

# Texas Jewish Historical Society

Preserving Jewish Heritage in Texas  
Est. 1980



September 2020 News Magazine

## TJHS To Hold Zoom Board Meeting Weekend

With a successful Zoom Board Meeting that was held in June, 2020, the Meeting Committee, chaired by Sally Drayer, has decided to hold the Fall Board Meeting via Zoom with virtual activities over a weekend. It will be held October 23-25, 2020, which is the date that TJHS was going to join the New Mexico Jewish Historical Society in Los Cruces, New Mexico for a joint meeting.

The Meeting Committee, with President Susan Zack Lewis, have planned the following tentative activities for the weekend. The final schedule and Zoom link will be sent to all Board Members prior to the weekend.

### Friday, October 23, 2020

Attend Zoom Shabbat services of your choice, and after services join TJHS for a virtual Oneg. The "hospitality room" will be "open" from 8:30 to 9:30 PM.

### Saturday, October 24, 2020

2:00-2:30 PM

Vickie Vogel will speak about the 1918 Pandemic and how it affected Texas.

7:00 PM

Havdalah Service with TJHS members participating with their unique Havdalah Sets.



7:15 PM

Mel Eichelbaum, TJHS Board Member, will speak about significant cases dealing with civil rights and poverty law reform based on his book, *The Legal Aid Lawyer*. Virtual "Hospitality Room" will be "open" following program until 9:30 pm.



### Sunday, October 25, 2020

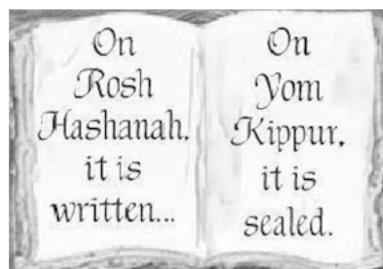
9:30 AM

Zoom Fall Board Meeting



## IN THIS ISSUE:

Message from the President .....	2
A Jewish Woman Warrior .....	3
by Mel Eichelbaum	
What I Did During the Pandemic.....	4-6
Speaker's Bureau In the Time of COVID-19.....	7
by Jan Siegel Hart	
The Galveston Movement.....	8-9
Meet Your Board .....	10-11
Update on Temple Freda in Bryan, Texas.....	12
Lynna Kay Memorial Award in Texas Jewish History.....	14
Grant Application .....	15
Three Marshallites Become Citizens.....	16-17
by Vickie Vogel	
From the Zoom Board Meeting, June 2020.....	18
Application for Preservation of Texas Jewish History Award .....	19
TJHS Texas History Awards .....	20
by Willie Braudaway	
Roots and Boots.....	20
by Tumbleweed Smith	
Guess this Member.....	21
In Memoriam.....	21



# Message from the President

by Susan Zack Lewis

Big plans...  
No plans...  
Months flow like  
sand.  
Technology  
friend  
Technology foe,  
Too much to  
learn,  
Too much to know.  
Hopeful  
Hopeless  
Sad to say,  
I won't need that new dress.  
Sun rise...too real,  
Courage found,  
Must cook that meal.  
Zoom meetings,  
Almost fine.  
Facebook messages,  
We're live now...on line.  
Virtual services to hear Rabbi's voice  
Best we can do, there's no other



choice.  
Understanding David's prophetic  
psalm,  
I see the valley,  
Feel the shadow near the alley of  
reality.  
Words taking flight,  
Landing hard at night.  
This virus is a fright...  
Ready to steal.....Life.

Collected thoughts running  
around in my head sometime over-  
shadow the work and effort to main-  
tain meaningful progress. However,  
as I look through the emails from the  
last few months I do see that life con-  
tinues and accomplishments happen  
with amazing determination.

Recently I received word that the  
latest issue of the Southwestern His-  
torical Quarterly contains the notice  
of the Lynna Kay Shuffield Award.  
Willie Braudaway did a great job of

posting it. This should be a great  
time for someone to take on the task  
of writing and researching a paper on  
Jewish life in Texas.

When we were in Palestine last  
summer, historian Ben Campbell  
spoke to us about Jewish history in  
that city. He mentioned that the mu-  
seum had the dedication tablet, cor-  
nerstone and two windows from the  
synagogue there. Sadly, the museum  
is closed and not expected to reopen.  
He offered these items to the society.  
That prompted a search on my part to  
find a home for them. It's ongoing.  
However Ben is looking into the pos-  
sibility of having the tablets mounted  
on stone and placed inside the Jewish  
cemetery in Palestine. They've been  
exposed to the elements for a number  
of years and should be fine out there.  
I welcome ideas for the windows.  
The colored glass is plain with no  
decorative design. A stained glass  
artist might be able to use the glass in  
some way to honor their origin.

I've had questions about finding  
a home for old Jewish themed shel-  
lac records from a gentleman in the  
Dallas area. I was able to send him  
contact information to help in that  
quest.

When the Jewish newspapers ar-  
rive I look for familiar names. During  
June and July there were numerous ar-

*continued on page 14*

## The Texas Jewish Historical Society September 2020 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 Davie  
Lou Solka at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org) or by mail to 3808 Woodbrook Circle, Aus-  
tin, TX 78759, 512-527-3799. Be sure to include your name and contact  
information.



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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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# A Jewish Woman Warrior

by Mel Eichelbaum

Born in Brooklyn in 1935, Hannah Margolis spent the predominant part of her youth being raised in the Bronx borough of New York City. After graduating high school, the family moved back to Brooklyn where she attended Brooklyn College, completing her undergraduate work with a degree in Education and a specialty in Physical Education (P.E.). Being a bit influenced by her mother, Hannah thought she would drift into a position of teaching P.E. in high school, but as it turned out her ship was destined to sail a different course.

Hannah had a yearning to go to graduate school, but her family could not afford it. In 1956 the Air Force had a significant need for Physical Therapists. Upon inquiry Hannah was convinced that the field of Physical Therapy was the profession to which she wanted to dedicate her life's working endeavor. At that time the Air Force offered an opportunity to pay for one year of graduate school in exchange for two years of military service. To Hannah that was a "win-win" solution, and so despite her parents being somewhat skeptical about her being in the military, Hannah joined up. At that time Hannah had no idea that the military would become her career.

Initially Hannah attended the University of Pennsylvania where she completed a special one year course of study, receiving a Certificate in Physical Therapy (P.T.). Later she earned her Master's degree in Education, with a specialty in P.T. at New York University (NYU).

Her first foray into Texas was in 1970 when she was stationed at Sheppard AFB in Wichita Falls. In 1973, she was transferred to Lackland AFB in San Antonio. Hannah fell in love with the charm and multi-faceted culture of the city and adopted it as



*Hannah Margolis at her retirement ceremony.*



*Recent photo of Hannah Margolis wearing blouse and scarf she wove.*

her home which it has remained ever since.

her home which it has remained ever since.

Hannah's tour in Libya was particularly challenging for a Jewish woman. As a First Lieutenant, she was the senior ranking Jewish officer and so ended up being the Jewish Lay Leader for her group. She always advised her fellow Jews that it was perfectly acceptable to take off for the Jewish holidays, but then she expected them to volunteer to serve during the religious holidays of others. While there she and some of her Jewish personnel had the occasion to spend Passover Seder with a Libyan family of Jewish-Italian extraction. As an American woman and an Air Force officer, she was able to sit at the dining table with the men, while the rest of the women were relegated to the

her home which it has remained ever since.

Hannah's first overseas assignment was at Wheelus AFB in Tripoli, Libya. This was during the pre-Kadafi era, and one of Hannah's patients was the Queen of Libya who used to show up, covered from head to toe, in ultra-orthodox Arabic garb. Upon her arrival at the hospital, at which time no other Arab

kitchen. As Seder guests, they were welcomed to bring gifts of matzah and wine, provided the products did not come from Israel.

While in Libya, Hannah had the opportunity to work with the local hospital treating their polio patients. Although in the U.S. that disease had pretty much been brought under control, the same was not the case in Libya. By utilizing her P.T. skills, Hannah was able to help and improve the lives of hundreds of afflicted individuals, while at the same time not only enhancing her personal reputation, but also bringing a sterling credit upon her country, her branch of service, and her gender amongst the local population.

