

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 2012

Wednesday October 3, 7:00 pm: TVCJ Planning Meeting. 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Sunday, October 14, 10:30 am: Jewish Culture School, at the Ireland's, 19663 Fremery Ct, Castro Valley. Call 510-888-1404 for more information on joining the school.

Friday October 19, 7:30 pm: Adult shabbes. By now, most of you already know who you're voting for president, congress and local positions, but many of us are still wondering about the propositions. We will be joined for our adult shabbes by a representative from Bend the Arc: A Jewish Partnership for Justice to discuss propositions about taxes, the death penalty, and the rights of workers. We will gather for a dessert potluck and discussion at 7:30 at the home of Debby Seid and Tom Green, 795 Meadowlark, in Livermore. Bring your questions, your ideas and a dessert to share.

Sunday October 28, 10:30 am: Jewish Culture School, at the Ireland's, 19663 Fremery Ct, Castro Valley. Call 510-888-1404 for more information on joining the school.

Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur

This year we had our first Tashlikh ceremony at Rosh Hashana. We had a nice walk down to a creek, cast away the mistakes of the previous year and thought about the good things that happened as well. Our Rosh Hashana theme this year was loyalty. We had stories, readings, and discussions related to that topic while also doing all of the other traditions related to Rosh Hashana, including the shofar, apples and honey, and our "resolutions." During the potluck dinner, we had an opportunity to talk with friends old and new. Special thanks to Judy for being the musical director, Derek for leading us in a wonderful rendition of "Lean on Me," the culture school students for making the honey cake and leading us in the music, Soloman for blowing the shofar, and just about everyone else for helping to clean up.

Yom Kippur is always a little more serious of a holiday. We had an intimate Kol Nidre ceremony which included thoughtful readings and music. We played our version of "musical chairs" with the resolutions we came up with at Rosh Hashana. One person read a resolution and then everyone who identified with the statement had to get up and find a new seat. The person left standing would read the next resolution. This was a great way to let us know that we all share similar resolutions and goals for the coming year. Please refer to Judy's thoughts on the resolutions, which also may be the first Philosophers' café topic. Thank you to Jamie for running the service, Judy for being musical director and making the program.

Message from the President

On the chance that there are people reading this who are unaware or unsure of what propositions 30 and 32 are about, I would like to offer whatever sway I may possess to influence them. With over 20 years of teaching in public schools, I have watched California slip lower and lower compared to other states in per pupil funding. While this has been going on, class sizes have gone up, resources have dwindled and the expectations have risen, placing an increasing burden on public schools. I think school funding will always be an issue but if prop 30 passes, it would put a stop to devastating cuts to public education. Please vote YES on Prop 30.

I also encourage you to vote NO on prop 32. This proposition is designed to silence unions. I find it unfortunate that money plays such a role in how our political system works, but since businesses have such large amounts of money concentrated in a few individuals, the only way most of the rest of us can be heard is through a collective process like a union. If unions lose their voice, the consequences could be devastating for union and non-union workers throughout the state.

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	– Jamie Ireland
Publicity	open
Movie Coordinator	Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

Mishpokha (family)

In our kid-related news, we have:
Ella King who met the mayor of Livermore (yet again! So old hat!) at the end of the summer reading program.
Matthew Looney, who just earned his Life rank in Scouts and is now working on the Eagle rank. He also earned a black belt in karate and has been volunteering helping other kids achieve the same.
Emma Greenberg, who rehearsing for the Grand Performing Arts production of "Alice" January. She also advanced to level 3 in gymnastics.

Musing on Our Resolutions

Every year at our Rosh Hashanah observance, we all write down our resolutions. I take them and put together our own "al khet*" for Yom Kippur. As I was working on that this year, I was struck by the difference between this year's resolutions and those of past years. This year, there were lots of thoughts about creating work-life balance, and about developing character strengths and healthy habits. Unlike prior years, this year there were no (count 'em - zero) resolutions about community. Nothing about doing more volunteer work. Nothing about being responsible members of our communities. I figure, there are two possibilities here. One is that people are feeling good about their volunteer efforts and about living up to their community responsibilities. We have a lot of people whose jobs are doing good work for the community - most notably, we have a lot of teachers - and they could certainly understand their jobs as their support for their community. Maybe we, as a group, are putting in lots of time helping others and we feel ok about that part of our lives. Could be. I hope so. But there's another possibility, and that is that, possibly in response to the current political climate, we have lost the sense of responsibility for others and for our community. Maybe we think it is ok to think only of ourselves and our immediate loved ones. I don't know which reason might be truer. What do you think??

