



T.J.H.S. NEWSLETTER

P. O. BOX 50501, AUSTIN, TEXAS 78763

WINTER, 1988

A NEW IMAGE

In these leaner economic times, it is incumbent upon your Society to maintain its regular communication with the membership while reducing expenses as much as possible. With this in mind, a major change will be considered at the next Gathering of the Texas Jewish Historical Society on March 6, 1988.

For the past several years we have produced an outstanding newsletter which not only carried information about the Society, but served as a vehicle for publication.

In 1988, it is being suggested that the Society establish an annual journal for the publishing of articles on Texas Jewish history. Articles would be solicited for publication in the winter.

A quarterly newsletter on the activities of the Society would continue to be produced, but on a modified basis. Though its size may be reduced, the facility for limited publication will still be present.

A fiscal responsibility to the members is incumbent upon the Society while ongoing communication is an absolute necessity. It is hoped this new approach will allow the Society to accomplish both.

Your ideas on this major issue are eagerly desired. Please drop a note to Ginger Jacobs, President, TJHS, at P. O. Box 50501, Austin, Texas, 78763.

Editor:
Rabbi James Kessler

8th ANNUAL GATHERING

in
AUSTIN
on
MARCH 5-6
Sheraton
Crest
Hotel

Scholar:
Janice R.
Blumberg
Past President,
Southern Jewish
Historical
Society

All sessions will be held at the Sheraton Crest, 111 E. First St., at the corner of Congress and First. Room rates are \$45 and reservations can be made by calling (512) 478-9611.

A TEXAS JEWISH HISTORICAL SOCIETY FIRST

The Texas Jewish Historical Society will hold its first joint session with the Texas State Historical Association on Thursday, March 4, 1988. The session is entitled "As Big as the State Itself: The Jewish Experience in Texas."

Presiding at the session will be TJHS Board member, Audrey Kariel. Presentations will be: "B.O.I. (Born on the Island): A Brief History of Congregation B'nai Israel in Galveston, Texas," by Jimmy Kessler, and "From Panhandle to Coastal Plains: A Texas Style Diaspora," by Cathy Schechter. Commentator for the session will be Phil Hewitt of Galveston.

Each year, the Texas State Historical Association conducts its annual meeting in different cities of the State. As a standard part of these conventions, regional and ethnic historical societies hold joint meetings. In addition to their individual business sessions, these societies conduct joint sessions for the purpose of presenting papers. Though the TJHS is not meeting formally this year with the Association, it is holding a joint session.

Though the Gathering will not begin until Saturday evening, the membership is welcome to come to Austin early and attend this session.

HOW 'BOUT ANOTHER MEMBER

by Rabbi James Kessler

Over the past seven years, each of you has been very supportive of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. As our small but vibrant organization has made bold advances, our membership has remained a bit more limited than it should.

Therefore, how 'bout bringing a potential new member with you to Austin for the 8th Annual Gathering. What a wonderful way to introduce someone to the unfolding story of Texas Jewish History.

Or, if you can't make it to Austin, then why not send Jane Manaster, our new Administrative Secretary, the name of the person you would bring so that she can send them information on the TJHS.

Please let us hear from you. The mailing address of the Texas Jewish Historical Society is P. O. Box 50501, Austin, Texas, 78763.

ESSAY CONTEST

by Jane Manaster

The Texas Jewish Historical Society annual essay contest will be launched in January, 1988. This year's topic will be "Jewish traditions: how we celebrate them in our Texas home." The contest will be open to all Jewish students in Texas. Materials will be sent through all synagogues.

Over the decades, Judaism in Texas has developed familial, independent and local overlays. Students are invited to consider and describe these particular traditions in their own households.

GROWING UP WITH TEXAS JEWISH HISTORY

by Jane Manaster

A Texas Jewish history curriculum for the religious school classroom is the first project made possible by the educational endowment of TJHS member Stanley Schneider and his brother Martin. Twelve religious schools around the State agreed to test pilot units this semester on the Jewish place in Texas history, and on ways to build community history. Over the coming weeks we will evaluate comments sent in from each school.

The first unit covers eight themes: early settlement of the Jews in Texas, merchants, Jews in political and civic office, involvement of Jews in Texas wars, women, biographical sketches of our best known forebears, and a miscellany of special topics.

The second unit proposes putting together a community or congregational history. Suggested activities include a cemetery field trip (equipped with butcher paper and wax crayons to do grave rubbings), and tips for interviewing members of the community.

We have emphasized that the activities in unit two are open to flexible interpretation and any input from teachers or students may be included so that younger and older students can become involved. These two units are suitable for 4th or 7th grades, the years when Texas history is taught in the public schools.

Comments and ideas drawn from the pilot program will be presented at the CAJE meeting in Austin in January, 1988. During the Spring, we will work on further units in preparation for completing the curriculum for next Fall.

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