

## Living On Premieres in Poland in June

**M**ira Kimmelman, a native of Danzig, now Gdansk, Poland, survived the Majdanek, Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen concentration camps. Today she lives in Oak Ridge. Kimmelman once spoke at a Days of Remembrance observance in a Knoxville synagogue about her experiences — a “moving account,” recalls Victor Ashe.

Ashe was mayor of the city then and now is American ambassador to Poland. Beginning June 21, he will be the unofficial host of *Living On: Portraits of Tennessee Survivors and Liberators*, a photographic exhibition whose subjects include Kimmelman.

The exhibit will be displayed at the photography gallery at the Academy of Fine Arts in Warsaw from June 21 through early August, and then may be shown in Krakow, the conference center at Auschwitz, Lublin and Lodz. The traveling exhibition includes portraits of 30 Holocaust survivors who are from Poland and eight U.S. Army liberators and witnesses. The accompanying text will be in English and Polish.

The main exhibition, from which the Poland tour was drawn, contains portraits by Tennessee photographer Robert Heller of 72 Tennesseans, with biographical text written by Dawn Weiss Smith and Susan Knowles. It was conceived by the



Mira Kimmelman

Tennessee Holocaust Commission and was mounted in 2005 at Nashville’s Frist Center for the Visual Arts. In the following two years the exhibition went to UT Chattanooga, Clarksville’s Customs House Museum, Western Kentucky University, the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, East Tennessee Historical Society, Lambuth University in Jackson and the Renaissance Center in Dickson.

“Of course, as a Tennessean, I feel no small sense of pride at the success of this project and the exposure it brings to Holocaust survivors and rescuers in my home state,” Ashe said. “That Tennessee connection of the exhibition certainly was an element that piqued my interest and made it all the more appealing. But I also feel something more than home state pride here. There is a deeper sense of satisfaction as well, satisfaction that the *Living On* exhibit — as an historical account that documents the past, an entire culture, those who suffered persecution and those who survived and rebuilt their lives — will reach a broader audience because of our efforts.”

Ashe said that bringing the exhibition to Poland “helps commemorate the individuals depicted in the photographs but, even more, the events, the trials and suffering of so many, and ultimately, all the millions whose lives were torn by the horrors of the Holocaust. Our role in keeping their memory alive, ensuring that they indeed are ‘living on,’ as the name of the exhibit recalls, is what is most important and, to me, most satisfying.”

James Wolfe, the embassy’s cultural attaché, who is facilitating the exhibition’s Poland tour, said that *Living On* “demonstrates how just one state in the United States is touched by the enormity of what happened in the Nazi German death camps and POW camps.”



Amb. Victor Ashe and James Wolfe

The primary reason for mounting *Living On* in Poland is that “the largest and most notorious camps were located in occupied Poland, and the majority of the victims lived in pre-war Poland, which is clearly reflected in the stories of the survivors, rescuers and liberators featured in this exhibit,” Wolfe added. “*Living On* also shows one more link between the United States and Poland.”

Heller, THC Chair Felicia Anchor and THC executive director Ruth Tanner plan to attend the exhibition’s Warsaw opening, whose speakers will include Ashe, Heller, Israeli Ambassador David Peleg and a Polish government representative.

The exhibit’s display in Poland will promote a message of “the importance of tolerance, given the disastrous results that extremism can bring about,” Wolfe said. “Poles are generally well aware of the suffering that Nazi Germany inflicted — being among the principal victims — but it is a message that never loses relevance.”

Wolfe said that he expects *Living On* to be “very popular and embraced by many people wherever it is shown” in Poland. “During the fall, we hope it will be used as a teaching tool in schools where the horrors of World War II and the Holocaust are already taught.”

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**From the Chair...**



*Felicia Anchor*

This has been an incredible year for our Tennessee Holocaust Commission. We have expanded our mission by reaching out to the populations of our state through both dynamic educational programming and exceptional professional development.

As you read about the travels and impact of our Living On exhibit, Web site and educational workshops, I hope you will see the scope of our outreach. We are endeavoring to provide every interested educator in Tennessee with the ability to teach about the Holocaust through the personal experiences of eyewitnesses.

Our Teacher Fellow program expands our ability to provide quality in-service and resource assistance to educators on the local level. Our Fellows will provide the energy and commitment of the Commission in the grand divisions of Tennessee. Any educator who calls upon them for help will be most impressed with their knowledge and ability.

