

The Texas Jewish Historical Society Magazine




February 2022

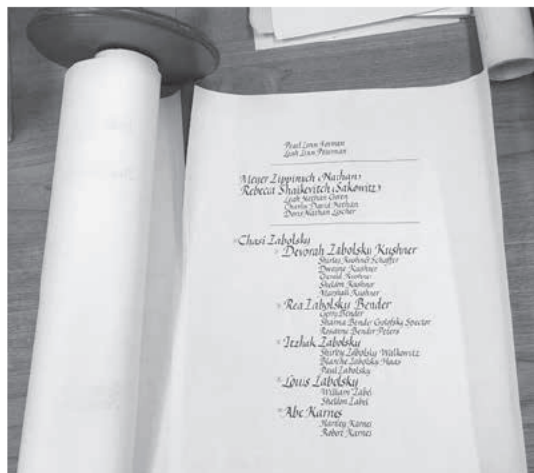
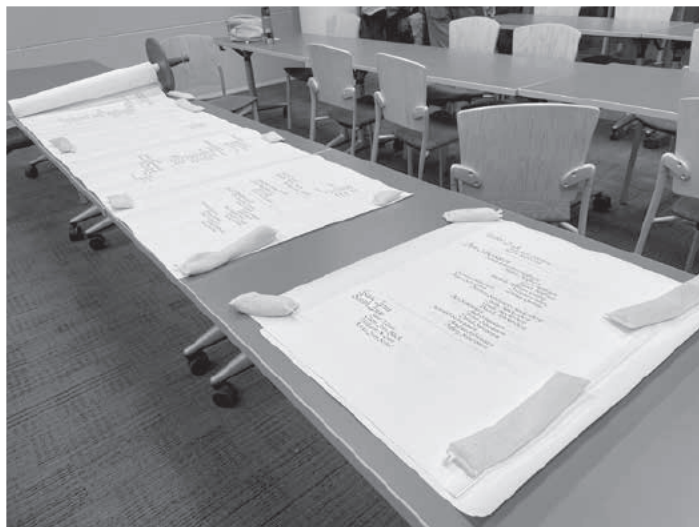
TJHS Galveston Scroll

by Davie Lou Solka

The Galveston Scroll is a Torah-like scroll that is in a large wooden box with handles that can be turned so the names can be seen. It was a project of the Texas Jewish Historical Society that culminated in the Spring of 1992.

TJHS members could send in the names of their immigrant ancestor, along with any descendants and relationship to the immigrant. Cost was \$5 per immigrant name, and \$2.50 per descendant. Ninety families and over seven hundred names of immigrants and descendants are represented on the Scroll. Families were sent a photograph of their page/pages from the scroll.

The TJHS Galveston Scroll is housed at the Briscoe Center for American History on the UT/Austin campus, and may be borrowed for program presentations. Recently a group of TJHS members met at the museum to view the scroll. The group met with Evan Hocker and he had the scroll partially unrolled for viewing. Sally Drayer, TJHS Archivist/Historian led the group which included John Campbell, Rachel Cockerell, Sheldon Lippman, Davie Lou Solka, and Vickie Vogel. 



Top right: Galveston Scroll partially unrolled. Bottom left: TJHS members looking at scroll—Davie Lou Solka, John Campbell, Sheldon Lippman, and Sally Drayer. Above: Example of family groups.



Content

Quarterly Magazine

The Texas Jewish Historical Society 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Texas Jewish history, oral histories, and requests for assistance with research are welcome, as are photographs and historical documents. We recommend that you provide photocopies of all documents and photographs. Please provide color photocopies or scans at 300 dpi or greater in gif, tif, or jpg format, and send electronically to editor@txjhs.org or by mail to Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, Texas. 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.

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Save the Date

April 3, 2022

Annual Gathering
via Zoom

Electronic voting for
proposed slate will
be held prior to the
Zoom meeting.

From the Editor

If you noticed a slight change in the weight of the paper used for this issue, you would be correct! Our printer could not get our usual weight paper because of the current supply chain issue, so he ordered the lighter weight paper so he could print this one. Hopefully, our usual weight will be available for the next issue. Enjoy this slight change along with the other changes that we are making. Happy Reading!

Message from the President

by Sheldon Lippman



On January 16, 2022, at 1:57 PM, I received a voicemail message from Shirley Rich from Houston. In her message she said “I’ve been meaning to get in touch with you for quite some time. I knew the whole Lewis family. And I just wanted to talk to you about things that I remember from childhood and adulthood.”

To my recollection, I have never met Shirley; but she knew my grandparents, uncles, aunt, and mother, Sarah Lewis, who lived in Houston.

When I returned the call and reached Shirley, she said she’d been meaning to call me after reading a story in *The TJHS Magazine* that I had written about my grandparents. Her call to me had been delayed for many personal reasons. She told me about moving into

an assisted living facility with her husband, Marvin, about two-and-a-half years ago. Sadly, Marvin died about one week after that move in August 2019. She and Marvin had been married for 64 years. I was familiar with the name Marvin Rich; he was TJHS President from 2004 to 2006. Shirley is a faithful TJHS member and reader of *The TJHS Magazine*.

Shirley could not help but laugh when she told me the story about how she and her mother would go every Thursday to purchase a live chicken and take it in a paper bag to the butcher for a “shechita” (kosher slaughter). Then, the young Shirley Mayer watched as her mother plucked and dressed the chicken for the family’s kosher meal.


What particularly resonated with me was the story of her visits with her mother to my grandparents’ kosher butcher shop on Hamilton Street. Shirley’s family lived a few walkable blocks away on Hadley Street. Shirley recalled how my grandfather, Joe, would unmercifully tease her mother to a point that made Shirley cry. Mrs. Mayer had to assure Shirley that Mr. Lewis was only kidding.

“My grandfather was a kidder, a jokester?” I asked. “Oh, yes,”

Shirley confirmed.

My grandfather died in 1963; I was 11 years old. My only memory of Joe Harry Lewis was as an invalid with severely trembling hands from years of progressive Parkinson’s disease. He sat in a wheelchair at the kitchen table with a fraying prayer book in front of him and his ever-present yarmulka slightly askew on his bald head. In those childhood years when I visited Joe with my family on Sunday drives from Schulenburg, he was never able to speak above a barely audible mumble. Until Shirley mentioned it, I had never heard that my grandfather had a sense of humor and was a jokester. That fact explains my Uncle Buddy who was the family funnyman!!

The rewarding connection on that Sunday afternoon illustrates the surprise benefits of TJHS membership. I thoroughly loved that phone chat with Shirley Rich. She revealed to me something profoundly special about my grandfather. I thanked Shirley for sharing that remembrance and urged her to call me whenever another Lewis story popped into her head.

For those who might visit or chat with Shirley, don’t forget to ask her about the chicken in the paper bag! 

We Need Your Stories!

The Texas Jewish Historical Society would like to print your story if you or your family immigrated to the United States from the former Soviet Union, South Africa, India, or other countries. We have received many stories—and still want to include them—from families who immigrated during the earlier part of the twentieth century, but realize that our beautiful Texas history is much more than those stories. Help us tell the rest of the story and contact editor@txjhs if you will include your family’s history in the *TJHS Magazine*.

**The deadline
for the April
2022 TJHS
Magazine is
Friday, April 1.**



Row 1: John Campbell, Vickie Vogel, Sheldon Lippman, Jane Manaster, Michael Furgatch, Reuben Linares.
 Row 2: Joan Katz, Amy Milstein, Betty Weiner, Kimberly Dietz, Susan Zack & Bob Lewis.
 Row 3: Marilyn Lippman, Sally Drayer, Helen Wilk, Susan Septimus, Cynthia & Michael Wolf.
 Row 4: Barbara Green Stone, Gayle Cannon, Ben Rosenberg, Susan Novick, Mel Eichelbaum.
 Row 5 –Sonny Gerber, Davie Lou Solka, Joyce & Marc Wormser, Janice Gerber, Joan Linares.

