

# THE FLAME

A Publication of the Tennessee Holocaust Commission, Inc.

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## VISIT OUR WEB SITE

Be sure to visit [www.tennesseeholocaustcommission.org](http://www.tennesseeholocaustcommission.org), where you may read this and the previous (inaugural) *Flame* newsletter. On the web site, you will also find information on THC's history, THC-sponsored outreach and education programs, awards the Commission bestows on teachers, and information on reference lending libraries and resource catalogues that THC makes available. The site also allows teachers to share lesson plans on the Holocaust. You also will find links to many more sites dealing with Holocaust education.



Gov. Don Sundquist (left) and Lt. Gov. John Wilder (right) join Jack A. Belz in congratulating Nancy Kemp, an American History teacher from Centennial High School in Williamson County. Kemp was one of three Tennessee teachers presented with a Belz-Lipman Holocaust Educator of the Year award for 2002 at a ceremony at the State Capitol in April.

## THE CHALLENGING MONTHS AHEAD



From the Chair  
*Felicia Anchor*

Dear Friend,

We are pleased to provide you with our latest edition of *The Flame*, the newsletter of the Tennessee Holocaust Commission (THC). As you review these pages, you will learn about the exciting and innovative programs the THC continues to develop and implement. Our cause: to convey an accurate history, memory and understanding of the Holocaust. The challenge of meeting these goals becomes more difficult as we move further and further away from the historical period, and as the Holocaust is exposed to layer after layer of interpretation. The Commission has begun considering a long-range plan to ensure that we create and develop the type of programming and educational outreach that focuses on the needs of a broad spectrum of our Tennessee citizens so that their understanding of the Holocaust era is enhanced.

Our commitment to the past also helps underline an abiding lesson: that this atrocity has direct applicability to our lives today. This is especially compelling as we deal with issues of understanding, tolerance and justice in the wake of the September 11 terrorist attacks. Unfortunately, once again we learned that prejudice lurks just below the surface.

While our mission and mandate remain critical, **our financial resources have become a serious challenge. We have felt the impact of a projected 25 percent reduction in**

**state funding for the Commission in the current fiscal year.** We do not know what the future will hold. This shortfall has greatly affected our ability to implement our current program and curtailed most of our efforts to expand into new areas. **We have had to stop the expansion of our Teacher Resource Trunk Project, and plans to develop a teacher-training program within the state have been postponed. We have reduced funding for our Educational Outreach Programs. Our uncertain financial future means that our ability to do our work is jeopardized.**

Our Tennessee Holocaust Commission has an international reputation as a leader in Holocaust education. We have created exciting new dimensions in this field. Our adult education program and our upcoming book on the Holocaust and genocide (to be published in May by Vanderbilt University Press) are recognized as innovative and well respected in the Holocaust education community. **We will need to work with our legislators in hopes of restoring our past funding levels and will seek funding from new venues if we are to meet our goals.** We sincerely hope that as you read about our successes to date, you will feel encouraged by our efforts and serve as our advocates and supporters in the months to come to both the legislature and the community. We remain committed to the causes of remembrance and education. Now it will require an even stronger effort to ensure that we reach our goals. We encourage you to let us know how you can help. ○

## PERPETRATORS EXHIBIT: READY TO LOAN

Artist Sid Chafetz had tackled the Holocaust before—long ago, shortly after World War II. Working from photographs, he sketched scores of drawings of victims. The more he did, the worse he felt. He doubted that non-Jews could relate to his outrage, and came to believe that the effort served solely as a personal catharsis.

So Chafetz destroyed the drawings.

"I felt I had done it and gotten it out of my system, but I didn't think it was exhibition material," said the now 80-year-old from his home in Columbus, Ohio. "I was frustrated. It was news, but it wouldn't be news for much longer."

In the late 1980s Chafetz experienced what he described as a "Eureka! moment" and decided on a new approach. The result is his exhibition, *Perpetrators*, a set of 42 woodcut lithographs that portrays the Nazi functionaries and average citizens without whom, he believes, the Holocaust could not have occurred. Each print of a subject, measuring approximately two feet by three feet, includes text informing the viewer of the person and what he did.

