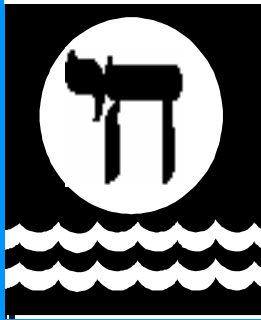


PACIFIC COMMUNITY
OF CULTURAL JEWS



CHAI-LIGHTS

March 2012

Pacific Community of Cultural Jews

Orange County, CA 949/760-9006

PacifComm@aol.com, <http://www.pccjews.org>

**COME ONE, COME ALL
TO THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY'S**

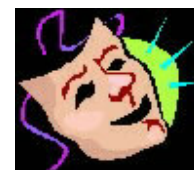
2012 PURIM PARTY!

**BE PREPARED TO LAUGH, TEST YOUR WITS, SING,
SCHMOOZE, AND NOSH ON HAMANTASCHEN.**

**PRICE OF ADMISSION – FREE TO MEMBERS
(NON-MEMBERS: \$5.00)**



MARCH 11TH, 2:00 P.M.



**PLACE: THE HOME OF
TERRY BAYER AND VICTOR VEGA**

**12 WHITE SANDS
NEWPORT COAST, CA 92657**

***** R.S.V.P. TO: ALICE SELFRIDGE
562-592-0999
SELFRIDG@EARTHLINK.NET**

*Mark
Your
Calendar*

Friday, March 2nd, 7:30 PM

THE PHILOSOPHERS CAFE

at the home of

Jack & Bernice Stein

(see page 3)

Saturday, March 3rd, 10:30 AM

BOARD MEETING

at the home of

Shirley Spiegel

Sunday, March 11th, 2:00 PM

PURIM PARTY

at the home of

Terry Bayer & Victor Vega

(see page 1)

Tuesday, March 13 th 7:30 PM

FILM CLUB

at the home of

Shirley Spiegel

(see Page 4)

Saturday, March 17th, 6:30 PM

DINE OUT

at

Casa Gamino

(see page 3)

Saturday, March 31st, 2:30 PM

PASSOVER SEDER

at the home of

Suzy & Bryon Baron

(see Page 5)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



March is here! And with March comes a number of fantastic celebration and programs Purim, Passover, Philosopher's Café, Film Club, and Dine Out And while our membership has a lot to choose from, it gives us the opportunity to spend time with like-minded people.

In the upcoming months, we will be presenting the slate of officers for the years 2012-2014. This slate will be presented in May to be voted upon in June at our year-end party.

One of our members, Norma Kellam, has undergone successful surgery and will be going home Tuesday. We are so glad that things went well, and are looking forward to seeing Norma in the future.

On a sad note, one of Pacific Communities long time friends, Vykki Ruvalcava Morton, lost her son DJ. After 28 years of challenges and health issues, he passed away on February 11th. While most of us did not have the opportunity to know him, I know that he will be missed terribly by his family. Our thoughts go out to Vykki, Shandi (his sister), and Dave (his stepfather).

Karen

HELLO FROM CSJO

I am happy to announce the site of the 2012 CSJO conference...Rutgers, Newark, NJ !!! The conference will, as usual, take place during the American Memorial Day week-end which is May 25-28, 2012.

Plans are well under way for interesting and fun topics that will be presented during that weekend. All information will be published in newsletters and the CSJO website at www.csjo.org. Do visit the website to be updated about the conference, and about the upcoming International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism (IISHJ) Colloquium to be held during the week-end of April 20-22, 2012 at Northwestern University in Evanston, IL, U.S.A.

I look forward to keeping you updated on all of the upcoming CSJO news...and weather, when important!

Enjoy Purim!

Rifke

DINE OUT

Saturday, March 17th, 6:30 PM

Casa Gamino

1228 S. Brookhurst
Anaheim
714-956-1120



Please RSVP to Karen
KNECHFOUR@AOL.COM
no later than Wednesday, March 14th

THE PHILOSOPHER'S CAFE

Friday, March 2nd at 7:30 PM

at the home of
Jack and Bernice Stein

The Philosophers' Cafe is a fun, intellectual, and social evening.

