

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.)

Passover invites us to come together around shared stories of freedom and resilience, and our Secular Humanist Seder brings those themes to life through thoughtful readings, music, and conversation. It's a chance to connect, reflect, and enjoy the richness of our traditions in a way that feels relevant and engaging.

We'll gather at **5PM for the Seder**, followed by a relaxed **potluck dinner at 6:30PM**. The address is shared upon registration.

Whether you come every year or haven't joined us in awhile, we'd love to have you at the table. As always, feel free to bring friends or family.

Lag B'Omer - 5/03/26 10:30am

**Lag
B'Omer**
*Picnic +
Potluck*

**Sunday,
May 3, 2026
10:30-12pm**

San Ramon, CA

 **TRI-VALLEY
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secular + humanist

WWW.TRIVALLEYCULTURALJEWS.ORG
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Mark your calendars for a relaxed and joyful Lag B'Omer picnic on **Sunday, May 3 at 10:30am** in San Ramon.

We're looking forward to a relaxing morning of connection, fresh air, and time together. Bring your favorite field games, a dish to share, and come enjoy good company! More details to come soon, but for now, we hope you'll save the date and join us.

Shavuos 5/23/26

Save the Date for our annual Shavuos Bookfest on **May 23**, a warm and engaging gathering where we share the ideas and stories that have inspired us.

Together we'll talk about the books we've loved, the things we've watched that have stayed with us, and the topics we've been learning and thinking about. It's a relaxed and thoughtful way to celebrate the spirit of Shavuos through curiosity, conversation and community. More details to come soon!

Annual Meeting - 6/7/26

Save the date for our Annual Meeting on **June 7th**. Be part of making decisions about TVCJ's future!

[Jewish Culture School](#)



Jewish Culture School 3/15

Our most recent Jewish Culture School class was full of energy, learning, and just the right amount of crunch. We explored the Passover story together and talked about why we retell it every year, connecting those ancient themes of freedom and resilience to our lives today.

We sang Passover songs, filling the room with music and laughter, and then got busy in the kitchen making delicious mandelbrot with almond flour--which, happily, we also got to enjoy.

To top it off, we played a round of Passover Codenames (hint: it's crunchy, a rectangle, and a Passover food). A wonderful mix of learning, fun, and community all around.

Our Purim Play and Celebration





Our Purim celebration was such a joyful, laughter-filled gathering--thank you to everyone who came, brought delicious food, and helped make it such a warm and memorable afternoon.

A special shoutout to Noah for his absolutely hilarious Purimspiel, which had all of us laughing and fully in the spirit of the holiday. And deep appreciation to Nancy, who heroically stepped in to rescue our very enthusiastic (read: way-too-soft) hamantaschen dough.

We're also grateful to everyone who stayed to help clean up. Extra thanks to Kevin, who once again proved that he wields a truly impressive vacuum.

It was a wonderful reminder of how much fun it is to be a community together--celebrating, laughing, and occasionally troubleshooting dough. Looking forward to the next one!

Refugee Shabbat Recap

Refugee Sunday was a meaningful and memorable afternoon filled with good food, thoughtful conversation and genuine connection. We shared a delicious spread together and were especially grateful to hear Negin Toosi speak so powerfully about

her family's refugee experience. Her story brought depth, perspective, and heart to our gathering.

A big thank you to Solomon and Jamie for graciously hosting and helping create such a warm and welcoming space for everyone.

PBS Documentary ***Black and Jewish America: An Interwoven History***



We had a wonderful evening coming together to watch the PBS documentary *Black & Jewish America* and share in thoughtful conversation afterwards. Going forward, we'll watch episodes 2 and 3 independently and then come together to watch the final episode and discuss.

Many thanks to Judy and David for generously hosting and creating such a warm and welcoming space for all of us.



jewish film institute

46th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival July 16 – August 2, 2026

[Click Here To Learn More About The Jewish Film Festival](#)