Two copies of the exhibition are owned by THC and will rotate to schools and universities throughout the state. "They represent a major opportunity for outreach for us, especially to far-flung corners," said THC executive director Ruth Tanner.

A third is owned by the Florida Holocaust Museum in St. Petersburg, Florida. The museum's curatorial consultant, Stephen Feinstein, called Chafetz's exhibit "an early-warning system" for the future. Feinstein said he could name nearly 30 artists around the world who also take on the Nazi aggressors.

"Seeing *Perpetrators* does put a new light on this [subject]," said Feinstein, who is the director of the University of Minnesota's Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies. "In contemporary political struggles, one does not remember the [individual] victims; one remembers who's in charge. It goes to the question: What does evil look like? Evil looks like us. That's as simple as it is."

Evidently, the message is not so clear to all viewers. At a recent showing at a local Jewish Community Center, several Russian Jewish immigrants were offended at what they saw as Chafetz's honoring of the perpetrators. They met with the artist. "They had their own history of suffering and atrocities, and they were not about to tolerate this," Chafetz said. "I explained that they were completely misreading it. I said that my idea was to inform people who may not have been aware."

The artist, a retired Ohio State University art professor, prepared the series primarily as a vehicle for reaching college students, "for whom World War II was ancient

history." Often when the lithographs are exhibited, they are accompanied by lectures and discussions on themes related to the Holocaust. Local public school students often are invited.

At Canada's University of Alberta, the program dealt with such themes as law, education and the arts. Chafetz wrote an essay for the booklet that accompanied the seminar. He explained how he, as an artist, deals with the atrocities of the Holocaust.

"Hitler would not have done what he did without the support he got from educated people," said Chafetz. "War has been a subject for artists for hundreds of years, most of it battlefield images. Mine was the first one that focused on the perpetrators, including the governmental and civil service functionaries."

Chafetz sees *Perpetrators* as his professional legacy. "It's my most meaningful work of art because of the educational value. An artist does a whole lot of work if he lives long. Some of the work can be frivolous, some can be meaningful only to the artist. But this, I think, found a wide audience because it appealed to the spectator. ... All my life, I was looking for a way to portray that period in a way that would be meaningful." ○

*The exhibit requires 175 feet of display space. It is available in two options: Set One: unframed, covered in acetate, and grommeted for quick and easy installation, and Set Two: framed in wood. Both sets contain the 42 lithograph prints. Contact THC for more information: (615) 343-2563 or ruth.k.tanner@vanderbilt.edu.*



Paul Joseph Goebbels, a 1991 lithograph from the exhibit *Perpetrators* by Sid Chafetz.

## D.C. SUMMER SEMINAR MEETS TEACHERS' NEEDS



Teachers from Tennessee listen raptly to a presentation by survivor Manya Friedman during the 2001 summer seminar at the USHMM.

Mark Workman said he was in "desperate need" of maps that compared 1933 Europe and post-World War II Europe. Tericia Summers wanted to expand the range of books to draw on for teaching her Holocaust classes. Helena Baier had to know "how widespread" the killing was.

Tennessee middle and high school teachers each had distinct reasons for participating in last June's seminar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM) in Washington D.C., and they invariably returned home recharged and better equipped to apply the new-found lessons.

The same can be expected, no doubt, from the crop of new and returning teachers who will attend this year's seminar at the USHMM, scheduled for June 19-22.

Most participants work in parts of Tennessee with few Jewish residents, so each cited a major benefit of the seminar as the professional gathering itself, which included Jewish and non-Jewish teachers. Meeting others from throughout the state and discussing ideas, brainstorming, learning what works and doesn't, chatting at dinner, comparing notes on sessions they were attending — all added up to a learning experience that extended well beyond the formal program.

Those interviewed also underlined the value of meandering through the museum at hours when the general public was not allowed, and leisurely examining exhibit items and explanatory text without pressure from the hordes to move on. They told of sitting spellbound by the experiences of Manya Friedman, a Holocaust survivor from Poland who volunteers her time as a speaker and docent at the USHMM.

