

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 located near the bottom of this email.)

August 29th, 2026 Newsletter

Museum Volunteer Opportunity for High School Students

[The Magnes Collection of Jewish Art and Life](#) is accepting applications for the 2026-27 cohort of **Teens Take the Magnes**. We're seeking high school volunteers to **curate their own exhibition** this year working with one of the world's pre-eminent collections of Jewish material culture!

The time commitment will be 25-35+ hours over 7 months. Magnes staff are happy to confirm volunteer hours for students with a community service requirement at school.

This opportunity is open to all students in grades 9 to 12 in the 2026/2027 school year. Students interested in museums, history, and/or art and culture are encouraged to apply. Knowledge of, or participation in, Jewish life is not required.

We welcome applications from teens in your community until **Friday, September 18**. Teens and their families can [learn more about the opportunity and apply by clicking here](#). The work submitted for **Teens Take the Magnes Committee** can be seen on Instagram at **@magnesteens** (posts forthcoming!)

Upcoming Events

Philosophers' Cafe - 09/03/26 7:00 pm

About a dozen of us met for our first in-person Philosophers' Cafe for a spirited discussion of some issues that had recently been brought to the The Ethicist at the New York Times. In addition to our discussion, we reviewed some 50 or so ideas for future sessions and voted on which we would like to talk about in the coming year.

Our September 3rd discussion - for which we'll be back on zoom at 7 p.m. - will be about privacy, and what the limits on privacy should be. Look for your evite! We'll meet in person again next summer.

Non-members are welcome to attend a couple of Philosophers' Cafes before we ask you to join.

Jewish Culture School - New Year of JCS

Our New Year of Jewish Culture School is off to a great start! We started by exploring the question "How do you know what you know?" Students thought about how we decide whether something is true, where information comes from, and why it is important to ask questions and look for evidence. We even talked about why you probably shouldn't ask a friend to taste a wild mushroom to find out whether it's poisonous!

We also made time for some singing and dancing before putting our scientific thinking to delicious use. Our big experiment of the day was making impossible pie cupcakes-- a tasty treat that seems to defy expectations as it transforms while baking. It was a wonderful first class, and we're excited for a year of exploring Jewish scientists, thinkers, innovators!

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

Rosh Hashanah Celebration
Saturday, 9/12/26, 4:30p.m.



Looking for a warm, inclusive, and meaningful way to welcome the Jewish New Year? Join Tri-Valley Cultural Jews on Saturday, September 12 at 4:30pm in Livermore for our annual Secular Humanistic Rosh Hashanah Celebration.

We'll begin with an uplifting, one-hour ceremony featuring music, English-language readings, and reflections on renewal, hope, and the year ahead. Afterward, we'll gather around the table for a community potluck, with apples, honey, good food, and plenty of schmoozing.

Reservations are required. The suggested donation is \$25 per non-member adult, but everyone is welcome regardless of ability to contribute.

Please help us spread the word! If you know someone who might be looking for a welcoming and meaningful way to celebrate Rosh Hashanah, invite them to join us.

Yom Kippur Kol Nidre Observance

Sunday, 9/20/26, 5:30p.m.

JOIN TVCJ FOR



A MEANINGFUL YOM KIPPUR

MUSIC READINGS REFLECTION

SEPT 20TH 5:30PM LIVERMORE



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If you're looking for a meaningful way to mark the beginning of Yom Kippur that reflects your cultural and humanistic Jewish values, we hope you'll join your Tri-Valley Cultural Jews community for our Kol Nidre Observance on Sunday, September 20, at 5:30pm in Livermore.

Together, we'll welcome Yom Kippur with music, readings, and quiet reflection. Our program offers a thoughtful way to connect with this holiday. While the program is designed for adults, families are welcome. We'll have quiet activities available to help children stay engaged during the program.

Please reserve your spot so we can plan for everyone. A suggested donation of \$25 per non-member adult helps support our community programs, but everyone is welcome regardless of their ability to contribute.

Sukkah Raising with Your TVCJ Community!

Sunday, 9/27/26 10:30a.m. to Noon



**SUKKOT
CELEBRATION**

You are always welcome

**Sept 27th
10:30-12pm
Livermore**

- Sukkah Raising
- Potluck
- Crafts

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One of the most joyful traditions of the fall is building a sukkah together--and we'd love for you to join us! On Sunday, September 27 at 10:30am in Livermore, we'll raise and decorate our community sukkah, share a delicious potluck brunch, and enjoy a relaxed morning with friends old and new.

