

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."



May and June 2016

TVCJ Community Event Dates

Planning Meeting: Tuesday, May 10, 7:00-9:00 pm, at the Seid-Gates' home, 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Havdalah and Movie Night, Saturday May 21, 4:00 – 7:00 pm. The Randel Home, 302 Hillcrest Court, San Ramon. Movie for the kids and one for the grown ups, plus pizza. Please respond to the evite. Movies TBA.

Lag B'Omer Picnic: Sunday, May 29, 10:30-12:30. San Ramon Athan Downs Park, 2975 Montevideo Dr., San Ramon. Come and join us for our annual picnic potluck and our traditional watermelon toss! We will be collecting donations for youth living at the Avalon Program at Fred Finch Youth Center in Oakland. The program serves adolescents and is a specialized residential program for low income youth with intellectual disabilities and mental health problems. They can use the following items: games (suitable for age range 5-18), activity books, arts and crafts supplies, shampoo, conditioner, body wash, or toothpaste.

Annual Meeting and Shavuot Potluck Brunch, Sunday June 12, 12:00 pm, at the Seid-Gates' home, 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. Bring a dairy dish and your favorite blintze topping. Lunch will be at 12:00, the meeting will start at 12:30. JCS will still be held.

Planning meeting: Tuesday, June 14, 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm, 1817 Sinclair Drive in Pleasanton. All members welcome.

Havdalah, Saturday June 18, 6 – 8 pm, at the King home, 5210 Diane Lane, Livermore. A little ceremony, some pizza and good conversation. Please respond to the evite.

Jewish Culture School

10:30 am - 12:30 pm

Sunday, May 1

Sunday May 15

Sunday June 12

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

Pesach

Thanks for help with the seder to:
Wendy Berenson and Kelly Mogilefsky for delicious charoses,
Jane Morrison for boiling and peeling all those eggs,
David Gates, Kevin Coren, and Jane and Mitch Morrison for setting up,
Leah Morrison for doing all the shopping,
Jamie Ireland and Noah King for greeting newcomers,
The Ireland and Mogilefsky and King families and David Gates and everyone who pitched in for cleaning up,
Carol King for bringing the donated food to the food bank.

It's a huge effort to put on the seder and it's a testament to our wonderful community that everyone helps. Also the food was delicious.



Adam
King's
Bar
Mitzvah
Project

Mishpoka (Family)

In May and June we remember:

Janice Green, Friend of Daryle Talavera,
Eliza Haile Cloe, grandmother of David Gates, and
John Mogul, grandfather of Marisa Castaldini

Happy May and June birthdays to: Lisa Halperin, Joey Mogilefsky, Bette Siegel, Rebecca Ireland, Rosia Gorel-Wong, Greg Gorel, Phyllis Looney, Lenore Kreit, Judy Seid, Leah Morrison, David Gates, Carol King, Eileen Alkin-Fagliano, Bret Mogilefsky

Welcome to our new members, Jane and Mitch Morrison. Jane and Mitch are Leah's parents and Isaac Passavoy's grandparents. Mitch is from Halifax and at the seder, we discovered he is acquainted with a family from Halifax who lived around the corner from Judith Seid when she was growing up. Small world!

Dear CSJO associate members and members of CSJO affiliates:

Please download the CSJO 2016 election ballot. It is provided to you for your vote in accordance with the CSJO bylaws.

https://gallery.mailchimp.com/4934845db68c558e84fde0c28/files/CSJO_election_ballot_2016_final.pdf

Please note the deadlines and instructions in the ballot.

We are looking forward to your vote.

Roberta Feinstein
CSJO Executive Director

Message from the President

We are almost at the end of another school year. This will mark the end of my 25th year of teaching. A quarter century of teaching; more than half my life. I have taught thousands of kids. I'm not done yet, but looking back over 25 years of teaching gives you a bit of perspective. I wonder how similar my view is to those in similar situations in teaching or other professions. As I really start to think about this, education has not changed. Teachers don't really know what awaits them after completing a credential problem. It always seems like students aren't as prepared as they used to be. The pendulum swings back and forth in an effort to improve education, but nothing really changes a whole lot. Politicians gain political clout by mucking around in a profession they know nothing about. The "achievement gap" continues to be a problem because the scope of the issue goes beyond what schools can affect. Technology continues to modernize what we do, although in schools, it lags behind the rest of society.

I have changed. I have made mistakes and I hope I have learned from those mistakes. The mistakes I have made that I regret are never the ones that have to do with teaching my subject; they come from when I realized that I didn't treat someone fairly or respectfully. With all those students I have taught, I hope I have left most of them with something positive and I can spend the rest of my career trying to have a positive effect on even more.

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)

Families that participate will split the fee (\$300)

This is a “members only” event so be sure to join!



From the Regional Park website: The centerpiece of the park is a lake five miles long with a variety of water-oriented recreation, from swimming to windsurfing and boating, surrounded by 4,395 acres of beautiful land for hiking, horseback riding, and nature study. Del Valle also is the eastern gateway to the Ohlone Wilderness Trail, 28 miles of scenic backcountry trail.

Purim!



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.



Shavuos

Why dairy? It is traditional on shavuos to have dairy foods - blintzes, cheesecake, kugel. But why? There is nothing about the official explanation for the holiday that would suggest that. All sorts of inventive reasons have been dreamed up over the centuries. For some of the stranger ones, check out the Orthodox site [aish.com](http://www.aish.com)'s list at <http://www.aish.com/h/sh/r/48969771.html>. But using our own understanding that people eat what's available, it becomes apparent that since the herding animals produce babies in the spring, by early summer, when shavuos is celebrated, the baby animals are being weaned and therefore milk is available. It's not as fanciful or intricate a reason as the made-up ones, but it's true and has the lovely effect of connecting us - urban dwellers - with nature and our earliest ancestors who were herders and then farmers.

