



Honoring the Past  
Protecting the Future®

# MIDWEST CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION NEWSLETTER

FALL/WINTER  
2011-2012



Photo Credit: Jason Cohn

Maestro Marvin Hamlisch is the winner of virtually every major arts and entertainment award that exists, including three Academy Awards, four Grammys, four Emmys, one Tony, three Golden Globes and a Pulitzer Prize.

He captures the power of music to bring people together, sharing stories that will charm you with his wit and touch you with a testament to his parents who fled pre-war Austria.

## MCHE Celebrates 18th Anniversary

Eighteen years of teaching the history of the Holocaust. Eighteen years of applying its lessons to our own times. Eighteen years of making a difference by countering indifference, intolerance and genocide.

Eighteen has a special meaning in Judaism. The Hebrew word for "life" is "chai" and the numerical equivalent of the two Hebrew letters that form the word "chai" adds up to 18.

Hence, MCHE will mark its 18th (*chai*) anniversary year with a grand night of entertainment and commemoration on November 3, 2011, at 7:30 p.m. in Helzberg Hall at the new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts.

Co-chaired by Rich and Judy Hastings and Ron and Barbra Porter Hill, it will be a musical celebration TO LIFE featuring the legendary Marvin Hamlisch.

Join us in honoring MCHE's directors emeriti and past presidents, whose vision and leadership have shaped the organization since its founding in 1993, and in paying tribute to our community's Holocaust survivors. Together, we can ensure that their legacy connects current and future generations to this history and the lessons it continues to teach.



**Marvin Hamlisch in Concert**  
**November 3, 2011 • 7:30 p.m.**  
**Kauffman Center**  
**for the Performing Arts**

### PATRON & DONOR OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

Please consider the patron and donor opportunities listed on the special insert between pages 4 and 5 and return your reservation in the enclosed envelope.

All patrons at the \$1,000 level and above will enjoy a pre-concert cocktail reception at Webster House.

Priority seating is limited and will be assigned as reservations are received.

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**MCHE** ♦ 913-327-8190  
info@mchekc.org • www.mchekc.org

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

# Looking Forward with Confidence and Pride

I am very proud to be addressing the community as president of the Board of Directors of MCHE!

Eight years ago, I worked on MCHE's Tenth Anniversary event, shortly after I was asked to serve on the Board of Governors. Over the past six years, I have been honored to serve on the Board of Directors and also as vice president of fund development and vice president of community relations.

I have big shoes to fill, following in the footsteps of Mark Adams, Gayle Krigel and other presidents who have raised the bar in establishing our organization as a leader in the community, dedicated to ensuring that our children and their children never forget the lessons of the Holocaust while honoring the memory of the survivors. I am confident that I will be able to accomplish our goals with a terrific board and a committed team of dedicated officers. We also have a great professional staff, including Jean Zeldin, Fran Sternberg, Jessica Rockhold, Dana Smith, Laurel Maslowski and Sarah McMeans.

On November 3, we will celebrate our past and insure our commitment to the future at the

new Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts, a world-class facility, with a performance by renowned artist Marvin Hamlisch. Proceeds from the event will be used to advance and strengthen our school and community programs and to carry forth the legacy of our cherished survivors. We hope you will join us for a delightful evening in the magnificent Helzberg Hall. Your support for this special event will enhance and sustain our work at MCHE.

Thank you if you are currently supporting MCHE with your gift of membership, and if you are not a member, then I ask you to please consider becoming one! Your membership at any level is valued and appreciated, and I can assure you that we will use your charitable dollars wisely and carefully. During the coming year, we also encourage you to attend our numerous and meaningful programs that further our mission—to teach the history of the Holocaust, applying its lessons to counter indifference, intolerance and genocide.

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*Steve Chick*

## MCHE Welcomes New Web Site and Communications Coordinator

Take a moment, if you haven't already, to visit MCHE's redesigned web site at [www.mchekc.org](http://www.mchekc.org). We are excited about the educational possibilities that lie ahead. New features include enhanced content and resources, program registration and a secure, internal donation link.

Major funding for the web site project was provided by a grant from the Courtney S. Turner Charitable Trust at Bank of America, with additional support provided by a grant from the William T. Kemper Foundation, Commerce Bank Trustee, and by gifts from Art and Diane Federman, Bill and Regina Kort, Jason and Heather Kort, and Jack Mandelbaum.

