

PENNSYLVANIA HOLOCAUST EDUCATION COUNCIL



July/August 2010

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PHEC OFFICERS:

- Elaine Culbertson, Chair
- Christopher Gwin, Vice Chair
- Samantha Patty, Treasurer
- Jennifer Goss, Secretary
- Rebecca Aupperle, Curriculum Coordinator

AUGUST MEETING TO TAKE PLACE AUGUST 9 & 10 IN MECHANICSBURG

This year's summer meeting will take place on Monday, August 9 and Tuesday, August 10 in Mechanicsburg, PA. Several important items are on the table to be discussed, including the need to explore additional funding options for the upcoming year, the October conference and the current contents of the Clara Isaacman Memorial Trunk. Several other items of concern that have been brought to our attention by members will also be addressed at that time. Your attendance at this meeting is crucial if you wish to have a voice in our organization.

The schedule is as follows:

Monday, August 9

3 PM: Business Mtg.

- Annual Reports
- Status Update on Last Year's Goals
- Financial Status Discussion
- Other Items of Concern

5 PM: Dinner @ Isaacs

7 PM: Film Showing & Discussion

Tuesday, August 10

9:30 AM: Future Funds

10:30 AM: Trunk & Website Discussion

11:30 AM: Conference Update



12:30 PM: Lunch

1 PM: Idea Sharing—please bring a book, film or resource to briefly share with members

2 PM: Close

If you plan on attending, please contact Chris Gwin at christophergwin1@aol.com by August 3. PHEC covers rooms for members at least 45 miles away.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION IS UP AND RUNNING!

Registration is now available for the 2010 PHEC Statewide Conference for Holocaust Educators. This year's conference is entitled, "Let Memory Speak: Voices of the Holocaust."

It will be held in Reading, PA on October 10 & 11. Cost for registration is \$35 and members may register and pay online at www.phec.org. Registration includes materials, breakfast and lunch on

the 11th, and access to all sessions. Hotel rooms will be paid (double occupancy) for members living at least 45 miles away from the site. Questions? Contact Jennifer Goss at jgoss825@gmail.com

MEET THE CENTER DIRECTOR: DAN TANNENBAUM

Throughout the state of Pennsylvania, there are six Holocaust Resource Centers. In our upcoming newsletters we will be featuring each director in this section. Our first feature is on Dan Tannenbaum, the director of the Holocaust Resource Center at Albright College,



Albright College Holocaust Resource Center Director Dan Tannenbaum

which is a partnership with the Jewish Federation of Reading. Albright is a small liberal-arts college that features an undergraduate certificate program in Holocaust studies, one of the few such offerings to undergraduates in the United States. Dan has worked as the Director of this center since 1995 and

joined PHEC, while it was still the Holocaust Education Task Force, one year later.

Throughout his years at the Center, Dan has brought in many interesting programs and speakers such as Doris Bergen, Jeffrey Shandler, and Sara Horowitz. Each year he also helps the Federation organize its Yom Hashoah program which has featured everyone from local survivors to Yaffa Eliach. Each year's program is a touching tribute to those we have lost in the Holocaust.

Dan has had many memorable experiences throughout his years working in the field. He cites the International Conference at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 1998 as being one that particularly stands out in

his mind. He recalls that this event was incredibly informative and it also gave him the opportunity to meet many influential people in the world of Holocaust studies including Yehuda Bauer, Benjamin and Vlakda Meed and Gerda Weissman Klein. Madeline Albright was also present at this event. Dan also states that meeting Irene Updike and Miles Lerman have also been highlights of his experiences throughout the years.

According to Dan, the most rewarding part of working in the field of Holocaust education is meeting a group of people who are very dedicated to this topic. Dan also enjoys the support of a local Federation that is very dedicated to preserving the memory of the Holocaust and helping to ensure that others are educated about this tragic event in history.

Gerda Weissman Klein's *All But My Life* and Irene Gut Opdyke's *In My Hands* are two of Dan's favorite Holocaust-related books, although he states that there are many good books out there. He was particularly fascinated with Opdyke's account because he found himself wondering how she was able to do some of the things she did under the circumstances that she faced. When asked about his favorite Holocaust-related film, Dan cites Claude Lanzmann's nine-hour documentary, *Shoah*.

Outside of working for the center Dan enjoys socializing with his many friends. He counts music, reading and collecting as hobbies. He has two children, Miriam and Mark. Miriam lives in southeastern Pennsylvania with her husband. Mark currently resides in North Carolina with his wife and Dan's grand-dog.

PHEC MEMBER ANGELA ATTARDO TO PRESENT AT THE 2010 ANNUAL DIVERSE LITERACIES CONFERENCE

On Saturday, October 9 at Bear Creek Resort & Conference Center, Penn State University—Lehigh Valley Campus will be hosting their annual Diverse Literacies Conference. This year's conference is entitled "Multiple Literacies Development: Utilizing Learner's Social, Cultural and Linguistic Funds of Knowledge."

Angela, a Reading specialist with the Allentown School District, will be presenting a session entitled, "*Victims, Perpetrators and Bystanders: Using a multi-genre approach that invites all students to connect the lessons of the Holocaust to their lives today.*" A summary of her session is as follows, "This

interactive presentation will begin a dialogue between educators about the need to invite all learners to study the Holocaust. A multi-genre approach is emphasized so that no child is left behind. When given the language of Holocaust study and allowing students to access a variety of materials, students will learn not just about the Holocaust

Holocaust has left for us to uncover.

