

Grand reopening a smashing success

by Vicki Gottlieb, Volunteer

Executive Director Leon Natker's vision takes the New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education (NMHM) to the next level, the result of an exceptional degree of collaboration and hard work with many people from NMHM's expanding community. More than 40 museum members, during five separate hourly time slots, attended the reopening of the NMHM on August 30.

Natker recalled that one of the inspirations for the renovation was a Czech Sefer Torah, an artifact he wanted to display well. Three generations of the Hammer family generously sponsored the new case for this nearly 200-year-old sacred scroll. During the one o'clock hour, Rick and Karen Hammer joined their children and Congregation B'nai Israel Rabbi Dov Gartenberg to dedicate the new case to the children, grandchildren, and great grandchildren of Holocaust survivors. The event was live-streamed and will be available on our website.

Czech Torahs and other artifacts were stolen by the Nazis--before all the synagogues were burned--in order to create a "museum of an extinct race." The British army rescued Hitler's cache of Czech Torahs which eventually were placed in trust with Westminster Synagogue in London. The scrolls are shared with synagogues and organizations around the world. Ours first came to Albuquerque in the care of Congregation B'nai Israel, and in turn it was loaned to the museum. The Torah is part of a new exhibit about local

survivors which includes their video testimonies.

Rabbi Gartenberg likened the survival of this Czech Torah to the survival of the Jewish people. He chanted a prayer for those who perished in the Shoah and concluded with, "Remember, it didn't start with gas chambers.

(see Grand reopening, page 5)



We extend our gratitude to the Hammer family who made possible this beautiful new case for the Czech Torah and local survivors exhibit in the museum. It was dedicated August 30 in remembrance of family members lost in the Holocaust during the grand reopening with family members and Rabbi Dov Gartenberg of Congregation B'nai Israel taking part in the ceremonies.

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Collaboration works toward improved NM hate crimes legislation

The recent vandalism our museum suffered brought forth a tremendously positive response from the community. In addition to the outpouring of sympathy and the many donations made to effect repairs, Dr. Harold Bailey, president of the Albuquerque Chapter of the NAACP, contacted me and--with his leadership--we have formed a working group to lobby our legislature for improved hate crimes legislation. The group currently includes Dr. Bailey, Rob Lennick, CEO of the Jewish Federation of New Mexico, and Dr. Siu Wong of the Chinese American Citizens Alliance. We are in the process of recruiting members of other communities to help us craft legislation that will address all of our concerns.

Representative Antonio “Moe” Maestas and Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino are leading the charge in Santa Fe. We already have received commitments from a group of 13 other bi-partisan legislators to help craft and advance this legislation next January. We want to make sure that the new legislation has some teeth. Currently under New Mexico law if the person who vandalized the museum were caught, he or she could only be charged with vandalism and charged for the repair of the window.

People who commit these crimes are cowards. They seldom show their faces. What they want is for us to be intimidated, to be afraid. The reaction of the community has shown that this will not work in Albuquerque or in the State of New Mexico. We have a strong active community that is ready to stand together to fight hatred and intolerance wherever it shows its ugly head. I am proud to be part of this community and I know I can count on you to help us lobby your legislators when the time comes.



Leon Natker MA, RPA
Executive Director

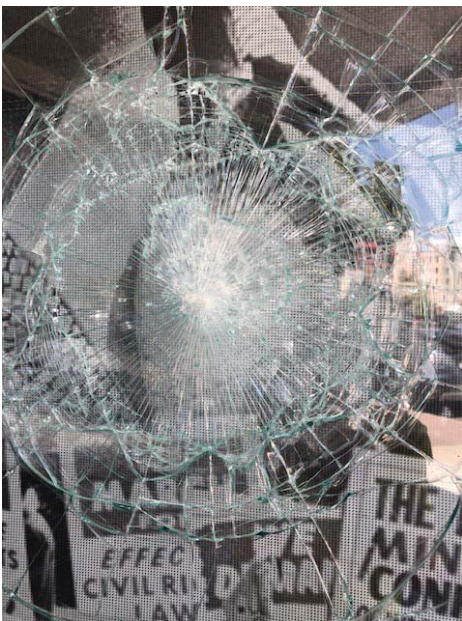
New exhibits promote hope while exploring history

The New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education reopened to the public on September 1. Executive Director Leon Natker said, “In spite of the recent vandalism, the museum is ready to welcome the general public back to its newly renovated home.”

