



Holocaust & Intolerance  
Museum of New Mexico

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### President's message

## New board leader shares dreams of museum's future

Recently I was elected board president of your Holocaust & Intolerance Museum of New Mexico. It seems like only yesterday, 2004, that Werner Gellert first asked me to serve on the board.

It's amazing to think how far the museum has come. I still recall the love and passion Werner and his wife, Frankie, had for their dream, a place where hate could be wiped out and tolerance taught. Because of Werner and his successor presidents, most recently Jennie Negin, our museum has survived and advanced. It has grown to the point that we must now start searching for a new space in order to provide for the needs of our community.

First, I feel it's important for you to understand what has brought me this far in my history to feel obligated to lead this important institution.

I was born in Colorado, a descendant of immigrants. My mother's family emigrated to escape the Spanish Inquisition and settled in the Española Valley before moving to southern Colorado. My father's parents were immigrants from Mexico. As a child, I was told stories of my father's trips through Texas, where if they wanted to get something to eat, they had to go to the back door.

In sixth grade, I was told that it was OK if I went to movies with a new

group of friends from middle school because I was

Spanish and not

Mexican. In my elemen-

tary years, I had never heard such racial language. I was fortunate enough to grow up in a diverse neighborhood with a diverse elementary school. I always felt bad for being reluctant to say that I am part Mexican.

When I went off to medical school in the Midwest, I was told that I had been accepted because of the color of my skin, never mind the fact that I competed 200:1 for a seat as opposed to the in-state students who only had to compete 2:1.

During the first year of med school, one night in Denver, I was flagged down to help a stranded car. When I stopped and rolled down the window, I was punched in the face and called "faggot." THAT WAS THE MOST LIBERATING PUNCH I EVER TOOK IN MY LIFE! I am reminded daily by the scar over my eye of the oppression and intolerance that people face every day. It is for these people that I look forward to carrying on Werner and Frankie's dream.



Victor P. Raigoza

(see Dream for museum, page 2)

## Inaugural installation celebrated January 16

In an impressive ceremony, designed and led by Doris Fields, five new board members were greeted and installed., and officers were elected on January 16.

Jennie L. Negin, president for the past four-and-a-half years, told the 40 persons in attendance that she has served on many non-profit boards, then added, "This has been the most remarkable volunteer experience I have had in my lifetime."

Many fellow board members recognized Jennie's leadership, including her ability to build relationships plus her dedication and organizational skills.

She handed the gavel over to new president

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### 2019 Board of Directors

President, Victor P. Raigoza

Vice President, Raye Cohen

Treasurer, Doris Fields

Secretary, Marcia Rosenstein

Life Member, Werner Gellert

Immediate Past President, Jennie L. Negin

Mostafa Amini

Richard Cooley

Jennifer Cornish

Terri Garcia-Hamounis

Jon Ghahate

Franz Joachim

Sheri Karmioli

Barbara Resnikoff

Thomas Ruby

Naomi Sandweiss

Gloria Taradash

Rita Pino Vargas

*The Herald*

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**Editors:**

Lyn Berner and Marcia Rosenstein

Victor P. Raigoza, who noted that this is his second stint on the board.

"This museum is important because it is a part of our history," he said. "We must shine a light on the past and be a beacon for the future."

We welcome our new board members: Richard E. Cooley, Terri Garcia-Hamounis, Jon Ghahate, Sheri Karmioli, and Naomi Sandweiss.

## Dream for museum revealed

(continued from page 1)

It is *my* dream to raise funds that will give us more room to accommodate current exhibits, new exhibits, the research library, appropriate office space, and an auditorium for programs. I want us to have the best resource center on Route 66 where teaching tolerance and combating hate are the primary goals.

It is my desire to make our museum the voice of reason and tolerance in our state. We have a great board of directors and a cadre of dedicated volunteers, but we need more. All can be accomplished only with your help by being generous with your time and or money. I intend to reach out to all the communities we serve for guidance and resources.

