

F A L L 2 0 1 8

the

Holocaust Child Survivors of CT



Save the date!

Our first annual Festival of Tzedakah has been scheduled for Sunday, December 9 from 2 pm to 6 pm at Congregation B'nai Israel in Bridgeport. We ask that you use this as an opportunity to tell our community about the work you do - whether you are a social service organization, a school or a summer camp. You can have a display, hand out materials or do volunteer recruitment. The day will feature a variety of activities, including giving circles, a hands-on mitzvah project, breakout sessions, and more. As a centerpiece, the day will include the Federation's Mitzvah Heroes Awards presentation.

Please respond to confirm that your organization will be participating.

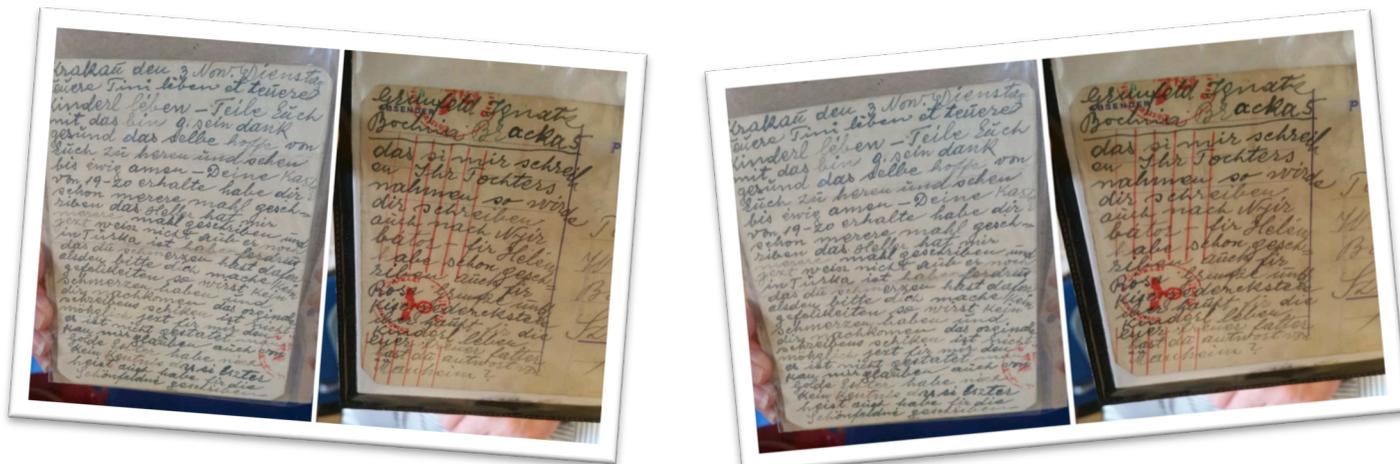
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Germany Increases Funding for Holocaust Survivors by \$88 million

The Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany in its announcement said the increase brings global allocations by Germany for 2019 to \$564 million.

Article 2 and Central and Eastern European Fund (CEEF) pensions, which the Claims Conference pays to 55,000 Holocaust survivors will increase by 53.6% over the next three years from €352 (\$411) to €541 (\$633). The first increase to €415 (\$485) will commence on January 1, 2019.

Shoah-Era Postcards Delivered to Writer's Descendants, 75 Years Later



Two postcards sent 75 years ago by a man to his family in Hungary amid the flames of the Holocaust were finally delivered this week to his descendants in Jerusalem.

The postcards sent from occupied Poland, which were never received by their intended recipients – most of whom died in the Nazi genocide – illustrate the intense emotions of those caught up in the horrors of the Holocaust.

In 1942 and 1943, Meilech (Ignatz) Grunfeld, a Jewish man from Hungary who was trying to help save his brethren from the Nazis, sent several postcards to his family back home in the town of Satmar.

As the massacres and deportations gathered pace, Grunfeld became increasingly anxious, asking in one last postcard for his family to help him flee the country.

The postcard, sent to his wife's brother Lazar Weiser, never made it to his family. Grunfeld himself was shot dead in or around the Bochnia Ghetto in southern Poland, two months after he sent his call for help.

Grunfeld's wife and three of his children were also murdered during the Holocaust, as was Lazar along with his children and grandchildren who were deported to Auschwitz in May 1944. Just one of Grunfeld's children, Bruchie, survived along with only one of Lazar's children, a son who went to the US before the war, and his son Sigmund Weiser who survived Auschwitz and the death marches.

Then, in 2008, a stamp collector from New Zealand by the name of Bruce Chadderton – who specializes in Holocaust-era correspondence – made contact with Sigmund, having seen his request for information as to the fate of his aunt during the Holocaust in the Yad Vashem online database.