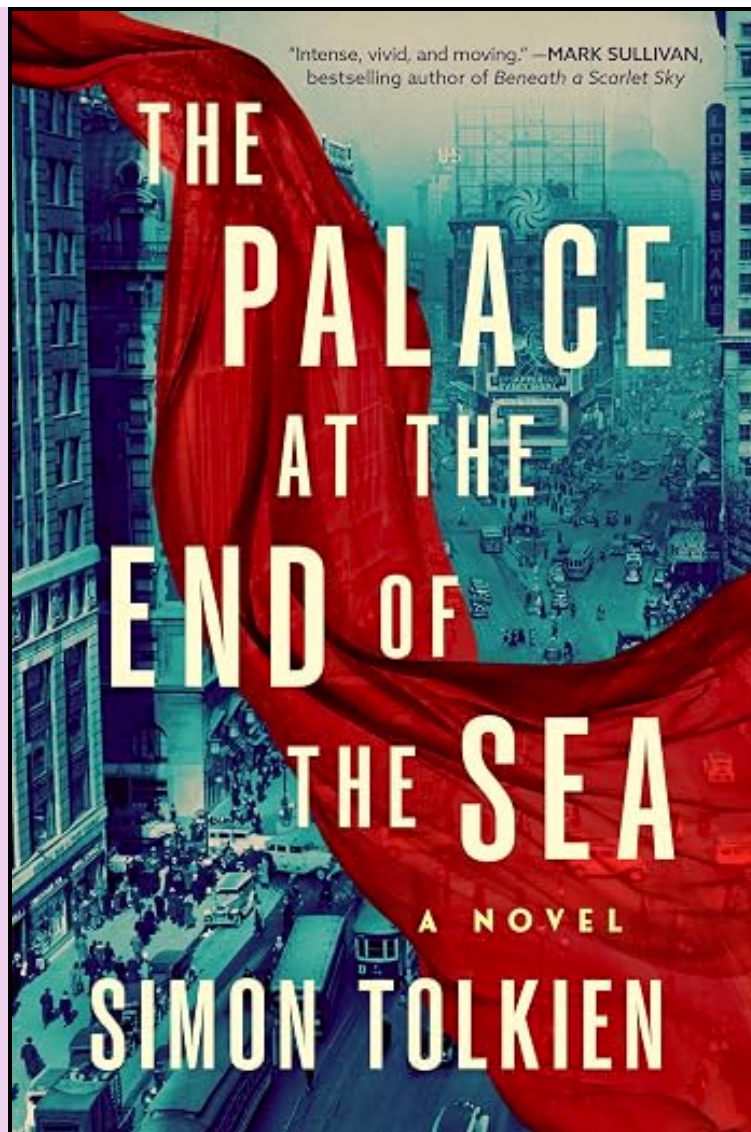
Succos is a celebration of the harvest and an opportunity to appreciate the comforts we enjoy. Building a sukkah together is a hands-on way to connect with these traditions while creating something beautiful as a community.

Help make our sukkah special! Bring a leafy branch for the roof and a piece of fruit to hang as decoration. There will be activities for all ages, and no sukkah-building experience is required! If you've never helped raise a sukkah before, this is the perfect opportunity to learn and pitch in--we'll figure it out together.

Free to TVCJ members, with a suggested donation of \$15 per non-member adult helps support our community programming, but everyone is welcome regardless of their ability to contribute.

We hope you'll join us and help us build something wonderful together!

BOOK REVIEW
THE PALACE AT THE END OF THE SEA
BY
SIMON TOLKIEN



Theo was a young man who was pulled in many different directions by the adults he cared about. His father, who ran a successful clothing manufacturing business in England prior to the Great Depression wanted him to take over the business when he was ready. His mother cared little about this but wanted him to follow her in her Catholic religion. His grandfather wanted him to learn about his Jewish heritage. Some of his friends at school, including his girlfriend, wanted him to become an Anarchist.

His respected running coach wanted him to develop his excellent running skills and use them to play rugby for his school. He also indoctrinated him into Communism.

In addition, his stepfather showered him with many expensive gifts in the hope of using him to gain the favor of Theo's mother.

So Theo spent much of his youth trying to determine which direction he should pursue. This was very complicated because he wanted to please all of these

significant others and he was quite torn. His main problem was that he couldn't find his own identity.

I enjoyed this book because Theo's issues were similar to those faced by so many other young people of different eras and different times.

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

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

Book Review By Jerry Zwick

Another Fun Game Day!





TVCj members and friends gathered for a relaxed afternoon of games, snacks and good conversation. Whether playing a favorite board game or simply catching up and schmoozing, it was a fun chance to spend time together and strengthen our community. Thanks to everyone who joined us, and to the Ireland Family for hosting!



TVCJ is on Bluesky now.
[@tvcj2.bsky.social](https://bsky.app/profile/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>



August We Remember

Lou Garcia

John Gates

Frances Shapiro Colvin



August Birthdays

Zachary Arkhipov

Tai Grabowski

Jamie Ireland

Joy Randel

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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