



Holocaust & Intolerance  
Museum of New Mexico

# The Herald

SUMMER 2018

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*Eliminating hate  
and intolerance one  
mind at a time.*

*President's message*

## Volunteering is priceless

There are many cartoons of a teenager asking a parent for money. Obviously, I am no longer a teenager and, when I was one, I rarely asked my parents for money. I was encouraged to earn my own. As it turns out, one of my best lessons in life was from a "job" that taught me the value of volunteering.

The baby-sitting position I had as a teen really wasn't a job because I didn't get paid. It involved entertaining the four children and putting them to bed. It also included cleaning up the kitchen because my mother told me to do that.

*see volunteering, page 4*



Jennie L. Negin

## Save the date

Sunday, October 21, 2018



—fun—food—silent auction—games—dancing—

Social Hall, Congregation B'nai Israel, 6 to 9 p.m.

Music by

**The 45's Classic Oldies Band**

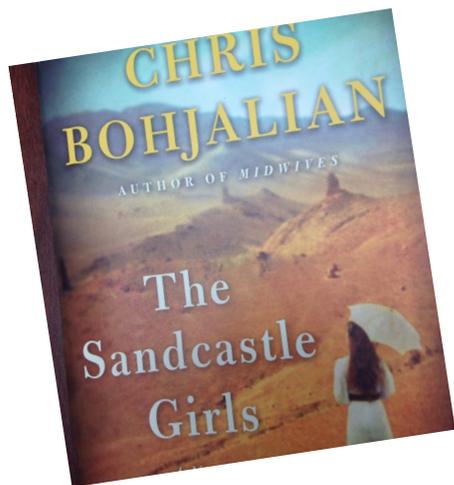
Fundraiser to benefit the Holocaust & Intolerance  
Museum of New Mexico  
(505) 247-0606

In the Silvan Library & Study Center

## ***The Sandcastle Girls* by Chris Bohjalian**

This book about the Armenian Genocide perpetrated by the Turkish government during the First World War is now available in our library. It is a poignant story of loss and love and “a wrenching secret that has been buried for generations.”

By 1914, the Young Turk dictators set out to “Turkify” the county’s minorities, beginning with the Armenians. From 1915 to 1923, 1.5 million Armenians perished and more than 500,000 were exiled from their homes.



The writer, well known and respected for his many works of fiction, is the grandson of Armenian survivors.

Below are two of the multitude of positive critiques of his mesmerizing novel.

“It takes a talented novelist to combine fully ripened characters, an engrossing storyline, exquisite prose and set it against a horrific historical backdrop – in this case, the Ar-

menian Genocide – and completely enchant readers. The prolific and captivating Chris Bohjalian has done it all with *The Sandcastle Girls*.”

– **Kim Curtis, *The Associated Press***

“Bohjalian’s powerful novel . . . depicts the Armenian genocide and one contemporary novelist’s quest to uncover her heritage. . . His storytelling makes this a beautiful, frightening, and unforgettable read.” – **Publishers’ Weekly**

## **Bring your book club meeting to us**

On June 25<sup>th</sup> eight members of the Nambe Book Club visited the museum to see historical information about the Holocaust and other genocides after reading *Lilac Girls* by Martha Hall Kelly. The museum provided an excellent back drop to understanding the novel and the history of the Holocaust. All attending thought it was an excellent way to bring the novel to life and gather more information about the topic.

*Criticized*

## **Attempts to inhibit historical research**

- July 8, 2018-

The Board of Directors of the Association of Holocaust Organizations (AHO) today called upon the government of Poland to revoke its controversial law regarding Holocaust research and stated that amending the law to remove criminal prosecution while leaving open the possibility of civil procedures is not sufficient.

The law continues to place the burden of proof on Holocaust survivors, scholars and educators. This is not an acceptable solution and any attempt to inhibit historical research or threaten open expression on the Holocaust in Poland must be rejected. Therefore the Board shares the concerns raised by institutions such as Yad Vashem, the Simon Wiesenthal Center and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, as well as experts such as Prof. Yehuda Bauer who have all pointed out that historical facts cannot be legislated. The AHO Board also urges Poland’s government to take immediate steps to counter the anti-semitism that has erupted in the wake of the controversy surrounding the law.