Notes from the Board Meeting, January 16, 2022

- Sally Drayer, Archivist/Historian announced that several boxes and scrapbooks had been taken to the Dolph Briscoe Center for American History in November. She is planning a trip to College Station to see what is in the boxes that have been taken to the Hillel, including the file that she recently received regarding the Charter process for the A&M Hillel.
- Jane Manaster, Grant Chair, announced that a Grant of \$2,000 was awarded to David Katz, Dallas, to help him with the translating of Yiddish letters for museums in Texas. An update to the grant awarded to the Hebrew Order of David Lodge Galil for the Grave-stone Project was announced by Sonny Gerber. He said there will be a presentation in April with the markers installed. He will let the Board know the exact date.
- The Annual Gathering will be held via Zoom April 3, 2022. Electronic voting for the Proposed Slate of Officers and 2022-2024 Trustees will be held prior to the meeting.
- Marc Wormser, Membership Chairman reported that our membership is composed of 101 single females, twenty states plus D.C. are represented, three countries are represented, with 445 members coming from Texas. There are currently 494 members who have paid their 2022 dues.
- Davie Lou Solka, *TJHS Magazine* Editor, reported there has been positive response to the changes in the Magazine, and the next issue will be out the end of February or early March.

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The Jewish Community in Big Spring, Texas

by Tammy Schrecengost, The Heritage Museum, Big Spring

Big Spring, Texas, became a melting pot for many Europeans who immigrated to the United States. The railroad attracted immigrants from the United Kingdom, as well as those from Eastern and Western Europe. Big Spring was a small town on the verge of great things, especially with the discovery of oil. Jewish merchants began arriving and opened stores along Main and Third Streets. They relied on each other for guidance, help, and familiar companionship. Some of those merchants set up their first shop in the 1870's, while waiting for the railroad to be built.

Joseph and William Fisher, founders of the J&W Fisher Mercantile, were brothers from the Czech Republic. Religious services were held in their homes until a formal organization of Temple Israel was made in 1927. Not all of the immigrants continued to follow Judaism. Some married and joined their spouse's religion, but the camaraderie continued within the circle of family, friends, and business partners. Each one proved that through hard work, diligence, and careful savings, the American dream can come true.

Joseph Fisher was born in Shintlin, Austria in 1845, and his brother, William, in 1857. Their father had immigrated to the United States aboard a lumber ship. Once he arrived in America, he sent for his family, and they made their home in Indiana. Soon after serving in the Civil War under the Union forces, Joseph and William left Indiana and moved to California to start a mercantile, but soon returned to Indiana. After hearing about the vast growth in the southwest, Joseph decided to try his

hand at setting up a mercantile store in Texas. He arrived shortly before the railroad had pushed through Big Spring in 1881, and opened a tent store at the springs. Once the railroad was established, he moved to the corner of First and Main. His first store burned, but he rebuilt it in brick and stone. Business was such a success that Joseph asked his brother, William, to join him in 1884. They enlarged the store with the two-story structure that still stands today.

Joseph's son, Albert, began his own successful department store at 214-216 Main Street in 1923. Albert died after suffering a heart attack in 1938, and his son, Albert, Jr. ran the store until it was sold to Hemphill Wells in 1946.

Victor Mellinger immigrated to the United States from Czechoslovakia at the age of fifteen. He had a sister in New York and a brother, Samuel, who was a prominent merchant in Menard, Texas. After immigrating to New York, Victor worked as a cigar maker, working sixteen hours a day for \$2.00 a week. He worked hard and learned to speak English. He married his wife, Rose, and they began their married life by heading to Texas.

They moved to Lockhart, Texas, where Victor was able to save a small amount of money to purchase a "pack and a small stock of merchandise." He received saddle sores from the



*Historical Marker for the J & W Company in Big Spring, Texas.
Photograph by Bill Kirchner.*

pack he carried, but he continued to persevere. He saved as much money as he could and purchased a mule team and cart. Soon he was able to open his first store in Blanco, Texas. Victor and his family arrived in Big Spring in 1917, and he opened a shop in the 200 block of Main Street. In 1939, he purchased Levine's and opened a business at 223 Main. By 1958, Victor Mellinger had employed both his sons and hired local architect, Daryl Hohertz, to redesign the bottom floor of the Masonic Lodge building

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at 3rd and Main. Melinger's Men and Boys Wear was a success.

Sam Fisherman was born in Lotz, Poland in 1885. He immigrated to the United States as a young man and married Pearl Guisberg from Poland/Russia. They moved to Goldthwaite, Texas, and opened a grocery store. Sam wanted to go west, so they sold the grocery store and moved to Big Spring, where he opened a dry goods business on the lower end of Main on January 1, 1917. In 1995, Sam decided it was time for him to retire, so he closed the store at 213 Main, saying that there had been a lot of merchandise changes since he began his business, and predicted that soft goods would be for the big or small operator, but nowhere in between.

Oscar and Bobbie Glickman moved to Breckenridge, Texas, from Chicago in the 1920's. He worked as a juke box repairman, and began to collect 78 rpm records, and selling them. They moved to Big Spring in 1933, where he joined his two brothers in a partnership of Margo's Dress Store. Oscar opened a store for his records at 120 Main Street, and in 1942, he opened The Record Shop at 211 Main with over 50,000 selections of music. He said he carried anything from Rocky Mountain ballads to Russian folk songs, including swing and Strauss waltzes. Oscar's crowded



The Record Shop in Big Spring, Texas, circa 1972. Photo courtesy Texas Monthly.

store contained stacks upon stacks of record albums. Shelves would buckle in the middle from the weight of the albums. When Oscar was asked where something was or if it was in stock, he would squint his eyes in thought and then go to the exact location of the album in question. Collectors, teens, and even the artists themselves would walk into Glickman's Record Shop for the experience of a lifetime. The Glickmans had three children, Martha, Julius, and Jake.

Oscar passed away in May, 1943.

Morris Prager was born in Lithuania in 1892. He immigrated to the United States in 1908 after his parents scraped together enough money to get him there. Morris was to meet an older brother in New York, but upon arrival, discovered that his brother had died. This left him alone, so he was taken to Ellis Island where a grocer agreed to take him in and teach him English in exchange for his help in the grocery. After working for two years, Morris felt he was ready to set out on his own. He became a bakery delivery driver in New York. He would wake up at 4:00 AM, hook up the horse, and make his rounds in the freezing cold. Moving further west was appealing to the slightly-built young man, so he saved his money for train fare to Dallas, where he went to work as a butcher boy selling candy and cigarettes.

He would send money back to his family, so they could come to America. He was finally able to bring three brothers, two sisters, and his mother to the United States. Morris started a cleaning business in Fort Worth, and through the arrangement of family, he married Netta (Nettie) Sheinberg from New York. Nettie had immigrated to the United States in 1908 at the age of twelve.

Morris was called for service during WWI. He heard there was

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opportunity in West Texas oil towns, so he left his men's store that he had in Fort Worth since 1910, and moved his family to Big Spring in 1927. He opened a store at 113 Main Street, and called it the Army Store, even thought it had nothing to do with the Army. The store had wooden crates for counters and shelves, and Morris said, "those were pretty tough times. Poor boy type of operations." In 1930, during the depth of the Depression, he decided to move the store up town to 204, and later to 206 Main Street. That store was named Prager's, and he continued to operate the Army store at 113 Main, selling military attire and accessories.

Morris's son, Albert (A.J.) graduated from Texas A&M with a degree in Petroleum Engineering in 1941. After Pearl Harbor in December of that year, A.J. was soon on active duty as a Lieutenant. After the war, he went to work as head of drilling operations in North Louisiana. Morris needed his son to help him in the business, so in the spring of 1948, A.J. moved to Big Spring to work in the men's wear business. Brother Joel became a mechanical engineer and sister Emily (Clark) stayed in Big Spring to also help in the family business. By 1956, Prager's moved to a new building at 102-104 East 3rd Street, and Morris' lifelong dream had finally come true. He owned the largest men's store in Big Spring, and with only a fourth-grade education, he had made sure that all of his children received formal education. He died February 28, 1958, at the age of sixty-five.

Adolph Szwarcbart Swartz was born in Czeszochowa, Slaskie, Poland in 1904. His mother and father passed away in 1916 and 1918, and Adolph immigrated to the United States, where he attended military schools.