Bear Creek Resort & Conference Center is located south of Macungie, PA (which is located outside of Allentown). More information and directions to the site are available at: www.lv.psu.edu/dlc

Good luck Angela with your presentation!

MEET A MEMBER: SEAN GASTON

This month we are featuring member Sean Gaston. Sean recently celebrated his ten year wedding anniversary with his wife, Jamey. Jamey is also a teacher, working for the past 11 years with at-risk 4 & 5 year-olds in the School District of Lancaster. They have two adorable children, Caleb (6) and Jaylin (4). The family also includes a 9 year old chocolate lab named Tucker and a 9 year old cat, Gabbie.

Sean is about to begin his fourth year teaching at Fleetwood Area High School where he teaches the district's communications courses. He joined PHEC during his first year of teaching and has been an active member ever since. In addition to teaching communications courses, Sean co-teaches a course entitled *The History of the Holocaust Through Film & Literature* with fellow PHEC member, Jennifer Goss. He is also in charge of the school's award-winning television program Tiger TV.

A recent graduate of the Belfer "Next Step" program in Indianapolis, Sean mentions his most interesting experience at a Holocaust education conference as "private access to the permanent exhibit at the

USHMM during the Belfer Conference at USHMM. Going through the museum, alone, is an experience like no other." This experience, among others, led Sean to apply for the Belfer "Next Step" which took place this past June (and is featured later in this newsletter).

Sean also said, "My most memorable experience as a Holocaust educator thus far has been being able to meet survivors and more specifically, just recently, at Belfer Next Step this past June, meeting Frank Grunwald, whose story is something that my high school students, music department and art department will all work together to document this coming school year." Just prior to press time, Sean received word that the Jewish

Federation of Reading will be helping to cover expenses for the film crew to begin this project over Labor Day Weekend.

Sean states that the most rewarding part of Holocaust education is, "being able to shed some light on the darkest time in 20th century history, in hopes to open eyes, hearts and minds, that genocide's will stop happening all over the world." In the upcoming school year, Sean will also be co-advising a new STAND chapter at Fleetwood in an attempt to

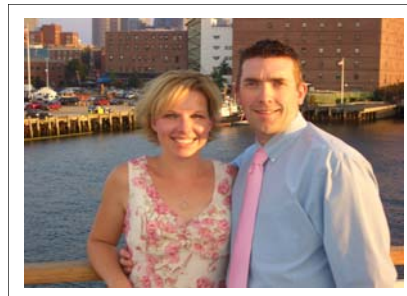
spread this message beyond his classroom.

When asked about his favorite book in this topic area, Sean responded "I have probably read more Holocaust books than I have read on any other topic and picking one is almost impossible, but I enjoy reading any Holocaust book that deals specifically with Holocaust film and more specifically books that deal with factual events that can be turned into movies, like "The Twentieth Train", which will probably end up being a film script project that my teaching colleague and I will work on once we are finished with the Frank Grunwald documentary."

Because of the nature of Holocaust films, it is difficult for Sean to denote a "favorite." He does mention *Schindler's List* as one that particularly stands out in his mind. In addition to being a great film, Sean feels that it is a film that contains many "teachable" moments," especially because so many educators are familiar with it. Sean also enjoys finding independent Holocaust films to watch and critique, some of which have become very useful in the course he teaches. For

the upcoming conference, Sean has helped to bring in one of those films, *No. 4 Street of Our Lady*, produced by Penn State professor Judy Maltz.

Prior to becoming a teacher, Sean worked for



PHEC Member Sean Gaston & his wife

15 years in the motion picture business, before he decided to parley a documentary film production he did into a teaching career. This is the reason why his Holocaust niche is based in film. This documentary project, *Rough Cut*, was picked up by Indie Pictures, a sub-company of Warner Bros., and distribution began last year. The film also did rounds in various film festival circuits, including the prestigious Cannes Film Festival in France.

It should be of no surprise that Sean lists watching movies as his number one hobby. He also enjoys reading about film and the Holocaust, playing baseball and working out. He wants everyone reading this to know that, "P90X is no joke!"

USHMM MUSEUM TEACHER FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM AN AMAZING EXPERIENCE

By Lynne Ravas with Jennifer Goss

In April, letters were sent to the applicants of the 2010-2011 Museum Teacher Fellowship program. 14 of those individuals received letters of congratulations informing them that the application itself (a list of influential books with ra-



PHEC Member Jennifer Goss with survivor Manya Friedman, USHMM Volunteer

tionales, lesson plans, and letters of recommendation) was only a hint of the work that lay ahead.

On Sunday, July 11, those 14 individuals arrived at the museum to begin 6 intensive days of work and study. Not only do those 14 represent school districts from California to North Carolina, but they also represent Jewish yeshivas, Catholic high schools, community colleges, as well as public high schools and middle schools. Of those fourteen teachers, Jen Goss and Lynne Ravas represented Pennsylvania and PHEC.

During the fellowship week, the 14 educators shared at least 2 meals each day with the instructors, Peter Fredlake and Christina Chavarria. This gave the group the time to share ideas and

educational experiences which created the foundation for supporting each other in the future. Peter Fredlake had requested that brief autobiographies be prepared and distributed prior to July 1, and this resulted in several of the individuals questioning their "right" to attend the fellowship.