The Association of Holocaust Organizations is an international network of over 370 organizations and individuals working for the advancement of Holocaust education, remembrance and research.

The Holocaust & Intolerance Museum of New Mexico is a member of AHO.

*The Herald*

Is created four times a year by staff and volunteers.

**Editors**

Lyn Berner

Marcia Rosenstein

## Beloved and steadfast volunteer announces retirement

Longtime docent Wille Peters had an “aha” moment years after her fifth birthday. *Others, maybe even Wille, might describe it more dramatically. Perhaps it was an epiphany.*

“I was shocked to read, as an adult, that on the day of my fifth birthday party, the Kovno Ghetto – hometown of my grandparents – was being liquidated,” claimed the Maryland native.

It might have been that grasp of reality that led her to us in 2004. After retiring from a career in education, Wille dedicated her volunteer time to sharing the history of the Holocaust with our visitors. It was a joy, really, to eavesdrop on her interactions especially those with school children.

“I particularly enjoy creating workshops and projects that involve the use of theatre activities to encourage students to think about moral issues.”

It would be impossible to say how many children she has reached and encouraged during these 14 years. In addition, Wille has done outreach for the museum and worked with students one on one.

For several years, she was the mentor for students from South Valley Academy and Amy Biehl High School. One of those 15-year-olds wrote of



Wille: “My supervisor helped me learn how to be organized and how to create consciousness in others about tolerance and how to be a good role model. She gives amazing speeches about why tolerating

others is important and how not doing so had affected people in the past. She made me feel special ... .”

Last winter, Wille spoke to psychology and history students at Central New Mexico Community College (CNM). The professor, James Johnson, wrote, “Thank you for your excellent presentation. Many of my students indicated that they learned a lot, and I think the important topic opened a lot of eyes regarding relatively recent history about which few students seem to know.”

CNM wants her to speak again and we, at the museum, hate to see her retire, but Wille has some other volunteering interests that she wants to pursue in the community. She will be back, however, when the museum needs help with visiting classes.

*The lasting lessons of the Holocaust are found in countless social issues unfolding in the world today.* Ivy Schamis, teacher  
Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School

## Thoughts for today

by Gail Werde, Volunteer

Whether Jew or Gentile; whether Muslim or atheist  
Whatever your sexual orientation; Whatever your race or ethnicity

Stand up against hate and intolerance  
Hate is loud; don't be afraid to be louder

Ignorance breeds fear

Knowledge helps us discover the beauty in our differences  
Let us stand together and create peace

## Families separated during war

*continued from page 6*

Reactions from New Mexico residents regarding the camps varied. On one hand, some resented the fact that these prisoners-of-war were being fed, clothed, and sheltered while they had to ration (or go without) food and other items. Other citizens recognized the lack of real threat from these men, and were quite tolerant.

In December of 1944, Public Proclamation No. 21 was issued by General Henry C. Pratt. This proclamation canceled Executive Order 9066 and allowed Japanese Americans to return to the west coast. However, since most of the interned sold their homes and possessions, there was not much to return to, and prejudice was still quite rampant making returning difficult if not impossible.

*With much success*  
**Community  
collaborations  
continue**

Our museum continues to collaborate with other community entities with similar missions, beliefs, and interests.

On Juneteenth, in concert with the New Mexico Office of African American Affairs, a panel discussion led by scholars and community thought leaders took place in the Jewish Community Center. Close 100 persons attended.

Among the topics discussed were lynching in the context of the Emancipation Proclamation, Jim Crow, and Confederate statues; transforming collective thinking and memory, and contemporary expressions of the Emancipation Proclamation and of Juneteenth.

Doris Fields, museum board member, moderated the panel which included Daniel Taradash, Josef Poddrell, Gloria Taradash, and Karen Jones Meadows.

Another collaborative event was held July 31 in Congregation Albert, and celebrated forgotten heroes of the Holocaust, members of the Italians secret underground to save Jews from extermination. The dramatic and compelling documentary film called *My Italian Secret* was shown with opening and closing remarks by Annalisa Di Nola, who shared her Italian-Jewish family's experience in Nazi-occupied Rome.

Almost 300 persons attended.

