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## Name change imminent

At its regular monthly meeting in January, the board of directors voted unanimously to change the museum's name so that it reflects the state of New Mexico first and then honor ours founders. Officially we will become the New Mexico Holocaust Museum and the Gellert Center for Education. While it may take some time to go through the formal motions of changing our name and look, the transition has begun.

Founded in 1998 by Werner and Frankie Gellert and Julianna K. Lerner, the museum opened January 2001 in 415 Central Avenue NW. Werner and Frankie greeted guests every day the museum was open for the first five years until the board hired a staff person. From then on, volunteers assumed front desk duties, and Werner, a Holocaust survivor, came into the museum frequently to speak to the many busloads of school children on field trips.

When the owner of that building was preparing to sell, the museum was moved to its present location. Doing the best we could with what we had and growing in the process, we now are bursting at the seams.

It's a new era for the New Mexico Holocaust Museum. We have five part-time staff on payroll and several contract workers in our important education outreach programs. Leon Natker, a museum professional, was hired recently as executive director to guide the staff and the board into and through the next growth spurts. His vision includes a complete re-do of our space and exhibits which will involve closing just after July 5 and reopening grandly on August 2.

While we appreciate the space and downtown location, eventually, and when the time is right, we will relocate. We don't know when or where, but we know we need at least 10,000 thousand square feet to create more professional exhibits and continue our necessary work.

# Exciting times ahead for NM Holocaust Museum

Friends,  
I hope you all are staying safe and healthy during the Covid-19 crisis. It is important not to panic; we will get through this and we will be stronger because of it.

The museum will remain closed until the Governor allows us to re-open. That being the case, it is important that you all remember we still have to pay the rent and utilities and keep our small staff around to take care of the place. We rely on your support.

There have been several changes since our winter newsletter. All changes are moving us toward becoming a truly professional regional museum that can proudly take its place among the other great museums in the state of New Mexico.

As of February 19, a new set of officers has been elected by the board of directors. These terms will be only until June as the museum has changed its fiscal year to July 1 to June 30. The new officers are Raye Cohen, president; Sheri Karmioli, vice-president; Gloria Taradash, secretary, and Doris Fields, treasurer. Please join me in congratulating them and thanking them for their willingness to serve this organization. We are moving from a volunteer board where people were handling day-to-day operations to a governance board. This is not an easy process and I am grateful for the dedication of our board members and their willingness to move this museum forward.

I also want to let you know that the museum will be refurbishing all of its current exhibits as well as adding



Leon Natker MA, RPA  
Executive Director

two new exhibits. **Colonization: Racism and Revision** will highlight the oppression of Native peoples of New Mexico during the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Spanish colonial government and by the 19<sup>th</sup> century American Territorial government. Phase II of **Slavery in America** will deal with the aftermath of emancipation and reconstruction to the present. These new exhibits will highlight survivors.

We also will be adding a section on survivors to our Holocaust exhibit. It is important to show the positive message of resistance by upstanders and survival when talking about these acts of hatred and genocide. We want people to leave the museum feeling that there is hope and that anyone can make a difference.

Currently we plan to open the new exhibits on August 2, but this depends on how the virus plays out. If all goes according to plan, we will close down after July 5 for construction. If you are interested in volunteering time to help with demolition and building please contact Larry Malick, our volunteer coordinator. We will certainly be grateful. This is a very exciting time for us and hope you will all be there for our grand re-opening.

I want to thank all of you for your continued support and I hope you are as excited as I am about the museum's future and will continue your generous support for all of our programs and activities.

*The Herald*

-published four times a year  
by staff and volunteers-

# Working together, staff members provide consistency



Lyn Berner  
Director of Administration

Lyn Berner found her way to our museum via volunteer work for the New Mexico Human Rights Coalition. Initially a board member, she couldn't resist the chance to be in the museum five days a week when the board decided in 2005 to hire its first staff person. She is privileged and grateful to continue the affiliation.

Lyn brings to the job a variety of skills and a background in several occupations from newspaper reporting to school public relations to book selling.

A Pennsylvanian by birth, Lyn grew up in Tamaqua, a small anthracite coal town. Her interest in the Holocaust and human rights reverts to teen years when much time was spent reading the likes of Leon Uris and Herman Wouk.

Since working here, Lyn has visited the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington DC, the Illinois Holocaust Museum & Study Center in Skokie, the El Paso (Texas) Holocaust Museum

& Study Center, and Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

Recruited by Lyn, Larry Malick became a volunteer in December of 2018.

It didn't take long for him to start attending four days a week, eventually becoming part of the staff as volunteer coordinator.