The biggest hurdle is becoming well known. I promise that will happen. I intend to push a social media campaign and a media campaign to address all the issues past and present dealing with intolerances of all types. I plan to make us the go-to center for information and education. But, as stated before, this can be accomplished only with your help.

The first thing I ask you to do is please go to our Facebook page and "like us," then share the page with all your friends and encourage them to like us. I always will encourage you to promote us by having speakers from our museum address your organizations or encouraging your organizations and schools to come to the museum.

The order is tall. The task ahead is demanding but, together, we will make Werner and Frankie proud by changing one mind and heart at a time!

Melanie J. Dickson

## College intern joins HIMNM staff

by Lyn Berner

By way of Brigham Young University-Idaho, we welcome 22-year old business management major Melanie Dickson into our museum family. In a few short months using a variety of skills, including marketing, her college minor, she has researched and created proposals to bring us more up to date with visitor tracking software and supported the administrator in financial matters. In addition, she has proven to be an able assistant to Susan Bapty, our director of education outreach and volunteer programs. She also helps Camelia Caton-Garcia, administrative assistant, with archival duties, and Larry Malick, administrative assistant, with front desk responsibilities, which include greeting visitors and explaining exhibits.

An avid camper and hiker, Melanie grew up in a large Oregon family, which consists of three brothers, two sisters, and mom and dad. She is the fifth of the six siblings. No wonder Melanie fits in well with our myriad staff and volunteers.



At the university, she started, managed, and operated a small profitable company on campus for 14 weeks, playing a key role in employee morale and obtaining a campus-wide presence. As a teacher assistant, she ana-

lyzed real and potential business case studies with 105 students, providing guided feedback.

"I've always loved organizing and being in leadership roles; in business management," she said, "I hope I can really help people strengthen their talents on an individual and team level."

She has had museum experience, too. At the Evergreen Aviation & Space Museum in McMinnville (Oregon), Melanie served as the first point of contact for customers and trained new employees.

She has become a valuable member of the team and will be missed when she leaves us in April.

*In our library*  
**Check it out**  
by Lyn Berner

*Where We Once Gathered: Lost Synagogues of Europe* is a beautiful tribute with paintings and words by Andrea Strongwater.

In an essay to readers, Stephen M. Goldman, executive director of the Holocaust Memorial Center at the Zekelman Family Campus in Detroit, asks, "Why this book?"

In his recommendation and high praise, he begins, "The European cities represented by the synagogues in this book were, prior to the Holocaust, the center of the modern Jewish world. Jews in each of these communities were part of the fabric of daily life, though often relegated to the fringes of this tapestry by the undercurrent of anti-Semitism, which permeated Europe for centuries."

Goldman points out that the Nazis' Final Solution rendered many of these communities *Judenrein* or free of Jews. While the Nazis allowed some synagogues and ritual objects to remain so to teach about a "lost race," many more were annihilated.

"Lost synagogues?" he asks. "They are lost only if we forget. Strongwater's paintings evoke the beauty and vitality of the lost communities of Europe."

Many thanks to Paulette and Tom Berner, of Bellefonte, Pennsylvania, who donated *Where We Once Gathered: Lost Synagogues of Europe* to the Silvian Library & Research Center in our museum.

## African American travel on New Mexico's Route 66

by Naomi Sandweiss

Despite the popularity of the "Mother Road," most people don't realize that many establishments along Route 66 did not allow African American tourists, making travel along the route's 2,400 miles difficult and dangerous. A number of communities on or near Route 66 were also known as "sundown towns" in which African Americans (and sometimes members of other ethnic groups) were prohibited after dark. The statement "Get Your Kicks on Route 66" held a very different meaning for African American travelers.

*The Negro Motorist Green Book*, published annually between 1936 and 1966, provided a vital resource, a state-by-state list of hotels, gas stations, boarding houses and restaurants that would serve African American travelers. The publisher and author of the guide, Victor H. Green, a postal employee, apparently modeled his directory after the 1930s Borsht Belt Jewish travel guides. The Green Book was available at Black-owned businesses, by mail order and at Esso service stations.

