

יד ינו Yadeinu

A PUBLICATION OF THE
HOLOCAUST CENTER OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA
SUMMER 2008

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Shalhevet Journeys to Poland and Israel

On March 17, 2008, thirty students gathered at San Francisco International Airport to depart for Warsaw, Poland. Joined by local partisan Mira Shelub and Rabbi Peretz Wolf Prussan of San Francisco's Congregation Emanu-El, the teens departed on Shalhevet ("flame" or "torch" in Hebrew), a journey of a lifetime.

Shalhevet did not begin at the airport. It began in January as high school students from San Francisco, the East Bay and the Peninsula gathered for intensive classes and seminars about the Holocaust, Jewish heritage in Eastern Europe, and Israel. The students met in their respective regions and together in San Francisco as they studied and prepared for the Shalhevet journey to Poland and Israel.

Shalhevet puts learning and preparation squarely in the hands of its teen participants. Each student was required to assume the role of educator during the trip by researching and providing on-site training to their peers at the historic stops along the way. Whether meeting with Polish Catholic youth in Lodz or with Czulent, the only Jewish youth group in Krakow, the Shalhevet teens taught each other about Jewish heritage and the significance of the site they were visiting.

Shalhevet serves as a stepping stone for the assumption of leadership roles by its participants in the years to come. The Shalhevet teens began as soon as they returned by delivering keynote addresses, and by planning and participating in Yom Hashoah observances around the Bay. "No book or movie could have taught us what we learned on Shalhevet," stated a participant. (Continued on page 5)



A Shalhevet student reflects on the significance of carrying an Israeli flag through the gates of Auschwitz.

News & Events

SUMMER 2008

JULY 24–AUGUST 11

HCNC co-presents five films at San Francisco Jewish Film Festival:

Saved by Deportation:

An Unknown Odyssey of Polish Jews

Blessed is the Match: the Life and Death of Hannah Senesh

Volevo Solo Vivere (I Only Wanted to Live)

Perlasca, an Italian Hero

We Were Exodus

FALL 2008

HCNC LECTURE & FILM SERIES

SEPTEMBER 25

German Consul General Rolf Schütte

OCTOBER 30

**Film Screening: *Secret Courage*
Q&A with Louis de Groot**

NOVEMBER 20

**Melanie Saxer Johnston,
author of *What My Father Saw***

DECEMBER 11

**Richard Hollander, author of
*Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish
Family's Correspondence from Poland***

NOVEMBER 2

**Bookfest at the Jewish Community
Center of San Francisco**

**Check our website for
2008 Fall Educator Workshops:
www.hcnc.org/events.html**

Editors

Judith Janec

Debbie Kahn

Leslie Kane

From left: Deborah Dwork; Ralph Romberg at San Francisco's Yom HaShoah remembrance; HCNC's new Program Assistant, Jessica Minturn.

Debórah Dwork Lectures on The Terezín Album of Marianka Zadików

Twenty-one-year-old Marianka Zadików was imprisoned in Terezín. As the Nazis pressed forward with mass deportations from Terezín to Auschwitz, Marianka began to collect inscriptions and sketches from her fellow inmates.

Professor Debórah Dwork interviewed Marianka Zadików extensively, edited her album, and directed the publication of a facsimile edition of the album by the University of Chicago Press.

Professor Dwork presented a lecture about the album to more than 75 people at the Holocaust Center on February 28th, showing color slides of the art work and writings in the Zadików album.

The album is a poignant document from the last months of the Holocaust. The words and images—by children and grandparents, factory workers and farmhands, professionals and intellectuals, musicians and artists—reflect both joy and trepidation. They include passages of remembered verse, lovingly executed drawings, and hurried farewells on the eve of transport to Auschwitz. The great German-Jewish scholar Rabbi Leo Baeck, one of the elders of the camp, offers Marianka an inscription about Jewish self-discovery, and participants in Terezín's now-famous musical performances fill several pages with musical annotation.

Professor Dwork's presentation was the launch of the annual Alfred Manovill Memorial Lecture, endowed by The Laszlo N. Tauber Family Foundation.

Yom HaShoah: Holocaust Remembrance Day 2008/5768

Each year the Holocaust Center of Northern California co-sponsors several Yom HaShoah commemorations throughout the Bay Area.

