



CHAI LIGHTS

November 2025
Pacific Community of Cultural Jews

Orange County, CA.
PacifComm@aol.com

714-739-1366
www.pccjews.org

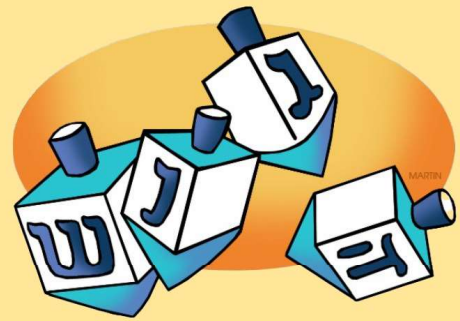


SAVE THE DATE!

Please join us as we celebrate
Chanukah together.
Saturday, Dec. 20, 2025
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Deborah Holland Penley's Club House
4552 Michelson Dr.
Irvine

We will have our traditional
latkes, candlelight to
Some surprise activities.



Look for more information in our
December Chai Lights.

Hope to see all of you there!

Co-Presidents' Message

November is a special month. We prepare for the year's final stretch. It's a month of thanksgiving, harvest, and reflection. Many gather with family and friends. For a short time, we focus on good things in our lives and feel gratitude.

We may feel that this is easier said than done given the discord in our society and the world at large. However, more and more Americans are speaking out against injustice. Jews for a Secular Democracy, the American Humanist Association, and Workers Circle, among other Jewish and Jewish-adjacent organizations are communicating with their members about the threats to our civil rights. Some are having "teach-ins" on contacting our government representatives. Individually, we are finding out that we have more in common with each other than our country's leaders would have us think. That gives us hope for the future.

The Pacific Community's recent Harvest Festival (belated Sukkot by another name) celebration was a success. A visit to the Fullerton Arboretum was enjoyable and we shared a potluck meal. Much was collected for the Fullerton Interfaith Pathways of Hope foodbank. Thank you to Mike and Celeste Mendelson for hosting this event.

Our trip to the Hsi Lai Buddhist temple in early October was well-attended. We had a well-informed docent who explained a great deal about Buddhist traditions and customs. We learned that some beliefs were not too different from those of secular Jews. Thank you to Shirley Bonem for organizing this event.

Please join us this month for our regularly scheduled Dine-Out and Philosopher's Café. Stay tuned for information on our Hanukah and Christmas events in December.

We wish everyone a Happy Thanksgiving!

Jim and Sylvia Rothman



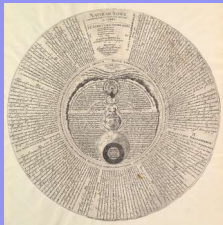
DINE OUT

Sat. Nov. 8, 2025
6:00 p.m.

Okidoki by Meiji
13681 Newport Ave. Ste 9
Tustin
714-730-7051



Please RSVP to Knechtfour at Knechtfour@aol.com
Or 714-739-1366 no later than Nov. 5, 2025.



Philosopher's Café

(Our Friendly Discussion Group)



Friday November 14, 2025

7:30 p.m. Via Zoom

(Sheila planning to do Jewish Jeopardy)

**The Zoom link will be sent out to those who RSVP to
Jim Rothman by Nov. 12, 2025 Look for it in your email.
Then on Nov. 14th, click on the link and join in the fun.**

**To make sure we have your correct email address,
please email Jim at jrbythec@aol.com,
so he can include you.**

Congratulations **October**



Happy Birthday!

Marie Lepowsky - 11/8

Ellens Jacobs - 11/12

Bob Knecht - 11/14

Shirley Bonem - 11/23

Bev Krassner-Bulas - 11/24

Celeste Mendelson - 11/29

Happy Anniversary !

Jim & Sylvia Rothman - 11/23





Jews to Know

Nathan Straus

January 31, 1848 – January 11, 1931

Nathan Straus was an American businessman and philanthropist who co-owned two New York City department stores, R. H. Macy & Company and Abraham & Straus. He was born in what is now part of present-day Germany and the family moved to the US in 1854. He was quite wealthy from his department store ownerships. In the late 1880s, Straus began a period of philanthropy and public service in New York City including presidency of the Board of Health and commissioner of the Department of Health.

Straus was a fierce advocate for the pasteurization of milk. In 1892 he heard a cow cough and was shocked when that otherwise healthy-looking animal died. He ordered an autopsy, which revealed that the cow's lungs were loaded with tuberculosis. Pasteurization had been discovered in 1865 but had not yet become standard in the food industry. Although Straus wasn't a scientist, he suspected that consuming milk from sick cows would transmit illness. He made sure his own children drank pasteurized milk, but his vision inspired him to do much more. During the 1890s, he set up "milk depots" in dozens of cities, where he gave away free pasteurized milk to poor families and donated a pasteurization plant for New York City's orphan asylum, where over 40% of the children died every year. As a result, the death rate for children plummeted. There's a small plot of land named Straus Square in Manhattan's Lower East Side, the neighborhood where several Straus milk depots once operated.

