

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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September 24th 2022

TVCJ Community News

Like and share our FaceBook page:
<http://facebook.com/trivalleyculturaljews>

Best wishes to Eileen Alkin-Fagliano for a speedy recover from knee surgery.

Jewish Unity Coalition's Symposium on Reparations for African Americans in California

On September 18th, I attended remotely the San Francisco Black and Jewish Unity Coalition's symposium on reparations for African Americans in California and San Francisco. We heard from CA Secretary of State Dr. Shirley Weber, eminent psychologist Dr. Theopia Jackson, Eric McDonnell who is the chair of the [African American Reparations Advisory Committee](#), and the Rev. Amos Brown, who serves on several commissions on reparations. Dr. Weber discussed the current bill AB3121 (<https://oag.ca.gov/ab3121>), pulling absolutely no punches about the racism behind the resistance to reparations for Black Americans, while approving reparations for others. She addressed a number of arguments against reparations, saying "The history of this country is full of people getting things they didn't work for."

Dr. Jackson implored us to stop saying "slave" and start saying "enslaved person" because this not only specifically recognizes the humanity of those enslaved, but it requires us to understand and articulate that another human being was responsible for doing the enslaving.

Mr. McDonnell busted out in song! Then he described the sorts of reparations that will be proposed by the committee and said that what's needed is political will. He stressed "reparations is not a merit-based project" but what is owed to Black Americans.

The Rev. Mr. Brown shared a personal memory of a time Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. "lost his cool" and said, "My God! You people are going to make this a paralysis of analysis." After telling the shameful historical story about how Andrew Johnson rescinded the "40 acres and a mule" order, he reminded us that it's not enough to show up, read studies, analyze and agree with the idea of reparations – we have to actually do something. He urged the audience to write or call the governor to support not just studies, but action.

Judith Seid

Upcoming Events

If you need more information or have questions about anything in this newsletter, then please email culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029**.

Our Calendar

2022:

August 13 - Shabbos

Gathering

August 28 - JCS Open House

September 11 - JCS

September 25 - Erev Rosh

Hashanah gathering

October 4 - Kol Nidre

(evening) gathering

October 9 - Sukkah raising

party

October 23 - JCS

November 3 - Philosophers'

Cafe

November 6 - JCS

November 20 - JCS

December 1 - Philosophers'

Cafe

December 4 - JCS

2023:

January 1 - JCS

January 5 - Philosophers' Cafe

January 22 - JCS

February 2 - Philosophers'

Cafe

February 5 - Tu B'Shvat

February 19 - JCS

March 2 - Philosophers' Cafe

March 5 - Purim

March 19 - JCS

April 2 - JCS/Passover Open

House

April 6 - Philosophers' Cafe

April 8 - Community Passover

Seder

April 16 - JCS

April 30 - JCS

December 18 - Chanukah
party (first light of Chanukah)

May 4 - Philosophers' Cafe
May 7 - Lag B'Omer

Jewish Culture School

What do Turkish Green Beans, Argentine mantioca, Barbadian sugar fingers and Ethiopian Yemiser W'et have in common? They are all Jewish recipes! And we'll be cooking them at Jewish Culture School this year as we explore the lives of Jews around the world. Jewish Culture School is a hands-on Secular Jews experience for kids 5-14, with a focus on social justice, cultural expressions and history. Interested? Our curriculum begins October 23rd and we have room for a few more kids. Tell a friend!

If you know any families looking for a fun Jewish educational experience for their 5-14 year-olds, please have them email culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029**. We meet twice a month from 10:30a.m.-noon in Pleasanton. Classes are held outside with masks on to keep everyone safe.

On September 11th, we started our new year of Jewish Cultural School with some music, games and asking "why are we celebrating the new year now?" We made sticky, yummy honey cakes and blew the shofar to wake everyone up.





[Click here to read more about our Jewish Culture School.](#)

Holidays

Rosh Hashanah

Date: September 25th

Time: Tashlich starts at 3:30p.m. and our ceremony begins at 4:30p.m.