North Peninsula: Yiddish Culture: Lost But Not Forgotten. This year's observance at Peninsula Temple Sholom featured speaker Chayale Ash who has dedicated herself to keeping Yiddish culture alive. She was born in Bessarabia to parents who were actors in the Yiddish Theatre. Chayale survived many hardships and losses during the war but immediately after, in a displaced persons camp in Austria, she and her mother started a Yiddish Theater group, writing out entire works from memory in order to perform. The community-wide service of remembrance began with a procession of survivors and included clergy from several synagogues and churches sharing prayers, poems, and songs as well as a memorial stone ceremony conducted by grandchildren of survivors.



Generation to Generation. For Lauren Solomon, a 16-year-old student from Menlo Park, this year's North Peninsula Yom HaShoah commemoration was just a beginning. She was one of six students paired with witnesses of the Holocaust through HCNC's "Generation-to-Generation" program. Each year the students are part of honoring members of our community who witnessed the Holocaust by presenting their stories at the Yom HaShoah service. After her participation, Lauren told us, "My interview with Tom Szelenyi has helped me tremendously to learn more about my religion and the Jewish people, and I will remember his story forever." She now feels committed to educate her peers about what happened during the Holocaust.

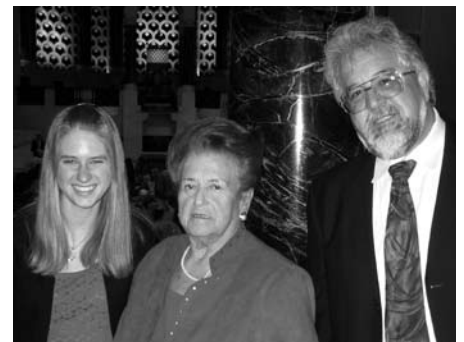


San Francisco: Remembering Kristallnacht. San Francisco's Yom HaShoah commemoration featured a remembrance by Ralph Romberg who witnessed Kristallnacht as a child in Essen. He and his older brother escaped from Germany to Sweden on a kindertransport. Ultimately Ralph, with his brother and parents, escaped from Europe to Cuba, where they lived for 21 months before being granted permission to enter the U.S. in 1940. The commemoration began with a screening of two travelogues produced in 1938 about Jewish life in Lwow and Warsaw. The Yom HaShoah service featured a procession of survivors, liberators and rescuers who lit candles of remembrance, and included songs by the Jewish Folk Chorus, and musical performances of Yiddish classics by violinist Randall Weiss and soloist Cantor Sharon Bernstein.



Morris Weiss Educational Scholarship

Morris Weiss was a founder of the Holocaust Center of Northern California. A Holocaust survivor who testified at Nazi war crimes trials, Morris Weiss was dedicated to fighting Nazism. In his memory, his family established a scholarship open to 11th and 12th grade Bay Area students.



This year's essay topic was "Personal Accountability." HCNC received 40 thoughtful essays from Bay Area teens in response to the question:

Can you recall a time in your life where you were either a witness to, an active participant in or were subjected to bullying, humiliation or isolation involving a friend, classmate or complete stranger? If so, what happened? Would you react differently than you did at the time? Why? In your essay, examine your personal experience in the context of the Holocaust.

This year's winner was Ariela Koehler, 11th grade, from Irvington High School, Fremont. Ariela was awarded the scholarship at San Francisco's Yom HaShoah commemoration on May 1, 2008. Ariela's winning essay can be viewed on HCNC's website at www.hcnc.org/scholarship.html

Welcome to Jessica Minturn, HCNC's new Program Assistant

Jessica joined HCNC part-time in March as Education Assistant, working together with Director of Education Morgan Blum to organize the 2008 Day of Learning. Jessica is a transplant to the Bay Area from Albuquerque where she worked as an event coordinator for a non-profit. She recently graduated from the University of New Mexico with a degree in Comparative Literature and Cultural Studies with a Film Theory concentration.

Top: Tom Szelenyi looks on as student Lauren Solomon tells his story.

Middle: A procession of survivors opens the North Peninsula Yom HaShoah observance.

Bottom: Morris Weiss Scholarship winner Ariela Koehler with Tauba Weiss and Norman Weiss.

