

What's next?

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE | JESSICA ROCKHOLD



As MCHE concludes its largest and most expansive project — the partnership with Union Station to support *Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.* — we are often asked, What's next?

At our core, the mission remains. We teach the history and lessons of the Holocaust. We teach with a primary emphasis on local survivor testimony and how the history of the Holocaust can lead to understanding that impacts our world. We recognize that, though the exhibition and our programming over the last year has reached hundreds of thousands of individuals, our work is far from over.

- We see the news of human rights violations around the world.

- We recognize and call out Holocaust distortion and denial by national leaders, as well as locally and by the media.
- We know that antisemitism and acts that marginalize and persecute minority groups are at all-time highs, and that those effects are felt in our own community.

Content and Meaning

How we approach our mission over the next year re-centers MCHE in who we are — an educational outreach center without an exhibit or a museum. We look forward to expanded partnerships through Kansas and Missouri, which will, in part, be designed to meet the requirements of a pending Holocaust education mandate in Missouri. In response to that need, we have committed ourselves to the largest and most significant content creation project in our history, which will vastly expand educational offerings on our website.

We look forward to developing the first year of programming for the Chevra of the Generations — reaching the children and grandchildren of our survivor community and helping them to engage with this aspect

of their family history. We look forward to the gradual return of in-person programming, while maintaining virtual access for those who have joined us over the last two years because of the ability to connect remotely. And we lean into our educational focus for the year which centers on ethics — helping leaders from classroom teachers to board room executives derive meaning from these lessons as they contemplate the spectrum of responsibility exhibited during the Holocaust and how that applies to today.

Beyond Walls

For nearly two years, we have focused our attention on exhibition walls — the power of what can be learned when encountering authentic artifacts. Now, we take that message to spaces with no access to those walls. We seek to ensure that the history and lessons of the Holocaust continue to be taught and to make meaningful connections throughout the Midwest. It is a task for which MCHE is uniquely qualified: To deliver a message our world desperately needs.

Ethics and the Holocaust

PONDERING THE SPECTRUM OF RESPONSIBILITY

Who is responsible for the Holocaust? When confronted with this question most people will answer Hitler, the SS, the Nazis. And while such answers are not incorrect, they are incomplete.

Difficult Questions

The number of active perpetrators in the Holocaust was relatively small compared to the millions of civilians living in occupied Europe during the Second World War. What about these millions of others? Where do they fall on the spectrum of responsibility that ranges from perpetrator, to collaborator, to bystander, to rescuer?

Is the woman who photographs a deportation of Jews outside her home a

bystander, or does her decision to document the event make her something more?

How complicit is the man who buys the household goods of deported Jews sold at auction?

What about children who steal from vandalized synagogues following *Kristallnacht*?

Community Workshops

This winter MCHE has been facilitating discussions in the community to explore these difficult questions of ethics and responsibility. Following a visit to *Auschwitz. Not long ago. Not far away.*, the Church of the Resurrection partnered with MCHE for an evening workshop. Participants discussed these historical situations and took the next step — carefully drawing

parallels to our modern world and their own lives.

High school students at Notre Dame de Sion engaged in a similar exercise in ethics. In conjunction with their visit to the Auschwitz exhibit, MCHE guided these students through a thoughtful discussion on the complexities of inaction and responsibility. One document students read and debated was a report from Paul Salitter, a captain in the SD. His report details the transport Jews from Dusseldorf to Riga in 1941. This account presented students with the opportunity to consider the direct and indirect harm caused by one's actions.

Notre Dame de Sion students were asked to write about their experiences. The poem on the following page was composed by Ella Satterwhite, a freshman at Sion.



When I began work on this message in early February, Kansas City was in the throes of Winter Storm Landon, having tolerated snow and near zero temperatures for several

days. However, the sun always comes up, the snow melts, and spring is not far away. That means flowers, greenery and warmth, but also floods, tornadoes and dust storms.

I compare the change in the seasons to the cycle we see in people's knowledge and perception of the Holocaust, and how that influences their actions and speech. So far, 2022 has presented several disturbing events, beginning with the January attack and taking of hostages at the Congregation Beth Israel synagogue in the Dallas-Ft. Worth area.

