

L'Dor V'Dor

from generation to generation • the newsletter of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society

IMPORTANT DATE - PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!!

The Nebraska Jewish Historical Society annual meeting is scheduled for Sunday, August 7th at 3:00 PM in the auditorium of the Jewish Community Center.



Carl Frohm



Mary Fellman

The Carl Frohm Memorial Foundation will be honored with the Society's most prestigious Mary Fellman Award. The Frohm Foundation, overseen by Linda and Harold Mann, not only is a large supporter of the Society, but has been a major contributor to many in the entire Jewish community.

The Mary Fellman Award, named for the NJHS co-founder, was created in 2005 to honor a person or group in the community who reflects the qualities that were an integral part of Mary Fellman's life. These include multi-faceted leadership, compassion, and/or service impacting the history of the Jewish people of Nebraska and western Iowa. We feel that these qualities more than describe the many contributions of the Carl Frohm Memorial Foundation to the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society, says Debbi Josephson, NJHS board president.

Sue Friedman Millward also will be honored at the meeting with the NJHS Shirley Berman Volunteer Award. This award honors a community volunteer who gives their time "quietly" over a period of time without expectation of recognition.

The event is open to the entire community and will be followed by a dessert reception.

MESSAGE FROM DEBBI JOSEPHSON, NJHS BOARD PRESIDENT

As the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society nears the end of another successful year and we prepare for the annual meeting, August 7, I would like to take this time to *show thanks and appreciation* to those that have put in their time and resources to grow this organization.

As a reminder, the funds that the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society uses to operate are obtained solely from dues, gifts and donations; *no money comes from the Jewish Federation of Omaha. The NJHS is an independent organization*, which is housed inside the Jewish Community Center building. We are very grateful that we have a very warm and respectable relationship with the JCC and the Federation, and look forward to continuing this into the future. **Thank you, JCC and Jewish Federation.**

Thanks to Renee Corcoran, Executive Director and Kathy Weiner, Staff Assistant. Without your wisdom of the community and dedication to the NJHS the growth we have seen would not have been possible. You manage our archives, put up and take down exhibits, answer phones, raise money and give tours of the museum and displays throughout the building, and I'm sure I have left out many other skills you use during the day. Thank you!

Thank you to many of our sustainers, who have been faithful from the founding of NJHS and who have been very instrumental in the maintenance and growth of the Historical Society; the **Carl Frohm Foundation**, the **Shirley and Leonard Goldstein Supporting Foundation**, the **Ike and Roz Friedman Foundation** and the **Jerold and Pearl Osoff Gross NJHS Foundation**. I want to remember two wonderful and devoted supporters taken from us this past year, **Dorothy Reikes Z"L and Ben Nachman Z"L** your loving vision and support will bless us for many years to come.

I need to give special recognition and thanks to **Sharon Houchin** for volunteering her time and talent. Her design and typesetting of L'Dor V'Dor helps makes our newsletter possible.

I would like to also thank, **Jenny Gordon, Sue Millward and Nan Katz** for the office and exhibit assistance you have provided and thanks as well to our outgoing board members for your years of dedicated service, **Sissy Silber and Ron Brodkey**. I need to say a big thank you to **Beth Staenberg** (for all your advice and support) and the rest of the board members continuing their service next year. Welcome to our newest board members, **Janis Fischer, Norma Fried and Phyllis Wasserman**, I hope you will find your terms rewarding and enlightening about the Omaha community. Welcome!

Of course I can't possibly thank everyone who has given of their time to the Historical Society so I do apologize to all of you out there who continually sing the praises and help us make new friends, keep up the good work. As we all make the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society stronger and more visible we help to make our Jewish community stronger and more vibrant. Thank you! We welcome your ideas and funds as we go forward. If you have anything you would like to share please don't hesitate to contact me, debbi.josephson8@gmail.com.

NJHS MISSION STATEMENT

The Mission of the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society is to preserve the histories of the Jewish families who settled in Nebraska and Council Bluffs, Iowa. The NJHS will promote the acquisition, cataloging and use of the collected materials which depict this history by: participating in conferences; issuing publications to members and professionals; fostering research; and promoting museum projects and related education and cultural activities.

Our recent partnership with the Rose Blumkin Home gives NJHS the opportunity to share with the community many treasures housed in the NJHS Carl Frohm Archival Center. We look forward to many future displays on Main Street.



There Was Film in the Camera Exhibit at the Rose Blumkin Home, Main Street. Photographs from the original exhibit honoring the life of Gary Gerelick, August 2007.



