

TVCJ Happenings [View this email in your browser](#)

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community

TriValleyCulturalJews.org

info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org

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

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



**TRI-VALLEY
CULTURAL JEWS**
secular + humanist

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<https://www.facebook.com/trivalleyculturaljews/>

TVCJ is an accepting, welcoming, diverse community of Cultural Jews and their families. 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.

December 28th 2024

We Need A Home Matching Fund

We're on our way! Our "We Need a Home" matching fund has received its first three donations and we're on our way to reaching our interim goal of \$10,000 by next Shavuot (June). When the fund reaches \$20,000 that amount will be matched and we'll start looking for a place we can rent for Jewish Cultural School, meetings and other small events, and where we can store our supplies and house our library.

If you value our TVCJ community and would like to see us continue to grow and thrive, please make a donation to the fund! You can use our venmo code (see our code at the bottom of this newsletter) or send a check to 1817 Sinclair Drive, Pleasanton 94588. **Please note that the donation is for the matching fund.** Thanks!

Upcoming Events

Philosophers' Cafe - 1/02/25

Join our Philosophers' Cafe discussion group on zoom, Thursday, January 2nd at 7:00 p.m. We'll be talking about how we should respond to the current wave of anti-Jewish speech and vandalism. Is it reasonable to just wait it out? Should we emulate the more militant JDL sort of response? Do we try to talk with our non-Jewish acquaintances? Can "it" happen here? Let's hash it out together. Please look for our Evite for more information.

Sunday Chats - 1/05/25

Let's chat! Several JCS parents and other TVCJ members meet on JCS Sunday mornings just after 10:30 a.m. at Inklings, in downtown Pleasanton to have a coffee and get to know each other. All TVCJ members are invited!

Not a Book Club - 1/12/25

TVCJ MEMBERS ONLY



NOT A
BOOK
CLUB

JANUARY 12TH 3PM 2025



TRI-VALLEY
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culturaljews@gmail.com
(925) 399-8029

TVCJ's NOT a Book Club is our chance to read something we might not have otherwise picked up. Join us for our discussion of *Typically Jewish* by Nancy Kalikow Maxwell. **See you on Sunday, January 12th at 3:00pm!**

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.

Tu B'Shvat 2/16/25



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SUN. FEB 16. 1-4PM. TU B'SHVAT



CELEBRATE THE NEW YEAR OF THE TREES

Join us for a Tu B'Shvat farm day & potluck!
Sunday, Feb 16th, 1-4pm
Livermore, CA

Celebrate the New Year of the Trees with us! Join us for our Tu B'Shvat Farm Day and Potluck on Sunday, February 16th from 1-4pm in Livermore, CA. We will be learning about the history of a historic ranch, followed by some farm chores and a Secular seder and potluck. **Our event will be outdoors, so please dress accordingly. Please bring a dish to share.**