Discouragement and Progress

Then we heard Whoopi Goldberg's ignorant remark that the Holocaust was not about race. Thankfully, she has taken steps to educate herself and apologized. Opponents of COVID-19 public health measures continue to compare them to Nazi oppression. Despite these and other incidents, Missouri's governor failed to support the recommendation of the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education to appropriate \$32,000 for a modest upgrade to the efforts of the Missouri Holocaust Education

A Seasonal Perspective on Holocaust Understanding

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE | KARL ZOBRIST

and Awareness Commission. It was a particularly miserly act when the state is enjoying a nearly \$3 billion general revenue surplus.

On the positive side, attendance at *Auschwitz: Not long ago. Not far away.* has been record-breaking. MCHE, as the educational partner of the exhibition, has never before played such a prominent role in a major Kansas City event. Jessica Rockhold and Dr. Shelly Cline spent endless hours at events, seminars and other sessions held in conjunction with the exhibition. Many of you have participated in these efforts, which will undoubtedly bear fruit for many years in the future.

Grateful Reflections

As I reflect over the past three years, knowing my term as president concludes in June, I am thankful for the opportunity to lead a stellar team of officers and to work with so many engaged directors, devoted advocates and faithful members. I have especially appreciated

working with two remarkable women: Jean Zeldin, our first executive director, and Jessica, who carries out those duties so effectively today.

Just as the seasons bring constant change to the Midwest, the pace of change in today's social and political environment requires MCHE to be flexible and responsive. With survivors as our inspiration, MCHE will continue its mission to teach the history of the Holocaust and to use its lessons to counter indifference, intolerance and genocide.

Serving as President of the MCHE Board of Directors has been a singular honor of which I am very proud. May God bless this enterprise for decades to come.

Karl Zobrist is a partner in the Kansas City law office of Dentons US LLP, where he specializes in energy law and corporate governance issues. He is also vice chairman of the Kansas City Metropolitan Crime Commission and a member of the board of trustees of Augustana College. He is president of the Truman Good Neighbor Award Foundation.

Black and White

INSPIRED BY SALITTER'S
REPORT ON THE TRANSPORT
OF JEWS FROM DUSSELDORF
TO RIGA, 1941

*A sheet of paper holds many lives
And a stroke of a pen can end them
Matter of fact words whisper
complex truths
The world is not black and white
A simple number that
conceals suffering
A tone that betrays no emotion
Horror expressed in mundane ways
The black and white of a tragedy
What do you feel as you look back
Does reflection cross your mind
Do you feel regret, do you lament
your hardship*

*Do you know the consequences of
your black and white
What about the lives behind the letters
The Jew who had to live
The ones who still wanted to
Their stories are not just
black and white
Was it all worth it
Did what you gain outweigh your loss
Did your compliance bring you peace
Black and white but stained with red*

Background Image: Jews assembled for transport to the Westerbork transit camp, in a photograph taken clandestinely from a nearby building. Amsterdam, the Netherlands, June 20, 1943
Credit: Verzetsmuseum Amsterdam/Dutch Resistance Museum

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Eliana, Noah, and Danielle Schwartzbard (pictured here with father Jonathan) held their second annual MLK Day hot chocolate stand to raise funds to support MCHC. In 2022, they became our youngest ever White Rose Benefactor members.

*of blessed memory

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New American Archive

IGIELNIK FAMILY DONATION ILLUMINATES POSTWAR JEWISH AMERICAN LIFE

United by loneliness, the newness of America and its language, and above all by their common past, a group of local Holocaust survivors joined together in 1956 to form the New American Club of Kansas City.

This club had a remarkable range of interests and activities. They held social gatherings for their members, raised money for projects within the community and in Israel, and they gave us two pillars of our local Holocaust commemoration — the Memorial to the Six Million and the Memorial Service of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, which we continue as our annual *Yom Hashoah* service.

Responsibility to Inform

From their very inception, this club felt a deep responsibility to inform the world about the Holocaust. Now, thanks to a generous donation of club documents, photos and correspondence from the Igielnik family, MCHE is compiling an archive of New American material. This archive will be of interest to those studying local history, Jewish American life and postwar Holocaust history.

