

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.)

February 28, 2026 Newsletter

Meet A TVCJ Member, Diego Rother



Say hello to Diego Rother, one of the faces of our community.

1. Where do you live?

Menlo Park.

2. Where are you from?

I was born in Montevideo, the capital of Uruguay.

3. What's your favorite Jewish holiday (and why, if you'd like to say)?

Passover. I always liked the stories about Freedom, and the parallels one can find with current topics.

4. What are you reading now? (Or watching, or listening to)?

I just finished reading *The Maniac*, a novel by Benjamin Labatut and I just started to read *Autocracy, inc.* by Anne Applebaum.

5. What do you know about that people can ask you about, or you can help them with?

I'm passionate about many topics, and always happy to talk about them:

- Uruguay (did you know that Uruguay abolished slavery and legalized gay marriage years before the US?)
- Electrical Engineering and Computer Science (this is what I studied in school)
- Neuroscience and AI (I also studied the former in school and I'm very passionate about the later)
- Math (I love Math...)

Upcoming Events

No Kings Day 3/28/26

March 28 is the next No Kings Day, when Americans of all persuasions affirm our commitment to democracy. Our Jewish ethics teach us “don’t stand idly by the blood of your neighbor” and we remember all the times in our history when our neighbors did and didn’t stand idly by our own blood. When a ruler can shed the blood of our neighbors, we cannot stand idly by. Find a rally near you at

<https://www.nokings.org/> to stand up for your Jewish and American values.

Purim - 3/01/26 at 10:30am

celebrate

PURIM

SUNDAY, MARCH 1ST, 10:30-12PM
LIVERMORE, CA

GAMES HAMANTASCHEN SPIEL CRAFTS

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Join us for a joyful, silly, Secular Humanistic Purim celebration on Sunday, March 1, from 10:30-12pm in Livermore (address provided upon registration). This festive morning is open to anyone who enjoys cookies, costumes, and good company.

Purim is one of the happiest holidays on the Jewish calendar, celebrating courage, resilience, and community. It reminds us that joy, laughter, and a little playful chaos are important too.

Costumes are encouraged for kids and grown-ups alike, whether your inspiration is a classic Purim character, a famous artist, or anything that makes you smile. Together we'll bake (and eat!) hamantaschen, enjoy crafts and games, and share a community

potluck lunch. We'll wrap up the morning with our annual Purimspiel--a playful, funny retelling of the Book of Esther.

If you've been meaning to RSVP but haven't yet, there's still time. We would truly love to see you there! Whether you're a longtime member or thinking about joining us for the first time, you'll find a warm welcome waiting.

Come celebrate, connect, and make a little noise with us!

Philosophers' Cafe - 03/05/26

In February, our friendly discussion group, Philosophers' Cafe chewed over some weighty ethical dilemmas about artificial intelligence and mulled over what intelligence actually is. Join us Thursday evening, March 5 at 7 p.m. on zoom for another completely random topic to connect with each other over. It's fun, it's interesting and let's us get to know each other better.

Look for your evite, and participate in an hour of distraction from daily concerns. . Come check out this month's topic! Zoom in and find out, meet other members, and find something interesting to think about. (Non-members are welcome to attend a couple times before we'll ask you to join TVCJ.)

Refugee Sunday - 3/15/26 at 1pm

REFUGEE SUNDAY

behind every journey is a story

March 15 | 1pm | 2026



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You're warmly invited to join us for Refugee Sunday, a heartfelt afternoon of community, culture, and shared stories, on Sunday, March 15 at 1pm in Castro Valley (address provided upon registration).

Refugee Sunday is a chance for us to come together to honor the stories, creativity, and resilience that immigrants and refugees bring to our shared world. Through food, conversation, and a special speaker, we'll explore the richness of these experiences and reflect on how diverse traditions and journeys continue to shape American life and strengthen our communities.

Whether you come to listen, to share, or simply to spend meaningful time in community, you'll find a warm and inclusive space. We hope you'll join us!