COME AND SHARE YOUR OPINIONS WITH THIS FRIENDLY GROUP OF THINKERS AND TALKERS!

RSVP to Bernice
JStein7901@aol.com
714-968-0998

Condolences to Jim Rothman and the Rothman family on the passing of Jim's mother, Lillian Kratz

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Leslie Zwick 3/03

OFFICERS 2010-2011

President:	Karen Knecht	Knechtfour@aol.com
Vice President	Lee Jacobi	LeeJacobi@earthlink.net
Secretary	Leslie Zwick	Jerlesz@verizon.net
Treasurer:	Greta Singer	danandgreta86@yahoo.com
Membership:	Alice Selfridge	selfridg@earthlink.net
Hospitality:	Dan Goldberg	danandgreta86@yahoo.com
Program Coordinators	Jack and Bernice Stein	JStein7901@aol.com
Publicity:	Lee Jacobi	LeeJacobi@earthlink.net

Committee and board positions:

CSJO Representative:	Karen Knecht	Knechtfour@aol.com
SHJ Representative:	Lee Jacobi	LeeJacobi@earthlink.net
Board Members At Large:	Sylvia Rothman	sobaysyl@aol.com
	Suzy Baron	BryonBaron@sbcglobal.net
	Bryon Baron	BryonBaron@sbcglobal.net
	Nancy Okamoto	Nokamoto@Roadrunner.com
	Marsha Harman	HARMSSSS@AOL.COM
Newsletter Editor	Bernice Stein	ChaiLights4You@aol.com

The Brooklyn Dodgers in My Life

By Greta Singer

I was a Brooklyn girl and like all other kids in Brooklyn, I loved the beach at Coney Island and the Brooklyn Dodgers. When I was quite young, we moved to a house only a couple of blocks from Ebbets Field. My father would point out the stadium's lights on game nights. We would walk over to the ballpark during a game and listen to the crowd cheering inside. Occasionally, I would get to go to a game and that was exciting: The hot dogs, the green grass, the handsome players.

When I was in junior high, Jackie Robinson came to speak to us kids. That was the most exciting happening in most of our lives. Once when I was at the game, I was standing near the railing overlooking the outfield where Duke Snyder was waiting for a ball. A bunch of kids were yelling and throwing bottle caps at him on the field. I was standing there amazed at how close to me he was. When one cap grazed the Duke's arm, the kids all ran away; but I was too young or too dumb to run. The Duke turned and looked right at me and cursed. I didn't know whether to be thrilled or terrified.

The year I was a freshman at Brooklyn College, the Dodgers won the pennant. It was the event of a lifetime in Brooklyn. The Bums were not often winners. It was late September and the weather was beautiful. The radios were on all over campus. Everyone was rooting for the home team; all the kids had nothing on their minds but baseball. Luckily, it was early in the semester. When the Dodgers beat the Yankees, the campus went wild. Brooklyn went wild with parades and celebrations. A couple of years later, the Dodgers were traitors and moved to Los Angeles.

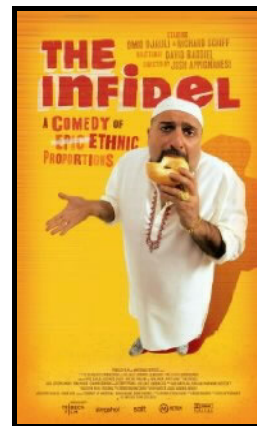
Many years later, I married Dan, a Brooklyn boy and a Dodger fan. His first and enduring love was the Brooklyn Dodgers. He knew all the players statistics by heart. He followed the box scores every day in the newspaper. And when the LA Dodgers played on television, he wanted to watch. But if the Dodgers were losing, or even close, he turned the game off. He couldn't stand to see them lose. These were not the LA Dodgers to Dan; it was the Brooklyn Dodgers, only playing 3000 miles away.

Fifty years after the Dodgers left Brooklyn, we moved to Southern California. We are so close to where the Dodgers play. But we never go to a game. Why? I am not sure but I think we can see the game better on television with our much older eyes. There is no parking problem or freeway traffic if we watch it at home. And if the Dodgers start to lose, we can change the channel and the loss is gone. We are still the same kids as we were in Brooklyn so many years ago: Our heroes never change; our dreams of winning never die.

