The Daffodil Project

In December, as part of MCHE’s 25th anniversary commemoration, volunteers including eighth-grade students from Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy, planted 400 daffodils at the Memorial for Six Million, located on the grounds of the Jewish Community Campus. The flowers, which are expected to bloom in time for Yom HaShoah, were provided by The Daffodil Project (DaffodilProject.net).

Am Yisrael Chai!, a nonprofit Holocaust education and awareness organization, established this international project in 2010 to encourage Holocaust education. Its goals are to plant 1.5 million daffodils around the world in memory of the 1.5 million children who perished in the Holocaust and to support children suffering in humanitarian crises around the world today.

Am Yisrael Chai! chose daffodils to help build a living Holocaust memorial because the shape and color of the daffodils represent the yellow stars that Jews in most Nazi-occupied countries were forced to wear during the Holocaust. According to Am Yisrael Chai!’s website, yellow is the color of remembrance, and daffodils “represent our poignant hope for the future. They are resilient and return with a burst of color each spring, signifying hope, renewal and beauty. The daffodils also honor those who survived the Holocaust and went on to build new lives after this dark and difficult period.”

Since the project began, more than 475,000 daffodils have been planted.

YOM HASHOAH
COMMUNITY COMMEMORATIONS

STATE OF KANSAS
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE
MONDAY, APRIL 29, 1:00 P.M.
Featured Speaker: Gitla Doppelt, Holocaust Survivor
Ramada Inn, 420 SE 6th Avenue
Topeka, Kansas
Sponsored by the Kansas Holocaust Commission

METROPOLITAN COMMUNITY COLLEGE – MAPLE WOODS
THURSDAY, MAY 2, 6:30 P.M.
The Story of the Arts of the Holocaust (A Musical Performance)
2601 NE Barry Road
Kansas City, Missouri
Campus Center Room #110
Contact Jim Murray, 816-604-3305 or jim.murray@mcckc.edu

No reservations are necessary for these free programs.
Teaching the Lessons of 25 Years to Future Generations

It's safe to say that MCHE's Silver Anniversary Celebration was a huge success, and I'd like to thank our chairs, staff, committees and donors for making this a truly memorable evening. With all of the planning, preparation and anticipation leading up to the event, it's hard to believe that it is now fading in our rearview mirror. Celebrating our accomplishments of the past 25 years was certainly meaningful, but now it's important to look forward and to pass the lessons we've learned from the Holocaust on to our children, grandchildren and beyond.

With 25 years under our belt and looking forward to the next 25, it is imperative that we effectively connect with our children and provide educational opportunities that are both valuable and relevant. How we accomplish this is no doubt becoming more challenging in an ever-changing world, and it is our duty to continue evolving as an organization to assure that our message reaches students for decades to come.

Taking a Closer Look

As we pause to reflect on what we have achieved, we should not become complacent. In the coming months, to ensure that MCHE is on the right track, we will be taking a closer look at our organization. We will hire an outside consultant to help us assess our strengths and challenges, as well as how efficiently we are utilizing our talented staff. We also will review our programming and resources to assure that we are employing the most innovative and effective techniques available to reach our youth. Our goal is to make certain that we are well positioned to serve our community for the next 25 years.

For the past two years, it has been my honor and privilege to serve as president of the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education. I have been fortunate to be surrounded by an incredibly talented and dedicated executive director and staff, an active and enthusiastic board and a supportive membership, which reached an all-time high in 2018. While we have achieved much as an organization, it is important not to lose sight of our mission to teach the history of the Holocaust, applying its lessons to counter indifference, intolerance and genocide.

Antidote to Antisemitism

During my tenure, we also have witnessed an onslaught of antisemitic episodes worldwide, including the horrific massacre in Pittsburgh the day before our Silver Anniversary Celebration. In fact, the Anti-Defamation League's most recent audit showed that antisemitic incidents rose 57% in 2017—and that was before Charlottesville and Pittsburgh. Other studies show that learning about the Holocaust can reduce bigotry and inspire understanding and compassion.

As the child of a survivor, I learned the message of the Holocaust from voices of those who lived through its horror. Our job is to share the stories and legacy of our treasured survivors when they are no longer able to do so personally, making sure that their voices are never silenced and that they continue to reach the ears—and hearts—of our children for generations to come.