Once again, I am proud to lead a delegation of Tennessee teachers to study in Europe in connection with the Richard Stockton College, Lest We Forget seminar. It was there, during our first trip, that I was able to connect to my own family roots as I stood in Treblinka to pay homage to them. Thanks to the generosity of the Guilford Glazer Foundation and the Belz and Lipman families, we were able to provide scholarships to our participants to make the trip possible.

Approximately six million people live in Tennessee. They are talented, skillful and energetic. They contribute to the political, scientific, intellectual and artistic life of our country. They are part of families and committed to justice and kindness. The loss of six million lives is devastating. Imagine how different the world would be without the contributions of the citizens of this wonderful state.

Our work at the Tennessee Holocaust Commission is dedicated to memory and education. With your ongoing support, we will continue the work of teaching future generations the significance and impact of the Holocaust.

With appreciation,  
 Felicia Anchor



*Living On - continued from page 1*

Wolfe added that he is working with the host institutions in Poland to supplement the exhibition with lectures by historians, veterans and Holocaust survivors.

In addition to the Poland tour, the American exhibition of Living On will move to East Tennessee State University's Carroll Reece Museum from September through November and to the Cookeville History Museum in 2008. Teacher seminars and other events will be held at both locations.

# From Teaching to Mentoring Teachers

After eight years as a high school teacher in Tennessee, Italy and Pennsylvania, Nashville native Julie Doochin needed a break from the profession. She saw an employment notice that she knew was the right fit: education director at the Tennessee Holocaust Commission.

Since September, Doochin has worked in the newly established, part-time position, serving as a resource to teachers throughout the state and steering them to materials that will assist in their teaching of the Holocaust.

The work is “perfect for me,” Doochin says. “I’ve had a passion for history, particularly the Holocaust.”

So much so that Doochin did her master’s thesis on the representation of the Holocaust in Italian cinema, watching all available films and examining the published reactions of Italian audiences and film critics.



Julie Doochin

Doochin, who had taught for three years at Williamson County’s Franklin High School, spends most of her time consulting with administrators and teachers on methods and ideas for integrating Holocaust studies into their curricula. That has included informing them of the broad educational resources that THC makes available.

She has hit the road, meeting teachers — “not as much as I would like,” she says — and running workshops at Lambuth University, the Tennessee Council for History Education Conference and for Williamson County teachers on strategies for teaching the Holocaust and other genocides. Doochin also serves as a mentor to five of the 12 teachers who this year were chosen as participants in THC’s Tennessee Holocaust Teacher Fellow Program. (See accompanying article.)

Doochin consults often with education experts at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum and has been to Washington twice. “I take a lot of my cues from the museum,” she says. “They’ve thought long and hard about strategies for teaching the Holocaust.”

Doochin says that she encourages teachers to adopt active, “creative approaches” to Holocaust studies by emphasizing art and writing in journals. She recently initiated a project designed to revamp the Commission’s Web site, making it more user friendly, particularly to teachers, and adding lesson plans that promote interdisciplinary learning.

THC executive director Ruth Tanner said that Doochin is someone who is “energetic, articulate, experienced as a teacher and has a passion for the subject that is contagious.”

When Doochin taught in the state, she attended some of the annual THC Educational Outreach Project (EOP) sessions at Vanderbilt University and brought her students to the programs. “I found it to be an extremely important topic, and I loved that I could offer it to my students. It was a treat for [them]. It was an opportunity to spend a day focusing on the Holocaust. I got ideas for lessons that I could use in the classroom.”

Now, Doochin notes the irony of coordinating the program for THC and contacting school administrators throughout the state to locate teachers who most would benefit from taking part.



*Teacher Fellow Program - continued from page 4*

“I want them to bring it down to their lives: that if you’re a bystander while perpetrators do this, you are involved, too,” she said.

Her project involves her students’ researching photographs of pre-Holocaust European Jews who are performing everyday activities. Students then gather information such as each picture’s year, location and the names of the people shown. Students also will assemble their own family’s photographs that portray the same activities. “All of these things will give them a greater understanding of the Holocaust and of themselves, and of what it means to be a citizen and part of humanity in general,” she said.

Davis added that being named a fellow “lends a certain authenticity” to the course plans that she is filing with the state’s board of education.

Davis said that she has enjoyed meeting other fellows at THC meetings this year. “Anytime you’re with a group that shares your passion, it’s invigorating,” she said. “It’s kind of [in] my heart. Everyone’s got great ideas.”

Sometimes, the effect of those ideas is learned only years later. Coble recently came across an article on a former student’s heading his college’s chapter of Habitat for Humanity, the national organization that helps build housing for poor people. The man said that her class on the Holocaust and on stereotyping had played a role in his activism.

Said Coble: “That was the affirmation I needed.”