~Judy Seid

*The "al khet" is the litany of sins recited by religious Jews during the Yom Kippur service. We Secular Jews write our own lists of things we want to change for the next year.

Mishpokha Yortseits and Birthdays

In October we remember
Adina Senenseib, cousin of
Judith Seid.

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

Jewish Culture School

On the first day of school the students made honeycake that we served at our Rosh Hashanah community celebration the following week and they made their own Jewish calendars with the Jewish months. They all figured out what their Jewish birthday is (for this year anyway). We will be using these calendars this year as we talk about the holidays that occur throughout the year. We will also be learning about the Jewish life cycles events this year as well.

Sukkot was very well-attended. In the blazing heat, we erected a beautiful sukkah and decorated it with branches, fruit, paper chains and many decorations from our children. We chatted under it and danced in and around it as we shared good food and good company. It was a delightful morning. We also collected a nice box of food to donate to the Alameda County Food Bank.

In the Community

Upcoming events at the JCC East Bay, 1414 Walnut Street

Berkeley, CA 94709, 510-848-0237 x148, www.jcceastbay.org, in the office Mondays-Thursdays

Talking Table Interactive Lecture Series, 2nd & 4th Fridays, 1:00-2:30pm, JCC East Bay, Berkeley Branch, 1414 Walnut Street, An interactive lecture series on the second and fourth Fridays of each month presented at the JCC East Bay with Time Well Spent. There is a different topic each meeting. Friday, October 12, Friday, October 26, Friday, November 9, Friday, November 30 (5th Friday)

Mindfulness Meditation 6-Week Course, Starting Monday, October 15, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
JCC East Bay, Berkeley Branch, 1414 Walnut Street

Contact Sam Young at samy@jcceastbay.org

\$130 JCC East Bay Members | \$150 General

Subsidies available by contacting Sam Young at samy@jcceastbay.org or 510-848-0237 x148.

Register online

Mindfulness is a quality of attention that can be learned, cultivated through practice, and applied in any moment of daily life. It is a wonderful remedy for stress of living, and conducive to well-being and positive mental states, such as peace, presence, appreciation, and kindness to self and others. Recent scientific research studies point to a myriad of mental and physical health benefits, and show that desirable structural changes in the brain can occur only after a couple of months of meditation practice.

Psychedelics Today: On Stage and Under the Microscope, Tuesday, October 30, 7:30 pm - 9:00 pm

JCC East Bay, Berkeley Branch, 1414 Walnut Street, Contact Alli Axelrod at allia@jcceastbay.org

\$8 General, \$6 Member, Senior, Student, Buy tickets in advance online

Award-winning playwright Lynne Kaufman and actor Warren David Keith discuss excerpts from their new production ACID TEST: THE MANY INCARNATIONS OF RAM DASS, playing at The Marsh in Berkeley this Fall. Trace the life, times and spiritual journey of Ram Dass from his roots as Richard Alpert, a scion of a wealthy Jewish family, to his tenured professorship at Harvard University, his beginning the psychedelic revolution with Timothy Leary, his finding his guru in India, to his becoming a revered spiritual leader. Accompanying the playwright and actor is Dr. James Fadiman, author of *The Psychedelic Explorer's Guide*. Fadiman will speak to the latest research and the resurgence of scientific interest in psychedelics.

Website of the Month

Journey of Man: A Genetic Odyssey (Part 1-13)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV6A8oGtPc4>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ybji0axp6s0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M25Ez4HW104>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BA3aINMIWMw>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0m2-RwYXkWg>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0QDrODnN6g>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EMzaQhqHYnM>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xhZ7zaT5hvU>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QV3Ws7pyJUI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nNlvzhfQex0>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8KzroCQVDoI>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jl-bnnES42U>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AT6XsVnuz6o>

This series demonstrates how all humanity is indeed one family, who only branched away from Africa less than 50 thousand years ago. Less than a blink of the eye in evolutionary terms. Therefore racist prejudices about "superiority" are false and scientifically invalid. All humans are simply branches of the same tree.

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