He entered Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, and worked his way through college as a salesman in local clothing stores. After graduating in 1931, he married his wife, Dorothy, and the couple decided to move to the growing town of Big Spring to start a business. They purchased the Hollywood Shoppe and upgraded the quality of the merchandise. They built a new store on the corner of East 3rd and Runnels, and this elegant building showed sophistication and style unlike any store in Big Spring.


(Editor's Note – the following information was added to this story because it is the abridged story of TJHS Past President, Susan Zack Lewis' grandparents and parents.)

Lena and Nick Brenner arrived in Big Spring in the late 1920's, and operated the Brenner Dry Goods Store. It was a favorite stop for salesmen and they learned quickly to call on Lena during the noon or dinner hour so they could join the family in the delicious meals that Lena had prepared for her family. Nick was a poor businessman, and he carried too many people that did not honor their accounts, causing his business to fail. However, Lena was an astute and shrewd businesswoman. Nick became a successful plumber and later an examiner in Texas.

Clara Brenner, one of their children, left Big Spring to go to New York, where she worked at a two-story five and dime. One day, she tripped on the stairs and was caught by the linen delivery man, whose name was Jim Zack. They were married within months in a small, simple ceremony with their parents not present. Lena wrote Clara a letter telling her of the importance of marrying a man who could earn a good living for her. Clara had that letter until the day she died.

Times were hard for Clara and Jim and shortly after they were married, a package arrived from Texas. In it was an angel food cake surrounded by popcorn. In the center of the cake were three fresh eggs and between them was a hundred-dollar bill. They took that as the sign they needed to move to Texas, where the depression was not as severe as it was in New York.

They worked with Clara's mother, Lena, in the dry goods business. They also worked out of a store front in Lubbock. Each week they would take merchandise from Brenner's Dry Goods and sell it in Lubbock. At the end of the week, they went back to Big Spring, paid Lena, and got more merchandise. Several years passed and they heard that the government was building a large army base in Killeen. They decided to move there and found a store where they could sell army surplus. It was a success from the beginning. In 1944, Clara and Jim moved back to Big Spring to be closer to Clara's family. In 1946, Jim made a connection with Margo's at 204 Main. Margo's was a shoe store, but he and Clara set up a women's apparel shop at the back of the store that they called Zack's of Margo's. The store was such a success that they remodeled and in June, 1955, a new store opened.

In 1965, they opened a larger and more spacious store at the corner of Main and 6th Streets. High above the fireplace in the store were portraits of Clara's parents, Nick and Lena Brenner 

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FROM OUR ARCHIVES

A Special Person Passed This Way

by Vickie Vogel

This column is based on information available in our archives, supplemented by some online research. If you have corrections or additions to this information, please submit them in writing to the TJHS editor at editor@txjhs.org. We want our archives to be as complete and accurate as possible.

A judicial colleague of Judge Irving Goldberg once compared him to the fictional Forrest Gump, who witnessed and influenced several defining historical events in twentieth-century America.¹ From the aftermath of the Kennedy assassination to the landmark case of *Roe v. Wade*, Judge Goldberg played a pivotal role.

Abraham and Elsa Loeb Goldberg operated a dry goods store in Port Arthur, Texas in the early 1900s. Elsa was born in Germany in 1885, died in 1939, and is buried in Beaumont.² She lived in Brooklyn before moving to Texas. Their son Irving Loeb, born June 29, 1906,³ later wrote that his parents fled to the United States to escape Russian oppression. Irving graduated from the University of Texas in 1926.⁴

While at UT, Irving met Phi Beta Kappa Marian Jessel Melasky. The Melasky family had been in Texas since the 1860s. Bernard Melasky⁵



Judge Irving Goldberg. Photo courtesy of Julie Goldberg Lowenberg.

came from Eastern Europe, probably Poland, before the Civil War and served in the Confederate Army as a cook. In the 1870s he brought family to the Austin area. His nephew Joseph “Jack” Melasky⁶ settled in Taylor and married a Texas girl, Sarah Pearlstone.⁷ Their son Hyman married

Julia Long of Waco. Her family was from England and also arrived in the 19th century.⁸ Hyman owned a drugstore and was a leading citizen in Taylor; their daughter Marian was born in Waco in 1905, but grew up in Taylor. Marian and Irving married while he was at Harvard; Marian took some

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Marian Jessel Melasky Goldberg. Photo courtesy of Julie Goldberg.

graduate courses there.⁹ She worked for a time for Governor Dan Moody,¹⁰ who was also from Taylor and was her Uncle Harris' law partner, but she wanted to be with Irving at Harvard.

Harvard was quite an experience for a small-town Texas boy. He found the most meaningful part of the experience

was mingling with his Eastern counterparts. Harvard in the 1920s produced the great legal thinkers of the 1930s and 40s.¹¹ Goldberg spoke with awe of his famous legal mentors at Harvard, but he only "endured" future Supreme Court Justice Felix Frankfurter. He recognized Frank-

furter's greatness, but he offered no help to students, and Goldberg never regarded him as a fine person.

While at Harvard, Goldberg was a classmate of Alger Hiss. The future accused Soviet spy was a quiet student, but once stood up for Goldberg when he was being harassed by their torts professor. Basically, Goldberg recalled Harvard as an exclusive gathering of white male faces. Five African-Americans started with his class, but none survived the first year. No women were even admitted.¹² Irving received his law degree in 1929.

He began his law practice in Beaumont, moved it to Houston in 1930 and to Taylor in 1931.

Marian's Uncle Harris Melasky practiced law in Taylor, and when the oil boom led to increased business, the Goldbergs moved to Taylor to pitch in. Once the oil frenzy subsided, Irving moved to Dallas and became in-house counsel for the Murray Company which manufactured cotton gins. Before long, he resumed private practice with a young friend, Martin Winfrey, which lasted until World War II upset everyone's life.

In 1942, Irving was drafted at age 36 and what he called the "Battle of Washington" began. They didn't know what to do with him. He suggested he should determine where other people should be assigned. He was told to acquaint himself with the Dictionary of Occupational Titles.¹³ He was assigned to the hospital corps, and then moved to the Office of General Counsel of the Navy in Washington, D.C. as a lieutenant. He worked with the Committee on Naval Affairs, on which Texas Congressman Lyn-

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don Baines Johnson served. Johnson chaired a subcommittee, Special Investigating Subcommittee of the House Committee on Naval Affairs. Irving had met LBJ through mutual friends in Texas. Harris Melasky had known the Johnson family for years, and worked on Johnson's first political campaign. Irving's former law partner Martin Winfrey was well known in political circles and also a Johnson supporter.

On his first Sunday in the nation's capital, Irving had dinner at the home of Lyndon Johnson. Since Johnson's route home passed where the Goldbergs were living, they carpooled. Johnson often took home important dinner guests, such as Texan Sam Rayburn, who would later become Speaker of the House. Once when they were leaving the office late, Johnson called home to say he was bringing four or five people to dinner. Irving asked him how he kept Zephyr Wright, his cook, so late. Johnson replied, "Irving, I'll tell you, don't tell Bird, but she doesn't know what Zephyr is getting paid."¹⁴ These long rides cemented their friendship. Sometime thereafter, when future first lady Ladybird Johnson needed a blood transfusion, Goldberg came to the rescue. In those days, the Judge recalled, the transfusion was provided directly from donor to recipient.

In 1946 Irving was discharged from the Navy but remained a Naval Reserve Lieutenant. He had returned to private practice with a lawyer named Cleo Thompson, but decided to form a firm with Bob Strauss in 1950 - Goldberg, Fonville, Gump & Strauss.¹⁵

Johnson ran for the U.S. Senate in 1948 against Coke Stevenson. Goldberg was happy to campaign for him. One day his phone rang. "This is Lyndon. What are you doing?" which



Temple Emanuel's Confirmation Class of 1920. Front row: Annie Nathan Friedman, Rabbi Samuel Rosinger and Evelyn Hurwitz Back row: Mack Waldman, Johanna Szafir Faye, Marjorie Uhry Samuels, Mamie Sharfstein Krone, and Irving Goldberg.

Temple Emanu-El confirmation class, 1920 from the August 2007 TJHS News Magazine.

was one of his common conversation starters. "I want you to do me a favor. I understand they are cheating me out of eight votes in Van Zandt County. I want you to go up there and see if it is true."