The event was presented in collaboration by Italian Festivals of New Mexico, the Jewish Community Center of Greater Albuquerque, Congregation Albert, and the museum.

## *Learning from the past* **Mexican-American soldier leaves diary to USHMM**

When thinking about the Holocaust, we often don't consider the American servicemen who also suffered the horrors of the Nazi camps. One of those soldiers was Anthony Acevedo who appears to be the first Mexican-American registered as a survivor and victim in the database of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM).

Acevedo was American born yet attended a segregated Mexican-American school in California until the age of 13 when he moved to Mexico to spend his teenage years. At 19, he returned and enlisted in the U.S. Army as a medic.

Captured and taken to a slave labor camp after the Battle of the Bulge, Acevedo was able to record

the atrocities with a pen and a diary left behind by the Red Cross.

He was subjected to and endured horrendous brutality including being gang raped by his Nazi captors. After being forced to walk 217 miles in 17 days, he and other POWs were freed by American soldiers on April 23, 1945. In his brief captivity, he went from weighing 149 pounds to 89 pounds.

His is a story of survival in a time of unimaginable horrors. In 2010, he donated his diary to the USHMM. "People have to know what happened; this is how low man can get," he said at the time. The story is one to help us not forget.

Anthony Acevedo died in February of this year at the age of 93.

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## **Volunteering is priceless** *continued from page 1*

It was only years later that I understood the circumstances. The father of the four children had a metal plate in his head from WWII and could not work. His wife, the children's mother, was weary from all her responsibilities. And I, basically, was volunteering.

Now that I am an adult (by definition) I have no problem asking for money, especially for causes that are important to me. That's why I am often showcasing the museum and letting you know how important your financial support is. For some, it's an automatic bank transfer, others write checks and/or make donations (with tax advantages for many) from their IRAs.

But as generous as many members of our museum family are, we still have the need to raise money through events. We think we have a good formula with our "To Life!" fundraiser. This year, on October 21, we will again gather for a night of fun, music, big-ticket raffle, silent auction, food and drink. If it's your first time to attend, you may be one of the lucky ones to be in the kazoo band or win the raffle prize of \$500 cash.

Please circle the date on your calendar and come with an appetite for fun.

## CURRENT EVENTS

# Museum reps join rallies to keep families together

On the afternoon of June 23 in the courtyard of the National Hispanic Cultural Center (NHCC) close to 700 concerned individuals rallied under the shade of giant trees in support of *Keeping Families Together*.

Museum staff and volunteers handed out literature, and president-elect of the board, Victor Raigoza, was a featured speaker.

He told of his grandmother, who at age 7 and holding her mother's hand "crossed that river." He told of his grandfather who followed the train tracks north all for a better life.

"Our country once was the beacon of hope, the beacon of light. That has now been dimmed.

"In 2018, the *last* place we ought to be is protesting the building of camps and incarcerating children!"

A week later on the morning of June 30, thousands gathered in Civic Plaza for the same reason. This time, the museum was represented by Marcia Rosenstein, board secretary and daily volunteer, who

explained why she is so heart-broken.

"People are trying to escape violence and danger and our country is putting them in jail and separating children from their parents. The history of our country is filled with stories of people coming here seeking freedom and a better life," she reminded the crowd. "We can't allow the quest be denied to the refugees trying to enter our country *legally* through our southern borders.

"Our museum not only shows the horrors of the Holocaust but also the horrors of slavery in America, the massacres perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against Armenians, Greeks and Assyrians, and the tribal fighting in Rwanda where a staggering 800,000 human beings were killed within 100 days.

"We must pay attention to proposed laws. We know what and how things happened before, and we must educate and speak out about it so that the horrors of the past are not repeated."

And as Victor stated the week before in the courtyard of the NHCC, "If there is a lesson to be learned here, it is *not* okay to be a bystander."

Current Events has become a monthly agenda item for the board of the Holocaust & Intolerance Museum of New Mexico.



NHCC, June 23, 2018

*Déjà vu*

## Families separated during World War II

Executive Order 9066 was signed by Franklin D. Roosevelt on February 9, 1942. This order authorized the internment between 1942 and 1946 of more than 120,000 American citizens with Japanese ancestry, as well as resident aliens from Japan.

