

TJP

TEXAS JEWISH POST ✡ SINCE 1947

INSIDE



Subscribe today!
subscriptions@tjpnews.com

Updates from the war

IDF foresees 6-8 more weeks of intense fight, p.2

Quick Look

- 2** Israel at War
- 4** Synagogues
- 5** Community
- 6-7** Dallas Doings
- 8** Federation News
- 9** Business
- 10-11** Organizations
- 12-13** Columnists
- 15** Obituaries

Thursday, February 22, 2024 • 13 Adar 1 5784 • VOLUME 78 NO. 8 • tjpnews.com

\$2.00



CONTINUING HER LEGACY

New DJHS scholarship honors Polsky's vision, p.10

Visit tjpnews.com for the latest on the war in Israel
Subscribe to our daily newsletter at tjpnews.com/newsletter

Photo: Courtesy Jewish Children's Regional Services
Allan "Bunky" Garonzik's mother, Ida Beerman Garonzik (standing to the right of her father, Abraham), was one of six siblings who lived at the Jewish Orphans' Home. Providing for orphans was a cause that Debra Polsky wholeheartedly supported as executive director of the Dallas Jewish Historical Society.

LOOMING MITZVAH
Sisterhoods teach, create for a cause, p.6

• **Light Shabbat candles:**
• **6:01 p.m. Friday, Feb. 23**
• **Shabbat ends:**
• **6:57 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 24**

DJHS creates Debra Polsky Scholarship



Photo: Courtesy Dallas Jewish Historical Society

Debra Polsky, who served as Dallas Jewish Historical Society executive director for a decade and passed away in May 2023, will be remembered with a scholarship to support students pursuing a career in Jewish communal work.



Photo: Courtesy Jewish Children's Regional Services

Allan "Bunky" Garonzik's mother Ida Beerman Garonzik, standing to the right of her father, Abraham, and with her siblings. Six of the eight Beerman children, who lived in West, Texas, in 1924, were admitted to the Jewish Orphans' Home after their mother passed away.

March 10 event hosts Jewish Orphans' Home history author

By Deb Silverthorn

The Talmud calls "the true guardians of a community, its teachers." The Dallas Jewish Historical Society has created the Debra Polsky Scholarship for Jewish Communal Work to honor the memory of its former executive director. The scholarship will be introduced at 10 a.m. Sunday, March 10, at Congregation Tiferet Israel along with a presentation of author Marlene Trestman's "Most Fortunate Unfortunates: The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans."

"It means so much to us to establish this scholarship in Debra's honor," said Jeanette Pincus, president of the Dallas Jewish Historical Society. "Dallas was important to her and she gave us so much as a teacher, a leader and a friend to many."

An initial \$1,800 in donations has launched the scholarship, which will first benefit students in fall 2025.

Beri Kaplan Schwitzer, who has succeeded Polsky as executive director, knew her for nearly 35 years.

"There are many who want to share in remembering Debra and she will live on through the

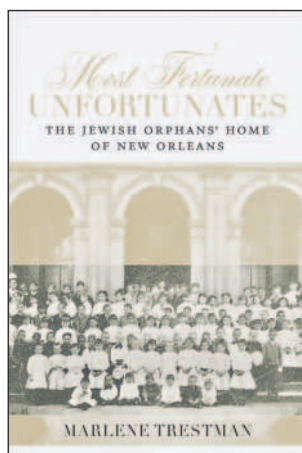


Photo: Courtesy Marlene Trestman

"Most Fortunate Unfortunates, The Jewish Orphans' Home of New Orleans" author Marlene Trestman will speak at the Dallas Jewish Historical Society event at 10 a.m. on Sunday, March 10, 2024, at Congregation Tiferet Israel.

beneficiaries. Debra will always be a part of DJHS. Her fingerprints and her heart are in everything we do," said Schwitzer.