Hannah's second overseas assignment was at Clark AFB in the Philippines. This was at the height of the Vietnam War. Many American and South Korean troops who had been injured were in need of treatment before being sent home. While there Hannah and her team were able to develop temporary prostheses, using a plaster cast, a crutch part, and a foot made from spare parts recommended by an aircraft mechanic. Assisting these troops to be able to walk again was indeed an inspiring experience. During this tour of duty, she had to deal with an assigned Orthodox Rabbi, which could have posed a bit of a problem. However, a compromise was achieved for Shabbat services, whereby each week ten men would sit up front, and then the rest of those in attendance, including the women, would then sit behind them.

While at March AFB in Riverside, California, Hannah had the special experience of treating President Eisenhower. It was determined that it would be easier to treat him at his home rather than to make all the special security arrangements that would

*continued on page 12*

# What I Did During the Pandemic

*COVID 19 hit—Texas, the United States, and the world—hard and left a “new normal” for everyone. On March 13, 2020, the order came for all Texans to stay home and only those who had “essential jobs” should go to work. Schools, restaurants, stores, offices, bars, movies, barber and beauty shops were closed by order of the governor. Most people have learned to work from home and several home offices, as well as a place for students to do classes, became a staple in many homes. We have learned that staying home, wearing masks and socially distancing is necessary to curb this virus. So TJHS members have been doing their part. Following are some of the ways that our members have found to stay busy while staying home. Your story is welcome—they will be printed in future issues. Send your story to [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net)*

## by Jan Siegel Hart

In March as we began to get news of the COVID 19 Pandemic, Charles and I realized that the Annual Gathering of the Texas Jewish Historical Society in San Antonio should be canceled. It had been scheduled for April 17-19 at the Omni Hotel. As chair of the Meeting Committee, Charles had spent hours on the phone with the hotel, as well as with the Institute of Texas Cultures, where we were to meet and have lunch. The meeting was canceled just days before we were to go to San Antonio for a tasting for the banquet at the hotel and to make final arrangements. This was Charles' final meeting before handing the chairmanship over to Sally Drayer.

Book Club, as well as lunch and dinner dates were canceled. On March 1 we met friends for lunch in Georgetown. That was our last meal out.

As we began isolation, I was determined that we would eat healthy and I would follow an exercise plan I had set up a while ago. I need to have a project every day, and my first project was to clean the refrigerator. Other projects followed, cleaning out the kitchen cabinets, which yielded two garbage bags full. Since I put my maid on furlough, I did some deep cleaning, under and behind furniture, places that were not normally touched. Both of us cleaned out our file cabinets, too.

The week of March 9, I let my bridge partners know I would not be playing at the Bridge Studio in Temple for a while. Some of my friends had been playing bridge on line, but I was never interested, until now. So I registered with Bridge Base Online (BBO) and learned how to play with my partner, Mary. We have been playing almost every day since then.

Before all the shops and restaurants closed, we had made arrangements to go out to eat with our cousins from Waco, Harry and Beverly Harelik. The day before our date, I called to invite them to have dinner in our home on March 15, so that we did not have to be out. They were the last people to be in our home for the next few months.

Our grandson, Joshua, traveled to his dad's home in College Station for spring break. We were to visit with him while he was home. However, his classes at UC San Diego were canceled, so he stayed home to finish his semester on line.

On March 24 I was scheduled to get my usual haircut. The night before, I told my daughter, Debbie, that I was looking forward to getting my haircut. She informed me that I should not be going to a hair salon. After we hung up, my other daughter, Kathy, called to add her “two cents” that I should not be going to a hair salon. I hung up and told Charles, that I would be the one to make that

decision tomorrow. When the morning of the 24th arrived, we heard the news that all nail and hair salons were closed. So after talking with my hairdresser, I took out my scissors and cut my hair. Five weeks later, right on schedule, I cut my hair again. I was pretty pleased at the way it looked. I no longer color it and let it go natural, which I call “Pandemic gray.”

I am an avid reader and often check out books at our public library. Since that is no longer possible, I read more on my Kindle. We have a large home library, so I looked on the shelves and discovered a book that my son, David, gave me over a year ago, *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. I wanted to rediscover the poets I once enjoyed. David had marked several poems for me to read, and I went right down his list of Romantic poets. Then I turned to the Victorians. Now I am reading the more modern poets. It seems I will have plenty of time! I am also reading *The B'Nai B'rith History of the Jewish People*. Charles recently read the book by our cousin, David Hoffman, *The Red Shtetle*. This is not to say that we have not watched hours of reruns on television.

March 28 is Debbie's birthday and she had planned an event at I Fly in Austin. That got canceled, so she set up a family Zoom. This was our first experience with Zoom. Debbie

*continued on page 5*



walked us through it. I am proud to say we are now experts at Zooming and are very thankful to have this way to communicate with family every Sunday.

At this point, with nothing else on my calendar, I began to make note of household chores, and when I went to shop for groceries. I wanted to see how long I could go before being forced to shop. We made it 11 days before running out of bread and milk. We kept a running list all week. Since I was used to running in to buy a couple of items every few days, it was nice to know that I could manage to be much more organized with my shopping. Making a note of when things got done was necessary, since days were running together.

Shopping was a whole new experience. The first few weeks I stood in line wearing a mask and gloves in order to enter the store. Once in, many items were not to be found, such as toilet paper, paper towels, napkins, hand sanitizer, liquid soap, etc. I bought more than usual so I would not have to return so soon. Charles went to Sam's the next day and bought a large package of toilet paper (45 rolls) and 15 mega rolls of paper towels.

I enjoy walking, so most mornings I have walked at a park, just 10 minutes away. It is so pleasant to see the ducks, the lone goose, turtles and wildflowers, it gives my spirits a lift. Some days I walk at a trail along a creek, and see the waterfalls and lots of people with dogs, strollers and bikes.

Two friends had been visiting outside on one of their patios. After three months of seeing no friends or family in person and having a meltdown, I knew I needed to get out, so I agreed to join them. It was so nice to be with friends. We made it a weekly visit, but one more person was invited each time, until I realized no one wore masks and we were not social distanc-

ing. I didn't feel comfortable with that, so I stopped going.

Debbie agreed to join us on our anniversary, June 4. She not only brought us items we couldn't find here, including a Star of David mask which she made, but cleaned all our carpets herself. It was wonderful physically being together.

Charles asked what I wanted for our anniversary and I told him food that I didn't have to cook. He ordered from BJ's and picked it up. Debbie joined us for dinner. It was a very different celebration, but I was thankful for it.

I have been doing work for Scott and White Hospital as a "Standardized Patient" for ten years. This involved memorizing a script and pretending to be a patient for the medical students. With the shutdown, the program changed to on line. The training turned out too involved, and I was not interested in face-to-face meetings. So I decided that now was a good time to retire. It was really a great experience and I enjoyed the challenge.

I cook our main meal every day and have plenty of fruits and vegetables to go along with the meat that Charles insists on having. We do pick up food sometimes, like hamburgers, barbecue, and finally a Dairy Queen blizzard, which I had been thinking about for weeks. We are not ready to dine-in yet, even though restaurants are now open.

Every May we look forward to traveling to Wisconsin to see our son, David, his wife, Karen, and our grandchildren, Daphne and Zachary. The kids are now nine and eleven years old and have been taking dance for several years. The recital was canceled, so the kids donned their costumes and Karen taped their dances, first at home, then on the stage. It was certainly not the same as the excitement of a full auditorium and stage full of dancers, but this is our new normal.

Debbie very generously decided to give me a trip to Russia for my upcoming birthday. Our trip was scheduled for July, but as the date got closer, we decided to cancel. We were really looking forward to discovering our family roots in the shtetle of Paritchi near Minsk. We hope to be able to make this trip at a later date.