NJHS Wedding Day Memories Exhibit at the Rose Blumkin Home, February to March, 2011.

NJHS and our entire community lost a dear friend and dedicated supporter with the passing of Dorothy Riekas. Her contributions were many but for the Society her greatest legacy is The Henry & Dorothy Riekas Museum located in the Jewish Community Center. We have the privilege of maintaining the first permanent Jewish Museum in Nebraska. The Riekas Museum opened in 1995 and was established to honor Henry and Dorothy's parents; Benjamin and Anna Chait and Samuel and Dora Riekas.



Dorothy Riekas

The main feature of the museum is a historic representation of the B'nai Jacob, Adas Yeshuron synagogue, also known as the Kapulier Shul. Located in the museum is a timeline history of the synagogue buildings in Nebraska and Council Bluffs.

Tours of the museum are available Mondays through Thursday from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. by appointment. If you have not visited the Riekas Museum please contact the NJHS office for an appointment.



The Henry and Dorothy Riekas Museum. Established in 1995.

Recapturing the Jewish Narrative on Israel

By Gary Javitch, NJHS Board Member

Turmoil always seems to engulf the Middle East. The confrontations between the Palestinians and the Jews have been going on so long, however, that battle fatigue has set in. Key issues have lost their clarity, and Israel, once the sympathetic character in the story, increasingly has been cast as the villain in a continuing narrative.

Two incidents illustrate this point. First situation : Gaza was home to 1.2 million Arabs and about 8500 Jews in 2005, when, as a unilateral gesture towards peace, Israel withdrew from the area. Following their departure, however, Gazans launched thousands of rockets into southern Israel, forcing the Israelis to return and root out the bombers.

This two-month conflict ended in January 2009. Yet, in the topsy-turvy world of Middle East politics, this was not a success for Israel. Israel was universally blamed for a "disproportionate military response" and, by many, for the hostilities itself.

Somehow, taking aggressive action to defend yourself against rocket attacks was wrong, and amazingly, Hamas, named a terrorist organization by both the US and the European Union (EU), became the sympathetic victim.

Second situation: When Hamas came to power in 2006, vowing to destroy Israel, the quartet – the US, the UN, the EU and Russia – all agreed to isolate them. That isolation would end if Hamas accepted three principles: renounce terrorism, abide by all previous PA agreements and recognize Israel's right to exist.

The Gaza blockade, one form of isolation, was also designed to prevent Hamas from receiving rockets and other weapons. The blockade conformed to the standards of international law, and the Jewish state warned all ships heading for Gaza that they would be boarded and diverted to an Israeli port for inspection.

At the end of May 2010, a flotilla of six ships sailed from Turkey under the auspices of the IHH, a group with known ties to terrorist organizations. Their pre-announced purpose was to "break the blockade." Five of the flotilla ships followed the Israel Defense Force (IDF) instructions and headed to an Israeli port for inspection.

The sixth ship did not. This so-called "freedom flotilla" ship was actually a component of a "guerilla flotilla."

Many on that ship wanted to achieve martyrdom and were armed with clubs, pipes, knives and guns. They attacked the IDF forces when the Israelis boarded the ship. In the ensuing action, nine from the passenger group were killed, while many Israelis were beaten and injured, some critically.

This mission took place at night but amazingly, the world press had the story almost instantaneously and, of course condemned Israel. So did many allegedly "mainstream" news media and so did many Jews.

Why? The reasons given: Israel "botched" the boarding attempt. They should have foreseen the attack. Their intelligence wasn't good. The operation didn't go perfectly.

Fortunately, an IDF film of the entire episode showed Israeli troopers being viciously attacked, clearly revealing the malevolent intent of the "humanitarian peace activists."

How could Israel become the villain against Hamas? No reason is forthcoming because when it comes to Israelis, the world often employs a double standard to judge them generally criticizing the Jewish state no matter what it does.

Moreover, if you compare the respective political systems of the governments surrounding Israel, you will see that almost universally, the other countries are dictatorships or one-party rule states.

In contrast to those authoritarian regimes, Israel is a true democracy, indeed the only one in the Middle East. The word "democracy" rolls off the tongue so easily, its great significance is often lost in the cacophony of condemnation that befalls the Jewish state.

Israel has free elections with multiple parties that can and do criticize the government without being imprisoned. Israel permits Christians, Muslims, Jews or other groups to practice their religion freely. This freedom was not present when the Arabs controlled the land.