The Green Book recently has received recognition as a result of the 2018 film *Green Book*, which earned three Golden Globes and is receiving

Oscar buzz for its tale of friendship and portrayal of African American travel in the Deep South.

In New Mexico, African Americans traveling on or near Route 66 had few options for lodging or dining. The Green Book and similar guides included listings for Tatum, Santa Rosa, Santa Fe, Albuquerque, and Gallup. Restaurants were extremely limited. Several private rooming houses were offered in

The 2018 film *Green Book* garnered three Golden Globes and is nominated for five Oscars.

Albuquerque, Tatum and Gallup as alternatives to hotels. Of those hotels that did welcome African Americans, the De Anza Motor Lodge in Albuquerque and the El Rey Court in Santa Fe are among the few still standing. In addition, according to Green Book historian Candacy Taylor, the Fred Harvey restaurants and hotels in New Mexico served African Americans, although they were not listed in the Green Book.

Bernalillo was a suspected sundown town and only 6 percent of

100 hotels on Albuquerque's Central Avenue accepted African American travelers despite an antidiscrimination ordinance (*Albuquerque Tribune*, 1955). In 1955, the NAACP raised an alarm about the safety of African American travelers after six family members were killed in a Clines Corners auto accident caused by a fatigued driver who could not find sleeping accommodations.

In 1964, the Civil Rights Act ended segregation in public accommodations. Today, as more communities are aware of the Green Book, the National Park Service has undertaken a Route 66 Green Book project focused upon conservation and understanding of the experiences of African American travelers.

For more information on the African American experience in New Mexico, see the exhibit *New Mexico's African American Legacy: Visible, Vital, and Valuable* in the museum on temporary loan from the African American Museum and Cultural Center.

### **Bibliography and Resources: National Park Service Green Book Project**

<https://ncptt.nps.gov/rt66/green-book/>

### **Route 66 establishments listed in the Green Book and other guides**

<http://ncptt.nps.gov/rt66/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/Rt66GreenBookSurvey.pdf>

### **The Roots of Route 66**

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2016/11/the-roots-of-route-66/506255/>

### **Was there a ban of black customers at Route 66 motels in eastern New Mexico?**

<https://www.route66news.com/2018/09/16/was-there-a-ban-of-black-customers-along-route-66-motels-in-eastern-new-mexico/>

## BlackKlansman up for six Oscars

In the midst of the 1970s Civil Rights movement, Ron Stallworth, a black detective in Colorado Springs, infiltrated the Ku Klux Klan. The basis for the 2018 movie is Stallworth's memoir, *Black Klansman*.

Spike Lee has been nominated as best director for the first time in his long history of filmmaking. The film received five more nominations.

*Eliminating hate and intolerance, one mind at a time.*

Archives alive

## What can you tell us about these objects?

by Camelia Caton-Garcia

In 1939 one of our founders, Holocaust survivor Werner Gellert, fled Nazi Germany with his parents. As stateless refugees they were denied residence throughout Europe but were eventually accepted into the burgeoning European community of Shanghai, China.

The Gellert family remained in Shanghai through the Japanese occupation, eventually leaving for the United States in 1948 when Werner was 23. The cigarette case was acquired during Werner's time in

China and traveled with him, crossing an ocean and several decades, until placed in the care of our collection.

Inside the case is an inscription from "Mutti Leo and Werner, S'hai 1948" as well as a Gellert family photo (we believe Werner is the young boy in the lower left).

Do you know anything about this object/photo? Please get in touch:

[ccaton-garcia@nmholocaustmuseum.org](mailto:ccaton-garcia@nmholocaustmuseum.org)



## Women in Holocaust history resisting the Nazis

On International Holocaust Remembrance Day at the end of January, Remember the Women Institute urged us to think about five young women who resisted the Nazis. All five were caught by the Nazis in the fall of 1944.

"Róza Robota, Ester Wajcblum, Regina Szafirsztajn, and Ala Gertner, along with other women, smuggled gunpowder to the men working in the Sonderkommando in Birkenau. The men then blew up Crematorium IV, damaging it beyond repair. After the women's role was discovered, these four young women were publicly hanged during the first week of January 1945.

