

Meet the Recipient of the 2004 Dr. Allan Hurst Award: Leah Kellogg

By Leah Kellogg



At birth we do not imagine what path our life will take. My family moved from a farm in Alberta, Canada, to urban areas ending up in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. My family felt that it was important that we all attend Cheder and learn Hebrew so that no matter which synagogue we went to in the world, we could daven and not just count windows. The organization Young Judaea attracted all the youngsters. Once a month we visited the Jewish families in our area to empty out their "blue boxes" and send the pennies and quarters to the Jewish National Fund to buy land in what was then Palestine. My degree work in Hospital Dietetics took me to the Hospital of the Good Samaritan in Los Angeles. For me as a Canadian, the second World War had begun in September of 1939, when Hitler's army of Nazis marched into Poland. In September of 1943 I enlisted in the American army as a citizen of an allied nation. My first assignment was in Santa Fe, NM at the site of the now College of Santa Fe. As I understand it, the Commanding General offered the non-sectarian chapel to the Jewish members of the post and they in turn offered the use of the chapel to the 30 families to worship with lay leader-

ship. In this way I was welcomed by the families into their homes. I was especially close with Ethel and Morris Bell. Perceiving my destiny to be an American citizen, I applied and received my citizenship in December of 1943. Before I was sent over seas to a tent hospital in a muddy cow pasture near St. Louis with the 189th hospital, I was semi-engaged to Gerald Bell. We were married December of 1946.

Santa Fe was a quiet village of 28,000 people. Understanding that we were a growing Jewish community needing to educate our children and provide a venue to worship and observe our holy days, Temple Beth Shalom was built. A couple of years after the death of Gerald Bell, I married Arden Kellogg. In 1970 Sam Pick nominated me to be president of the Board. Marian Silver and I alternated positions of president of Sisterhood and B'nai Brith auxiliary. I have saved every Temple bulletin and newsletter about Jewish causes since the 1960s.

One of my civic interests was being an early volunteer with the Rape Crisis Center, including writing their first grant with Federal law enforcement and organizing its Board, of which I was president. Dr. Allan Hurst arrived in Santa Fe with

a mission to found a New Mexico Jewish Historical Society. Under his leadership and inspiration and under that of those who followed, the NMJHS has flourished. With the sponsorship of the State Archives of NM, the Society has built a significant institution which reaches into every nook and cranny of New Mexico. In 1975 we finally chartered a chapter of Hadassah. In 1980 I was asked to become a member of the County Jail Advisory Board, where I was quickly asked to serve as president when the penitentiary went up in flames. The new jail was built on Airport Road. I was a member of the Synchronettes who performed once a year. I was a member of the Scarlet Ladies tap dancing group for about 20 years. When it became apparent that our growing Jewish community needed more space, a large committee at Temple Beth Shalom was appointed under Sam Ballen's leadership. The building was dedicated in September of 1986.

In 1991 I was recycled as president of Temple Beth Shalom for a two-year term. Santa Fe has been my home and my extended family system. We call it networking. I would urge all of my Jewish family in this beautiful state of New Mexico to continue to support our Jewish institutions of learning and knowledge.