We also have a new part-time staff member, Sarah McMeans, whose responsibilities as communications coordinator include web management. Sarah has worked in public health communications for the past five years, with previous experience in fundraising, event planning and advertising. A graduate of Kansas State University, she is excited about putting her skills in writing, design and web management to work in a challenging and fast-paced environment that offers new learning opportunities each day.

[www.mchekc.org](http://www.mchekc.org)



**EDUCATORS' BLOG** <http://holocausteducators.blogspot.com>

**FACEBOOK** <https://www.facebook.com/MidwestCenterforHolocaustEducation>

# MCHE at 18: Chai-lights and Lessons Learned

I never received my pin for 25 years of teaching. Instead, during the summer of 1993, I became executive director of the newly founded Midwest Center for Holocaust Education, and—despite numerous questions about whether or not I missed teaching—I never looked back. I knew from 24 years of classroom experience the impact this history had on middle school students. Yet, I could not have envisioned the opportunities I would have, the remarkable people I would meet, the knowledge I would gain, the community support that MCHE would enjoy, or all that it would become.

Compelled by a sense of urgency—with most survivors then in their 70s—we hit the ground running with our Witnesses to the Holocaust project, culminating 16 months later in nearly 50 recorded testimonies and two documentary films. Since then, MCHE has developed a treasure trove of memory and educational resources to remind future generations why “six million” is best understood through personal stories.

## 1993: A Turning Point

The year 1993 also saw the opening of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and the release of *Schindler's List*. The Holocaust had gone mainstream. No longer was it a “footnote in history.” The world understood that if we educate, we will remember.

Students born that year have now graduated from high school and those educated then as seventh and eighth graders are now in their 30s. As voters, in leadership positions at universities and in their professions, they recall their knowledge of the Holocaust. Inspired in many cases by memories of listening to a survivor, they can

make a difference and positively influence the actions of their peers. If confronted with Holocaust denial, they know the truth.

## Life-long Learning

The Holocaust inspires life-long learning—perhaps because of the enormity of the tragedy, perhaps in an effort to understand how it could have happened, perhaps because we live in a world still plagued by genocide. Researchers and historians continue to add to the immense knowledge base. On a personal level, I have learned much and continue to learn.

From students and educators, I have learned that...

- We cannot assume that students know about the Holocaust. We must ensure that this history is communicated to them personally and accurately.
- We must not let the Holocaust define young people's connection to their Judaism or non-Jews' perception of Jewish history. We must also teach about the beauty of Jewish life and the culture of the Jewish people.
- The Holocaust is not and cannot be just a Jewish issue.
- To keep the Holocaust relevant, we must connect it to events in today's world.
- To improve today's world, we must remember the Holocaust.

From scholars and historians, I have learned that...

- The Holocaust was perpetrated not by madmen, but by intelligent, charismatic, methodical bureaucrats.
- The Holocaust was a process—implemented with the willing cooperation and complicity of those from all professions and all levels of society.

- Rescue was not a silver lining to the Holocaust. It was all too rare and all too often only a temporary reprieve from the inevitable.

And from the survivors themselves...

- Despite sharing a collective history, each victim's experience was unique.
- Liberation was not a “happily-ever-after” ending to the Holocaust.
- Distance from the events does not dull the pain.
- It is possible to retrieve one's humanity from the depths of inhumanity.
- Never take our families or our freedom for granted.

## Our Adult Years

At 18, one still has much to learn and many challenges yet to meet. Like those entering their “college years,” ever mindful of our roots, MCHE will expand our network, focus on what we do best and prepare financially for our future. There will be new initiatives, new highlights and new lessons—some, predictable, the result of strategic planning and visionary thinking—others, serendipitous, as world events unfold or as unanticipated opportunities present themselves.

As MCHE graduates into our “adult years,” we will reflect upon past highlights and build upon the lessons we have learned, staying true to our mission. MCHE will continue to reach out to current generations while putting in place programs and resources to educate those who come after us.

Above all, we will honor our commitment to transmit the messages and legacy of Holocaust survivors, protecting that which has been entrusted to us.