SAVE THE DATE

Repro Right Shabbat - 2/22/25

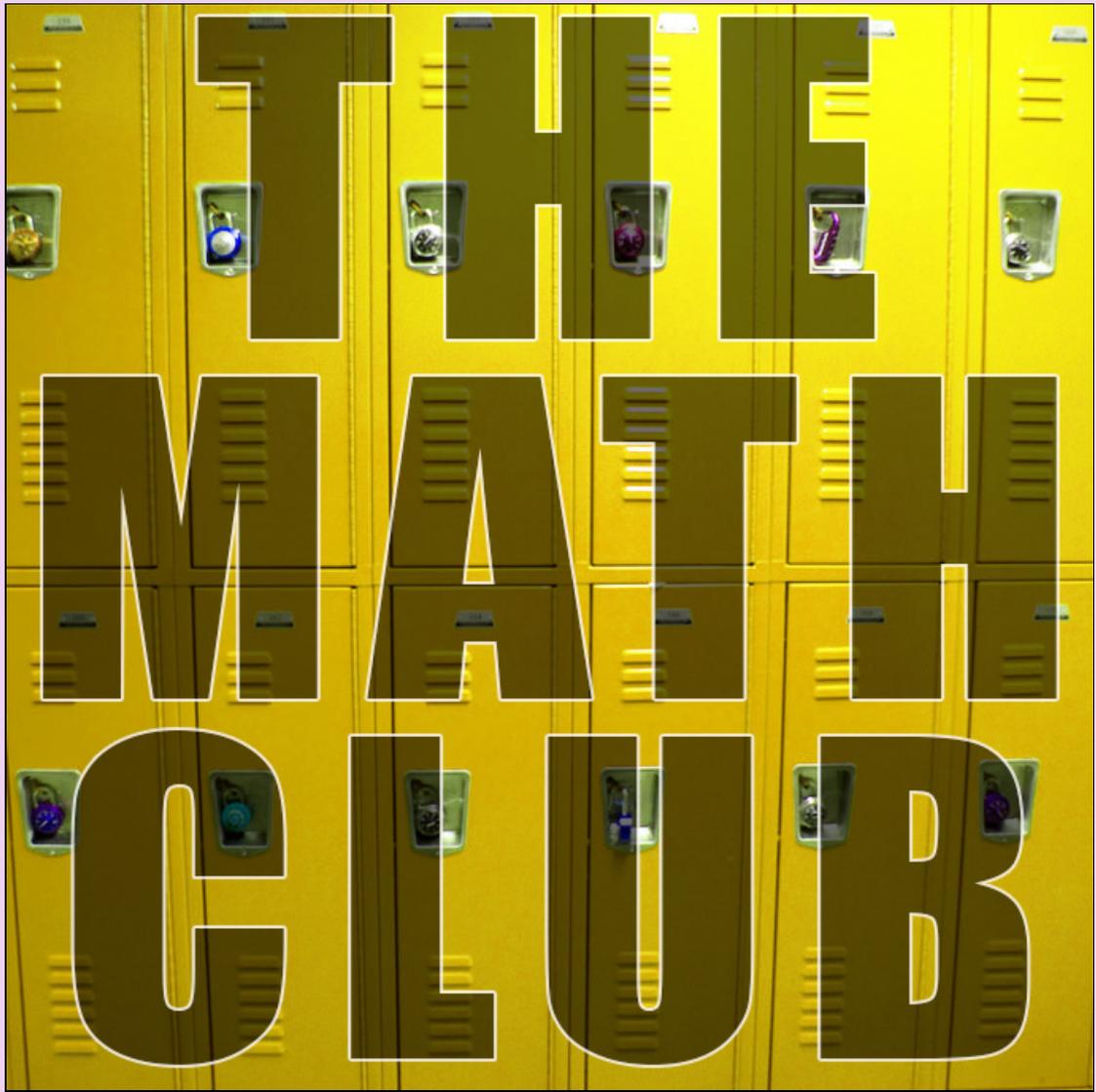
Mark your calendars for our Repro Rights Shabbat on Feb 22nd. Location TBA.

Purim - 3/16/25

Join us for Purim on March 16th in Livermore!

Passover - 4/13/25

Save the Date for Passover on April 13th in Livermore!





Did you know that our very own Noah King is one of hosts of The Math Club, a podcast that aims to make math more accessible, more engaging, and more fun to more people? Their latest episode, "I Have a Little Bias", is all about the mathematics behind the beloved Hanukkah game of dreidel. Noah and his co-host Pete discuss how, mathematically (and counterintuitively), it is not a fair game with equal chances of winning for all players. You can find the episode by searching for The Math Club in your favorite podcasting app, or by heading here in your browser: <https://sites.libsyn.com/410831/i-have-a-little-bias-the-mathematics-of-dreidel> Chag sa-math-ach!

Our Movie Night

A small group of us had a great time eating popcorn and potato chips while we watched *Remembering Gene Wilder* at the Mogilefsky's. This was part of our ongoing movie program, Jewvie, where we pick a movie to watch together and discuss.

The documentary, an overview of Wilder's life and career, was surprisingly poignant and insightful. It was also surprising. Who knew that in addition to his famous

movies, *Willy Wonka*, *Blazing Saddles*, *Young Frankenstein*, and *Stir Crazy...*, that he was in *Bonnie and Clyde*.

Jewish Culture School (JCS)

JCS 12/15/24

Our Jewish Culture School class learned about Jewish history through the ceremonial artifacts preserved from the middle ages. Then we made some of our own!



Hanukkah



HUGE thanks to those who helped with our wonderful Hanukkah party and made it so special! Maggie was our greeter and she and Gale took photos. Alex, Jesse, Ira, and Minta made fabulous latkes. Thanks to Gale, Sol and Tai who helped set up and to Sophia and Jazz who baked delicious cookies for us to decorate, and to Judy and David for offering up their home and also doing the set up. A special thank you to David and everyone who cleaned up. Everyone brought fun food and Jazz made it all happen.