While closed this summer a major renovation was in progress including several new exhibits. The new exhibits include *Colonization: Racism and Resilience*, a look at the experience of the indigenous peoples of New Mexico during colonization by both the Spanish and Americans. Also new is *Slavery in America: Reconstruction to WWII*, which explores the African American experience in the century following emancipation. The *Chinese Exclusion Act* relates a brief history of a law passed by the U.S. Congress that singles out a specific ethnic or racial group for discrimination.

Natker said, “These exhibits are not meant to be comprehensive histories. They are designed to build awareness of acts of hatred and intolerance throughout our history. It is our hope that patrons will be interested enough to explore additional sources.”

The other aspect of the exhibits new to the museum is a focus on underlying causes for racism and intolerance and the resilience of survivors. “Our new exhibits will highlight survivors,” said Natker. “It is important to show that there is a positive message of resistance and survival by upstanders when talking about these acts of hatred and genocide. We want people to leave the museum feeling that there is hope and that anyone can make a difference.”



Museum window shattered during funeral of civil rights leader John Lewis on July 30. Might this have been a hate crime?

New Mexico Holocaust Museum revamps



RESISTANCE IS NOT FUTILE

Becoming comfortable with ambiguity

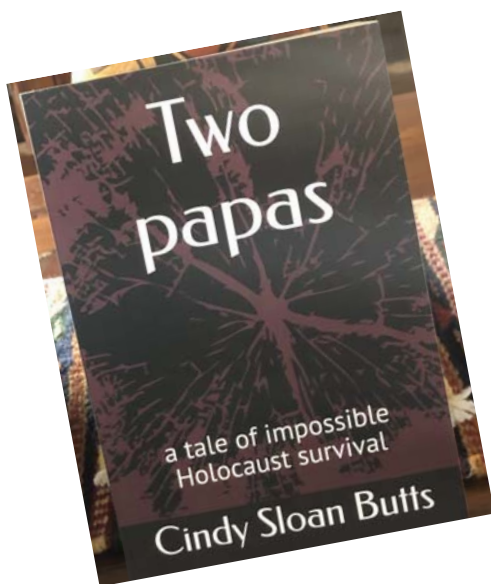
by Susan Bapty, Director of Education

The pandemic has spread havoc within the educational community. As schools scramble to come to terms with how to move the learning forward without bringing the students back physically, until at least January, the museum's educational staff is working feverishly to plan for all scenarios. The tasks ahead may seem daunting, but the New Mexico Holocaust Museum and Gellert Center for Education has developed a hybrid approach to classroom instruction, ensuring our lessons and programs enhance learning objectives and state standards regardless of the mode of delivery. All our programs seek to preserve, promote, and perpetuate understanding, collaboration, and develop a willingness to stand up for what is just. We do this by using age-appropriate, arts-integrated, and literature-based lessons, predicated on the Holocaust and social justice, to build empathy and compassion, and to provide students with the tools to recognize and to respond effectively as an *upstander* when they see, hear, or feel injustice. Our new motto amongst the educational team is "get comfortable with the ambiguity and prepare for all scenarios."

