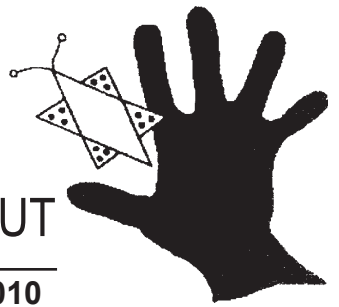


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The Holocaust Child Survivors of Connecticut *We are the Jewish children who survived Hitler's killing machines. Our group is indispensable in helping us deal with our loss and our pain. We also come together to celebrate our existence and our survival. We are involved in teaching the Holocaust to schools and interested groups. It is our firm conviction that our story must be told so that it will never be repeated.*

Organizational News

On Sunday, July 18th we had our annual picnic again at Viki Blank's house. Sixty-five of us enjoyed the delicious lunch in the shade of a large tent. Steve Herman even donated to us sangria which put us in a good mood. Rayhan Pasternak entertained us strolling around with her violin first and then the guitar and the accordion. The food was delicious, but we ran out of the yummy apple strudel pretty fast. Michael Phillip Davis joined us and I introduced him to the crowd. We said goodbye to Eva Benda who is moving to Washington to be closer to her children and grandchildren. We gave a present to Vicki, our gracious hostess and sang her happy birthday which was coming soon. We thanked her again for her gracious hospitality. Eliana Matalon did a wonderful job again planning the menu. Nick Friedman as every year took care of the rental and Judy Altmann was helping with everything as usual. ❖

Membership News

Our heartfelt condolences to our member **Nick Friedman** whose younger sister Eva Eisikovitz passed away suddenly in Israel. Nick and Eva survived the Shoah together in Budapest while their younger siblings were deported to Auschwitz with their grandparents and gassed.

Mazel Tov to **Agnes Vertes** whose grandson Joshua was a bar mitzvah on June 12 at Temple Beth Avodah in Newton, MA

Refuah sh'lema to our member **Regine Kallish** who is so bravely battling serious illness.

And **Paula Reens**, wife of our member **Lou Reens**, who is recuperating at home after two months in the hospital.

Chicago Conference

Our umbrella organization, the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust, will hold its 22nd Annual International Conference at the Doubletree Chicago North Shore Hotel in Skokie, Illinois from the evening of November 5 to noon November 8, 2010. September 15 is the deadline for registration at \$350 per person. From September 16 to October 15 it will be \$400 per person. The fee includes 3 breakfasts, 2 lunches, 3 dinners, all programs, materials and entertainment. Post conference programs include a visit to the Illinois Holocaust Museum at \$10 per person and Chicago's Jewish Roots tour at \$35 per person. ❖



Agnes and Joshua Vertes at Joshua's bar mitzvah

Revisiting Hell: An Amazing Story of Closure

Our **Judith Altmann** went on the March of the Living in April. The marchers visited five concentration camps: Auschwitz- Birkenau, Sobibor, Majdanek, Treblinka and Belzec. This was also the time when the president of Poland and many of the top government people died in a plane crash travelling to Russia. The marchers wore black ribbons in solidarity with the locals. It was a triumphant return to Birkenau for Judy wrapped in the blue and white flag of Israel even though it was a bitter sweet experience. She and her son, Steve and his family said kaddish for her mother and father and sister and nephews and nieces who were all murdered in the gas chambers. She found the block where she stayed in unbelievable squalor sixty-six years ago and took a piece of a brick as a reminder of those horrible days when she didn't know if she would still be among the living the next day. The students who were on the March with her were amazed at her energy and spirit. They all consider her an extraordinary human being. Majdanek is the only camp that stands still the way it was during the Shoah. It was an eerie experience to visit the barracks, the gas chambers and the crematoria that are still standing as they did almost seventy years ago. It could be put in operation again easily. Sobibor, where approximately eight hundred thousand Jews were murdered, was the saddest experience for the teens as well as the adults. The ashes of the Jews murdered there are exhibited under a large glass dome. It was so heart wrenching that everybody cried.



Judy Altmann in Birkenau on the March of the Living

The children were so moved and saddened by this sight that they could not stop crying. But for Judy Belzec was the saddest experience. Since the end of the Shoah she had been trying to find out what happened to her sister, seven year old son, three year old little girl and their father who lived in Mikulycsyn, Poland. Judith didn't know why but something pulled her to go to a different section of the camp then the group. And there among the monuments she discovered one on which Mikulycsin was written. Six hundred thousand Jews were murdered there the most brutal way. When they asked where they were being taken they were told: Himmel Strasse. (Heaven Street). "When the others from the group joined me and the three rabbis who were with us found out that I finally located the place my sister and her family were murdered they performed a funeral service for them. Although I was shaken and very sad it was finally closure after many years of uncertainty."

