

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

TriValleyCulturalJews.org

info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org

[\(925\) 399-8029](tel:(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.



Like Or Share Our Facebook Page

<https://www.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](tel:(925)399-8029) or culturaljews@gmail.com for an Evite or for more information about our community. You can find us at trivalleyculturaljews.org. Free to members, suggested \$15 donation per non-member adult if you are able.

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

November 30th 2024

Upcoming Events

Leviticus Class Monday Evenings at 7:30 p.m.

As November started, so did our Torah study class. We are in person and on zoom having riveting discussions about Leviticus based on the book *The Bible with Sources Revealed* By Richard Elliot Friedman.

Our discussions take us to the priestly times as we are learning about all the rules set out for the different types of offerings one should make to atone for various sins. It is absurdly specific at times but also gracious at other times. Did you know you had to buy back your first born son from the priests?!? Or that if you didn't have enough for an offering you could bring a lesser offering? We also delved into discussion about whether intent to transgress matters.

If you are interested in joining us...we will be continuing our discussions Monday evenings at 7:30 p.m. through December.

Sunday Chat 12/01/24

10:30 a.m. at Inklings on Main St., Pleasanton. Come hang out with other TVCJ members and talk about interesting things. A chance for JCS parents to meet with other members for a friendly chat during JCS.

Philosophers' Cafe 12/05/24



Philosophers' Cafe
Friendly Discussions
1st Thursdays
7pm Zoom

 **TRI-VALLEY**
CULTURAL JEWS

culturaljews@gmail.com
(925) 399-8029

7:00 p.m. - 8 p.m. Philosophers' Cafe friendly discussion group. How should we think about Chanukah? Do we want to glorify military power, the idea of cultural diversity, the hope of light after darkness? And we'll share our memories of Chanukah when we were children. We will meet on Zoom.

Movie
Remembering Gene Wilder
12/07/24

TRI-VALLEY CULTURAL JEWS secular + humanist

CULTURALJEWS@GMAIL.COM (925) 399-8029

It's showtime!

7 DEC

OPENING 3 PM CASTRO VALLEY

GET YOUR POPCORN AND HAVE A SEAT!

JEWVIE MOVIE

+ POTLUCK SNACKS

Book your seat for...

REMEMBERING GENE WILDER

Join us on December 7th at 3 p.m. for a screening of the documentary film, *Remembering Gene Wilder*. From the film website, "Interviews and never-before-seen footage provide insight into the life, career and legacy of actor and comedian Gene Wilder. The star of "Willy Wonka," "Blazing Saddles," "Young Frankenstein" and

many more is remembered by those who knew and loved him in this documentary." Located in Castro Valley. **Please bring a snack to share!**

Hanukkah/Chanukah 12/21/24



Join us as we celebrate what lights us up at Tri-Valley Cultural Jews' Hanukkah Celebration on Saturday, December 21st from 5:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m. in Pleasanton. The menorah (or candle holder) will be lit and latkes (potato pancakes) will be fried. Come spin the dreidel and enjoy games and crafts with our warm, welcoming community. **Please bring your favorite latke topping and a dish to share.**

We are trying to be good friends to the earth and reduce the amount of trash we produce. **Please bring your reusable plates, cups and utensils.** **As is our tradition, we will light the Hanukkah candles. We invite you to bring your own menorah and candles and join us in lighting the candles together.**

Not a Book Club - 1/12/25

TVCJ's NOT a Book Club met to discuss *Frostbite: How Refrigeration Changed Our Food, Our Planet, and Ourselves* by Nicola Twilley, who traveled the world researching the cold chain.

The next book, which will be discussed January 12th, will be *Typically Jewish*, a fun read by TVCJ remote member Nancy Kalikow Maxwell. The not-a-book-club provides an opportunity to read books we ordinarily wouldn't choose from many different genres. We've read science fiction, historical fiction, history and more. Join us and expand your reading horizons!

