

JEANNETTE KERN
Left Lasting Impressions
El Paso Inc January 26, 1997

Jeannette Edelman Kern, who spent 35 years as a prominent El Paso travel agent was murdered during a burglary of her home Dec. 18. She was 74.

“The outpouring of sympathy has been tremendous,” said her daughter, Linda Hayon of Albuquerque. “We have received hundreds of cards and letters from people whose lives she has touched.”

Included are donations to Israel, where more than 25 trees have been planted in her memory.

Jeannette was born May 12, 1922, in the Bronx, N.Y. In 1937, the family moved to Tucson Ariz., for health reasons. Jeannette graduated from high school in Tucson in 1939.

She soon returned to New York to become a buyer in the fashion industry. While in New York, she met and married Louis Kern in 1942. He was serving in the Army and she traveled with him to several duty stations.

Jennette found her way to El Paso when Lou had to leave for overseas duty, said her sister, Mildred Levitt.

She stopped on the border to visit Lou's brother, Ben Kassinoff, who convinced her to stay in El Paso for, the winter.

“She wrote our mother and said, 'Come on down here. El Paso has a warm climate, and I just love it.' Mom agreed and neither of them ever returned to New York,” said her sister, Mildred Levitt.



In late 1945, Lou was discharged from the Army at Fort Bliss. For about 5 years, Jeannette was employed by the Immigration and Naturalization Service in El Paso.

Her sister-in-law, Etta Kern, who has known Jeannette since she was 4 years old recalls: “It was before the masses of immigration came to this country. It was during this job that she became people-oriented. All would greet her with a smile. She made a lasting impression on the persons she met.”

When Jeannette began working travel business, there were only two travel agents in El Paso. She worked for Betty's House of Travel and, for 15 years, was manager of Coronado Travel Agency.

Then she established Kern Travel out of her home. She visited each of the world's continents, some more than once.

Her favorite places were Prague in Europe, Alaska, and the Galapagos Islands, Etta remembered.

Jeanette was the first president of B'nai Brith Women in El Paso and was a past president

of Pioneer Women for Israel. She was active in Discover El Paso and the Community Concert series and was a life member of Hadassah.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 53 years. Her brother, Lou Edelman, died the day of her funeral. She is survived by her daughters, Linda Hayon and Deborah Kern; son-in-law Dr. Yehiel Hayon; sister, Mildred Levitt; and two grandchildren.

“I will remember the time when being a working Mom was not such a popular thing,” Linda mused. “She was my role model - strong and independent. She set a good example for my sister and me.”

"She was a young 74," sister-in-law Etta Kern added. “She was always busy, busy, busy doing something new all the time.”

She took classes at UTEP with the Center for Life Long Living and was always traveling.

Memorial services were held at Fort Bliss National Cemetery with Rabbi Stephen Leon officiating.

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