

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

Like and Share on Facebook

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.)

June 27th, 2026 Newsletter

Mishpokha

Celebrating Tai Grabowski's Brit Mitzvah Ceremony



Congratulations to Tai Grabowski on becoming a Brit Mitzvah! Family, friends and members of the TVCJ community gathered to celebrate Tai's Secular, Humanistic Brit Mitzvah, marking her transition into Jewish adulthood through learning, reflection, and community service.

We are proud of all the hard work Tai put into preparing for this special day and grateful to her teachers, Judy and Jamie, for guiding her through this two year process. Mazel Tov, Tai, and congratulations to the entire Grabowski family on this wonderful celebration!

Congratulations on Our New Arrivals

We have two new babies in our community! Mazal tov to Galina Arkhipova and Alexei Frunze and big brother Zachary Arkhipov on the birth of Mark and to Rachel Rose and Zhaomo Yang and big brother Yanai Yang on the birth of Naiya.

With Deepest Sympathy

Condolences to Mary Frances Colvin on the death of her brother and to Jeff Colvin on the death of his sister.

Upcoming Events

Philosophers' Cafe - 07/02/26 7:00 pm

Join us for a friendly discussion on zoom, 7:00 pm, Thursday, July 2. Topic to be announced at the time - no preparation needed!

Games, Snacks and Schmoozing in June & July



Join TVCJ for an afternoon of games, snacks, and schmoozing! Whether you enjoy board games, card games, or simply spending time with friends, we'd love to see you there.

Saturday, June 27, 2pm - Livermore
Saturday, July 25, 2pm - Castro Valley

We'll have a variety of games and snacks available, and you're welcome to bring your favorites from home to share with the group.

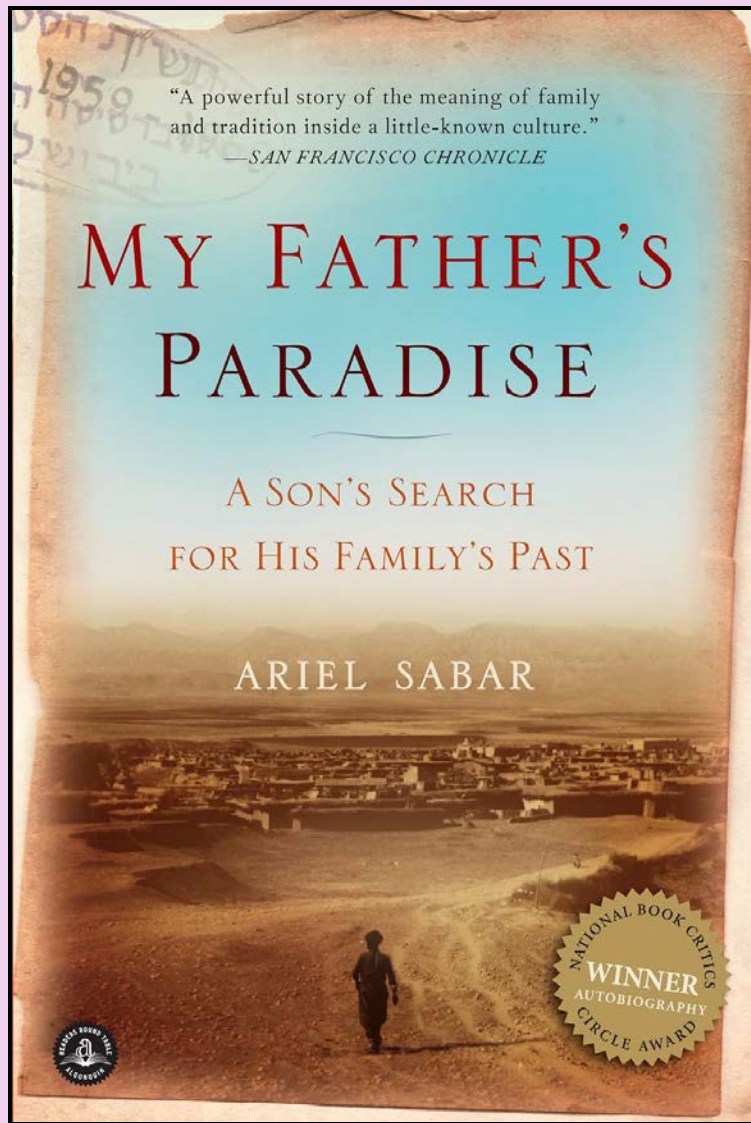
We hope you'll join us!

This Month in Jewish History

On July 1, 1879, Romanian Jews were granted political equality. This was a bit later than Austria-Hungary (1867) and a lot later than Czechoslovakia (1918) but close to Switzerland (1874).

BOOK REVIEW

**MY FATHER'S PARADISE:
A SON'S SEARCH FOR HIS FAMILY'S PAST
By Ariel Sabar**



This is a non fiction book that takes place in the town of Zakho, Iraq which is just south of the Turkish border. It is largely inhabited by poverty stricken Kurdish Jews. The book taught me a lot about the Kurds, of whom I knew very little. This group had always been treated poorly by its neighbors. Racism and ridicule were ever present in their lives.

The author of this book wrote it primarily to learn about his family whose patriarch was the fabric dyer of the town. He was the author's great-grandfather and a very prominent member of the town's synagogue.