Passover- 4/04/26 at 5pm Ceremony | 6:30pm Potluck



Passover Seder

SAT. APRIL 4, 2026
5PM CEREMONY
6:30PM POTLUCK



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Passover is a time to gather, share stories, and reflect on freedom, justice, and our responsibility to care for one another. We warmly invite you to join us on Saturday, April 4 in Livermore (address provided upon registration) for an evening of music, readings, conversation, and good food shared in community.

Our gathering begins at 5pm with an inclusive Passover ceremony that blends tradition with reflection and participation, followed by a community potluck dinner at 6:30pm. Together we'll explore timeless themes that continue to resonate across generations.

This is a relaxed and welcoming experience open to everyone. No religious background or prior knowledge is needed--just bring yourself, your appetite, and your

desire to spend a meaningful evening together.

We look forward to sharing the table with you.

[Jewish Culture School](#)



Jewish Culture School 2/15

At our most recent Jewish Cultural School class, we dove into the history of Jews in feminism, learning about the women's rights movement in America and researching inspiring Jewish feminists who helped shape it. We also revisited the Purim story, comparing the very different choices of Vashti and Esther and what courage can look like.

In true Purim fashion, learning included delicious hands-on fun: students made chickpea turnovers together--proving that history pairs well with good food! We wrapped up by singing the crowd favorite "Vashti Wouldn't Dance!"

Our Tu B'Shvat Celebration

This year's Tu B'Shvat celebration brought out our inner nerds in the best way possible as we gathered at Nancy Frishberg's Rancho Milagro olive grove for a day

of sunshine, learning, and very enthusiastic appreciation of trees. We toured the grove, asked many questions, learned far more than we ever expected to know about olives and olive oil, and happily confirmed that tasting counts as serious educational research. The morning wrapped up with a delicious potluck and great conversation. We are especially grateful to Nancy for generously opening her home and sharing her deep knowledge.

Our Reproductive Rights Gathering





What a hilarious and delicious gathering we had in honor of Reproductive Rights! We played games where we had to think of associations between objects and reproduction (any ideas how a spool of thread could be connected?) and a champion sing down game where we thought of songs that have family members (mothers, aunts, brothers, etc.) in them. We made delicious challah inspired by reproductive organs and a good time was had by all. Many thanks to Judy and David for hosting, and to Judy for making the dough ahead of time so that we could jump right into playing!

Our TVCJ Watch Party

Black and Jewish America, a PBS presentation

Did you join us for our *Black and Jewish America* watch party? Then you know how great the program was, and what a great discussion we had afterwards! If you were not able to join us, no worries--we'll get together again soon! Thanks so much to Judy and David for hosting and providing snacks. This was the first of a series of four episodes. We hope to see you for the next one!