"I really loved this trip. I couldn't think of a more intimate, valuable setting. It was unanimous, that we

wished we all had more time," said Glenda Fugate, an eighth-grade history teacher at Woodland Middle School in Brentwood. "At night, I'd climb the steps [of the Lincoln Memorial] and stop by Abe Lincoln and look at the words. It was incredible. It was a ripple effect."

There were revelations, too. Workman, who teaches a unit on the Holocaust in his 10th grade English class at Morristown-Hamblen West High School in Morristown, had thought that the 12 to 15 days he devotes annually to the subject were insufficient for the breadth of material. He was stunned to hear how colleagues taught their material in just a week. Then again, there was his roommate during the seminar, a private school teacher, who had the luxury of devoting one month to the Holocaust. In light of the disparity, he concluded, "I wish I had longer, but I'm not complaining."

Baier, who teaches history and geography at Portland High School in Sumner County, said she wanted to "learn about other people so that I could talk about how all-encompassing in Europe [the Holocaust] was." The standard information that schoolchildren learn about the period tends to come from reading *The Diary of Anne Frank*, said Baier, who added that "there was a whole lot more to the Holocaust" than that.

Summers, a ninth-grade English teacher at Chattanooga's Brainerd High School, and Baier spoke of how the seminar and museum ran emotionally deep, beyond the intellectual stimulation.

Viewing the room with thousands of worn shoes conveyed to Baier beyond mere numbers that "these were real people who lost loved ones, who went through torture." Summers said the seminar "really broadened my knowledge of the Holocaust" in that it helped her develop "an emotional connection to what Hitler did," especially when she walked through the museum's exhibitions. Summers said she was struck particularly by the three-story tower of photographs that revealed the everyday lives of residents of the shtetl Eisheshok. And she, too, was struck by the shoes.

"Shoes are such an everyday item. You connect with these people because you have shoes," she said. "I looked down and saw the shoes on my own feet. It was the emotional realization of [imagining] another mother with two kids. There was a sense that there was someone else like me, who ended up suffering horribly — and those might have been her shoes, and the little shoes over there might've been her daughter's."

Baier, who now has spent three years incorporating a Holocaust curriculum, found it "extremely helpful" to mingle at the seminar with colleagues who'd come from throughout the state and hear how they teach the material.

The teachers stated that they returned to Tennessee better equipped to present the subject matter in more compelling ways. Summers, for one, said that she has moved beyond *The Diary of Anne Frank* to other sources.

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(Seminar, continued)

This year she began utilizing the book *Tell Them We Remember*. She assigned her students sections of the book, like Kristallnacht or deportations, telling them, "Okay, you're a reporter. Report on what you just saw." The students then worked in groups to assemble the correspondences into a mock newspaper and a multi-media presentation.

"I was able to use a wider strategy with these kids, rather than just read, answer questions and take a test," she said. "Much more of the information was gathered by the students, rather than me standing up there and telling them." ○

## 17 HOLOCAUST EDUCATION TRUNKS FIND PERMANENT HOMES



Students from Upperman High School explore the contents of the Holocaust Education Resource trunk donated to Putnam County.

Paul Steinfeld never learned about the Holocaust in the schools he attended in Skokie, Illinois, but he was exposed to the era easily enough. He knew many Holocaust survivors who attended his synagogue. Steinfeld's father Manfred escaped Germany before World War II but the Nazis killed Manfred's mother and sister. Manfred helped liberate the Woebelin concentration camp as a soldier in the U.S. Army's military intelligence.

So when the opportunity came to convey the history of the Holocaust to Tennessee students, Paul Steinfeld jumped in. In the name of the Steinfeld family, he funded one Holocaust Education Resource Trunk, which resides in Morristown High School.

The gift was one of three provided in 2001 to school systems throughout the state. The others were for Robertson County (as a grant from the Community Foundation of Middle Tennessee) and for the Memphis Jewish Federation (a gift of Jack Belz). The trunks contain a plethora of books, videotape documentaries and feature films that deal with the Holocaust. In 2001, THC placed another 14 trunks in the care of school systems throughout Tennessee (see box for complete list). They were paid for through THC's budget and private donations.