This special group is a perk for our members. Want to find out more about who we are and what we do? Email us at culturaljews@gmail.com or call **(925) 399-8029** if you have questions or want to find out more about our community. You can find us at www.trivalleyculturaljews.org

Tu B'Shvat 2/16/25

Save The Date: Celebrate the Birthday of the Trees at our Tu B'Shvat Celebration on February 16th in Livermore.

Why is Chanukah 8 Days?

You might have been told a story that was written several centuries after the events, the story about the oil in the ner tamid (eternal flame) in the Second Temple lasting for longer than would be expected. The real story was actually hidden from the Jews by not being included in any texts that Jews accepted. It was, instead, preserved by the Catholic Church in the Apocrypha (hidden books). There are 4 Book of Maccabees - the first two of which, written shortly after the events described - tell the actual history of the holiday and stories about the people and events of the time. Beware, though - it's pretty grisly. Oh, and why is it 8 days? Because the Temple wasn't available for the ingathering in Sukkot, an 8-day holiday. When it was re-sanctified, the people held Sukkot in Kislev (the Jewish month when we celebrate Chanukah).

By Judith Seid

Jewish Culture School (JCS)



11/17/24 Our journey through the past led us to the Duras Europos, a border city that straddled Greek, Roman and Persian civilizations. We looked for themes from the mosaics excavated there and then made our own!

BOOK REVIEW
THOSE WHO SAVE US
By
Jenna Blum

THOSE WHO SAVE US

a
novel

"An absorbing tale of two
women's struggles with the burdens
and responsibilities of remembrance."

—*The Boston Globe*

JENNA BLUM

This is a book of historical fiction that takes place during World War II. Most of the story takes place in Weimar, Germany. The main characters are a German mother, Anna and her daughter, Trudy. Anna, owns a bakery in town and is an important baker: however, food becomes very scarce in this town as well as most others in Germany.

This story takes a turn when the Nazi army overruns Weimar and the officers are looking for residences to live in for the duration of the war. One officer learns of

Anna's house and decides that he would like to live here. He tells Anna that he will look after her and protect her from harm if she consents to this arrangement. She reluctantly agrees in order to survive.

Eventually, she becomes his mistress and they have a child together, He then returns to the war and leaves the house. He leaves Anna with a great deal of shame for her relationship with the officer.

As her daughter Trudy grows up, she becomes a brilliant and strong willed young lady. She gets a job at a university and starts a project in which she interviews and films survivors of the holocaust. In the process she learns about her own family's hidden history.

This novel is very well written and has many twists and turns, it is unique in that it is a holocaust story told from the perspective of the women who lived through it. I would definitely recommend it. [Click here if you would like to purchase this book on Amazon.](#)

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

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 below.



or

visit: <https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/2326042>

2024/2025 TVCJ Calendar

12/1 JCS & Sunday Chat

12/5 Philosophers' Cafe

12/15 JCS

12/21 Chanukah Party, 5:00pm-7:00pm

1/2 Philosophers' Cafe

1/5 JCS
1/12 Not A Book Club
1/19 JCS
2/2 JCS
2/6 Philosophers' Cafe
2/16 Tu B'Shvat, time TBA
3/2 JCS
3/6 Philosophers' Cafe
3/16 Purim
3/30 Passover Family Day 10:30am-Noon
4/3 Philosophers' Cafe
4/13 Passover Seder
4/27 JCS Last Day
5/1 Philosophers' Cafe
5/18 Lag B'Omer 10:30am-Noon
6/1 Shavuot + Annual Meeting 10:30am-Noon
6/5 Philosophers' Cafe



In November We Remember

Jerry Kranz



November Birthdays

Karen Furst
Amy Greenberg
Emma Greenberg
Robert Kociolek
Kelly Mogilefsky

Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid 925-485-1049

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

David Gates

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Jamie Ireland

Maggie Pino

Sophia Ireland

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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