We were able to Zoom on several birthdays, our anniversary, Mother's Day and even for Passover Seder. We normally have it together, where each person brings their specialty. We prepared the seder plate, but had to make some substitutes. Instead of parsley, we had celery and instead of horseradish, we had sliced jalapenos. David's family has not been able to join us in the past, but they had the opportunity this year, with his children asking the four questions. During the meal, we each ate and visited, as if we were at the table together. It turned into a three-hour seder, which was surprising and wonderful. Houston Jewish Archives at Rice University put out a request for stories and photos of how everyone was celebrating Passover. We were happy to share a picture of our unusual seder plate.

I have been watching Houston's Emanu El Sabbath service on Facebook for a while. It makes me feel a part of the Jewish community, since we have none here in Temple. Occasionally I see our friends and family there and let them know we are with them virtually. Now with the Temples and Synagogues closed, everyone is doing the same thing.

One of the saddest things about COVID 19 is not being able to hug someone at a funeral. Our cousin, Dorothy Harelik, died in Hamilton, Texas, soon after celebrating her 90th birthday. Her family arranged a small graveside service in the Waco Jewish Cemetery. We decided to go to our very first group outing on June 7. We

*continued on page 6*

started out with masks and trying to social distance. But it really broke down when we went to our cousins' home afterwards for a meal together. It is impossible to eat wearing a mask.

The very next week, we attended our dear friend, Bernie Berman's funeral on Zoom. And the next night we participated in his Zoom minyan. How hard it is to not be able to be with dear friends when they really need us.

I ventured out to have my teeth cleaned on June 3 and my hair cut on June 9. Both offices took special care to wear masks and make sure everything was germ free.

We had Debbie, Kathy and Joshua here for Father's Day, which was also Charles' 85th birthday. We also had dinner with cousins in their home in Georgetown. It is a new normal to only be in small groups. I don't see anything changing any time soon.

We had our first Texas Jewish Historical Society Zoom quarterly board meeting. It turned out to not only be well attended, but very productive as well. None of us were in a hurry to leave. We enjoyed seeing friends that we normally are with four times a year. I am thankful that our News Magazine Editor, Davie Lou Solka, asked for our experiences during the Pandemic. It gave me a "project of the day."

### **by Kathy Kravitz**

Well, I have NOT been ignoring TJHS. In fact, I have been spending many hours every day working on Texas Jewish burial records. For any given cemetery, I open numerous tabs on my computer – TJHS Burial Database, JewishGen's Burial Registry, Ancestry.com, and Find a Grave, being the main ones. I compare the data on these websites to get the most accurate information I can. Then I make a spreadsheet; with the names of all burials within that cemetery. The

spreadsheet includes names, date of birth and death; places of birth and death and names of fathers and mothers (including maiden, whenever possible). The spreadsheet also indicates what additions and corrections need to be made in TJHS's and JewishGen's databases. On the Find a Grave website, I create memorials and/or add photos of gravestones and documentary information. I also identify any veteran and forward that information to Hershel Sheiness. It has kept me quite busy!

### **by Jack Solka**

By the time the COVID-19 hype got hot in March, 2020, I had already experienced the need to self-quarantine since December, 2019, when I had lung surgery. After the surgery I was concerned about getting pneumonia. I did get pneumonia some time in January. I have been fighting this condition ever since.

Since March I have had numerous hours of boredom. I have added some activities to fill the time. Since I have not been able to visit the Fitness Center at Shalom Austin, I have started a daily walking routine. I walk in the mornings and was walking in the evenings until the temperatures reached the high 90s and 100 degrees.

I miss my previous breakfast and lunch meetings with friends. Telephone calls are not the same. TV, Netflix, and reading take up some time. I have read more books in the past few months than I have read in years.

My trips out of the house have been primarily to doctor's offices and a few trips to the Post Office. Our kids have been very supportive. They make efforts to see us by visits in our driveway or their backyards.

Our grandson was to be married on May 1st. We watched as the date was changed—along with the number of people attending—to August

8th—then to August 15th. We finally attended the wedding of Kevin Solka and Sara Drapkin on August 22nd with ten people in attendance! Mazel Tov to them and what a story they have to tell (as my wife says) our great-grandchildren!

A byproduct of the current situation is that Davie Lou and I decided to sell one of our cars. This is the first time that we have only one car for the past fifty years! The savings is considerable and we can always buy another car in the future.

### **by Larry Holtzman**

The fear and uncertainty surrounding the coronavirus pandemic may feel new to many of us. However, it has brought back similar memories for me, being one of those who lived through the polio epidemic of the last century. The poliomyelitis virus arrived each summer striking without warning. How it spread was a mystery to scientists at the time. The virus was discovered to be spread usually through water or food contaminated by poor sanitation and could also be spread by saliva from an infected person. There was no known cure or vaccine.

When I was growing up in the late 1940s and 1950s, the swimming pools and movie theaters closed during the summer. Sadly, it was the children who were most affected by polio. We stopped going to playgrounds or birthday parties for fear of catching polio. In 1952, the number of polio cases in the U.S. hit over 57,000 resulting in 3,145 deaths. Those who survived could end up with some sort of paralysis because the virus destroyed nerve cells in the spinal cord. The most dangerous paralysis was to the muscles needed to bring air into the lungs. Those affected would be put into an iron lung, which was a large tank respirator that would pull air in and

*continued on page 14*



# Speaker's Bureau in the Time of COVID-19

by Jan Siegel Hart

The Speaker's Bureau normally get requests from congregations, where we then ask one of our speakers to contact them to make arrangements to give a program.

Last January we received a request from the Program Director at the Congregation for Reform Judaism in Houston. He said that a couple of years ago Barbara Rosenberg gave a program that was well received. He wondered if she could come back with another subject.

In March, when Covid 19 hit, it was no longer feasible to meet in person. The Program Director asked if we could do a Zoom meeting instead.



*Vickie Vogel speaking to Chavurah at Sun City*

His congregants would greatly appreciate it. At that time none of us were knowledgeable about Zoom, so it was put on hold again.

By April, Vickie Vogel let me know that she was comfortable on Zoom and would be glad to present a program. On May 14, 2020 Vick-

ie gave a delightful program on "Little Known Texas Jews." She used people she had written about for the *News Magazine* which were gleaned from the Texas Jewish Historical Society archives at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History. There were about 20 participants, including a few of our own members. She was able to plug our website and the *News Magazine*, as well as quarterly meetings.

The program was filmed and put on YouTube where it can be viewed any time. It was not only informative, but very entertaining. She was so well received that she was asked to come back with more "Little Known Texas Jews."

On June 27, 2020, Vickie gave the same Zoom program for Temple Mount Sinai in El Paso, where several of our members attended. On August 2, Vickie presented the program to the Sun City Havurah in Georgetown; and again, several of our members attended.

People are so hungry for human contact, that they are even more appreciative of programming that can be met on Zoom. There are many benefits for this type of programming: people can be flexible about attending, they don't have to be in the same town at the same



*Group in Sun City Chavurah.*

*continued on page 17*

# The Galveston Movement

*In 1907, European Jews began coming to the United States via Galveston, Texas. They were routed from locations along the East coast to relieve crowding in overpopulated cities and prevent a public wave of anti-Semitism, which could lead to immigration restrictions. This immigration continued until 1914 and became known as the Galveston Movement.*

*The American Hebrew and Jewish Messenger was a weekly publication with articles of Jewish news from around the world. It sold for ten cents a copy or three dollars a year. Gregg Philipson, TJHS member, recently acquired a copy of the May 23, 1913 issue for his collection with the following article:*

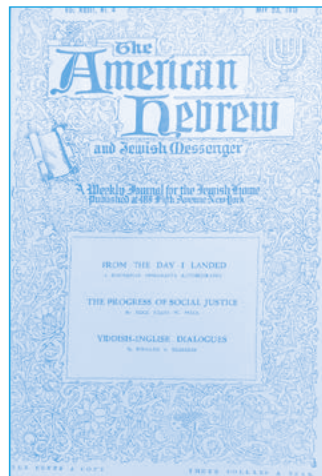
## Galveston Work Taken Over By the ITO

It is reported from Berlin that the Jewish Colonization Association has decided to take the place of the Jewish Territorial organization as the supervisor in Europe of the Jewish immigration to Galveston. The Galveston movement [sic], so-called, has been financed at this end by Mr. Jacob H. Schiff. In Russia and other ports of embarkation, the work has hitherto been conducted by agents of the Ito [sic], Mr. Zangwill's organization. It is rumored that the funds of the to have been exhausted. The work has been so successful; however, that it has been found desirable to have the European service transferred to the Ito [sic] which seems to have ample funds for the work.