To begin the process, MCHE partnered with Jewish Studies at the University of Kansas. KU seniors, Alaina Tyrell and Danielle Wolff, worked with Historian Dr. Shelly Cline on the initial phases of cataloging and organizing the materials. Both students were enrolled in a service learning class at KU, a course that allows students to engage in meaningful work within the community through projects related to their major.

Featured Documents

A closer look at a few selected documents reveals the diverse interests of the Club and the ever-present memory of the Holocaust.

1959 Letter from Greater Kansas City Committee Development Corporation for Israel

This letter acknowledges the newness of the New American Club and expresses admiration for their achievements in such a short period of time. The Committee requests the participation of the Club in sponsoring a dessert supper to support Bonds for Israel. This collection includes many examples of the Club's participation



December 1959 Letter Sol Margolin

This document provides important insight into the development of our *Yom Hashoah* service. From this letter we learn about multiple



in fundraising efforts for Israel, including the purchase of an ambulance for Israel and regular contributions to the Israeli Orphans Fund.

efforts to commemorate the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising within the community. After 1960, these efforts would be combined into the joint service we know today.

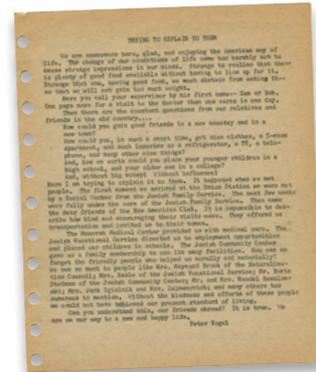
January 1968 Bulletin — The Club regularly communicated with its members through *The Bulletin*. This newsletter was published at least once a month and included announcements, updates and thank yous. This particular edition thanked those who had supplied food and entertainment for the New Year's Eve party earlier that month. It also included well-wishes for members in the hospital and an update on the children of club members who were now in college. Even this announcement, which proudly listed students with their schools, included a statement about how different the lives of these young people were from their parents' generation.

One of the last pages from this bulletin contains a piece by Peter Vogel titled "Trying to Explain to Them." This earnest account describes the experience of leaving Europe and making a new life in America. Mr. Vogel notes the many people and agencies that made his transition to American life possible.

HELP BUILD OUR ARCHIVE

Thank you to the Igielnik family for their generous donation.

If you have items related to the New American Club and would like to donate or allow MCHE to scan, please contact Shelly Cline at shellyc@mchekc.org



"We are newcomers here, glad, and enjoying the American way of life. The change of our conditions of life came too harshly not to cause strange

impressions in our minds."

November 1984 Jewish Chronicle "Campaign Aimed at Moving Memorial"

— In the 1980s, the Jewish Community Center moved from its location on Holmes Road in Kansas City to a temporary location at the Indian Creek Country Club and finally to its current location in Overland Park.



As they waited for the new center to be built, the New American Club made plans to ensure that the Memorial to the Six Million was

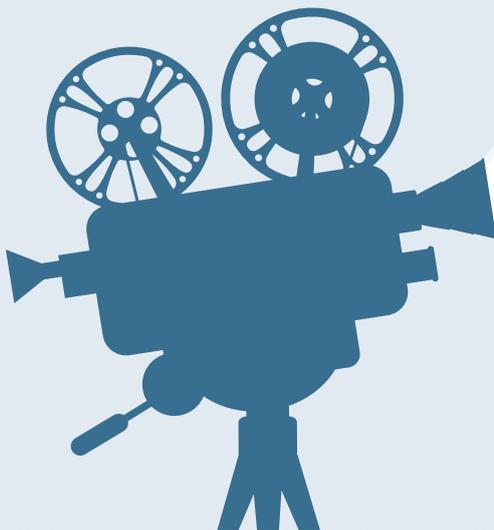
also moved. This article details the move and describes the fundraising campaign to cover the expenses of moving the monument to its new location. The article also gives a brief history of the memorial.

Free Film Series Returns This Summer!

POLISH PALIMPSEST

Film footage from a long-ago vacation, interviews conducted to find lost Jewish graves, Nazi propaganda, and YouTube videos of young Israelis. All the films in this year's series were constructed from footage originally shot for another purpose. This repurposing creates a layered experience through which much is revealed.

