

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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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.

Events are free for members. For most events, we suggest a \$15 donation for non-member adults. For High Holiday services, the suggested donation is \$25 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.

September 27, 2025

We Need a Home Fund

It's time to pull out the big guns, or, pens. We need the last \$6,000+ dollars for our We Need a Home Fund to earn the \$20,000 match and allow us to find permanent space. It's time to ask the grandparents of our Jewish Culture School students and graduates to donate. It's time to ask people you know who care about Jewish continuity to donate. It's time to ask your most generous friends to donate.

TVCJ is the only Secular Humanistic community in Northern California that has a school for children. We are welcoming to all configurations of families and provide a home for cultural Jews who would not otherwise affiliate with a Jewish organization.

Checks can be sent to **TVCJ at 690 South K Street, Livermore, CA 94550**. Our Venmo is **@Tri-Valley-CulturalJews** (you can also scan the QR code below).

TC

Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

@Tri-Valley-CulturalJews



Upcoming Events

Yom Kippur
Kol Nidre Gathering - 10/01/25



TVCJ Secular Humanist

YOM KIPPUR

Kol Nidre Ceremony

Oct 1st 7pm Livermore



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Kol Nidre Observance – A Humanistic Reflection for Yom Kippur
Wednesday, October 1 | 7:00 PM | Livermore

Join us at Tri-Valley Cultural Jews for an evening of meaning, music, and reflection as we come together to observe Yom Kippur through a secular, cultural Jewish lens.

Our Kol Nidre gathering is rooted in Jewish tradition but free from religious ritual. Instead, we'll reflect on the year behind us, honor those we've lost, and take time to connect—with ourselves, each other, and the values we hold dear. Through readings, music, and shared presence, we'll mark this powerful moment in a way that feels authentic to our humanistic community.

While the event is geared toward adults, we'll have quiet activities available so families with children can feel welcome and comfortable.

As always, TVCJ embraces all who walk through our doors—interfaith families, non-traditional families, and anyone looking to connect with Jewish culture in an inclusive, thoughtful way.

Reservations are required.

Suggested donation of \$25 per non-member adult is appreciated, but everyone is welcome—no one is turned away due to cost.

Sukkot - 10/5/25



- **Sukkah Raising**
- **Potluck**
- **Crafts**



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Sukkah Raising & Potluck – A Festive Morning for All Ages

Sunday, October 5 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM | Livermore

Come help us welcome Succos with a morning of community, creativity, and hands-on fun as we raise and decorate our sukkah together!

No building experience? No problem. Whether you're handy with a drill or just happy to hold a branch, everyone's help is welcome. We'll provide the tools—just bring your energy and spirit!

Once the sukkah is standing tall, we'll share a potluck brunch. Please bring something delicious to share (labeling ingredients is appreciated), and don't forget your reusable plate, cup, and utensils so we can keep things eco-friendly.

Want to add a personal touch to our sukkah? Bring a few natural branches or decorations to hang. We'll also have crafts and activities for both kids and adults, so feel free to bring the whole family.

Let's build something beautiful—together!

Reservations are required.

Suggested donation: \$15 per non-member adult (no one will be turned away for lack of funds).

Philosophers' Cafe - 11/06/25

Really, people are just people. That was the conclusion of the participants in September's Philosophers' Cafe, which was a discussion of generational differences. We also somehow veered into the topic of homework, but that's what generally happens at Philosophers' Cafe. It's always wide-ranging.

There will be no Philosophers' Cafe in October because of the fall holidays, but join us again on zoom for another friendly chat on **Thursday, November 6th from 7-8 p.m.** for another fun and interesting discussion with members and friends of TVCJ. Look for your evite! (Non-members are welcome to attend a couple times before we'll ask you to join TVCJ.)

Chanukah 12/13/25

As Chanukah approaches it's time to ask the most important question of all: Who wants their house to smell like a latke factory exploded??

We're looking for a brave person (or family who's not afraid to open all the windows and take the batteries out of the smoke detectors) to host our annual Chanukah party on Saturday, December 13.

Perks include, but are not limited to...

- Dibs on the first latke

- Free latke-scented air freshener

If you're feeling festive (and you've got your fire extinguisher ready), please send us an email at CulturalJews@gmail.com!

Jewish Culture School

This month at Jewish Culture School we talked about the importance of being able to read and learn—and how Jewish communities have always valued literacy. We also learned about some amazing Jewish advocates who've fought for everyone's right to access books and knowledge.

We had a special Zoom guest, Ruthie Seid, a librarian with over 20 years of experience, who spoke with us about censorship and why it's so important to protect the freedom to read.