Those religious groups can even have their representatives be elected to the Knesset, if they get enough backers. Gays and Lesbians are not imprisoned or killed just for being homosexual.

Israeli newspapers are not controlled by the government

and can print almost anything they desire about the government, pro or con, usually the latter.

Those freedoms are not available in the surrounding Arab countries, where women are treated as second class and can be killed if the men in their clan believe the women have in some way dishonored the family. Yet those facts are dismissed or down played by the world press.

Recapturing "The narrative"

The accepted narrative for many around the world is that the Israel is the Little Satan, the oppressor and the aggressor in their role with the Palestinians. The Palestinians have become the sympathetic victims.

History contradicts that story: The Palestinians have turned down the two-state solution every time it was offered to them.

When the UN voted to partition Palestine in 1947, the Palestinians rejected this two-state solution. They rejected it again at Camp David in 2000 and again just three years ago, when Prime Minister Olmert offered statehood to Palestinian President Abbas.

Although they wanted to, Israel could not even give back the land they won. Shortly after their loss in the 1967 war, the Arabs espoused their infamous "Three Noes: No negotiation; No recognition of the Jewish state, and No peace with Israel (the Khartoum agreement)."

Amazing, isn't it? The Palestinians launched and lost three wars against Israel. Their being occupied still to this day is a direct result of their losing wars and rejecting three offers of a state.

But give them credit: they have the sympathy of the world because they are "victims." In essence, that part is true. They are victims of very poor leadership. Unfortunately, for them, that leadership has lasted more than 60 years.

Ironically, while President Obama says he will negotiate with any enemy without preconditions, Palestinian President Abbas demands Israel meet a number of requirements before they will even sit down with them. How odd, that the tail can wag the dog. Israel is being attacked all the time, even in America. And by fellow Jews, too. Check out "J Street." In an article by Jonathan Rosenblum, entitled "Jewish Students Under Assault," he describes the problem this way. "The rise of J Street is emblematic of the tension within the community. J Street has never heard a criticism of

Israel that it did not endorse" he said, referring to the now-discredited Goldstone Report, among other issues. "Nor has the organization ever heard a criticism of one of Israel's enemies that it could endorse. It has opposed sanctions against Iran, and is currently working against a congressional letter urging the administration to take a tougher stand on incitement against Israel in the official Palestinian media and educational system."

So what are the lessons? How do we combat this? First and foremost, we have to be proud of ourselves, our religious brethren our heritage and traditions. Our people have survived the Holocaust and have gone on to build a great society in Israel. As a "Start-up Nation," Israelis have created an economic miracle in the desert. They converted swamps into viable living areas and provided homes and opportunities for many, both Arab and Jew.

In addition, the Jewish people have contributed a great deal to the world, especially the idea of "monotheism." Moreover, our list of Nobel Prize winners, for example, far exceeds in number our relative population size.

Our history did not begin post-1945. The history of the Jewish people is rich and glorious, but do we as Jews know it well enough?

We also need to speak out. "All that's necessary for the forces of evil to win in the world is for enough good men [and women] to do nothing" (Edmund Burke). This is the day of the 24-hour news cycle. A lie can be spread around the world almost instantaneously.

In the Middle East, surface distortions of the truth take place all the time. We need to take the time to learn what really happened within its historical context. And yes, be aware that frequently it is anti-Semitism that drives the drivel often disseminated as the "truth."

While we are relatively "safe" in America, there remains a large group of radicals in the world that do not value human life and disdain western values.

That is why in the end, you do need to choose sides. Israel is not a perfect country and does not claim to be. Yet when people denounce the Jewish state for its occasional missteps that puts them in the camp of those who want to drive Israel into the sea.

The is the time to recapture the narrative. The Palestinians need to be required to make concessions for peace also. Israel has an honorable case; the Jewish state and the Jewish people can be defended and now is the time to do it.

Ancestry Corner

By Sue Friedman Millward, NJHS Board Member

A Jewish Settlement in Cotapoxi, Colorado

A Continuing Journey – Cotopaxi, Colorado to Council Bluffs, Iowa

What happened to the twenty-two families of Jewish Russian descent who arrived at New York's Castle Garden and traveled to the Cotopaxi, Colorado - The agri-colony experiment that failed in just a few short years?

The immigrants arrived in New York in April 1882, two years later, by June of 1884, the colony was formally dissolved. The Cotopaxi agricultural colony was considered a failure. But it had proven valuable in the lives of the families. It had relocated them from the tumultuous czarist Russia to a life in a country full of new-found freedoms and opportunities.