The films will be shown at the Jewish Community Campus. Dates and times to be determined. Details will be available at mchekc.org/filmseries/.



Define: Palimpsest

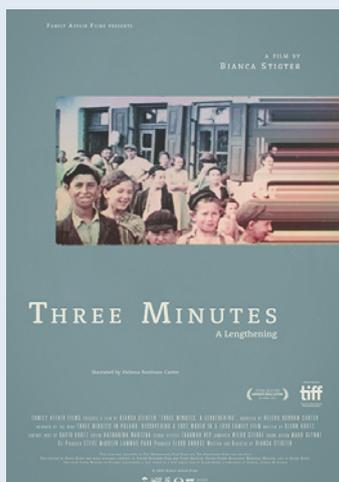
Something having usually diverse layers or aspects apparent beneath the surface

Three Minutes: A Lengthening

In a found holiday film from 1938, the Jewish inhabitants of a small Polish village crowd in front of the camera. The grim, inevitable reality is that hardly any of them survived the Holocaust. In this quest for answers, the three-minute color film is closely analyzed by repeating it over and over.

Who are the people who appear before the camera? What do the grainy letters above the store say?

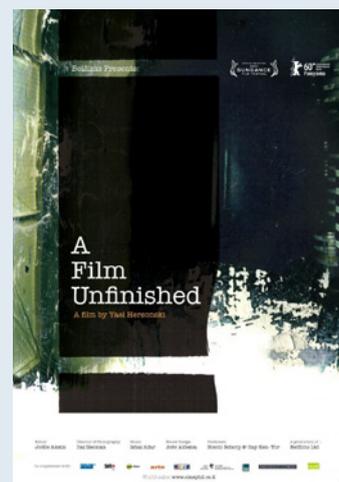
By zooming in, showing the footage frame by frame or enlarging details, the end of the film is constantly postponed — and with it the fate of the villagers. Off camera, a survivor and a descendant talk about the village and its inhabitants, remembering these lives to create a moving cinematic monument. (69 minutes)



A Film Unfinished

This film seeks the truth behind one of the most mysterious Nazi propaganda films ever shot inside the Warsaw ghetto. A rough draft of a silent film juxtaposes meticulously staged scenes of Jews enjoying a life of luxury in the ghetto with other chilling images that required no staging at all.

Ironically, after the war, filmmakers and museums used bits and pieces from the film as objective, general illustrations of the narratives collected from survivors and written documents. Few people were aware of the cynical manner in which these images were created and the true, yet inconceivable witness they bear. By juxtaposing the filmed scenes with its behind-the-scenes' layered reality, *A Film Unfinished* shakes our uncritical trust in the photographic image and the way we perceive the historical past. (88 minutes)



I Remember

I Remember depicts a historical, elegiac fresco about Jews living in small towns of provincial Poland before World War II. The last living witnesses remember not only the joint life of Polish and Jewish communities but also the cruel time of the war. In their accounts, they mention both the cases of hiding their neighbors and handing them over to the Nazi perpetrators. (68 minutes)



#uploading_holocaust

Thousands of young Israelis join "the journey to Poland" each year to learn about the Holocaust. Looking into the journey through the videos they upload on YouTube reveals a moving and troubling image about the way the collective memory is formed in the web age. It offers a fascinating look into how memory and trauma are processed by new generations. (75 minutes)



SURVIVOR PROFILE

Ralph Berets

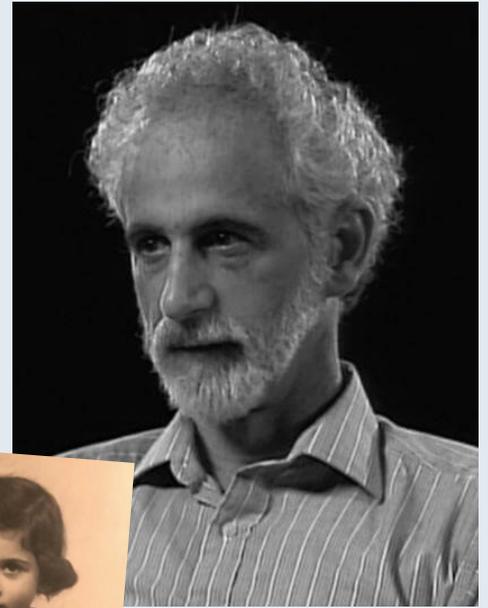
Ralph Berets' parents and older sister fled to the Netherlands from Germany in 1935. His father financed the move by converting their assets into diamonds and gold and smuggling them out of the country.

