

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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July 29th 2023

TVCJ Community News

Like and share our FaceBook page:

<http://facebook.com/trivalleyculturaljews>

Upcoming Events

If you would like to attend one of our events email us at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **(925) 399-8029** for an Evite. You can find us at trivalleyculturaljews.org. Free to members, suggested \$15 donation per non-member adult if you are able. Masking is optional outdoors when social distancing is possible.

You can make donations to TVCJ through Paypal or Venmo. Our handle is Tri-Valley Cultural Jews.

Philosophers' Cafe--8/03/23 Monthly Friendly Discussion Group

What's the best decision you ever made? How do you know what you know? What makes a good friend? If these are the kind of discussions you might like to have with a group of friends, join us for Philosophers' Cafe, our monthly friendly discussion group. We meet on zoom on the first Thursday of each month from 7 p.m. to about 8:00 or 8:15. We never know what the topic will be until we get there - so there's no homework. Join us Thursday, August 3rd and find out the topic then. Zoom ID 568 599 7884.

New TVCJ Youth Group--8/5/2023

Our TVCJ youth group is getting underway! The teen members of TVCJ are meeting Saturday evening, August 5th for a cookie-making and game night. Interested? Let us know! (We will be doing it again, so if you can't make it this time, we'll see you next time.)

New Year of the Animals Gathering--8/20/23



Did you know there are 4 Jewish new years? It's true! And one of them is the new year for COWS. Well, in our 3500 year old tradition, we change things up a lot, so now we say it's the new year for all animals. This year we'd like to share our pets at a gathering. If your pet isn't people or other-pet friendly, bring a picture and tell us about it. Cookies provided! Join us on Sunday, August 20th at 10:30am at Judy and David's for a Pawsome time!

New Year of Jewish Culture School--8/27/23

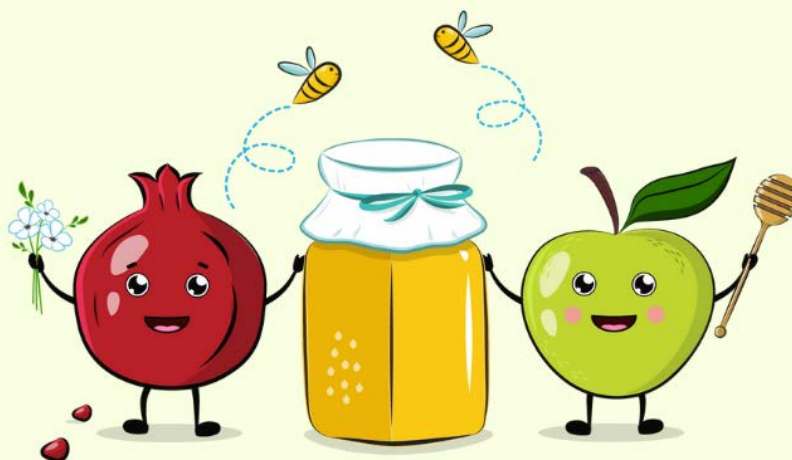
Get ready for another amazing year of Jewish Culture School! This year we're doing a deep dive into holidays and life cycles and as always, we'll do plenty of singing, dancing and cooking. The fun starts on August 27th, so mark your calendars and tell your friends! JCS is geared towards Kindergarten through Brit Mitzvah (5-14). Meetings will be mostly indoors with good ventilation and air filtration. Located in Pleasanton.

Rosh Hashanah Family Day--9/10/23

Celebrate the New Year at Tri-Valley Cultural Jews'

Rosh Hashanah Family Day

10:30am
September 10th



Cooking Crafts Music

Got apples and honey? Get in the Rosh Hashanah mood at our Family Day on September 10th. We're cooking, crafting and making the music that makes this time of year special. Come see what a Secular Jewish Culture School is all about and while the kids are crafting, the parents can learn a little bit about the chaotic Jewish calendar. TVCJ is an accepting, welcoming, diverse community of Cultural Jews and their families, affiliated with CSJO. Call or email us at [\(925\) 399-8029](tel:9253998029) or culturaljews@gmail.com for an Evite or for more information about our community.

Rosh Hashanah Celebration Save the Date--9/16/23

Join us for a sweet start to the New Year at our annual Rosh Hashanah Celebration on September 16th in Livermore! Our ceremony starts at 4pm, with a dry Taschlich at 5pm and a potluck dinner at 5:30pm. Dip your apple in some honey and start your New Year with our moving Secular Humanist program. Our ceremony is in English, and includes readings, poetry and music. Everyone is welcome.

Save the Date for Kol Nidre--9/24/23

Start your year off right with our Secular Humanist Kol Nidre Observance on September 24th. Our ceremony is in English and includes music, poetry, readings and reflection. Everyone is welcome.