# Nuremberg: Its Lessons for Today

SPECIAL SCREENING OF RESTORED POST-WAR DOCUMENTARY

*Nuremberg: Its Lessons for Today*—the first complete 35mm picture and sound restoration of the U.S. Government’s post-war documentary about the first Nuremberg trial—will be shown at a special preview screening on November 10, 7:15 p.m., at the Glenwood Arts Theatre.

Columbia University adjunct professor Sandra Schulberg, who restored the film and is the daughter of Stuart Schulberg, who wrote and directed the original film, will be present to provide personal family perspectives about this work, as well as historical and political context. Schulberg is also the niece of noted screenwriter Budd Schulberg, who made information and propaganda films for the War Department and the Office of Strategic Services during World War II and later compiled filmed evidence against the Nazis for the Nuremberg trials.

Produced in 1948 under the auspices of the U.S. War Department and the Motion Picture

Branch of U.S. Military Government in Berlin, *Nuremberg* sought to show what happened in the courtroom before the International Military Tribunal and why such a trial had been necessary.

Shown extensively in Germany as part of the Allies’ de-Nazification campaign, the film was suppressed during the Cold War, experts believe, to avoid making the Soviet Union look good and the United States’ new ally, West Germany, look bad.

As we mark 65 years since the conclusion of the International Military Tribunal, conducted during the Truman Administration, the film and the events it depicts remain relevant today. The trial established the “Nuremberg principles” and laid the groundwork for all subsequent prosecutions for crimes against the peace, war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

The screening of *Nuremberg* is co-sponsored by MCHE and the Harry S. Truman Library and Museum. A dessert reception will follow the film.



*U.S. Signal Corps camera teams were able to shoot only 25 hours during the 10-month trial, a major challenge for the filmmakers later charged with making Nuremberg: Its Lesson for Today.*  
© Schulberg Productions, Inc.

Advance tickets are available for \$15 each by calling 913-327-8194, by visiting the MCHE office, or online at [www.mchekc.org](http://www.mchekc.org) or [www.fineartsgroup.com](http://www.fineartsgroup.com). They may also be purchased at the Glenwood Arts Theatre box office. (A fee of \$1.00 applies to online orders.)

## Exhibits and Lectures



### *Emma Lazarus Exhibit*

A traveling exhibition exploring the life and legacy of Emma Lazarus—poet, critic, advocate for the poor, early feminist and champion of immigrants and refugees

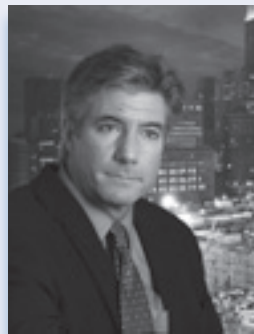
Now through October 14

Exhibit talk Sunday, October 2, 2011, 2:00 p.m.

Hasia Diner, professor of American Jewish History at New York University, discusses the great century of Jewish migration, from the 1820s through the 1920s.

*Sponsored and hosted by the Kansas City Public Library*  
14 West 10th Street • Kansas City, Missouri

[www.kclibrary.org](http://www.kclibrary.org) • 816-701-3407 • Free Admission



### *James Young: Stages of Memory in Berlin and New York After 9/11*

Authority on memorial architecture and former juror for the World Trade Center Memorial Site competition and Germany’s national Holocaust memorial, Dr. Young offers a meditation on architecture’s capacity for reflecting evolving narratives and mediating public spaces and personal memories.

October 23, 1:30 p.m.

Kansas City Public Library • Plaza Branch, Truman Forum  
4801 Main Street • Kansas City, Missouri

Reservations requested at [www.kclibrary.org](http://www.kclibrary.org) or 816-701-3407

Free Admission

*Co-sponsored by the Kemper Museum of Contemporary Art, Kansas City Public Library, MCHE, American Institute of Architects Kansas City, and Prairie Gateway Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects*

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**2010-2011  
WHITE ROSE ESSAY  
CONTEST FINALISTS**

**10TH-12TH GRADE DIVISION**

*Lee's Summit High School*

Natalie Branch

Jackie Land

Daniel Vernon

Teacher – Christopher Bobal

*Liberty High School*

Ryan Anders

Nick Smith

Teacher – Sara Wickham

*Notre Dame de Sion High School*

Devlin Woods

Teacher – Dennis Conaghan

*Saint Thomas Aquinas High School*

Natalie Bunker (2nd Place)

