

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 March 2013

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

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

Sunday March 3, 10:45 am-12:15 pm: **Philosophers' Café/Culture Chat**, Cafe Rumi, 4799 Heyer Ave., Castro Valley. This month's topic: "What values do we pass on to our children, and what did we get from our parents?"

Saturday March 9, 6:00 pm: **Family Havdalah** at the King Home, Livermore. A little ceremony, pizza, \$7.00 for adults. Please respond to the evite or call 510-888-1404.

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

Saturday March 30, 5:00 pm: **Community Seder**, our secular progressive haggadah in English includes lots of singing and is child-friendly. It's followed by a non-kosher-for Pesakh potluck. To make your reservation and claim a potluck assignment, please call Jamie at 510-888-1404 by March 24. We also collect food for the food bank, as we do at all our holidays. Members and children are free. We request a \$10 donation from non-member adults to help defray the costs of rent and the ritual foods. Bothwell Center, 2466 8th St. in Livermore. Please respond to the evite or call 925-485-1049.

Jewish Culture School

At JCS in February we learned about Jewish Weddings...we watched a video of a secular humanistic wedding and then enacted an Orthodox wedding for a bit of comparison, we danced some traditional wedding dances and tried to make couscous, a Sephardic wedding food.

At the second meeting this month we got ready for our Purim party. We made a Sephardic Purim treat called Orejas de Haman (Haman's ears). Sang our favorite Purim Song "Vashti Said No" and a huge THANK YOU goes out to Marisa and Carol for making costumes for us to wear next week to the Purim Party!!!! We also read the Purim story and discussed according to age groupings.

Culture Chat/Philosophers' Cafe

At our last culture chat we talked about how the secular should deal with death. We agreed that those who have religious beliefs would likely derive a lot of comfort from those beliefs that secularists might not enjoy. We also talked about how being spiritual is often associated with religion, but these two things do not have to go hand in hand. A secularist's own spirituality might give him or her comfort in death. Of course, in the end nobody can really say what happens after we die.

Message from the President

There has been a lot of press in Brentwood lately about an incident with a teacher. In a nutshell, the teacher abused a student; the district handled the situation poorly; and it all came out when the family won a lawsuit against the district.

As a teacher, this hurts. It hurts my profession. It hurts my union. I cannot control who becomes a teacher or if one will give teachers a bad name. The district tried to deflect responsibility by saying their hands were tied by the education code, which the “powerful” teacher lobby designed. This particular district is non-union, but the district still basically blamed the union. Fortunately, most of the parents didn’t seem to agree with their argument.

Here’s the part that frightens me. I don’t know what I would have done if I was a teacher at the school. Generally, I give a fellow teacher the benefit of the doubt. If I saw the abuse, I know I would have reported it, but what if I had warning signs before it happened? Would I have tried to intervene before it reached a critical point? Would I have figured it wouldn’t go that far? Would I have informed the administration that I felt the teacher might not be suited to be in the classroom? I don’t know.

Purim Party

Our annual Purim party was great fun! Thank you to Noah for creating yet another fantastic Purim play. Thank you to Carol and Marisa for doing kids’ crafts, Wendy for making hamantashen dough and to all who helped baked the yummy cookies! The kids dressed up in their costumes, as did a few adults.

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

In March we remember;
Rebecca Friedman, grandmother of Jamie Ireland,
Roy Calder, Father of Jacky Poulsen, and
Doris Handler, mother of Eleanor Pemper

Happy March birthdays to Ryan Inkelis, Leonard Kreit, Kyla Peinado, and Adam King

Aging, You and Your Family: Free Workshops from JFCS/East Bay

Caring for a Parent Long Distance. Tuesday, March 12 from 5:30 - 7:00, JFCS/EB, 2484 Shattuck Ave , Ste, 201 in Berkeley . Practical suggestions for ensuring a loved ones' safety and the major issues caring for a parent long distance. For more information and to register. <http://jfcs-eastbay.org/event/caring-parent-long-distance>. RSVP by March 8th

Aging without Children: Planning for the Future. Thursday, March 21, 2013 from 5:30 - 7:00, JFCS/EB. 1855 Olympic Blvd, Ste 200 in Walnut Creek . What you need to know about planning for your future with a special focus on older adults without children. For more information and to register. <http://jfcs-eastbay.org/event/aging-without-children-planning-future>. RSVP by March 14

To Drive or Not to Drive? Thursday, April 4th from 5:30 - 7:00, JFCS/EB, 2484 Shattuck Ave , Ste, 201 in Berkeley. Figuring out when or if to stop driving is one of the hardest issues facing older adults as well as their adult children. For more information and to register. <http://jfcs-eastbay.org/event/drive-or-not-drive>. RSVP by March 28th.

