

# Tri-Valley Cultural Jews:

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

(925) 485-1049

Tri-ValleyCulturalJews.org

CulturalJews@aol.com

<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 February 2013

Sunday February 3, 10:30 am-12:30 pm: **Jewish Culture School**, at the Ireland's, Castro Valley.

Sunday February 3, 10:45 am-12:15 pm: **Philosophers' Café/Culture Chat**, Cafe Rumi, 4799 Heyer Ave., Castro Valley. This month's topic: "How should the secular deal with death?"

Wednesday February 6, 7:00 pm: **TVCJ Planning Meeting**. 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Saturday February 8, 6:00 pm: **Family Havdalah** Site TBA. Check your evite!. A little ceremony, pizza, \$7.00 for adults. Please respond to the evite or call 510-888-1404.

Sunday February 17, 10:30 am-12:30 pm: **Jewish Culture School**, at the Ireland's, Castro Valley.

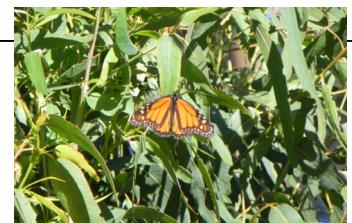
Sunday February 24, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm: **Purim** Please join us for our annual Purim party. We will make hamentashn, have crafts and games, and fun for all ages. And we will have some fun Purim related antics. Don't forget to come dressed as your favorite Purim character. Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St. in Livermore. Please respond to the evite or call 925-485-1049.

### Reminder

If you do not want your pictures or your children's pictures in the newsletter and on the website, please let us know.

## Jewish Culture School and Tu B'Shvat

In January, the kids at Jewish Culture School hosted their own Tu B'Shvat seder. They also learned about bar and bat mitzvahs. Levi Coren talked with the group about his bar mitzvah and Jamie talked about her bat mitzvah, what they did and what they learned from the process. Several of our girls who are all 10 and 11 got jazzed up for theirs! The next week we all met at Ardenwood Farms in Fremont for a walk to visit the Monarch butterfly wintering groves. We had a lovely potluck; each dish had at least one of the 7 fruits of the holiday – dates, figs, citrus, almond, raisin, olive or carob. Thank you to Ya'el Seid Green for organizing the event. It was a beautiful day out with current and new members and guests.



## Message from the President

A couple months ago I had a conversation with some coworkers about gun control. I stated that I didn't believe most gun owners truly needed the guns for protection. Rather they used that as an excuse so they could keep their guns for other reasons. I was met with some resistance that I did not expect. While some agreed with me that guns were not really kept for protection, others stated there are many dangerous areas and even in what seems like the nicest neighborhoods there have been break-ins. Some felt secure just by being able to make the sound of cocking a rifle, which could be used to scare off an intruder.

This conversation, which happened before the massacre in Newtown, gave me pause. Was I wrong about the need of people to use guns as protection? Of course Newtown brought this issue to the center of national debate and gave me a chance to think about it more.

We haven't talked about it since at work, but I think I would ask now whether those who feel they need a gun for protection are willing to kill someone. This is what it really comes down to for those with guns for that reason. "Are you prepared to pull the trigger and end another person's life?" "Are you prepared to be judge, jury, and executioner for someone who wanted to take some of your stuff?" I know I could not answer yes to either of these questions.

I also wonder whether they consider that by the very nature of brandishing such a dangerous weapon, they might turn an unfortunate situation into a deadly one.

## Who We Are

President	Kevin Coren 925-240-5612
Board Members	Judith Seid 925-485-1049 Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404
Newsletter	Marisa Castaldini 925-240-5612
Webmasters	Noah King 925-371-8585
JCS Teachers	Judith Seid, Jamie Ireland
Phone Chair	open
Family Shabbat/Havdalah Coordinator	– Amy Greenberg
Publicity	open
Movie Coordinator	Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

## Mishpokha Friends and Family

Events: Come enjoy Guys and Dolls with Brentwood Teen Theater, Feb. 22, 23, March 1, 2, 7 pm, matinee March 2, 2:00 pm. Levi plays Benny Southstreet. Contact [marisard@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marisard@sbcglobal.net).

Local Livermore artist Lenore Kreit is exhibiting her paintings at Garre Winery Cafe from January 2nd through February 29th. Her works include landscapes, still life and local pastoral scenes in colorful settings ranging from impressionistic to abstract. Lenore has been painting and exhibiting her art throughout the Tri-Valley area for several years and is noted for her beautiful and subtle handling of color.

## Much Gratitude for Your Holiday Giving

Greetings to all who participated in the Holiday Giving Program this year, through *Jewish Family and Children's Services of the East Bay*! This was our 9th year of running it, and we are amazed at the generosity and heart that went into helping families this year -- **a total of 106 families** in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties receiving gifts, and **9 preschool classrooms** in Oakland receiving preschool supplies! On behalf of all our staff, thank you!

You may know already that gift recipients of the Holiday Giving Program here are also JFCS/East Bay *clients* -- they receive social services throughout the year from our case managers, clinicians and program coordinators. We work to support these families throughout the year in many ways, providing: therapy, classroom consultation, resettlement work for refugees, social service referrals, health care navigation etc.

**We are proud to serve people in the community from all walks of life and religious backgrounds.**

Many of our client recipients this year are newly arrived immigrants or refugees from: Russia, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, and Latin America. And, many of our other recipient client families are from the US originally, but are in great economic need, and unable to provide gifts for their children. For all, the need was great this year. And, you helped to make it a beautiful holiday season.

## Congregation Shir Ami and Eden Church invites you to Interfaith Purim Retreat

When: Saturday, February 23, 2013 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

Where: Eden UCC- Oliver Hall, 21455 Birch Street off Grove Way, Hayward CA 94541

As part of our observance of the Festival of Purim, Congregation Shir Ami joins with our friends at Eden United Church of Christ for a workshop on tolerance and interfaith solidarity. We'll learn together about strategies to combat anti-Jewish and anti-LGBTQ attitudes and behaviors in our community, including harassment and bullying in our public schools.

We'll experience the profound power of solidarity—especially when expressed across lines that often divide. We will learn more about what it means to be an effective ally to others, and strengthen our relationships with our allies at Eden Church. We'll hear from our teens about what it's like for them at school, learn from a guest speaker about ways to combat bullying, and discuss ways that our congregations can continue to promote diversity education in our local schools.

Light refreshments and fellowship will be available at 8:30 am, and there will also be a light lunch. For more information, email Ruth Hartman at [events@congrshirami.org](mailto:events@congrshirami.org).



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## This Month In Jewish History

On January 28, 1916, Louis Brandeis was nominated to the Supreme Court by President Wilson and was confirmed five months later. Brandeis was a lawyer who championed labor rights and women's rights.

He fought the railroad monopolies and helped to create the Federal Trade Commission. Because of his views, the *Wall Street Journal* led a corporatist opposition to him. He was approved, however, by a Senate vote of 47-22. On the court, he was instrumental in establishing the right to privacy, which is now under attack. Brandeis was the first Jewish Supreme Court Justice. Thanks to Jewdayo! for the information. You can subscribe to a daily blast of informative and entertaining Jewish history at [JewishCurrents.org](http://JewishCurrents.org).

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews  
1817 Sinclair Drive  
Pleasanton, CA 94588