*Josh Furman, Director of the Houston Jewish Archive, at Rice University obtained a pamphlet titled*



*Bette Evans*



example, than all of France. Its soil is especially fertile for grazing cattle and cotton plants. Except for its southern section, its climate is good for your health, especially in the winter months. The population of the state consists of Englishmen, Spaniards, Germans, Frenchmen, Negroes, Indians, and others. There are Jews in significant numbers only in the larger

*"Major News About Immigration to Galveston (State of Texas)." The pamphlet was published in Ukraine in 1907 mostly in Yiddish by the Jewish Territorial organization (ITO). It is one of only two known to exist, and was distributed in Eastern Europe to encourage Shtetl Jews to come to Texas. At that time there were about 20,000 Jews in Texas. It has been translated as follows:*

The state [sic] of Texas is the largest in the United States. It occupies 262,290 English square miles and is larger, for

cities, especially Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Galveston. The population of the state is approximately 3,000,000. Compared to its huge area of territory, its population is very small. The state has lots of empty space for new immigrants.

*If your family came through the Port of Galveston in the years of the Galveston Movement, 1907-1914, please send us their story. So many people did not stay in Texas, and we would love to have their stories. Send them to [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net).*

## My Galveston Connection

**by Bette Evans**

Chana Gorelik, a seamstress and Velvel Astonovitsk, a carpenter, married in Parichi, Byelorussia (now Belarus) in 1906. A few months later, Velvel and his siblings left to start a new life in the United States, with the help of the Galveston Movement. Velvel and Chana were my grandparents, and he first worked in the slaughterhouse of Fort Worth for fifteen cents an hour. How could a man who had known nothing but kosher meat have survived the filth of slaughterhouse in those days?

Before long, Velvel had saved enough money to acquire a peddler's wagon and became one of the many Jewish peddlers who carried bananas and other novelties to the isolated small towns of Central Texas. My grandparents were naturalized as American

*continued on page 9*



citizens in 1917, and Velva became Wolf Novit and Chana became Annie. Over the next few years, he was able to bring over Annie's brothers and parents and they in turn, brought a wider extended family. Wolf settle his growing family (four daughters and one son, my father) in Dublin, Texas.

He chose Dublin, because in his travels, when he arrived there, business was booming and the main street was crowded. On the spot he decided to settle there. Only later did he realize that he had arrived on "First Monday, the monthly market day that brought farmers into town for shopping. Never-



*Standing: Annie Harelik Novit, Haskell Harelik, Morris Harelik, Esther Novit Hoffman. Seated: Wolf Novit holding Fannie Novit, unidentified man, Sol Novit.*

theless, he prospered and soon was able to leave the wagon and open a small general store on the main street.

Our family was never offended by well-meaning neighbors who tried to bring us to their churches. My parents taught that they really cared for us and genuinely wanted us to be saved. We thanked them graciously, but declined. Sometimes the Novit children did not quite get the message. Both my father and I remember taking communion in Methodist churches because we thought they were serving grape juice and crackers.

Saturday was the major business day in farming towns, so Sabbath rest was not an option. Nor was kosher food. I suspect the biggest loss must have been the lack of a good Jewish education for their children. My father recalls being prepared for a home Bar Mitzvah by a relative whose teaching made no impression at all. The children did not learn Hebrew, and Yiddish was reserved for conversations between parents when they did not want their children to understand what they were saying. Jewish holidays were celebrated in the home, although as cars and roads became more accessible, they would drive for hours to Fort Worth or

Waco – the nearest communities with synagogues – for the High Holidays. They worried who their children would marry.

The immigrant generation learned English—and spoke with a delightful combination of Yiddish accents overlaid with a Texas twang and slang. As they prospered, they became leaders in their communities. My grandfather funded, out of his own pocket, the hiring of a music teacher in the local schools. His brother-in-law became mayor of Dublin. By the time the next generation came along, they were all Texans. But they carried an unspoken, and perhaps unconscious burden: they all felt the need to be uncontroversial and to fit seamlessly into the local culture. Even in the midst of success and acceptance, they felt vulnerable.

All of the Novit children, and their spouses opened their own dry goods stores in the surrounding towns. My sister and I grew up in Stephenville, where our parents owned one of the of the main stores on the town square. Our lives were much the same as our local friends, except when we all met to celebrate the Jewish holidays our family did not quite understand. Given our parents lack of Jewish education, it is no surprise that ours was worse. For several years, our parents drove us to Fort Worth every Sunday for Sunday School at the conservative synagogue. As "country cousins", we were painfully conscious of being outsiders and learned absolutely nothing.

But we learned other things – Jewish merchants had to be not only scrupulously honest, but also scrupulously accommodating. If a farmer wore his work shoes for a year and then returned them because they didn't wear well, he would be given a refund. My cousins and I learned that we must always be good, because our behavior "reflects on all Jews."

As our families became more



*W.H. and Annie Novit, about 1940,*

*continued on page 13*



# 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 has two children and two grand-children. She likes to travel, cook, play Mah Jongg and read.



**Douglas Braudaway** is from Del Rio, and teaches government and history at South-west Texas Junior College. He is married to Willie, who is also a TJHS Board Member, and they have five children and fifteen grandchildren. Doug enjoys writing history and historic marker applications.



**Nelson Chafetz**, Austin, is a lifelong Texas resident, who was born in San Antonio. He attended the University of Texas/ Austin, where he received a BSEE degree. He is married to another native-born Texan, Mitzi Chafetz.



Nelson works for the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality and is

a competitive swimmer. He has two children, Rachel Chafetz and Valerie Chafetz Gonzales, and one grandson Brayden Chafetz. Nelson lives in Austin and is a thirty-three-year member of United States Masters Swimming Organization, and in his spare time, is a party barge captain.

**Deidra B. Cizon** lives in Dallas with her husband, Gordon, who is also a TJHS Board Member. She is a native of Fort Worth and was a member of Beth-El Congregation.



**Joan Katz** is from Houston, TX, 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 Hadasah. She is a life-time member of the Houston Livestock show and Fort Bend County Fair. Joan enjoys cooking. Joan attended the University of Oklahoma and the University of Houston. She is a member of Alpha Epsilon Phi sorority.



**Rabbi Jimmy Kessler** is the founder and first president of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. He is the Rabbi Emeritus of Congregation B'nai Israel in Galveston. When he was a rabbinical student at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati, Ohio, he discovered that there were only two cards on Texas Jews in the



card catalogue in the school's library. Several years later, he wrote letters, held a meeting, and the Texas Jewish Historical Society was

born. (Read the full story on our web site.) He was the Director of the Hillel Foundation at the University of Texas in Austin before assuming the pulpit in Galveston. He was the first rabbi in the history of Freemasonry in Texas to be elected the presiding officer of a Masonic lodge. He served as the Chaplain of the Galveston County Sheriff's Office and as a visiting Rabbi at UTMB. Jimmy and his wife, Shelley, enjoy their children and grandchildren. In 2018, a street near the Temple was renamed Rabbi Jimmy Kessler Drive in honor of his Double-Chai Anniversary at Congregation B'nai Israel.

**Molly Kristall**, was born in Duisburg-Hamborn, Germany, and arrived in the U.S. with her family in December, 1949. Her father served in WW I and WWII. He was in the Lodz



Poland Ghetto and spent four years in the Auschwitz concentration camp. Molly has three sons, one daughter, and two grand-

daughters. She is looking forward to the birth of her grandson in October. Molly has served as President of the Sisterhood in McAllen and of District #22 NFTS (now Women of Reform Judaism). She has been a member of the WRJ National Board. She is an event planner and loves music, art

*continued on page 11*



history, and Jewish films and music. Since moving to Austin, she has been a coordinator for the Health Professions for Austin Community College and has served as an usher for the ZACH Theatre.