Moira Cullings

Megan Schilling

Dani Spafford (1st Place)

Teacher – Lisa Bauman

**8TH-9TH GRADE DIVISION**

*Blue Valley Northwest High School*

Mykell Ma

Teacher – Helen Hardgree

*Curé of Ars Catholic School*

Ben Trickey (2nd Place)

Teacher – Sharon Walters

*Harmony Middle School*

Lauren Baumert

Teacher – Ronda Hassig

*Indian Woods Middle School*

Ben Iba

Brandon Maxey

Teacher – Laura Patton

*Trailridge Middle School*

Grace Amundson

Audrey Gleason

Casey Kelley (1st Place)

Teacher – Gay Ramsey

*Westridge Middle School*

Elijah Bunde

Maggie Byrne

Teacher – Jennifer Jenkins

To read the winning essays,  
visit [http://mchekc.org/  
WhiteRoseStudentEssayContest  
Finalists.aspx](http://mchekc.org/WhiteRoseStudentEssayContestFinalists.aspx).

# Holocaust Education Has an Impact

The following excerpts from MCHE's 2010-2011 White Rose Student Essay Contest are from contestants in grades 8-12 who attend public and parochial schools in the Greater Kansas City area. Their reflections bear witness to the importance and impact of Holocaust education and to the lessons it teaches.

*"I plan to exercise the many freedoms I am guaranteed and honor all who have fought to protect those freedoms by participating in community service projects that promote good citizenship."*

*"Reading so much about the Holocaust has made me realize that while saying 'never again' is easy, making it happen is a lot harder."*

*"It takes one person to change a life. I believe I can change someone's life that feels they don't belong."*

*"These survivors are truly great and inspiring people. They should be role models for determination, humility and strength."*

*"It was not the lack of God's presence in the Holocaust that made it unbearable, but the absence of humanity."*



10th-12th grade runner-up Natalie Bunker and winner Dani Spafford with their teacher Lisa Bauman.

*"I realize that I need to stop taking the simple things for granted. Things like a safe home, supportive community and a democratic government should never be underappreciated."*

*"The Holocaust affects me today by making me think about every decision I make. It teaches me to be kinder and to think more about whether my words or actions will hurt somebody."*

*"Reading about the Holocaust really puts into perspective what matters in the end. Take a chance today to let a family member know how much you care for them; there are millions of victims who wished they could have done the same."*

## 2011-2012 White Rose Student Essay Contest Focuses on Events of 1942

### FINALISTS AND WHITE ROSE SOCIETY MEMBERS TO BE HONORED AT MCHE'S ANNUAL MEETING

After the establishment of the death camp system in 1941, full-scale destruction of the Polish ghettos began in 1942. By summer and early fall, massive deportations were underway and the Operation Reinhard camps (Belzec, Sobibor, Treblinka), which were designated for the murder of those communities, were operating at full capacity.

This year's White Rose Student Essay Contest, open to 8th through 12th grade students in the 18-county Greater Kansas City area, asks contestants to research the history of a specific Polish ghetto from the perspective of one Jewish person who experienced or witnessed the deportation from that ghetto during 1942 and to reflect on how learning about the Holocaust through first-person testimony makes the events more meaningful.

Students in the following counties are eligible to participate:

- Kansas: Atchison, Douglas, Franklin, Johnson, Leavenworth, Miami, Shawnee, Wyandotte
- Missouri: Buchanan, Cass, Clay, Clinton, Jackson, Johnson, Lafayette, Livingston, Platte, Ray

This year's finalists will be honored at MCHE's annual meeting on May 10, 2012, where MCHE also will recognize members of its White Rose Society, donors who contribute annual membership gifts of \$500 or more.

Students and sponsoring teachers should reference full contest guidelines and criteria at [http://www.mchekc.org/  
WhiteRoseStudentEssayContest.aspx](http://www.mchekc.org/WhiteRoseStudentEssayContest.aspx). The postmark deadline for entries is April 2, 2012.

## A SECOND GENERATION DAUGHTER EXPLAINS

# Why I Speak *By Regina Kort*

For the past three years, my mother, Sonia Warshwaski, and I have been speaking to schools and community organizations on behalf of MCHE. As a member of the second generation, I was asked more than once by Jean Zeldin, executive director, and Jessica Rockhold, director of school programs, if I would consider speaking since the survivors were declining in number and it was important to keep their stories alive.

