

**TVCJ Happenings** [View this email in your browser](#)

## Tri-Valley Cultural Jews

**Your East Bay Secular Humanistic Jewish Community**

[TriValleyCulturalJews.org](http://TriValleyCulturalJews.org)

[info@tri-valleyculturaljews.org](mailto: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](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) for an Evite or for more information about our community. You can find us at [trivalleyculturaljews.org](http://trivalleyculturaljews.org). Free to members, suggested \$15 donation 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.

**March 29th 2025**



TVCJ is on Bluesky now.  
**@tvcj2.bsky.social.**  
Check it out.

## **TVCJ Statement**

As Jews and as Americans, we decry the Trump/Musk administration's attempts to deport a green card holder for expressing opinions opposed to the current government's. As Americans, we support the rights of everyone to speak peaceably about controversial subjects without fear of retribution. As Jews, we know that the oppression of anyone means that society isn't safe for Jews. We further demand that the administration stop using supposed anti-Semitism as a reason for punishing their opposition. Jews will not be used as an excuse for unAmerican and anti-Constitutional government actions.

## **Why Do We Need a Home?**

As you know, we are trying to meet a matching grant of \$20,000 to help us find permanent rental space for our supplies, library and activities.

Why can't we continue as we are, though?

To start with, our supplies are scattered - we fill an enormous cabinet at the Bothwell Center (although the Center is no longer available for our events), a 6 foot high bookcase and another bookcase shelf, a garage cabinet and some floor space at Judy's house, as well as space in Jazz's garage. Every time we have an event, a gathering or a holiday, we have to make the rounds searching for what we need. If we had dedicated space, we could keep track of what we have and it would be easily available.

The second reason is that we need space for our gatherings. Homes are not always available, accessible or the right size/configuration. We also need space for our school. While it is nice to have the kitchen in a home,

there's no way to separate classes so there's sometimes a little more noise than is optimal.

How can you help? Make a donation of any size to our "We Need a Home Fund." We're hoping to be halfway to our \$20,000 goal by June.

## **Upcoming Events**

**Passover Family Day - 3/30/25**



JEWISH CULTURE  
SCHOOL

# PASSOVER

FAMILY DAY

SUN. MARCH 30

10:30AM-12PM

PLEASANTON, CA

MATZAH MAKING  
CRAFTS MUSIC



**TRI-VALLEY  
CULTURAL JEWS**  
secular + humanist

CULTURALJEWS@GMAIL.COM  
(925) 399-8029

## **You're Invited: Passover Family Day Celebration!**

Celebrate the joy of Passover with Tri-Valley Cultural Jews at our fun and festive Family Day! Whether you're a seasoned Passover celebrant or new to Jewish traditions, this event offers a wonderful way to experience the holiday in a warm, inclusive, and welcoming environment.

### **Event Highlights:**

- **Matzah Making:** Get hands-on at our matzah-making station and craft your very own Passover matzah!
- **Crafts:** Enjoy arts and crafts for all ages, making it a great way to celebrate together as a family.
- **Music:** Tap your feet and sing along to traditional Jewish music that will bring everyone into the Passover spirit!

**When:** March 30, 2025

**Time:** 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM

**Where:** Pleasanton, CA (address provided at registration)

This free, family-friendly event is open to all and offers a wonderful opportunity to connect with our vibrant Jewish community. It's also a chance to learn more about our [Jewish Culture School](#), where we provide a secular, humanist approach to Jewish education for families, children, and adults.

### **RSVP Today!**

We can't wait to celebrate with you! RSVP now to reserve your spot for this exciting and fun-filled morning.

For more information or to RSVP, email [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) or call **(925) 399-8029**.

We look forward to celebrating Passover with you and your family!

## **Philosophers' Cafe - 4/03/25**

Our March discussion was postponed until April, it will be on ethics, specifically the question of whether one should do the "right thing" even if it will result in a bad end. Join us Thursday, April 3rd from 7:00p.m.-8:00 p.m. on zoom. Look for the evite!

