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As I listened to the three survivor testimony stories at this year’s Yom HaShoah community-wide commemoration, I couldn’t help but be amazed by the continued power, passion, courage and horror conveyed by these survivors’ experiences. The three willingly shared their stories. Almost 70 years after the end of WWII, some survivors are just now able to speak of their experiences to their families, friends and communities. Others are so intent on having their story reach as many people as possible that they are writing books about what happened to them so many years ago.

While we know that relaying these histories makes a difference, the recent tragic events in Overland Park, Kan., (and other parts of the world) remind us that despite our best efforts there still exists terrible hate, anti-Semitism and acts of genocide. That is why it is imperative that all of us—not only our professional staff, docents and volunteers, but also the more than 30,000 annual visitors—tell and retell the stories they hear and lessons they learn. These stories, these lessons, must resonate and be taught throughout multiple generations, not just in schools, but in homes, churches, synagogues...wherever we can get people to listen and learn. And we must continue to recognize the multiple contemporary issues we confront regularly. That is why an exhibit such as the museum’s “Change Begins With Me” installation, which allows visitors to address these issues in an interactive forum, gain knowledge and seek additional information, is such a valuable teaching tool. As Stephen Smith, executive director of Steven Spielberg’s Shoah Foundation said, “People must listen to the past, but act for their own future.”

In the coming months, we will be convening the advisory committee of the Gloria and Rubin Feldman Family Education Institute, which you can read more about in this newsletter. We anticipate that this committee’s ideas, and the implementation of them, will further our ongoing educational initiatives as we all work diligently to eradicate hate in our communities and throughout the world.

Sincerely,

Kent Hirschfelder
Chair, Holocaust Museum & Learning Center
Gloria and Rubin Feldman Family Education Institute Established

The Holocaust Museum and Learning Center (HMLC) is pleased to announce the establishment of the Gloria and Rubin Feldman Family Education Institute. Gloria and Rubin (z’l) Feldman have a long history of philanthropy with national and international organizations, and the institute fulfills one of their lifelong dreams to enhance Holocaust education. Under the auspices of the institute, the museum will have the ability to build upon its current programming strengths and expand upon its educational objectives.

Both Gloria’s and Rubin’s parents taught them the importance of giving back and the value of education. Rubin, who died in 2002, and Gloria experienced the darkness of the Holocaust and witnessed the cataclysmic effects of hatred and discrimination. Born in Lithuania, Gloria, along with her parents, Abraham and Bessie Kaplan, and her brother David, immigrated to the United States and settled in St. Louis in 1949. Her other brothers, grandparents, and almost all of her many aunts, uncles and cousins were murdered. To this day, Gloria does not dwell on the past, saying, “I prefer to live in the present and look toward the future.” This positive vision inspired Gloria to create the Feldman Family Education Institute.

Kent Hirschfelder, current chair of the HMLC, says that when Gloria first approached him about establishing the education institute “the first word that came to me was ‘transformational.’” Hirschfelder notes that this initiative will significantly expand the museum’s mission to teach the history of the Shoah and its lessons, still currently relevant, such as confronting hatred, contemporary genocide, promoting human dignity, and the dangers of indifference and of being a bystander. In fact, it was through the generosity of Rubin and Gloria Feldman that the museum was able to create “Change Begins With Me,” an interactive exhibit focusing on hatred, discrimination and ethnic conflict in the world today.

According to Hirschfelder, an initial step in exploring the potential of the institute was the development of an advisory committee comprising educators, community leaders and respected individuals to explore, develop and expand programming opportunities.

Gloria said she and Rubin wanted to give something to the community that would “make a difference.” The institute is already supporting a state-wide Holocaust education workshop intended to attract teachers from underserved regions, scheduled for this summer. Through the establishment of the institute, Gloria wants to demonstrate her support for the dedicated staff of the HMLC, Jean Cavender, Dan Reich and Andrew Goldfeder. Gloria says, “My investment in the museum has exceeded my expectations as I witness their accomplishments, growth, and their meaningful and inspiring programs. I am also extremely impressed with the extraordinary leadership that has been a part of HMLC during the past 20 years.” In addition, she wishes to recognize the countless hours donated by committed volunteers, especially the survivor speakers. Gloria would also like to thank Kent Hirschfelder and all of the past chairs who have made the HMLC what it is today.

Gloria Feldman created this education institute on behalf of the Feldman family, including her beloved husband, Rubin; their son, Dr. Steven Feldman; their daughter, Cheryle Atkin; one granddaughter; and four grandsons.

