



News & Fun Activities

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Tri-Valley Cultural Jews
Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community
TriValleyCulturalJews.org
info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org
(925) 399-8029

Affiliated with the Cultural and Secular Jewish Organization

Our mission statement: "A Secular Humanistic community serving those who identify with the Jewish People through family, culture and history, rather than through religion."



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December 18th 2021

TVCJ Community News

Our Covid Policy Update

Starting in January, we will hold events (including JCS) indoors (with masks) for fully vaccinated individuals. Maximum ventilation will be provided indoors. Masks will continue to be required outdoors as well, and a Zoom option if it necessary will be maintained for the non-vaccinated and remote members.

Please contact us at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you need a Zoom meeting accommodation. **(Zoom Meetings will be available only if requested.)**

Upcoming Events



Tu B'Shvat January 16th

Our Tu B'Shvat celebration will be at Sulphur Creek Nature Center in Hayward. Details to follow in our Evite in late December. We will be able to accommodate 15 children and 20 adults, so **reservations through Evite are on a first come first serve basis**. Hope to see you there!

January 22nd Havdalah

Join us on January 22nd for our Reproductive Rights Havdalah in honor of Roe v. Wade. We will have a short, Secular Humanistic ceremony. **There will be more information in the Evite.**

Date: 01/22/2022

Time: 7:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.

Cost: Free to members, suggested donation \$10.00 per non-member adult if you are able.

Email: culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions.

January 6th Philosophers' Cafe Monthly Friendly Discussion Group

Day: First Thursday of each month (next one is January 6th)

Time: 7:00p.m.

Place: Zoom (Please see Evite for Zoom information)

Cost: Free to members, \$10.00 suggested donation for non-members.

The December Philostophers' Cafe topic was trust - whom do you trust and how do you decide. Jeff Colvin led a fascinating discussion, bringing in various expert opinions and asking questions focusing on medical advice and the controversies about various untested treatments. Philosophers' Cafe is our monthly friendly discussion group, meeting on Zoom the first Thursday of each month.

Our topics are sometimes timely current events, sometimes personal stories, sometimes ideas and issues. We'd love any of our members to lead a session - just think of something you'd like to hear people's stories or opinions about and let us know you're ready to lead. If you have an idea you'd like to discuss, please let us know by emailing

culturaljews@gmail.com and we'll schedule your session. We have discussion leaders lined up for January and February, but the rest of the year is open and waiting for you! Join us!

If you have questions, please contact
Jazz at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029**.

Our Chanukah Celebration

Chanukah 2021 was another adventure! Many thanks to the Mogilefskys for hosting our outdoor gathering. Everyone enjoyed their climbing wall and hammock, as well as meeting their gorgeous pets. We lit our giant Menorah, as is our custom, played dreidel, and had a Chanukah trivia guessing game with gelt prizes. Although no latkes were cooked communally this year, jelly donuts (or sufganiyot), were available as take-home treats. As always, we found another way to welcome the light into our lives and into the world.







Jewish Culture School (JCS)



We had a good time at [JCS](#) on December 12th despite the cold and a bit of rain. We talked about identity and made shakers to use during our singing. We cooked German potato salad, something that the Jewish immigrants from Germany might have eaten in the 1820s-1880s when they came to America, many of the refugees from the revolutions of 1848. We introduced the topic of German Jewish immigration to America with a play including some of the jobs they found in their new country. Here's a picture of the cast: Rebecca Ireland as the peddler, Sophia Ireland as the baker, Jazz Salwen-Grabowski as the rabbi and Colin Mogilefsky as the rabbi's wife.

[If you want to learn more about Jewish Culture School click here.](#)