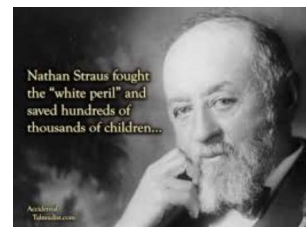
Unfortunately, clear scientific facts and statistics did not move the political machinery necessary to make pasteurization mandatory. Straus was vilified by dairy producers, bureaucrats and politicians. Straus did not give up. Even after he was arrested for "adulterating" milk (found to be untrue) he remained tireless in his advocacy and generosity. He donated pasteurization plants throughout the United States and in parts of Europe.

Straus visited the Mediterranean and Palestine in 1904 and he and his wife became staunch Zionists. There he built soup kitchens for the aged, blind and the disabled from 1912-1917. The city of Netanya, in Israel, is named for Nathan Straus. Some historians have estimated that he gave more than half his fortune toward the development of Israel. In a speech Straus made in 1911 he said,

"I often think of the old saying, "The world is my country, to do good is my religion. ... This has often been an inspiration to me. I might say, "Humanity is my kin, to save babies is my religion." It is a religion I hope will have thousands of followers."

Written by Zena Jacobi

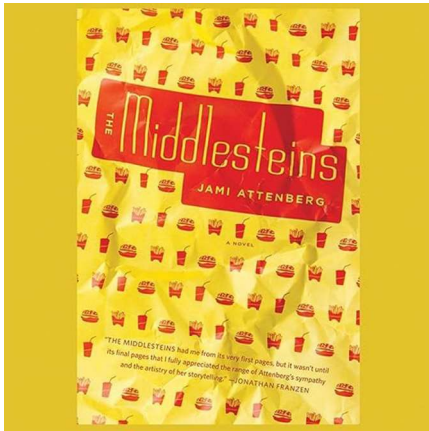
Credits: myjewishlearning.com/the-nosher website, Wikipedia



BOOK REVIEW

The Middlesteins

By Jami Attenberg



This novel takes place in a Jewish section of Chicago. It tells about a mostly dysfunctional family. Each member has his/her own issues and does not seem to know how to resolve them.

The matriarch, Edie's main problem is her weight. Since childhood she could not control her eating. Therefore, she has become an obese adult.

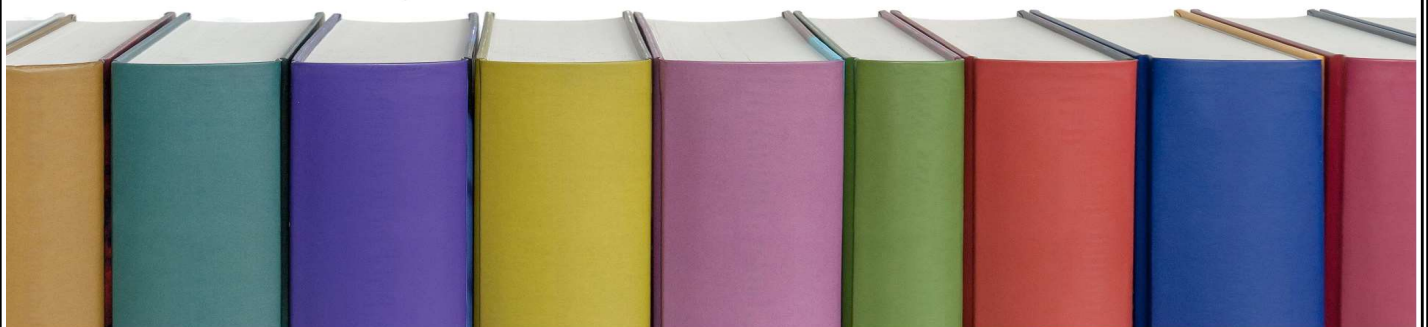
Some members of her family have tried to help her with this, but her appetite was uncontrollable. Her husband has made some attempts but has been unsuccessful. Her negative attitude has not helped.

On top of all this is that theirs is largely a loveless marriage, leading to the family breaking up and father walking out. This happened after mother was diagnosed with a serious case of weight-related diabetes.

A highlight of this story is the advent of the niece and nephews (twins) Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Mother wanted to attend with her latest lover and father wanted to take his latest partner. What could possibly go wrong?

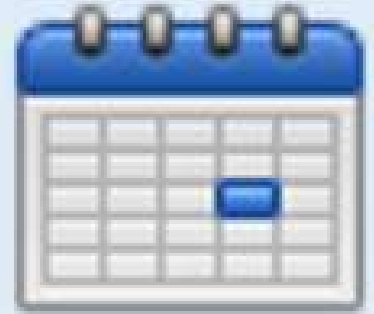
As can be seen the issues in this family are numerous and complex. This story is told with much humor and drama. I therefore would recommend this book to all.