**Bob Lewis**, aka Tumbleweed Smith, is from Big Spring, TX. He hosts a daily radio show, *Sound of Texas*, that is syndicated throughout Texas. It is a show featuring Texans talking about their interesting careers and sometimes



unusual experiences. He writes a newspaper column, also syndicated in the state, and is co-owner of Multi Media Advertising, Inc. Bob taught

communications at UTPB in Odessa for thirty-four years, was District Governor of Rotary, and has won many awards for audio and video production. One was the Gold Award for Excellence from the Communicator Awards for "Texas Jews go to Cuba," a documentary about the first TJHS humanitarian mission trip to that country. He and his wife, TJHS President, Susan Zack Lewis, have two children and four grandchildren. Bob is Publicity Chair for TJHS.

**Joan Teter Linares**, is a retired elementary teacher who taught for thirty-two years at Harlem Elementary



School in Baytown Texas. Joan grew up in Baytown and learned about the Texas Jewish Historical Society from her parents, Don, who is a past

President, and Gertrude Teter. She is President of Congregation K'Nesseth Israel in Baytown and treasurer of the Baytown Chapter of Hadassah. She and her husband, Ruben, have three daughters, one son, and six grandchildren. Joan is serving as 3rd Vice-President of TJHS.

**Abigail (Abbi) Glosserman**

**Michelson** was born in Lockhart and still lives there. She graduated from the University of Texas in Austin and is a member of Alpha Epsilon Phi Sorority. She taught school in Dallas before she married David J. (Buddy) Michelson, who lived in Gonzales.



Abbi and Buddy lived in Gonzales when they were first married, and after ten years, moved to

Lockhart. Her children, Jeffrey and his wife, Shelley, live in Lockhart and her other son, Jon, lives in Austin. She loves to travel, entertain, and be with people. Abbi is always willing to help with all meetings—especially the hospitality room!

**Mitzi Milstein** is from Longview, Texas, and grew up in Dallas. She is a graduate of Hillcrest High School, and

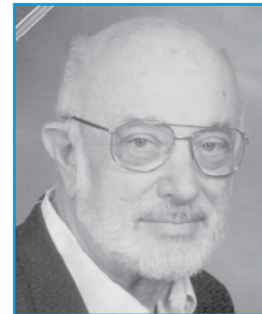


attended the University of Texas, where she was a member of Sigma Delta Tau Sorority. She is a member of the

Longview Junior League, Past President of Longview Community Theatre

and Past President of Temple Emanuel-El. She and husband, TJHS Past President, Rusty Milstein, have three children, including Amy, who is Corresponding Secretary of TJHS.

**Jack Solka** was born in Mexico City and immigrated to Texas in 1945. He grew up in Corpus Christi. Jack received a Bachelor's degree in Architecture from Texas A&M College 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. He is married to TJHS

Past President and *News Magazine* editor, Davie Lou Solka. They have three sons and daughters-in-law and six grandchildren—one is married, and one is engaged. He and Davie Lou relocated to Austin in 2007 to be closer to their family. In addition to his TJHS work, Jack volunteers in construction management projects for non-profit organizations in Austin. He has been a member of Rotary since 1968, and continues this active role in Austin. He was involved in the moving of the Brenham Historic B'nai Abraham Synagogue to Austin from Brenham, Texas. As Regional Director for the Volunteers for Israel Program, Jack assists civilian volunteers from Texas to go to Israel to work in Israel Defense Forces camps. Jack is a member of the Grant Committee.

**Betty Fram Weiner** grew up in Goose Creek (now Baytown). While attending UT Austin, she met her husband, Ira Weiner, who was in the U.S. Air

continued on page 13

# Update on Temple Freda in Bryan, Texas

Stephanie A. Hilliard, President of the Brazos Heritage Society, sent the Texas Jewish Historical Society an update on the preservation of Temple Freda in Bryan, Texas. She said "For many years, the building sat unoccupied until it was in danger of collapse. However, a few years ago, a preservation project was started under the auspices of the ad hoc Friends of Temple Freda, the City of Bryan, and the Brazos Heritage Society. We have completed Phase 1 to stabilize the property and are now working on Phase II of what is planned to be a 5-phase project.

"After completion, the building



*Temple Freda, Bryan, Texas*


will be put into service for public events in keeping with the mandate that it be used for benevolent purposes. It will become another important part of the award winning and ongoing beautification of downtown Bryan.

"As part of our efforts, we are

participating again this year in Brazos Valley Gives, an annual community fund-raising campaign that benefits a number of non-profit organizations in the Brazos Valley. Our goal is to raise the \$150,000 needed to complete Phase II of the Temple Freda restoration.

"In preparation for this fund-raising, we're reaching out to Jewish historical societies who may be able to get word out to the Jewish

community about an opportunity to preserve an historic property."

If you wish to contribute to this project, contact Stephanie A. Hilliard at [contact@brazosheritage.org](mailto:contact@brazosheritage.org). For more information, see the Brazos Heritage Society web site [brazosheritage.org](http://brazosheritage.org). 


*Jewish Woman Warrior, continued from page 3*

have been required for his treatment at the base hospital facility. So Hannah reported to his home to perform her P.T. treatments on his behalf. Mamie was so impressed with Ike's progress that in gratitude she invited Hannah and the Hospital Commander to have breakfast with her and President Eisenhower, which was indeed a most memorable event.

After 27 years of service with the Air Force, Hannah retired at the rank of Colonel. At that time it was rare for a woman to have achieved such a high rank in the military, which

was a credit to her extraordinary record of service. When she retired, Hannah and one of her Black friends received a full military parade in their honor at Lackland AFB, which included attendance by all of the trainees. Initially her friend did not want a parade, but Hannah convinced him that it was important for the basic trainees to see how a Black person and a woman could make it to the top.

Hannah's remarkable dedication to service did not stop after retirement. Shortly thereafter she was responsible for setting up a successful Gerontol-

ogy Outreach Program for the Jewish Federation of San Antonio, which was eventually taken over by the Jewish Family Services. Hannah has served on the Boards of the Jewish Community Center, the National Council of Jewish Women, SAM Ministries, and Temple Beth-El, and currently is on the Board of their Sisterhood. Hannah is an expert weaver, weaving scarves which she donates to various charitable organizations for their fund raising auctions. She weaves unique tallitot for Bar and Bat Mitzvahs. She also serves as a docent at the Institute of Texan Cultures. 

## 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 Davie Lou Solka at [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net) or 512-527-3799.

**If you need TJHS membership applications for an event, program, personal use, etc., please contact Rusty Milstein at [hrmilstein@prodigy.net](mailto:hrmilstein@prodigy.net).**






W. H. Novit and cart about 1908.

comfortable as rural Texans, our parents worried that we would stop being Jewish. So, by the time we were approaching adolescence, they decided to leave their beloved community and move to Dallas, where we could belong to a synagogue and join Jewish organizations. The transition from rural to urban child was easier on my younger sister than on me. In subtle ways, I had grown up in a Protestant world rather than a Jewish one. I know more Gospel

songs than Jewish ones, and later (as an academic) probably know more about Christian theology than Jewish theology. It was only as an adult that I became seriously interested in my own religion.

But whatever I missed by not growing up in a Jewish community, I have gained something that has become an enormous blessing. Even as a child, and long before I knew the word, I understood marginality. Having

one foot in very different worlds gave the ability to look at each with an outsider's eye. This gift has given me a special appreciation for the immigrant generation who made a literal transition from one world to another - from the shtetl to the Texas countryside—from forest to plains—from Yiddish to Texas English—from a seamless Jewish community to a totally foreign one. We, the descendants of the Galveston Movement are who we are because of them. 



Annie & Wolf Novit (formerly Chana and Velvel Astonovitski). Novit was taken out of Astonovitski in the U.S.

### Meet Your Board, continued from page 11

Force. He was her life partner for over sixty-five years until his death in 2017. After moving to Houston in 1962, she




worked for many years in fund raising, volunteer activities, and plan-

ning special events for non-profit groups, including the Mental Health Association, Jewish Family Service, and the Houston Ballet. Then, acting on her love of travel, she became a travel agent for several years before retiring. Betty now spends her time enjoying her family—a son in New York City, and a daughter and her husband and two grandchildren living in Houston. She also enjoys reading, theater, travel, and various volunteer groups.

