

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."



March and April 2016

TVCJ Community Event Dates

East Bay Jewish Film Festival: Sunday, March 6. Movie at 4:30, dinner at 6:00 pm, second movie at 7:30 pm. Come for one, two or all three. Please see the evite for more information. Reservations required for dinner. Downtown Livermore.

Planning Meeting: Tuesday, March 8, 7:00-9:00 pm, at the Seid-Gates home, 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Family Havdalah at Val Vista Community Park: Saturday, March 12, 5 pm – 7 pm. 6701 Payne Dr, Pleasanton. Please bring a dish to share. Call Leah with questions 650-223-9073 and respond to the evite. In the event of rain – stay home where it's dry!

Purim: Sunday, March 20, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm. Bothwell Arts Center in Livermore. We will make hamantaschen, have crafts, games, and fun for all ages, and present our annual Purim skit. Attendees are welcome to come dressed as their favorite Purim character. Free for TVCJ members, and costs \$10 for non-members (which can be applied to a membership if someone wishes to join). 2466 8th St. in Livermore.

Planning meeting: Tuesday, April 12, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Secular Progressive Community Potluck Passover Seder: Saturday, April 23, 5 pm. Bothwell Arts Center, 2466 8th St, Livermore. We use our own English-language haggadah with lots of singing. It's family-friendly but not child-centered. Please respond to the evite with the sort of dish you'd like to bring (main dish, salad or vegetable, dessert) or call us at 925-485-1049 and we'll get back to you. Vegetarian dishes are encouraged but not required. Invite a friend, too! The suggested donation for non-member adults is \$20. Kids and members are free (and you can put your \$20 towards membership). We are also collecting canned and boxed food for the bank.

Hikes – March 26 and April 30. Please see full descriptions on page 6. Contact Leah for questions 650-223-9073.

Jewish Culture School

10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Sunday, March 6

Sunday March 20 (Purim)

Sunday April 13

Sunday April 17

Who We Are

President Kevin Coren
925-240-5612

Board Members

Judith Seid 925-485-1049
Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404
Noah King 925-371-8585
Amy Greenberg

Newsletter Marisa Castaldini
925-240-5612

Webmaster
Noah King 925-371-8585

JCS Teachers
Judith Seid, Jamie Ireland

Family Shabbat/Havdalah Coordinator
Amy Greenberg

Publicity open

Movie Coordinator
Wendy Berenson 925-829-0554

Adult Programming
Karen Furst

Field Trip to the Jewish Contemporary Museum

We had a tour of the "Chasing Justice" exhibit at the Jewish Contemporary Museum in San Francisco. Justice is an important concept in Jewish life. There were 3 artists who did a body of work based on their concept and experiences of justice or injustice. It was moving to see the way the various artists portrayed this important idea.

We learned about an immigrant woman who bravely fought for the rights of workers during the early 1900's. She helped to organize workers despite the hardships she personally faced. The artist retold the real story of her grandmother's experience. There was an artist who turned his FBI file into compelling works of art. He was classified as a communist and the FBI had amassed a large file on his comings and goings. Another artist attempted to find out the truth to the rumors that the CIA had acquired abstract expressionist art from the mid-century. It was believed that the CIA was financially assisting artists during this time. The theory was that this "radical" art could show the world just how open our society is. The artist was not able to get a full account of the suspected art collection housed at with the CIA. They refused her attempts to get information from the "Freedom of Information Act." With the information she was able to get, the artist recreated the work believed to be held by the CIA. Their denial only piqued our curiosity even further to know more definitively about their art collection.

We then all got the chance to do an art project connected to this exhibit. We did a reverse redacted piece - allowing words that we want to be shown, to be shown.

Thanks to Karen Furst for helping set up the trip. We all enjoyed visiting the CJM and having a beautiful day in San Francisco.

BOOK REVIEW

BEYOND ALL RELIGION

By
Samuel Butler

This book exposes the myths and falsehoods that are the basis of the world's major religions. For example, Christ was a fable, according to two popes; and Christianity was created for political purposes. It states that the Christ story was based on five previous deities who were born on December 25 of virgin mothers and who were crucified and resurrected.

