TOGETHER WE WILL REMEMBER: HOW COLLABORATION AND COMMITMENT HAVE BROUGHT A COMMUNITY TOGETHER AROUND HOLOCAUST STUDY-- FOR TWENTY YEARS!

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AKRON, OHIO

ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LIBRARIES 52ND ANNUAL CONFERENCE
JUNE 19-21, 2017 – NEW YORK CITY
Together We Will Remember

• Why do or should we REMEMBER?
  – JUDAISM: G-d Commands us ZAKHOR! REMEMBER!

• In Akron, Ohio a synergy of efforts by Holocaust educator, public and Jewish libraries, and the City of Akron makes this reality
A. Akron Jewish Community Federation / Jewish Community Board of Akron -- **Educational Resource Center** (1980-2005)

1. Established 1980 by Esther Hexter to serve teachers / others through
   a. Collection resources, audio visual materials, curriculum consultation, seminars and in-services.

2. Topics included: Judaism: Holidays, Bible & Sacred Texts, Customs & Traditions; Jewish History; State of Israel; Jewish literature; U.S. / World Jewry, etc.

3. Specific grant established a **Holocaust Resource Center** within E.R.C.
   a. Included: books, a-v materials, lesson plans, survivors accounts, etc.
   b. Curriculum and resources for middle and high school teachers and interested community learners

4. Individual curriculum consultation and design; plus small teacher workshops.

5. Note E.R.C. and its library were closed in 2005. Books and resources were offered to teachers. The Holocaust seminar continues through grants.
Partnerships in Formation

B. City of Akron, Office of the Mayor – Holocaust Commemoration Committee (1987 – ongoing)


Assigned Staff: Since beginning - 3 deputy mayors, 2 program specialists and support staff

   a. Members from Akron-Summit County Public Library, Akron Jewish Community Federation [now Jewish Community Board of Akron], City of Akron, Akron Public Schools, area arts organizations, some clergy and interested citizens
   b. Staffed by Mayor’s Office
   c. First Chairperson - Akron Jewish Community Federation Executive Director

City of Akron Holocaust Commemoration Committee
continued

3. Developed City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest 1989 – ongoing for students from Akron and surrounding Summit County (public, parochial, private and home schooled). 2018 is 30th anniversary of contest!
   a. Theme selected annually by committee
   b. Two Divisions: I Middle School & II High School
   c. Included over time - Writing, Arts, and Multi-media entry opportunities.
   d. Entries judged by educators, Holocaust survivors, experts, writers, artists, etc.
   e. Funded by Holocaust Memorial Trust Fund – donations from community
   f. First Place Winners and their teachers: trip to Washington, D.C. - includes United States Holocaust Memorial Museum
   g. Annual Booklet includes copies of winning entries and names of all entrants.
   h. Annual Display of award winning art and excerpts from writing at ASCPLibrary

4. Developed Web Site – www2.akronohio.gov/holocaust
   a. Includes Teacher & Student Resources [from Holocaust Seminars (see below)]
   b. Award winning student works and foreign entries
   c. Students from Akron international affiliate cities invited to submit entries in separate category. [Kiryat Ekron, Israel; Chemnitz, Germany; Weihai, China]
Welcome to the City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Welcome to the City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest webpage. Here you will find all the information needed to participate in the contest, as well as a showcase of winning entries from previous years.

Thanks to our sponsors and continuing partnership with the community, this year marks the 29th year for the contest and the 31st year of our Annual Holocaust Commemoration Ceremony.

I am truly grateful to the many community members and teachers who have dedicated their time and expertise, by educating students and honoring the lives lost during this time in our world’s history. Are commitment to remembering assures that the next generation will never forget these past horrific actions, and is better prepared to stand firm against hatred.

Our students’ awe-inspiring submissions are a testimony to the depth of their understanding of each year’s theme. Their ability to communicate powerful messages through their unique talents is also a source of pride for our entire community.

I invite you to join us this year as we explore and gain insights from this year’s theme, “When Hatred Becomes Law: The Eroding of Rights in Nazi Germany 1933-1939.”

Our annual exhibit of winners, awards ceremony and commemoration will be held at the Main Library of the Akron Summit County Public Library. The Holocaust Art and Writing Exhibit will be held April 17 to May 17, 2017. The Awards Ceremony and Commemoration, open to the entire community, will be April 25.

First place winners are awarded an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, D.C. to visit the United States Holocaust Museum and other historical sites.

On behalf of the entire Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest and Commemoration committee, we look forward to seeing your submissions on February 3.

Mayor Dan Horrigan
Partnerships in Formation

C. Annual Holocaust Seminar for Teachers & Other Interested Learners -- 1992 – ongoing

1. Created by Esther Hexter and partners from beginning and sponsored by Akron Jewish Community Federation /now Jewish Community Board of Akron [JCBA] with help from partner institutions.

2. From 1998-2017 Esther Hexter, Jewish Community Board of Akron, and Barb White, Akron-Summit County Public Library, have been seminar co-chairs; with The Lippman School joining in 2013.
   a. Barb White & Esther Hexter have extensive background in Holocaust resources.
   b. Advantages to collaborating with colleagues from different disciplines.

3. Since 1998 the annual Holocaust Seminar themes have corresponded to City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest themes to aid teachers in presenting information.
   a. Both Esther Hexter and Barb White also serve on City of Akron Holocaust Arts and Writing Contest Committee

4. Through 2005 annotated resources /bibliographies from the Educational Resource Center of Jewish Community Board of Akron and from Akron-Summit Country Public Library were combined.
5. Seminars generally include sessions on History; Keynote Presentation by experts from USHMM, area professors, etc.; Survivor – Eyewitness Testimony; Invitation to City of Akron Holocaust Arts & Writing Contest; Using Resources; and Strategies for Teaching.
   a. Each seminar is 4 hours with option of 4 CEU credits.
   b. Seminars are offered from 4-8:00 PM generally in early fall.