Steinfeld, who has been on THC's board for 12 years, recalled when the television miniseries *Holocaust* aired in the late 1970s, and his colleagues at work did not believe that real events were depicted. The business consultant sees the trunks as resources to inform students of the facts and to prevent ignorance.

"What happened in my father's life, to my relatives — it's part of me," he said. "We in the succeeding generation have an obligation to make sure this never happens again. Education is the best way. Especially when you get to some rural parts of the country. People's focus may not be as wide and their horizons as broad as people in cities."

"I have always taken the approach that to understand yourself, you have to understand your neighbors. Mark Twain had a great line about travel, that it reduces prejudice. And if [people] can't travel, you bring it to them.

"I felt that the trunk is a fantastic idea for teachers throughout the state to teach the curriculum on the Holocaust. The more tools you give educators, the more adept they will be at teaching the curriculum," he said.

"The trunk is something I wanted to do for Hamblen County. I felt that with [THC's] limited funds, any way I can help, I want to. I feel strongly that there's a lot of ignorance out there in the world, and if you can make students understand that everybody's the same, it helps combat prejudice." ○

### Educational Resource Trunks Find Permanent Homes in 17 Locations

As of January, Holocaust Education Resource Trunks have been placed in the following schools and school systems throughout the state:

#### East Tennessee

Kingsport City Schools  
Greenville City Schools  
Sevier County  
(all four high schools)  
Knox County  
Hamilton County  
Morristown High School

#### Middle Tennessee

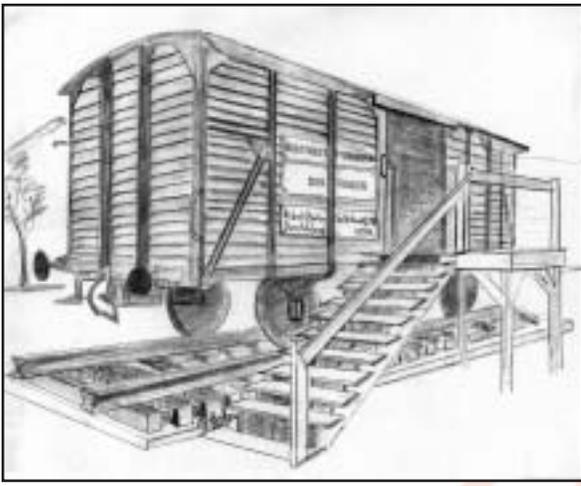
Marion County  
Putnam County  
Sumner County  
Robertson County  
Davidson County  
Rutherford County  
Williamson County

#### West Tennessee

Jackson  
Memphis City Schools  
Shelby County Schools  
Memphis Jewish Federation

*Trunks also may be borrowed for one month periods by contacting the Commission's office. Shipping services have been generously donated by the Federal Express Corporation.*

*Holocaust Education Resource Trunks come equipped with four class sets of books, dozens of individual book titles, video tapes, lesson plans and teacher guides. Trunks contain \$2,500 in materials and may be purchased for individual schools or school systems. Contact Ruth Tanner at (615) 343-2563.*



A Nazi-era railroad car houses the Children's Memorial to the Holocaust in Whitwell.

## WHITWELL MIDDLE SCHOOL DEDICATES MEMORIAL, EXPANDS PROJECT

When Whitwell Middle School began its now-famous Paper Clip Project in 1998, the students participating in the special after-school Holocaust program set as a goal accumulating a symbolic six million paper clips.

Little did anyone imagine that today the sum would reach more than three-fold: 20 million. A railroad car donated to the school by Germany holds 11 million, one for every Jew and non-Jew the Nazis murdered. People can ascend steps or a ramp, walk through the middle of the car and peek through the glassed-in ends to see what 11 million clips looks like.

The school's ambitious road started modestly, with its roots in a conference that Whitwell history teacher and assistant principal David Smith attended at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga four years ago. Principal Linda Hooper had asked Smith to find a way to teach about tolerance, and Smith knew he'd struck gold at a session on the Holocaust at the conference, which was sponsored by the International Education and Resource Network.

Smith listened as a Holocaust survivor addressed the group, and at that point, he said, "it all clicked."

"In my mind, I said, 'That's it.' That's what I'm looking for. She talked about how she talks with kids from other countries. I said, 'I want our kids to hear from survivors.'"