Goldberg agreed, and said he would take a witness with him to Canton. The County Tax Assessor was also the County Democratic Chairman. Goldberg told him he was a friend of Johnson's and understood an error had been made. The chair quickly agreed but said he had been too busy to do anything about it. Goldberg told him this should be a priority and wrote out in longhand a certification that a mistake had been made. He insisted the man call the Texas Election Bureau with the cor-

rection. It was a very close race and every vote mattered.¹⁶ The winning margin was 87 votes.¹⁷

Attorney Goldberg particularly enjoyed tax cases. One of his clients was LBJ.¹⁸ Johnson chaired the Senate Committee on Naval Affairs during the Korean War. The committee studied manpower utilization, and he wanted eight Navy people to help. Goldberg was still a reservist, and the Navy called him back. Goldberg was not thrilled. He did not want to spend the rest of his life writing bureaucratic reports. He asked Johnson how he could get out of it. Johnson smiled and said, "I guarantee you'll get out when you finish this report, and it will only be a month or two." Goldberg made important contacts through

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this job.¹⁹ Once again, he and Johnson carpooled, often with Sam Rayburn sitting up front and Goldberg “quaking in the back” with the joking that they might be unable to spring Goldberg from his Washington duties after the report was done.²⁰ Eventually, of course, the service ended.

From 1950 to 1966, Goldberg practiced law in Dallas. In 1950, Senator Johnson wrote Goldberg for his opinion on Fair Employment Practices Commission legislation. He asked for his experience with conditions in Dallas and his general knowledge of minority groups. He stressed he was not asking for time-consuming research, just his life experience.

Goldberg replied in less than a week. He wrote that fair employment practices legislation is sound, because historically, “minority groups have advanced economically where their inalienable rights were buttressed by legislation.” It legislates against prejudice and discrimination, which do exist. He emphasized that discrimination against Negroes exists, as well as “obvious and wanton employment discrimination” in Dallas against Latin Americans. He described an example where a friend hired a Hispanic girl as secretary in a large department store. Co-workers were outraged, solely on the basis of her origins. Legislation would have conditioned them to accept her, and could have broken down barriers by working together.

Goldberg also described employment discrimination in Dallas against Jews. “To be denied a job opportunity because one is a Jew is an affront to the dignity of the individual and inculcates the job-seeking Jew with a feeling of alienness and of not belonging, which is more devastating in its spiritual and psychological effects than the economic loss involved.” He recognized the potential conse-

quences of such legislation. “It might wrench the social texture of the South and cause an eruption of unmanageable proportions, but legislation, Federal or State, is called for to catalyze the conscience of America so that it may measure up to the constitutional axioms and moral precepts that should animate our nation and its citizens - lest our protestations of these first principles become paper mockeries.”²¹

In the 1960 Presidential campaign, Goldberg once again helped Johnson. He and Bob Strauss went to Florida to talk up LBJ with delegates to the national convention. He worked in Dallas raising money, attending meetings, giving legal advice, etc. He told Johnson, “I think there are ways of being a liberal; you don’t have to go in with a bulldozer all of the time.” When John Kennedy became the nominee, Lady Bird asked Goldberg if Lyndon should accept the second position. He said, “... Bird, I think that if a man is asked to be the vice president of this country, he should accept it.”²²

On November 22, 1963, a bright, beautiful, crisp November day, his old friend Lyndon Johnson called on him again for help. Irving and Marian were invited to the luncheon at Market Hall for the President and Vice President. When asked where he wished to sit, he requested a seat upstairs so that he could look down on everybody and see who was there, rather than being one of the people who were seen. They were at the hall when word began circulating that shots had been fired and cars were speeding to Parkland Hospital. Goldberg suggested that an announcement be made, as the crowd was becoming restless. The Goldbergs went home.

His phone rang. Goldberg’s receptionist said the Dallas White

House was trying to reach him. Goldberg said, “Well, we’d better get off the phone.” The phone rang again. Johnson said Kennedy had been assassinated and he needed some answers right away. He asked if he was president automatically or if he needed to be sworn in, and if it could be in Dallas or if he should go to Washington first. He trusted Goldberg’s institutional knowledge could supply answers to these urgent questions without research, and he was right.

“Well, you are President right now, but it should be memorialized by some formality with witnesses.” In answer to who should do the job, Goldberg said anyone who can take an oath, but recommended it not be a Republican. It should be someone with stature - an officeholder or a judge. Goldberg suggested Federal District Judge Sarah Evans Hughes. She was a Democrat, a supporter, a woman, and a fine judge. Johnson told Goldberg to get her to Air Force One as soon as possible. Goldberg was surprised that the President would ask him to accomplish this, but he thought of Barefoot Sanders, the US Attorney in Dallas and future federal judge, as someone who could help track down Judge Hughes. He told Sanders to give her a copy of the Constitution so she would have the text of the presidential oath in front of her. Sanders located her but forgot the copy of the Constitution. Attorney General Robert Kennedy’s office provided one.

Johnson had urged Goldberg to meet him on Air Force One. After Sanders located Judge Hughes, Marian Goldberg suggested they should go to Love Field. She drove, because her husband was shaking. They parked at the airport, but there was a wall of police between them and Air Force One. They were stopped, and Gold-

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berg tried to explain the new president was expecting him. The officer glared. Goldberg told his wife it was hard to convince policemen of anything, and they returned home. Later on, Johnson asked Goldberg where he had been. Goldberg said, "Never mind, you didn't need me," but Marian said, "He doesn't know how to talk to a cop," and Johnson laughed. After LBJ became President, Goldberg would always see him when he was in Washington.

To tease his friend, President Johnson circulated a rumor that Goldberg was to be named the head of the Federal Power Commission. Goldberg would have to move back to Washington and be part of one of its worst bureaucracies. Already in his late fifties, he was distressed by the rumor and was delighted to hear later that not only had he dodged that bullet, he had been appointed to the position he really wanted - a federal appellate judgeship, the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. He had loved the law since his 1920s stint at Harvard.²³ Goldberg became the first Jew in the South for such an appointment on June 28, 1966 and was confirmed by the US Senate on July 22, receiving his commission the same day.²⁴

Johnson never discussed the appointment with him. Goldberg learned of it by reading it in the newspaper, although he had heard rumors. During the time of his confirmation hearings, he and Marian rented a car and drove up to the Catocin Mountains and discussed how this would change their lives.

"The happiest thing I could have done at 60 years of age was to have become a judge...I had doubts whether I could do it at age 60, and whether I should do it. At the time, I was very close with my rabbi. It wasn't so much that he was a religious man as

it was that he seemed to have good judgment." Rabbi Levi Olan of Temple Emanu-El encouraged him to explore it, knowing that he would do his best.²⁵

At the time he was appointed, sixty was considered old. An appointee could expect maybe a decade of active service, not enough time to leave a significant judicial record. In his time, however, many Fifth Circuit judges were in their late fifties when appointed.²⁶ The Fifth Circuit included Florida, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, and Texas²⁷ and was the busiest circuit court in the country, hearing complex cases in civil and voting rights, employment discrimination, and cases involving the 1964 Civil Rights Act and the 1965 Voting Rights Act. In the mid-1960s, the court was expanded from nine to thirteen judges, so this was a new position Goldberg would fill. There were ten judges when he was appointed.²⁸

During his tenure, he sat on 4151 judicial panels, wrote the majority opinion for 805 cases, 158 dissenting opinions, and 52 concurring opinions.²⁹ His decisions covered criminal, wrongful death, torts, oil and gas, labor, banking, securities, admiralty, bankruptcy, tax, customs duties and school law.³⁰

Goldberg has been called "an activist especially sensitive to civil liberties." Judge Frank M. Johnson Jr. said, "Irving Goldberg learned from the cradle what it feels like to be different from the majority. He grew up as a Jew in the small city of Port Arthur, Texas in the early years of [the 20th] century. It was a time when the Ku Klux Klan enforced its own brand of vigilante justice on blacks, Jews, Catholics, and others who did not conform to their standards."³¹