**Gary P. Whitfield** is from Fort Worth, and is a former coach and teacher. He retired from the Air Force Reserve



where he was a small arms instructor. He is a former Data Col-

lector (Field) RTI and is a past chairman of the Tarrant County Historical Society. 

out of the lungs, allowing the person to breathe.

In 1950, my cousin, Harriette Holtzman was in Tulsa, Oklahoma visiting her grandmother when she began to have trouble breathing. She was diagnosed with polio and placed in an iron lung. The polio patients were quarantined in the basement of the hospital. She and two other youngsters were there. The other two died. Harriette was considered lucky to be in Tulsa because at that time Brownsville lacked an adequate amount of iron lungs that were need-

ed. She spent about six months in the iron lung before she could breathe on her own.

Ultimately, poliomyelitis was conquered in 1955 by a vaccine developed by Jonas Salk and his team at the University of Pittsburgh. The research money came from the March of Dimes, founded by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, who contracted polio and was never able to walk again. Leading drug manufacturers made the vaccine available and more than 200 million doses were distributed between 1955 and 1962, reducing the cases

of polio by 90%. By the end of the century, the polio scare had become a faint memory in the United State. Rotary International with support from the Gates Foundation founded the Global Polio Eradication Initiative which has reduced polio worldwide by more than 99.9%.

I remember being in a long line of kids in 1955 at Sam's Memorial Stadium to get my vaccination. Let's pray that a vaccine will soon be found for COVID-19, and the long lines for food, water, employment and other necessities will also be a memory.

## Lynna Kay Shuffield Memorial Award in Texas Jewish History


The Texas Jewish Historical Society has joined the Texas State Historical Association in offering the Lynna Kay Shuffield Memorial Award in Texas Jewish History for \$2,000. The first award will be presented at the 2021 Texas State Historical Society Annual Meeting.

Competition for the award will be open to any graduate students

or lay historians who have created a work of scholarship in Texas Jewish history, including published books, chapters in published books, articles published in scholarly journals, and post-graduate theses or dissertations.

Eligible works will have been created within the previous three years; i.e. the 2021 Award will be offered for a work created in the

years 2018, 2019, and 2020. More submission details will be available on the Texas State Historical Association website at [tshaonline.org](http://tshaonline.org)

As a lay historian herself, Lynna Kay Shuffield appreciated how much work and passion it takes to preserve Texas Jewish history. Her legacy will be to reward others for doing the same. 

**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.*

### *President's Message, continued from page 2*

ticles about Rabbi Jimmy Kessler: one from Tumbleweed about his life and others about his new book, *Ramblings of a Texas Rabbi*. What fun to read upbeat, positive news!

One of my high school chums recently wrote to me about restoring a house in Galveston owned by a rabbi for a number of years. The house has been in and out of her family twice. She's looking into the history hoping to discover a connection for TJHS.


I've also reached out to Rabbi Kessler.

After great consideration, Davie Lou Solka requested a refund on the remaining funds from the intern program at the Briscoe. The amount was less than \$200, but the shutdown might have an effect on who works there in the future and our connections may need to be reestablished.

The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience is set to open in New Orleans, in early 2021. Davie

Lou Solka, Sonny Gerber and I had an interesting conversation with Kenneth Hoffman, Executive Director. Look at the website to see what they're doing. [www.msje.org](http://www.msje.org)

Sally Drayer and her meetings committee hope to have plans for the Fall Zoom meeting complete soon.

L'Shanah Tovah Tikateivu V'te-ichateimu. This is a year to stay safe, stay healthy, stay involved and stay in touch! 





# The 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).*

# 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.*

## — Three Marshallites Become Citizens —

by Vickie Vogel

Our archives contain a news clipping from May 20, 1945 from the *Marshall News Messenger* profiling three residents, including two Jews, recently awarded United States citizenship. Rabbi and Mrs. Adolf Philippsborn and Mrs. Philip Maranto were congratulated in Jefferson. Mrs. Maranto's sister, Mrs. D. Tatillo of Beaumont; Mrs. Henry Stein and Rev. L. L. Meyer, both of Marshall, were in attendance.

"I Am an American" Day was authorized by congressional resolution in May, 1940, honoring naturalized citizens. It was a special day for Rabbi and Mrs. Philippsborn who had barely escaped Nazi Germany.<sup>1</sup> The rabbi fled Berlin on April 9, 1933 for Paris. His wife, Gertrude,<sup>2</sup> and younger son, Kurt, followed ten days later. Their older son, Heinz, remained in hiding in Berlin until he was able to leave in May, directly for Palestine.

The rabbi was born in 1888 in Potsdam<sup>3</sup> and grew up hating fascism because his father, Leopold Philippsborn, had taught him the ideals of democracy.<sup>4</sup> He studied Semitic languages and philosophy, graduated from the Victoria Gymnasium and college in Potsdam, and attended the University of Berlin and Heidelberg, and the Jewish Teacher Seminary



*Unidentified with Rabbi Philippsborn, right.*



*Marshall News Messenger, May 20, 1945, from The Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.*

his people."<sup>5</sup>

Adolf was connected with the *Vossische Zeitung*, a well-known liberal Berlin newspaper which lasted until

in Muenster. He served in several congregations in Berlin, and from the pulpit, he preached against Nazism in synagogues in the Ruhr, Westfalia, Eilesia, and Pomerania and other places. He addressed hundreds of meetings in Berlin, Frankfurt, and other cities telling people of the Nazi danger. He wrote articles in German newspapers about the threat to world peace as well as the German people. He knew he was a marked man and had to leave. In Paris, Adolf and Gertrude read in the paper that they had both been deprived of their German citizenship because "we were not faithful to the fuehrer and

1934. It was considered the national newspaper of record until it was dissolved. The owners were Jewish, and even though they purged Jewish staff and hired new staff with German Nationalist tendencies, that didn't save the paper.<sup>6</sup>

Philippsborn worked on the newspaper while still fulfilling rabbinical duties with congregations in Berlin. His work as Reichstag correspondent brought him in touch with leaders of all political persuasions from Nazis to Communists. He met former Chancellors—Dr. Wilhelm Marx, Dr. Heinrich Bruening, Dr. Karl Wirth, Philipp Scheideman, Franz von Papen as well as Foreign Ministers such as Dr. Gustav Streseman. He met with the first president of the Reich, Friedrich Ebert and his successor Paul von Hindenburg as well as Martin Erzberger and Walther Rathenau, members of democratic governments who were assassinated. When Hermann Goering became president of the Reichstag in 1930, Philippsborn met with him, and also met Dr. Joseph Goebbels.

January 29, 1933, twenty hours before Hitler came to power, Philippsborn went to the lobby of the Hotel Kaiserhof which was Hitler's headquarters at the time. Hitler, Goebbels, Goering, Himmler and others were sitting in the lobby. Rumors were flying that Hitler would march against Berlin if von Hindenburg did not appoint him chancellor. At the press conference the next day, held at the Palace Leopold across the street from where von Hindenburg

*continued on page 17*



lived, journalists buzzed that Hitler was meeting with von Hindenburg at that moment. At last, Privy Counsellor von Heyde, deputy chief of the press department of the German Foreign Office arrived. With trembling hands, he read the announcement of Hitler's appointment.

Thus, Philippsborn was yards away from the birth of the Third Reich. "The end of the Third Reich which Hitler predicted to last a thousand years - I witnessed it here in Marshall," Philippsborn said, "in these blessed United States of America, whose citizens my wife and I now are."

The Rabbi was grateful that Hitler told the world he and his wife had nothing in common "with those gangsters who have tortured and slain innocent people, who have extinguished the lights of freedom in Europe, and who have set the world aflame."

Once in the United States, he studied at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati. He was committed to Reform Jewish institutions, joined the Central Conference of American Rabbis, and was on the committee for Family, Marriage, and the Home. He was an executive board member for the southeastern region of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations and was active in the Kallah of Texas Rabbis.