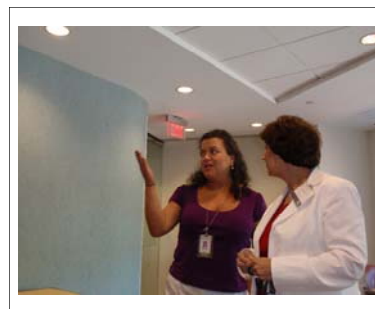
Those autobiographies included well-educated, well-traveled, and highly knowledgeable Holocaust educators which made some members feel inadequate for such a gathering. However, as people shared those same feelings, the members quickly realized that each one had something to offer for the benefit of the others. Educators who teach about the Holocaust rarely find individuals in their personal lives who want to discuss Holocaust-related books and teaching strategies 14 hours each day for 6 consecutive days. Clearly, the feelings of inadequacy were quickly replaced with enthusiastic questions and discussions. On a few occasions, those conversations lasted past the final evening session since the members did not want to miss an opportunity to share book and film recommendations.

The Fellowship program was on hiatus during 2009 as the instructors examined the new initiatives of

the museum. They restored it this year with many changes. During the week Dr. Will Meinecke spoke on Nazi ideology; Manya Friedman, a survivor volunteer at the museum, described her experiences in Poland and Czechoslovakia; and Judy Cohen, of the photo archive department, discussed the role of photographs in education. New initiatives for the museum and the fellowship include propaganda, collaborators and complicity, antisemitism, and contemporary genocide. As a result, Dr. James Waller, author of *Becoming Evil*, and Dr. Ann Millin, curator of State of Deception exhibit, also addressed the group. Fellowship members were given copies of the presenters' books to deepen their understanding. Tim Kaiser demonstrated activities using photographs to analyze complicity and collaboration, which supports the museum's educational directive to "complicate the thinking" of students. Understanding that there are no simple answers to the questions associated with the Holocaust, students must consider a variety of situations and possibilities before labeling the Nazis or Hitler as the sole perpetrators.

This year's fellowship group was privileged to

ork with Dr. Simone Schweber, who has completed extensive research on the teaching of the Holocaust. Dr. Schweber led three sessions which demonstrated strategies for use in the classroom setting. During one of her sessions, Dan Napolitano and one of the financial supporters of the fellowship participated in the simulation. Dan is a member of the 1997 program and a past director of the program; now he directs both the international and national teacher outreach programs for the museum.



PHEC Member Lynne Ravas with Christina Chavarria of USHMM

Prior to the start of the fellowship week, each member prepared a presentation on the USHMM's guidelines for teaching the Holocaust and contemporary genocide. However, the bulk of their work has just begun. Members must create a program of outreach and implement it over the next twelve months. Quarterly reports showing the progress of the project must be filed once the (continued on pg. 10)

PHEC MEMBERS ATTEND THE BELFER “NEXT STEP” CONFERENCE IN INDIANAPOLIS

By Linda Short with Joyce Kupec & Sally Gooch

PHEC Members Sean Gaston & Linda Short recently attended the Belfer “Next Step” Conference for Educators hosted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. Below is Linda’s account of the experience and that of two other Pennsylvania teachers:

A successful conference affords participants three benefits: new knowledge and professional development, networking, and a renewed understanding of and excitement about the work in which one is engaged. The US Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Belfer Next Step Conference for the Eastern Region, held this year in Indianapolis from June 28-30, delivered on all three.

Holocaust educators from New Jersey west to Iowa and Missouri, and from Maine and Wisconsin south to Alabama and Louisiana gathered in Indy to exchange success stories, concerns and lesson plans about teaching the Holocaust. The conference was led by a quartet of educators who are Museum Teacher Fellows.

What is the Belfer Next Step Conference?

The USHMM website explains:

The Belfer Next Step Regional Conferences will lay the foundation for Belfer alumni to assume leadership roles in Holocaust education in their region. The conferences will provide further professional growth in pedagogy and the history by examining issues related to the history, literature and moral and ethical implications of the Holocaust. Belfer alumni in each region who wish to expand their role as leaders in Holocaust education are invited to apply. Up to 30 Belfer alumni in each region will be chosen to participate in the Belfer Next Step conference.

I met other educators from Pennsylvania at the Conference, none of whom I knew. Two of them either had not heard of PHEC or were not members. Well, now they’ve heard and may join us. Of greater significance, I think, is that we’ve discussed the challenges we face and the opportunities for collaborative strategies. Joyce and I recognize that the problems she sees in her community are not easily remedied but we intend to develop an approach, in which the USHMM may now be a participant. Another PA educator, Sally, whom you’ll also read from below, has two children at Penn State. One of her immediate actions was to tell them they had to take my Holocaust course!

Reflections on this year’s Next Step Eastern Region

I asked both Joyce and Sally to share their observations about this year’s Conference. Joyce Kupec, a middle school Language Arts teacher in the Souder-ton Area School District, Indian Valley Middle School outside Philadelphia, writes:

We had the wonderful opportunity to hear from a Holocaust survivor. It was during his talk that I realized how I wanted to use the information from the conference. I work in a district—perhaps like many districts—that includes persons who are uninformed or hold certain views about these issues. I believe that if I could arrange for a survivor to speak at our school in the evening then that would give an opportunity for the families in the district to experience his talk together and would bring more discussion into the community.

Another aspect of the conference that was beneficial to me was the discussion on anti-Semitism.

One of the conference organizers presented an overview of the history of anti-Semitism from early times through the 20th century. I could see how this could be its own topic for a possible future conference in my part of the state. In the meantime, there was plenty of information that I can now use to answer student ques-

tions on the subject. I look forward to taking the information and not only applying it to my classroom but also sharing it with other teachers and districts in my area.



Another Next Step Participant was Sally Gooch, a middle school Social Studies teacher in the Diocese of Pittsburgh at St. Joseph Regional School in Port Vue, PA, a small suburb of Pittsburgh. She writes:

Teachers came together to strategize and develop curricula for teaching the Holocaust and genocide.