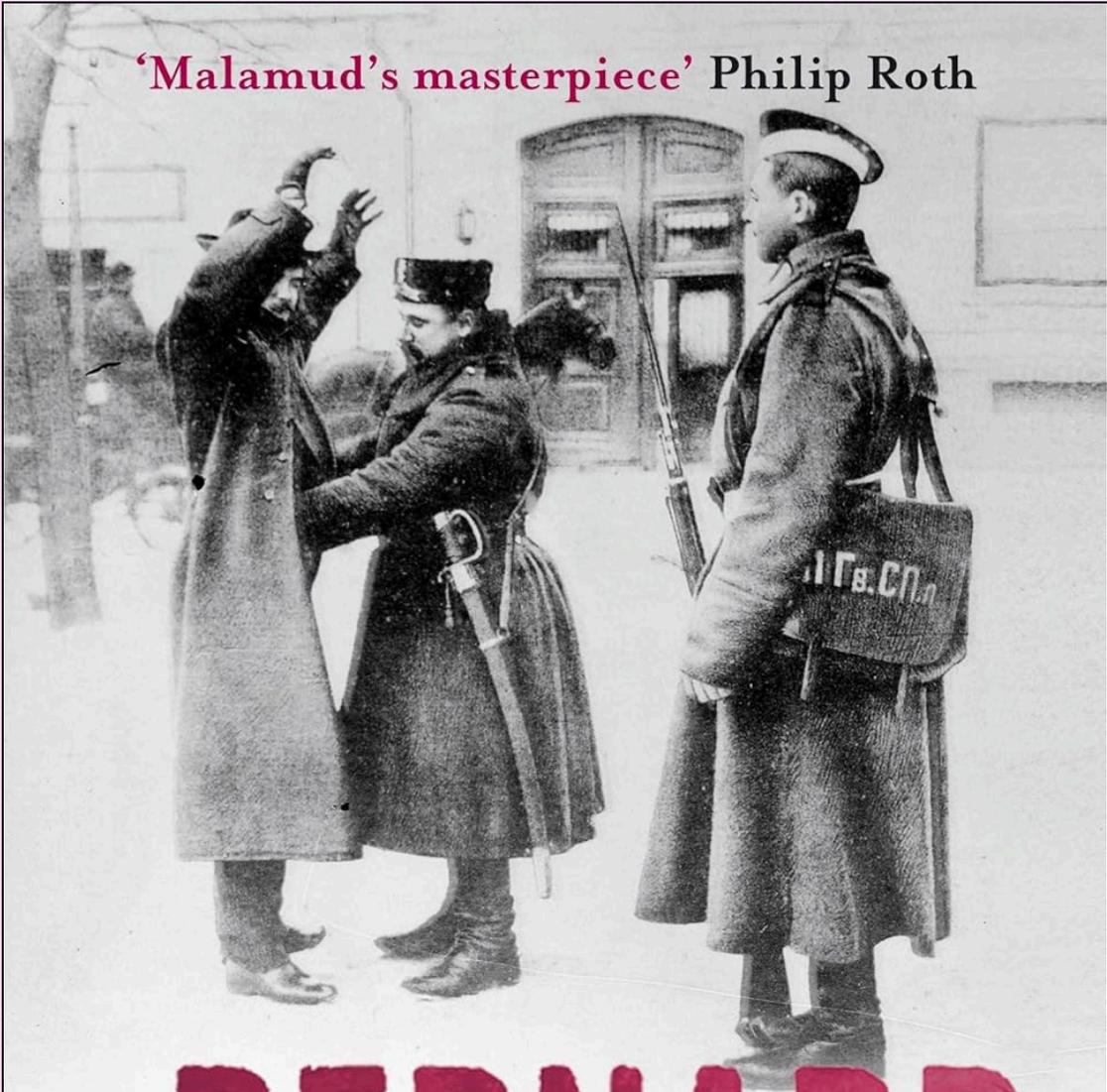
BOOK REVIEW

THE FIXER

By

Bernard Malamud

'Malamud's masterpiece' Philip Roth



BERNARD MALAMUD

The Fixer

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize and the US National Book Award

Yakov Bok is a poor Secular Jewish handyman (a fixer) living in Russia in the early 1900's. The town he lives in is quite upset because a 12year old boy is found stabbed to death in a ravine close to his house. Yakov is especially worried because he is

living in a restricted area under an assumed name. No Jews were allowed to live here. When this is reported to the authorities he is arrested and imprisoned. Furthermore, he is falsely charged with killing the boy and using his blood to prepare the Passover matzos, which makes this a ritual killing. He spends the next 3 years in a Russian prison, where he is tortured and humiliated. He constantly begs for a trial to prove his innocence because he knows the authorities have no evidence of his guilt. He is convinced that the authorities are mainly out to blame the Jews for this and other crimes. Most of the police he encounters in prison are quite brutal towards him with a few exceptions. And the few that are sympathetic are soon eliminated.

This book is somewhat difficult to read because it graphically describes his painful treatment and the seemingly endless delays for his trial. Furthermore, the prejudice and bigotry of the non Jewish Russian residents of the town are vividly described. We can see how the anti Jewish prejudices originated and can be perpetuated. [This book can be purchased on Amazon by clicking here.](#)

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>

Joke: Where do hamburgers and hot dogs go dancing? **Answer:** A meatball.



In December We Remember

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



December Birthdays

Isabel Gross
Ella King
Keren Rother Telias

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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