"That was the first time I ever heard a survivor speak. I, having never heard a survivor or known much about the Holocaust — it blew me away. That's what I had come for. I knew that day how we'd teach the Holocaust to these kids through teaching tolerance, how we'd get the parents involved."

Upon his return, Smith conveyed his concept to Hooper, and she agreed. That fall, the first unit on the Holocaust was taught after school hours.

This year the Whitwell School Holocaust group expanded its scope to *shtetls*, the rural market towns with large Jewish populations that once dotted Eastern Europe.

Students research the histories of each town, establish how many Jews lived there and how many were killed. A box representing an individual *shtetl* includes a teacher's guide to the Holocaust, historical information on that *shtetl*, and the amount of paper clips corresponding to the town's victims. The school plans to make the *shtetl* resources available on loan to classes across the country.

As the Whitwell faculty made the journey — individually and as a teaching team — to an enriched understanding of the Holocaust, they tapped the resources of THC. Felicia Anchor, Commission Chair, noted: "in the early stages we helped spread the word about the Paper Clip Project in Tennessee, in the United States and around the world. We were pleased to offer our advice and counsel on educational elements of the project at every stage and are proud of Whitwell's accomplishments. It was our honor to attend the dedication of the Children's Memorial as special guests in November."

"We've seen the importance of Holocaust education and what it can bring, and we want to share it with everyone else," Smith explained. "We know what this enlightenment can show. What's going on in Israel, in Afghanistan, what happened September 11 — it all validates the Holocaust project. It shows there's still a great deal of intolerance in the world today." ○

## STATE ADOPTS STANDARDS FOR TEACHING ABOUT HOLOCAUST

When Michele Ungurait was hired in June 2000 by Tennessee's department of education as its social studies coordinator, her mandate was to establish standards for grades K-12.

Broad swaths of subjects were vague. Civics, for example, was to be taught sometime between grades six and eight, and the students may not have covered it by the time they took state tests.

So when curricula were rewritten, they included, for the first time, standards that called for the Holocaust to be taught as part of the seventh-grade world history, eighth-grade American history and high school world history lessons.

Among the teachers who sat on the committee that helped write the new standards was Paul Fleming of Nashville's Hume-Fogg Magnet High School. Fleming teaches the Holocaust and has worked closely with both THC and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum.

"He made sure it got in," said Ungurait of the Holocaust component of the curricula. "He was the minder of the store."

Ungurait said it was "important" to her to have genocide recognized in the high school curriculum. She told of sitting on a train in the middle of the night in Serbia in 1994 with her late husband and seeing Muslim families exiting and later re-entering another train. She is not sure, but suspects that the Muslims were being deported en masse.

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The image recalled what she'd read about the Nazis' deportation of Jews. Ungurait had never taught the Holocaust before but knew that she wanted the Holocaust and other campaigns of ethnic intimidation and killing, like Rwanda and Serbia in the 1990s, to be taught.

"We as educators don't do a sufficient job of teaching the creation of the State of Israel; certainly the Holocaust and World War II were central to that happening," she said. "We use the Holocaust and Bosnia as examples to study to get a greater understanding. Contemporary tragedies have at their core what happened in the Holocaust.

"It's incredibly important for kids to buy into the relevance of their subject matter. And they won't get it if we don't tell [the teachers] they have to teach it." ○

## DID YOU KNOW?

The Irvin and Elizabeth Limor Educational Outreach Program was established in 2001 to support an annual conference for secondary school teachers in Middle Tennessee.

Your contribution can provide similar benefits to teachers, students and the general public across the state. THC depends on private contributions to expand and grow its programming.

THC is a tax-exempt organization. Contributions may be made to its operating budget or may be designated for specific donor interests.

Your gift will impact the content and quality of education in Tennessee. **Please be generous. Act now.**

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# THE FLAME



Commissioner Lon Nuell assists Rachel Olsky, a Holocaust survivor, in lighting one of six memorial candles. The Days of Observance ceremony on April 9 was attended by members of the Tennessee General Assembly, the Governor and Lt. Governor, area survivors and teachers and their students.