Judge Goldberg became known

for his stern but fair questioning of both sides in a case, cutting through legal jargon to get to the heart of the matter. He had a sharp wit and an inimitable writing style. He wanted the people to understand what the courts were doing. Marian was a great help in this effort. She read all his opinions prior to release, gave her stylistic suggestions, and proofread his work. An accomplished grammarian, Goldberg joked that she "grammarized" his draft opinions. He often used humor, wanting his opinions to be teaching tools. He complained that later generations of students did not know how to write. "Make it talk, make it walk," he advised.³²

His office in the federal building in Dallas on the thirteenth floor was filled with photos of friends. He participated in many memorable cases. He was on the Fifth Circuit panel that decided *Roe v. Wade*, the landmark case protecting a woman's reproductive health care decisions.³³ He considered it an easy case. The statute was bad, criminalizing almost any type of abortion. "Now you cannot tell me that a woman who gets pregnant due to rape cannot have the burden removed from her body. That is what I told these people in oral argument. Talk about life, liberty, or anything you want to; you can't even begin to talk about the constitutional rights if this is prohibited." Goldberg did not believe the Supreme Court would take up the case because it was "political dynamite," but it did, and affirmed the Fifth Circuit decision.³⁴

In Goldberg's opinion, the most significant case in which he participated was one he lost, *Rodriguez v. San Antonio Independent School District*. He believed education was a fundamental right. A free country could not give more education to some and less to others, simply because some lived

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Judge Irving Goldberg, drawing by Dallas Artist Dimitri Vail. Photo courtesy of Julie Goldberg.

in an area with a high tax base. Education was the key obligation of government, and the most important right its citizens had. The Supreme Court disagreed and reversed the decision, five to four.

The most effective oral argument he ever heard came from a small-town lawyer in a public accommodations case. A young Black girl had been denied the right to ice skate at a public rink in Baton Rouge. The lawyer stated that he came prepared to argue legislative history and other weighty matters, but he realized his case was

about something far simpler. It was about a little twelve-year-old girl who wanted to ice skate, and a white attendant had thrown her off. What rational explanation could a judge give to a little girl to explain that her skin color meant she could not skate? The legal doctrines fell into perspective.

Another memorable case was *White v. Regester*. Blacks and Hispanics challenged the new voting district lines in Texas. "I am not a born-again Democrat; I'm an always-been Democrat," said Gold-

berg. The case caused him to define what voting discrimination was—being deprived access to the political process.

Goldberg was also known for his decisions in tax cases. He placed his personal stamp on federal tax law. He wrote opinions in eighty-four tax cases.³⁵

He stated that he never received flak for his decisions affecting the South, often overturning district court decisions. "The only pressure I feel is of my conscience and the conscience of the people with whom I was privileged to sit - my colleagues on the bench."³⁶ He regretted that he could not discuss issues openly in social settings. He could not belong to civic organizations or political parties where fundraising might be involved. His participation in community life was curtailed by virtue of his position.³⁷

Nevertheless, he was active in the Jewish Welfare Federation, was president of Golden Acres and the Dallas Home and Hospital for the Jewish Aged as well as Temple Emanu-El of Dallas, and national vice president of the American Jewish Committee. He was on the board of the National Conference of Christians and Jews, the Dallas United Nations Association, the Dallas Council of Social Agencies, and the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society. He served as vice chair of the Texas Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights. In 1968 he was awarded the Brotherhood Citation of the National Conference of Christians and Jews. In 1974 he was awarded an honors degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion.³⁸

Judge Goldberg need not have worried about a potentially short tenure. He served on the court for thirty-one years. In 1980, he assumed senior status and served in that capacity until his death in 1995 at the age of 89.³⁹ He had a special relationship with his sixty-six law clerks over the years, and many of them

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wrote glowing memorials after his death. Diane P. Wood clerked for him in 1975-76 and later became a Deputy Assistant US Attorney General, then judge on the Seventh Circuit US Court of Appeals.⁴⁰ She wrote about how his law clerks were devoted to him and remained lifelong friends. His ebullient personality, his belief in and commitment to the institutions of a democratic society, his passion for justice and compassion for others inspired them. He worked tirelessly for a smooth-functioning institution, and his hospitality for his colleagues were legendary. He always sought common ground, taking a firm stand when principles were at stake, but respecting disagreements on points of law. “Justice for all” were not just words to him. The federal courts were obligated to keep the door open for those whose rights were being denied.⁴¹

Lawrence J. Vilardo and Howard W. Gutman were co-clerks in 1980-81. They wrote of his humility, his sparkling eyes, his brilliance, and called him a treasure. “He simply could not understand how a rider could be prohibited from choosing any empty seat on a bus; how a voter could be prevented from casting a meaningful ballot; how a child dressed in third-generation rayon or Givenchy’s latest silk could be deprived of a first-rate education...And what had been a living treasure became a legacy of warmth and wit and wisdom, and wonderful stories - some with a lesson, some with historical significance, all entertaining and memorable.”⁴²

The Irving L. Goldberg Lecture Series at Southern Methodist University was established in 1988 by his former law clerks to honor his life and work, as he was “renowned for the integrity of his legal scholarship, the lucidity of his opinions, and the skill with which he employed his wit

to illuminate the point.”⁴³

Goldberg’s greatest gift was the ability to impart his unconditional kindness and affection to his secretaries, clerks, their spouses and children. “Working with the Judge meant joining his extended family,” which continued throughout their lives.⁴⁴ Another clerk, Lee M. Simpson, noted that the young clerks had a secret fear that the Goldberg clerkship might be the best job they would ever have in their law careers.⁴⁵

Reflecting back on his life, Goldberg said, “The past eighteen years of my life have undoubtedly been the happiest. Whether I agree or disagree with my colleagues, has had absolutely nothing to do with my happiness, and my enjoyment of the work. I hope that I have made a contribution, but I have enjoyed attempting to make it. I have convictions, they’re strongly held and strongly expressed, everybody expects them to be, and I have lived my life that way of where I had to do it, everybody knew. I have very often been in the minority, but I never backed off of saying what I believed in strong language.”⁴⁶

Irving and Marian were happily married for over sixty years. They had two daughters, Nancy Paula Goldberg Todes and Julie Goldberg Lowenberg.⁴⁷ Marian died in 1993 at the age of 88.⁴⁸ Judge Goldberg developed an irreversible neurological disorder that caused his limbs to tremble for some fifteen years. He sat on the full court in early January, 1995. He died at his home of complications of his condition on February 11.⁴⁹

As one lawyer put it, “...(t)he empirical and subjective evidence available to evaluate Irving Goldberg leads inexorably to the conclusion that he was an extraordinary man. In Irving Goldberg, a special person passed this way.”⁵⁰

Endnotes

- ¹ Patrick E. Higginbotham, “In Memoriam - Irving L. Goldberg Memorial,” *Texas Law Review*, Vol 73, Number 5, April 1995. https://www.academia.edu/30545316/In_Memoriam_Irving_L._Goldberg_Memorial
- ² <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/42105720/elsa-goldberg>
- ³ Abe had at least one brother and possibly a sister, but the family is unsure. Email Julie Lowenberg, December 9, 2021.
- ⁴ Unless otherwise stated, all information is from Box 3A168, Folder: Judges, Texas Jewish Historical Society Collection, Briscoe Center for American History, University of Texas at Austin.
- ⁵ Bernard Melasky 1825-1911 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/25610977/bernard-melasky>
- ⁶ Joseph Melasky 1851-1913 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/8529337/joseph-melasky>
- ⁷ Sarah Melasky 1854-1951 <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/8529335/sarah-melasky>. They had two sons, Hyman and Harris, and two daughters, Annette and Lula. email Julie Lowenberg, December 22, 2021.
- ⁸ George Jessel, the entertainer, is from the same family. Email Lowenberg op cit.
- ⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰ Dan Moody was governor in 1927-1931. He graduated from Taylor High School, attended UT 1910-1914 and began practice in Taylor with Harris Melasky in 1914. <https://texaspolitics.utexas.edu/archive/html/exec/governors/16.html>
- ¹¹ Vilardo, Lawrence J., and Howard W. Gutman. “With Justice from One: Interview with Hon. Irving L. Goldberg.” *Litigation*, vol. 17, no. 3, American Bar Association, 1991, pp. 16–57, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29759466>.
- ¹² Lawrence J. Vilardo & Howard W. Gutman, “In Memoriam - The Honorable Irving L. Goldberg: A Place in History,” 49 *SMU L. REV.* 1 (1996)

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<https://scholar.smu.edu/smulr/vol49/iss1/2>

¹³ Vilardo and Gutman interview, op. cit.