They settled in Amersfoort, where his father opened a fabric store and Ralph was born in December 1939. In 1940, the Germans invaded and occupied the Netherlands. With the help of contacts in the Dutch underground, Ralph's father arranged for the family to go into hiding, paying their way with the gold and diamonds.

The family spent the next four years in a series of hiding places, including an attic and a chicken coup. In May 1945, Ralph and his family were liberated by the Canadians. The family immigrated to the United States in 1951.

Ralph will represent the survivor community by lighting the survivor candle in the annual *Yom Hashoah* commemoration in May.

To access Ralph's video testimony, visit mcheck.org/survivors.



Ralph Berets and his sister, Marion.
Courtesy of Ralph Berets.

Holocaust Survivors Celebrate a Century of Life

Reaching 100 years of age is a remarkable milestone for any person. When that birthday is achieved by a Holocaust survivor, the milestone is truly worthy of reflection.

Consider that these were children born into a Europe scarred by World War I, though they remember more about their loving homes and families than the politics and economy of the time. They lived in a 20th century that saw great advances in the cause of equality, yet suffered its most grievous failure during the Holocaust. They picked up the pieces of their lives in Europe and emigrated across the globe — placing their love as well as their hopes and dreams for the future in their children and grandchildren — their greatest triumph against Hitler.

They lived in a 20th century that saw great advances in the cause of equality, yet suffered its most grievous failure during the Holocaust.

Over the last two years, our community of Holocaust survivors has seen two 100th birthdays. The first, in April 2021, was Eva Hartwich, a German survivor who fled Hanover after *Kristallnacht*, seeking refuge in Shanghai. Because of Covid restrictions



Eta Mandelberger surrounded by her family on February 9, 2022, one day before her 100th birthday.

at the time, Eva enjoyed a small, private celebration with her immediate family to mark her special day.

In February, MCHE had the honor of celebrating Eta Mandelberger's 100th birthday with her. Surrounded by her children, grandchildren and friends, we shared thoughts on her survival, the resilience she demonstrated in her life, and the impact she had on her family. Eta is a Polish survivor of the Lodz ghetto, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen.



Eva Hartwich, pictured here in 2020, celebrated her 100th birthday in April 2021.

Auschwitz Legacy Fellowship and Affiliated Scholars

MCHE ONE OF FOUR LOCAL PARTNERS

AUSCHWITZ-BIRKENAU MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

On January 26, the eve of both International Holocaust Remembrance Day and the 77th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial Foundation (ABMF), together with its institutional partner the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, and four local partners in the U.S., launched the Auschwitz Legacy Fellowship, a year-long program for U.S. high school teachers.

Resource Partners

MCHE is proud to be named one of the four local partners to participate in this program, serving as the educational resource for educators from Kansas and Missouri. MCHE is joined in this effort by the Mizel Museum supporting Colorado educators, the United Jewish Federation of Utah supporting Utah educators, and the Zekelman Holocaust Center supporting Michigan educators.

The 32 Auschwitz Legacy Fellows were identified through a competitive application process. They will undergo six months of intensive Holocaust education before traveling as a cohort to Poland where they will visit the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial site. There they will spend time with the Auschwitz education team, visit the preservation labs, and deepen their knowledge and skills for teaching this material in their classrooms. MCHE will partner with ABMF to provide pre- and post-trip education for the program.

Power of Proximity

Dr. Shelly Cline, MCHE historian and Director of Education, will be traveling with the participants. She notes, "It can be easy for Americans to think of the Holocaust as a very distant event, far removed from their own world. Having access to the space in which these crimes occurred is a powerful reminder of our proximity to this event. What was once safely confined to black and white images is now before them in the full color of today's present."

We are deeply grateful to Union Station Kansas City for providing the inaugural funding for Kansas City area educators to participate in this program.

