

# Texas Jewish Historical Society

Preserving Jewish Heritage in Texas  
Est. 1980



November 2017 News Magazine

## — Winter Board — Meeting in Gonzales, Texas



*This is a replica of the Come And Take It flag that flew over Gonzales during the first battle of the Texas Revolution in 1835. It currently hangs at the State Capitol in Austin.*

Come to Gonzales January 12-14, 2018! All members are welcome. The Texas Jewish Historical Society will hold its Winter Board Meeting in Gonzales, Texas, home of the first skirmish of the Texas Revolution in 1835.

Join us as we tour the Gonzales History Museum, the unique Jail Museum, and a driving tour of homes of Jewish families and other Victorian and Greek Revival homes. TJHS members from Gonzales will participate in the program relating their experiences growing up and living in this interesting community.

In addition, there will be a cemetery ghost tour with possible appearances by some of the inhabitants.

Luxurious historic B&B accommodations await you, along with a Holiday Inn Express. Be aware that the rooms in the B&Bs are all on the second floor, with no elevators available. You can meet longtime friends and make new ones as we dine at local restaurants. All meals and museum fees are included in the registration fee.

Please note the deadline for hotel reservations is December 12, so make yours now and send your registration to the address on the form included in this issue. See you in Gonzales!

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# Message from the President

by Davie Lou Solka

We had a good Board Meeting in Marshall October 20-22, 2017, with an interesting, full program planned by Sally Drayer. We began the weekend with a delicious Shabbat dinner at Temple Emanu-El in Longview. Temple Emanu-El began as a congregation when my congregation in Kilgore, Beth Sholom, closed. It was a homecoming for me because my parents were members there, and I saw many items from my childhood in Kilgore. Rusty Milstein has done a wonderful job of preserving artifacts from Congregation Beth Sholom, as well as from Temple Moses Montefiore in Marshall. Thanks to him, Temple Emanu-El is a wonderful repository/museum for the Jews of East Texas.

Sally enlisted the help of Audrey and Louis Kariel, TJHS members and



the last Jewish family who lives in Marshall. One of the many highlights was visiting the exhibit on the Jews of Marshall at the Harrison County Historical Museum. TJHS awarded a grant to help with this exhibit, which included the Ark and other artifacts from Temple Moses

Montefiore that had been in storage at the museum since the Temple closed in 1980. Audrey also had some papers and artifacts from the Temple, so there was quite a bit for this exhibit—with more to come!

We saw Audrey and Louis's hand in Marshall everywhere we visited. One place was the Law Office of Michael Smith, which is located in the building that housed The Hub, a shoe store owned by the Kariel family. Mr. Smith had many items from the

store, including an original sign and shoe-type storage boxes for his papers. When we visited the Marshall Train Depot, which is another wonderful museum, we saw the plaque honoring Louis and Audrey, who was mayor of Marshall at the time, displayed in the waiting room.

Other visits included the Hebrew Cemetery, the Michaelson Art Museum, and the site of Temple Moses Montefiore, which now has the Municipal Court Building on the property. At the site, Gail Beil, Marshall City Commissioner, Place 2, wearing a beautiful lace-placed-on-the-back black mourning dress, told us about the Jews of Marshall. Saturday night after dinner and some shopping in the restaurant, we heard from Janet Cook, Executive Director of the Harrison County Historical Museum, and Gayle Weinberg, Director of Development of the Michaelson Art Museum, speaking on the Kariel's memories of Jewish Marshall.

In addition to many committee reports, at the Board Meeting, we awarded a \$3,000 grant to Marlene Trestman from Baltimore, who is researching descendants of the children who lived in the Orphans' Home in New Orleans in the early part of the twentieth century. A grant of \$4,000 was awarded to Dr. Joshua Furman of Rice University, who along with volunteers, is retriev-

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## The Texas Jewish Historical Society November 2017 Quarterly News Magazine

The Texas Jewish Historical Society News Magazine is published four times annually. Stories about Texas Jewish history, oral histories, and requests for assistance with research are welcome, as are photographs and historical documents. Please provide color photocopies or scans at 300 dpi or greater in gif, tif, or jpg format, and send electronically to Editor Jack Solka at [jack@solka.net](mailto:jack@solka.net) or by mail to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Austin, TX 78759, 512-527-3799. Be sure to include your name and contact information.

**Editor** Jack Solka  
**Layout/Design Editor** Alexa Kirk

Note: The Texas Jewish Historical Society is unable to guarantee the safe receipt and/or return of documents and photographs. It is strongly recommended that you provide color photocopies of both color and black & white documents. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

*Visit us on the web at [www.txjhs.org](http://www.txjhs.org).*



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# —Frapart Family, Brownsville, Texas—

by Jules Frapart

Growing up in Brownsville, I did not know about our rich family history until I started asking questions of my father, Ralph Frapart, and my great-grandmother, Johanna Kaiser.

The store was called Ralph's of Palm Village. Eventually Ralph would take on new partners in Henry and Mildred Dorfman Fruhling, Sarah's sister and brother-in-law.



*Elizabeth Street in Brownsville, Texas, c. 1865.*

My kids are 7th generation Texans. Did any of my family take part in Texas history since we have been here for so long?

My father, Ralph Frapart, met and married Sarah May Dorfman from Brownsville. They moved to Brownsville with the encouragement of Sarah's parents, Isadore and Dorothy Oshman Dorfman. Isadore had a jewelry store in downtown Brownsville but on orders from his doctor closed it and opened an office where he continued his passion in jewelry and diamonds. Ralph and Sarah were starting their new life on the international border between Mexico and the United States. Ralph had been raised in the retail business working for his father in Tyler, Texas. Isadore offered to help him open his own ladies ready-to-wear store in Isadore's new Palm Village Shopping Center.

My grandparents, Herbert and Francis Kaiser Frapart, moved to Brownsville in the mid-1950s to be closer to their son and daughter-in-law, Ralph and Sarah May, and their new grandson, Jules. In the same shopping center, Herbert and Francis opened stores called Tot-to-Teen and The Stag Shop. Later they turned over ownership of those stores to their youngest son and daughter-in-law, Lewis and Kay Shapiro Frapart, who had moved to Brownsville from Houston.

Sam Kaiser and Johanna Lewis Kaiser, my great-grandparents, lived in Houston where Sam was a successful architectural artist. After retiring, he and Johanna moved to Brownsville to live with Herbert and Frances on Robins Lane. I recall going fishing with my great-grandfather Sam and watching him do his sketches.

I questioned my great-grand-

parents as part of my research of the Frapart side of the family. I discovered our connection to Texas history was Lewis A. Levy, Johanna Kaiser's great-grandfather, and his brother Dr. Moses Albert Levy, sometimes mentioned as Dr. Albert Moses Levy. They were born in Amsterdam, Netherlands, to Abraham and Rachel Levy. The family migrated to the United States via London in 1818, settling in Richmond, Virginia.

Dr. Albert Moses Levy completed medical school at the University of Pennsylvania in 1832, married and lived in Richmond, Virginia. After his wife died, he moved to New Orleans to join his older brother, Lewis A. Levy. According to the Handbook of Texas Online, Dr. Albert Moses Levy joined the New Orleans Greys, a military unit formed to aid in the Texas War of Independence, and within two months he was appointed surgeon in chief of the volunteer army of Texas. He fought in the battle of the siege of Bexar where he was wounded. Once he recovered, he joined the small Texas Navy and served briefly on the schooner *Brutus*. David G. Burnet, president of the Republic of Texas, signed Levy's papers appointing him a surgeon in the navy in March 1836. In 1837, Levy's ship, the *Independence*, was captured by two Mexican brigs-of-war, and he was taken prisoner along with the other Texas sailors. After 3 months in a Mexican prison, he was able to escape, swim across the Rio Grande River and walk to Matagorda, Texas.