And because reading and snacking go hand in hand, we baked some delicious (and very tidy!) non-crumby crackers to munch on while we listened to a story together.

Thank You for a Beautiful Rosh Hashanah Celebration









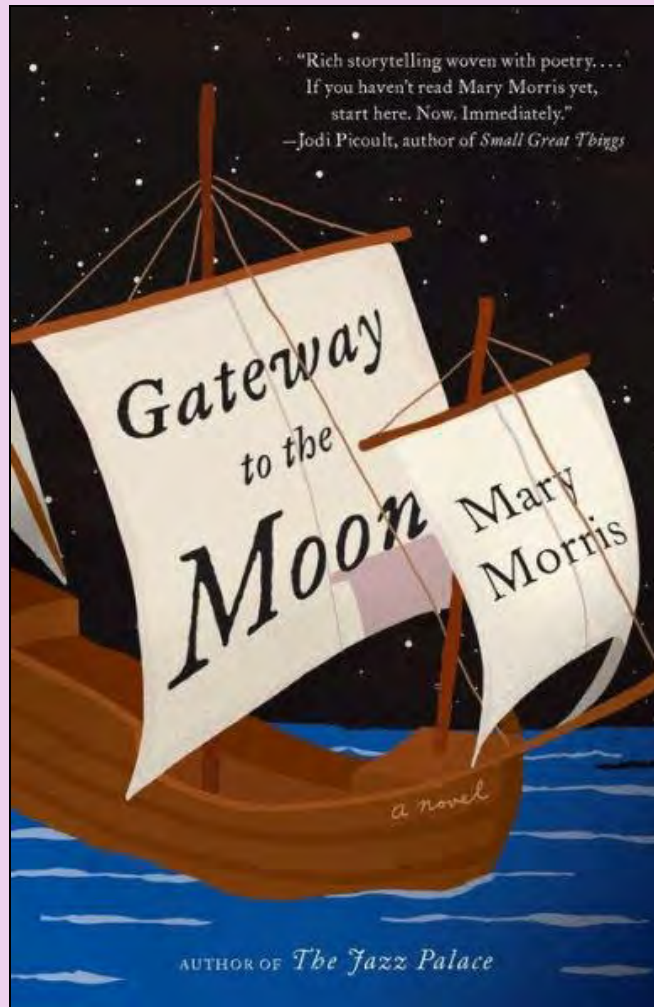
We had a truly special evening as we gathered to welcome the new year. Our celebration began with a potluck featuring lots of apples, honey and challah, of course, and continued with a heartfelt ceremony that united us in a spirit of community and renewal.

A huge thank you to everyone who helped make the evening so meaningful: Judy, for writing such a moving ceremony and leading the music. Jazz, for planning and coordinating everything so seamlessly. Karen, for showing up early to set up and warmly greeting everyone at the door. Debby, for shopping and making sure we had all the essentials. Tai and Solomon, for sounding the shofar so powerfully

And to everyone who came, lent a hand, and brought such delicious food to share-- you made the evening truly special.

Wishing you all a sweet and joyful new year!

BOOK REVIEW
Gateway to the Moon
By
Mary Morris



This is a historical novel that begins with the Jews being expelled from Spain in the fifteenth century and continues to the present day. It tells the story of the Crypto Jews of Spain who by edict of the king either had to convert to Catholicism or be expelled from Spain. Those who refused these choices remained in Spain and outwardly adopted Christianity but retained their Jewish rituals in secret.

As the centuries went by many of these Conversos forgot their Jewish roots but retained many of the rituals of their ancestors. They were to become the “hidden Jews” of the inquisition. If they were discovered, they were punished by imprisonment, torture, or death.

This book tells the story of five generations of the Torres family. They settled in the New Mexico. Each generation tells the story of one main character who did not know of his origins but eventually discovered it. It helped that in each generation an individual had an interest in astronomy, as well as a love for science and knowledge. The characters were compelling and interesting. Though the origins of the traditions they followed, such as lighting candles on Friday and not eating pork, were passed down, many times at great risk.

The stories of the characters read like novels. They are full of suspense and drama. I truly loved this book and highly recommend it.

[If you would like to purchase this book on Bookshop.org click here.](#)

[If you would like to purchase this book on Barnes and Noble click here.](#)

Reviewed By Jerry Zwick



TVCJ is on Bluesky now.
@tvcj2.bsky.social. Check it out.

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>



In September We Remember

Lynn Zizlavsky

Sam Zuckerman



September Birthdays

Sophia Ireland

Jane Morrison

Mathilda Shulewitz

Shana Soltani

Adriana Telia

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

Diego Rother

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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