We gathered in small groups to share what we have used and to learn about new media resources available to enhance our lessons. Based on the guidelines presented by the United States Holocaust Museum, we were encouraged to develop our own Next Step programs for our students.

As a result of Next Step, I am collaborating with one of the Conference educators from New Jersey to develop an “Interfaith Interaction” between our seventh graders. My colleague teaches in a Hebrew school (Conservative) in Aberdeen, NJ. Our students will be connected via the Internet to explore each (continued on pg 7)

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- **8/9&10:** PHEC Annual Summer Meeting in Mechanicsburg, PA. To attend, please contact Chris Gwin at christophergwin1@aol.com
- **8/12:** Lecture by Ephraim Kaye of Yad Vashem on Holocaust Denial at Rochester High School (near Pittsburgh). For more info, see article on the rear of this newsletter.
- Every Tuesday and Wednesday in August at 1 PM the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum hosts "First Person: Stories from Survivors." For a schedule, please go to www.ushmm.org. *If you are unable to attend in person, many of these stories are available at www.ushmm.org through podcast*

<i>August 2010</i>						
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September 2010

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SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

- Every Friday in the Wexner Learning Center, the USHMM will feature a special conversation hour with a Holocaust survivor. For more details, please visit the USHMM website at www.ushmm.org and click on the Events Calendar.
- Now is a terrific time to register for the October Conference. Be sure your membership is renewed by September 25 to take advantage of free accommodations during the conference (double occupancy)

WHO WILL WRITE OUR HISTORY? BY SAMUEL KASSOW (REVIEW BY JENNIFER GOSS)

Throughout the years many books have been written about the Warsaw Ghetto and the experiences within this microcosm. Most of these works mention the existence of the Warsaw Ghetto Archive, also known as *Oyneg Shabbes* or the “Joy of Sabbath”, but few have focused on one of the most important Holocaust-era resources to survive. Much of what is known about life in the eastern European ghettos comes from this collection which was accumulated in the largest ghetto of this period. Samuel Kassow does an excellent job of answering the title question by not only explaining the genesis of the archive but also personalizing the role of the players behind it.

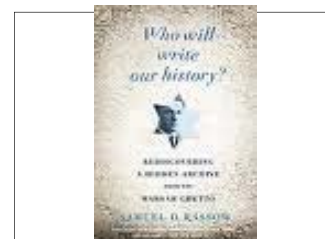
The key player in Kassow’s text is Emanuel Ringelblum. Politically active before the war, this young Polish Jew was convinced that “the story of Jewish suffering, no matter how terrible, was a universal story and not just a Jewish one” (pg. 7). As a historian and a teacher, he hoped that this

archive would survive to teach post-war lessons that would prevent a similar tragedy. While information on Ringelblum’s childhood and early life is limited, Kassow provides ample material on Ringelblum’s life as a father and community activist prior to his internment in the Warsaw Ghetto. He paints a picture of a man had a desire to maintain the Yiddish culture in an increasingly modern world, while encouraging positive Polish-Jewish relations.

In addition to providing personal details on Ringelblum, Kassow includes a chapter entitled, “Band of Comrades,” which examines the lives and roles of many of the other players who participated in this dangerous project deemed by Ringelblum to be one of collective responsibility. Only three of the estimated fifty or sixty contributors of the archive would survive – Hersh Wasser, his wife Bluma, and Rachel Auerbach. Hersh Wasser had served as the secretary of the archive. Auerbach had

worked as a writer and recruiter for the archive. Kassow includes several excerpts of her works including a poignant account of the challenges of operating a soup kitchen, which was Auerbach’s official duty within the Ghetto.

Who will write our history? provides the reader with not only an overview of the establishment of *Oyneg Shabbes* but also a comprehensive picture of the life of Polish Jewry before and during the Holocaust. Kassow’s only fault may be his biggest strength as well – this text is overwhelmingly detailed and sometimes it is necessary to read and re-read a section in order to fully understand the makeup of a particular political organization or Jewish cultural institution. A portrait of life within the ghetto from establishment to the uprising is painted in painstaking detail, through Kassow’s own descriptions and the inclusion of works from within the archive that give the reader insight into the difficult task which the archives’



PHEC Mem-

contributors had undertaken

This book is an essential read for any educator who teaches about the Holocaust. It is a particularly important source regarding elements of pre-war Polish Jewry and life within the ghettos. It is a complement to teaching the Warsaw Ghetto and showing the film, *The Pianist*, which is a staple in many Holocaust courses around the country. Kassow successfully accomplishes Ringelblum’s own goal; to show the world that the Jewish people were more than just victims, they were a part of a vibrant culture with lives beyond the scope of the tragedy of the Holocaust.

BELFER NEXT STEP CONT. FROM PAGE 5

other’s beliefs and traditions through various activities and lessons. Our goal is for our students to develop an appreciation and understanding of people of other faiths. In addition, these young adolescents will share dilemmas and obstacles common to all young teens, regardless of religion.

I highly recommend the Belfer Conferences to all teachers. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum offers a variety of resources for educators to ensure that the Holocaust and current and historical genocides are presented in an appropriate way to stu-

Dents of all ages.

I also benefited personally from this particular conference as it offered me an opportunity to return to a city in which I had spent 20 years, first as a VISTA volunteer and then as a Legal Services attorney. Hence, I used our limited free time to reconnect with friends, notice all the varied and many changes in the years since I’ve been gone, and take in some live blues at the “oldest bar in Indiana”, the Slippery Noodle Inn. C’mon, all work and no play... Besides, getting together outside the conference space is another important venue for forming

friendships, exchanging ideas and planning partnerships.