Dr. Levy established a medical practice in Matagorda and was appointed to the Medical Board of the Republic of Texas in 1838. He married and had 5 children. He died in May of 1848. The state of Texas

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# Board Meeting in Marshall

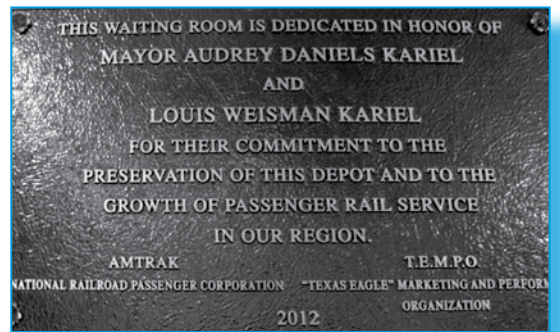


*Audrey and Louis Kariel—the last Jewish family living in Marshall, Texas.*



*Dedication Wall at Cemetery incorporating the Cornerstone and Star of David from Temple Moses Montefiore, Marshall, Texas.*

*Marker located at waiting room of Train Depot, Marshall, Texas.*



*Entrance Gate at Marshall Hebrew Cemetery.*

*Historical Designation Plaque at the Marshall Hebrew Cemetery.*



*Ben Rosenberg participating in the Havdalah Services.*



*Janet Cook, Director of Harrison County Historical Museum, spoke to the group Saturday night.*



*Monica Braverman, Cantorial Student, and Rusty Milstein.*



*Davie Lou Solka with artifacts from her congregation, Beth Sholom, Kilgore, Texas, that are displayed in Temple Emamu-El, Longview, Texas.*




*Sonny Gerber and Doug and Willie Braudaway.*



## Notes from the Board Meeting

At the October Board Meeting in Marshall, the following occurred:

- The Speaker's Bureau has had requests for two speakers. Barbara Rosenberg spoke to Congregation for Reform Judaism in Houston, and Sally Drayer will be speaking at Temple Shalom in Dallas in the spring. We have many speakers available on a variety of topics. Contact Jan Hart at [jshauthor@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jshauthor@sbcglobal.net) or Gayle Cannon at [gaylecannon70@gmail.com](mailto:gaylecannon70@gmail.com)
- The Traveling Exhibit has had part of one exhibit concerning marriages shown in Fort Worth, and there are requests for three more places. These are wonderful exhibits showing the Jews of Texas and the United States and are very easy to display—either hanging on a wall or on easel-type on tables. Contact Deidra Cizon at [dcizon@swbell.com](mailto:dcizon@swbell.com)
- A grant of \$3,000 was awarded to Marlene Trestman from Baltimore, Maryland, to travel to Texas to interview descendants of the children who lived in the Orphans' Home in New Orleans. If you have information for her, please contact her at [marlenetrestman@gmail.com](mailto:marlenetrestman@gmail.com)
- A grant of \$4,000 was awarded to Dr. Joshua Furman of Rice University to salvage and preserve archival photos and documents damaged during Hurricane Harvey at Congregation Beth Yeshurun and the United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston. The grant money will be used for supplies and to hire and train undergraduate students to assist with the preservation. 



*Sharon Gerber and Ruth Nathan.*



*Monica Braverman, Cantorial Student, leading Kaddish at the cemetery.*

*Four smiles in Marshall—Phyllis Berman, Joan Katz, Jan Hart and Joyce Wormser.*



*Gail Beil in a "mourning" dress discussing the history of Jewish families in Marshall, Texas.*



*Lecture by Gail Beil, Marshall City Commissioner Place 2, at Marshall Hebrew Cemetery.*

# — Florence Bates: Pioneer Jewish San Antonio Lawyer and Golden Age Hollywood Actress —

by Judith W. Rosenthal

During the 1940s and early 1950s, Florence Bates appeared in approximately sixty Hollywood films. She worked with the likes of Joan Fontaine and Laurence Olivier (*Rebecca*, 1940), Errol Flynn (*San Antonio*, 1945), Ava Gardner and George Raft (*Whistle Stop*, 1946), Danny Kaye (*The Secret Life of Walter Mitty*, 1947), Kirk Douglas (*My Dear Secretary*, 1948), and Doris Day (*Lullaby of Broadway*, 1951).

Just a few years younger than the silent screen star Theda Bara (*Theodosia, Burr Goodman*) and a decade older than Yiddish theatre's Molly Picon,



*Florence Bates starred with Grady Sutton in the 1948 film My Dear Secretary.*

Florence Bates' journey to Hollywood was most unusual. In fact, she began her career as a stage actress relatively late in life when she was more than fifty years old. Following her immensely successful Hollywood career, she made the transition to television and was a cast member of one of television's earliest sitcoms ("The Hank McCune Show," 1951). She also made guest appearances on "I Love Lucy," "My Little Margie," and "Our Miss Brooks." In spite of her extraordinary career, and unlike Bara and Picon, Florence Bates is somehow overlooked in the "lists" of successful female Jewish actresses and entertainers.

Florence Bates, of course, was her stage name. She was really Florence Rabe who was born in Texas in April of 1888. She was the daughter of German Jewish immigrants, Rosa and Sigmund Rabe, and one of three

siblings. Her father was the owner of an antique and curio store in San Antonio.

Extraordinarily well educated for a woman of her generation, Florence not only graduated from high school (1903) but also from the University of Texas (1906) with a degree in math. When a hand injury put an end to her childhood dream of being a pianist, she instead became a teacher and social worker.

In 1909, she married Joseph Ramer and

stopped working to raise their daughter, Mariam. The marriage, however, ended in divorce, and while looking for a new career, Florence decided to become a lawyer. She did not attend law school but instead studied law on her own. She was admitted to the practice of law in the state of Texas in 1914 at the age of twenty-six. Florence was among the earliest women admitted to the Bar in Texas, and quite possibly the first who was Jewish. Nonetheless, after four or so years of practicing law, Florence grew bored, leaving her legal career behind to begin assisting her sister who managed their father's store.

Florence's second marriage was to William F. Jacoby, a Texas oil man, and for a while the couple lived in Mexico. Florence apparently knew Spanish, and at one time was a bilin-

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# — Hurricane Harvey Attacks the Texas — Coastal Bend in a Fury—August 27, 2017

Texas coastal communities from Rockport to Beaumont received the full force of Hurricane Harvey, creating havoc and anguish among millions of Texans. Jewish institutions and residents received the same punishment as all others. Because of Houston's size, the city and the Jewish community amounted to the

greatest numerical losses. The extensive rain, exceeding 50" in some areas, flooded many neighborhoods where Jewish institutions are located. More than 70% of Houston's 60,000-plus Jews live in the area hardest hit by the flooding caused by Hurricane Harvey, according to the Houston Jewish Federation.

Some of the institutions damaged by rising water included the Evelyn Rubenstein JCC, United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston, Beth Yeshurun Synagogue, Congregation Beth Israel, Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care Services and the Medallion. Relatively minor hurricane damage occurred at Temple Emanu El. Efforts are underway to salvage flood-damaged historical documents and records at two of the city's most prominent



*Flood damage at United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston. Photo by Robert Levy via Facebook.*

local residents, persons from the entire State of Texas, from communities throughout the USA and from overseas.

Israel's special rescue units were dispatched to Houston. Jewish organizations from Texas and other states collected relief supplies and funds. Multiple eighteen wheeler trucks filled with supplies arrived at Houston's JCC and were distributed to all residents of Houston and surrounding communities. Harvey rescue efforts are the essence of *tikkun olam*. Trucks with relief supplies were also sent to Beaumont and Rockport.

In order to reduce the stress on small children whose families were evacuated or needed to allocate all of their time to repairing their homes, URJ Greene Family Camp set up a mini-day camp in Houston. Over two hundred children from the Houston

Jewish synagogues by Rice's Jewish Studies scholars—Joshua Furman and Melissa Kean.

Assistance for the victims came from first responders, the Texas National Guard,


Jewish Community attended the camp, which was paid for by the URJ Disaster Relief Fund and private donations. In spite of the damages caused, High Holiday Services were held by Beth Yeshurun Congregation at Lakewood Church, Joel Osteen's megachurch.