6. All session materials and resources are also posted on City of Akron Holocaust Contest web site for use by teachers and students. This includes lesson plans from key sites including museums. www2.akronohio.gov/holocaust

7. Seminar receives limited grant from dedicated Holocaust Education fund at JCBA.
   Registrants pay for dinner and small amount towards seminar expenses.

8. Three-way collaboration enables serving broad community, including: educators and other interested adult learners. Seminar information is also distributed to area colleges / universities for faculty and students.
Akron Holocaust Seminar
Topics & Themes *

- Revisionism: You Can Help “Right” History
- Holocaust and Racism
- Anne Frank: The Legacy The Promise/Tolerance
- Holocaust Ghettoes
- Why Oppose Hatred and Cruelty
- The Lives of Children
- Holocaust: Rescue & Assistance
- Helpers & Bystanders: Rescue and Indifference
- When Hatred Becomes Law: Eroding of Rights in Nazi Germany 1933-1939
- Rescue & Assistance
- Survivors & Their Families
- Bearing Witness in the 21st Century
- To Do the Right Thing: the Holocaust & Beyond
- Do Not Stand Silent: Kristallnacht 1938
- Fighting Apathy: Power of Individual Choice
- Liberators & Liberation: Exploring Issues
- Women & the Holocaust
- At War’s End: Survivors and Lives Continued
- Survivors: Stories, Challenges & Legacy

* Note: Some themes have been repeated
Annual Holocaust Seminar
Challenges & Opportunities

1. Keeping up to date on variety of formats and new research.
2. Evaluating resources for accuracy and identifying intentional historical revisionism.
3. Addressing the absence of eyewitness testimony as survivors age/die.
4. Encouraging teachers to include Holocaust study for their students.
5. Meeting state standards and/or working to help bring about state mandates.
6. Meeting needs of teachers and other seminar registrants.
7. Considering the uniqueness of the systematic, state-sponsored “war against the Jews” and the sacredness of Holocaust memory, while also acknowledging post-WW II genocide.
WHEN HATRED BECOMES LAW:
THE ERODING OF RIGHTS IN NAZI GERMANY, 1933-1939

SELECTED RESOURCES FROM THE
AKRON-SUMMIT COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

The Holocaust: General Resources


Berenbaum, Michael. The World Must Know: The History of the Holocaust as told in the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. USHM. 2006. An excellent and accessible resource from an important source.


Downing, David. Origins of the Holocaust. World Almanac. 2006. Well-done overview of the history of Anti-Semitism and of pre-war Germany, and of the sequence of events that brought Hitler to power. (Accessible to middle- and less-proficient high school readers.)…
Do you know how one says “never” in camp slang?

“Tomorrow morning”

Just as our hunger is not that feeling of missing a meal, so our way of being cold has need of a new word. We say ‘hunger,’ we say ‘tiredness,’ ‘fear,’ ‘pain,’ we say ‘winter’ and they are different things. They are free words, created and used by free men who lived in comfort and suffering in their homes. If the Lagers had lasted longer a new, harsh language would have been born...

--Primo Levi
Minute Particulars

He who would do good to another must do it in Minute Particulars: general Good is the plea of the scoundrel, hypocrite, and flatterer, for Art and Science cannot exist but in minutely organized Particulars.

–William Blake
“The angels, who are they?” I asked my grandfather on Friday evening during his weekly visit. He leaned forward and whispered a secret in my ear. “The angels my child are all of us, sitting attentive and peaceful around this table covered by a white cloth and transformed into an alter. You, I, and all of our guests, therein lies the force and grandeur of Shabbat, it makes possible for man to fulfill himself.” I heard heavenly wings fluttering above my head. I heard them I swear.

But since I left you, grandfather, I have not seen the angels anymore. This, too, I swear. In truth grandfather, I think they stayed behind, in our forgotten little town buried in the mountains, invisible like you and me. Like all of us.—Eli Wiesel
Morry Chandler:

“I can’t believe that I was really yet a kid. My god, I had a mother. And I had a grandfather. And people were getting married and bringing forth generation after generation. It’s looking back and saying, ‘yes, there was a world.’”

Berlin, 1933:
Germany, 1935:  

Rosenheim, Bavaria:  
http://www.iwm.org.uk/ww1reflections/item/object/205194335
“Citizens protect your public spaces. Keep your dogs on a leash. The yellow benches are for Jews (in accordance with the Reich’s law) for their free use.”

Oliviaplatz, Berlin, 1937:
https://collections.ushmm.org/search/catalog/pa1154487
I went to talk to them: “What happened during the war [in 1942]?” They replied, lifting their hands to the sky: “The Jews...the Jews...They were walled up. They were walled up under the marketplace in a cellar.” The Germans had burnt some straw to make smoke and smother them. Then, after closing the door, they piled two meters of earth on top.

The women told us that, for four days afterwards, the Jews had tried to get out, and that one could see the ground of the marketplace moving. On the fifth day, the silence was total... I ventured to ask “When did you reopen the cellar?”

“In 1954,” one of them replied.
“This is what we must do—not to sleep well when people suffer anywhere in the world. Not to sleep well when someone’s persecuted. Not to sleep well when people are hungry all over there or there. Not to sleep well when there are people sick and nobody is there to help them. Not to sleep well when anyone somewhere needs you.”—Eli Wiesel