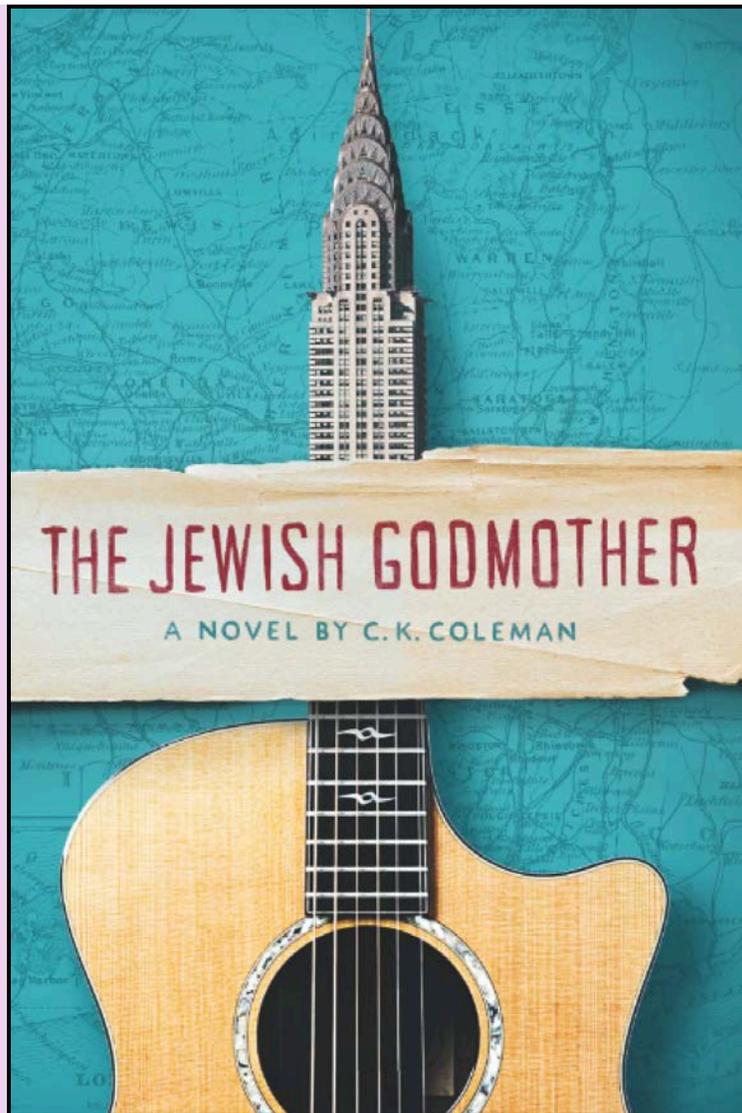
Calendar of Events for the Next 6 Months

2/1 Tu B'Shvat
2/5 Philosophers' Cafe
2/22 Repro Rights Gathering
2/27 Watch Party - *Black and Jewish America*
3/1 Purim
3/5 Philosophers' Cafe
3/15 Refugee Sunday
4/2 Philosophers' Cafe
4/4 Passover
5/3 Lag B'Omer
5/7 Philosophers' Cafe
5/23 Shavuus
6/7 Annual Meeting

Joke: Why did the hamantaschen go to the doctor?

Answer: Because it was feeling a little crummy!

BOOK REVIEW
The Jewish Godmother
By
C.K. Coleman



Klugh (pronounced same as clue) is a 17 year old boy growing up in New York. He is an extremely precocious guitar player as is his father, who has given lessons to a great many students, including Klugh. His mother was a music teacher also, but to elementary school students. Unfortunately both parents die and there is no other close relative left to raise Klugh, until his cousin Esther volunteers to do so. The problem is that she is Jewish and his parents are Catholic. Esther really wants to raise him, so she promises to raise him as a Catholic.

Things go relatively well until his estranged grandfather comes on the scene. He had been in prison and is violent and hostile. However, he wants to get custody of Klugh, mainly to get control of his inheritance which is sizable. In order to avoid this, Klugh and Esther escape out of town and stay in various locations. During this trip he rediscovers his guitar along with some skills he never knew he had. He also meets and develops a relationship with a girl who has a very positive influence on him when he needed it the most.

This book, *The Jewish Godmother*, is well written and has many twists and turns. I would definitely recommend it.

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

Reviewed By Jerry Zwick



Jewish Film Institute WinterFest 2026

Saturday, February 28 – Sunday, March 1

Vogue Theater, San Francisco

Winterfest passes for all the films can be purchased here:

<https://jfi.org/programs/winterfest-2026/box-office>

Discover the Films and by Tickets for Films Individually here:

<https://jfi.org/programs/winterfest-2026>



Bluesky

TV CJ is on Bluesky now.

[@tvcj2.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/tvcj2.bsky.social). Check it out.

TV CJ 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 February We Remember

Eileen Alkin-Fagliano
Benjamin Gorman
Rachel Hubbard
Jennifer Ann Holland
Dena Luborsky
Jeanette Maddon
Elinor Peel
Donald Wright

February Birthdays

Galina Arkhipova
Derek Greenberg
Phoebe Shulewitz



Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid 925-485-1049

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

David Gates

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Jamie Ireland

Maggie Pino

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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