Recovery from the damage caused by the floods will take months, and in



*The clean-up efforts at United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston were not complete in time for the High Holy Days. Photo by Yi-Chin Lee.*

some cases years, to return to normal. However, it is likely that some families, especially some elderly residents, will choose to move to other parts of the city since these areas in Houston have seen flooding occur twice before in recent years. This movement of residents will affect the demographics of the neighborhoods.

Information for this article was gathered from various Jewish newspaper sources. 

## Houston Members

Addresses for TJHS members living in the Houston area will remain the same in the new upcoming membership directory, unless TJHS is notified of a change. If necessary, a supplement will be issued in 2019.

**The deadline for  
the February 2018  
TJHS News  
Magazine is Friday,  
January 5, 2018.**

# -San Antonio's Northside School District- Dedicates Nathan Kallison Elementary

by Kal Kallison

On August 28, 2017, the doors of Nathan Kallison Elementary opened for the first time to welcome over 600 eager students in the Northside Independent School District in San Antonio, and on November 1, the district held the official dedication of the school to members and friends of the Kallison family and to school and city dignitaries. Dedicating new schools is commonplace to Northside, as it is the fourth largest district in the state with nearly 80 elementary schools alone. However, Nathan Kallison Elementary is likely to be special to the Jewish community, as the school's namesake was a Jewish immigrant from czarist Russia who came to San Antonio via Chicago in 1899 and became a very successful merchant and pathbreaking farmer and rancher.

With a \$300 investment and the aid of his wife, Anna, Nathan opened a saddlery and harness shop which grew into a unique and legendary farm and ranch store, becoming the largest supplier of related goods in the South-



*Nathan Kallison*

west. Kallison's Store in downtown San Antonio became a crossroads for literally thousands of farmers and ranchers in the area.

Beginning in 1910, Kallison bought and developed the Kallison Ranch, which included the property where Nathan Kallison Elementary is built. The ranch served as a living laboratory for experiments in soil conservation, seed improvement, new crops (like flax) for the area, better animal breeds (like the Polled Hereford), and improved farm implements and equipment. To express his vision for the ranch, Nathan placed a sign above the ranch gate that read, "Established in 1910 for the Development of Better Farming and Ranching."

Having a profound desire for learning, Nathan Kallison succeeded in realizing his vision by working with agricultural extension agents and with agronomists from Texas A&M, and then showcased the new and highly recommended scientific practices for the benefit of others. As one of the earliest ranchers to embrace these new concepts of scientific farming and ranching, Nathan would hold "mini seminars" at his ranch to demonstrate new methods or products. Dr. Mary Volcansek, Executive Director of The Center for Texas Studies at TCU and a professor at TCU, wrote that "Nathan Kallison is among the many individuals ... who have helped to form the culture of honor, entrepreneurship, courage, and resilience that characterize the state of Texas."

When Nathan Kallison came to Texas, he soon demonstrated the spirit and strength of the westerner as a rugged individualist, unafraid of charting his own course, looking only for the opportunity to better oneself and contribute to the larger community. He was also sympathetic to those going through rough times, as he would readily defer customer payment at Kallison's Store to when times were better. During the Great Depression, he and Anna made their ranch a haven for as many as 20 displaced families who had lost their land, as the Kallisons erected tents for them on the ranch as a temporary refuge. Nathan described his basic philosophy to a *San Antonio Express* reporter in 1933 saying, "Some people want to get rich in too much of a hurry. They just won't take the time to be friendly and kind, to give good service and a little



*Dedication of Nathan Kallison Elementary School*


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more in old-fashioned friendship.”

Nathan Kallison was a young and poor man when he made his way to San Antonio. He ended up playing a very significant role in the advancement of the farm and ranch community and in the rise of South Texas. However, Nathan never forgot his humble roots nor lost his moral compass. For example, despite the success of Kallison’s Store, Nathan never repainted the ceiling over the small space occupied by his original harness shop, saying the patch of peeling plaster reminded him of his modest beginnings. Nathan also never forgot his Jewish heritage, which was so important to him, particularly because of the oppressive and brutal regime of Czar Alexander III. Anna and Nathan joined Temple Beth El soon after their San Antonio arrival and became active in

religious services and social activities. Their children and grandchildren were educated at the Temple, and those remaining in San Antonio became members as adults.

Nathan Kallison died at the age of 71 in 1944. Throughout the years after his death, Nathan’s family carried on and advanced his vision of cultivating and promoting a collective farm and ranch community through the downtown store and northside ranch and now, Nathan’s memory and legacy will live on, in part, from the naming of the Nathan Kallison Elementary School and from the biography, *The Harness Maker’s Dream: Nathan Kallison and the Rise of South Texas*. This book was written by Pulitzer Prize winning author Nick Kotz, who is Nathan’s grandson. Much of the material from this article comes from Nick’s book. 

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*Florence Bates, continued from page 6*

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gual radio broadcaster. When the stock market crashed in 1929, Jacoby lost his fortune. The couple moved to Los Angeles, bought a bakery, and made it a success. That was when Florence first tried out at the Pasadena Community Playhouse and was cast as “Miss Bates” in a play based on *Emma* by Jane Austen. During the 1930s, she honed her acting skills at the Playhouse and took the stage name of Florence Bates (her new last name taken from the “Miss Bates” character).

In 1939, she auditioned for Alfred Hitchcock and won the role of Mrs. Van Hopper in the 1940 film, *Rebecca*. In a *New York Times* review of Hitchcock’s film, Florence Bates is described as, “a magnificent specimen of the ill-bred, moneyed, resort-infesting, servant-abusing dowager.”

By now, Florence Bates was fifty-two years old and on her way to becoming a very successful character actress. For more than a decade she appeared on the big screen in film after film alongside some of Hollywood’s

most famous actors and actresses. Often she was cast in supporting comic and dramatic parts such as that “of plump, matronly characters, wealthy women, a gypsy, maids, a murderer, a humorously obnoxious mother-in-law, and as a landlady.”

Predeceased by her daughter and husband, Florence Bates passed away in Burbank, California, in 1954. She was sixty-five years old. She may not have a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, nor did she win an Oscar, and probably few Americans remember her today. Nonetheless, she was a remarkable Jewish woman, a college graduate, an attorney, a movie star, wife, mother, and grandmother. Neither tall nor glamorous, Bates was thoroughly modern, and made a life that remains remarkable even by today’s standards.

*Judith W. Rosenthal lives in Edison, NJ. She is currently writing a book about the earliest Jewish American women lawyers. She can be reached at [jwrosenth12017@gmail.com](mailto:jwrosenth12017@gmail.com).* 

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# From Our Archives

*This column is based on information in the TJHS Collection, housed at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas campus in Austin. It has been supplemented with online research. If you have corrections or additions, please submit them in writing to the TJHS editor at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org). We want our archives to be as complete as possible.*

## — The Denn Family of Bay City, Part 1 —

by Vickie Vogel

The Denn family story goes back to Certizne, a village outside Medzilaborce, Slovakia, in the foothills of the Carpathian Mountains. This was home for the maternal line from the 1790s until the last family member was murdered by the Nazis.<sup>1</sup> The paternal line traces to Korczyn, Galicia (present-day Poland) where Joe Denn (Josef Juda Denn) was born on May 4, 1894.

His father was Chaim Denn (1852-1910) and his grandparents were Israel Simon Denn and Beile Neumann (1830-1899). Chaim was in the grain business and died of consumption (tuberculosis). Joe's mother was Zecil Kalb (1847-1922), daughter of David Tanchum and Leah Kalb, all of Galicia.

Joe was in the Austrian army in World War I. Keeping kosher in the army was hard. A rabbi told him it was okay to eat the soup with meat, but not the meat on the bone, or he might have starved. Joe was a guard at a POW camp.