Sukkah--10/1/23

Have you always wanted a Sukkah in your backyard? TVCJ hosts a Sukkot Gathering every year in a member's backyard. You provide the space, and we help you build and decorate! If this sounds like fun, call or email us at [\(925\) 399-8029](tel:9253998029) or culturaljews@gmail.com. Our Sukkah Celebration is on Sunday, October 1st at 10:30am.

Upcoming Events Calendar

2023

8/3 Philosophers' Cafe
 8/5 New Youth Group Meeting
 8/20 New Year of Animals
 Gathering
 8/27 First Day JCS
 9/10 Rosh Hashanah Family
 Day
 9/16 Rosh Hashanah
 9/24 Kol Nidre
 10/1 Sukkah Raising
 10/15 JCS
 10/29 JCS
 11/12 JCS
 11/26 JCS
 12/10 Chanukah Party - mid
 afternoon

Winter Break

2024

1/7 JCS
 1/21 Tu B'Shvat
 2/4 JCS
 2/18 JCS
 3/3 JCS
 3/17 JCS
 3/24 Purim
 4/7 JCS
 4/21 Passover Family Day
 4/27 Community Passover
 Seder
 5/12 Last Class JCS
 5/26 Lag B'Omer
 6/9 Shavuot + Annual Meeting

Elul

We often say that Elul is the only Jewish month with no holidays - and we like that because it comes right before Tishri, which is absolutely packed with them! We use Elul to get ready for Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Hoshana Rabbah, Shemini Atzeret and Simchat Torah. Whew! But - is it true? Well, almost. In addition to the New moon, which is celebrated every month, Elul does have one holiday - the new year for water buffalo. Okay, cows. But the word beheyima does translate as water buffalo. This is a tax holiday, like the new year of the trees. It's found in the Mishnah, the 6-volume reinventing of Judaism, writing between 200 b.c.e. and 200 c.e.

The beginning of the tractate Rosh Hashanah tells us that animals born before that date are to be counted as taxable. The tractate then goes on to explain who is to be trusted to report the sighting of the new moon, which sets the date of the new month. Here's what it says "The following are unfit to give testimony, as they are considered thieves and robbers: One who plays with dice [kubbiyya] or other games of chance for money; and those who lend money with interest; and those who race pigeons and place wagers on the outcome; and merchants who deal in produce of the Sabbatical Year, which may be eaten, but may not be an object of commerce; and slaves. This is the principle: Any testimony for which a woman is unfit, these too are unfit. Although in certain cases a woman's testimony is accepted, e.g., to testify to the death of someone's husband, in the majority of cases her testimony is not valid." Charming, no?

By Judith Seid

La Familia's Backpack Drive



TVCJ is participating in La Familia's Backpack drive again this year that benefits immigrant students in Alameda County. If you can donate any of the school supplies listed below, Jamie will coordinate to get them to Hayward for us. You can drop off at her house in Castro Valley or at any of our upcoming events in August. Contact culturaljews@gmail.com for any questions.

Color Pencils
Sharpeners
Highlighters
Dividers
Binder Paper
Pens: Black, Red, Blue
Crayons
Erasers
Folders
Notebooks
Glue Sticks

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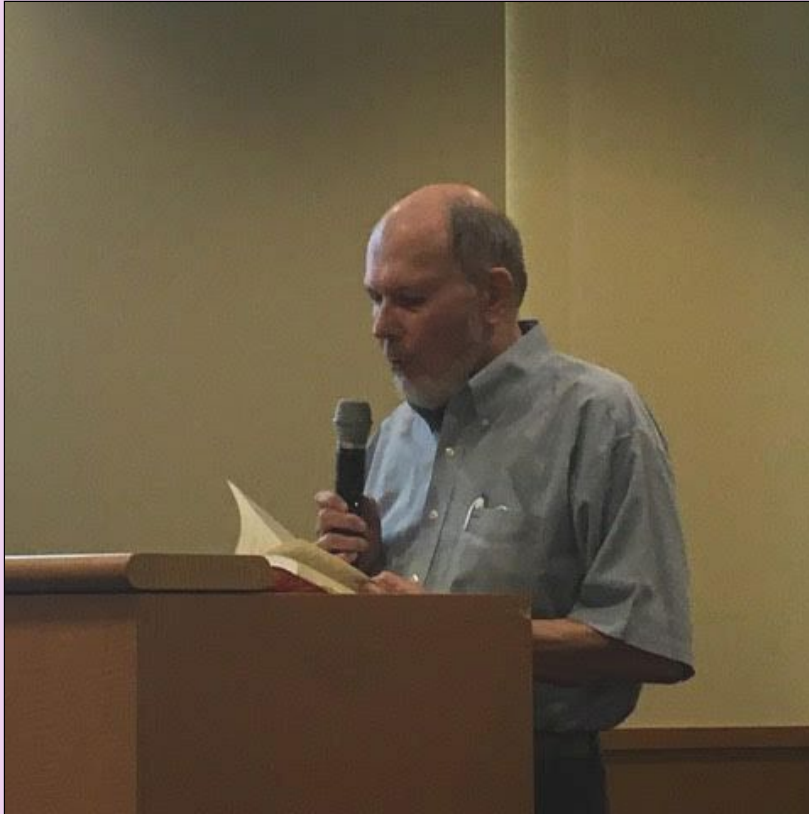
TVCJ at Castro Valley Pride