I have learned a great deal from my experience as board president, and I deeply appreciate your continued support of MCHE. I look forward to seeing you at future events as we strive to provide meaningful educational programs during these volatile and complicated times.

To view the video, photos and tribute journal from MCHE’s Silver Anniversary Celebration, visit https://mchekc.org/mches-25th-anniversary.
MCHE actually began when Isak Federman and I met on the steps of the American Consulate in Frankfurt, Germany, in 1945.

Isak was 23 and I was 18. We had two things in common—we were the sole survivors of our immediate families and we wanted to immigrate to the United States.

Through the sponsorship of the Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), we were fortunate to obtain visas. On June 9, 1946, we boarded the SS Marine Perch to New York and traveled for 15 days with other survivors and 3,000 GIs returning from the war.

We were met by a representative of the JDC and put up in the Oakdale Hotel. We were given coupons to have breakfast the next morning. None of us spoke a word of English. Unfortunately, when we left the hotel to go to breakfast, none of us thought to take a business card, so we couldn't find our way back to the hotel for several hours.

We joked about it later—here we survived the war and the brutalities we witnessed, and couldn't find our way back to the hotel!

I was completely overwhelmed by New York.

Over the next two to three days, we were interviewed by JDC staff and given a choice of where we wanted to live. I don't know what Isak told them, but I said I wanted to live in a place not too big and not too small where I could be integrated into the community. One of the staff suggested Kansas City. I had absolutely no idea where it was and asked why. He told me that in 1938 and 1939 the JDC sent some German Jews to Kansas City and it must be a good place. Again, I asked why. They said, “WE NEVER HEARD FROM THEM AGAIN.” So, with $5.00 and a ticket provided by the JDC, I boarded a train for Kansas City.

The JDC was absolutely right about Kansas City. The Jewish community embraced us. Isak Federman and Ann Warshawski were the first survivors to marry in Kansas City and a hopeful symbol of the new lives and futures ahead of us. They knew no one in Kansas City, yet 500 people showed up for their wedding!

Ann, Isak, my late wife Frances and I took a vacation to Hawaii in 1984. Isak and I started discussing what we could do to memorialize our families and all those that who perished as a result of Hitler’s murderous regime.

We both felt the responsibility to honor the promise we made to tell the world what happened if we survived.

We considered a building to house some kind of museum or a monument. Although monuments are important, monuments do not speak nor do they teach. We believed our limited resources should be spent only on Holocaust education and not on bricks and mortar. The war interrupted our education so, to Isak and me, education was a priority and teaching about the Holocaust was always our primary objective.

Once the concept was born, we began the challenging process of raising the money to bring MCHE into existence. At the beginning, Isak and I identified people we could solicit for this project, and we took them to lunch. When Isak and I took someone to lunch and explained our vision, it was impossible for anyone to say no to us. I think I gained twenty pounds during that time.

Of all the people we solicited, one person told us we should call his secretary and she would tell us in a week. Being naïve in fundraising, I said, “You are the decision maker. Why should I go to the secretary?” I walked out with a check for $18K.

To all those who contributed in the beginning and continue to support MCHE, thank you for making our dream of a Holocaust education center become a reality. Isak and I were very honored and grateful that we were able to keep this important promise to those who did not survive.

My son Mark and I went to Warsaw and purchased the first exhibit for MCHE from the Jewish Historical Society in Warsaw. Mark gave our organization its name—The Midwest Center for Holocaust Education.

When we began to look for personnel to direct MCHE, we had several applicants, but none were educators. We were so fortunate that Jean Zeldin ultimately became one of those candidates. As a teacher, we knew Jean would be able to implement our vision of Holocaust education. She has been with us from the very beginning and has done a tremendous job of stewarding the growth of MCHE.

We are grateful to the members and all who have supported MCHE during these past 25 years. I only wish that Isak were here to celebrate this important milestone with us.

We live in times where, once again, the voices of hate, division, racism, bigotry and antisemitism are heard loudly. Now, more than ever, I hope that MCHE continues to be a platform to educate, enlighten, inform and engage our community to confront these evil voices.
Thank you to our generous members • Current as of March 31, 2019

Please use the attached envelope to become an MCHE member, to reactivate an expired membership, or to renew your current membership.

Thank you to our generous members • Current as of March 31, 2019

We regret any errors or omissions & would appreciate your contacting the MCHE office at 913-327-8190 or info@mchekc.org with any needed corrections.