HCNC Welcomes Wide Variety of Visitors

A visitor from Canada. She leaned over the display case, quietly reading the letters, envelopes and postcards on display in the Center's current exhibit, *Letters: 1938-1946*. She perused the stacks, holding more than 12,000 volumes, selected several books and then sat down at the research table to read. Several hours passed as she read, absorbed in Holocaust history and the eye-witness accounts of survivors. HCNC Director of Education Morgan Blum approached this visitor and offered to help with her research. But she was not writing a book or paper. A flight attendant from rural Canada, Michelle Isaac had long been interested in the Holocaust. When she learned about HCNC, she requested a route to San Francisco, specifically to allow her time to visit. Ms. Isaac's dedication to expanding her knowledge about the Holocaust, so great that she spent the night in San Francisco just so she could take advantage of HCNC's resources, was a reminder of the vital importance of HCNC's work.

Yosemite Park High School visits HCNC. Their day began at 5:30 a.m. as they boarded the Amtrak train in El Portal, California. Two teachers and seven students—the entire staff and student body of Yosemite Park High, a one-room school—began their journey to San Francisco to visit the Holocaust Center on May 8th, the 63rd anniversary of V-E Day.

Yosemite Park High's visit was the culmination of planning that began six months earlier when teacher Gail Dreifus contacted Rachel Isquith, HCNC Director of Community Outreach, about a school visit to the Center. Dreifus knew how important such a visit would be to her students who lived in remote El Portal, a town of less than 700 people. Few of the students had heard of the Holocaust, and for all of them Dreifus was the first Jewish person whom they had met.

The students arrived eager to learn and HCNC was prepared to teach them, having built a full program of activities especially for their visit. Survivor Ralph Romberg told the teens about his experience witnessing Kristallnacht, fleeing the Nazis and immigrating to the United States. The students peppered Romberg with questions and invited him to visit them in Yosemite and have lunch at the El Portal restaurant, where several of them worked.

Director of Education Morgan Blum taught a lesson on discrimination using artifacts from the Center's Archives—yellow stars that Jews were forced to display on their clothing, and passports marked with the letter J—that enabled the students to learn from original source material the meaning of prejudice.

None of the students wanted to leave and they stayed the entire afternoon, far longer than scheduled. "I want to work here when I grow up," remarked one student. Another asked when they might make a return visit. All left with new knowledge and insights about how the lessons of the Holocaust touch their own lives.

Visitors from Stockton's Rio Calaveras High School. In the spring of 2007, Jennifer Brown contacted several synagogues in and around Stockton, California, hoping to make a connection with a Holocaust survivor who could speak to her 9th and 10th grade students at Rio Calaveras High School. Her search led her to the Holocaust Center and when she realized that HCNC had a variety of educational resources to offer, Brown worked with the Center to plan a school trip to HCNC.

Receiving a grant to cover the cost of transportation from Stockton to San Francisco, Brown arrived with 115 students, teachers and parents. Half of the group visited HCNC in the morning and the other half in the afternoon, to tour the Center and to hear eyewitness testimony from survivors Ralph Berets and Anne Marie Yellin. Their experiences as hidden children made a lasting impression on the Stockton students and on Brown, who was motivated by her visit to HCNC to expand her Holocaust classroom curriculum.

HCNC was so moved by Jennifer Brown's dedication to Holocaust education that it nominated her for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum's Belfer Conference for Educators, held in Washington, D.C. She was awarded a grant, usually reserved for Bay Area teachers, to attend the Conference.



Director of Education Morgan Blum with students and teachers from Yosemite Park High.

Shalhevet Journeys to Poland and Israel

CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER



Shalhevet student Mara Weber-Appleton is captivated by Mira's story of life as a Jewish partisan.

A dynamic collaboration between the Holocaust Center of Northern California and the Bureau of Jewish Education, Shalhevet is a way for local Jewish teens to participate in a program tailored specifically to the educational and cultural environment of the Bay Area.

Information sessions for Shalhevet 2009 will begin in Fall 2008. For more information, contact HCNC Director of Education Morgan Blum at mblum@hcnc.org or 415.777.9060 x203, or BJE's Shalhevet Coordinator Yaron Lipschitz at ylipschitz@bjesf.org or 415.751.6983 x106.

Shalhevet is made possible by grants from the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund; Jewish Community Federation; Alexander M. and June L. Maisin Foundation; The Laszlo N. Tauber Family Foundation; William J. Lowenberg; Rubin Family Philanthropic Fund; Marc and Ellen Brown Family Philanthropic Fund; Jewish Community Endowment Fund's First Time in Israel Experience Scholarship; The Gift of Israel Program of the Federation and the Janet A. Schultz Teens to Israel Endowment Fund of JCEF; The Israel Trip Scholarship Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of the Greater East Bay; Jewish Family & Children's Services; Congregations Beth Abraham, Emanu-El, B'nai Shalom, Temple Sinai, and Claire Mikowski.