2022 KANSAS/MISSOURI AUSCHWITZ LEGACY FELLOWS



**Angie DalBello, History teacher,
Mill Valley High School**

This is such an incredible opportunity to see Auschwitz first-hand and bring new ideas into my classroom.



**Angela Gottesburen, English Language
Arts teacher, Lone Jack High School**

As a student and educator of the Holocaust, it has been a dream of mine to go to Europe, and I cannot believe this dream is coming true. The fact that I will actually stand in places where so many of the testimonies I have read and heard occurred fills me with a sense of commitment and resolve to learn as much as I can so that I can do justice to so many witnesses' memories. I truly believe that this experience will make me a better teacher and make history come alive for my students!



**Jennifer Reeder, Social Studies teacher,
Blue Springs High School**

I know this program will help me develop a personal connection to Holocaust education and, in turn, provide a more meaningful experience for my students. I hope to use this program to teach a more detailed history of the Holocaust, as well as how to use the lessons learned from the Holocaust and apply them to issues of human rights today.



**Crystal Yakel-Kuntz, English Language
Arts teacher, JC Harmon High School**

I am so grateful for the opportunity to learn from the Auschwitz Legacy Program, to support both my personal and professional growth. With access to new learning experiences from the program, I will be able to create more impactful and enduring learning opportunities for my students.

We are also pleased to announce the first Auschwitz Legacy Affiliated Scholars who will receive special access to programs and materials to support their teaching.

**Christina Hernandez,
Liberty High School**

**Angela Lea,
Raytown South High School**

**Brett McFall,
Shawnee Mission South High School**

**R. Gina Renee,
Hyman Brand Hebrew Academy**

Yom Hashoah Community Unites to Commemorate

Across the world this spring, communities will commemorate the loss of six million Jewish lives in the Holocaust. *Yom Hashoah* was first established in Israel in 1959. It is officially observed on the 27th of Nissan, a date chosen because it marks the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising.

This year's community *Yom Hashoah* service will be held on May 1 at 1:30 p.m. in the White Theatre at The J and be chaired by Frances Glazer Sternberg. The ceremony marks 79 years since the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, the 59th anniversary of the dedication of the Memorial to the Six Million, and 77 years since the end of World War II.

"MCHE's watchwords — 'Honoring the past and protecting the future' — are words that I've always tried to live up to professionally as a Holocaust historian and educator," said Dr. Sternberg.

"Now, thanks to MCHE, I will have the chance to live up to those watchwords more personally and more publicly. As a daughter of Holocaust survivors and chair of this year's *Yom Hashoah*, I am privileged to be part of a singular program that links the past with the present and the future and that unites our community and the generations in remembrance and commemoration."



Bessie Fischman Glazer (of blessed memory) and Abraham Glazer. Rozavlea, Romania 1946

HYBRID LIVE EVENT

After two years of pre-recorded ceremonies, this year we are pleased to offer a hybrid live event. For those who attend in person, proof of vaccination and masks are required.

Members of the community who are not able to attend in person are invited to watch the livestream event on MCHE's YouTube channel (MCHE Kansas City) beginning at 1:30 p.m.

THURSDAY JUNE 23, 2022 | 6:30 P.M.

Save
the
Date

MCHE Annual Meeting and Elections Honoring Outgoing MCHE President Karl Zobrist

MCHE members are invited to submit nominations for the MCHE Board of Directors and Council of Advocates by emailing Nominating Committee Chair Steve Flekier at info@mchekc.org.

A determination of meeting format (virtual or in-person) will be made in May. Registration to attend will be available at www.mchekc.org/annualmeeting at that time.

MCHE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President | Karl Zobrist

Immediate Past President | Steve Flekier

Vice Presidents | Steve Cole • Jackie Hermanson • Dr. Ron Slepitza • Rita Sudhalter

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Directors Emeriti | Maria Devinki* • Isak Federman* • Jack Mandelbaum

* of blessed memory

MCHE TEAM

Jessica Rockhold – Executive Director
jessicar@mchekc.org

Dr. Shelly Cline – Director of Education/Historian
shellyc@mchekc.org

Dana Smith – Accounting Manager
danas@mchekc.org

Ronda Hassig – Librarian
resource@mchekc.org

A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO OUR GRANT AGENCIES



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