Chadderton said that he did not have information about Sigmund's aunt, but that he did have one of the postcards sent by Grunfeld to Sigmund's grandfather Lazar Weiser. He sent scans by email to Sigmund.

In the postcard, Grunfeld writes to his wife – “My beloved Tini” – and to his children, telling them that he is healthy but “begs” them to quickly assist him in getting permission to leave occupied Poland.

The Weiser family gave Chadderton permission to keep the postcard to exhibit in his collection, but this week he came to Jerusalem for the 2018 World Stamp Championship, currently being held in the capital.

On Tuesday, Chadderton was finally able to show the postcard to Sigmund. At the same time, he presented him with a second postcard, written by Grunfeld in November 1942 to his wife and children, which he had also obtained.

Chadderton said that he had been quite emotional to meet Sigmund, and also shed a tear during the meeting, adding that he was the first Holocaust survivor he had met in person.

He explained that he began to specialize in the field of Holocaust-era correspondence after he learned in 1999 that the school his daughter attended was holding a debate about whether the Holocaust had really happened and if indeed six million Jews had been murdered.

Marilyn Adler, a daughter of Sigmund, said that when she, her sisters and her father saw the postcards, their eyes welled up with tears, and that they had been incredibly moved by these historical family documents.

She said that her father, Sigmund, had said he felt pain reading the words of his great-uncle Meilech Grunfeld pleading for help, but was comforted by the fact that despite that, Grunfeld and Lazar had numerous descendants, many of whom live in the Jewish state – including grandchildren and great-grandchildren who have served in the IDF in order to keep Israel strong and secure.

Prince William's Ancestor Saved a Jewish Family in the Holocaust



Princess Alice von Battenberg was born in 1885 in Windsor Castle in England, and was deaf from birth. After marrying the Greek Prince Andrew in 1903, she lived in Greece until the expulsion of the Greek royal family in 1917. In 1930, Alice was diagnosed with schizophrenia and was hospitalized in a sanatorium in Switzerland for two years.

During World War II she lived in Athens, where she helped hide Jews from the Nazis. In 1994, 24 years after her death in 1969, she received the title of Righteous Among the Nations from Yad Vashem.

After the war, she remained in Greece, where she founded an Orthodox nursing order of nuns called the "Christian Sisterhood of Martha and Mary." After the overthrow of King Constantine II of Greece and the military coup of 1967, she was invited by her son Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, and her daughter-in-law, Elizabeth II of England, to live with them at Buckingham Palace in London, where she passed away. In 1988, her bones were transferred, at her request, to the Mount of Olives in Jerusalem.

In September 1943, when Athens was conquered by the Nazis following Italy's surrender, the persecution of Greek Jews began. During the Nazi occupation there were thousands of Jews in Athens who sought refuge from the Gestapo, which deported 60,000 of the 75,000 Greek Jews to concentration camps. As this was happening, Alice hid the Jewish widow Rachel Cohen, along with two of her five children.

During his visit to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's home, Prince William met with the descendants of Haim and Rachel Cohen, whose family members - among them Eve Cohen, Rachel Cohen's granddaughter - were saved by Princess Alice.

"Princess Alice did not live the life of an ordinary princess," said Professor Dina Porat, Yad Vashem's chief historian. "She was very aware of social issues. During World War I, she established military hospitals and soup kitchens, and served as a nurse. She was socially involved, a constant social activist. Haim Cohen, Rachel Cohen's husband, was a member of the Greek parliament and close to the royal family. Alice cared for his widow and his children and all their needs until the liberation from Nazi rule, and put her life in danger for them. The rescue story was discovered by word of the family."

The Gestapo had suspected Alice and interrogated her several times, but she [claimed she could not understand] due to her hearing disability, though she could understand and speak. They were initially convinced she was pro-German because of her daughters, but she was not."

"Alice's story doesn't exist in the Israeli school curriculum. She truly risked her life to save the Cohen family, and it's important that people know about it."

Holocaust survivor on Long Island meets family of doctor who saved his life

It was an emotional meeting for a Holocaust survivor who had the chance to meet the relatives of the doctor who saved his life at a concentration camp multiple times.

Bernard Igielski, 91, said Dr. Bethold Epstein stepped in four times to keep him from the gas chamber at Auschwitz.

Epstein died in 1962, but on Thursday, Igielski had the chance to meet his nephew at the Gural Jewish Community Center in Cedarhurst.

Epstein was a Jewish doctor who ran the hospital where Igielski was quarantined for scarlet fever. "Every two days they would come and clean out the hospital and take everybody to the gas chamber," Igielski said. "Every time they came, he pushed me out the back door until they left."