DONATE YOUR VEHICLE TO HCNC!

Call 415.777.9060 or email the Center at info@hcnc.org. Our "car guy" David Spieler makes it easy for you to support us!

Students Engaged With OHP Testimony In Innovative Ways

Through a collaborative effort between HCNC's Oral History Project and Santa Clara University, a new course was created this year. Professor Jill Goodman taught "Visual Media and Holocaust Narratives," which focused on the intersection of film and first-hand accounts of the Holocaust.

Santa Clara University students explored Holocaust narratives through videotaped personal testimony from HCNC's oral history collection as well as through autobiographies and film. The ongoing collaboration between the OHP and SCU is part of the "Living History Program," through which hundreds of SCU students have viewed and summarized our oral histories.

Digital versions of the HCNC interviews were made available through a pilot program with the SCU library. The students documented and summarized the testimonies and then used them as the basis for imagining an original film and a creative visual presentation.

The students connected strongly with the testimonies. One student reported that "It felt like I actually got to know my survivor, rather than just a fictional character in a documentary." Another said that "When we learn about the Holocaust we become desensitized, [but] watching videos like the ones from OHP help us see the human side of events."

The tremendous educational potential of interacting with Holocaust testimony motivated this new initiative to digitize the interviews and use them in innovative curriculum. OHP staff and SCU professors and library staff are scheduled to present this ground-breaking project at the Oral History Association's annual academic conference in October.

This kind of partnership between HCNC and the community is vital to our mission of education and remembrance, and we continue to create innovative and impactful ways to engage students in learning about the Holocaust.

GIVE HCNC YOUR ORAL HISTORY!

Recording your oral history is one of the best ways to preserve your stories. We believe that each personal testimony will be a legacy to be appreciated and from which we can learn. If you know a Holocaust survivor or witness, encourage them to talk to us about the possibility of giving an interview.

Please contact the Oral History Project at 415.777.9060 x202 or by email at ohp@hcnc.org for more information.

500 Teens and Educators at Day of Learning



In its sixth year, the Holocaust Center's annual Day of Learning is an opportunity to engage a very broad cross-section of the Bay Area educational community in active learning. Students, teachers, and adults, who would not otherwise have the opportunity to hear eyewitness accounts from survivors and learn from experts, spent Sunday, April 13th in workshops studying the Holocaust and genocide. This year HCNC held the Day of Learning at Mercy High School in San Francisco, a Catholic parochial school where the Holocaust has long been part of the curriculum.

"The 500 attendees are a self-selecting group of teens and educators," said Morgan Blum, HCNC Director of Education. "Those students who want to go above and beyond their classroom assignments come to the Day of Learning. They choose to be here."

In 2003, the first Day of Learning drew 150 participants. Each year attendance has increased. This year more than 500 teens and adults, including 98 educators, were present. The large turnout reflects HCNC's responsiveness to the need to supplement the limited time spent in northern California classrooms teaching about the Holocaust.

The workshops featuring Holocaust survivors Louis deGroot, Helen Farkas, Dora Sorrell, and Anne Marie Yellin were packed to capacity, with standing room only. "I could walk away from the Day of Learning, but I kept thinking how the two women I heard had no choice and could not walk away," a student remarked.

The seminar format of Day of Learning maximizes the learning experience. "I liked that people were not afraid to give their opinions. I am really glad our generation had the ability to speak with someone who actually survived this horrible, historic event," commented a teen.

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—STUDENT PARTICIPANT

The Day of Learning attracts so many students because it bridges the divide between history and present day events. A popular workshop on Darfur elicited this evaluation from a student: “This workshop really motivated and inspired me. It was wonderful to learn about China, Darfur and the Olympics.”

Day of Learning aims not only to tell the story of the Holocaust but also to serve as a platform for building tolerance and preventing genocide. A teacher says it best: “I brought 12 students to Day of Learning. I love that this is available, for free, to us in San Francisco. Thank you so much.”

Day of Learning is made possible by a generous gift from Lydia and Doug Shorenstein.



Opposite left: One of the 400 students throughout the Bay Area to attend the Day of Learning.

Right, top: Helen Farkas, a member of HCNC’s Survivors Speakers Bureau, with a local educator at the Day of Learning.

Right, middle: A student is captivated in a workshop at the Day of Learning.

Right, bottom: Dora Sorell engages a packed room of students and teachers in her workshop *My Time in Auschwitz—Words from a Survivor*.