Most of these families were not discouraged by their failure in the colony, but tried again. They scattered through the Midwestern states and started anew creating nuclei of small Jewish communities throughout Colorado, South Dakota, Iowa and Nebraska. They embraced their new homeland, and assimilated into business and political life. The Snyder/Morris/Namen families put down roots in and around the Omaha, and those roots have spread further since then.

Abraham Snyder and his wife Zisel Greenspun who were innkeepers in their homeland of Telz, Lituania sailed from London in March 1882 on the Assyrian Monarch. They landed in New York City on April 10, 1882 and soon were sent to Colorado. Accompanying them in their new life were their four children, and spouses of their two oldest daughters: Sarah (25 yrs) and her husband Berel Morris (24 yrs), Reina (20 yrs) and her husband Samuel Namen (24 yrs), Fanny (17 yrs), and Solomon (17 yrs).

Their experience at the Jewish colony of Cotopaxi was short-lived. As the conditions became unbearable, Abraham and Zisel packed up the family and headed for "greener pastures". By the mid-1880's most of the Snyders had drifted into Omaha and Council Bluffs.

Only their oldest daughter, Sarah Snyder Morris and her husband Berel sojourned further east and settled in Chicago. Berel Morris became a jeweler. He and Sarah stayed in Chicago where they raised their five children.

Abraham and Zisel settled in Council Bluffs where Abraham had a retail clothing store. They lived there until their deaths, and both are buried at the Jewish section (Bikhor Cholim) of the Oak Hill Cemetery in Council Bluffs.

Their daughter, Reina Snyder Namen, and her husband Sam delivered their first child Matilda, (Tillie) in Omaha in 1883. Soon thereafter, four other children were born here as well: Harry born in 1886, Rose born in 1888, Minnie born in 1890, and Louis born in 1893.



Sam and Fannie Friedman & Family

Louis had a twin brother who died at birth. Though his mother Reina survived the birth, she died a month later at the young age of 31. It is possible that the physical burden of carrying the twins to term was too much for her. Reina died on February 20, 1893 and was buried at Fisher Farm Cemetery in South Omaha.

Sam was devastated. He now had five children to raise on his own. It was a daunting task. In 1895, he traveled with his four youngest children - Rose, Minnie, Harry and Louis to Cleveland, Ohio where he placed the children in the Jewish Orphanage Asylum run by a Samuel Wolferstein. The home founded in 1868 was an orphanage for children who had lost their parents during the Civil War. (From 1868 to 1918 the Jewish Orphan Asylum was a home for 3,581 boys and girls of eastern European descent from many mid-western and southern states.)



Zisel Greenspun Snyder

The 1900 census shows Rose, Harry and Louis were still at the Orphanage, but Minnie was in Chicago with her father Sam, and her new step-mother Bessie Cohen. (Sam and Bessie married in Chicago in 1898.) Sometime after 1900, Sam returned to the orphanage for his children, according to the 1905 census, the family had reunited and was living at 615 W Broadway in Council Bluffs with Albert and Eli, their younger half brothers. (Three other children were born to Sam and Bessie after 1905, they were Ethel, Max and Edith Namen.) Sam worked as a shoemaker in Council Bluffs, he and Bessie raised their family there. Many of the Namen family married and maintained businesses in Council Bluffs. Sam and Bessie, and several of the children are buried in the Jewish section of the Oak Hill Cemetery.

Fanny (Nechama) Snyder, the third daughter, married Sam Friedman, a family friend who had immigrated to Omaha several years after the Snyders. The family legend has it that they had been in love as teenagers in Lithuania, and when Sam came to America, he tracked Fanny down. Sam and Fanny had five children: Samuel born in 1883, Sarah born in 1886 (both of these children may have been born to Fanny in an earlier marriage), Rose born in 1889, Minnie born in 1890, and Herman born in 1894. Sam and his younger son Herman operated a pawnbroker business in Council Bluffs for over 50 years.

The only son of Abraham and Zisel was Solomon Snyder (also went by the name Sam). He too lived in Council Bluffs and married Hattie Lubkin Freedon in 1898. They had five children. Sam ran a jewelry store.

Many of the Snyder/Namen/Friedman offspring have continued their family legacies as our neighbors. Names that are associated with these families, not included above are: Ager, Bernstein, Gordon, Pred, Shamberg, Skuldt and Tobias to name a few. If you have additional information to add to this family tree, please contact Sue Millward at suefm04@aol.com.