Throughout my entire youth and a good portion of my adulthood, the Holocaust and my parents' stories of survival were subjects I avoided talking about because it was very painful to me. Deep in my heart, I knew it was important to share their history when asked about it, but emotionally I had trouble handling it. I also did not consider myself a public speaker and was quite anxious about speaking in front of groups.

I am not sure what the defining moment was for me, but three years ago I decided I needed to be a part of this important effort, in memory of all my relatives and all those who perished under Hitler's regime. I felt that the most effective way for me to tell my mother's story was to create a Power Point, which I did with Jessica's help. It includes photos of my mother's family (the majority of whom were murdered by the Nazis), photos of her hometown of Mezreich, Poland, and photos of the three death camps she survived from 1943 until her liberation in April of 1945.



*Regina Kort and her mother, Sonia Warshwaski*  
Photo Credit: Fred Poese

I interviewed my mother over a period of three months to get the facts and put everything in chronological order. This was a bit difficult but very rewarding. For the first time, I had a time line of my mother's story during the war. It has also been rewarding for the rest of my family since we were always confused as to what happened when and other details that were never very clear to us.

When I speak, I almost always bring my mother to elaborate about her experience after I finish my presentation. The combination is quite powerful. Everyone is so honored to meet a survivor and to hear in her own words what she witnessed. Frequently, students send notes to my mother and me telling us how special it was to meet my mother and how they will never forget her story. "Life changing" is a phrase that students and adults often use in their thank you letters.

It is important for me to know that when my mother can no longer speak on her own behalf, I will be able to speak for her and make certain her story continues to be told.

## MIDDLE SCHOOL TEACHER RECEIVES DOUBLE HONOR

Congratulations to Terry Beasley, MCHE's newest Lerner Fellow! A classroom teacher at Lakeview Middle School in the Park Hill, Missouri, School District, Terry earned this honor by participating in the Alfred Lerner Summer Institute sponsored by the Jewish Foundation for the Righteous (JFR) in New York.



*Kate Trarnofsky (left) and Johanna Stark present Terry Beasley (center) with the Sonder Award.*

Alfred Lerner Fellows are nominated by local Holocaust centers designated by the JFR as Centers of Excellence. MCHE has previously sponsored 13 members of its teaching cadre, as well as two staff members, to attend this seminar, which features noted scholars and pedagogical sharing sessions among participants.

Terry was also this year's recipient of the JFR's Eduard Sonder Scholarship, awarded by his granddaughters, Kate Trarnofsky and Johanna Stark, who as children were able to leave pre-war Germany. Eduard, who was not able to emigrate, was killed during the Holocaust and the girls never saw him again. Terry also received Teuscher chocolates, a reminder of the gifts Eduard would bring his granddaughters upon his return from business trips to Switzerland.

To read more about Terry's JFR experience, go to <http://holocausteducators.blogspot.com>. To learn more about the JFR, visit [www.jfr.org](http://www.jfr.org).

## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

If you were unable to attend MCHE's Speaker Programs in July featuring noted historians Robert Jan van Pelt and Severin Hochberg, you can access podcasts of their talks online.

### **Auschwitz in the Courtroom**

By Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt

<http://kcdv.tv/mchekc/robert-jan-van-pelt/auschwitz-in-the-courtroom.html>

### **James McDonald and the Refugee Crisis 1933-1946**

By Dr. Severin Hochberg

at [www.trumanlibrary.org](http://www.trumanlibrary.org) (Posting date TBD)

## MCHE RESOURCE CENTER HOURS

Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. and until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesdays when schools is in session.



*Dr. Robert Jan van Pelt*



*Dr. Severin Hochberg*

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for an online version of this  
newsletter plus additional  
history and resources.



## TO LIFE

*a musical celebration of life, learning and legacy*

**11.03.11** | 7:30 p.m.

**Helzberg Hall | Kauffman Center for the Performing Arts**

Marvin Hamlisch *in concert*

**Event information is available in this newsletter and online at [www.mchekc.org](http://www.mchekc.org).**

**For questions, email [tolife@mchekc.org](mailto:tolife@mchekc.org).**

MIDWEST CENTER FOR HOLOCAUST EDUCATION