*Of blessed memory

Contributors

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Joyce Fulps
Mary Ann McCue
Joyce Fulps
Mark & Vicky Nanas
Marc Russell
Mike Russell
Maureen Will
Raise the Roof

SUNDAY, APRIL 28, 2:00 P.M.
JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS, LEWIS AND SHIRLEY WHITE THEATRE
5801 WEST 115TH STREET, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

Artists Rick and Laura Brown’s goal was to rebuild Gwoździec, a magnificent wooden eighteenth century synagogue in Poland that was destroyed by the Nazis. Their vision inspired hundreds of people to join them, using their hands, old tools and techniques to bring Gwoździec’s history, culture, science and art back to life.

The film Raise the Roof, which the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City presents in partnership with MCHE, provides a window into a time period that is often clouded by fictional representations like Fiddler on the Roof and overshadowed by the tragic realities of the 20th century.

For details, including ticket information, visit TheJKC.org/KCJFFRaiseTheRoof.

Cuba’s Forgotten Jewels: A Haven in Havana

PRESENTED BY THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER KANSAS CITY AND THE MIDWEST CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

THURSDAY, AUGUST 8, 7:00 P.M.
JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS, LEWIS AND SHIRLEY WHITE THEATRE
5801 WEST 115TH STREET, OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

General seating. Cuban-inspired dessert reception following the program.

Cuba’s Forgotten Jewels explores the little known story of the Jewish refugees who escaped Nazi-occupied Europe and found a safe haven on the Caribbean island of Cuba.

After a wave of Jewish refugees to Cuba in the 1920s and 30s, the island shut its doors to immigrants, most notably to the Jews aboard the ship the St. Louis in 1939. In 1940, Cuba under General Fulgencio Batista changed course and took in some 6,000 Jewish refugees, primarily diamond cutters and their families from Belgium and elsewhere—joining roughly 6,000 German and Austrian Jews who had arrived in an earlier wave before the doors slammed shut.

The film, which features an original soundtrack of Cuban and Jewish music, was born of the tales that Marion Kreith told her daughter, co-director Judy Kreith, about Marion’s escape from Nazi-occupied Belgium and her teenage years in 1940s Havana. Marion and other refugees interviewed in the film recall their lives in wartime Havana: the draw of Cuban food, music and dance, its language and people, as well as the challenges they faced in this unfamiliar land.

Running time: 46 minutes. Q&A to follow.

There is no charge for this program. Please make your reservation by August 5 for early entry at 6:20 p.m. 913-327-8196 or rsvp@mchekc.org.
The Holocaust is often seen and taught as an event with a singular perspective. Part of the effort to personalize this history is by exploring how the same historical event impacted individuals in unique and varied ways.

This course examines the experience of the Holocaust through a few of the perspectives of those who lived through it. Workshops will focus on the policy and experience of perpetration based on geography—specifically focusing on western Europe.

Each session will explore the role of the war in the unfolding of the Holocaust in that country, featuring documents, survivor testimony and resources for classroom use. Participants will learn from lectures, extensive primary source analysis and seminar-style discussions of the content.

**Topics (subject to change) and dates:**
- June 24 – The Holocaust in France
- June 25 – The Holocaust in Italy and the Role of the Vatican
- June 26 – The Holocaust in the Low Countries
- June 27 – The Holocaust in Greece and southern Europe

A registration fee of $60 includes all necessary materials and lunch each day. Registration is available at mchekc.org/perspectives.

Discriminating Thieves: Nazi-Looted Art and Restitution

JANUARY 26, 2019 - JANUARY 26, 2020
NELSON-ATKINS MUSEUM OF ART
4525 OAK STREET, KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI

During World War II, the Nazis looted art on an unprecedented scale, stealing thousands of objects across Europe. Jewish collectors were particularly affected by this due to Nazi laws that forbade Jews from owning property.

After the war, Allied forces found much of the looted art and returned it to the rightful owners, but other items disappeared in the chaos of war and remain lost to this day. In light of this fact, the Nelson-Atkins researches the ownership history of its artworks.

*Discriminating Thieves* features four works of art stolen by the Nazis, returned to their original owners after the war and eventually legally acquired by the Nelson-Atkins. Exhibition hours and related programs are available at nelson-atkins.org/events/discriminating-thieves.