Currently, staff is writing lessons for both asynchronous and synchronous formats on Google Meets, Classroom and Zoom, for our *Stand Up! Be Counted!* arts integrated middle school program. This program is appropriate for 6th to 12th

grade and requires 14 to 16 sessions, occurring successively or dispersed throughout the year. These literature-based, arts-integrated programs seek to improve students' academic skills, increase their social-emotional intelligence, and develop resilience, creativity, and problem-solving skills, all of which are necessary for students to see a path forward for themselves and build empathy for others. There are three distinct components to this program: history, literature, and the arts. Using Holocaust education as the foundation, we teach students to take a stand and empower them to take control of their lives and learning. Both the literature component and the arts-integrated projects are developed specifically for each grade level and afford the students the opportunity to make meaning of what they are learning and to process difficult topics.

What this means, given the new realities, is taking the face-to-face lessons and completely re-writing them to engage the students virtually. This semester we will pilot this new format at three Title 1 middle schools. While we are planning for the uncertainties, we also are hoping to be back in the classrooms with the students this spring. Nothing can replicate the teacher-student interactions that naturally occur in the classroom, but museum educational staff is preparing for all scenarios and in the process getting comfortable living with ambiguity.



Volunteer News

An author amongst us

We are blessed to have many accomplished volunteers working on behalf of the museum. Congratulations Cindy Sloan Butts on the publication of her first novel. Cindy described *Two papas - a tale of impossible Holocaust survival* as the result of wanting to do something important to remember both the victims of the Holocaust and those who assisted the Jews and others during the tragedies of World War II.

She explains, "My journey began as I assisted in the writing of a biography for a World War II veteran. As I learned about his experiences, I realized that I had a responsibility to learn as much as I could.

"Now as a writer and an educator I have the opportunity to teach my students about fighting prejudice and hate in their own lives. My book speaks of hope, strength and the vision of a better life."

Cindy has donated a copy of the book to the museum's Silvan library.

Grand reopening a success (continued from page 1)

It started with politicians dividing the people with ‘us versus them.’ It started with intolerance and hate speech and when people stopped caring, became desensitized and turned a blind eye.” He concluded with, “May this sacred Torah be a source of light, a source of hope, and a source of action.”

NMHM board president Raye Cohen referred to our well-established and well-received educational programs, and asked for support to ultimately expand these programs to schools and communities across New Mexico. She said, “It is important now more than ever that our children understand and take care of each other, that no one is ‘other,’” as part of her appeal for donations to fund NMHM’s expansion of educational outreach. Cohen stressed a renewed emphasis on education that “promotes social justice and respect for the rights of all.”

The ceremony included pre-recorded messages from State Auditor Brian S. Colón, U.S. Representative Deb Haaland, and Albuquerque Mayor Tim Keller who highlighted the relevance of two new exhibits: the effects of colonization on our native populations and phase two of *Slavery in America* which exposes some history often missing from what is taught in schools. Natker referred to NMHM’s current collaboration with the City of Albuquerque “to secure a permanent home large enough to accommodate all of the exhibits we’d like to do and all the education we have to do.”

The legislator’s statement, read by her field representative Brenda Agoyothé McKenna from Nambé Pueblo, reminded us that Haaland is a 35th generation Native American from Laguna Pueblo. “It’s been said to look at who is writing the historical texts before concluding the content is the truth. One too many texts perpetuate the idea that we are an inferior race and going extinct. That false narrative has tried to silence our voices.”

Colón, the inaugural recipient last year of NMHM’s *Upstander of the Year* award, spoke of his Jewish upbringing in Albuquerque and the reputation of the museum’s work to eliminate racism. Colón emphasized “the importance of educating our community when it comes to the Holocaust experience and the lived journey of generations of Jewish people.”

Natker’s initial remarks thanked hard-working staff and volunteers including Camelia Caton-Garcia, collections; Mario Griego and Jack Montgomery, graphic and exhibit designers; Dr. Daniel Taradash, co-curator and researcher; Reinhard Lorenz, videographer and recorder; Lyn Berner,

director of administration, and myriad volunteers including Thien-Nam Dinh, Nic Estrada, Brenda Rabinowitz, Hal Larson, Hagar Hecht, Nicholas Poe, Juan Martinez, and John Cornish all led by Larry Malick, volunteer coordinator.

