives to make sure they know that we Jews believe concrete action must be taken to ensure justice and liberty across our country, for all.

You can also call your Senators and Representatives directly regarding other issues using the member lookup provided via [congress.gov](#) and via [ca.gov](#).



A Message From the Rabbi

By the time you read this, the Supreme Court ruling on reproductive rights will have been made public. We are in a time of decreasing rights over our bodies. Abortion and contraception, marriage equality (“racial” and gender based), and LGBTQ+ rights are all under attack. It is tempting to despair or to comfort ourselves by thinking these terrible oppressions can never affect us: we live in California, we have means. Neither of those responses is reasonable. Our obligation as Jews and human beings is to stand for the rights of everyone. What can you do besides shout your outrage (which you should also definitely do)? Here’s one practical thing you can do today: donate to an abortion access fund. The DC Abortion Fund dcabortionfund.org helps pay for people all over the country to come to DC for abortions that aren’t legal in other states. The Texas Equal Access Fund teafund.org helps find and fund abortion access and provides emotional support networks. Medical Students for Choice msfc.org provides abortion training and family planning education to medical students whose medical schools do not provide this training. Don’t give up. Don’t despair. But also,

don't fail to do something. In the words of our famous Partisan Hymn - our marching steps will be a drumbeat; we are here!

By Judith Seid



Tonight June 25th, The National Council of Jewish Woman (NCJW) invite partner organizations and individuals to utilize NCJW's new Havdalah ritual and hold space for what this decision means. We encourage Rabbis, NCJW sections, communal organizations, and groups to let us know they are hosting. [Click Here to sign up to host a Havdalah service tonight.](#)

[Click Here to signup for any of the events listed below.](#)

Next week, the National Council of Jewish Woman will hold a briefing for the Jewish community with NCJW President Dana Gershon, our partners at Center for Reproductive Rights, who litigated the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization case and with Physicians for Reproductive Health. We'll break down exactly what today's decision means for our country, for people seeking access to abortion care, and lay out NCJW's plan for the months ahead. We

hope you'll join us.

On July 14th at 10:30am PT: Rabbi Danya Ruttenberg will lead an in-depth teaching on Jewish sources around abortion justice over Zoom.

And finally, we know that today, and in the days to come, many will panic to determine where and how to find abortion care. It's challenging already, but it's about to be insurmountable for many — especially women, people of color, LGBTQ individuals, and those with disabilities in states that will overturn abortion access.

That's why NCJW created the Jewish Fund for Abortion Access in partnership with the National Abortion Federation (NAF) last month, to directly support real people who need abortions by connecting them with money they need to access care. [Click Here and scroll down to donate to the Jewish Fund to Abortion Access.](#)

In the fall: NCJW will announce a day of action for the Jewish community to mark together across the country.

Jewish Culture School

Jewish Culture School Announces Curriculum for 2022-2023 School Year

Jews Around the World will be the focus of the 2022-2023 school year for Jewish Culture School (JCS). JCS students will explore the cultures of Jews from Northern Africa, Turkey and the Balkans, Argentina, China, Yemen, Central Asia, Ethiopia, India and other various places in the world. They will discover the distinctive dress, holidays and customs of a diverse array of Jews and will enjoy participating in crafts based on the traditional jobs performed by them. In addition, they will discover the distinctive foods of world Jewry and will have the opportunity to cook and taste many of them.

If you know any families looking for a fun Jewish educational experience for their 5-14 year-

olds, please have them call [925-399-8029](tel:925-399-8029) or email culturaljews@gmail.com.



Rosh Hashanah Jewish Culture School Open House...and Tell Friends!

Date: August 28th

Celebrate Rosh Hashanah with Us! Join Tri Valley Cultural Jews for a Rosh Hashanah Open House and see what we do at Jewish Cultural School. We'll sing, we'll dance, we'll bake and there will definitely be apples and honey! Geared towards kids Kindergarten through Brit Mitzvah (5-14) and their families. We meet outside with masks on to keep everyone safe. Kid centered, but open to everyone. Email culturaljews@gmail.com or call [925-399-8029](tel:925-399-8029) for an Evite.