¹⁴ <http://www.lbjf.org/txt/oh/oh-lbj/27500879-oh-goldbergi-19691102-1-95-6.pdf>

¹⁵ The firm is now known as Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld. <https://www.akingump.com/en/>

¹⁶ lbjf, op.cit.

¹⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/1948_United_States_Senate_election_in_Texas

¹⁸ Diane Wood, "Remembering Irving Goldberg." <https://judicature.duke.edu/articles/remembering-irving-goldberg/> See also Lawrence J. Vilardo and Howard W. Gutman, "The Honorable Irving L. Goldberg: A Place in History," 49 *S.M.U. L. Rev.* 1 (1995)

¹⁹ lbjf, op. cit., Vilardo and Gutman interview, op. cit.

²⁰ Vilardo and Gutman, In Memoriam, op.cit.

²¹ ILG correspondence with LBJ 1950, Senate Papers of Lyndon B. Johnson, Papers of Irving Goldberg, LBJ Library, copies courtesy of Julie Goldberg Lowenberg. The House approved the permanent FEPC bill, but Southern senators filibustered and the bill failed. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fair_Employment_Practice_Committee. Despite Goldberg's plea, Johnson joined the Southern Senators in voting against cloture. Congressional Quarterly pp 7299-7300, email Liza Talbot, Digital Archivist, LBJ Presidential Library, January 3, 2022.

²² lbjf op.cit.

²³ Vilardo and Gutman interview, op. cit.

²⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Irving_Loeb_Goldberg

²⁵ Vilardo and Gutman interview, op. cit., https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Levi_Olan

²⁶ "Judge Irving L. Goldberg and the Federal Tax Law" by William D. Elliott pp 851-993 *Texas Tech Law Review* Vol 46:849, 2014

²⁷ It also included the Canal Zone. Ibid.

²⁸ In 1980, the 11th Circuit was created

out of the Fifth. Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Bass, Jack. *Unlikely Heroes: The Dramatic Story of the Southern Judges of the Fifth Circuit Who Translated the Supreme Court's Brown Decision into a Revolution for Equality*. University of Alabama Press, 1981. p. 304-5. Frank M. Johnson Jr., "Civilization, Integrity, and Justice: Some Observations on the Function of the Judiciary," 43 *Southwestern L. J.* 652 (1989).

³² Vilardo and Gutman interview, op.cit. p. 863.

³³ Judge Sarah T. Hughes also served with Goldberg on the three-judge panel. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roe_v._Wade

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ For a detailed discussion of tax decisions, see William D. Elliott, "Judge Irving L. Goldberg and the Federal Tax Law," *Texas Tech Law Review*, Volume 46, 2014, p. 851-993.

³⁶ Vilardo and Gutman interview, op.cit.

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ <https://www.smu.edu/Law/Faculty/Conferences-Symposia-Lecture-Series/Goldberg-Lecture-Series>

³⁹ wikipedia, op. cit., Beginning at age 65, a judge may retire at his or her current salary or take senior status after performing 15 years of active service as an Article III judge (65+15 = 80). <https://www.uscourts.gov/faqs-federal-judges>

⁴⁰ <https://www.ali.org/members/member/103078/>

⁴¹ Diane P. Wood, "Tribute to Judge Irving L. Goldberg: The Consummate Humanist," 73 *Texas Law Review* 977 (1994). View at https://chicagounbound.uchicago.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3061&context=journal_articles

⁴² Vilardo and Gutman "In Memoriam," op.cit.

⁴³ www.smu.edu op. cit.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Lee M. Simpson, "A Tribute to Judge Irving L. Goldberg," 73 *Tex-*


L.Rev. 981 (1994-1995). View here: <https://heinonline.org/HOL/LandingPage?handle=hein.journals/tl-r73&div=38&id=&page=>

⁴⁶ Elliott, op. cit.

⁴⁷ Nancy died in 2009 of ovarian cancer at the age of 72. She was an elementary school teacher in Dallas for twenty years. She married Dr. Jay Littman Todes, and was an active community volunteer. They had one daughter, one son, and four grandchildren. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/196493807/nancy-paula-todes> and <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/196493823/jay-littman-todes>. Julie married Michael Lowenberg and they are both attorneys, Julie with a Harvard law degree like her father. Michael was a partner at Akin Gump and later with Gardere Wynne. They have two sons, a daughter, and seven grandchildren. Julie practiced in Dallas and was an adjunct professor at SMU. Like Nancy, Julie has been an active volunteer in many civic organizations. Email Julie Lowenberg, December 19, 2021.

⁴⁸ www.findagrave.com/memorial/39308117/marian-jessel-goldberg

⁴⁹ <https://apnews.com/article/8be2c2f2de9065434ca1e0d0c643c6f2>; <https://www.sfgate.com/news/article/Irving-L-Goldberg-3044896.php>

⁵⁰ Elliott, op. cit. 

Board Notes, cont. from page 4

- John Campbell, Bylaws Chair, presented the proposed changes to the Bylaws. They were approved by the Board, with the final vote to be held at the Annual Gathering.
- Susan Zack Lewis, Nominating Committee Chair, presented the Proposed Slate of Officers and 2022-2024 Trustees. See Slate on page 25.

From Russia with Love

by Olga Kosheleva and Vladik Kreinovich, El Paso, Texas

The Texas Jewish Historical Society has asked for stories from the “New Immigrants” who arrived in the U.S. in the 1980’s from the former Soviet Union, South Africa, India, and other countries. Here is the first of those stories.

We were born in Communist Russia in the 1950s. In Russia, being Jewish was an ethnicity, not a religion, very few people were religious. Our parents were not religious at all. Vladik’s grandfather had a Bar Mitzvah before the 1917 Revolution, but he believed, like most people then, that religion is opium for the people. Even the language was lost. Vladik’s grandparents knew Yiddish, but never taught it to their son so that they would be able to quarrel without him understanding. As a result, all he learned from Yiddish were a bunch of bad words.

There were some cultural traditions. When Vladik was little, every spring, his parents would bring him to his mom’s godmother to enjoy matzo ball soup, which he loved (still loves). Everyone was relaxed and reclining, dressed in their best clothes (and by the way, this was the part that little Vladik hated. Like many little boys, he did not like being nicely dressed up).

Matzah was not easy to get, and the only place you could buy it was the synagogue. The synagogue could not buy that much flour, you have to buy your own flour (which was not easy either), and bring it to the synagogue, where they made matzah out of it. At least in St. Petersburg, where Vladik lived, we were lucky because we had a synagogue where we could buy matzah. Jews living in many other cities had to go by train to Petersburg or Moscow to buy it.

Olga’s mom taught her how to make challah. We practically never make challah since you can easily buy a very tasty one, but one year, when we attended a California family summer Jewish camp with our son, she surprised me and our son by winning a challah competition. It looks like her mom taught her well. Olga’s Mom also taught her how to



Vladik Kreinovich’s grandmother’s family. Grandmother, “Riva” is the baby. Circa 1908-1910.

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make latkes and she made them very creative and very delicious, sometimes like a pie with meat or cheese inside the usual potato stuff. These Olga still makes every year.

But there were no prayers, no beliefs.



Olga Kosheleva & Vladik Kreinovich—1976.

It was not only food. For example, we read *Sholom Aleichem*—in Russian translation, of course—and loved it. We also read books by several other Jewish writers.

We knew that we were Jewish—it was in our documents, and there was a discrimination against Jews. Some universities and jobs did not accept Jews at all, some took only a few, but to be accepted, you had to be much better than others. It was not possible to forget that we were Jewish. Our dream was that this nonsense would stop, that people of all ethnicities and races would be treated equally, based on their merits and not based on their ethnic origin. Yes, we Jews stuck together, to help each other in the hostile environment, but our hope was

that in the future, everyone would be equal and there would be no need for us to stick together, just like there is no special need, for example, for red-headed people to stick together.