Natker also acknowledged the support of the board of directors, calling out by name members of the executive committee who were present: Raye Cohen, president; Sheri Karmiol, vice president; Gloria Taradash, secretary; Jennie L. Negin, treasurer, and Jennifer Cornish, parliamentarian.

Natker announced that the museum’s hours will be Tuesday through Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. while adapting to COVID-19 restrictions with safety measures and procedures in place.

Now available...

Masks support our mission

The fall fundraiser gala is canceled this year because of COVID-19. In an initial attempt to make up for some of that loss, we have started an online gift shop featuring something everyone needs and can use these days, a mask, pictured below.

This unique item contains an imprint of our new logo and the ever popular *No Hate* button. It is two-ply cotton with a pocket so you can insert a filter for extra protection. Wearing this mask will identify you as an upstander, someone who speaks out when observing injustice anywhere.

Tell your family and friends about it. Better yet, buy masks for all the like-minded folks in your life. They will be mailed to you within two days, if possible, of placing an order.

Masks are available for \$15 each on our website, www.nmholocaustmuseum.org/store. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Your continued support of our museum’s mission means that you care. You are appreciated in so many ways.



Archives Alive!

Hagada, almost 100 years old, resides with us

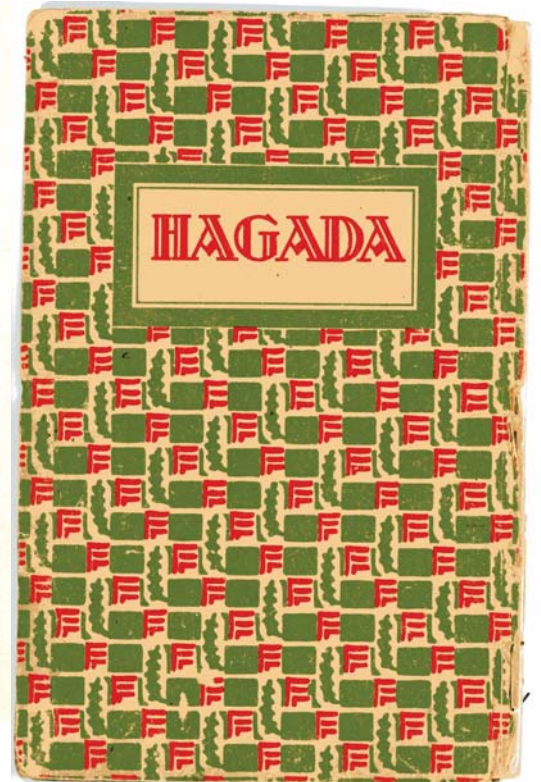
by Cameila Caton-Garcia, Collections Manager

These are the details from *Hagada* Frankfurt, Germany, 1929

by Rabbi Dr. Gelig Bamberger

This 1929 edition of the *Hagada*, the Jewish text that sets forth the order of the Passover Seder observed in March or April, was published in Frankfurt, Germany and is printed in both German and Hebrew. The text is accompanied by detailed black and white illustrations by Polish artist Stanislaus Bender. The inside cover has an inscription from Julius Gellert (b. March 11, 1887-?), a relation of NMHM founder Werner Gellert. The Gellert family was forced to flee their home in Breslau, Germany (now Poland), with the rise of Nazism in 1938. Julius Gellert was listed in the Breslau Synagogue's directory of community members in 1933 as a businessman. Although Werner and his parents managed to survive the war as refugees in Shanghai, nearly all of Breslau's 10,000 Jewish community members perished at the hands of the Nazis. A testament to faith and survival, this *Hagada* was preserved by the Gellert family and is now a part of NMHM's permanent collection.