The language spoken in Zakho was primarily Aramaic, which was basically a dying language. This was one of the main reasons that there was so little respect for the Kurdish Jews of the town. Most speakers of this language were Bedouins, or wanderers, and had no power base.

One afternoon the author and his family were examining a family picture. It was then that they noticed that the father's sister was missing in the photo. It was determined that she was abducted. Since the author was very fond of her he decided to lead a search for her. The search lasted several years and covered several cities and countries.

During this time he encountered many dangerous situations and people, some of whom were not always helpful. Many family members tried to discourage him, but he persevered in this search. In this voyage we learn much about the history, nature and customs of Kurds, Arabs and Jews of the region.

This book was well written, exciting and informative. I therefore would recommend it.

[If you would like to purchase this book from the Yiddish Book Center Museum Store click here.](#)

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

Book Review By Jerry Zwick

[Jewish Culture School](#) - Starts August 16th



[Jewish Culture School](http://www.trivalleyculturaljews.org) is Back--And We're Putting Jewish History Under the Microscope!

What do an astronomer in medieval Spain, a physician in ancient Egypt, and a modern environmental scientist have in common?

They're all part of this year's Jewish Cultural School theme: *Jewish History Through Science!*

At TVCJ, we believe Jewish history is much more than a timeline of holidays and hardships. It's the story of curious, creative, and determined people who have shaped the world through ideas, discovery, and innovation. This year, our students will explore the lives of Jewish scientists, physicians, astronomers, environmentalists, and inventors from biblical times to today.

And because science is best experienced firsthand, we'll be mixing in plenty of hands-on experiments and activities along the way!

Jewish Culture School offers a unique Secular, Humanistic approach to Jewish education, where children learn about Jewish history, music, dance, literature, foodways, ethics, and social justice in a welcoming and engaging environment.

Rather than focusing on religious observance, we celebrate the rich diversity of Jewish culture and encourage curiosity, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of learning.

The program is open to children ages 6-14 and culminates in a personalized Secular Brit Mitzvah experience that reflects each student's interests and connection to Jewish life.

This promises to be an exciting year of learning together. We can't wait to see what our young scientists discover!

[For more information click here: Jewish Culture School](#)

Joke: Einstein, Newton and Pascal are playing a game of hide and seek. Einstein begins to count to ten. Pascal runs and hides. Newton draws a one meter by one meter square in the ground in front of Einstein then stands in the middle of it. Einstein reaches ten, uncovers his eyes, and exclaims "Newton! I found you! You're it!"

Punchline: Newton replies "You didn't find me. You found a Newton over a square meter. You found Pascal!"

UC Davis Hibel Lab Research
Looking for Participants

UC Davis Hibbel Lab

Calling All Jewish Moms

We are inviting Jewish moms living in California with children born around the time of the October 7th attack to participate in a study on the experiences of Jewish identity, culture, and antisemitism

Mishpacha Project

Requirements:

Jewish mom aged 18 or older, residing in California, with a biological child **born between September 1, 2022 and September 30, 2023**

Participation Involves:

filling out a 60-minute survey with questions on Jewish identity, family cultural practices, and experiences with antisemitism



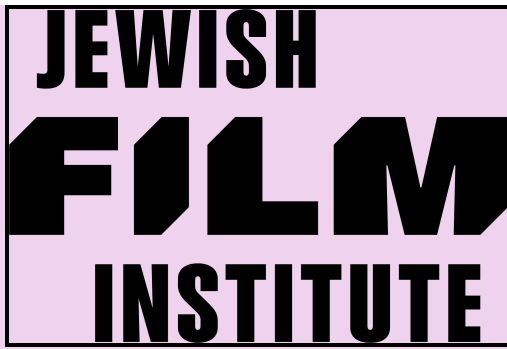
Compensation:

eligible participants will receive a \$20 Amazon gift card

How to Get Involved:

contact us at HibellLab@ucdavis.edu to confirm eligibility and receive the survey link

***The 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, is in the Bay Area from July 16 – August 2, 2026!

[Tickets to individual screenings can be purchased on each film's webpage by clicking here.](#)

Can you believe that the [SFJFF46 lineup](#) has already been out for a week? We're sure you're busy poring over the [schedule](#), and with 60+ films in the program, we're here to help you find your next favorite movie.

For those seeking unexpected and untold stories that expand and deepen our collective understanding of Jewish identity and culture, [look no further than these riveting works](#) that received JFI support in their completion. We're proud to offer you the first chance to see these anywhere in Bay Area theaters!

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 Jewish Film Institute member today!](#)



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 June We Remember

Eliza Haile Cloe
Augusta Gorman
John Mogul
Ian Peel
David Randel



June Birthdays

Alexey Frunze
David Gates
Greg Gorel
Jazz Salwen-Grabowski
Carol King
Bret Mogilefsky
Judy Seid
Naiya Rose Yang

Who We Are

Rabbi: Judith Seid 925-485-1049

Madrikha: Jamie Ireland

Board Members:

David Gates

Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Jamie Ireland

Noah King

Rachel Rose

Diego Rother

Judith Seid

Keren Tellias

Newsletter: Joy Randel

Webmaster: Noah King

JCS Teachers: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski, Judith Seid

Treasurer: Judith Seid

Secretary: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Holiday Coordinator: Jazz Salwen-Grabowski

Movie Coordinator: Bret Mogilefsky

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