When asked if they would like to return to their homeland, Rabbi Philippsborn replied that they preferred dry bread and salt in the United States to fried chicken in Germany.

Meanwhile, their two sons were in Palestine. Heinz was with the Eighth British Army from 1940, and Kurt from 1942. They saw action in Africa, Sicily

and Italy. They were separated from their parents for twelve years.

"Before we came to America we lived in Germany, France, Spain, the Netherlands. I was in Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Romania, Belgium, Great Britain, but - there is only one America, and we are proud to be its citizens."


Philippsborn came to Shreveport in 1939 and was connected with B'nai Zion congregation, assisting Rabbis Abraham Brill and David Lefkowitz. In 1942, He was elected rabbi of Temple Moses Montefiore in Marshall. He succeeded Dr. David H. Wittenberg who had been rabbi for the past year and resigned because of ill health.<sup>7</sup>

Philippsborn was a member of the Marshall Rotary Club and president of the Marshall Ministers' Association, serving as secretary-treasurer for several years. He was secretary of Reuben Lodge No. 237 of B'nai B'rith of Marshall, chaplain at Harmon General Hospital in Longview, and representative of the National Jewish Welfare board. Other activities included serving on the council of the Boy Scouts of Harrison County, publicity chairman of the Marshall Boy Scouts and member of the district board of review, East Texas Area Council. He also served on the council of the Harrison County Girl Scouts and was a member of the Marshall USO council.

After leaving Marshall, he served congregations in Harlingen; Lubbock; Gadsden, Alabama; Muncie, Indiana; Colorado Springs, Colorado; and Vicksburg, Mississippi. He died in Vicksburg in 1967,<sup>8</sup> and Gertrude in 1976.<sup>9</sup> His papers are in the American

Jewish Archives in Cincinnati.

### **Endnotes**

- <sup>1</sup> [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11096861/gertrude-s\\_-philippsborn](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11096861/gertrude-s_-philippsborn)
- <sup>2</sup> 1898- <http://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/ms/ms0010/ms0010.html>. Rabbi Philippsborn married Frida Anna Jacob Philippsborn (b. 1896) and they had two daughters, Lieselotte (b. 1913) and Ruth (1916-2014). Ruth died in Buenos Aires. <https://www.geni.com/people/Frida-Philippsborn/60000000030546322115>
- <sup>3</sup> <http://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/ms/ms0010/ms0010.html>. This source gives the date of birth as 1898, but <https://www.geni.com/people/Rabbi-Adolf-Philippsborn/6000000007551168810> says 1888.
- <sup>4</sup> His mother was Johanna Philippsborn. <https://www.geni.com/people/Rabbi-Adolf-Philippsborn/6000000007551168810>
- <sup>5</sup> Unless otherwise stated, all information is from Box TN 21367 of the Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Dolph Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.
- <sup>6</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vossische\\_Zeitung](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vossische_Zeitung)
- <sup>7</sup> Dr. Wittenberg had been a Marshall resident for 18 years and often served as rabbi during that time.
- <sup>8</sup> Box 1, Folder 1, History of the Marshall Jewish Community, Adolf Philippsborn, January 1943. <http://collections.americanjewisharchives.org/ms/ms0010/ms0010.html>
- <sup>9</sup> [https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11096861/gertrude-s\\_-philippsborn](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/11096861/gertrude-s_-philippsborn). 


### *Speaker's Bureau, continued from page 7*

time, they can attend even if they are under the weather, they don't have to find a sitter, they save on gas, they get to see their friends and family without being exposed to the virus.

I want to publicly thank Vickie

Vogel for representing Texas Jewish Historical Society so well.

Zoom may never replace in person meetings, because of the personal contacts, but (as Vickie says) "it is another arrow in our quiver."

Zoom programming may be with us for a long time, with senior citizens not anxious to be out in groups. If you wish to have a TJHS Zoom program, contact Jan Hart or Gayle Cannon at [tjhspeakers@txjhs.org](mailto:tjhspeakers@txjhs.org). 

# From the Zoom Board Meeting, June 2020

- The 2020-2022 Membership Directory was mailed to all members.
- Davie Lou Solka, News Magazine Editor, is seeking articles from members whose family came to the U.S. through Galveston during the Galveston Movement years (1907-1914); and also, articles from members on how they have spent their time in isolation during the COVID-19 Pandemic. These will be ongoing articles—contact Davie Lou is you would like to submit an article.



- The Board approved expenditure of \$5,000 for an intern for a semester at the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History on the UT campus to continue organizing and perhaps digitizing our Collection. This will be done when the Center reopens after the Pandemic.
- Plans for the updating of the

Jewish Exhibit at the Institute of Texan Cultures in San Antonio have been placed on hold due to the Pandemic. When they reopen, they will contact us on their plans.

- The web site was accessed 3,548 times, including 1,541 new visitors. It is updated with current information, including the Jewish

burials database. A goal is to create a “search feature for News Magazine articles.

- Approval was given to open a corporate account for future Zoom meetings and perhaps for Vimeo access to relevant documents, lectures, and other presentations. 🇺🇸

## Does TJHS Have Your Current Email Address?

Is your email address current? Has it changed since the 2018 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.





# The TJHS is Accepting Nominations for Two Outstanding Recognition Awards for the Preservation of Texas Jewish History

Texas Jewish Historical Society (TJHS), founded in 1980, is seeking nominations for Outstanding Recognition Awards in two areas: (1) Significant Historic Site Preservation (awarded first to Leon and Mimi Toubin for the restoration of the Orthodox Synagogue originally in Brenham and moved to Austin, in order to continue as a sacred place for Jewish worship services) and (2) Extraordinary Historic Project (awarded first to Rabbi Jimmy Kessler for the 1980 founding of the Texas Jewish Historical Society, which continues to educate, to preserve stories, and to archive Texas Jewish History).

TJHS now seeks your help to identify and honor those individuals who have made a significant and lasting impact on the preservation of Texas Jewish History. Only one award per year can be given in each category; but it is not mandated to be given yearly, only when an outstanding accomplishment merits the award. Recognitions as determined by TJHS Award Committee will be presented at TJHS Spring Annual Gathering. Applications must be received by July 15, 2021 and mailed to Cynthia Wolf, 4305 Sterling Lane, Beaumont, TX 77706.

## Application Form

Date of Submission: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and Contact Information of Nominee(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name and Contact Information of Person(s) Recommending Nominee(s) for Consideration: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Category of nomination:

☐ Significant Historic Preservation

☐ Major Historic Project

In the packet that you will return with this sheet as your cover page, please include the following:

- Complete description of the accomplishment
- Reasons that you are submitting this nomination and how you became aware of this accomplishment
- Pictures and other documentation
- Impact of this accomplishment and how it has and will continue to make a difference now and in the future on the ongoing story of the Jews of Texas
- Short bio of nominee(s)

Thank you for helping us recognize deserving individuals!

*Send applications to: Cynthia Wolf, 4305 Sterling Lane, Beaumont, Texas 77706*

*For more information, contact*

*Cynthia Wolf at 409-899-4499 or [cwolf@gt.rr.com](mailto:cwolf@gt.rr.com).*

# TJHS Texas History Awards

by Willie Braudaway


The 40th Texas History Day 2020 was held virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions. The Texas Jewish Historical Society awarded two Jewish History Awards in the Senior Division. The theme was "Breaking Barriers."

Courtney Lamb (from Travis B. Bryan High School, Bryan) received a first-place award of \$100 from TJHS. Her paper was titled "Breaking Barriers During the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising."

Jack Jordan (Veterans Memorial Early College High School, Brownsville) received a Second-Place award of \$50 from TJHS. His paper was titled "Breaking Barriers: America's Response to the Holocaust." Jack was a first-place winner in 2019.

The winning papers can be viewed on the web at <http://texashistoryday.com/?q=education%2Fstudents%2F-texas-history>.

