



**Tri-Valley Cultural Jews**  
Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community  
**TriValleyCulturalJews.org**  
[info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org](mailto: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.



**\*\*Please share this with your friends by clicking on the Facebook, Email, or Twitter symbols above.\*\***

## January 27th 2024

### TVCJ Community News

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

TVCJ is an accepting, welcoming, diverse community of Cultural Jews and their families, affiliated with CSJO. Call or email us at **(925) 399-8029** or [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) for an Evite or for more information about our community. You can find us at [trivalleyculturaljews.org](http://trivalleyculturaljews.org). Free to members, suggested \$15 donation per non-member adult if you are able. Masking is optional when social distancing is possible.

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

## Calling all crafters! Want to get together?

Email [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) if this sounds like fun!

## Upcoming Events

### Philosophers' Cafe Next Meeting 2/01/24

We've had a lot of fun discussing so many varied topics at our monthly friendly discussion group led by members. Our topics are sometimes timely current events, sometimes personal stories, sometimes ideas and issues. Join us on zoom the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. for a new topic!

The topic for Feb 1 will be sexwork - is it inherently demeaning? Should it be legal?  
Look for your evite!

### It's Not A Book Club! -- 03/03/24

Our members-only Not A Book Group will meet Sunday, March 3rd at 3:00 p.m. at Judy and David's house to discuss *The Maid* by Nita Prose.



## Repro Rights Shabbat



Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Secular \* Humanist



Castro Valley, CA

**GATHERING IN SUPPORT OF  
REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS AND  
FREEDOM**

The Supreme Court's decision to reverse Roe v. Wade put access to abortion and birth control in jeopardy across America. Join us on Saturday, February 10th at 2pm for the Shabbos we shouldn't have--the one where we discuss the Jewish Secular Humanist values surrounding reproductive health, rights and justice. We will be telling our personal stories about our reproductive choices and there will be alternative activities for children. Please bring a snack to share. Our program will take place indoors with good ventilation. \$15 per non-member adult, if you are able.

## Purim March 24th





Join our Purim Celebration on Sunday, March 24th at 10:30am in Livermore. Come for crafts, games, hamantaschen making and don't forget the spiel!

Here's a message from our Spiel-writer, Noah:

This year's Purimspiel is going to be in the format of a nightly news broadcast. There will be different segments (political roundtable, society news, man on the street interview, etc.) that work together to tell the story of Esther.

We are looking for seven people to be in the performance during our Purim celebration on March 24th (Well... Noah wrote the play and is taking one of the parts for himself, so we really need six more). The play will probably run about 10 minutes or so, so it's not a huge commitment.

Here are the parts:

**Rue** - One of the news anchors. This is one of the larger parts.

**Herman** - This is the other news anchor, and Noah is playing this part.

**Vashti** - This is a bit part with only a few lines

**Ahasuerus** - The King... a medium sized part.

**Haman** - BOOO!!!! Also a medium sized part.

**Mordecai** - Esther's cousin. Small to medium.

**Esther** - Our heroine. Medium sized part.

If you're interested in being in the show, please email Noah at [maluba2@yahoo.com](mailto:maluba2@yahoo.com). If you only want a specific part (or parts) let him know. If you don't specify, he'll assume you're ok with anything.

Once the cast is determined, Noah will contact them to share the script and to let them know who's playing each part. Questions? Feel free to email Noah. =)



## **Passover Seder, April 27th**

Save the Date for our Passover Seder Saturday, April 27th

### **Jewish Culture School**

We're happy to announce that Elaine Kociolek is joining us as a new JCS aide.

#### **JCS 1/07/24**

What is your "happy place" in nature? This class was all about Tu B'Shvat and included a delicious fruit and nut couscous, and ecology resolutions.