What is your next step?

Professionally, one possibility is to take this newsletter and this article and share it with other districts and educators not necessarily for the purpose of increasing PHEC membership—although that might be one result—but of publicizing the educational and networking and pedagogical possibilities for teachers who are currently addressing Holocaust in the classroom as well as recruiting additional teachers open to adding Holocaust lessons. Moreover, Joyce and Sally offer specific ideas which might also benefit your community and school dis-

tricts.

Personally, consider applying for next year’s Belfer Conference. Once you have successfully completed it, you then may apply for selection to Belfer Next Step. You may attend the initial Belfer Conference whether or not you are interested in continuing with Next Step. At either conference, participants receive free books and video materials for personal and/or classroom use. In addition, Belfer alums become part of the USHMM family with easier access to museum staff and resources. Both Belfer conferences are run through the education department of the USHMM, online at ushmm.org.

ANNUAL TEEN SYMPOSIUM TAKES PLACE IN SCRANTON

By Tova Weiss, Center Director

Within an hour of returning to school after participating in the full-day program of the 22nd Annual Teen Symposium on the Holocaust on Tuesday May 11th, a high school teacher emailed me to say “My students want to thank you, as do I, for a wonderful program today! Kudos!”

His comments were followed that day and the next with other emails and phone calls lauding the superb quality of this year’s program on both Tuesday and Wednesday. I must admit that, thank G-d, this was actually one of the best years of this event. The credit, however, belongs to all the people who made it happen, not just to me.

Among the special parts of the whole are the volunteers who help with planning and preparation: members of the HERC advisory board, the volunteers who help with mailings and packing materials, those volunteers who serve as *facilitators during sessions, and more. To these are added the guest speakers from out of town who rearrange their lives for three days to come to Scranton, and – I now include local speakers – to revisit painful chapters in their lives in order to share first-hand testimony with middle and high school students and their teachers.*

This year a total of 10 survivors of the Holocaust spoke in 10 different rooms at Marywood University, touching the hearts and minds of over 1,100 students and 70 teachers in the course of two days. The volunteers and speakers are listed at the end of this article, and they all have my warmest gratitude.

An important part of the whole was “Opening Remarks” by Sister John Michelle Southwick who consistently sets the proper tone for the day. She serves as Marywood University’s spokesperson, but also invests much of herself in this program and is passionate about young people learning the truth about the Holocaust.

Sr. John’s remarks were followed by the film *Children Remember the Holocaust*. This documentary uses photographs and film footage from the Holocaust years with voice-overs that are strictly the words of children taken from diaries and memoirs of that time. It is a very powerful film that begins with pre-war life and progresses through all the stages of the Holocaust, through post-liberation.

Following the film, another important part of the special day was the address to the entire group each day in Marywood’s Theater building, by former GI/Liberator Alan Moskin. To say that the audience was transfixed cannot begin to describe how well he spoke. He was able to transport his listeners to the battlefields via vignettes of very particular moments, allowing them a window into that time. They came to know his buddies, his captain, and that though he had been forced to use weapons to kill, that he truly hated killing.

Mr. Moskin explained how although he’d seen so much death and many terrible things in combat, coming face-to-face with a concentration camp his unit discovered was an unparalleled shock. He brought home the useless waste of life caused by the Nazis and emphasized that what made it worse than the horrors of battle was that these were innocent civilians who had been starved, worked to death and/or murdered. He had no choice but to describe what the liberators found somewhat graphically, and tried to convey that which the listeners could not feel: the stench, the choking, horrific odor that haunts all liberators. He also explained clearly how the servicemen tried to help the starved skeleton-like persons they found who were still alive, and had to be stopped by the , he explained, shuts down all the systems, and the newly-

liberated victims in the camps could not begin to chew or swallow the GIs K-rations. “Only soft foods, only soft foods,” yelled the medics.

Following the liberator’s address, the 600 participants broke out into 10 breakout rooms in order to meet with survivors. Among the survivors were several who had survived labor and concentration camps, as well as death marches, a woman who was a child on the S.S. St. Louis, a child survivor of Terezin who had acted in the children’s opera *Brundibar*, and two hidden children, one hidden in Poland, the other in Belgium. Two of the speakers had been through Auschwitz and had numbers tattooed on their arms. Together, they represented many facets of the Holocaust experience. Because there is not sufficient time for everyone to meet each survivor to hear his/her story, each school’s group of students is divided up among the breakout rooms. This allows students and teachers from the same school to sit in on different sessions so that when they return to school they can share the testimonies they heard.

It has been a hallmark of this event to allow students to interface with survivors in smaller, more intimate groups so that they can relate more easily to the speaker and, hopefully, connect with him/her. In the best cases, as witnessed by the boxed piece “A Student Speaks,” students take on the (self-appointed) task of carrying what they hear forward into the future.

After a 45-minute break for lunch, participants returned to the Theater for the Abe Plotkin Memorial Lecture on the Holocaust & Social Justice, which is underwritten by the PA Holocaust Education Council (PHEC). This year, PHEC support allowed us to pre-

sent the NEPA premiere screening of *We Must Remember*, a special documentary currently being screened at film festivals. *Children Remember The film* spoke very directly to the assembled students because it is a film created by their contemporaries. Sixteen Carlsbad, California high school students, ages 15-17, took on the enormous task of trying to, in their words, “comprehend that which is beyond comprehension,” to try to understand the Holocaust.