In 1918, Joe married Bertha (Blima) Schwartz, born in Certizne in 1895. The family tree gets a little



*Joe and Bertha Denn with sons Manuel, Herman and Sidney, and baby Ethel. Photo courtesy of Meyer Denn.*

complicated here, because her grandmother was Beile Neumann, and so was Joe's. The grandfathers were different, as Beile divorced Israel

Simon Denn and married Abraham Josefovics. That makes Joe and Blima half first cousins.<sup>2</sup>

In 1920, Joe and Bertha emigrated from Slovakia, sailing from Bremen, with dreams of a better life. They had turned the wagon back once, because her parents were so upset. When they got back to the house, she could see everyone was asleep, so they would be okay. They retraced their steps and continued their journey.

Joe's brother David, and two of Bertha's sisters (Dora and Rose) had settled in New York years earlier. Bertha's brother, Joe Schwartz, and her sisters Hannah and Esther, were all in Wharton, Texas. Joe arrived in New York in Chassidic garb, complete with long beard and side curls. A brother-in-law told Joe he couldn't walk around America looking like that. He took him to the barber shop and told the barber in English to

cut off his beard and side curls, as Joe didn't speak English. Returning to the house, the brother-in-law told Bertha

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he had found a landsman and to see if she recognized him. At first she was shocked to see her beardless husband, but soon gave up her *sheitel* (wig).

Joe and Bertha settled in Wharton that same year and worked in the fruit business. They bought the M. Kasman Grocery in Bay City in 1921 and changed the name to Joe Denn Grocery. Joe became a citizen in 1927 and Bertha in 1942.

Their sons were born in 1921 (Abraham Herman), 1924 (Sidney) and 1926 (Manuel).<sup>3</sup>

Herman<sup>4</sup> and Manuel were born in Wharton, and Sidney in Bay City. A daughter, Ethel Lee, followed in 1929 in Bay City. Herman was born in Aunt Hannah's house on Juneteenth. Joe was so nervous the doctor told him to go get a watermelon just to get rid of him, and he went running out of the house. Sydney was born at Esther's store (E. Goldman Grocery), because that's as far as Bertha got as she headed towards the hospital.

Manuel was born in Wharton on Rosh Hashanah, also at Aunt Hannah's house. Ethel was born in the front bedroom at home. The boys wanted to see what was happening and kept trying to get in. The doctor told them he brought the baby in a suitcase, but he couldn't bring her out while they were watching.

On a series of YouTube videos filmed by Sidney's son Meyer, the three brothers tell stories of growing up and the trouble they got into. One day, a neighbor came to the store to get everyone and took them to see the first gusher in Matagorda County. The circus came to town, and school was let out. The clowns scared Sidney. There's also a hair-raising story of the

last street fight in Bay City, caused by racial prejudice. They tell stories of Joe and his store.

Joe bought pecans from the area. One day a man brought in some sacks of pecans and Joe could tell they didn't weigh as much as the scales showed. He looked down and the man had his foot on the scale. Joe picked up an ax handle and brought it down hard on the man's foot. "If I'm gonna pay for your foot, I'm gonna buy your foot," Joe exclaimed.



*Bertha (Blima) Denn in front of Joe Denn Grocery. Photo courtesy of Meyer Denn.*

Joe was a feisty little man who had many funny expressions. He was notorious for following kids around the store and as soon as they would pick something up, he would say, "You got money? DEN PUT IT DOOOOWWWN!"<sup>5</sup> If a kid would say he was "just looking," Joe would tell him to come back tomorrow. "Today's for buying, tomorrow's for looking!"<sup>6</sup>

Joe remembered once seeing a hanging at the courthouse, and it made him ill. In 1939, a young man who had run away from home was walking in front of Joe's grocery store. Joe questioned him and got him something to eat. He bought him a pair of shoes and told him to go back home to Palacios. The young man went to Houston and

joined the army. Years later, he came back to Bay City and told Herman he had come to buy Joe a pair of shoes and told them what had happened.

Joe wouldn't drive on Shabbos, but he worked at the store, staying open late, sometimes as late as midnight on Saturday nights. Herman loved baseball, and once when he was on his way to work at the store, he stopped to play third base, until Joe came to get him and take him home. Joe told him he violated a cardinal

rule and had to be punished. Joe took the belt to him. "For a small man, he was a very powerful man," Herman recalled.

Every Saturday night, when they closed the store, Joe, Bertha, Esther and the boys would drive halfway to Wharton and meet Bertha and Esther's sister, Dora, and her husband, Benny Wadler. On Sundays, they would go to Wharton to visit family. It was a great day when Joe brought

home a Victrola. They listened to Eddie Cantor, Al Jolson, and Yossele Rosenblatt.

The Denns kept kosher at home. At lunchtime, the boys would run to Aunt Esther, and she would cook something for them in the back of her store, and they would return to school. When it was time to come inside for dinner, Joe would go to the front porch and yell, "Kiddush!" Even their maid called them in the same way. Every Thursday night, Bertha and Esther would bake eight challahs so they would have bread for a week.

Esther had come to America with a sister when she was 11 years old in 1903. The few dollars that were

*continued on page 12*

sent with her were stolen on the boat. Esther married Julius Goldman, but they divorced in 1927<sup>7</sup> and he moved to Corpus Christi. "The sun rose and set on Aunt Esther, as far as I was concerned," recalled Herman. One time he jumped off the roof and landed on a nail in back of the store. He ran to Aunt Esther, fearing he'd get in trouble with his mother. She left the store and carried him on her back to the doctor's office. On another occasion, he stepped on some glass and cut his foot all the way to the bone. Aunt Esther wrapped it in a towel and, once again, carried him on her back to the doctor, who put the foot in coal oil (kerosene) to stop the bleeding. If the boys had the flu, she would put an asafetida bag around their necks.

Joe davened alone at home (before being joined by other Bay City Jews) before the Beth David Center (Jewish community hall) was built. The family packed up and went to Wharton for the High Holy Days. They often stayed with Bertha's sister, Hannah, and Izzie Kreitstein.

Herman was Joe and Bertha's oldest son. Herman wanted to go to a Boy Scout camp, and Joe said, "No." A priest came to see Joe and told him he knew what Herman had to do every morning, and he would wake him up to daven if Joe would let him go to camp, and that's what they did. Sidney had a similar experience where a minister came to his aid for a trip to New Mexico.

When Herman first enlisted in the army in 1941, Joe went to see him in San Antonio. Herman took him through the base and introduced him

to his gambling buddies, asking Joe to pay this one \$5 and that one \$10 that he owed them. Joe asked if all the boys' fathers gave them money to pay their debts. Herman said, "No, Pop, but when you have a good cow, you milk it." Pop said, "Hoiman, your cow just went dry."<sup>8</sup>

Herman was sent to Payne Field, Washington, after basic training. He became an instrument specialist on a P-39. One day he was paged and

ried Rosie Ray Wirzberg, daughter of Chaim and Mirl Wirzberg of Houston. They settled briefly in Houston, then moved to Bay City. Herman ran unsuccessfully for city council around 1958.<sup>9</sup>

Joe and Bertha's middle son, Sidney, attended Jefferson Davis School and Bay City High School. In December 1942, he headed off to war with the Army Air Corps from the old Missouri Pacific Depot. BCHS classes

were dismissed so a big sendoff, led by the Black Cat Band, could be given to their classmates, Denn and Francis Denbow. A teacher recalled fifty years later that this event stood out like no other in her teaching career, the single most patriotic experience of her life. This event brought the war to Bay City. They sent the boys off "with their hope, their love, their prayers, and their admiration."<sup>10</sup>

Sidney was sent to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. After sev-

eral transfers, he landed at Hickham Field, Hawaii, with the 1521st Air Transport Command, but the war in Japan ended, and he returned home to Bay City to work at Joe Denn Grocery.