Our Last JCS Class for the Academic Year



Our last class of the year sure was sweet! And it wasn't just because of the delicious donuts! We sang our favorite songs and danced our favorite dances. We looked back on the sweetest parts of the year while we planned for what kinds of changes we want to see in the year to come. Join us next year as we explore Jews Around the World through culture, crafts and cooking. Please let others know about Jewish Culture School - we have room for a few more students. See you next year!

Our Board meeting

On July 14th, the fiscal year 23 TVCJ Board (Brett Mogilefsky, Judy Seid, Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Rachel Rose-Yang, Jesse Pino, and Rebecca Ireland) met for the first time since the annual meeting. All officers will continue in their current roles: Bret Mogilefsky as board president, Judy Seid as treasurer, Jesse Pino as corresponding secretary, and Rebecca Ireland as recording secretary.

Our Shavuot Celebration and TVCJ Ninth Annual Book Review

Every year, as part of our Shavuot celebration, we all recommend our favorite books from the past year. Here are this year's recommendations from some of our members. You can click on any title to be taken to an Amazon page to order that book.

If you haven't already done so, please set up TVCJ as a charity on your AmazonSmile charity list. To set up TVCJ as your charity, go to your Amazon account and click on **Accounts & Lists**, then **Your Lists**, then **AmazonSmile Charity Lists** and choose **Tri-Valley Cultural Jews**.

[Too Much Lip](#) by Melissa Lucashenko. A story set in an indigenous Australian community

[Last Night at the Telegraph Club](#) by Malinda Lo. About Lesbians in the 1950s

[Ulysses, A Life](#) by Ronald C. White. A different take on our 17th president.

[The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society](#) by Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrows. A story of the Nazi occupation of the Channel Island

[Unwinding Anxiety](#) by Judson Brewer (audio recommended). Practical ways to deal with anxiety.

[The 57 Bus](#) by Dashka Slater. The true story of the student whose dress was set on fire and what happened to the assailant.

[Ain't Burned All The Bright](#) by Jason Reynolds. A three-sentence book of art about coping with the pandemic.

[Kiss & Tell](#) by Alain de Botton. Philosophy disguised as a novel disguised as biography.

[The Seventh Handmaiden](#) by Judith M. Pransky. A story about a girl enslaved to Queen Esther of the Purim story.

[Holes](#) by Louis Sachar. A story about a child in a correctional camp and the how the past and present

interact.

[Renegades](#) by Marissa Meyer. A story about good and evil and how superpowers can be used.

[A Deadly Education](#) by Naomi Novik. What happens when everything is transactional. And also magic.

[The Future is Yours](#) by Dan Frey. A story about a computer that can tell the future, and what happens when you know it.

[Atomic Habits](#) by James Clear. Small ways to make big changes in your life.

[The Expanse](#) (series) by James S. A. Corey (really Daniel Abraham and Ty Franck). Humans have colonized the solar system and created distinct societies in different places. Later in the series, humans gain access to other worlds.

[Just Pursuit](#) by Laura Coates. A readable, edifying and horrifying set of accounts of real encounters with the criminal justice system by a former federal prosecutor.

[The Hidden Palace](#) by Helene Wecker. Sequel to 1920s magical realism pairing of a genie and a golem shows the costs of obsession and the possibility of non-romantic love between lifelong friends.