Gloria does not know how she survived the Holocaust, but having survived, she is committed to do whatever she can to create a better world. Gloria feels she gives on behalf of “the millions of souls that were senselessly tortured and murdered. Perhaps that is why I survived.”
Seven Hundred Gather for Local Yom HaShoah Commemoration

Approximately 700 local people gathered at United Hebrew Congregation on Sunday, April 27 for the annual Yom HaShoah commemoration. The event, put on by the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center and dedicated to remembering the six million Jews who perished in the Holocaust, featured testimony from local Holocaust survivors, Marie Watnicka Cuttler, Saul Rozen and Miriam Kenisberg Poster. The commemoration also featured a candle-lighting ceremony, an opportunity for survivors to memorialize their loved ones, liturgical readings and prayers, and a procession of Torah scrolls that survived the Holocaust.

28 Teens Win in 12th Annual Holocaust Museum Art & Writing Contest

More than $2,800 in cash prizes was awarded to 28 winners of the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center’s 12th annual Art and Writing Contest at an awards ceremony Monday, May 12 in the Holocaust Museum theater in the Jewish Federation Koplow Building.

There were nearly 900 submissions to the contest, from students in middle schools and high schools throughout the bi-state area. Submissions came from as far away as the Ozarks in Missouri and suburban Chicago in Illinois. The judges also selected art and writing winners from students who attend schools in Indianapolis, Ind., and Hartford, Conn.

“The Art and Writing contest is a wonderful opportunity for young people who have visited the museum or studied the
Holocaust in their classrooms to respond creatively to what they have learned,” says Rachel Katzman, chair of this year’s contest. “Many of the submissions show amazing sensitivity and depth of understanding. This important outreach program was established with the support of Dr. Ira (of blessed memory) and Judy Gall, and we are so appreciative of Judy’s continued participation.”

As in previous years, the contest is dedicated to the memory of the 1.5 million children who perished during the Holocaust and in honor of the Galls’ grandchildren.

Winning submissions will be displayed in the Holocaust Museum Theater and at other locations to be determined. Judges for the visual art entries were John Lesser, retired art gallery curator, JCC and JCC Cultural Arts Staff, artist Jill Rosenberg, and Roseann Weiss, Regional Arts Commission. Judges for writing were Judi Scissors, retired educator, Pat Lorraine Simons, author and retired lawyer, and Sandy Snodgrass, retired teacher, currently with Webster University.

Winners of the 2014 Art and Writing Contest are:

Visual Arts—Division 1, Middle School
First Place: Marwa Abdelkader, Wentzville South Middle School
Second Place: Chloe Shen, Park Tudor School
Third Place: Taylor Branson, LaSalle Springs Middle School
Honorable Mentions: Ella Tobias, Park Tudor School; Riley Schaefer, LaSalle Springs Middle School; Isabelle Steinlage, Holy Infant School; Courtney St. John, LaSalle Springs Middle School; Lauren Ferrari, Holy Infant School; Chase Schroeder, South Point Elementary; Megan Gross, Black Hawk Middle School

Visual Arts—Division 2, High School
First Place: Kevin Herber, Christian Brothers College High School
Second Place: Maddie Murphy, Lafayette High School
Third Place: Jessica Campbell, Wentzville Holt High School
Honorable Mentions: Annie Woodard, St. Charles West High School; Sydney Woods, Camdenton High School; Angel Garcia, Ritenour High School; Ryan Rich, Lindbergh High School; Kayla Wilkerson, Centralia R-6 High School

Writing—Division 1, Middle School
First Place: Felix Hu, Ladue Middle School
Second Place: Kaitlyn Amos, Wentzville South Middle School
Third Place: Alexis Twillmann, Bernard Middle School
Honorable Mentions: Averee McNear, Pana Junior High School; Rachel Dressler, Holy Childhood of Jesus School; Juliana Richardson, North Kirkwood Middle School

Writing—Division 2, High School
First Place: Blair Kurtz, Camdenton High School
Second Place: Melanie Brucker, Parkway North High School
Third Place: Colleen Feeney, Greater Hartford Academy of the Arts
Honorable Mention: Sophia Choo, Wentzville Holt High School
Reflections of a Docent by Sarijane Freiman

For the most part, giving tours is a heartwarming, rewarding venture that touches my soul, but sometimes, as others can attest, when we have dealt with bored, inattentive groups and our feet hurt and we’re tired, we wonder why we spend the time. Then there are those moments, when we see we have really gotten someone’s attention and his questions are really thought out, that we realize that not only shall we keep on with our work, but we must keep on with our work.