On September 1, 1946, he married Gertrude "Gertie" Estelle Rosenzweig of Houston at the Rice Hotel.<sup>11</sup> Her family traced back to Lublin, Poland. Gertie had graduated from San Jacinto High School in Houston in 1940. Sidney and Gertrude moved to New Orleans, where he worked for his brother-in-law, Leon Rosenzweig, but they returned to Bay City in 1947 to go into business with his brothers Herman and Manuel.<sup>12</sup>

Joe and Bertha's youngest son,



*Joe and Rose Denn, and Esther Goldman. Photo courtesy of Meyer Denn.*

told to go to the gate. To his shock, there stood Joe and Bertha. They had travelled three days on the train to see their son, who took them to a kosher deli so they could finally eat. Herman went to England, France, Belgium and Germany, serving with the 394th Fighter Squadron in the Army Air Force. A sergeant, he received the EAME Campaign Medal with six bronze stars, a distinguished unit badge and other medals of distinction. He lost his stripes once for insubordination—telling a lieutenant to go to hell. When the war in Europe ended, he went to Marseilles prepared to ship out to Egypt and on to the Asia Theater, but the war ended there too.

Returning to Bay City, he mar-

*continued on page 13*



Manuel, graduated Bay City High School in 1944. As a boy, he worked after school and on weekends in the family grocery store. He joined the Army in 1945 and trained at Camp Wolters in Mineral Wells. He remembered his first Pesach in the service, because he only had a kosher salami to eat. After Fort Sam Houston in 1944 or 1945, he went to Los Angeles where Sidney was posted at the time, but the train was late and they missed each other at the station. Manuel caught a ride to Sidney's base and located him.

Manuel served in the Marshall Islands and Leyte, Philippines, and with the 77th Division on Cebu Island where he learned of the Hiroshima bomb. When the war ended, he was sent to Japan with the army of occupation as a corporal and spent several months in Tokyo. On the boat coming back to the States, he won about \$20,000 at cards but lost it all. Manuel married Helen Maleh in 1950.

After the war, the Denns learned that Bertha's father, Joe's brother Israel Isaac with his wife, children and grandchildren, had all been killed by the Nazis. His sister Rachel lost all but two children to the Nazis, along with her grandchildren.

The three brothers had a sister, Ethel Lee (1929-1957), who married Ike Hoffman, who owned Hoffman Diamond Cutting Co. in Houston.<sup>13</sup> They had two sons. Tragically, Ethel

was riding in a car being demonstrated by a salesman when she was killed instantly in an automobile accident in Houston. She was only 28 years old.<sup>14</sup> The salesman received 182 days in jail for negligent homicide, his testimony that Ethel was driving having been contradicted by several witnesses.<sup>15</sup>

Joe retired in 1948, sold the store in 1949,<sup>16</sup> and spent his retirement years working at his sons' store. Bertha died in 1954, and in 1955, Joe married Rose Friedman Wald of New York. She was born in 1897 in Hungary. Rose died in 1976, and Joe in 1981 at Seven Acres Jewish Senior Care in Houston, at the age of 87.

TO BE CONTINUED in the next issue.

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDMD87PhJYE&t=1152s>
- <sup>2</sup> [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family\\_denn\\_joe.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family_denn_joe.htm)
- <sup>3</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all information is from Box3A164, File 5, of the Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin. Bertha Denn <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&G-Sln=Denn&GSiman=1&GS-cid=712505&GRid=75866767&>
- <sup>4</sup> Born Abraham Herman, he switched his names because he didn't want to be called Abraham. <https://www.you->

<tube.com/watch?v=eNUmLI03um0>

- <sup>5</sup> "My Memories of Denn Brothers Sporting Goods in Bay City, Texas" contains 504 members. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/143082235761520/>
- <sup>6</sup> email Meyer Denn, October 2, 2017.
- <sup>7</sup> <http://www.isjl.org/texas-bay-city-encyclopedia.html>
- <sup>8</sup> email Meyer Denn, October 3, 2017.
- <sup>9</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/groups/143082235761520/>
- <sup>10</sup> Jonnie Montalbo, "Schools Honor Veterans," *Bay City Tribune*, November 12, 2014 and print-ed at [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family\\_denn\\_sidney.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family_denn_sidney.htm)
- <sup>11</sup> They celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary in 1996.
- <sup>12</sup> <https://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&G-Sln=Denn&GSiman=1&GS-cid=712505&GRid=75866767&>
- <sup>13</sup> "Car Salesman Gets 182 Days in Traffic Death of 'Prospect,'" *The Houston Press*, December 6, 1957, in Meyer Denn's files.
- <sup>14</sup> [http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family\\_denn\\_joe.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txmatago/family_denn_joe.htm)
- <sup>15</sup> "Salesman Is Sentenced in Auto Death," *Houston Post*, December 6, 1957. In Meyer Denn files.
- <sup>16</sup> "Connie Anderson Buys Denn's Grocery Next to Kirk's Shop," *Bay City News*, June 16, 1949, found in Meyer Denn's "Bay City & Wharton, Texas Jewish Communities" file.



## Your Help Needed

**The American Jewish Archives** is looking for photos that show the American flag on the bimah. They would like to acquire a collection of late 19th and early 20th century (before 1920) photos. Some of these photos may actually go back to the 1870s.

Please check to see if you have photos showing the American flag on the bimah or the flag bunting inside

the sanctuary in your old confirmation photos, anniversary or wedding photos, Fourth of July photos, etc.

You may submit a hard copy or a high-quality scan of the photo to Mr. Kevin Proffitt, Senior Archivist for Research and Collection at the Jacob Rader Marcus Center for the American Jewish Archives. For more information, please contact him at [kproffitt@huc.edu](mailto:kproffitt@huc.edu).

**The Cemetery Committee** thanks all who have helped with the recording of Jewish burials/cremations in Texas. But we still need the help from the many of you who live outside the major cities. If you learn of a Jewish death in Texas in your locale, please send that information to Rusty Milstein, [hrmilstein@prodigy.net](mailto:hrmilstein@prodigy.net). Your help is appreciated.




ing papers and photos from Congregation Beth Yeshurun and United Orthodox Synagogue in Houston, that were damaged in the waters from Hurricane Harvey. They will use the grant to preserve these papers and photos, as well as train and hire undergraduate students to assist in this work. See the articles elsewhere in this issue for addresses if you have information to aid them in their research.

I hope you will be able to join us in Gonzales January 12-14, 2018, for another great weekend. Barbara Rosenberg has planned some wonderful places to visit and has enlisted TJHS members from Gonzales to help out. A Registration Form is included in this issue with a close deadline for registering. Please do it now while you are thinking about it!

We are beginning another calendar year, and dues for 2018 are now to be paid. We are very pleased that we have fourteen new members since the beginning of this term and hope to add many more—but we want YOU to come join us at meetings. This is an added bonus to your membership—renewing long-time friendships and making new ones. Our Board Meetings are open to all members of the Society, and we welcome you to each and every one.

Thank you for your support and the many notes I have received from you --- I hope to see you soon and especially in Gonzales!

*Davie Lou Solka* 

## **TJHS Charter Members**

We are trying to compile a list of the charter members of Texas Jewish Historical Society. If you know someone or if you are one and are not listed here, please contact Davie Lou Solka at [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net). If someone has been listed and is not a charter member, please correct that, also. A source has said that all charter members received a certificate stating that they are charter members. Cities listed are where the members were living in 1980.