Effectively, this order gave the U.S. military broad powers to exclude any citizen from up to 60 miles of coastline spreading from Washington State through California. Because of this, entire communities of Japanese Americans were uprooted and families were separated.

While many of us are familiar with this time in American history, few are aware of the role New Mexico played in regards to internment camps.

New Mexico held interned Japanese Americans in Santa Fe, Fort Stanton, Old Raton Ranch (Baca Camp), and Camp Lordsburg. The Santa Fe internment camp started operating in March of 1942, and shortly thereafter camps were created in Lordsburg, Fort Stanton, and Old Raton Ranch (Baca Camp).

Upon the signing of Executive Order 9066, Japanese Americans

reported to assembly centers bringing only what could fit in a suitcase. Those with businesses and property had to sell quickly, resulting in a combined estimated loss of \$400 million. Because those in charge of the "relocation efforts" believed some Japanese Americans (mostly first generation men) were a greater threat than others, they were given "loyalty tests." Those who swore allegiance to the United States were reunited with their families in "relocation camps," while those who refused were deemed "undesirable enemy aliens" and sent to prisoner-of-war camps.

Daily life in the compounds varied, but all those detained were still considered enemy aliens, and thus prisoners-of-war, by the federal government. The Geneva Convention (signed by the United States in 1929) stated that prisoners did not have to work, and furthermore must receive a certain amount of food daily. However, interns performed their own cooking, cleaning, and gardening.

Locals remember them as being quite creative, engaging in carpentry and concrete stone work to decorate the camp with birdbaths and statues.



### Sources:

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see *Families separated*, page 3

# Teaching the Holocaust for social justice

The Holocaust & Intolerance Museum of New Mexico (HIMNM) partnered with the Olga Lengyel Institute for Holocaust Studies and Human Rights (TOLI) to support a five-day seminar for teachers, the Summer Institute on Teaching the Holocaust for Social Justice. This was the 5<sup>th</sup> year for the event under the leadership of HIMNM board members Susan Quintana and Leslie Lawner, and Manzano High School teacher Michelle Thompson-Loyd, with much help from Barb Lazar of the Bosque School.

A full complement of 25 teachers from virtually every corner of the state participated this year.

This is a valuable seminar as the New Mexico Public Education Department offers no meaningful professional guidance for our educators on how to teach about the Holocaust.

***The Holocaust is a suggestion, not a required topic.***

For those educators who want to teach the vital lessons that Holocaust study offers, just how to broach this subject with their students is a daunting task. Teachers who have tried on their own often find that students suffer emotionally when confronted with the disturbing images and stories. The goals of social justice

education can be lost when the subject of the Holocaust is not carefully and thoughtfully presented to students. The institute is



A seminar participant learns about the Torah on display in the museum.

designed to give teachers guidance on how to teach the Holocaust effectively and appropriately.

Our focus is on giving teachers content and pedagogical methods for teaching about the Holocaust and making connections to

other acts of intolerance and injustice that are part of New Mexico's history.

As TOLI was created through the National Writing Project, we emphasize using writing activities to help the students learn and process information. Our program follows the concept of "safely in, safely out," meaning that materials are presented so as to give meaning to events and actions without emotionally harming the students. We help the teachers, who work with very diverse groups of middle and high school students, find materials and lessons appropriate for their particular student population.

In the seminar we cover the history of anti-Semitism in Europe and the events leading to the rise of Nazi Germany and its state-sanctioned genocide, as well as the individual's role as victim, perpetrator, upstander, and bystander. The role of identity and its part in the Holocaust, as well as in many of the events we are experiencing today, is also explored. We give hands-on demonstrations of a number of ways to teach about identity and how it can be used to both unite and divide people.

This year's program featured a number of outstanding presenters: Murray Sidlin, the choral/orchestra conductor who was responsible for the making of the documentary *Defiant Requiem*; Sherry Bard on using *Echoes and Reflections*, the ADL Holocaust curriculum; Professor Andrew Russell and Victor Yamada on Japanese internment camps in New



Teachers, as students, work through lessons they will present to their classes.

Mexico during World War II; Andy Holten, a "hidden child" during the Holocaust, and New Mexico Secretary of Education Christopher Ruszkowski who spoke on the importance

see *Teaching the Holocaust*, page 8