## **Updates from the Board: Philosophers' Cafe**

Philosophers' Cafe will continue to be free for members of Tri-Valley Cultural Jews, and we welcome non-members to attend up to two sessions before we kindly ask that they join our community.

## **The Barry Sisters: America's Yiddish Swingsters - 4/08/25**

If you need a break from America, Workers' Circle is presenting this virtually on Tuesday, April 8th at 7:00 PM

Andy Muchin will trace the history of the United States' most popular Yiddish singing act.

[Click here for \*\*FREE\*\* online registration and more information.](#)

## **Passover - 4/13/25**



## **You're Invited to Our Secular Humanist Passover Seder!**

We'd love for you to join us for a special Passover Seder. This is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community and celebrate the values of freedom, justice, and shared humanity. Our Seder will be secular and humanist, focusing on the universal themes of liberation and collective responsibility, while still honoring the traditions of the holiday.

### **Details:**



**When:** Sunday, April 13th

**5:00 PM:** Ceremony

**6:30 PM:** Dinner

**Where:** Livermore, CA (details shared at registration)

**RSVP:** [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) | **(925) 399-8029**

**What to Expect:**

- A thoughtful, non-religious Passover Seder
- Meaningful discussions around justice, equality, and social responsibility
- A delicious potluck meal to share together
- A welcoming, inclusive atmosphere for everyone who values community, human rights, and social progress

Whether you're a long-time Passover celebrant or new to the holiday, this Seder is a chance to connect with others who care about building a just and compassionate world.

We're really looking forward to celebrating with you all!

**P.S.** Feel free to bring a friend or family member—just let us know so we can make sure there's plenty of food to go around!

## **Not a Book Club - 4/26/25**

Not-A-Book-Club met Feb. 23 to discuss *The 12 Million Dollar Stuffed Shark*. A lively debate about what constitutes art was followed by a conversation about branding (turns out there's a whole lot of branding going on) and marketing. On Saturday, April 26th, we'll discuss *The Golem of Brooklyn* by Adam Mansbach and on Sunday, June 8th, our book will be *The Art Thief* by Michael Finkel. Look for your evites!

This special group is a perk for our members. Want to find out more about who we are and what we do? Email us at [culturaljews@gmail.com](mailto:culturaljews@gmail.com) or call **(925) 399-8029** if you have questions or want to find out more about our community.