Donna Berliner, Dallas  
*Editorial Board*

Norman Black, Houston  
*Legal*

Mona Colver, Seabrook  
*Editorial Board*

Susanne Friedman, Houston  
*Director*

Ima Joy Gandler, Waco

Kay Goldman

Herbert Given, El Paso  
*2nd Vice-President*

Doris Glasser, Houston  
*Associate Archivist, Publications*

Barry Green, Tyler  
*Editorial Board*

Larry Gretskey, Austin  
*Archivist, Editorial Board*

Ginger Jacobs, Dallas  
*Director*

Rabbi David Jacobson, San Antonio  
*Director*

Sanford Kantor, San Antonio  
*Public Relations, Editorial Board*

Frances Kallison, San Antonio  
*1st Vice President*

Rabbi Jimmy Kessler, Galveston  
*President*

Stuart Klein, McAllen  
*Recording Secretary*

Ed Lax, Dallas  
*Treasurer*

Adrian Levy, Sr., Galveston  
*Director*

Helen Levy, Galveston

Jane Manaster, Austin

Leah Kay Miron  
*Proofer*

Barbara Schachtel, Houston  
*Director*

Lonnie Schooler, Houston  
*Corresponding Secretary*

David Schwartz, Houston  
*Director*

Lynn Schwartz, Houston  
*Membership, Editorial Board*

Helen Smith, Austin  
*Editorial Board*

Milton Smith, Austin  
*Finance, Editorial Board, Director*


Seth Wolitz, San Antonio  
*Editorial Board, Director*

## **Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?**

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 2015 directory was printed? Have you changed email providers? If so, please send Marc Wormser an email at [c2aggie@gmail.com](mailto:c2aggie@gmail.com) so that he can update your information in the database. To reduce postage cost



and printing delays, we are going to be electronically sending as much mail as possible, so don't be left out or behind—send your current information today!

Please put "email change" in the subject line and with your name in the text of your message, send it today! Thank you. 





# Texas Jewish Historical Society Grant Application

The mission of the Texas Jewish Historical Society is to expand and enhance the knowledge and understanding of the Jewish presence in Texas and the history of Jews from their first arrival in the State to the present.

We solicit applications for research projects that are in this spirit.  
Deadlines for submission are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1.

## Application Form

The Texas Jewish Historical Society will consider applications from individuals and non-profit organizations in any written or visual media. Attach additional sheets as necessary.

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Cell: (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Title and Description of project.

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Briefly outline personal and professional background information that support this application.

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What is the anticipated budget for the project? Are you seeking additional support from elsewhere?

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Please detail the timeline of your project.

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Completed project must acknowledge TJHS support. A copy or account of the completed project should be submitted to the Society's archive at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin.

*Send applications to: TJHS Grant Committee: P.O. Box 10193, Austin TX 78766-0193, or email to [grantchair@txjhs.org](mailto:grantchair@txjhs.org).*

# Meet Your Board

**Ruthe Berman** is from Katy, Texas, and attended the University of Texas. She worked at Dow Chemical as a paralegal for seventeen years, and upon retiring, began

volunteering in various organizations. She and her husband, Morton “Marty,” have two children and two grandchildren. She likes to travel, cook, play Mah Jongg, and read.

**Anita Feigenbaum** grew up in

Bastrop, Texas and graduated from Bastrop High School, the University of Texas, and received

a Master’s degree from Texas A&M. She and her husband, Leslie, have been married since 1983 and live in College Station, Texas. They have two children, Sarah and Ryan. Anita is currently treasurer of the Brazos County Aggie Moms’ Club and involved in her local homeowner’s association. She is the daughter of Betty and Dr. Neil Gurwitz, and a loyal TJHS board member.



**Charles Hart**, TJHS past president, is from Temple, but

was born and raised in Houston. Charles graduated from the University of Houston with a BS degree, and American University with a MS degree. He served in the U.S. Army 1958-60 and 1961-62. He retired from the U.S. Department of Agricultural after thirty-four years of civil service and taught horseback riding at Jewish summer camps for over twenty-five years. He is married to Jan Siegel Hart, and they have three children and six grandchildren. He and Jan have been TJHS members for over thirty years. Charles is Chair of the Meeting Committee.

**Joan Katz** is from Houston, Texas, and is a past president of a branch of National Women’s League and the Lions

Club. She has been an AZA advisor, held many offices in Beth Yeshurun Sisterhood and Hadassah. She is a life-time member of the Houston Livestock Show and Fort Bend County Fair. Joan enjoys cooking, and she and husband, Louis, are co-chairs of the TJHS Gathering in Houston in April, 2019

**Bob Lewis**, aka Tumbleweed Smith, is from Big Spring, Texas. He hosts a daily radio show, *Sound of Texas*, where

he interviews Texans about their

interesting careers and lives. He is an actor, student, soldier, teacher, columnist, and radio producer. He and his wife, TJHS 2nd Vice President Susan Lewis, have two children and four grandchildren. Bob is Publicity Chair for TJHS.

**Joe L. McClellan** is from Longview, Texas. He and wife, Barbara, grew up in Tyler, Texas, where Joe had a strong interest in sports and music. He began

boxing when he was nine and boxed in Golden Gloves with good success as a middleweight. He has a Bachelor’s and Master’s degree from the University of North Texas and retired after directing vocal music for thirty-two years. He is a member of the Longview Rotary Club and is very interested in World War II and its history. This versatile TJHS board members did oil explorations in Indonesia and Singapore from 1971-74.

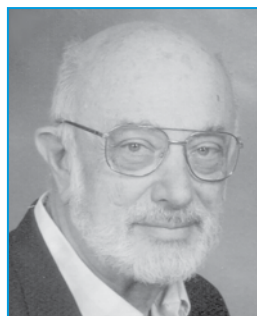
**Mitzi Milstein** is from Longview, Texas, and grew up in Dallas. She is a graduate of Hillcrest High School and attended the University of Texas, where she was a member of Sigma Delta Tau sorority. She is a member of the Longview Junior League, a past president of Longview Community Theatre and a past president of Temple Emanuel. She and husband, TJHS Past President Rusty Milstein, have three

*continued on page 17*



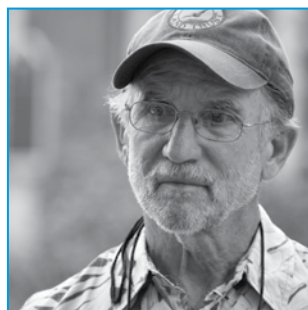
children, including Amy, who is Corresponding Secretary of TJHS.

**Jack Solka**, TJHS News Magazine editor, was born in Mexico City and immigrated to Texas in 1945. He grew up in Corpus Christi, Texas, and received



his Bachelors in Architecture from Texas A&M, and a Masters in Architecture from Columbia University in New York City. He practiced architecture for over fifty years and had his own firm in Corpus Christi for over forty years, where he also participated in real estate development. He is married to TJHS President Davie Lou Solka, and they have three sons and daughters-in-law and six grandchildren. He and Davie Lou relocated to Austin, Texas, in 2007. In addition to his TJHS work, he volunteers his time in construction management projects in the Austin area and his Rotary Club. He was very involved in the moving of the Brenham Historic B'nai Abraham Synagogue to Austin from Brenham.

**L. David Vogel** is a native Houstonian, a retired real estate broker, and a past president of Temple Israel in Schulenburg. He maintains an organic garden at the farm near La Grange and currently serves as a board member and vice-president of Pines and Prairies Land Trust. He is a volunteer Bat Host at Orient Land Trust. He and wife, TJHS Past President and Travel



Chair Vickie Vogel, travel to as many places as they can during the year. They spend most of their summers at their home in Colorado.

**Helen Wilk** is a naturalized Texan having lived in Texas for fifty-four years. She is from Michigan but now lives in Corpus Christi.



She is interested in local history and has conducted oral histories for many Texans for TJHS archives. Helen is a Past President of TJHS and with her husband, Larry (now deceased), have four children and eight grandchildren.

**Debra Winegarten** is a past president of TJHS and lives in Austin. She is an award-winning author and publisher with nine books to her




credit and two more on the way. She teaches sociology at a small college in north Austin.

**Marc Wormser**, TJHS past president, lives in Pearland and is an "Aggie at heart." He has been a traveling sales rep for



Levis, C.R. Gibson, gifts, and medical sales. He owned a recruiting firm and was active in scouting and the

Optimist Club. He and his wife, Joyce (TJHS Recording Secretary), travel whenever they can. He maintains the database for membership and dues and manages the website for TJHS.

Correction for **Cynthia Wolf** from Beaumont, who was highlighted in the last issue. She is Memorial Resolution Chair of Rotary Club of Beaumont, not on the Board, and she is on the Outstanding Teacher Recognition Committee of Beaumont A&M Club, not on the Board. 