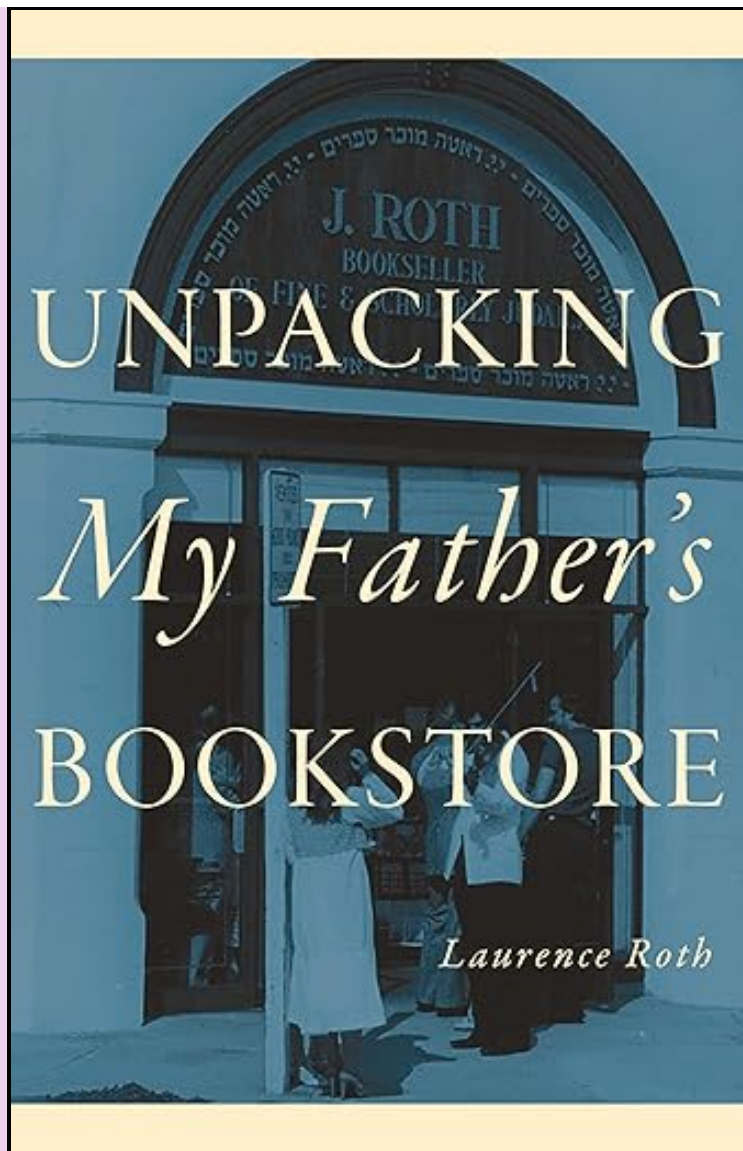
The 46th San Francisco Jewish Film Festival, presented by the Jewish Film Institute, will be returning to the Bay Area soon from **July 16 – August 2, 2026!** Mark your calendars for the world's most exciting celebration of Jewish culture, stories, and cinema and discover new premieres of acclaimed films and exciting stories from up-and-coming filmmakers.

Mark your calendars for these key dates:

- **May 15:** Early Bird Ticket Packages & Festival Venues Announced
- **June 16:** SFJFF46 Program Reveal & JFI Members Pre-Sale
- **June 18:** General Public Sales Begin

The best way to experience SFJFF is as a member! Unlock benefits like early ticket sales, exclusive savings, and exclusive events & receptions. [Join as a member today!](#)

BOOK REVIEW
UNPACKING MY FATHER'S BOOKSTORE
BY
LAURENCE ROTH



This book is both a memoir of the author and the true story of his father's Jewish books stores. After I started reading this book I happily discovered that these stores were located in West Los Angeles which is where I grew up and spent my teenaged years.

The author's father, Jack Roth had become a renowned book seller and collector of Judaica. He was known for his vast knowledge of Jewish Literature and all things related to Jewishness -all branches of Judaism. He was also known for treating his customers with respect and courtesy. So when a customer came to his store, he was more than happy to share his knowledge with them, even if they didn't make a purchase. He also led book discussion groups, which became very popular. He developed a wide range of clientele- ranging from celebrities, business people, scholars, and anyone interested in Jewish literature.

He was extremely well organized and he had a rigid sense right and wrong. And while his customers loved him, his family had issues with it, even leading to a divorce with his wife. His son, who wrote this book stayed with him and worked in the store. He emulated a number of his better qualities. But while his father was an expert book seller and collector, he needed help with modern business practices and finances. This is where his son became a help to his father.

The thing that eventually led to the stores' demise was the negative pressures from the ultra orthodox community. They felt that he was not giving them enough recognition and respect with his merchandise. Furthermore he could not keep up with the chain book sellers. His efforts to copy them were basically unsuccessful.

I really enjoyed reading this book. It provided an accurate picture of the highs and lows of the independent book business. Especially the Jewish book business, to the extent that we hardly see an independent Jewish book store in our communities today. One would hope that they make a comeback because they can be valuable assets to the communities as a whole.

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

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

Reviewed By Jerry Zwick



Bluesky

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 March We Remember

Teible Barach

Henry Eilbirt

Jeannette Eilbirt

Rebecca Friedman



March Birthdays

Adam King

Alexandra Kociolek

Nadav Noy

Sierra Randel

Debby Seid

Leslie Zwick

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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