PC Film Club

Tues., March 13th at 7:30 PM

"THE INFIDEL"



An identity crisis comedy centered on Mahmud Nasir, successful business owner, and salt of the earth East End Muslim who discovers that he's adopted - and Jewish.

At the home of Shirley Spiegel

Please RSVP

714-378-1186 or

SHIRL-B@SOCAL.RR.COM

Pacific Community of Cultural Jews

Passover Seder

March 31, 2012 2:30 P.M.

Bryon & Suzy Baron's Home

1141 E. Tularosa

Orange 714-639-4906



Pacific Community
Members - Free

Guests - \$10.00

Pot Luck Dinner
A - K - Side Dish
L - S - Main Dish
T - Z - Dessert



Please RSVP no later than March 21st to either

Suzy Baron 714-639-4906

bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net

or

Leslie Zwick 714-893-2715 jerlesz@verizon.net

QUEEN ESTHER'S ASSIMILATION

by
Norma Kellam

The Book of Esther doesn't mention God. That correlates with the type of Jews that it tells about: assimilated Jews. The Jews of ancient Persia were quite assimilated, even though they kept their Jewish identity.

Judaism frowns on assimilation. Traditional Jews don't even approve of the degree of assimilation that liberal religious Jews and Secular Humanistic Jews consider natural. Then why does one of the books of the Bible present an assimilated Jewish heroine?

Esther had a Jewish name, which was Hadassah. However, the Megillah only mentions her Jewish name once and refers to her throughout the text as Esther. Various sources suggest that the name Esther is a variation of the name of a Babylonian fertility goddess called Ishtar. The name of Esther's cousin Mordecai, who had raised her, appears to have developed from Marduk, the chief Babylonian god.

Esther assimilated even further than most Persian Jews. She became King Achashverosh's wife without even telling him that she was Jewish. However, she didn't make the decision not to tell on her own. Mordecai, told her not to tell, so he shared responsibility for Esther's extreme assimilation.

Considering that Judaism strongly objects to that degree of assimilation, it is paradoxical that a Jewish heroine was so assimilated that even her

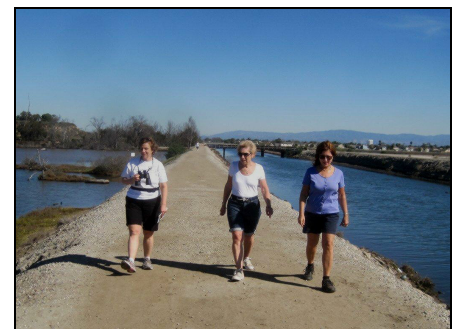
husband didn't know that she was Jewish. It may just be that without Esther's assimilation, she never would have become queen and therefore, would not have been able to save the Jews in the large territory that Persia ruled.

According to an opinion in the Talmud, Esther refrained from eating meat while she was in the king's palace in order to not break the laws of kashrut, but the Megillah doesn't say what she ate. The rabbis who presented that viewpoint apparently couldn't conceive of a Jewish heroine breaking the kosher laws. Considering that King Achashverosh didn't know that she was Jewish, it is doubtful that she was able to keep kosher while living in the royal palace. Considering her assimilation, it is even doubtful that she cared about keeping kosher.

The only things in the Megillah that could be religious are Mordecai's refusal to bow to Haman, which could be refusal to worship a human being, and Esther's request for all the Jews in Shushan to fast before she approached the king. There is no mention of prayer. A Jewish heroine who neither keeps kosher nor prays is ideal for us Secular Humanistic Jews.