Jewish Music Festival, March 2-12, 2013

Just a few of the opportunities at the Jewish Music Festival. More information at www.jewishmusicfestival.org

Saturday, March 2nd, **Polesye**, a joint Polish – Israeli CD project, revives rare pre-war Yiddish repertoire through innovative arrangements. The band is fronted by Olga Mieleszczuk, a young Polish vocalist who often brings Jewish music to small Polish towns that last heard these sounds before World War II. Shofar, a trio of vanguard Polish jazz instrumentalists, creates exquisitely original improvisations inspired by Eastern European Jewish folk music known as klezmer. \$26 general, \$24 JCC member, senior and student, 7:00pm Talk, 8:00pm Concert, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison St 94704

Thursday, March 7th, **Theodore Bikel, Merima Ključo, and Shura Lipovsky, part of the 28th Jewish Music Festival, March 2-12, 2013**, Journey through Yiddish and Bosnian / Sephardic cultures with **Theodore Bikel**, a legendary figure on the American Jewish music scene, Bosnian accordionist Merima Ključo, a world renowned singer of Yiddish, direct from Amsterdam. \$30 General, \$28 JCC member, senior and student, 8:00pm, Freight and Salvage Coffee House, 2020 Addison Street, Berkeley 94704

Saturday, March 9th, **Vilna Poems and Akoka - The End of Time, part of the 28th Jewish Music Festival, March 2-12, 2013**, World Premiere of Vilna Poems, a song cycle of works by the great Yiddish poet, Avrom Sutskever, composed by David Garner in memory of Sylvie Braitman. With Bay Area-based soprano Lisa Delan, pianist Kristin Pankonin; cellist Matt Haimovitz, an award-winning former student of Yo Yo Ma, and clarinetist David Krakauer, who has appeared with the Tokyo, Kronos and Emerson quartets, among others. With Akoka, a project inspired by Olivier Messiaen's Quartet for the End of Time and developed by Haimovitz and Krakauer for the Banff Centre for the Arts. \$26 general, \$24 JCC Member, Senior and Student, 8:00pm, Thrust Stage, Berkeley Repertory Theatre, 2025 Addison Street, Berkeley 94704

Tuesday, March 5th, **Michael Alpert & Julian Kytasty: Night Songs from a Neighboring Village, part of the 28th Jewish Music Festival, March 2-12, 2013**, Rich **East European Jewish and Ukrainian musical traditions** come together with Michael Alpert, a leading Yiddishist and pioneer of the klezmer revival, and Julian Kytasty, a premier bandura (lute-harp) player. \$20 general, \$18 member, senior and student. 7:30pm. JCC East Bay. Berkeley. 1414 Walnut St Berkeley. CA 94709

Save the Date for J-West

Kol Shalom is excited to invite you to the 5th annual J-West Conference to be held this year in Portland, Oregon. Come help us celebrate our 20th anniversary at the same time!

The conference will be Labor Day Weekend at University Place Hotel in downtown Portland. If you have ever wanted to visit the Weird city of Portlandia – now is the time.

Please spread the word about this wonderful opportunity to get together with Secular, Humanistic and Cultural Jews for a weekend of culture, learning, friendship and fun. The attached flyer can be copied into your calendar and posted in your newsletter. Details are still being finalized, so keep an eye on your inbox and check the J-West website for updated information. <http://j-west.net>

We look forward to seeing you there!

Mary Raskin, Kol Shalom
On behalf of the J-West 2013 planning committee

For more information, contact the conference organizers at jwestmeetup@ymail.com

THIS MONTH'S BOOK RECOMMENDATION

A good read for the non-believers amongst us.

I would like to recommend a humorous memoir, Candidate Without a Prayer by Herb Silverman.

His life story has much in it to which we as Secular Jews can relate.

When he ran for governor, he challenged the laws of South Carolina, which said that non-believers could not hold public office.

Jerry Zwick



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