The students spent a full year of their own time (in addition to regular school hours and homework) involved in a project of great magnitude, received no extra credit and had to raise their own funds to cover expenses in order to try and accomplish their goal. They traveled to Washington, D.C. to do research, they traveled to Europe twice, they met with survivors and liberators on both continents, German high school students and older Germans, they bumped up against Holocaust denial in the form of both a neo-Nazi demonstration in Germany and hate letters to them in the United States. Then, they took the knowledge and experiences they had gained in that year and synthesized it in order to shape this film.

Two students, Rory Gallagher and Dakota Aden, and their teacher/director Doug Green, traveled to Scranton to enhance the presentation. The students handled the Q&A in a mature, thoughtful and articulate manner, and yes, they had a lot of questions! They are passionate about ensuring that the Holocaust is not forgotten and were wonderful role models for area students.

The successful day ended with a quick wrap up and thanks you to all who were involved.

"VOICES OF HOLOCAUST HISTORY" MADE ITS PHILADELPHIA PREMIERE

By Deanne Comer, Clara Trunk Committee Co-Chair

On Wednesday, April 14, 125 people attended the Philadelphia local premiere of "Voices of Holocaust History: A Curriculum Project" as part of the Ambler Theater Cinematheque Series. The film had been shown previously at part of the New York International Independent Film and Video Festival held in New York City and Los Angeles in September of 2008.

The production of this documentary film has been quite an exciting venture for me as it reflects the challenges of a long journey and great challenges to make the teaching of the Holocaust a reality in Abington School District (ASD) where I taught for 25 years.

After serving as a coordinator for the First International Conference on Teaching the Holocaust sponsored by the National Institute on the Holocaust in Philadelphia back in 1974, under the aegis of the Philadelphia Coordinating Council on the Holocaust, comprised of some thirty interfaith organizations in and around the area, I returned to my teaching job and was named the chairperson of the Social Studies team in my school. The school was designated a model by the ASD Board which gave teachers opportunities to develop new ideas and implement them into existing curriculum.

I taught in the largest elementary school in the dis-

trict, with some 450 students. Demographically the faculty had perhaps two or three Jewish teachers and an under 5 percent Jewish population.

In 1980, the history and the events of the Holocaust were receiving national attention with the creation of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Council and the National Days of Remembrance both established by an Act of Congress. It was those 2 actions that propelled me to begin to lay the groundwork for a Holocaust curriculum and I began by contacting the Council, making several trips to their small office to gather their newly published educational materials.

Initially, our team had much work to do. The 5 of us had diverse backgrounds: 3 of us first-generation children of Catholic, African American and Jewish immigrants, the others, third-generation descendants of Protestant and

Lutheran parents.

It took much dialogue to reach consensus and conclude that the intrinsic elements within the teaching of the Holocaust were universal in scope and confronted issues of humanity that should be of concern to all people regardless of faith. The committee came to understand that while "all Jews were victims...not all victims were Jews," as Elie Wiesel had said. Sensitivities to other historical injustices came into play and it took much research and analyses for the broader implications of teach-

ing the Holocaust to come into focus and to be accepted by the team.

In testimony before the ASD school board in 1986, I was tentative in presenting our vision, aware back then, as now, that there are many obstacles such as time restraints, teacher training and materials to purchase that enter into making curriculum changes and additions.

But in presenting the committee's plan, that unique year commemorating the bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution, I specified that the inherent issues within the teaching of the Holocaust, provided students with a powerful opportunity to see how the breakdown of a civilized society's laws can lead to such a state-sponsored genocide, the hope being that they would learn to understand the importance of individual responsibility towards the preservation of society's freedoms.

Overwhelmingly, Abington School Board, in support of our principal, Lorraine Hirsh, and her model school plan, agreed to fund and expand the creation of the project making it a fully mandated 4th, 5th and 6th grade supplemental curriculum, which exists to the present and includes ongoing teacher training and updating of newer resources and materials that are available.

Resistance to the teaching of the Holocaust was widespread at the beginning as teachers were unfamiliar with the

topic and afraid of stirring up prejudicial feelings.

We began with the USHMM's first project, which was to establish a Children's Wall of Remembrance with tiles painted by school children throughout America. Ours became the first school in Pennsylvania to participate, creating 86 tiles for the wall.

I learned a great deal about human behavior and comfort levels and, moreover, that patience is a great virtue indeed because the results were astounding. In retrospect, I couldn't have accomplished all of my goals without my team and am so grateful to them for all that they taught me, especially about other group's struggles for survival.

In recent years, More than thirty teachers from the district have taken advanced courses on the subject and the Holocaust curriculum has been updated and revised four times.

I am proud of the fact the Abington School District allowed the "walls to come tumbling down" with its mandated Holocaust curriculum and that I led this exciting process.

"A Curriculum Project" along with three companion DVDs featuring full-length testimonies of the three survivors are part of the PHEC Clara's Trunk materials.

NEWS FROM BEACH LLOYD PUBLISHERS

Beach Lloyd Publishers would like to announce the publication of a new work by author Judi Olga Cahorn entitled [The Incredible Walk: The True Story of My Parents' Escape from Nazi Occupied France](#). Here is a sneak peak into the plot: "Judi's sister Nadine finds a newspaper clipping revealing that Nadine, born at sea during the height of a storm, had a twin who did not survive. Judi assumes the task of Remembrance for Holocaust victims and for her parents, always reticent about their incredible flight from Europe to their new life found from their children and the welcome in North America.

Born two years after World War II, the author recounts the suffering that her parents

endured to reach freedom. Their parents had put their painful past behind them and built a happy, carefree life for their children while using their own unique talents and education to enrich their adopted country of Canada.