In addition to training newbies, Larry assists in many other aspects of the museum's day-to-day operations.

A veteran of service in the U.S. Marine Corps and a retired



Larry Malick  
Volunteer Coordinator

attorney, Larry and his wife, Amy, have lived in Albuquerque for seven years and have three children and seven grandchildren who live in Namibia and Tacoma, Washington and points in between.

Camelia Caton-Garcia has worked in social justice and archives across the American west. She spent several years at the Northwest Coalition for Human Dignity's research

archive. The NWCHD monitored white nationalist groups in a five-state region and was partially responsible for the success of the lawsuit in 2000 against the Aryan Nations in Idaho that forced them to abandon their Hayden Lake compound.

She first volunteered at the New Mexico Holocaust Museum and transitioned to staff two years ago. It is a natural fit.

A working artist, Camelia was the Grand Canyon South Rim artist in residence in March of 2013.

Of her time at NMHM, Camelia says, "It is an incredible privilege to work with this collection and with a community so dedicated to stopping hate and preventing genocide. I look forward to the growth that is in store for our museum."



Camelia Caton-Garcia  
Collections Manager

# Stand Up! Be Counted!

by Susan Bapty, Director of Education

“Witness” according to Merriam-Webster means an attestation of a fact or event. For one seventh grader it means a time watching parents attempt suicide.

“And in what role were you?” asked the museum educator. “Were you victim, perpetrator, bystander, or upstander?”

The student responded, “I was a bystander because I just stood there as my parents tried to kill themselves.”

This interaction, more than any encounter thus far, speaks to the need for our *Stand Up Be Counted* program. The museum educator explained, “You were a child. What could you have done? You were a victim.”

Our pilot program currently is being tested in three middle schools in Albuquerque, two of which are designated as Title I.

The program is predicated on the goal of improving student academic skills, increasing social-emotional intelligence, and developing resilience, creativity, and problem-solving skills necessary for students to see a path forward for themselves.

Using the Holocaust as the foundation, a team of museum educators and artists work with 195 students

to apply the terms victim, perpetrator, bystander, and upstander to historical and personally relevant events. By exposing students to patterns in history and teaching them to recognize how they are subjugated to those patterns, we help them take control of their lives and their commitment to learning grows.

After providing some historical context, students are introduced to a carefully selected age-appropriate literature component. This year the

students are exploring various sections of Art Spiegelman’s graphic novel *MAUS*. With a firm understanding of the escalation of hate and how silence and indifference facilitates this escalation, students are challenged to create an original piece of art on an issue that they feel empowered to support.

The mediums selected are differentiated by grade level and this year span the gamut of filming a public service announcement to creating a graphic novel excerpt. It is this latter component as well as the self-reflection piece integrated into each week’s lesson that challenges the students to assess and monitor their own behaviors.

This evidence-based approach is designed purposely to increase students’ critical reading, researching, and writing skills. The program’s goal is eventually to increase the number of sessions in each school, which allows this arts integration model to

provide students with extended, hands-on art making in visual as well as performing arts.

By extending the art component and creating frequent touchpoints students are given opportunities to process difficult topics, develop empathy, build grit and resiliency, and make real meaning of what they are learning and ways to cope with what they are experiencing in their lives beyond the classroom.

A critical component of our mission is educating children about bullying, prejudice, and hate. Empowering students to be upstanders is a critical part of our educational program, and the core of *Stand Up Be Counted*.

To paraphrase the museum’s tagline, this program seeks to “create upstanders one mind at a time” and in so doing create real and sustainable changes in a school’s culture.

## What are you?

**-victim-**

**-perpetrator-**

**-bystander-**

**-upstander-**

# Janet's trunk and its travels

This is the story of a steamer trunk that survived Hitler's regime and traveled more than 13,500 miles from World War II Europe to present day. It is incredible, inspiring, almost unbelievable--but in no uncertain terms--undeniable.

Today, that trunk rests in the New Mexico Holocaust Museum, a gift from Janet (Kastel) and Abraham Goldberg.

The journey begins in 1938 when the Germans occupied Sudetenland of Czechoslovakia. Many synagogues were burned and approximately 300,000 Jews were sent to concentration camps. Not willing to ignore the ominous development taking place, Dr. Hugo Adler, his wife Sdenka (who was not Jewish) and their children, Yaakov and Hana, packed whatever they could in a single steamer trunk and fled their home. They headed more than 1,500 miles north from Ceske Budejovice, Czechoslovakia, to Hammerfest, Norway near the Arctic Circle. This amazing effort was mobilized by Sdenka to protect her family from Nazi brutality and Jewish persecution.