Cost: Free to members, suggested donation \$15 per non-member adult if you are able.

Welcome the Jewish New Year through our Secular, Humanist Rosh Hashanah Celebration! We'll gather together on September 25th for a Tashlich walk, followed by our ceremony, which will be available on Zoom and in person.

Start your new year with our gift of apples, honey and a little challah for a sweet year! We'll meet outside with masks on to keep everyone safe. Please bring your own water bottle and sun protection.

Tashlich starts at 3:30p.m. and our ceremony begins at 4:30p.m. More details to follow in our Evite.

Located in Livermore. Email culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions or would like to be added to the evite list. Free to members, suggested donation \$15 per non-member adult if you are able.

Yom Kippur

Date: October 4th

Time: 6:30p.m.

Cost: Free to members, suggested donation \$15 per non-member adult if you are able.

Join us for a Secular, Humanist Kol Nidre on October 4th at 6:30p.m. We will have a beautiful outdoor observance with music, which will also be available for remote attendance on Zoom.

Not child-centered but children are always welcome. We'll meet outside with masks on to keep everyone safe. Please bring your own water bottle and sun protection.

Located in Livermore. More details to follow in the Evite. Email culturaljews@gmail.com or call **925-399-8029** if you have questions or would like to be added to the evite list. Free to members, suggested donation \$15 per non-member adult if you are able.

Sukkot Celebration

Join us for our annual outdoor sukkah building! Please bring a branch to put on top of the sukkah, and a fruit to hang as decoration. We will have games and crafts and fun for all. In light of the current COVID conditions, we will forgo our potluck this year.

Masks are required for all attendants. Please bring your own folding chair and water bottle if possible.

Date: Sunday, October 9th

Time: 10:30am-12:30pm

Place: Akin-Pino Home, 54369 Sandra Way, Livermore 94550

Cost: Free to members, \$15.00 suggested donation for non-members if you are able.

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

November 3rd Philosophers' Cafe Monthly Friendly Discussion Group

Date: First Thursday of each month (next one is November 3rd)

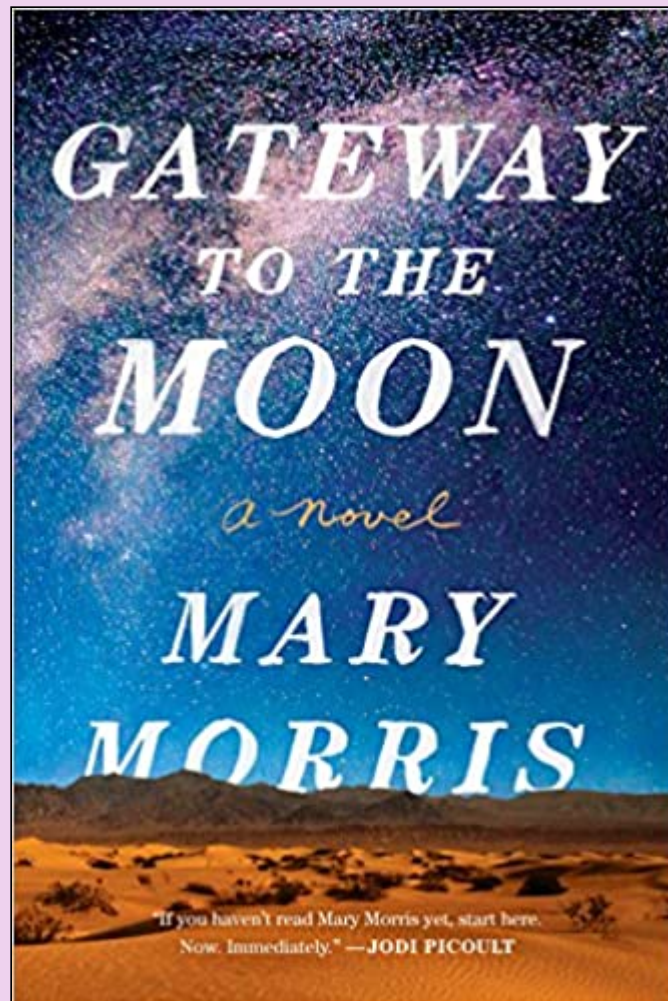
Time: 7:00p.m.