Paul Sekelj and Trudy Katzenstein literally crossed Europe to escape Hitler's "Final Solution" to the "Jewish Question." Eventually, desperation led them to accept the French Resistance's plan to cur across the Pyrenees' into Spain. Thus began the journey, fraught with perils and hardships never imagined. The book is carefully documented and beautifully illustrated Jean-Pierre Cahorn's photographs of Paul's emotionally charged paintings."

This book is now available for purchase by contacting Beach Lloyd Publishers or via their website at www.beachlloyd.com.

Beach Lloyd Publisher Joanne Silver is also available to deliver a program entitled, "Courage and Transformation: The Human Thing to Do." According to Dr. Rebecca Pauley, a professor of French at West Chester University, "Ms. Silver offers a truly unique and personal series of video interviews with a variety of French citizens who sequestered and aided the Jewish people when they were being pursued by the Nazis, before and during World War II. The title perfectly illustrates the experience of the people interviewed. This talk taps into the rich collection of work that Ms. Silver publishes

through her Beach Lloyd publishing firm including memoirs, interviews and videos. It also connects to a rich filmography of films produced over the decades on this topic, so it makes it the perfect enrichment for French and film courses as well as Holocaust studies at both college and high school levels."

For more information regarding this particular presentation or other works by Beach Lloyd publishing, please feel free to visit the website or to contact Joanne directly via e-mail at beachlloyd@erols.com or by telephone at 610-407-0130. Beach Lloyd offers a wealth of titles in this topic area and will be happy to help you find the right one!

USHMM MUSEUM TEACHER FELLOWSHIP CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

he museum staff has approved the proposed project. Outreach can include the greater school district's community, a religious community, or higher-level education.

The week had numerous highlights but according to Jennifer the following really stand out. "Having the ability to explore the museum when it was completely empty was an amazing experience. You notice so much more about the ambience and the artifacts when there is not a crowd around or students to worry about. It was also wonderful to network with such a diverse and talented group of educators. Lifelong

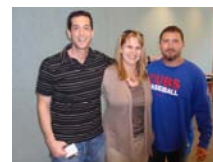
working relationships and friendships were definitely forged during our experience. Finally, working with Peter Fredlake and Christina Chavarria, as well as the high caliber scholars that were brought in to work with us, really caused us to stretch our minds and imaginations. The year ahead will be filled with challenges and opportunities that I am really looking forward to. I would strongly encourage anyone to apply for this program. It is an unforgettable experience."

Although the members found it difficult to go their separate ways on Friday afternoon, they found comfort in the fact

that not only will they be communicating with each other over the next several months, but they will reconvene at the museum in July, 2011. Secondary educators who teach about the Holocaust are welcome to apply for the 2011-2012 program. The application will be posted on the USHMM website under "For Teachers" and then "Professional Development." PHEC is fortunate to have several fellows, including Elaine Culbertson, Chris Gwin, Becky Aupperle, and Nancy Derby, Please feel free to discuss the program with these individuals; they are happy to share.

For more information about the USHMM Museum Teacher Fellow Program, please visit

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum website www.ushmm.org and click on the "For Teacher's" section under the Education link.



PHEC Member Jennifer Goss with Rob Gangi of NJ and Mark Thorsen of CO

From that point click on Professional Development opportunities and then select USHMM Museum Teacher Fellows Program. Applications are usually due by the middle of February by the year in which you intend to apply. Teachers are expected to have at least five years of experience teaching about the Holocaust.

PHEC MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN LERNER FELLOWSHIP AT COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

By Felicia Mode Alexander

In late June, while most teachers were celebrating the close of another school year, fellow PHEC member Laura Higgins and I were continuing our study of the Holocaust at Columbia University in New York City, as part of the 37 participants in the *Summer Institute for Teachers*. For a decade, The Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) has conducted this unique program of advanced Holocaust study for educators. As stated on the JFR website, "The Summer Institute for Teachers examines the Holocaust from the precedents found in the history of antisemitism,



2010 Alfred Lerner Fellows Group

to the rise of the Nazi party, the machinery of death, rescue, through to the aftermath of the Holocaust." To date, 375 teachers have completed this program to become Alfred Lerner Fellows. I am proud to now be among them.

My own background in teaching and studying the Holocaust is extensive. Beginning in the 1980s, I became aware of the Eugenics movement in Germany and subsequently taught my deaf students at Gallaudet University about

the impact of the Third Reich's sterilization policies on deaf Germans and the T4 "euthanasia" program. This sparked my more serious scholarly interest in the Holocaust in general.

Since that time, I have completed the 3 semester Master Teacher Institute in Holocaust Studies at Rutgers University, Facing History and Ourselves' The Holocaust and Human Behavior course, ADL's Echoes and Reflections teacher training program and Kean University's Teaching the Holocaust courses.

Last but certainly not least, I have participated in two intensive summer study seminars. The first was for NJ teachers and was sponsored by the NJ Commission on Holocaust Education. Maud Dahme, a NJ resident who was a hidden child during the WWII, was our guide as we studied at historically significant sites in Germany, Poland, the Czech Republic and the Netherlands. The second was the Holocaust and Jewish Resistance Teacher Program, which was coordinated by PHEC's own Elaine Culbertson and led by USHMM historian Stephen Feinberg. Fellow PHEC member, Jennifer Goss was also in my group. This study tour brought a group of teachers from all over the USA to Holocaust related sites in Poland and Israel, culminating in stimulating lectures by historians at both Yad Vashem in Jerusalem and the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz and Mu-

seum in Nahariya. With my ongoing commitment to studying the Holocaust, I was very excited to be nominated for and accepted into the JFR's program! The intensive Summer Institute for Teachers did not disappoint me and I heartily recommend it to other like-minded teachers of the Holocaust.