Once in Hammerfest, Dr. Adler worked in a tuberculosis hospital. It was a remote area where not many wanted to live, and he was doing work not many wanted to do. The Germans occupied Norway as long as they occupied any European country and eventually came to take Dr. Adler away. Triumphantly, it was Sdenka who saved him by going to the commander, convincing him Dr. Adler was dying of tuberculosis and it would be useless to take him.



As the situation became worse under the Nazis, the entire hospital (patients, doctors and staff) was evacuated to an island in Alta Fjord. The cows, an integral part of the hospital by supplying milk to the patients, had to be left behind. They had become friends to Hana and would later be instrumental in the path her life would take. The Germans slaughtered the cows for food. Because

of the danger they were in, the Norwegian Underground smuggled the Adler family to Sweden where they lived until the end of the war.

The trunk traveled with the Adlers all the way to Sweden, another 1,000 miles. After the war, the Adler family returned to Czechoslovakia with the same trunk, adding 700 more miles. Upon their return—following a brutal and miserably long journey—they discovered that their home had been taken over by the Communists. The Adlers decided to emigrate to Israel. Again, the trunk went with them for a distance of 2,600 miles. There, Dr. Adler established Hospital Meir in the “neck” (Hod Ha Sharon) area of Israel.

Yaakov became a doctor and head of the Shere Tzedek Hospital in Jerusalem. Hana returned to Norway to study veterinary medicine, specializing in milk cows. She married Dr. Arie Krieger, also a cow specialist, and who had lost his family in Poland during the war.

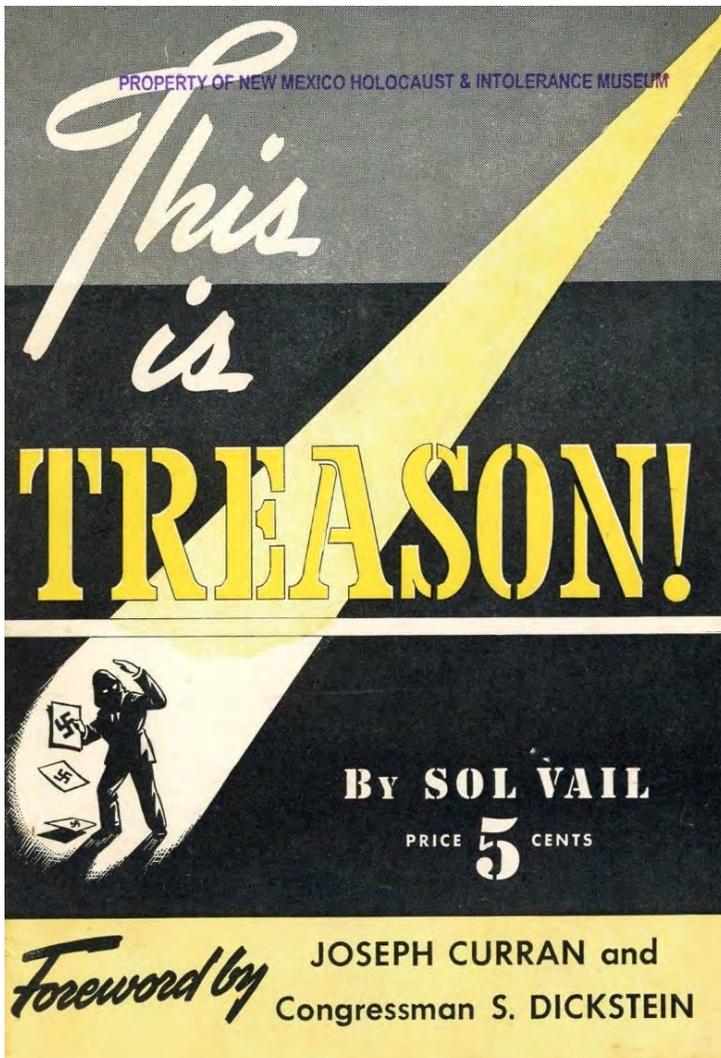
While the Adler family had finally settled, the steamer trunk had not. It still had miles to go before reaching its final destination.

In September of 1974 the steamer trunk was sent travelling again. This time, Hana Adler gave

(see Janet's trunk, page 6)

Archives alive!

How did this come into our possession? Do **YOU** know?



*This is Treason!* is a 1943 publication of the Jewish People's Fraternal Order, a member organization of the International Workers Order. The pamphlet discusses the rise of fascism globally and the dangers of anti-Semitism in America. It specifically addresses the threat of normalizing anti-Semitic speech and behavior in wartime America and the rise of Nazi propaganda in the USA.

