

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews:

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

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Tri-ValleyCulturalJews.org

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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 October 2011

Wednesday, Oct. 5 – Planning meeting, 7:00 p.m. at 1817 Sinclair Drive, Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Saturday, Oct. 8 – Yom Kippur Observance, 1-5 p.m. We will have a ceremony of readings and music followed by a series of workshops including writing a Jewish poem, Jewish art, and ethical shopping, after which we will hold our memorial observance. Those who want to will go out to dinner together after. Bring canned or boxed food for the food bank. There will also be an opportunity to donate to various charities. \$10/adult non-member. Members and children under 13 free.

Oct. 9 - Deadline to RSVP for Angel Island trip. JCS and any interested adult friends or members of TVCJ. If you are interested in coming along, please call Jamie at 510-444-1808.

Sunday, Oct. 16 – Sukkah raising and potluck brunch. 10:30 a.m. at the Frank/Wang home. 925-454-1715 for address and directions. We'll put up and decorate the sukkah and learn some things about the oldest of Jewish holidays. Bring a dish to share, canned or boxed food for the food bank, a branch for the sukkah roof (if you can) and a piece of fruit or other decoration for the sukkah. Kids and adults!

Sunday, Oct. 23 – Trip to Angel Island! Our tour of the immigration station starts at 11 am. After the tour, JCS kids will learn about Chinese Jews, and adults and other kids are welcome to join in. Angel Island also offers beautiful hikes. Bring a sack lunch. Fees for the ferry are: adults \$11.50, kids \$7.50. TVCJ is paying for JCS kids. Our group can have up to 40 people – Please RSVP by Oct. 9th. The ferry leaves Oakland at 9:00 am and they want us there at 8:45 to make sure everyone gets on. The return trip leaves Angel Island at 3:15 am.

Friday, October 28 – Family Shabbat, 6 p.m. at the home of Jamie and Solomon Ireland, 19663 Fremery Court in Castro Valley. A short ceremony, pizza, chat and play before everyone gets home in time for bed. \$7/adult for pizza. Kids free. Please let us know if you are coming by responding to the evite or calling Jamie at 510-444-1808.

Wednesday, Nov. 2 – Planning meeting, 7:00 p.m. at 1817 Sinclair Drive, Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Sunday, Nov. 6 and 20: Jewish Culture School 10:30 a.m. in Castro Valley.

Message from the President

I was thinking about the health care law that some republican lawmakers are trying to repeal. It is also being challenged in court because those who oppose it feel it is unconstitutional to force US citizens to buy something.

I agree we cannot force Americans to buy something they may or may not want or need.

The problem is that people who don't buy health insurance still get services. They may even get billed for those services. But how many people with cancer are going to be able to pay the tens of thousands of dollars their treatment may cost?

So what do we do? I don't think there's much choice. We need a single payer system.

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
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JCS Teachers	Judith Seid, Jamie Ireland
Phone Chair	Phyllis Looney
Family Shabbat/Havdalah Coordinator	– Jamie Ireland
Publicity	Kristie Wang 925-596-0416
Movie Coordinator	Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

To See the Stars

By Levi Coren

The play at Liberty High School, *To See the Stars*, was about the workers in the garment industry. The setting was New York in 1909. The workers went on strike because of the little pay that they got for twelve hours of work a day, six days a week (\$4/week). They sat on crates instead of chairs and had to ask to go to the bathroom, which all 200 of them shared, and it was always filthy. All of them were girls that were sixteen and seventeen years old. Most of them were immigrants. Their leader was a Jewish immigrant named Anya. When they went on strike, they got beaten up and then were carted off to jail. When they continued, they were sent to the Tomes. They got assistance from the garment union. At the end, they won the strike, pay was raised to \$6/week. This has meaning to me because as a result of this strike my great-grand parents had better pay.

Levi is our TVCJ Bar Mitzvah student. He is a 7th grader at Bristow Middle School in Brentwood. So far he has logged 33 hours of volunteer time, presented "Jews vs Rome" for a Havdalah and will present "Jews in the Super Hero Comics Industry" at Rosh Hashana.

Mishpokha (family)

Happy October birthdays to: Susan Fox
Larry Lubran, Elaine Pector, Savanna Roy

Michelle Coren made it to the state competition in gymnastics! It will be in Livermore in November

In October we honor the yortseits of Adina Senensieb, cousin of Judy Seid
As well as Judy's father Seymour Seid.