On three occasions Epstein sent Igielski for quarantine instead of the selection line for the gas chamber.

Igielski said it was very hard for him to express how he was feeling during the emotional reunion.



Membership news

Jewish Museum

On May 27th twenty-three of us traveled to Manhattan by couch bus to visit the Jewish Museum on Fifth Avenue. The featured artist was Jewish painter Chaim Soutine, whose works stunned many of us with its unusual coloring and style. After spending 2 hours at the museum we walked one block to Madison Avenue to have a late lunch at the well-known Sarabeth restaurant. We were escorted upstairs to the balcony where we had a private place to enjoy each other's company and savor the delicious food. Both the meal and the service were excellent.



Meet Talia: Paying it Forward Mikey's Way

Talia's inspiration to "pay it forward" stems from her own story, which began in 2014 when she was just 11. A happy young girl with a passion for travel, Talia especially loved visiting with cousins and her Grandparents in Florida. She worked hard in school but also found time for Girl Scouts and field hockey. Her most favorite thing in all the world was going to sleep-away camp which was only a few short months away. But in the spring her life changed. Talia learned that she had a brain tumor. Soon after her diagnosis, Talia bravely underwent surgery to remove the tumor at the Children's Hospital at Montefiore in New York. Talia's surgery left her unable to walk without the aid of a walker.



Determined to go to sleep-away camp, Talia worked diligently to walk without help as soon after surgery as possible.

The hours recovering in the hospital were long and lonely until one wonderful day when Talia received an iPad from Mikey's Way. The iPad provided much needed diversion and distraction for Talia not only while in the hospital but also as she continued to heal at home.

The gift and the impact that it had on Talia's life inspired her to pay it forward. For her Bat Mitzvah project, Talia decided to raise \$5,000 to support a Mikey's Way Day at the hospital where she had been treated. She started a fundraising page on Crowdrise where she posted her story and her Mikey's Way experience. "Last year when I was diagnosed with a brain tumor, Mikey's Way gave me an iPad to help me pass the time after surgery." Talia wrote describing the impact of a Mikey's Way gift, "The foundation helps children cope with life-threatening illnesses. It is the goal of Mikey's Way to be able to connect every child with their friends, family and school, enabling them to cope with the long hours, days and weeks of separation that they must endure. Studies have shown that when the mind is stimulated and engaged, the body can respond in positive ways—more tolerable nausea, lower fever, higher blood counts and a more relaxed patient. This holds great importance for our seriously ill children. This was absolutely true in my case."

Talia's desire to pay it forward is a stunning testament to her compassion and commitment to help other children facing cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. She exceeded her Bat Mitzvah project goal, raising over \$5,000! Soon after the completion of her project, Talia returned to the hospital floor where she had been treated. This time, she entered the hospital not as a patient but rather as a healthy visitor to experience the Mikey's Way Day that she had sponsored.

Note: Talia is Agnes's granddaughter

Our condolences to the families of members who passed away in 2018

- Our member Dr. Dori Laub passed away on June 23rd in New Haven. He was a clinical psychiatrist, a professor at Yale Medical School and the founder of the Fortunoff Archives that recorded the testimonies of Holocaust survivors.
- Bernard Ferszt, husband of Leah, was buried on July 5th. He passed away after a long illness.

We wish a refuah sh'lema to:

- Betty Deutsch, who is one of our busy speakers, is recuperating at home after suffering a broken pelvis.
- Viki Blank is facing brain surgery, but she is in very good spirits.
- Vera Blau is fighting several health problems.
- Andy Sarkany suffered a severe heart attack in June

Marian Nachman Returns to Holland

In June, Marian took a trip to Holland, specifically Horst, in the province of Limburg, to visit her Dutch brother and his family. The main purpose of her trip was to lay “stumbling stones”, in front of Marian’s old home in Den Bosch, which is in the province of Braaband. This is where Marian was born and had spent a few happy years with her parents and grandfather before the Nazis came. It was a very moving ceremony for Marian. In attendance was her family from Amsterdam, her adopted family, the hospitable owners of her old house, as well as several people from her earlier years that are still living in Den Bosch. Marian felt in a way that her parents were finally given a funeral, more than 75 years after their death.



Summer Picnic 2018

We had our annual and unfortunately last picnic at Lou Reen's house on August 5th. We had our usual kosher caterer that served delicious food. To show our appreciation, Lou was presented with a gift card for a restaurant that will be closeby to his new home in Florida.



Thank you Lou!



If anyone needs anything you may call Agnes Vertes in confidence 203-226-3092



Agnes Vertes, President
Judith Altmann, Vice President
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