TVCJ is Partnering with 3 Organizations on a Trial Basis

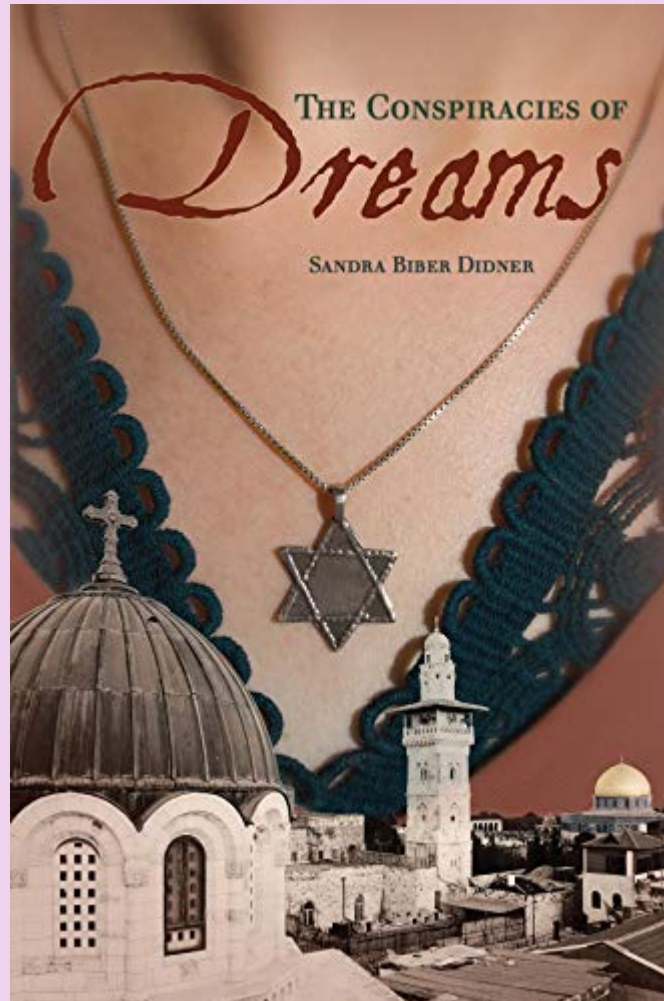
- **Never Again Action**, a jewish-led mobilization against the persecution, detention, and deportation of immigrants in the United States;
- **Bend the Arc**, where progressive American Jews join together to fight for justice and equality for all;
- and
- **Dayenu**, a multi-generational Jewish movement that confronts the climate crisis with spiritual audacity and bold political action.

We will not get involved in particular organizations taking a side on the middle east conflict. Announcements from these organizations will be communicated via our Facebook page and the Newsletter. We will see how working with the 3 organizations goes for 6 months and then reassess.

Please let email the TVCJ Board at culturaljews@gmail.com if you would like to get involved, or if there is a specific call to action you want added for consideration.

BOOK REVIEW
THE CONSPIRACIES OF DREAMS
By

Sandra Biber Didner



This book of historical fiction took place in 1956 around the time of the Israeli Egyptian war. The main character was a spy for Egypt. His assignment was to collect as much information as possible about Israeli troop movements and military plans in order to relay them back to Egyptian military headquarters. In order to accomplish this he decides to pose as an Israeli. In the process he falls madly in love with an Israeli woman. They have a serious affair and contemplate making it permanent. However, in order to do this he realizes that he would have to

betray his family, his military career and his country. Since this would be too much for him, he decides to disappear without telling her his true identity and his whereabouts. Other relationships ensue and get complicated.

In the course of this drama, we learn about such things as Israeli and Egyptians politics of the time, Christian and Jewish religious issues, as well as pagan beliefs. This book was as dramatic as it was informative. I didn't want to put it down. I would highly recommend it. [Click here to find this book on Amazon.](#)

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

Interfaith InterConnect Religion Chat

Topic: "What holy books or other texts are important to your religion?"

Date: Wednesday, January 12th 2022

Time: 5:00p.m. via Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87260067417>

Optional breakout groups 6:00p.m. to 6:30p.m.

A speaker from Baha'i Faith will present along with a second speaker who is pending. For more information go to the Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/InterfaithInterconnect/>

CSJO Meeting Notes

- CSJO is conducting Shabbat on Zoom monthly for people looking for community.
- Book club: Most recent book was The Bee Season. We will put the next book in front of our membership when it starts up.
- TVCJ is looking for people to join the CSJO board; there are not currently enough people.

- The CSJO Conference is in the planning stages, with both in-person (Ohio) and remote attendance options.
- There are scholarship options for youth and first-timers. Brit Mitzvahs in particular can find older-youth connection.
- Rebecca is working on a queer affinity group; more information to come.

Got questions? Contact [Rebecca rireland05@gmail.com](mailto:Rebecca.rireland05@gmail.com) .



2019 TVCJ @ Light Up the Season Sing-Along

<https://trivalleyculturaljews.org/>



Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski 718-578-7876

Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404

In December We Remember

Elfrida Erhard
Melvin Luborsky
Martin Salwen
Benjamin Sczuchman
Enye Seid
Yossi Seid
Stewart Silverman
Celia Zuckerman
Charles Zuckerman
Sam Zuckerman



December Birthdays

Isabel Gross
Ella King
Manda Pepper
Scott Pepper

Rebecca Ireland 510-888-1404
Bret Mogilefsky 510-610-1956
Jesse Pino 925-605-6003
Rachel Rose 808-494-8586
Newsletter: Joy Randel
Webmaster: Noah King
JCS Teachers: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Judith Seid
Holiday Coordinator: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski
Movie Coordinator: Bret Mogilefsky

Riddle: What is often on the ground getting stepped on by others, but you don't have to wash it because it never gets dirty, in fact, you couldn't wash it even if you tried? **Answer:** A Shadow



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