"From her early work with Jewish teens, to her place here collecting and sharing our Jewish community's rich history," said Schwitzer, "honoring her by supporting future Jewish communal workers is so fitting."

Attending the event will be Polsky's sister, Sharon Polsky; her partner, Mordechai Kaufman; Debra's lifelong friend Antoinette Gruner; and her husband, Larry. Sharon hopes community members will join the family for Polsky's



Photo: Courtesy Marlene Trestman

Author Marlene Trestman with her granddaughter, Nora Lilly Kahn, whose middle name honors Marlene's late foster mother, Lillian Rodos.

unveiling at 4 p.m. that same day, March 10, at Congregation Tiferet Israel's Dolphin Road Cemetery.

"This scholarship is the perfect way to honor my sister, who was so committed to her work in the Jewish community. Dallas' community couldn't have been more like family to her," said Sharon. "She touched every corner, so many organizations and countless lives and it's very special that she'll be remembered in this way."

Partnering for the event with DJHS is the Texas Jewish Historical Society.

"Marlene gives an excellent

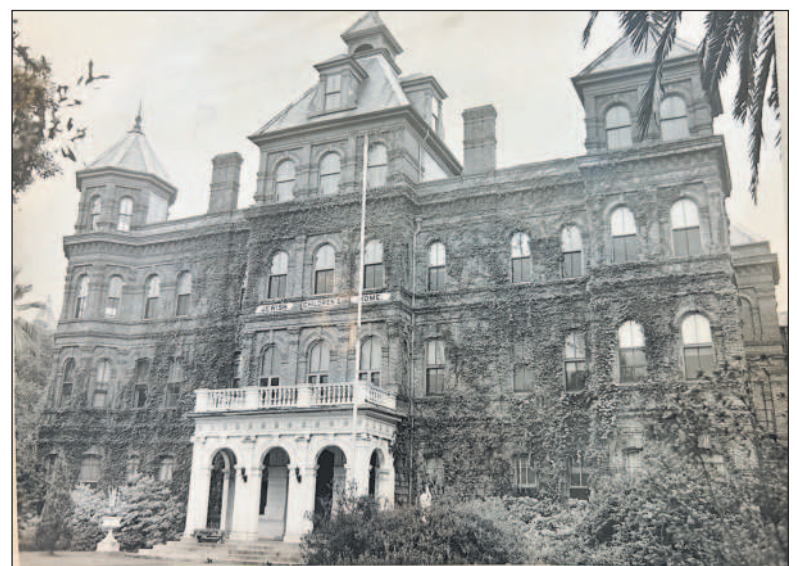


Photo: Courtesy Jewish Children's Regional Services

Over 90 years, pre-Civil War through World War II, nearly 400 orphaned Texans lived at the Jewish Orphans' Home in New Orleans.

presentation in her book," said Barbara Stone, a TJHS board member whose husband, Ed, is a descendant of a resident of the Home. "We're thrilled to partner with the Dallas Jewish Historical Society in what we hope is one of many future programs."

Polsky and Trestman visited together while at a Southern Jewish Historical Society conference.

Trestman said, "Debra was lovely, she was smart and she was committed to her community and to Jewish life."

Trestman and her brother Robert became wards of New Orleans after their father Anchel

passed away when she was 8 and their mother, Mae, passed away three years later. She calls herself one of the "most fortunate unfortunates." She and her brother grew up as foster care clients of the Jewish Children's Regional Service, the successor to the Jewish Orphans' Home, which has served children from Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Tennessee and Texas.

Founded in 1855, the Home was the first purpose-built Jewish orphanage in the nation, reflecting the city's affinity for religiously

see DEBRA, p.16

DEBRA

continued from p.10

operated orphanages and the growing prosperity of its Jewish community. By the time the Jewish Orphans' Home closed in 1946, it had sheltered more than 1,600 parentless children and 24 widows. Today, the agency continues to support at-risk, dependent and financially challenged children and families through camp and academic scholarships, special

needs assistance and more.