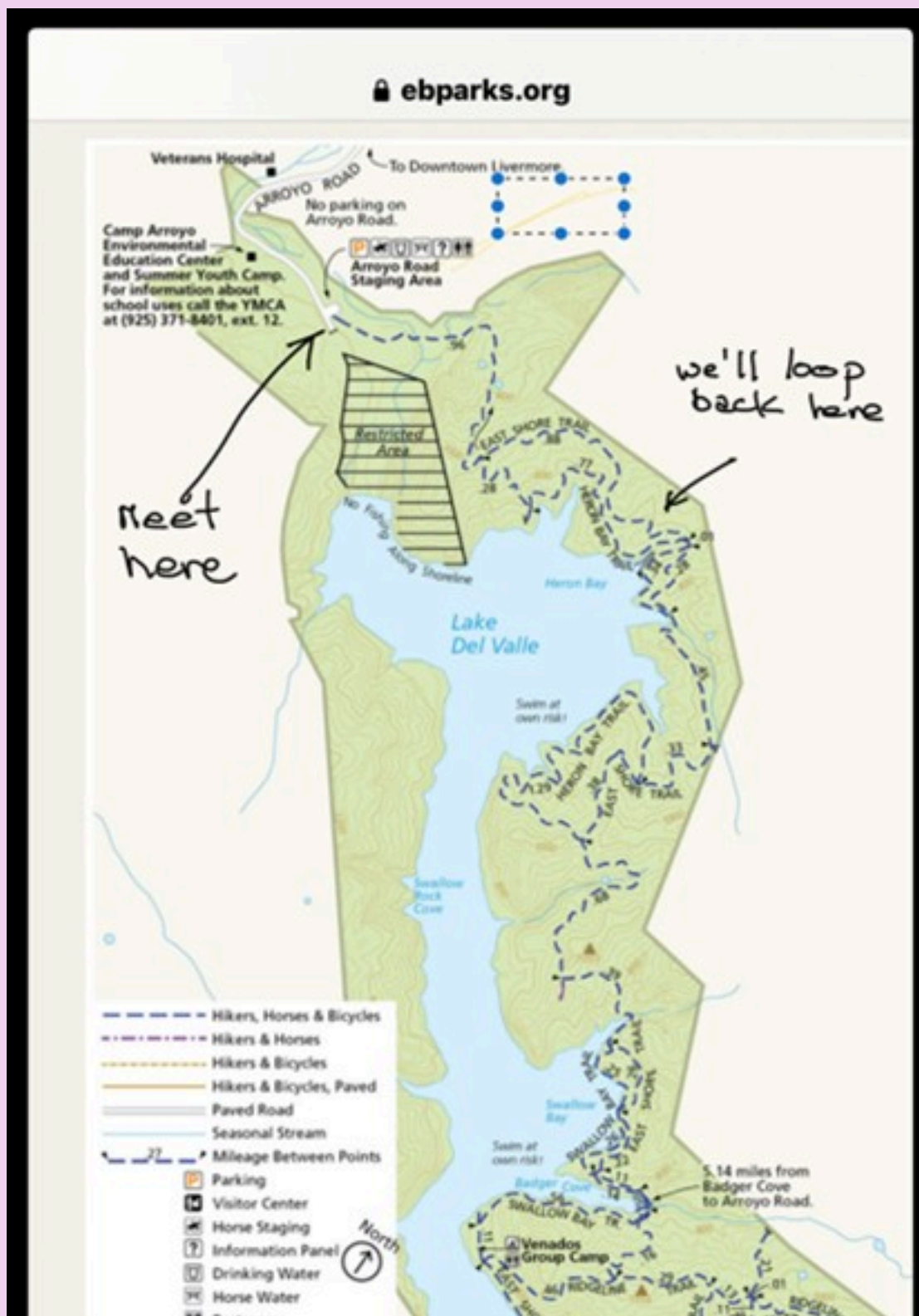
## **Sunday Chats - 4/27/25**



Sunday Chat is composed of any members who want to meet on the Sunday mornings that JCS meets. Parents of JCS kids and other members meet at Inklings in downtown Pleasanton for coffee and conversation.

## **TVCJ Hike Saturday - 5/03/25 9:30a.m.**

Meet at the East parking lot (no fee) at 9:30a.m. Walk about 2 miles out (466ft elevation gain) loop back 2 miles. Total trail is 14.6 miles so we can go further if we want. Deep in a valley framed by oak-covered hills, Del Valle Lake is five miles long surrounded by 4,395 acres of beautiful land for hiking, horseback riding, and nature study. Exposed, but shouldn't be too hot in early May. Bring plenty of water.



### Directions to Arroyo Road Staging Area

From I-580 in Livermore, exit at North Livermore Avenue. Drive south on North Livermore Avenue. Turn right at Portola Avenue, then left on North L Street. North L Street becomes South L Street, then Arroyo Road. Continue on Arroyo Road past the entrance to the U.S. Veterans

Administration Hospital and Sycamore Grove Park. The staging area is on the left at the end of Arroyo Road (No parking fee).

**Alternatively**, take Holmes St. in Livermore to Wetmore Rd. Continue past Sycamore Grove entrance to Arroyo Road. Turn right and proceed as above.

## **Save the Date: Lag B'Omer Picnic! - 5/18/25**

Join us this Lag B'Omer for a day of community, fun, and laughter! Tri-Valley Cultural Jews is hosting its annual Lag B'Omer Picnic in San Ramon on **Sunday, May 18th from 10:30am-12pm**, and we want YOU to be part of the celebration!