Our attitude was best described by a Russian Jewish writer, Ilya Erenburg, in one of his interviews. A journalist asked him, “Your native language is Russian, you write your poems and prose in Russian, why do you consider yourself a Jew?” To which he replied, and we all remembered it, “There is blood that flows in your veins, and there is blood that flows out of your veins. Until there is at least one anti-Semite, I will consider myself a Jew.” This is how we all felt.

Yes, there were synagogues, and once in a while we would drop by, but they were not very welcoming. First, they were Orthodox, women separated, and we were not comfortable with this. Some of them had posters encouraging us to pray for the Soviet government, i.e., for the



Vladik Kreinovich & Olga Kosheleva—2005.

same un-elected dictators who made our life miserable. And we did not respect the Rabbis because we knew that there were no *yeshivas* in the Soviet Union, so to become a Rabbi one needs to study abroad, and the KGB only allowed a few most obedient



Vladik Kreinovich in the Soviet army—1973.

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citizens the possibility to go abroad. Most of us were not even allowed to travel to other communist countries like Bulgaria or Cuba.

Israel? We had a lot of Russian-language material smuggled from Israel, and we had letters from relatives. I read a Russian translation of Leon Uris's *Exodus* which was circulating as *Samizdat*, along with many other illegal books. How did we feel about it? Too socialist to our taste. When a ballerina milks a cow and feels good about it, this was just like in Soviet novels. And when we learned that in the *Kibbutzim*, who

gets to the University to study was decided by voting, not based on merit, this felt exactly like in the Soviet Union. Did we want to go to this Israel? Well, it was better than living in the Soviet Union, but not exactly how we wanted to live. We wanted people with talent in ballet to be ballerinas, we wanted people with talent in mathematics to study mathematics. This was not possible for many Jews in the Soviet Union, and this is what we wanted.

Could we leave the country? Some people managed to leave, but it was not easy. Besides, we would

not have been allowed to leave, since our parents had top security clearance. This did not mean that they had access to top secret. As an example, Olga's mother, an engineer who had nothing to do with anything military, had top security clearance because she has access to a copy machine. Copy machines were strictly controlled by the KGB since you could use them to copy a Bible (difficult to get) or even Solzhenitsyn's novels (impossible to legally get, and you could go to jail for reading an illegal book). We could apply to emigrate, but then our parents would be fired from their jobs, and our whole families would be stuck without any but the lowest-paying jobs waiting as *refuseniks* for 10 years or more.

Was being Jewish always so gloomy? Gladly, no. One day a year, at Simchat Torah, men and women, boys and girls were allowed to be together in the synagogue. It felt like a real celebration. We danced together, we carried Torah around, we kissed the Torahs that were brought around. It felt good to be a Jew. This was probably the first time when Vladik felt not neutral but positive about his Jewishness.

It was not without problems. There were KGB folks taking photos of everyone who came. Vladik's university was liberal, no one did anything to him, but in other universities, folks who attended the services were immediately expelled.

It was also not straightforward to get a Torah to carry. There was a line of volunteers, and when Vladik's turn came, he asked (since he knew nothing about the rituals) whether it was okay for him, a nonbeliever who knew almost nothing about Judaism, to carry a Torah. Out of the three folks who gave out Torahs, the two immediately started arguing. Since they



Olga Kosheleva, 2009.

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argued in Yiddish, Vladik did not understand much, except that one of them was repeating, pointing to him. A *Yid* (a Jew), while another repeatedly disagreed: *Nicht a Yid* (not a Jew). This went on for some time, until the third guy gave up waiting and gave Vladik a Torah to carry.

In the late 1980s, when *Pere-stroika* started and life became easier, we were finally allowed to leave the country, and we came to the U.S. Vladik came to Stanford first. He was invited there as a visiting researcher, and came in September, 1989. Since he was a visiting researcher and had an H-1 visa, he flew first into San Francisco Airport, which was close to Stanford University. He changed planes and went through immigration in New York. Olga and Misha joined him in December. Once both of us had a job in El Paso, we applied for a change in visa, and eventually got green cards and became U.S. citizens. We do not have any family in the U.S. other than very distant relatives who emigrated about the same time we did.

Once at Stanford, Vladik started applying for positions at different universities, and there was an opening at the University of Texas at El Paso. It was also a visiting position, so we moved there in January 1990, and like it. A few months later, the department chair came to our house to inform us that the university had officially decided to make us an offer of a tenure-track position. Vladik was Americanized enough to know that you are not supposed to say, "Yes! Yes!" You are supposed to say, "Thank you, let us negotiate," but our nine-year-old son interrupted Vladik and said, "Dad, Mom, I like it here." So, we stayed. The chair of the department was Jewish and so were several faculty members, so we commu-



Vladik Kreinovich's parents – 2007.

nicated with many Jews. They were very welcoming to us.

In the beginning, remembering our not so pleasant synagogue experience in Russia, we shied away from any organized religion. But it was our son, Misha, who changed our minds.

A daughter of Misha's school principal had a Bat Mitzvah, so the whole school was invited. This was probably Misha's first time in a synagogue, and he was impressed by the lovely music, by friendly folks, and most of all, by the fact that a twelve-year old girl was confidently leading a big group of adults in services. And then on Sundays, he started feeling lonely, since all his classmates attended Sunday schools of their religions. So, he asked us to enroll him in a Jewish Sunday school. We called Temple Mt. Sinai, the Reform synagogue where the principal's daughter had a Bat Mitzvah, and they said that for this, we needed to join the Temple.

We had no idea what it means, so we asked Vladik's Department Chair, who happened to be Jewish, about it.



Vladik Kreinovich, 2018.

The Chair was somewhat on the cynical side, and explained that the only legal requirement of Temple membership is to pay dues. We said that we are scientists, and do not believe that the world was created in 6 days, and that Moses hit a rock with a stick and

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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, 2022 and mailed to Award Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society, P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardchair@txjhs.org.

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: Award Chair, Texas Jewish Historical Society,
P. O. Box 10193, Austin, TX 78766-0193 or awardchair@txjhs.org.*

www.txjhs.org



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.

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

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

Please detail the timeline of your project.

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
www.txjhs.org.*

Meet Your Board

JANE MANASTER lives in Dallas and was raised in the north of England. She moved to Texas in 1969 with her husband, Guy, a past TJHS Board Member, who passed away in 2019. Jane has three children and six grandchildren. She has degrees in Psychology and Geography, and is the author of three natural history books. She is a former newspaper columnist and has written articles on travel and Texas history. Jane is a charter member of TJHS and chairs the Grants Committee.



MICHAEL FURGATCH was born and raised in Texas. He has lived in Beaumont, Dallas, Austin, and now Brownsville for over forty-seven years. He is married to Lynda (also a TJHS Board Member), and they have two children and three grandchildren. Michael and Lynda were married in 1973, when he graduated from UT/Austin. They moved to Brownsville where he began working in the ship dismantling and recycling industry, which is his occupation today. He enjoys working with non-profit and service organizations, and has been involved with the Temple Beth El Board of Directors in Brownsville for almost thirty years. Michael serves on the Grants 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 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 planning 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.

DOLLY MOSKOWITZ GOLDEN grew up in Baytown, Texas. She married Ed Golden from Corsicana and they settled in Austin, where she now lives. Ed passed away in 2018. Dolly is a Certified Travel Counselor, and continues to plan trips. She has visited two-hundred sixteen countries and plans to visit the rest. She has two children, and one granddaughter who live in Austin. Dolly is Chair of the Photo Exhibit Committee.



GAYLE FELDMAN CANNON is a retired lawyer now living in Austin. She is a transplanted Dallasite and has three children, two stepchildren, sixteen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. She is a widow and active in the Austin Jewish community and is a strong supporter of Congregation Beth Israel in Austin. Her interests include genealogy, reading, traveling and theater. Gayle serves as co-chair of the Speaker's Bureau.