An alumna of the Home's prestigious Isadore Newman School, which served the most impoverished residents as well as those with more resources, Trestman says her fondest memories were summers at Camp Barney Medintz.

Trestman attended Goucher College and then George Washington University Law School. She was introduced to Bessie Margolin, the first woman attorney she'd ever met, who

became her mentor, her friend and the subject of her first book, "Fair Labor Lawyer: The Remarkable Life of New Deal Attorney and Supreme Court Advocate Bessie Margolin." Trestman spent 30 years as a special assistant to Maryland's attorney general before writing that book.

"Bessie was a force of nature. When I had the opportunity to write about her, I just couldn't pass it up," said Trestman. "From that book came this one. I am proud to share these histories. I really

believe I was born to write them."

Trestman lives in Baltimore, Maryland. She is married to Henry Kahn; they are the parents of Eli (Jayme) and Helene Mae (Chris Mabry) Kahn and the grandparents of Nora Lilly Kahn. The couple's daughter, named after Trestman's mother, and their granddaughter, named after her foster mother — Lillian Rodos, of blessed memory — continue the legacy of *l'dor v' dor*, from generation to generation. Today, Trestman remains close to her foster sisters Devvie (Harvey)

Harris and Evelyn Rodos, who attended her October 2023 book launch.

Trestman co-curated a permanent exhibit about the Jewish Home at the Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience in New Orleans. She will share archival images and audio and video clips to tell the history of the Jewish Home and how she wrote the book.

Over 90 years, pre-Civil War through World War II, nearly 400 orphaned Texans lived at the Jewish Home in New Orleans.

Mark Rubin, JCRS executive director, said, "Marlene's book breathes life into the history of the Home. JCRS is grateful to be able to grow and continue our mission to provide support and services for Jewish youths to become well-adjusted, self-supporting young adults."

Argyle resident Allan "Bunky" Garonzik is among the interviewees for "Most Fortunate Unfortunates." His mother, Ida Berman Garonzik, of blessed memory, lived in the orphanage from 1924 to 1932.

Garonzik's mother had seven siblings. She was one of six of the children who lived at the Home; the other two were older. "My mother worked at Shearith Israel for many years. When her mother passed away at a young age, my grandfather, who was living in West near Waco, away from family, believed he couldn't raise them alone," said Garonzik, who has enjoyed family reunions of the many branches through the years. "The Home was nothing like the Mickey Rooney movies of only 'poverty-stricken and sad children' who were abused. My aunts and uncles left the Home with a good education and a path to success."

Among others Trestman spoke with were 94-year-old Hannah Golden Limerick, who lives outside of San Antonio and resided with her late sister Lilyan Golden Milner in the Jewish Home from 1935 to 1942; and Dallasite Susan Szafer Golman, whose grandfather Edmund Szafer was a resident of the Jewish Home from 1889 to 1893.

"The book is beautifully written and is truly a living history of the Jewish Home," said Schwitzer. "It's appropriate that our first annual event, to honor Debra, celebrates an entity which made such a lasting impact — as did she.

To register for the March 10 event, visit tinyurl.com/DJHS-March-10. For more information on Trestman's work, visit marlenetrestman.com; to learn more about JCRS, visit jcrs.org.

The Legacy

WILLOW BEND

WE'RE
NOT
DONE
YET!

Please join us for a seminar where we'll present our plans for a dramatic **CAMPUS EXPANSION**—the first of its kind in Texas. During the event, you'll enjoy brunch bites and hear about our new residential option. You'll also have the opportunity to put your name on our waitlist, with a fully **REFUNDABLE \$1,000** deposit.

FEBRUARY 27 · 10AM-12PM

The Legacy Willow Bend
Tamarisk Dining Room
6101 Ohio Drive - Building A
Plano, TX 75024



Scan to RSVP, or contact
Shelle Stebleton:
sstebleton@thelegacywb.org
972.468.6238