## Save the Date

**January 12-14, 2018**

Board Meeting in  
Gonzales, Texas

**April 13-15, 2018**

Annual Gathering and Board  
Meeting in Fort Worth, Texas

**May 3 -10, 2018**

TJHS Panama Trip (See  
information on page 21.)

**June, 2018**

Workshop Board Meeting in  
Rockdale, Texas

## Please Note:

*If you are sending a check to the Texas Jewish Historical Society, please indicate the purpose of the check—dues, gift, contribution, etc.*

# Honor or Memorialize a Friend or a Loved One With a Donation to the TJHS Endowment Fund

When you honor or memorialize a friend or a loved one with a donation to the Texas Jewish Historical Society's Endowment Fund, you help support important programs. Send the honoree's full name, type of honor (memorial, congratulations, or occasion—birthday, anniversary, award, new child or grandchild, etc.) and your name, along with a check in the amount of your choice, to

**Texas Jewish Historical Society**  
**P. O. Box 10193**  
**Austin, TX 78766-0193**

Your support of the Texas Jewish Historical Society's programs is greatly appreciated and will be recognized in an issue of the quarterly News Magazine. Thank you.

The Texas Jewish Historical Society gratefully acknowledges your gift to its Endowment Fund in the amount of

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

In honor/memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Acknowledge to:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## *Donor Information:*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_


*Your gift will further the efforts to record, preserve, and disseminate historic information about Texas Jewish culture.*

## *Frapart Family, continued from page 3*

honored him with a historical marker in Matagorda, and the city of Houston declared April 30, 1986, Albert Moses Levy Memorial Day, in honor of Jews who participated in the fight for Texas independence.

His brother, Lewis A. Levy, and his wife, Mary Alice, moved to Houston, Texas, where they had 20 children. Lewis was appointed one of 3 trustees in the bankruptcy of Jacob de Cordova, a Jewish land developer who brought many people to settle in Texas but had financial reverses. Lewis purchased land from Sam Houston and built a home close to the courthouse with an additional 15 acres. Mary purchased land in her name from Jacob de Cordova at a time when women were not usually allowed to purchase land without their husband's permission. Lewis was a Houston merchant and pub-

lished a letter to attract European immigrants to Texas. He also published an article on the history of anti-Semitism in the first major Jewish weekly in the United States, the New York *Asmonean*. He is credited with organizing the Hebrew Cemetery in Houston in 1854 and served as chairman of the Hebrew Benevolent Association. Lewis A. Levy died in 1861 and was buried in the cemetery he helped to establish.

**Note:** Buried in the Hebrew Cemetery in Brownsville are the following relatives of Jules Frapart: Ralph and Sarah May Frapart, Isadore and Dorothy Dorfman, Elaine and Jean Wiedermann, Susan Weidermann and Mildred and Henry Fruhling. Herbert and Frances Frapart along with the Kaisers and Lewises are buried in the Beth Israel Cemetery of Houston, Texas. 

## We need Your Stories!

We are earnestly looking for stories with ties to Texas Jewish history! Any kind of story about your family history or your Temple's history can fill the pages of our News Magazine. Everyone has a story to tell, long or short. To submit your story, or if you need help writing your story, contact Jack Solka at [jack@solka.net](mailto:jack@solka.net) or 512-527-3799.



## Guess This Member

We finally have a winner! Debra Winegarten, Past TJHS President, guessed that this handsome accordion player is none other than David Vogel. Congratulations, Debra—your dues are now paid for 2018! Now, see who can guess our next person?



This cute little guy is now a very handsome and active member of TJHS. He has carried on a family tradition, and I know they are smiling at him with all his accomplishments. Email your guess to Jack Solka at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org) or [Jack@solka.net](mailto:Jack@solka.net) any time beginning December 5, 2017. Entries received before that date will not be considered. Previous winners and family members are not eligible to participate. Good luck! 🇺🇸



## Announcements

- If your family came from the Czech Republic, and if you would like some help in obtaining information, the following might help you. Contact Alexander Woodle of Groton, Massachusetts ([awoodle@verizon.net](mailto:awoodle@verizon.net)) for further information.
- The Tachov Archive and Museum Society (TAMUS) (<http://tamus.tachov.org/>) was recently created to try and increase the awareness of the restoration efforts of Jewish cemeteries in the Czech Republic (or Czechia). These

restoration efforts have been due to the efforts of Lenka Matusikove, former archivist at the Czech National Archives, and many donations from members of the Austria-Czech Special Interest Group. The museum also has a Facebook page.

- Another organization C.H.A.I. ([www.chaiworks.org](http://www.chaiworks.org))

whose mission is to build strong connections between the Jewish communities of the Czech Republic and those elsewhere in the world. They support the restoration and preservation of Jewish cemeteries and synagogues in the Czech Republic. A contact person for this organization is Lisa Feder.

- Dr. Vaclav Fred Chvatal of the office of Jewish Cemeteries (<http://zh.tachov.org>) has been documenting, photographing and restoring Jewish cemeteries in Bohemia. Dr. Chvatal has published a number of books on his restoration work that are sold through the TAMUS Museum. 🇺🇸



# Grants Awarded at the Marshall Board Meeting on October 22, 2017

Report by Hollace Weiner

***Rice University: Awarded a TJHS Grant of \$4,000 to salvage and preserve archival photos and documents damaged during Hurricane Harvey at Congregation Beth Yeshurun and the United Orthodox Synagogues of Houston.***

The devastation that Hurricane Harvey brought to Houston resulted in serious flood damage to the archives at both institutions. In the days following the flooding, archivists from Rice University donned

protective masks, gloves, and boots to retrieve wet, moldy boxes and binders filled with confirmation-class photos, synagogue bulletins, and board meeting minutes dating back many decades. They rescued audio recordings of sermons and services. These materials will become the basis of a permanent archive at Rice University for the study of Jewish history in Houston and surrounding areas.

The \$4,000 that Rice requested

will be used to purchase supplies to process, treat, preserve, and re-bind documents retrieved from the flood. The materials include acid-free boxes and folders, Mylar envelopes, gloves, masks, absorbent sheets, fans, and dehumidifiers. The grant money will also be used to hire and train undergraduates to assist with basic preservation and cataloging tasks.

Dr. Joshua Furman, the historian who applied for the TJHS grant, had previously planned to develop a Houston Jewish archival collection at the Woodson Research Center at Rice's Fondren Library. The storm gave urgency to those plans and presented Rice with a dramatic reason to embark on that effort without delay.

Dr. Furman is also focused on adding materials to the collection. He asks that members of the TJHS donate their photos, documents, minutes, and memorabilia that relate to the history of Houston Jewry. Dr. Furman may be reached at [jf36@rice.edu](mailto:jf36@rice.edu).

***Marlene Trestman: Awarded a TJHS grant of \$3,000 to conduct interviews in Texas for a collective biography about the New Orleans Jewish Orphans' Home, which during its 90-year history helped raise more than 400 Texas children.***

Ms. Trestman, an author, researcher, and attorney

## In Memoriam



**Lloyd Marvin Parkans**, TJHS member, died on September 19, 2017, in Houston. He is survived by his children, Alan

Parkans Ehrenkranz, sisters-in-law, brother-in-law, and a host of nieces and nephews.

**Barbara Cowen Schmidt**, TJHS



member, died on August 2, 2017, in Austin. She is survived by her children, Robert Schmidt, Edythe Michel, Rona Baizer, and Susan Disman.

**Morris Shapiro**, TJHS member, died on August 4, 2017, in Austin. He is survived by his wife, Elaine Novy Shapiro; his children Bobby (Phyllis), Ira (Diane), Mike (Kay), and Jay (Shannon); fifteen grandchildren, and nineteen great-grandchildren.

**Bernard Solomon Stolbun**, TJHS



member, died September 18, 2017, in Houston. He is survived by his children, Norma (Jonathan) Hyman, Sam

(Alana Spiwak) Stolbun, and Marlene (Tom) Moscoe; eight grandchildren; and thirteen great-grandchildren.