Place: Zoom (The Zoom link will be in the evite you should receive soon.)

Cost: Free to members, \$15.00 suggested donation for non-members.

Our last Philosophers' Cafe until November featured a spirited discussion on professional army (what we call all-volunteer) vs conscripted army, the merits of universal service, and what is feasible in America. We discussed an efficient army vs an equitable army, and the rights of individuals vs the needs of society. We had the benefit of participation from someone who had served in the military, someone who was exempted from service, and someone who was prepared to go to Canada to avoid being drafted. Philosophers' Cafe is an event in which people of different generations can participate on an equal basis. Look for the evite for our November zoom gathering. The topic, as always, can be serious or lighthearted and will be revealed at the event.

BOOK REVIEW
GATEWAY TO THE MOON
BY
MARY MORRIS



This historical novel takes place primarily in two locations and in two eras. The first location is Spain in circa 1492. The second locations are Mexico and New Mexico in modern times. The book continually shifts between these eras and locations. What is illustrated dramatically in this novel is the

experiences and hardships the crypto-Jews faced and the role that astronomy played throughout their history.

As you may know, Jews were expelled from Spain in 1492. Most left. But those who remained were forced to hide their Jewish identities under penalty of death or imprisonment. They became known as the crypto-Jews. Many of them sailed to the New World with Columbus and settled in Mexico and later, New Mexico. Without modern navigation, they used stars to guide them. Crypto-Jews in the New World also hid their Jewish identities and became Christian in name only due to the extreme anti-Semitism of the time. However, over the centuries they kept many of the Jewish customs and practices, sometimes not knowing their origins.

The main character in the modern era was Miguel, whose great-great-great grandfather sailed with Columbus as his interpreter. He was a teenager employed by a family whose customs were similar to those he grew up with but didn't understand. In this respect his story is similar to thousands of crypto-Jews over the centuries. Also his love of astronomy played a significant role in his life and guided many of his decisions.

This book is very well written. I found it very hard to put down. I would highly recommend it to everyone. [If you are interested in purchasing this book, then you can find it on Amazon by clicking here.](#)

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

Our Rosh Hashanah Open House



Our Rosh Hashanah open house was a lot of fun! We made delicious challah and scrumptious Indian apple halwa (pudding). We made Rosh Hashanah cards and planted pollinator seeds in plantable containers, to ensure we'll continue to have fruit and honey in future years. And we spelled out the traditional Rosh Hashanah greeting l'shanah tovah with our bodies!

We also we made wishes for the world:

- Peace
- Everyone to have at least one friend
- Continue to fight climate change
- Develop clean unlimited energy
- Enough food for everyone
- Better pay for workers
- Better environmental education (specifically about sea toads)

- Equal rights for everyone
- Everyone to know more than one language
- A cure for AIDS
- A pet axlotl for everyone
- Everyone to have a wonderful Rosh Hashanah!

TVCJ PayPal Giving Fund Page

We now have a PayPal page where you can quickly and easily donate to Tri-Valley Cultural Jews. Simply scan the QR code or visit: <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2326042>



Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski 718-



In September We Remember

Lynn Zizlavsky
Sam Zuckerman



September Birthdays

Ira Ehrlich
Wendy Berenson Garcia
Ilan Seid-Green
Sophia Ireland
Jane Morrison
Evangeline Pepper
Mathilda Shulewitz

578-7876

Jamie Ireland 510-888-1404

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

Joke: Why can you never trust an atom? **Answer:** Because they make up everything.



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