If you have a yortseit you'd like us to remember, please let us know, 925-485-1049 or CulturalJews@aol.com.

First Day of Jewish Culture School

For the first day of Jewish Culture School, we started our Jews Around the World curriculum. We introduced Benjamin of Tudela and his travels using the world map, and we started our timeline to track our studies. We put our birthdates on the timeline, as well as those of some famous people we know, to put the time of Benjamin's travels in perspective and learned some vocabulary with a fun puzzle. During music, we started a fun song that incorporated Benjamin of Tudela to the tune of *We Shall Not Be Moved*...one of our faves! That was fun! We made the honey cake for our community Rosh Hashanah event later this week. It smelled great; we can't wait to eat it.

Jewish Culture School

Jewish Culture School still has openings for students aged 6-13. We meet twice a month for a hands-on fun experience. This year we are learning about Jews Around the World and will be cooking food from all over the world and doing crafts based on the traditional occupations of Jews in the various places we are studying. If you are interested, or know someone who might be, the number to call is 510 888-1404.

Website of the Month

Here's an interesting article on the Bund and Yiddish in Israel printed in the Israeli paper Ha'aretz.
<http://www.haaretz.com/weekend/magazine/w-e-fought-for-a-better-tomorrow-1.375943>. It tells about the Secular young people in Eastern Europe who worked for a better world and about how they live now, in their nineties, in Israel. The Bund, founded in 1897 in Vilna, was instrumental in the self-defense movement against the pogroms of 1903-1906. After WWI, the Bund in Poland established trade unions and published Secular Jewish books for the Secular Jewish children's schools. During WWII, Bund members led resistance to the Nazis both inside and outside the camps. In Israel, the Bund has been a continuous voice for equality of Arab and Jew and an end to occupation.

This Month in Jewish History

In Tishri (this year mostly in October), we observe the yortseit of the hero Sarah Aaronsohn, one of the leaders of Nili, a Jewish underground movement in World War I. At the time, Israel was ruled by the Turkish Empire and Nili, in an attempt to gain freedom, allied itself with the British. The group was formed when news of the Armenian genocide reached them, along with deportation orders from the Turks. Although the group was able to provide the British with much information about the Turkish troop movements, railroads, desert routes and oases, their work lasted only a couple of years. In 1917, one of their carrier pigeons bearing a secret message was intercepted in Ceasarea. Almost all members of Nili were apprehended. Several were sentenced to death and others were tortured. Sarah Aronson killed herself after enduring several days of torture. She never talked. The British conquest of Beersheba, which would have been impossible without the help of Nili, led to an end to Turkish Ottoman rule of the area. You can see a picture of Sarah Aaronsohn at <http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/biography/SAaronsohn.html>.

J-West Secular Jewish Conference

We had a terrific time at the Labor Day J-West Secular Jewish conference in Seattle. Here are some highlights of the weekend:

- A workshop on Jews in rock music, including a sing-along. Did you know Robbie Robertson of the Band is Jewish? How about a couple members of Steely Dan, three Beastie Boys and a couple of the Ramones? Only one member of the J Geils Band is not Jewish. A couple of Phish and a member of Dire Straits – Jewish! The most famous Finnish rock star is Jewish. Leslie Gore, Mama Cass, Paula Abdul, and SO many more.
- A workshop on fundraising with practical advice and a reality check for us. The Seattle SHJ group does about the same amount of stuff we do (or maybe a little less) – holidays, monthly shabbes and twice-monthly school for kids. Their basic membership is \$600 for a two-adult household, \$450 for a single adult household. School is extra. TVCJ membership is \$180 for a two-adult household, \$120 for a single adult household.
- Prof. Naomi Sokoloff, who teaches modern Jewish literature at U. Washington, talked about Hebrew as a sacred language and a secular language.
- Folk dancing, community service, reclaiming Jewish rituals, and singing without the words in front of you were also fun and informative.
- The traditional talent show was great, and we also had a fantastic time at an improv show.

And the great news is that next year, you don't have to miss it! It'll be in our area and we're hosting. We're hoping to hold it the first weekend in August at some conference center or hotel in the East Bay.

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews
1817 Sinclair Drive
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