Are you interested in our collection or have something to share about this material? Please get in touch:
collections@nmholocaustmuseum.org



The Herald

-published four times a year
by staff and volunteers-

Eliminating hate and intolerance one mind at a time

U.S. museum heralds opening of Eisenhower Memorial

SEPTEMBER 16, 2020

WASHINGTON—As our country marks this 75th anniversary of the end of World War II, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum welcomes the opening of the national memorial to President Dwight D. Eisenhower who served as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe. This new memorial complements the museum's Eisenhower Plaza that honors his leadership and the soldiers he commanded.

General Eisenhower led the invasion of the European continent that would bring the war in Europe to an end and in so doing free those remaining Jews and other victims who had survived the Nazi onslaught.

Eisenhower knew of Nazi atrocities when he spoke to the troops before the D-Day invasion on June 6, 1944:

“The hope and prayers of liberty-loving people everywhere march with you. In company with our brave allies ... you will bring about the destruction of the German war machine, the elimination of Nazi tyranny over the oppressed peoples of Europe, and security for ourselves in a free world.”

It would be another 10 months before General Eisenhower would realize that the oppression and atrocities he had read about were far more horrific than he imagined. On April 12, 1945, he visited the newly liberated Ohrdruf concentration camp; the next day he toured Buchenwald. On April 15, he cabled General George C. Marshall:

“The visual evidence and the verbal testimony of starvation, cruelty, and bestiality were so overpowering as to leave me a bit sick ... I made the visit deliberately, in order to be in a position to give first-hand evidence of these things if ever ... there develops a tendency to charge these allegations merely to ‘propaganda.’”

On D-Day Eisenhower spoke about what America was fighting for and by the end of the war in Europe, he fully grasped what we were fighting against. He recognized that the fight was not only for freedom but against massive crimes, eventually to be called the Holocaust. General Eisenhower also presciently recognized that there would be future battles to secure the truth of those crimes. He anticipated Holocaust denial and distortion.

His exceptional legacy endures.

Silvian Library & Study Center

Major conversion continues

by Sheri Karmiol, PhD Volunteer Librarian

As I reported in the summer edition of *The Herald*, there is a great deal happening in the library. The conversion of the library system from a Dewey catalogue to Library of Congress continues. I began this work in March 2020, with both the physical work of applying labels and the more labor-intensive work of organizing and shelving books. Converting the library to Library of Congress included a great deal of data entry work to add missing information to the catalogue and to correct data entry errors.

Hagar Hecht and Margaret Gates, docent volunteers, have helped to carry and shelve books. These two volunteers have saved me hours of work. In addition, our collections manager, Camelia Caton-Garcia, also helped to solve catalogue software issues so that we were able to keep printing labels. Converting 4,000 books in the NMHM Silvian Library to Library of Congress has been a group effort.

I expect to complete this catalogue conversion within the next six to eight weeks. I will not be out of work, though. I have many shelves to empty and boxes of books and film donations to process once the current conversion is completed. Later this fall, we hope to be able to open the library to visitors, who will be able to use the library for research.



Become a member

Museum programs encourage *upstanders*

Our museum is a 501(c)3 non-profit educational organization. We are steadfast in our commitment to build communities of *upstanders*, folks who will speak out when they see injustice.

The majority of our operating funds come from private donors. Please become one and help us continue our important work: you can use the form below and mail it to New Mexico Holocaust Museum, PO Box 1762, Albuquerque NM 87103-1762 or become a member via our website: www.nmholocaustmuseum.org

As a member, you are eligible for special benefits including free admission, access to resource materials in the Silvan Library & Study Center, a one-year subscription to our newsletter, *The Herald*, and invitations to premiere events.

Yearly membership levels include Student (\$18), Individual (\$50), and Family (\$75). These will receive the above-mentioned benefits. Additional levels and benefits are:

Patron (\$100), above plus 10 percent discount in the museum store.

Benefactor (\$250), above plus admission to special ticketed programs

Rescuer (\$500), above plus a meet- and-greet with our staff and board of directors

Upstander (\$1,000) all above plus a one-on-one tour with our executive director

Sponsor (\$2,500) all above plus naming privileges on a new exhibit

We appreciate your continued support.

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