Our booth at Castro Valley Pride was full of information about TVCJ and Jewish Culture School and attracted a lot of visits! Thanks to Bret Mogilefsky, Rachel Rose, Sarah Rees, Pheobe Shulewitz, Jamie Ireland and Solomon Ireland for set-up, clean-up and staffing of our booth.



Avoiding Apocalypse: How Science and Scientists Ended the Cold War By Our Member Jeff Colvin

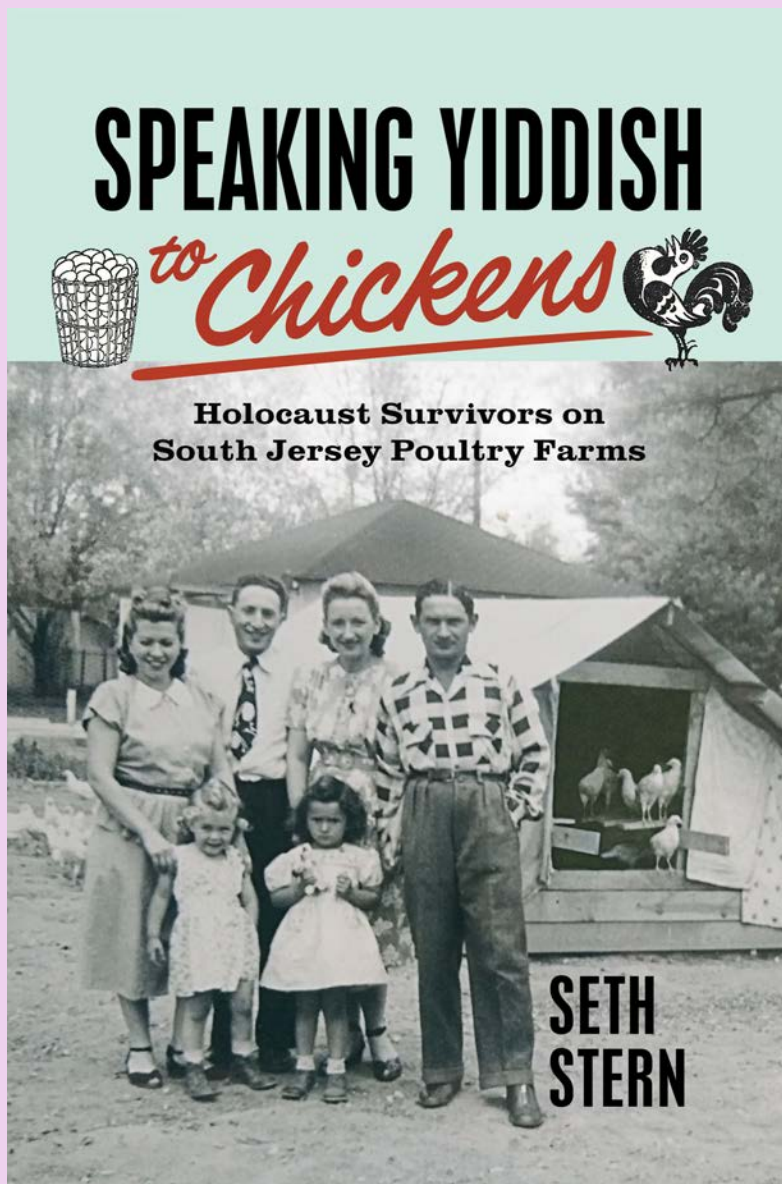
TVCJ member Jeff Colvin, spoke at the Livermore Public Library July 23 about his book *Avoiding Apocalypse: How Science and Scientists Ended the Cold War*. He spoke about the scientists' boycott of the Soviet Union and the real history of the end of the Cold War. Spoiler alert: It wasn't Reagan who ended the Cold War and brought down the Soviet Union. In his book, Jeff explores the necessary linkage between science and democracy - a topic only too relevant today, as anti-science and anti-democracy forces ally themselves with each other. The book is available from the author or on Amazon at <https://www.amazon.com/Avoiding-Apocalypse-Science-Scientists-Ended/dp/1803411988>.