One of those moments occurred for me while giving a tour to a group of about 15 high schoolers in a program for troubled youth. They filed in, neatly dressed (only a few piercings and no obvious tattoos). During the brief intro, there was polite attention, and when we went to the first room and discussed numbers of people killed, one young man seemed drawn to the picture of Gus and his murdered classmates. At the WWI case with the commission and medals, I brought up the subject of the American Nazi Party and other hate groups. The same young man tentatively raised his hand and said that his uncle was a member of the Aryan Nation and wanted to sponsor him in joining this group.

Stunned, I suggested that as we continue the tour, he take note of what hate accomplishes, and I told him that after the tour I would be happy to talk to him about this. Whenever possible, I interjected thoughts and questions on bullying and the search for power at the expense of decency and morality and truth.

I did notice that at each stop he listened attentively and lagged a bit to read the signage. At the displays of the Einsatzguppen, liberation of camps and the Nuremberg trials, where we discussed the Nazi response to questioning, he pulled me aside with a worried look on his face and said plaintively, “This really did happen—it’s not a lie, is it?” I again asserted that the pictures, information, etc., were all from Nazi archives; indeed, this did happen, and when he listened to the survivor, the truth would be confirmed totally.

When the tour was completed, and we were heading to the auditorium to hear the speaker, I took his arm and asked if he had any more questions or thoughts that he wanted to discuss. With tears in his eyes, he gave me a hug and said, “I am cutting it off with my uncle, and I will make sure he knows why. Thank you for helping me straighten out my life. I want to be one of the righteous.”

He had listened, he had learned, and he had taken the message of our museum to heart, and there is no reward equal to that.

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People leave their mark on the world in many different ways

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Your support, no matter the size of the gift or method of giving, changes a life. It may be today, tomorrow or years from now that your donation will provide the opportunity for someone to learn the history and lessons of the Holocaust. Whenever it happens, it will be because you cared enough today to think about tomorrow. Have you considered leaving a legacy gift to the Holocaust Museum? For more information, contact Museum Director Jean Cavender at 314-442-3715 or jcavender@jfedstl.org.

*Of Blessed Memory
When Nikki Met Andrew

One rarely thinks of a Holocaust museum as a setting for love to blossom, but it was here that the seeds of a beautiful, inspiring relationship first took root. Both Nikki Poslosky and Andrew Goldfeder went to Parkway schools (he, North; she, Central), but their difference in age prevented them from crossing paths. It wasn’t until Nikki, a first-year teacher at Parkway Northeast Middle School, brought her language arts students to the HM LC on February 15, 2011, that she met Andrew. Both had been alerted, by professional colleagues or family members, to look out for the other, thinking they would make a good match. Their brief encounter, on a particularly busy day without time for conversation, left them both attracted, yet unsure of the other’s feelings.

Persevering, Andrew tracked Nikki down and asked if they could meet, which they did, almost a month after their first encounter. From then on, their relationship grew. Nikki was attracted to his kindness, courteousness and thoughtfulness; Andrew was enamored with her sweet demeanor, intelligence, humor and smile. Both shared a passion and commitment to their chosen professions and vision of social justice.

Two years after their first date, Andrew proposed, and a Memorial Day wedding date was set. All who know them agree that the Jewish concept of beshert perfectly applies to Andrew and Nikki—that their union is both providential and ideal.

Since that first visit, Nikki has returned to the HMLC each year, and the museum visit is the central core of the 8th grade English curriculum at her school. Andrew’s future aspirations now are inseparable from his relationship with his beautiful wife.

Because he works at the HMLC, Andrew and his bride have innumerable godmothers and godfathers—colleagues, survivors, docents, etc.—all wishing them a joyous future and confident of the loving Jewish home and family they will create together.
Thanks to all our Donors

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- Inscribe the name of a loved one
- Honor special lifetime events
- Memorialize family members

Please contact Jean Cavender at 314-442-3715 or jcavender@jfedstl.org

Continued on reverse

2014 Friends Campaign
I want to join the FRIENDS of the Holocaust Museum and Learning Center as a:

- $1,000 Guardian of Remembrance
- $500 Benefactor
- $200 Patron
- $125 Sustainer
- $36 Educator (age 40 and under)
- $18 Student
- $36 Young FRIEND (age 40 and under)

Check enclosed in the amount of $ ___________ (Make payable to FRIENDS of the Holocaust Center)

MasterCard
VISA

Name on account:

Account no.:_________________________________________ Exp. date: ___________

Signature:_________________________________________ Email: ______________________

I want my/our name(s) listed in the FRIENDS Newsletter and other acknowledgments to read:

I am interested in:

- information about remembering the Museum in my estate plans
- a tour of the Holocaust Museum
- volunteering at the Museum

Return this form along with your donation to: Holocaust Museum & Learning Center, 12 Millstone Campus Drive, St. Louis, MO 63146