DAVIE LOU SOLKA, is a grandchild of Russian immigrants who were part of the Galveston movement. She was president of TJHS 2017-2019, and she and her husband, Jack, (also a TJHS Board Member) moved to Austin fourteen years ago from Corpus Christi. Davie Lou was involved in the community in Corpus Christi and was elected President of several Jewish organizations, PTAs, service clubs, and the first woman president of Temple Beth El. After her children left home, she began and taught a Jewish Holiday Program called L'dor Vador in the JCC Pre-school. She retired from teaching after fourteen years just before moving to Austin. She was involved in activities in Austin pre-COVID and is a born and bred Texan. She graduated from the University



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of Texas before you had to add Austin. Davie Lou is editor of *The TJHS Magazine*.



CAROLYN (KAY) KRAUSE now lives in Houston, but raised her three children in Brownsville. She participated in many different areas in organizations and was one of three women to help open a Planned Parenthood Center. She is a paralegal and has worked in courtrooms during trials and picking juries.



RUTH NATHAN served as Treasurer of the Texas Jewish Historical Society for many years. Ruth is the past assistant director of the Jewish Community Center in Houston, and has a MA in Speech Pathology and a MA in Social Work. Ruth teaches a social skills program, "Skills for Success." She is a docent at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

HOWARD "RUSTY" MILSTEIN, was born in Longview and still lives there. He is retired from Industrial Steel Warehouse and is married to Mitzi Milstein, TJHS Board Member. Rusty is a retired state level soccer referee; Administrator, Treasurer, Lay-leader, and Schlep-per for Temple Emanu-El in Longview; and has performed in a community theatre production of "Fiddler on the Roof." He and Mitzi are the main reason there is still a congregation in Longview. They have three children, Randy, Jeff and Amy. Rusty attended the University of Texas, Austin, and was a member of Phi Sigma Delta Fraternity. He was President of TJHS 2010-2012.



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, and one grandson. Nelson is a thirty-three-year member of United States Masters Swimming Organization, and in his spare time, is a party barge captain.



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.



HELEN WILK is a naturalized Texan having lived in Texas for fifty-four years. She is from Michigan, and but now lives in Houston. 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.



LIONEL “LONNIE” SCHOOLER is one of the founding members of the Texas Jewish Historical Society. He served as President in 1984-1986, and has remained as the “official” legal counsel for the Society. He and his wife, Marsha, live in Houston.



JEFFREY JOSEPHS lives in Austin. He grew up in Corpus Christi.

CHARLES B. 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 from 1958-1960 and 1961-1962. He retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture after thirty-four years of civil service, and taught horseback riding at Jewish summer camps for over twenty-five years. He is an Eagle Scout and a long-time member of the Hillel Board at Texas A&M University. He is married to TJHS member, Jan Siegel Hart, and they have three children and six grandchildren. He and Jan have been TJHS members for over thirty years.



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 mem-



BOB LEWIS aka Tumbleweed Smith, is from Big Spring, Texas. 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 International, 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.

DR. MARC ORNER is from Abilene. He is President of Temple Mizpah and conducts services when a visiting Rabbi is not in town. 🇺🇸

Guess This Member

We have a winner! Marilyn Lippman guessed that this pretty lady is Kathy Kravitz, of Austin. As the cue said, Kathy has already made a name for herself in the work she is doing for TJHS. She stepped forward to help Rusty



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TJHS Awards Grant to

David Katz

by Davie Lou Solka

The Texas Jewish Historical Society awarded a \$2,000 Grant to David Katz of Dallas. The Board approved the Grant at the Board Meeting held via Zoom January 23, 2022. David’s project is translating Yiddish Letters in Texas Archives and Museums. He has successfully translated Yiddish letters for the Dallas Holocaust Human Rights Museum, Houston Jewish History Archive, and TJHS. Completed translations are donated back to the institution holding the document. His current project is for the Houston Jewish Archives, and he plans to complete it by April 1, 2022. 🇺🇸

In Memoriam



JUDITH A. BIALIK, friend of TJHS, died in Abilene on April 14, 2021. Judith was the great niece of Chaim Nachman Bialik, the national poet of Israel. She had no survivors.



GORDON CIZON, TJHS Board Member, Dallas/Amarillo, died January 31, 2022, in Dallas. He is survived by his wife, Deidra, step-children, Todd Megley, Brian Biahri, Ethan Kloss, and six grandchildren.



BETTYE JEAN COHEN, former TJHS Board Member, Abilene/Plano, died December 13, 2021, in Plano. She is survived by her daughters, Barbara (Barry) Brown, Judy (Preston) Vice, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



ROBERT NEIL COHEN, TJHS member died on December 1, 2021, in Encino, CA. Bob grew up in Longview and is survived by his wife, Nancy and his son, Aaron.



JEROME SAMUEL FRAM, TJHS member, Baytown/Houston, died in October, 2021. He is survived by his sisters, Betty Weiner, TJHS Board Member; Tobye (Mort) Joachim; sister-in-law, Marilyn Fram; nieces, nephews, great nieces, and great nephews.



ANNETTE LACKMAN, former TJHS member, died November 19, 2021, in Arlington. She is survived by her children, Samara (Andy McCarthy) Kline, Jared (Leslie) Lackman, and three grandchildren.



DR. ELLIOT WESER, TJHS member, died March 26, 2021 in San Antonio. He is survived by his wife, Marcia; son, Stephen Weser; step daughters, Sara Solon (Robert) Ellman, Leah Solon (David) Steen, three grandchildren, and numerous cousins.

May their memories be a blessing.

Proposed Slate for TJHS Electronic Voting

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2nd Vice-President	Susan Novick, El Paso
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 Betty Weiner, Houston
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 Joyce Wormser, Pearland

Guess Member, continued from page 24

Milstein with the cemetery database and has gone above and beyond in identifying stones and where they are located. The work she is doing for TJHS will aid many researchers and people looking for their ancestors.

We're going to take a break for this issue. If you'd like to try and stump the TJHS membership, please send your photo to editor@txjhs.org.

Welcome New Members!

Linda Herring Behrends
[Redacted]

Charles & Idella Cohen
[Redacted]

Rachel Cockerell
[Redacted]

Lanie (Tobin) Hill
[Redacted]

David Katz
[Redacted]

Vladik Kreinovich & Olga Kosheleva
[Redacted]

Jeff Levine
[Redacted]

Morton H. Meyerson
[Redacted]

If you have any changes in your information, please send them to membership@txjhs.org

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<i>Audio/Video</i>	Bob Lewis
<i>Awards Committee</i>	Cynthia Wolf
<i>Bylaws Committee</i>	John Campbell
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<i>Cemetery Research</i>	Kathy Kravitz
<i>Dolph Briscoe Center for American History/Austin</i>	Davie Lou Solka
<i>Finance Committee (Standing Committee)</i>	Ben Rosenberg
<i>Grant Committee</i>	Jane Manaster
<i>Historical Texas Cemetery Designation Committee</i>	Doug Braudaway
<i>Institute of Texan Culture</i>	To be appointed
<i>Legal Committee (Standing Committee)</i>	Lonnie Schooler
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<i>Texas History Day Committee</i>	Willie Braudaway
<i>Texas Jewish History Adult Writing Contest Committee</i>	Willie Braudaway
<i>Travel Committee</i>	Vickie Vogel
<i>Photo Exhibit Committee</i>	Dolly Golden
<i>Website/Technology Committee</i>	John Campbell

TJHS on Facebook

TJHS on Facebook: Search *Texas Jewish Historical Society* on your device and "Like" us!



From Russia , continued from page 19

water came out. "No worries," explained the Chair, "I do not believe in this either, and I doubt that the Rabbi takes it so literally." So, we paid the dues and became members, and Misha attended the Religious School. He began studying for his eventual Bar Mitzvah, and we had to promise to attend a certain number of services. We reluctantly attend-

ed, and you know, we started feeling good about it.

Six days a week, we deal with urgent problems, we worry about urgent but often not very important things, but on Friday night, we relax, we start thinking about things that are more eternal and more important. And people are sincerely welcoming and nice to each other,

it all feels like being a member of a nice family. You get refreshed, really rejuvenated, and you become ready to handle another week.

Now that we are finishing this short story, it is Friday afternoon, we are again filled with anticipation of the forthcoming service, and the good warm feeling already starts in anticipation. Yes, it is good to be Jews! 🇺🇸



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