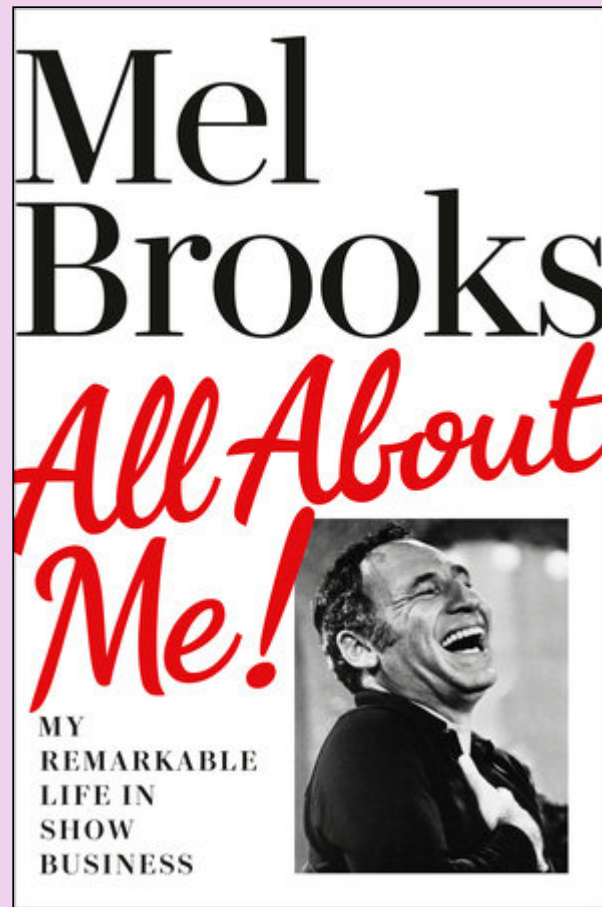
[Religion for Atheists](#) by Alain de Botton. This Secular Jewish author calls for atheists to create communities that provide what religious communities provide to believers.

[Mis-Education of the Negro](#) by Carter G. Woodson. This 1933 classic explores how the educational system fails Black children.

Book Review

All About Me! My Remarkable Life in Show Business

By
Mel Brooks



I love to laugh. I have never laughed at a book as much as I did when I read this autobiography of Melvin Kaminsky. (You may know him as Mel Brooks). Starting as a young comic doing shtick on the street corners of New York, to creating the most memorable and hilarious movies ever written, with stars such as Sid Caesar and Carl Reiner. He was a writer, director, producer and comic actor. Nobody could do all of these things like Mel Brooks, and he did them all his own way.

This book was very hard to put down because every other page had hilarious excerpts from one of his movies such as the 20,000 Year Old Man, The History of the World Part 1, The Producers,

Blazing Saddles, Young Frankenstein, Space Balls, and many more. The difficult thing now is that since I know what went into the production of these works of cinematic art, I have a craving to view them all over again—and laugh again. It is also good to know that behind all of the hilarity and off -beat humor of his movies and plays there are serious messages. Furthermore, he has received so many awards and accolades, they are too numerous to mention here.

So if you are interested in the inner workings of the movies of Hollywood, the theater of New York, or just the life and career of one of the Jewish icons of show business, this book is for you. [Click here to purchase this book on Amazon.](#)

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

Interfaith InterConnect Religion Chat

July 13th is a hybrid meeting (You have the option to attend in-person or via Zoom!).

Religion Chat is a free monthly interfaith forum presented by Interfaith Interconnect on the second Wednesday. The group's mission statement, "To enrich, educate, and inform ourselves and others about the great diversity of faiths and cultures in our Valley."

More information:

Interfaith.interconnect@gmail.com or <https://www.facebook.com/InterfaithInterconnect/>

Date: Wednesday, July 13th 2022

Time (Summer Hours): 7:00p.m. to 8:00p.m. includes time for questions. **The Doors and Zoom Meeting Open at 6:40p.m.**

Topic: How does your community welcome children/youth into the faith? What rite of passage ceremonies are traditional in your culture?

Speaker (In-Person): Featured speakers from Asbury United Methodist and St. Charles Borromeo Catholic churches, followed by time for audience questions. Optional breakout discussion groups, 8:00p.m.–8:30p.m..

Come In-Person: St Charles Borromeo Catholic Church, 1315 Lomas Ave., Livermore 94550.

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82960493317>

All are welcome! Please feel free to invite others to attend.



In June We Remember

Eliza Haile Cloe
Augusta Gorman
John Mogul



June Birthdays

Eileen Alkin-Fagliano
David Gates
Greg Gorel
Jazz Salwen-Grabowski
Thelma Poxon-Hudson
Vicki Hudson
Carol King
Bret Mogilefsky

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

Webmaster: Noah King

JCS Teachers: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Judith Seid

Holiday Coordinator: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Movie Coordinator: Bret Mogilefsky

Leah Morrison
Judy Seid

Joke: What kind of bone should a dog never eat? **Answer:** A trombone.



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