Reviewed by Jerry Zwick



MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Nov. 8, 2025 -	Dine Out
Nov. 14, 2025 -	Philosopher's Café
Nov. 16, 2025 -	Jewish Jeopardy
Dec. 12, 2025	Philosopher's Café
Dec. 13, 2025	Dine Out
Dec. 20, 2025	Chanukah Party
Dec. 25, 2025	Lunch Gathering



2024 - 2026 PACIFIC COMMUNITY BOARD ELECTED OFFICERS

Co-President	Jim Rothman	JRbytheC@aol.com
Co-President	Sylvia Rothman	Sobaysyl@aol.com
Vice President	Nancy Okamoto	949-386-0400
Secretary	Sylvia Rothman	sobaysyl@aol.com
Treasurer	Leslie Zwick	jerlesz@verizon.net
Membership Chair	Barbara Price	BarbaraPPrice@aol.com
Program Coordinator	Suzy Baron	Bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net
Publicity Co-Chairs	Ellen Jacobs Laura Shapiro	ejacobs@socal.rr.com LShapiro501@gmail.com

COMMUNITY AND BOARD POSITIONS

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Board Member-At-Large	Bryon Baron	Bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net
Board Member-At-Large	Di Bunin	DBF331@hotmail.com
Board Member-At-Large	Mike Mendelson	Mendelsons5@yahoo.com
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Webmaster	Celeste Mendelson	Mendelsons5@yahoo.com
Sunshine	Sheila Bass	shekaba@aol.com

Chai-Lights is published monthly
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Affiliated with
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PACIFIC COMMUNITY OF CULTURAL JEWS

Calendar of Events 2025 - 2026

EVENTS

Sept. 13, 2025 - Bowers Museum
Sept. 21, 2025 - Rosh Hashanah Observance
Oct. 2, 2025 - Yom Kippur Observance
Oct. 25, 2025 - Sukkot/Succos & Potluck
~~Nov. 16, 2025 - Jewish Jeopardy~~
Dec. 20, 2025 - Chanukah Party
Dec. 25, 2025 - Lunch Gathering
Jan. 10, 2026 - TBD
Feb. 7, 2026 - Lee Jacobi Memorial Hike
Feb. 28, 2026 - Jewish Improv
Mar. 21, 2026 - International Food Event
Apr. 4, 2026 - Passover Seder
Apr. 25, 2026 - Yom Ha'Atzmaut Observance
May 16, 2026 - Humor Night
June 6, 2026 - Book Sharing Event
Jun 14, 2026 - Year-End Party

For more information,
contact Suzy Baron, or Karen Knecht
bryonbaron@sbcglobal.net / 714-639-4906
Knechtfour@aol.com / 714-739-1366

DINE - OUT

Join us for lunch or dinner at a variety restaurants once a month. All locations will be decided upon the month before and announced in our newsletter. All lunches are at 1:00 p.m. and dinners are at 6:30 p.m. unless otherwise noted.

All dates are always tentative.

Oct. 18, 2025 (date change)

Nov. 8, 2025

Dec. 13, 2025

Jan. 10, 2026

Feb. 14, 2026

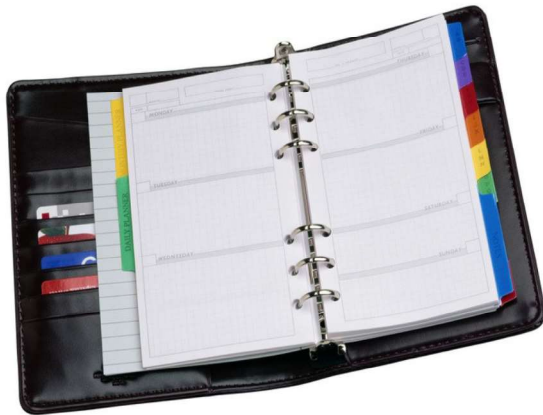
Mar. 14, 2026

May 9, 2026

June 6, 2026

July 11, 2026

For more information, or for suggestions for restaurants, contact Karen Knecht
714-739-1366 or Knechtfour@aol.com



PHILOSOPHER'S CAFÉ

(via Zoom)

People get together on a monthly basis to discuss a topic - either issues of the day, or any topic of general interest. Where they meet is up to the group. The discussions take anywhere from an hour to . . . ?

Philosopher's Café is being held via Zoom. Please check our monthly newsletters for information on our Philosopher's Café.

Sept. 19, 2025

Nov. 14, 2025

Jan. 16, 2026

Mar. 6, 2026

May 08, 2026

July 17, 2026

Oct. 17, 2025

Dec. 12, 2025

Feb. 6, 2026

Apr. 17, 2026

June 5, 2026

Schedule subject to change.

Pacific Community is an affiliate of the Society for Humanistic Judaism,
an international organization