"Haviva Reick was a hero who joined the

parachutists from pre-Israel British Mandate Palestine and operated in Slovakia in September and October of 1944 to save Allied troops and the remnants of the Jewish community. She was murdered and fell into a mass grave along with more than 740 other victims. Her body was taken to Israel in 1952, where she is buried on Mt. Herzl among those whom Israel honors. "

The Remember the Women Institute founded in 1997 and based in New York City conducts and encourages research and cultural activities that contribute to including women in history. Special emphasis is on women in the context of the Holocaust and its aftermath.

# Many more migrant children separated from parents

by Lyn Berner

The *New York Times* reported in January that thousands more migrant children likely were taken from families than first reported.

Originally more than 2,300 children were identified, but this does not represent the full scope.

Thousands were separated during an influx that began in 2017 before tracking was required. The total number is unknown because of the lack of a coordinated formal accounting system between the Office of Refugee Resettlement and the Department of Homeland Security.

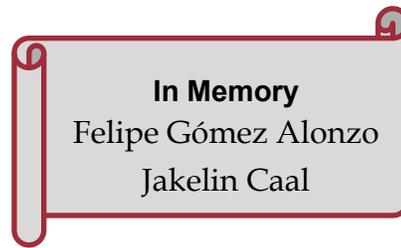
Since the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) filed its class action lawsuit, *Ms. L v. ICE*, almost one year ago, the numbers on family separation keeps changing.

It first was reported that a policy didn't exist. Then it was noted that dozens, then hundreds, then *thousands* of children, including infants and toddlers, were separated. And now, a new report says there could be thousands more than the 2,737 children previously reported. This is because, according to the ACLU, the government did not track all the families it tore apart.

In June a federal judge directed the government to halt separations and to reunite children with their parents, and public outrage forced the administration to rescind the policy that same month.

Though many families were reunited, this crisis isn't over. Federal inspectors have found that separations are still happening, even after the court order to stop.

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## New asylum policy implemented

by Melanie Dickson

*What we know:*

In 2018, the Justice Department announced “zero tolerance” for illegal border crossings. Soon after, 3,000 children were separated from parents at the border while seeking a safe haven. And soon after that, a federal judge ordered U.S. immigration to stop separating parents and children. Numerous families were reunited, but not all. Uniting those families is still taking place as of January 2019. Even with push back from human rights groups and civil liberties advocates, a new policy has not been enacted. On July 25, 2018, the Senate--with unanimous consent--objected to passing S. 3093- Keep families together and Enforce the Law Act by countering it with laws S. 3263- Humane Treatment of Migrant Children Act and S. 3036- Keep Families Together Act, which in turn were unanimously voted down.

*What's new:*

The Refuge and Asylum Policy, implemented in January, requires those seeking asylum to wait in their homeland countries as their claims are processed in America. Officials are saying it “will help restore a safe and orderly immigration process, decrease the number of those taking advantage of the

(see New asylum policy, page 8)

August 28

# 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom

“I say to you  
today, my friends,  
so even though we  
face the difficulties  
of today and  
tomorrow, I still  
have a dream. It is  
a dream deeply  
rooted in the  
American dream.  
I have a dream that  
one day this nation  
will rise up and  
live out the true  
meaning of its  
creed, ‘We hold  
these truths to be  
self-evident, that  
all men are created  
equal.’ “

Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister who became the most visible leader in the American civil rights movement.

The quote at left was in his 17-minute “I Have a Dream” speech delivered August 28 at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. Dr. King called for civil and economic rights and an end to racism in the United States.

Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi, he is best known for advocating and advancing civil rights through non-violent resistance and civil disobedience.

In 1955, he led the Montgomery bus boycott. Other notable activities he took part in or led include Selma to Montgomery marches, protests in Birmingham, and many struggles against segregation throughout the country.

He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for combating racial inequality, and was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Honor and the Congressional Gold Medal.

In 1986, a federal holiday in his honor was legislated.



*Agence France Presse/Getty Images*

Martin Luther King Jr.  
January 15, 1929 — April 4, 1968