Enjoy a delicious potluck meal—bring your favorite dish to share! Plus, get ready for classic park games, including frisbee, soccer, and our famous Annual Melon Toss (trust us, you don't want to miss it!).

We can't wait to see you there for a day full of fun and community!

## **The 37th Annual East Bay Tikkun: A Day of Learning in Honor of Shavuot**

**When:** Sunday, June 1st

**Time:** 2:00p.m. to 8:00p.m.

**Where:** JCC East Bay in Berkeley

**Pre-Registration will be required.**

### **Class Schedule**

Shortly before the event, all pre-registered attendees will receive a PDF schedule of classes emailed to the email address with which they registered.

**If you have questions**, email [tikkun@jcceastbay.org](mailto:tikkun@jcceastbay.org) and they will respond in a timely manner.



**Save The Date:** Keren Rother Telias will celebrate her Brit Mitzvah on **July 5th** in the South Bay. We hope many TVCJ members and friends will come celebrate with the family and see what a Secular Brit Mitzvah ceremony is like.

## Jewish Culture School (JCS)



### JCS Update 3/2/25

In our latest [Jewish Culture School](#) class, we explored the powerful art of Ben Shahn, a Jewish artist known for his social commentary through his stunning lithographs. We discussed how Shahn used his art to address

issues like justice, human rights, and the struggles of everyday people, reflecting deeply on the world around him. Inspired by his style and themes, the class then got creative, making our own art pieces influenced by Shahn's bold and evocative approach.

Of course, no class would be complete without a delicious treat, so we wrapped up the session with some homemade potato kugel. It was a meaningful and inspiring class, blending creativity, history, and, of course, good food!

## **Reproductive Rights Program**

Our Reproductive Rights shabbat program on Feb. 22 sparked a lot of interest in contributing to the cause of Reproductive Rights. We watched the short movie *Under G-d*, about the religious freedom lawsuits against abortions bans brought by Jewish and other groups in Florida and religious freedom arguments against abortion bans in Indiana led by Hoosier Jews for Reproductive Rights. A lively discussion followed the movie.

If you'd like to join the fight for reproductive rights and reproductive justice, you can contribute to Americans United for the Separation of Church and State by clicking this link ([au.org](https://www.au.org)).

If you'd like to contribute to abortion access, you can click on the following link to donate to the [\*\*Jews For Abortion Access fund of the National Council of Jewish Women\*\*](#).

