

ERIKA MANDLER

Dear Children of the Future:

My name is Erica Mandler. I came to the Kansas City area in the year 1951 because my husband, Dr. George Mandler, was invited to join a medical clinic in Chillicothe. Though located far from a Jewish community, we were welcomed with open hearts and minds and truly felt that we had found a new home.

My husband passed away in 1994 and shortly thereafter I was contacted by MCHE asking if they could interview me. This began a new life for me. I began speaking to classes in schools, then in churches and to civic groups. Teachers from other towns called me to speak to their classes. I addressed the Council on Human Rights in Jefferson City in 1997. I have spoken to children and adults in 25 towns, in and outside of Missouri. My proudest moment was addressing over 2,000 people at the University of Colorado, Greeley.

The Midwest Center for Holocaust Education is important for Kansas City because it is vital to the continued awareness and education about the Holocaust. It creates a vital link to the next generation by giving teachers the skills and materials they need to communicate with their students. Through the Center's activities, survivors are encouraged to give voice to their experiences. This gives life and soul to what otherwise is in danger of becoming facts on paper that many will try and deny.

From studying the Holocaust, you should learn more than what happened to millions of innocent people. You will learn important lessons about human nature – the only way to prevent such things from happening again is to take action yourselves. You will understand the responsibility each person has to be aware of what is happening in the world, to question it and take action whenever possible.

My message for you is if anyone ever tries to tell you that the Holocaust never happened, you know that this is not true. You know me – you have shaken my hand. You know that it did indeed happen. When you witness an injustice you must not stand by innocently and tolerate this. You must take action.

Very truly,

Erika Mandler
Vienna, Austria
July 22, 1922