# Teacher Fellow Program Concludes Inaugural Year

**T**HC is proud to announce the successful conclusion in June of its inaugural Teacher Fellow Program. The program included 12 teachers in various regions of the state who have taught the Holocaust and who will serve as key THC resources to other teachers.

The teachers represented east, west and middle Tennessee. Each created projects this year for use in their region or school system that, according to THC's executive director Ruth Tanner, met three criteria: drew the attention of their school population and the greater community, offered pedagogical substance to students and colleagues and could be replicated.



The lessons from each project will be posted on THC's Web site. The program is funded by THC, with additional support from the state legislature. It included a five-day intensive introduction in Nashville and at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, in Washington, D.C.

The teachers are due to report on their projects at a follow-up conference in Nashville in June.

"For some time, we have been seeking ways to create a network of well-trained, experienced teachers from across the state who could serve as resources for teaching about the Holocaust," Tanner said. "There is a real need for other teachers to have colleagues to whom they can turn for questions as well as teaching materials that work."

Paul Fleming, principal of Nashville's Hume-Fogg Magnet High School; a former teacher, Griff Watson; and THC's education director Julie Doochin served as mentors to the 12 fellows.

Jill Coble is a fellow who includes the Holocaust in her sixth-, seventh- and eighth-grade social studies and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes at

Smyrna Middle School and Truman Francis Arts Academy, both in Rutherford County. Along with another fellow, Lyn Newman, Coble designed an arts competition for students in which they could utilize such media as photography, sculpture, masks and drawing to address the lives and items that victims left behind when they and their families were deported.

Coble said that her students, who come from Albania, Iraq, Mexico, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, already have "an understanding of what they've left behind ... families, relationships and fond memories."

The project is voluntary for her students, but those who participate will earn grades for their work, Coble explained. In future years, the project will be mandatory, she added.

"I know that the benefit they'll get from doing this will stay with them because when you do your own research or create or interpret, you have some ownership of it," Coble said.

Duane Eliff, who teaches eighth-grade literature at Savannah's Hardin County Middle School, said that he long has had an interest in teaching his students "the Holocaust beyond Anne Frank." For his project, Eliff is teaching Nancy Patz's *Who Was the Woman Who Wore the Hat* and having his students use their own memorabilia. Some students may pair their favorite music with pre-World War II Jewish music.

Eliff said that he favors this project because "not all students are linguistic learners," and through art students "are affirmed in their dominant learning styles." The completed project will be displayed at a local bank and court house, Eliff said.

On April 26, the class also produced what Eliff called a "living biography" dramatic presentation of some of the subjects who were depicted in the Living On: Portraits of Tennessee Survivors and Liberators photographic exhibition. Another teacher painted a backdrop for the event, featuring maps of Europe and of

Tennessee, with stars plotting survivors' European birthplaces and Tennessee hometowns.

Eliff said that he feels "very proud" to have been selected as a fellow, and is careful to accurately present information to all whom he addresses on the Holocaust, whether students or members of the community.

"I am passionate about Holocaust education," said Eliff, whom THC chose as 2003's Teacher of the Year in the western Tennessee region. "I think that it's an important thing for young people to learn about: to train them to live better and [to warn of] the dangers of targeting people." The payoff, he said, is when sixth graders say that they are eager to enter eighth grade so that they can learn about the Holocaust.

Athena Davis, from Cleveland High School, teaches an 11th- and 12th -grade class on literature of pre-war European Jewry and of the Holocaust. Davis is considering including such works as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *On Both Sides of the Wall*, *Images from the Holocaust* and *We Are Witnesses*.

Davis said that she wants her students to understand the historical context of the Holocaust and to draw lessons applicable to such contemporary tragedies as that in Darfur, Sudan.



Rep. Kevin Brooks and Athena Davis

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# Seven Teachers Attend THC's Europe Seminar

Approximately five years ago, a student in Christiane Schmidt's German-language class at Morristown-Hamblen High School East said something that shocked her. The Berlin native admits to being strict, but she was unprepared for being called a Nazi.

She contemplated the incident and decided to turn it into a lesson — for the students. Schmidt gave each a worksheet on which to list such personal information as their physical looks, religious belief and political leaning. Next to the answers she placed a red, green or yellow dot. Schmidt explained that in the 1940s in Germany such personal attributes could mean death in a Nazi gas chamber (red dot), confinement in a labor camp (green) or survival (yellow).

"They asked, 'Why?'" said Schmidt. "I said, 'That's what we'll talk about.'"

The discussion dealt with "what happens when we're not tolerant toward those who are different," Schmidt said.