KC Jewish Film Festival: *After Auschwitz*

THURSDAY, MAY 2, 7:30 P.M.
JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS
LEWIS AND SHIRLEY WHITE THEATRE
5801 WEST 115th STREET
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

*After Auschwitz* is a post-Holocaust documentary that follows six extraordinary women, capturing what it means to move from tragedy and trauma toward life. These women all moved to Los Angeles, married, raised children and became “Americans,” but they never truly found a place to call home. What makes the story even more fascinating is how these women saw, interpreted and interacted with the changing face of America in the second half of the 20th century. They serve as our guides on an unbelievable journey, sometimes celebratory, sometimes heart breaking but always inspiring.

Tickets to *After Auschwitz*, sponsored by the Jewish Community Center of Greater Kansas City and the Midwest Center for Holocaust Education, may be purchased at TheJKC.org/KCJFFAfterAuschwitz.

Perspectives on the Holocaust: A Course for Educators

JUNE 24-27, 9:00 A.M - 4:00 P.M.
JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS
CONFERENCE ROOM C
5801 WEST 115TH STREET
OVERLAND PARK, KANSAS

The Holocaust is often seen and taught as an event with a singular perspective. Part of the effort to personalize this history is by exploring how the same historical event impacted individuals in unique and varied ways.

This course examines the experience of the Holocaust through a few of the perspectives of those who lived through it. Workshops will focus on the policy and experience of perpetration based on geography—specifically focusing on western Europe.

Each session will explore the role of the war in the unfolding of the Holocaust in that country, featuring documents, survivor testimony and resources for classroom use. Participants will learn from lectures, extensive primary source analysis and seminar-style discussions of the content.
The Invasion of Poland and the Fate of Polish Jewry

Eighty years ago, when the Germans invaded on September 1, 1939, Poland was the world’s largest Jewish community, home to more than three million Jewish men, women, and children. In October, when the Polish Army had been defeated, the country was partitioned. Germany annexed western Poland directly into the Reich, the Soviet Union occupied eastern Poland, and the remainder of German-occupied Poland (including the cities of Warsaw, Krakow, Radom and Lublin) was organized as a German-occupied territory—the “General Government”—under a civilian governor general, Hans Frank.

Into the Ghettos

Within weeks of the invasion, the Germans began to implement severe measures against the Jewish and non-Jewish communities. Intellectuals, community leaders, potential leaders and ordinary individuals were brutalized, arrested and often executed. Additionally, Jews were forced onto labor details, ordered to wear identifying badges and stripped of their livelihoods, their property and most of their possessions. Then, giving people very little time, the Germans forced all Jews and those they defined as Jews to surrender their homes and move into ghettos, where they lived in isolation from the non-Jewish population under increasingly harsh conditions.

The German government viewed the ghettos as a provisional measure to control and segregate Polish Jewry while the leadership in Berlin considered how most effectively to implement their goal of removing the Jewish population from Europe—the so-called “Final Solution of the Jewish Problem.”

In the spring and summer of 1942, when the Nazis had constructed the six killing centers in Poland, Polish Jews were systematically deported to these death camps—the vast majority being murdered in the Operation Reinhard Camps of Belzec, Sobibor and Treblinka. By the summer of 1943, most Polish Jews had been murdered.

Exhibit of Local Survivors

To mark this watershed event in world history, MCHE will display portraits of local Polish survivors from our Honoring the Past exhibit in the lobby gallery of the Jewish Community Campus. The exhibit will open on September 1 and remain on view through October 2019. To hear testimonies by these and other local survivors, visit mchekc.org/survivors.
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**SAVE THE DATE**  
**JUNE 6 | 2019**

**MCHE ANNUAL MEETING & ELECTIONS**  
**JEWISH COMMUNITY CAMPUS**

**THURSDAY, JUNE 6, 7:00 P.M.**  
**HONORING OUTGOING BOARD PRESIDENT STEVE FLEKIER**  
**AND COMMEMORATING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY**

**FEATURED PROGRAM**

“If I Tell People My Story,” an interpretive dance performance created in response to the antisemitic violence at the Jewish Community Campus of Greater Kansas City and the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh  
Based on the testimony of Holocaust survivor Sonia Golad  
Choreography by M. Suzanne Ryanstrati

**DESSERT RECEPTION**  
FOLLOWING THE PROGRAM  
**RESERVATIONS | 913.327.8196 OR RSVP@MCHEKC.ORG**

There is no charge to attend.