What happened to other families from Cotopaxi?

Saul Baer Milstein went to Denver in 1883 with his wife Miriam and seven younger children. He prospered with a very successful stockyard.

His brother Benjamin Zalman Milstein bought a farm near Derby, Colorado. And, his youngest brother, Isaac Leib Shames, took his wife to Salt Lake City.

Isaac Shames' son Michael moved to Denver and joined his uncle in the cattle business and a bought a farm near Westminster, Colorado.

Saul Baer Milstein's eldest daughter Nettie, whose marriage to her first cousin, Jacob Milstein, was bitterly opposed by her father but eventually won his forgiveness. She and her husband were the most enthusiastic and successful of all the new farmers. Their first homestead was near the city of Longmont, Colorado. They later moved to a larger farm near Broomfield.

Jacob Milstein, Saul Baer's eldest son, moved to Seattle, Washington. Both he and his cousin and brother-in-law, Jacob Milstein, had been Colorado Volunteers during an Indian disturbance in 1887.

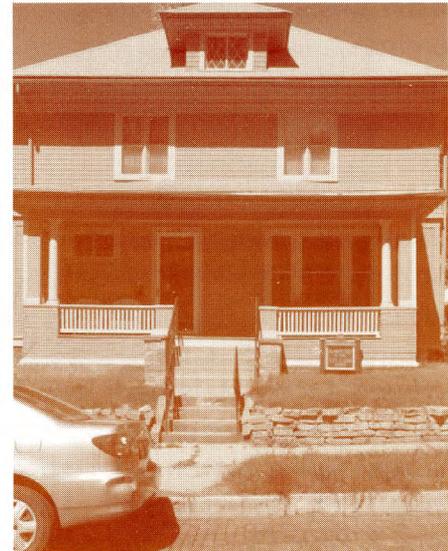
The Prezants, the Shuterans, David Korpitsky and his daughters, and the Toplitskys moved to Denver, where they entered various fields of business. Several of the men served on the Denver Police Force and Fire Department.

For some years the Tobias family lived in Cheyenne, Wyoming where they ran a hardware store.

The Needleman and Moscowwitz families homesteaded in South Dakota.

The younger Shradskys moved to California.

Soloman Shuteran participated in the Cripple Creek gold rush in 1892 and established a comfortable family fortune from profitable real estate investments in that region.



Sam Snyder Home - 315 Glen Avenue, Council Bluffs

Tribute Card Donations

In Memory: of **Ben Nachman** by Joanie & Terry Bernstein, Dr. Louis & Rose Leviticus; **Pearl Osoff Gross** by Don & Ann Goldstein, Bernie Altsuler, Buddy & Shirley Goldstein, Jan & Bob Egermayer, Sally & Ed Malashock, Owen & Betty Neary, John & Betty Kaplan, Stanley Slosburg, Richard & Pam Berry, Kevee & Myrna Kirshenbaum, Bob & Bev Zuber, Bob & Norma Malashock, George Shafer, Jonathan & Carmen Bank, John Pizer, Carla Brooke Cowan Tulchin, Gayle, Sarah & Zach Spooner, Kathy & Brad Shapiro, Florence Brody, Susie & Paul Landow, Dorice & Jacob Melamed, Lynn Wagmeister, Ron & Cheryl Cooper, Jerry Milder, Leslie & Michael Adler, Steven & Julie Bram, Roselle Pizer, NJHS Board & Staff, **Linda Tilley** by Jenny & Peter Gordon, Renee Ratner Corcoran; **Rose Kirshenbaum Becker** by Sara Cooper Meirovitz; **Ann Goldstein** by Rocky Stern & Dick Rochman, Phyllis & Sid Schwartz, Elaine Nachman, Bob Belgrade, Al Abramson, NJHS Board & Staff; **Carol Brodkey** by Estelle & Ralph Turkel; **Mace Jabenis** by Elaine Nachman, Bob Belgrade; **Ben Josin** by Patty & Mike Sherman; **Harriet Kutler** by Elaine Nachman, Estelle & Ralph Turkel; **Dorothy Riekes** by Rocky Stern & Dick Rochman, Helen & Tuffy Epstein, Vicki Perlmeter, John Robinson, Roie & Bernie Meyers, Elaine Nachman, Al Abramson, Joanie & Terry Bernstein, NJHS Board & Staff; **Rosalie Meiches** by Debbi & Larry Josephson; **Marvin Taxman** by Bernice Kaplan, Toni Rosen, Bob Kaplan, Marcia Gallner; **Leo Meyerson** by Toni Rosen, Bernice Kaplan, Bob Kaplan; **Don Kneeter** by Toni Rosen Bernice Kaplan, Bob Kaplan; **Susan Vann** by Barbara & Jerry Cohen; **Harry Lewis Freeman** by Barbara & Jerry Cohen