Schmidt went on to take a deep interest in the Holocaust, including teaching it and attending THC workshops.

This summer Schmidt will be taking another step in her professional development. She will participate in THC's summer seminar in Eastern Europe from July 7 to 18. Seven teachers from Tennessee will join the seminar, which is being coordinated by New Jersey's Richard Stockton College.

The seminar, the second in which THC is participating, will include visits to Berlin, Warsaw, Lublin, Krakow and Prague and to the Majdanek, Treblinka, Sobibor, Auschwitz and Theresienstadt camps. While in Warsaw, the group will have the opportunity to tour the Living On exhibition and to meet Ambassador Victor Ashe.

The program is being funded by a generous gift from Guilford Glazer, of Santa Monica, California, by scholarship assistance from the Commission's Belz-Lipman program and by the participants.

Schmidt said that she will be participating because the experience, like other Holocaust

seminars she has attended, will further "ignite" her in the classroom and will lend greater authenticity to her presentations.

"You don't understand the material until you've been there," Schmidt said of the places she'll be visiting. "When there's a genuine passion, you relate the topic so much better, and then kids can relate to it. If you touch something, you tend to be a better teacher. ... It's all about relevance. If you teach in a vacuum, it's harder to reach the kids."

Janet Hertzog, who teaches third graders at Johnson City's Mountain View Elementary School, has been interested in the Holocaust since reading Corrie Ten-Boom's *The Hiding Place* back in 10th grade in Pennsylvania.

While she misses the discussions she had on the Holocaust with her high school students, Hertzog said that talks can be held on the topic, on a different level, with her much-younger pupils.

Hertzog sees a "huge need for education and understanding" on the Holocaust, and that need became more apparent in a recent conversation. Hertzog was telling a college professor, a native of Poland, about her upcoming participation in the THC summer seminar, when the woman interjected, "I'm not anti-Semitic, but it wasn't only Jews who died in the Holocaust" and went on to say that the Holocaust is spoken about too much and that her great-grandfather perished in a concentration camp, too.

"Don't people ever learn?" said Hertzog. "That's why I'm interested in participating and going to these places. People generally only care about people who are like them. That's why it's so hard to get action [taken] with what happens in Darfur [and] Rwanda. We have to stop having that mentality. We have to care about people of all races, religions and backgrounds. ... The more you educate yourself, the more you open your mind to things."

Monnie DeBerry, who teaches at Savannah's Hardin County Middle



*Monnie DeBerry and Memphis survivor Jack Cohen*

School, said that she has been saving money from each paycheck to pay for the trip because it will provide her with "a better understanding" of the Holocaust and may "make me even more compassionate."

"I'll have photographs to bring back [and can state.] 'This is where it happened,'" DeBerry said. "Maybe, as a selfish reason, because I can grow as a person, and my students can naturally grow from my teaching."

DeBerry said that she wishes to see where European Jewish life was lived and where it was destroyed. Similarly, at a THC seminar she attended last November in Washington at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, she could not look away from an archival film of bodies being taken away on a wagon just "like lumber to a fireplace," she said.

"I wanted to look. If we close our eyes to it, or refuse to see it [or] if we stand by and don't do anything, it could happen again," she said. "By seeing the images, it lets you know that this is real."

More than anything, DeBerry wants to participate in the program because "it means that much to me to do it," she said. "I've always felt that everyone has something that they can be passionate about and touch others with."

## THC Acquires Nelly Toll Print Collection

**A**uthor and artist Nelly Toll has donated her personal collection of 61 prints that illustrate 13 months in hiding during the Nazi occupation of Poland. Toll was a child of eight when non-Jewish Poles hid the young girl and her mother in a small bedroom in their apartment. From her perch behind a “secret window” she observed the outside world. During that time, Toll illustrated her confinement and her fantasies of a life in freedom.

This collection is the only set of high-quality color reproductions of Toll’s original watercolors. It is the most complete set of childhood images known to have survived the Holocaust.

The collection is housed at Middle Tennessee State University, where it will be cleaned and minor repairs made. It is being readied for circulation to schools and libraries in the coming year.



*“In the long months of hiding, my mother became my girl-friend and teacher. We played many domino games together.”*



*“I wished that I too could walk outdoors like the children I watched from behind our window.”*



### **2007 Belz-Lipman Awards ceremony**

*Left to right, Rep. Mark Maddox, Sen. Rosalind Kurita, 2007 Belz-Lipman recipients Deborah Broyles, Athena Davis and Elaine Radcliffe, Joshua Lipman, Rabbi Philip Rice and Sen. Tim Burchett.*