**Marie "Mongie" Eisen Swartz**,



TJHS member, died on August 10, 2017, in Beaumont. She is survived by her husband, Leonard; children, Gary (Gail) and Bruce; two

grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren.

**May their memories be a blessing.**


*continued on page 21*



who lives in Baltimore, asked the Society to underwrite a seven-day trip to Texas and to pay for transcriptions of the oral histories she records. She became interested in this project because she was orphaned as a child and benefited from the services of the Jewish Children's Regional Service, the successor to the New Orleans Orphans' Home.

The New Orleans Orphans' Home provides a vista to Texas Jewish history from antebellum times through World War II. Texas was second only to Louisiana as the children's home state of origin. Beginning in 1860, when two children from Gonzales entered the New Orleans Home, nearly 400 Texas children from 33 different Texas cities and towns were reared there. Many returned to Texas, received post-graduate degrees, and excelled in a wide range of civic and professional endeavors. Best known among them was Edgar Goldberg, founder of the *Texas Jewish Herald*, who lived in the home from 1882 to 1891. The author has interviewed his grandson, Ed Stone of Dallas.

If you know of anyone whose parents, grandparents, or great-grandparents had ties to the Orphans' Home, please contact Marlene Trestman by mail at [marlenetrestman@gmail.com](mailto:marlenetrestman@gmail.com).

The working title of Marlene Trestman's book is *The Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The History of the Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans, 1856-1946—a Collective Biography*. The oral histories conducted for this research will be made available to the TJHS Collection at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History. 

## Join TJHS As We Explore Jewish Panama

### May 3-10, 2018



From our base in Panama City at the Radisson Decapolis Hotel, we will explore the country and connect with the Jewish community of Panama.

*The canal!*  
*Aerial tram ride!*  
*Professionally guided tours!*  
*Explore living Indian cultures!*  
*Flora and Fauna!*

- Meet Rabbi Gustavo Kraselnik
- Participate in Shabbat services at Kol Shearith Israel
- Enjoy Shabbat dinner at a local family home
- Visit Beth El Synagogue to meet community leaders
- Visit Albert Einstein Jewish School
- Our tour leader is Ariel Goldstein, who studied Latin American History in Montevideo and tourism at Hebrew University. Ariel has led tours around the world and speaks four languages.

*Tour organized through **World Passage LTD**,  
the same company that took us to Cuba three times.*


Price: \$2,929 per person, double occupancy  
\$3,449 per person, single occupancy  
Price includes 7 breakfasts, 5 lunches, and 4 dinners  
Price does not include airfare to Panama

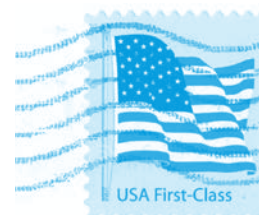
**Deposit Deadline \$500: December 9, 2017**

For detailed itinerary and information on deposit and deadlines, contact Vickie Vogel, TJHS Travel Chair, at [vickvogel@yahoo.com](mailto:vickvogel@yahoo.com) or 979-966-2493

## Save Postage

Please notify TJHS when your address has changed or if you may be temporarily away from home when the News Magazine is to be delivered. These issues are

returned to us at a postage due rate of \$1.52 (at printing date) per magazine. These amounts add up—it's your money we are trying to save! 



## Welcome New Members!

### Donald & Claudia (Gernsbacher) Bankler

207 Briarcliff Dr.  
San Antonio, TX 78213  
210-834-7923  
cbankler@sbcglobal.net

### Laurin & Cheryl (Klotzman) Baum

3037 Tanglewood Parkway East  
Fort Worth, TX 76109  
Home: 817-924-6221  
Cell: 817-366-4609  
laurinbaum@yahoo.com

### Jack & Annette (Adler) Corman

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Dallas, TX 75225  
214-369-6378  
annette.corman@gmail.com

### Keren (Ami) Johnson

3605 Steck Ave., #1061  
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415-505-8190  
keren.johnson@sbcglobal.net

### Harriett Denise (Abramson) Joseph

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Brownsville, TX 78520  
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### Robert & Janice Jucker

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jjucker123@me.com

### Morton L. & LuAnn (Stella) Katz

5400 Maple St.  
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713-202-0559  
mlk@mortonlkatz.com

### Leone (Meyers) Lain

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214-773-5168  
leonehain@gmail.com

### Amnon & Elaine (Steiger) Orent

7211 Lakewood Dr., #122  
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512-372-9690  
elaineorent@gmail.com

### Robert & Sally Rosen

3802 Shenandoah  
Dallas, TX 75205  
214-522-9425  
rkrosen@yahoo.com

## Directory Changes

### Dr. Louis Green

c/o Brookdale Galleria  
2929 Post Oak, #514  
Houston, TX 77056

### Sheldon Lippman & John Campbell

110 San Antonio St., #919  
Austin, TX 78701  
Sheldon: 202-549-0122  
John: 202-460-0542

If you have any changes in your information, please contact

**Marc Wormser**  
1601 S. Riviera  
Ct.,  
Pearland, TX  
77581,  
832-288-3494  
c2aggie@  
gmail.com

## Contributions

The following donations have been received by the  
Texas Jewish Historical Society:

### In Memory of

Morris Shapiro

### From

Bette Jean Cohen

### In Honor of

Gaylon & Marving Heckler

### From

Mark & Pixie Cohn

## —Mazel Tov— to the following TJHS Members

**Shalom Austin, Dell Community Campus**, has received a Coveted Stewardship Award from Preservation Austin. Preservation Austin has been Austin's leading voice for the preservation of historic buildings and places since 1953. The Jury's comments were, "The love and commitment of Shalom Austin, along with Brenham's Leon and Mimi Toubin, to preserving B'nai Abraham as a synagogue is phenomenal. Moving the building involved difficult decisions followed by years of hard work and fundraising, but with wonderful results." The Texas Jewish Historical Society played a key role in the early fundraising effort by granting \$25,000 to the project.

**Lynn Lipsitz**, Houston, who was awarded a membership in the United Daughters of the Confederacy on the service of her great-great-grandfather, Moise Levy, who served in Frois' Company, 3rd Regiment European Brigade, Louisiana Militia, CSA.

## TJHS on Facebook

Did you know that  
TJHS has a Facebook page? Like  
us at [https://www.](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Jewish-Historical-Society/187629054741368)



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## TJHS Traveling Exhibit

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has compiled two museum quality photo exhibits, with explanations depicting early Jewish life and contributions.



Both exhibits highlight the lives of Jews in Texas since the early part of the century.

Each exhibit is comprised of approximately thirty-six photographs that can either be self-standing with an easel back or hung on a wall. There is no charge for the exhibits and they will be shipped prepaid

freight via UPS in waterproof boxes to your location. There will be the expense of prepaid freight back to the shipper via UPS ground.

The exhibits have been displayed

in various locations in Texas and other parts of the United States, including Rhode Island and California. They are an excellent program for schools, congregations, and other organizations. To schedule the exhibits, please contact Deidra Cizon at [dbcizon@swbell.net](mailto:dbcizon@swbell.net) or 214-361-7179.

Texas Jewish

Historical Society

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Join the Texas Jewish Historical Society today! Or use this form to update your contact information. Mail this form with your check made payable to the Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193. Please PRINT.

☐ YES! Count me in! My dues are enclosed.

☐ Please **update** my information.

### Check the Appropriate Box(es)

☐ New Member

☐ Renewing Member

☐ Special interests, professional background, talents \_\_\_\_\_

Who suggested TJHS to you?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Membership Category

☐ \$35 Annual Member

☐ \$50 Supporting Member

☐ \$18 Student Member

☐ \$100 Sponsor

☐ \$250 Sustaining Member

☐ \$500 Benefactor

☐ \$1,000 Patron

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*Contributions to the Texas Jewish Historical Society are tax deductible within the limits of the law.*