Also, Moses never existed, and there is no evidence that 600,000 people left Egypt to escape the Pharaoh. These among many other biblical falsehoods are exposed.

The very questionable origins of Islam and Mormonism are presented.

The author also describes the surprising violence, pedophilia, and matriarchal origins of some religions.

He concludes that we would have a better world if the 10 Commandments would be replaced by 10 tenets that are secular and humanistic.

Each controversial statement in the book is immediately followed by its source.

I found this to be a very interesting book, but I did question a few of the sources that are quoted.

Jerry Zwick

Mishpoka (Family)

Congratulations to David Gates and Judith Seid on the marriage of their daughter
Rivka Gates to the lovely Brian Quirt!

In March and April we remember: Rebecca Friedman, grandmother of Jamie Ireland;
Doris Handler; Teible Barach, great-aunt of Judith Seid; Edward Looney Sr., grandfather of
Ed Looney; Regina Seid grandmother of Judith; William Haughn, great uncle of Ed Looney;
Norma Mogilefsky, mother of Bret Mogilefsky

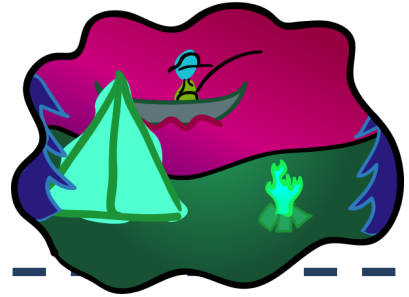
Happy March and April birthdays to: Leonard Kreit, Sierra Randel, Leslie Zwick,
Debby Seid, Adam King, Jeffrey D Colvin, Allison Berenson Schiffman, Michelle Coren,
Jerry Zwick

Save the date - Camping Trip

Join us for our 2nd annual camping trip. August 12 -14 at Del Valle Regional Park in Livermore. The centerpiece of the park is the lake, with all kinds of water-oriented recreation. There are also some nice hiking trails too!

We reserved the “Wild Turkey” Group Camp Site (developed site – flush toilets)

More information to come.



New in Our Library

The Lost: A Search for Six of Six Million by Daniel Mendelsohn.

A fascinating memoir including historical research and personal narrative written in a really engaging style. If you'd like to read this book, contact Judith Seid, who houses the library, at 925-485-1049.

CSJO Annual Conference

Toronto will be the hosts of the CSJO 2016 Annual Conference to be held over the U.S. Memorial Day weekend, Fri-Mon, May 27-30, 2016. The site will be Glendon College, 2275 Bayview Ave, Toronto, ON M4N 3M6, Canada (www.glendon.yorku.ca). The theme of the conference is Our Tradition of Solidarity.

We have many interesting and erudite members in our organization, therefore, the Conference Committee asks you to please consider presenting a workshop at the conference. Kindly contact Sarah Waslow-Washington, sarahwaswas3987@gmail.com, if you would like to present, or if you have questions.



JCS Kids are Cooking

Isaac made the Marzipan featured in the recipe on this site and shared it with everyone at Cultural School. It was a really big hit!!

Homemade Marzipan

Makes 24 balls

1½ cup finely ground almond meal

1½ cup confectioners sugar

2 teaspoon almond extract

½ teaspoon rose water

1 egg white

Pinch of kosher salt

1) Blend all ingredients together in a food processor or blender until mixture forms a thick dough.

2) Turn out onto board, and knead for a few turns.

3) Form into a log, and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for several hours. (Marzipan will keep, well wrapped, in the refrigerator for several months.)

4) Form the mixture into 1-inch balls or cubes, or if you are artistic, into shapes.