Of Interest

Yad Vashem Names Recovery Project

Yad Vashem has issued a call to action to help register names of Holocaust victims in their Shoah Victims' Names Database. Millions of victims remain unidentified. Yad Vashem urgently calls upon Jewish communities to recover their names through a worldwide Names Recovery Project.

You can participate in registering names!

- Visit Yad Vashem Names Recovery site at www1.yadvashem.org/download/home_download_remembrance.html, to submit testimonies.
- Contact HCNC, where blank testimony forms are available.
- Contact Rachel Kesselman at 415.449.1288 or rachelk@jfccs.org, if you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or know of someone who might be able to identify victims.

For more information, visit www.hcnc.org/yadvashem.html or www.yadvashem.org/

Appeal for Previously Unpublished or Unavailable Memoirs by Survivors of the Shoah

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference) is establishing a worldwide electronic collection of previously unpublished or unavailable memoirs written by Jewish survivors of the Shoah. Documents in this electronic collection will be made available to appropriate organizations and individuals engaging in the critical work of research and documentation of the Shoah.

For more information, visit the Worldwide Shoah Memoirs website at memoirs.claimscon.org/eng/index.php

International Tracing Service Records Are Now Available

Located in Bad Arolsen, Germany, the ITS archive contains approximately 50 million digital images of documentation on 17.5 million victims of Nazism. Yad Vashem and the US Holocaust Memorial Museum have received the first installment of scanned ITS images, and both organizations have launched web pages where survivors and their families can submit requests that ITS records be searched for information about the fate of family and friends.

Yad Vashem's webpage:

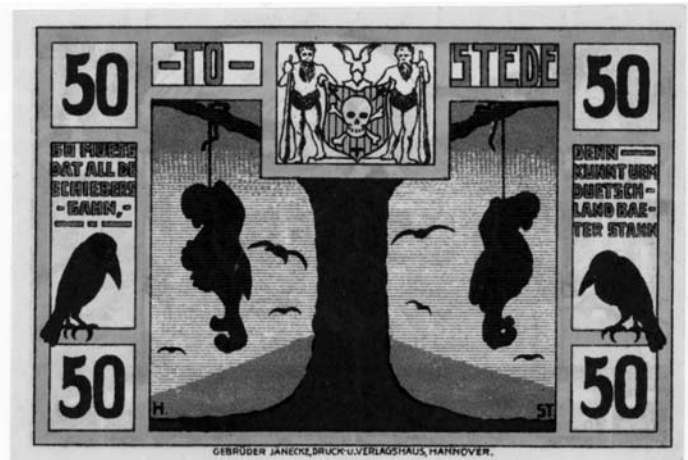
www1.yadvashem.org/ITS_and_yadvashem/home.html

US Holocaust Memorial Museum's webpage:

www.ushmm.org/museum/exhibit/focus/its/

Notgeld

A DONATION TO THE HCNC ARCHIVES



The currency featured above is a 50 pfennig notgeld, issued by the municipality of Tostedt, Germany in 1927. The note is illustrated with caricatures of two Jewish men hanging from nooses on a tree surrounded by ravens, with an inscription: “This should happen to all profiteers—Then Germany would be better off.”

Notgeld was currency issued during the 1920s, when inflation was so extreme that currency issued one day was worthless the next. Notgeld was not official currency, but was issued locally, backed by communal assets, and accepted by local merchants. This artifact reflects the environment in which Hitler rose to power, when Germany was experiencing a severe economic crisis, many blamed “profiteers” and antisemitism was on the rise.

This item was donated by the family of Captain Robert H. Johnson, a liberator of Nordhausen concentration camp. We are especially grateful to Mark Johnson, grandson of Capt. Johnson, who is a frequent donor to HCNC's library and archives.

DONATING TO HCNC ARCHIVES

In order to fulfill its mission of education, research, and remembrance, the Holocaust Center of Northern California Archives accepts additions to its collections and holdings that document the events of the Holocaust.

It is crucial to collect and maintain primary source material relating to the Holocaust. In addition to its historical and intrinsic value, primary source material is a valuable weapon in the battle against Holocaust denial and revisionism. For more information, contact Judy Janec at 415.777.9060 x206 or jjanec@hcnc.org

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The list below reflects donations from November 1, 2007–June 15, 2008. Thank you for your support of the Holocaust Center of Northern California. We apologize for any omissions. Please contact us if there is an error so we can correct our records.

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