The format of the *Summer Institute for Teachers* is a series of lectures by major players in the field of Holocaust research with each followed by a breakout discussion session. In preparation for the Summer Institute, each teacher received extensive reading material, including the JFR's own impressive text *Voices and Views: A History of the Holocaust* which is edited by Deborah Dwork. This year, lecturers were stellar! Deborah Dwork, Volker Berghan, Harry Reicher, Henry Feingold, Jeffrey Burds, Samuel Kassow, Nechama Tec and Robert Jan van Pelt mesmerized us. Each of their presentations was packed with indepth information and described by many of my peers as "doctoral level".

I appreciated the opportunity to have discussion sessions because although I have taught the Holocaust in my high school World Studies classes for many years, I will be moving to 8th grade Social Studies this fall. During the discussions, I was able to network with other middle school teachers. Another excellent component to the

presentations was the testimony of Roman Kent, president of the American Gathering of Holocaust Survivors, who spoke about his life in the Lodz Ghetto and while incarcerated at Auschwitz and



Felicia with Program Director, Stanlee Stahl

Flossenburg. His story was especially interesting to me because my father was in the 9th Armored Division of the US Army, which liberated sub-camps of Flossenburg!

To participate in the JFR Summer Institute for Teachers, each candidate must be nominated by one of the 16 Holocaust Centers of Excellence located around the country. I am grateful to have been nominated by the Kean University Holocaust Resource Center, which also provided me with a scholarship to attend. Further study is available to Lerner Fellows at JFR's annual 3-day *Advanced Seminar*, and for graduates of both, there is a summer European Study Program in Germany and Poland. Additional information about all three JFR teacher programs and the Centers for Excellence is available on the JFR's website: <http://www.jfr.org>.

**POINTS OF INTEREST
FOR HOLOCAUST
EDUCATORS**

Keep posted on information for the PHEC by visiting www.phec.org.

Be sure to check out Facing History at www.facing.org. The Brookline, Mass.-based organization provides a wealth of online resources including an online course entitled "The Holocaust and Human Behavior."

Yad Vashem is currently offering several online courses. More information can be obtained by visiting www.yadvashem.org

USHMM offers many professional development opportunities and other sessions throughout the year. There are also several online exhibitions that are great for classroom use. Be sure to check out www.ushmm.org for more information.

Wilda Kaylor recently sent a link for the UN site for Holocaust Remembrance. It can be accessed at www.un.org/holocaustremembrance/. There is a special section under Newsroom that focuses on the Middle School Level book, *Hana's Suitcase*.

Registration for the October Statewide Conference for Holocaust Educators, "Let Memory Speak—Voices of the Holocaust" will be taken until October 1. Check out www.phec.org for more information.

Next Year's Philadelphia Memorial Ceremony for the Six Million Jewish Martyrs will take place Sunday, May 1, 2011 from 1-3 PM

ABOUT THE PENNSYLVANIA HOLOCAUST EDUCATION COUNCIL

The Pennsylvania Holocaust Education Council (PHEC) began in 1985 as an outreach effort of the Philadelphia Jewish Community Relations Council and was previously sponsored by the Pennsylvania Jewish Coalition and Gratz College. The mission of PHEC is to provide instructional guidance, support and resources for educators who teach the history of the Holocaust and its relevance to contemporary issues across the state of Pennsylvania.

PHEC is the recipient of funds from various private and public sources, including the Pennsylvania Department of Education, numerous foundations and individuals, and Jewish Federations throughout the state. This summer we will be offering a workshop in conjunction with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in addition to our previously existing programs such as the Clara Isaacman Memorial Trunk Program and the Mary Costanza Memorial Fund. Membership is \$25/yearly for regular members and \$5/yearly for college students.

Further information can be obtained by visiting www.phec.org or by writing to us at the address listed below.

Small District in Western Pennsylvania Takes Big Steps in Holocaust Education

Starting next year, Rochester High School will make The Holocaust a full year course for most of its 11th grade students. Rochester is a small district about 25 miles north of Pittsburgh. For the past 10 years, Rochester has offered an elective on the Holocaust for one semester, but now the class will be all year. This is a unique opportunity for a public school to offer this level of Holocaust Education for that long. The students at Rochester have taken pride in their level of commitment and knowledge on this subject.

An example of this is the great response to Rochester's June 2011 Holocaust History trip to Europe. As many as 20 students will be traveling to Germany, Poland, and the Czech Republic to visit many Holocaust sites. This trip will also be in cooperation with the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh. It was a natural progression for many of these students, because their desire to learn this subject continues to grow. This trip is open to any educator and students interested in joining Rochester on their tour.

The news from Rochester High School doesn't stop

there. On August 12th, 2010, Rochester High School is honored to have a special speaker, Ephraim Kaye, Director of the International Seminars for Educators at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad-Vashem. Ephraim will be doing a short lecture on Holocaust Denial. One of the reasons for his visit is to help show support for the students of Rochester's commitment to Holocaust Education. The lecture will start at 7 pm followed by small reception, admission is free. Please email Mr. Jason Russo at jasonr68@yahoo.com for directions or more information.

Providing information and instructional guidance, support and resources to educators across Pennsylvania dedicated to the teaching of the Holocaust.

PHEC P. O. Box 42166 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19101
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