Birthday: **Joe Erman** by Midge & Bill Bowers; **Harold Bernstein** by Sue & David Millward, Anne & Bruce Shackman, Kevee & Myrna Kirshenbaum, Roie & Bernie Meyers, Vicki Perlmeter; **Dr. Larry Roffman** by Renee, Dan & Ashley Corcoran, NJHS Board; **Leonard Goldstein** by NJHS Board & Staff; **Harlan Rips**

by Phyllis Weinberg; **Esther Meiches** by Dottie & Bob Shapiro; **Joanne Freeman** by Dick Rochman & Rocky Stern; **Jean Elkon** by Ann Kaiman; **Barb & Mike Platt** by Toni & Tony Rosen; **Gail Kohll** by Toni & Tony Rosen, Bob Belgrade; **Richard Jacobson** by Debbi & Larry Josephson, **Shirley Brody** by The Monday night dinner group, Rose & Jacob Rosenberg, Helen Manheimer, Mary Kaiman, Betty Kolnick, Gerald Meyer, KiKi Hatzidakis

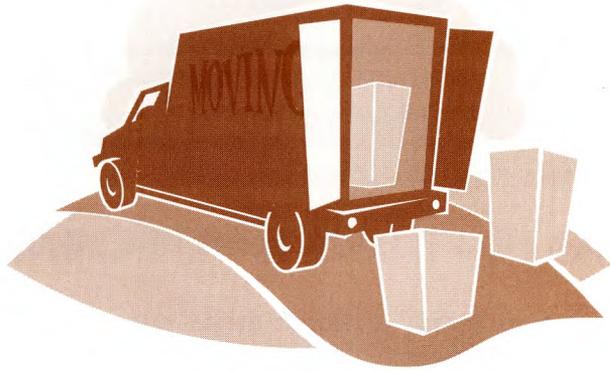
Honors: **Dorothy Riekes** for receiving Lion of Judah honor with 2010 Kipins-Wilson/Friedland Award by Frances & Louis Blumkin; **Mike Silverman** for newly created appointment by Jerry & Janey Dann;

Recovery: of **Bernie Bogdanoff** by Sue & David Millard, Anne & Bruce Shackman; **Harriet Singer** by Rocky Stern & Dick Rochman; **Midge Bowers** by Rocky Stern & Dick Rochman, NJHS Board & Staff; **Wendy Marks** by Ronnie & Art Jacobson, **Bette Kvasnik** by Ronnie & Art Jacobson; **Jean Neff** by George Shafer; **Helen Rifkin** by Phyllis Roffman

Anniversary: of **Karen & Oliver Pollak** by Aveva & Marty Shukert, Steve & Margo Riekes

Marriage: of **Mr. & Mrs. Jeremy Friedman** by Debbi & Larry Josephson

Remember the
Nebraska Jewish Historical
Society in your Will



**Moving? Please notify us of
your address change!**

New NJHS Members

We gratefully acknowledge and welcome our new members. Thank you for your generous and continued support.

New Members

Ann and Don Farber
Stacey and Jonathan Rockman
Barbara Cohen and D. Kolpen
Maynard and Sally Telpner
Nancy and David Jacobson

President: Debbi Josephson
Vice President: Beth Staenberg
Secretary: Rocky Stern
Treasurer: Don Dandy
Past President: Ira Nathan

Founders: Mary Fellman &
Oliver Pollak

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Beverly Fellman
Michael Gendler
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Nebraska Jewish Historical Society

Donations

We have available for all occasions, cards for donations of \$5.00, \$10.00 and up. Also available are packets of six (\$5.00 cards) for \$25.00. Please use the form below and we will send the appropriate card. Make your checks payable to the Nebraska Jewish Historical Society, 333 South 132nd Street, Omaha, NE 68154.

TO: Name _____

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IN HONOR OF _____

IN MEMORY OF _____

OTHER _____

OR call the NJHS office at (402) 334-6441/42 between 10:00 AM & 4:00 PM Monday through Thursday. Contributions can be made to the NJHS Fund, the Mary Fellman Permanent Enrichment Fund, or the Dr. Ben Nachman Oral History Endowment Fund.