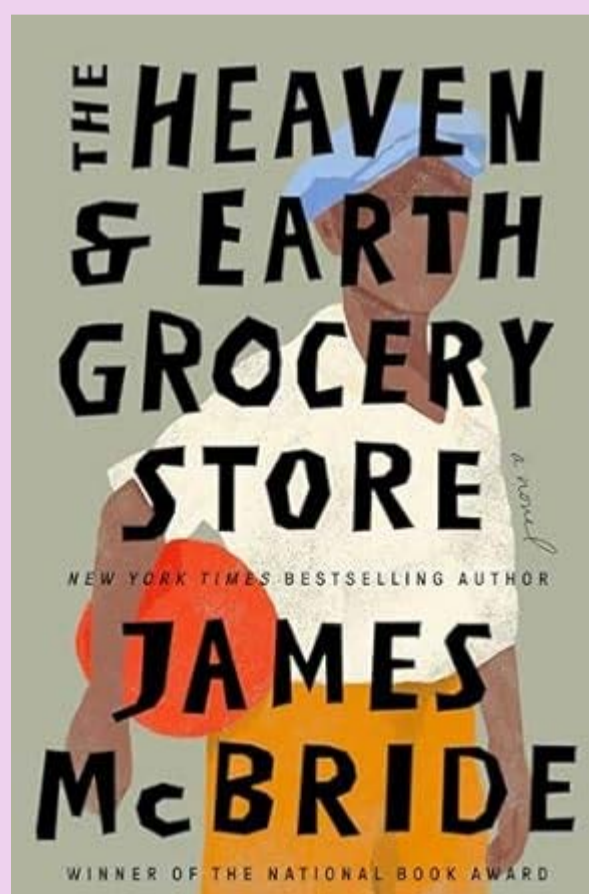
## **Tu B'Shvat 1/20/24**

We harvested some veggies, helped with some garden projects, and had a beautiful Tu B'Shvat Seder with a yummy potluck afterwards. Many thanks to St. Clare's for hosting us and a big thank you to everyone who brought food and helped to clean up--you made our Tu B'Shvat harvest and potluck a success!





**BOOK REVIEW**  
**THE HEAVEN AND EARTH GROCERY STORE**  
By James McBride



This novel takes place in Pottstown Pennsylvania in the middle 1900s. The town that the story takes place is called Chicken Hill. Its residents are made up of Jewish immigrants, Blacks, and other ethnic immigrants. Each group brings with it its various prejudices and ethnic misconceptions. Their struggle becomes (not always successfully) to live together in this small town.



One of the plots in the book is about two residents who dig a well in an open field of the town. At the bottom of the well they find a mezuzah and other religious items. Then these well diggers are sealed in the well by a hurricane. The mystery becomes who put the items in the well and why was the well being dug in the first place.

Another central plot to this story concerns a deaf boy they call Dodo. He witnesses an attack on the beloved town matriarch, Chona, by the town doctor who is a leader of the local KKK. In order to conceal this crime, the doctor has Dodo committed to an insane asylum. The story goes on from there with a number of diverse characters and plot twists.

The story gets very complex and wordy but ends up in a quite satisfactory manner. The book is very well written though more complex than it has to be. However, it kept my interest, and I would definitely recommend it. [If you are interested in purchasing this book, then you can find it on Amazon by clicking here.](#)

**Reviewed by Jerry Zwick**



### **January's Online Short Couscous, Hand-Rolled, With Olives Directed by Yaari Nadav Tal**

The Jewish Film Institute is proud to present *Couscous, Hand Rolled, With Olives* as our Online Short for January.

In *Couscous, Hand-Rolled, With Olives*, a young Jewish man tries to escape from the bounds of the two worlds that he lives in over one Shabbat dinner with his punk girlfriend and his traditional father.

Head over to the [JFI Blog](#) to read an exclusive JFI interview with director Yaari Nadav Tal and learn more about the film.



### **JFI WinterFest February 24-25, 2024 Vogue Theater, San Francisco**

Join us in February for the eleventh annual WinterFest at the Vogue Theater in San Francisco. You won't want to miss this captivating program of Jewish-content films sure to fascinate, educate, and foster empathy in and beyond our local community. [For more information click here.](#)

# INTERFAITH INTERCONNECT

**Interfaith Interconnect Virtual Religion Chat, Wednesday, February 14, 2024.**

**Presentations: 5-6 p.m. Optional breakout discussion groups: 6-6:30 p.m.**

**Topic:** *Nearly all religions have a version of "thou shalt not kill." How does your religion/congregation deal with the reality of war?*

**Speakers:** Rabbi Dr. Laurence Milder, Congregation Beth Emek, Pleasanton and Br. Omar Naisan, Muslim Community Center East Bay, Pleasanton.

**Online via Zoom:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82295909602> Meeting ID: 822 9590 9602

Zoom room opens at 4:45.

**All are welcome.**

Second in a series on this topic.

January 10th Religion Chat recording with Rev. Andy Lobban, St. Bartholomew Episcopal Church, Livermore; and Rev. Sangye Hawke, Unitarian Universalist Church, Livermore: <https://youtu.be/re-E9g8wjwY>.

**Save the date March 13 at 5pm:** The same topic will be featured at a virtual Religion Chat with Manish Singhvi, Jain and Troy Witt, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Details will be emailed closer to the time.

**Interfaith Interconnect Facebook**

**Page:** <https://www.facebook.com/InterfaithInterconnect/timeline>

## 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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**Yahrzeit Memorial**

### In January We Remember

Hillel Cohen

Charles Roy Colvin



### January Birthdays

Marisa Castaldini

Mary Frances Colvin

Kevin Coren

Levi Coren

Tom Green

## 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

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