It speaks to the terror of the Axis mobilization in Europe, the mass murder and devastation of Jewish communities in Nazi occupied countries, the America First Party, the Ku Klux Klan, the Black Legion (a violent American white nationalist terror organization, similar to the Klan, that operated throughout the Midwest in the 1930s), and in particular 1943 attacks on Detroit's black population.

*This is Treason!* was a call to action for American citizens. As the pamphlet says: *Forge Jewish Unity, Crush Anti-Semitism, Defeat the Axis Now.*

Do you have a relationship to this pamphlet or know how it came to be in our collection? Please contact: [info@nmholocaustmuseum.org](mailto:info@nmholocaustmuseum.org)

## Janet's trunk and its travels

(continued from page 5)

the trunk to her friend, Janet Kastel in Boston, a distance of 5,500 miles. Janet and Hana had become friends in the 1960s at Moshav Ben Ami in Western Galilee.

"I still remember that people would come to the Adler-Krieger home in Moshav Ben Ami," recalled Janet.

"They sometimes came on bicycles with cats and dogs in baskets needing veterinary help. The Adler-Kriegers could be found transfusing dehydrated

small animals with fluids stored in their refrigerator as well as treating sick horses in their front yard."

In 1987 Janet (Kastel) and Abraham Goldberg brought the trunk to Placitas, NM, another 2,200 miles.

In October of 2011, the Goldbergs donated the steamer trunk to the museum, its final resting place after traveling the globe some 13,500 miles spanning 73 years.

## USHMM director visits Albuquerque



Marla Abraham

Representatives of our museum met recently with the Western Regional director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) to discuss Holocaust education centers

and other programming.

Marla Eglash Abraham was in Albuquerque March 11 to confer with Miriam (Mim) Burhans, a regular volunteer with us who, in addition, is a member of the USHMM's Western Region Advisors group on behalf of New Mexico.

Mim gave Marla the grand tour of exhibits which was followed by a meeting with Leon Natker, executive director, Camelia Caton-Garcia, collections manager, and Sheri Karmioli, librarian. The future of our museum and its programming was very much part of the discussion,

As Western regional director, Marla helps facilitate USHMM's work over a staggering nine-state area. She already has connected us with many USHMM resources.

We anticipate working with her to bring exciting new programming, traveling exhibits and speakers to New Mexico. The USHMM coordinates a network of Holocaust education centers across the country, and we look forward to joining their ranks to fulfill our shared mission.

## Silvian Library & Study Center undergoing retro conversion

The museum is undertaking a major project in our special collections library. We have long wanted to complete a retro-conversion from the Dewey Decimal System to Library of Congress. With the support of volunteer librarians Sheri Karmioli and Diane Kozelka we have finally begun.

The Library of Congress system is the standard for most universities and research centers and will enable our collection to be much more accessible.

The Silvian Library has nearly 5,000 titles covering topics such as the Holocaust, genocide, resistance, social justice and the effects and prevention of hate. Each book will have to be relabeled with the correct Library of Congress call number and re-shelved using the new system. It's an enormous undertaking, but exciting to know we will be moving toward a better, more usable collection. We are on the path to making our library a major resource for the community, educators, researchers and students.

You can digitally browse our books on the museum's website (<https://nmholocaustmuseum.org/library/>).



# Museum board in restructuring process

For the first time in the history of the museum, we have hired an executive director whose responsibilities include running the museum and helping the board transition from working to governance and fiduciary. Leon Natker's contract impacts how the museum

is managed concerning exhibits, programs, and employees. He is the chief executive officer of the museum and ex-officio member of the board and all committees.

In re-doing our structure, there will be four standing board committees: governance,

executive, fiduciary, and fundraising. The education and library committees will continue with staff and volunteers in the lead. The board's focus will shift to overseeing budgets, fundraising, and building a stronger panel with present and new members.

## Support the museum and its important educational programs

Our museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization. We are determined to steadfastly continue our work to combat hate and intolerance, encourage understanding and influence upstanders. The majority of our operating funds come from private donors. Please become one: you can use the form below and mail it to New Mexico Holocaust Museum, POB 1762, Albuquerque NM 87103-1762 or donate via our website: [www.nmholocaustmuseum.org](http://www.nmholocaustmuseum.org).

In addition, **all you Amazon shoppers** can apply a percentage of your spending on eligible purchases to the museum by registering on [smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com) and designating the Holocaust & Intolerance Museum of New Mexico as your charity of choice. We appreciate your continued support.



Don't forget to like us on Facebook and follow us on Instagram.



Your donation automatically makes you a member of our museum family.

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