Open Position: Eden Interfaith Representative

Meet 1x a month, the first or second Tuesday of the month at 7:00p.m, with other leaders at their location in Hayward and give Secular Jews a voice. Tasks involve representing TVCJ in Interfaith actions, reporting back to the board on Interfaith activities, and volunteering (or finding other volunteers) for actions you find important.

**BOOK REVIEW
SPEAKING YIDDISH TO CHICKENS
BY**

SETH STERN

With a title like this I couldn't resist buying this book, thinking it would be a humorous read. I was mistaken. This book told the nonfiction story of several hundred Jews, including the author's grandparents, who after surviving the holocaust, traveled to America to get into farming. Specifically, to raise chickens. They settled in a town called Vineland, New Jersey.

They were told that the poultry business was an easy way to make a good living. After surviving the holocaust, this is exactly what they needed. However, they were given misinformation. Not having any farming experience, most had a terrible time of it. Besides having to deal with the horrible feeding schedules of the chickens, they had to deal with issues of weather, the costs of feed, and prejudices of non-Jewish farmers, and of other Jewish farmers who preceded them on the land. The most difficult issue was the fluctuating price of eggs. This could make or break them. Many times, it was the latter. But if their farms failed, they found other ways to make a living.

The book talks about how resilient they became and how their experience surviving the death camps gave them the impetus to keep going. Mostly, they wanted to prove to Hitler that he could not destroy them, and that they and future generations could survive and thrive despite the horrors he inflicted on them. **[If you are interested in purchasing this book, then you can find it on Amazon by clicking here.](#)**

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

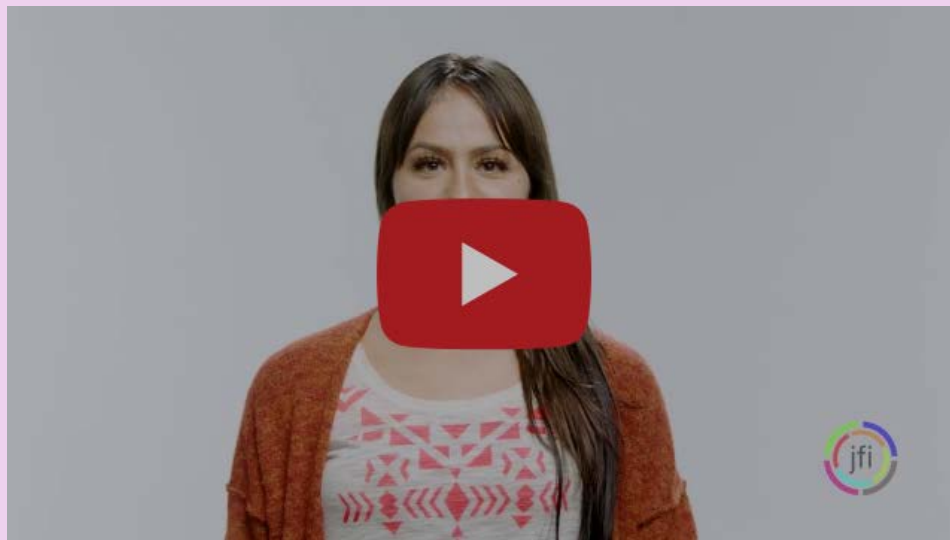


**San Francisco Jewish Film Festival (SFJFF)
July 20th – August 6th**

[Browse All the Films](#)

[Click Here for Tickets on Sale Now](#)

We're proud to share this exclusive sneak peek of one of our 2023 San Francisco Jewish Film Festival trailer spots created by WTBR TV!



Contemporary Jewish Museum

Mika Rottenberg: Spaghetti Blockchain Exhibition



[Click Here to Buy Tickets:](#)

May 18, 2023–Oct 22, 2023

One of the most innovative and internationally acclaimed artists working today, New York-based Mika Rottenberg (b. 1976, Buenos Aires) employs a disarmingly absurd sense of humor to confront the paradoxes of global capitalism and uncover the surprising ways in which we are all connected. This exhibition presents Rottenberg's most prominent videos, installations, and sculptures of the past decade in the first museum survey of her work ever to be presented on the West Coast. Explore a collection of vividly colorful video installations and kinetic sculptures that uncover the surreal qualities of mass production and consumption.

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>



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In July We Remember

Allen Lee Coren
Dolores King
Bunny Simmel



July Birthdays

Rick Randel
Solomon Ireland
Noah King
Isaac Passovoy
Mark Shulewitz
Ben Gross

Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid **925-485-1049**

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

David Gates
Jazz Salwen-Grabowski
Jamie Ireland
Kai Mogilefsky
Rachel Rose
Judith Seid

Newsletter: Joy Randel

Webmaster: Noah King

JCS Teachers: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Judith Seid

Holiday Coordinator: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Movie Coordinator: Bret Mogilefsky

Joke: Where do young trees go to learn? **Answer:** Elementree school.



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