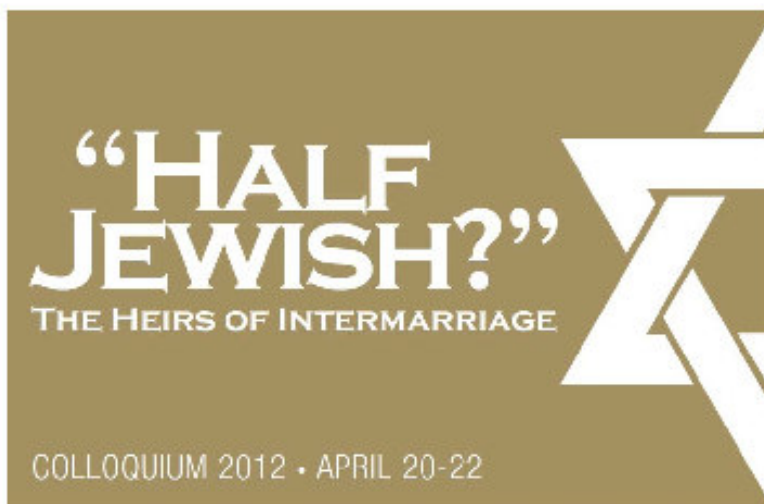
Assimilation in various degrees is a fact of modern life. Just as Queen Esther admitted that she was Jewish to save the Jews of ancient Persia, modern highly assimilated Jews may remember that they are Jewish in an emergency situation. Maybe that's why the Book of Esther received canonization. Jewishness is buried deep in our psyches.

TU B'SHVAT at BOLSA CHICA





**THE INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE FOR
SECULAR HUMANISTIC
JUDAISM**



**HOW WILL HEIRS OF INTERMARRIAGE CHANGE JUDAISM?
CAN YOU BE “JEWISH AND” RATHER THAN “JEWISH OR”?
CAN THE JEWISH WORLD HANDLE “HALF-JEWISH”?
IS BEING “HALF-JEWISH” NO BIG DEAL ANYMORE?**

“Half Jewish?” is crucial to the future of American Judaism—an opportunity and a challenge. For two decades, half of the marriages involving Jews have been intercultural. Their children are now young adults, choosing their own identities. Who are they? How do they define their own identities? How do they relate to being Jewish, and to both sides of their families? Is “half Jewish” like “half pregnant,” or can the Jewish world accept multiple identities in an open tent?

Northwestern University, Evanston, Illinois

The International Institute for Secular Humanistic Judaism in cooperation with Newberger Hillel at the University of Chicago and Fiedler Hillel at Northwestern University

Featured Speakers will include

Rabbi Adam Chalom, Dean – North America, IISHJ

Maya Escobar, Latina-Jewish artist and activist

Professor Lynn Davidman, Professor of Sociology/Religious Studies, University of Kansas

Dan Libenson, Executive Director, University of Chicago Hillel

Rabbi Kerry Olitzky, Executive Director, Jewish Outreach Institute

Yoni Sarason, Midwest Regional Coordinator, Birthright Israel NEXT

Rabbi Sivan Malkin Maas, Dean, Tmura-IISHJ, Israel

ONLINE REGISTRATION NOW OPEN – <http://halfjewish.eventbrite.com>

PRINTED REGISTRATION MATERIALS TO BE MAILED SOON

For more information: www.iishj.org info@iishj.org 847-777-6907



The Pearly Gates

A rabbi dies and is waiting in line to enter heaven. In front of him is a man dressed in a loud shirt, leather jacket, jeans and sunglasses. Gabriel addresses the man, "I need to know who you are so I can determine whether or not to admit you to Heaven."

The man replies, "I'm Moshe Levy, the taxi driver."

"Gabriel consults his list, smiles and says, "OK. Take this silken robe and golden staff and enter Heaven."

Now it's the rabbi's turn. He stands upright and says, "I am Benjamin Himmelfarb and I was the rabbi of Temple Beth Am for forty years."



Gabriel looks at his list and says, "OK rabbi. Take this cotton robe and wooden staff and enter Heaven."

"Hold on a minute," says the rabbi, "that man before me was a taxi driver - why did he get a silken robe and golden staff?"

"Up here, we only work by results," says Gabriel. "While you preached, people slept - but while he drove, people prayed."

Chai-Lights is published monthly by the Pacific Community of Cultural Jews, Orange County, CA
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<http://www.pccjews.org>

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For an electronic copy, please provide your e-mail address
Editor: Bernice Stein ChaiLights4You@aol.com*

*Affiliated with The Society for Humanistic Judaism and
The Congress of Secular Jewish Organizations*