TJHS offers monetary awards in

the Senior and Junior divisions each year. The Texas History Day History Committee, chaired by Willie Braudaway, with members Doug Braudaway, Jan Hart, and Hollace Weiner, read and judged papers that were potentially eligible for the Jewish History Awards this year. The Committee will be actively encouraging students to consider writing Jewish History papers for Texas History Day 2021. 

## Roots and Boots

by Tumbleweed Smith

A group of immigrants in Dallas has formed an organization called Roots to Boots. Boris Gremont and his wife, Joan, immigrated to the United States from South Africa in 1978, and settled in Dallas. Boris was an established, successful accountant in Johannesburg, but he says every day was uncertain as to what the day might bring politically. He had to re-qualify as a CPA in Texas. "When I went to the certification board, they said 'give us \$90; stay here for ninety days, and we'll make you a CPA.' I thought this is my kind of town."

He was showing some people from South Africa around Dallas who were thinking of immigrating. He took them to a grocery store, and when they saw sixty kinds of bread, they thought the country was too confusing and decided not to immigrate.

Boris found a job in the accounting department at Neiman-Marcus. "I was giving a financial report to some executives, and was about forty-five


minutes into my presentation, when one of them asked me to start over because he could not understand a word I had said."

When Boris left South Africa, taking money out of the country was dangerous. "It was considered treason if you were caught taking money out, and you could receive a prison sentence," said Boris. They don't have a legal system that is here in America with lawyers fighting for you. There it is pretty much an open and shut case."

Boris had a friend who decided to take his wealth with him in the form of diamonds when he left. He put his arm in a plaster cast and was going to imbed the diamonds in the cast and go through the airport and go to London. He called the security authorities at the airport the day he was leaving and said there was a British Airways flight from South Africa to London and a short fellow (he was short) was planning to take that flight. He told them the fellow had his arm in a cast and it


was full of diamonds. That evening he arrived at the airport with his arm in a cast. Of course, the authorities were watching for him. They pulled him aside and took him into an interrogation room and asked about the diamonds in his cast. He said he had no idea what they were talking about, but they continued to badger him until they eventually decided to cut off the cast to take a look. They peeled it off, layer by layer and there were no diamonds.

The security officials were very embarrassed and apologized, and the man told them they had made him miss his flight. They said they would get him on the next night's flight. The next night he went to the airport with his cast full of diamonds and they escorted him onto the plane.

*Editors Note: If you immigrated to Texas from South Africa, and would like to tell us your story, please send it to Davie Lou Solka at [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net). *

**The deadline for the  
December 2020 TJHS  
News Magazine is  
Friday, November 13.**

## 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. We want to save you money! 



## In Memoriam

**Bernard (Bernie) Berman**, TJHS member, died June 7, 2020, in Houston. He is survived by his wife, Phyllis (Bumar); children, Mark (Rocio Lilliana) Berman; Cynthia (John)

Riddle; sister, Susie Abramson; sister-in-law Ruthe Berman (TJHS Board Member); and four grandchildren.



**Dr. Louis Harry Green**, TJHS member, died May 21, 2020, in Houston. He is survived by his children, Shelley Green; Chuck (Pat) Green; Lauren (Robert) Smith; three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.



**Dorothy Harelik**, former TJHS Board Member, died June 6, 2020, in Hamilton. She is survived by her bonus children Mark and Spencer Harelik; Joe and Marcia Medrano; Matt & Dawn Harelik; two grandsons; many cousins, nieces and nephews.

**Nick Kotz**, TJHS member, died April 26, 2020, in Broad Run, Virginia. Mr. Kotz was an author and Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist, and was born Nathan Kallison Lasser in San Antonio, Texas. He is survived by his wife, Mary Lynn; a son, Jack Kotz; and one grandson.

**May their memories  
be a blessing.**

## Mazel Tov


**to the following TJHS Members**

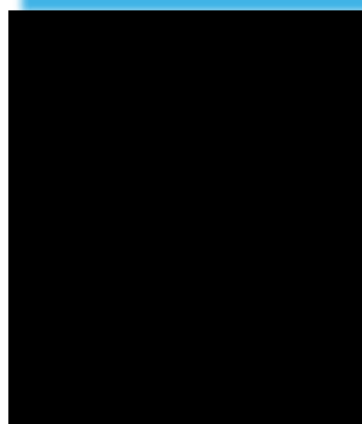
**Jack Solka**, on becoming a member of the 2019-2020 Rotary District #5879 Roll of Fame for his outstanding exemplification of the Spirit of Rotary.

## Guess This Member

We had a winner! Mazel Tov to Areve Alexander who guessed that our cutie from the past few issues is **Janice Gerber** from Houston. Areve will receive a year's membership in TJHS for her excellent sleuthing. Here's another cutie for you.

This little one has been a faithful TJHS Board Member for many years.

Email your guess to Davie Lou Solka at [editor@txjhs.org](mailto:editor@txjhs.org) any time beginning Monday, September 14. Entries received before that date will not be considered. Family members and previous winners and their families are not eligible to participate. Good luck! If you'd like to try and stump the TJHS membership, please send your photo to [davielou@solka.net](mailto:davielou@solka.net). 



## Contributions

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

### In Honor of

Joyce K. Lieb, on receiving the BSA  
Silver Beaver Award in El Paso  
Vickie Vogel

### From

Bernadine Belkin  
Temple Mount Sinai in El Paso

### In Memory of

Dorothy Harelik  
Rabbi Kenneth Roseman

### From

Barbara & Ben Rosenberg  
Susan & Bob Lewis

### Gift Membership For

Merom & Judy Brachman  
Richard & Phyllis Ulman  
Shawn Ulman  
Andy & Brandie Kessler  
Jenny Kessler & Nick Bius  
B. Z. Lewis  
Kevin Lewis  
Norma Rabinovich

### From

Areve Alexander  
Rabbi James & Shelley Kessler  
Susan & Bob Lewis  
Cecilia Shapiro

# Welcome New Members!

**Sheila Aron**



**Merom & Judy Brachman**



**Bruce A. Hoffman**



**Vicki (Aaronson) Hutson**



**Andy & Brandie Kessler**



**Jenny Kessler & Nick Bius**



**B. Z. Lewis**



**Kevin Lewis**



**Jack & Barbara Markman**



**Roslyn Hoffman Pittsford**



**Norma Rabinovich**



**Freida Lee Schwartz**



**Richard & Phyllis (Alexander)  
Ulman**



**Shawn Ulman**



**Rabbi Ben Zeidman**



## Directory Changes

**Sandy Dula**



**Sandra (Miron) Freed**

**Drs. Robert & Miriam (Kalman)  
Friedman**

**Frances Goodman**



**Ruben & Joan Teter Linares**



**Melvin Lipsitz**



**Babbette (Blankfield) Samuels**  
GrammySam@outlook.com

**Arthur & Joyce (Proler) Schechter**



**Davie Lou & Jack Solka**



**David & Joy Turkel**  
davidbturkel@gmail.com

**Dr. Elliot & Marcia Goren Weser**



If you have any changes in your  
information, please contact

**Marc Wormser at**  
832-288-3494, c2aggie@gmail.com

## TJHS on Facebook

Did you know that TJHS has a  
Facebook page?

Like us at [https://  
www.facebook.  
com/pages/  
Texas-Jewish-Historical-Society/](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Texas-Jewish-Historical-Society/)

187629054741368.







# TJHS Board of Directors

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### *2nd Vice President*

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Joyce Wormser (Pearland)

## Past Presidents

*(Living Past Presidents are  
members of the Board of Trustees,  
per our By-Laws.)*

David Beer (Dallas)

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Howard "Rusty" Milstein (Longview)

Barbara Rosenberg (Sugar Land)

Lionel Schooler (Houston)

Davie Lou Solka (Austin)

Vickie Vogel (La Grange)

Helen Wilk (Houston)

Marc Wormser (Pearland)

## TJHS Traveling Exhibit

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has three museum quality photo exhibits, with explanations depicting early Jewish life and contributions. The 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 Dolly Golden at [goldendolly81@yahoo.com](mailto:goldendolly81@yahoo.com) or 512-453-8561.

**Texas Jewish**  
**Historical Society**  
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## The Texas Jewish Historical Society New Membership and Information Update Form



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

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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