Read more: <http://forward.com/food/330279/almonds-and-marzipan-for-tu-bshvat/#ixzz41Dm7Dc22>

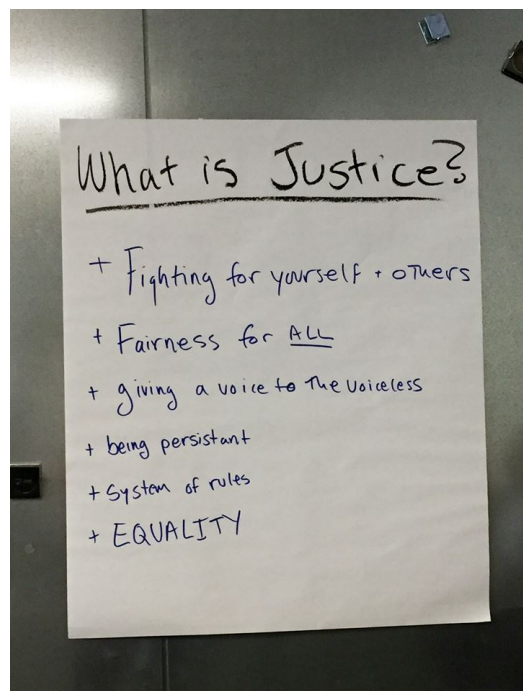
Kids - Have you made a new recipe and shared it with JCS?

Send it in to share with everyone!

Check out this Five Minute Megillah from Ima on (and off) the Bima: Real-Life Jewish Parenting: The Five Minute Megillah

<http://imabima.blogspot.com/2010/02/five-minute-megillah.html>

*Thank you to Leah Morrison
for the submission.*



Sunol Regional Wilderness Waterfall Hike, Saturday, March 26 @ 10 am

To call it a waterfall is a stretch, but the tumbling water display found at Little Yosemite in Sunol Regional Wilderness is still a sight worth seeing, especially after rain: everything is glowing green, streams are busy and-in late winter-wildflowers are on the cusp of popping. The hillside-hugging Canyon View Trail-with views of Alameda Creek Valley and the wilds of Mission Peak Regional Preserve-leads to Little Yosemite, a narrow boulder-strewn gorge fed by Alameda Creek. Scramble down to the shore and boulder-hop upstream to continue exploring. For the return trip, take the gently descending Camp Ohlone Road. Simply streamy.

The hike is 3 miles round-trip. Park at the visitor center. There is a \$5 for parking and dogs are allowed, for a \$2 fee. Bring a snack/lunch.

We'll meet at the Old Green Barn Visitor Center, located at main entrance:
1895 Geary Road
Sunol, CA 94586

Here's the trail we'll be taking: Take the trail behind the visitor center and cross a bridge. Turn right and follow the signs for Canyon View Trail. In 1.3 miles, you come to a junction with Cerro Este Rd.; go right and downhill to Camp Ohlone Rd. and turn right again. The best entrance to scramble down to Little Yosemite is a couple hundred feet in on the left, just before the cattle guard. Return to the visitor center on Camp Ohlone Rd. Dog-friendly!

Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve Hike, Saturday, April 30 @ 10 am

Even the name is sweet, and this little hike in the Oakland hills is a treasure for the family to enjoy. This short 1.7 mile hike will be more leisurely as we frequently stop to identify dozens of species of wild flowers along the way. If you'd like, you can print out the native flower guide to bring with you on the hike. Huckleberry hosts plant species that are rare to the East Bay, with origins in an ancient geological past. So this should make for a fun experience.

http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/files/EBRPD_files/photoguides/wild-flowers/EBRPD_Huckleberry_Botanic_Wildflowers.pdf

Here's the trail map:

http://www.ebparks.org/Assets/_Nav_Categories/Parks/Maps/Huckleberry+map.pdf

Carpooling is encouraged! Parking is free. Dogs are NOT allowed.

To Reach Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve:

From Highway 24 in Oakland, take the Fish Ranch Road exit immediately east of the Caldecott Tunnel. Continue 0.8 miles to Grizzly Peak Blvd. Turn left and go 2.4 miles on Grizzly Peak to Skyline Boulevard. Turn left and drive approximately one-half mile to the park entrance on the left, past Sibley Volcanic Regional Preserve.

Message from the President

I am a bit worried about the presidential election.

We have created a society that thrives on seemingly real altercations that occur on “Reality” TV. The public has thrived on a steady diet of documentary style dramas where personalities clash and profanities fly. These images have become normalized and people feed the entertainment value.

So I am worried that our election process will turn into a ratings game where people will vote on entertainment value and not policies.

I hope enough people in our country recognize that “Reality” TV is not real, but who we elect to run our country is.