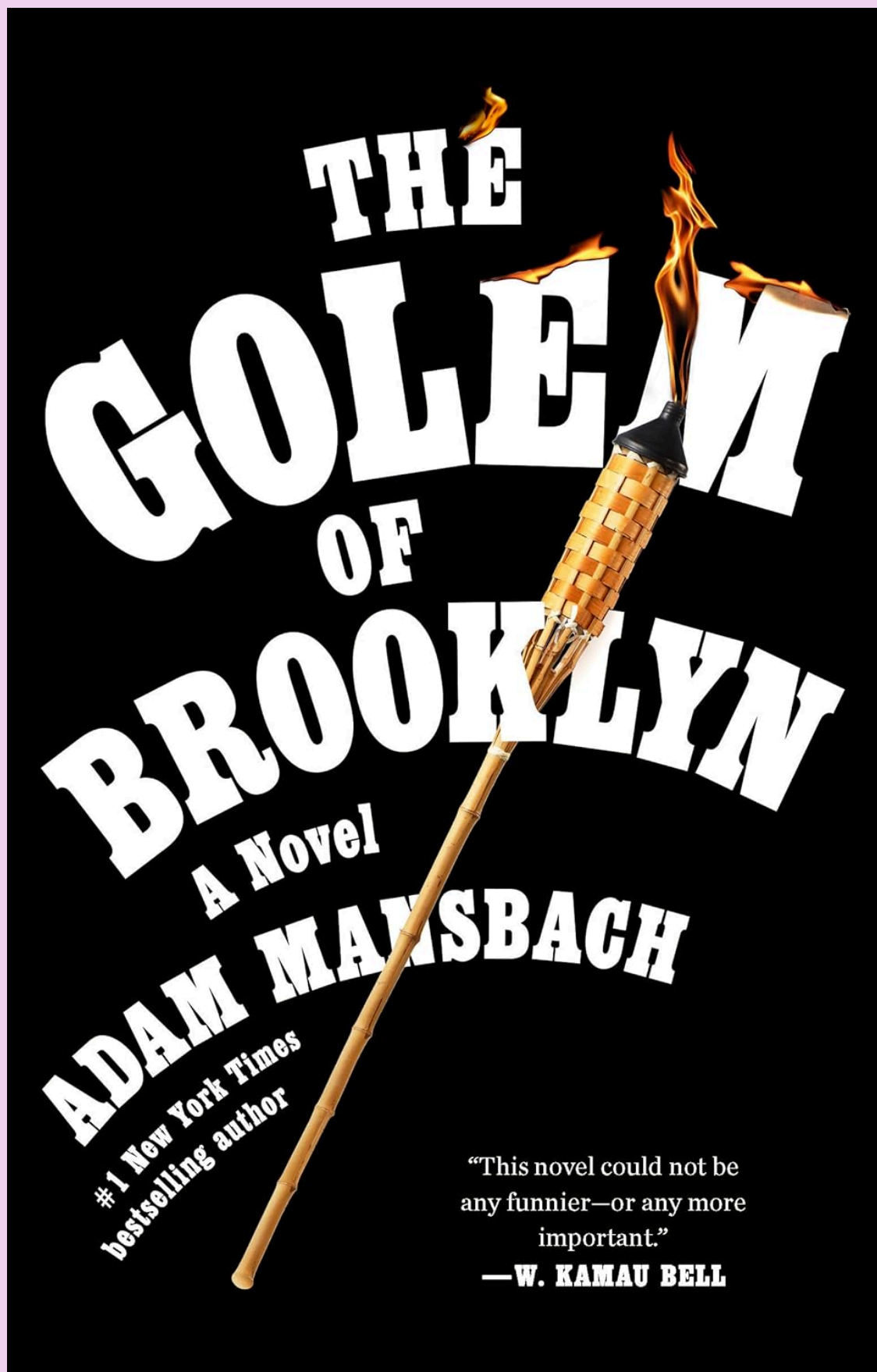
## **Our Purim Celebration**





A big thank you to everyone who helped make this year's Purim celebration truly special! From the delicious hamantaschen to the fun of playing Hit Haman, crafting, and sharing a wonderful potluck meal, it was a day filled with joy and community spirit. A heartfelt thank you to David who was our chef de hamantaschen, Adriana who brought her wonderful energy to the craft table, Elaine who greeted everyone with a smile, and to those who helped with clean-up, ensuring everything ran smoothly. A special shout-out to Noah King for writing this year's Purimspiel and to all the kids who dedicated their time and energy to making the performance a memorable one. Your creativity and hard work made the show a great success, and we couldn't have done it without you. Thank you again to everyone who joined us in making this Purim celebration a time to remember!

***Book Review***  
***The Golem of Brooklyn***  
***By***  
***Adam Mansbach***



*The Golem of Brooklyn* by Adam Mansbach is a quick course on Jewish history and culture cleverly hidden in a hilarious - maybe even rollicking -



story set in Brooklyn, upstate New York and Kentucky. A cultural Jew and a OTD (ex-Hassidic devotee) set out with The Golem to fulfill the mission of all the golems (there's really only one) in all of Jewish history and folklore - to protect the Jews against those who seek to kill and oppress them. TLDR - The Golem comes through.

A little Yiddish is helpful, but if there's anything you don't understand, call me and I'll translate. (I actually had to look up a word or two, one of which is "pus," which is not a word I have ever needed to use in Yiddish.)

**Reviewed by Judith Seid**

## **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>

**Joke:** How do you make an octopus laugh? **Answer:** With ten-tickles!



### **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

Sophia Ireland

Rachel Rose

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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**Our mailing address is:**

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