

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** (you can also scan our QR code below.)

November 22, 2025

Upcoming Events

Philosophers' Cafe - 12/04/25

What's your favorite kitchen appliance? You'd be surprised at what that question can lead to! It's how we started November's Philosophers' Cafe, our monthly friendly discussion group that meets on zoom the first Thursday of each month at 7 p.m. Do you wonder what question we'll ask in December? Join us on December 4th and find out! It's always an interesting hour. Zoom in and find out, meet other members, and find something interesting to think about.

Look for your evite! (Non-members are welcome to attend a couple of times before we'll ask you to join TVCJ.)

Hanukkah 12/13/25



Light Up the Night at Our Hanukkah Celebrations

We'd love for you to join us on Saturday, December 13th from 4-6pm in Castro Valley as we come together to celebrate Hanukkah! We'll light candles side by side, share stories, fry up fresh latkes, and enjoy cozy crafts and playful games for all ages.

Please bring a favorite latke topping and a dish to share, along with your menorah and candles--let's fill the room with warmth and light together. To keep our celebration gentle on the planet, we also encourage everyone to bring reusable plates, cups and utensils.

This gathering is free for members, and for non-member adults we suggest a \$15 donation if you're able. Location details will be shared at registration.

[Jewish Culture School](#)

JEWISH CULTURE SCHOOL

EXPLORING JEWISH CULTURE THROUGH:



JCS 11/16

Exploring the Stories of Refugees

This week at Jewish Culture School we explored the question "who are refugees?" through stories, food and music that explored these themes of welcoming strangers and resilience.

We read the beautiful book *Shoham's Bangle*, by Sarah Sasson, discovering the rich culture of Iraqi Jews. The kids loved cooking (and eating!) Syrian red lentil soup, and watching an inspiring JDC (American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee) video about Sasha, a Ukrainian Jewish child building a new life in Poland.

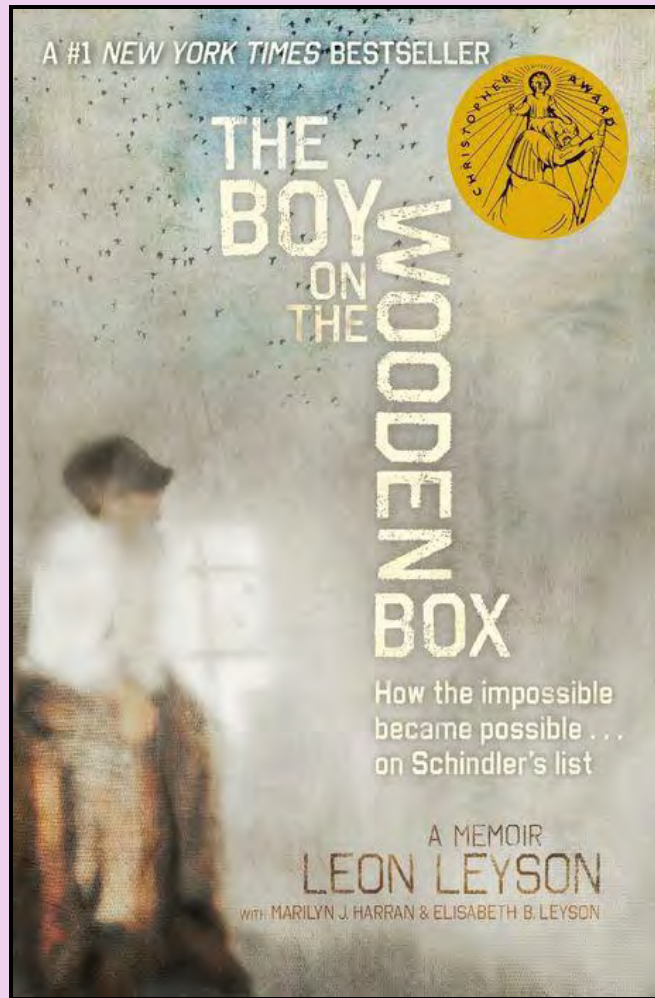
We learned the song "Follow the Drinking Gourd", exploring how music has guided people toward freedom throughout history. It was a meaningful, lively morning filled with stories, cooking, music, and cultural discovery--exactly the kind of learning that makes our community so special!

BOOK REVIEW

The Boy on the Wooden Box

A Memoir

By Leon Leyson
with Marilyn J. Harran and Elisabeth B. Leyson



This memoir takes place in Poland prior to World War II. Until Leon was 9 years old, he and his family lived in the village of Narewka. After several months they moved to Krakow where they enjoyed the big city middle class life style.

In 1939, when the Nazis invaded Poland, Leon and his family's lives turned upside down. Their rights as Jews were taken away, and among other things, he could not go to school, and his father was not permitted to work. However, all at once, the family's fortune changed again when the father was hired by Oskar Schindler.

Schindler was impressed by the father's work skills at his factory. Eventually, he also became impressed by the Leon's interest and mechanical skills, though he needed to stand on a box to reach the controls. He didn't know it then but these eventually saved their lives, since Schindler was allowed to save his workers from extermination at the death camps.

This memoir tells a story of amazing perseverance and courage amidst horrible conditions and death. All of this is told through the eyes of a teenager and his family. It was memorialized in the movie, *Schindler's List*.

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick

[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



Joke: Did you hear about the restaurant on the moon?

Answer: Great food, no atmosphere.



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 November We Remember
Jerry Kranz



November Birthdays

Karen Furst
Amy Greenberg
Emma Greenberg
Robert Kocielek
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

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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