Judith did not go to Treblinka with the group instead she flew to Germany to visit Bergen Belsen that everyone who was imprisoned there during the Shoah remembers as hell on earth. She was invited to the ceremony on Sunday, April 18 to commemorate the liberation of Bergen Belsen by the British. Judith ended the death march in March 1945 together with five hundred and fifty Jews guarded by SS men and women. Wherever they turned there were mountains of dead bodies and the prisoners lived in incredible filth. In 2010 she entered a totally different landscape with green lawns, monuments, a very tall obelisk and a stone wall with inscriptions of all the nations whose citizens were murdered there by hanging, sickness and hunger. There is even a museum on the sight. Only the mass graves remind the visitor of the hell on earth that was Bergen Belsen. As the saying goes: "Anyone who survived Bergen Belsen will live forever." ❖

Claims Conference

FBI Expands Probe Of Fraud At Holocaust Claims Conference

The Article 2 fund for survivors was defrauded by more than \$7 million, on top of the \$350,000 Hardship Fund scheme. Treasurer Roman Kent noted that the \$7 million was only the tip of the iceberg. The thieves were so good that they were able to change crucial data on official documents for more than a decade without raising the attention of experts at the New York-based Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany and even the German government. The fraud might have continued unnoticed had the perpetrators not gotten even greedier. While little has been disclosed about the thieves, including whether or not they are Jewish, they are believed to be primarily men and women from the former Soviet Union who now live in Brooklyn. In December, when they applied for what is known as the Hardship Fund, a one-time payment of approximately \$3,500 to compensate Jews who were forced to flee east during the Holocaust and who remained in Soviet-bloc countries after the war (making them previously ineligible for German reparations), the thieves submitted materials that raised the suspicions of the Claims Conference. The Claims Conference called in the Federal Bureau of Investigation and mounted a thorough check of every Holocaust-era reparation

program the Claims Conference has administered over the years for the German government. Three of the 10 employees who processed Hardship Fund applications were immediately fired. One of them, the supervisor of that fund, was also the supervisor of the Article 2 Fund. It is not known if the employees were complicit in the fraud; there have been no further firings. To deal with the public relation fiasco the board set aside a budget of \$500,000 for engaging one of the best PR firms in the US. None of the board members challenged this decision even though the Claims Conference has a fully staffed PR department. The board members also did not find it important to ask if a larger portion of the Claims Conference's \$1,086,810,179 investment portfolio could be used to help aging Holocaust survivors. What are they intending to do with it? The Claims Conference leadership seems to be a self-perpetuating private club with the board of directors acting as a rubber stamp to approve all policies presented to them. By the way each director is flown to meetings at Claims Conference expense. The Germans robbed us of everything we owned and now the organization that was entrusted with money to help us is robbing us. ❖

Holocaust Victims to Receive \$10 Million in Aid from Weinberg

Foundation Grant to Claims Conference

The Weinberg Holocaust Survivors Emergency Assistance Fund will fund a range of emergency services to Jewish victims of Nazism, including medical equipment and medications, dental care, transportation, food, and short-term homecare. The Claims Conference will implement the distribution of the funds from the Weinberg Foundation to agencies throughout the U.S. and Canada that provide services to Holocaust victims. Each agency has an advisory committee comprising Holocaust survivors that reviews individual requests for assistance. "Aging victims of the Holocaust require assistance to meet their basic needs for shelter, food and medical care," said Rachel Monroe, president of The Harry and Jeanette Weinberg Foundation. "The grant for emergency assistance is expected to help at least 10,000 Nazi victims living in poverty throughout North America. The Weinberg Foundation remains committed to honoring these courageous men and women whose memories we call upon to educate the world today and for generations to come." ❖

Save the date!

On Sunday, October 17th we are having a fabulous program at Temple Beth El in Stamford co-sponsored with the Jewish Historical Society of Southern Fairfield County. Regina Resnick Presents a unique program of Jewish music composed by non-Jewish composers, introduced by Michael Philip Davis.

*Wishing you a happy and healthy 5771
Shana Tovah Agnes*

An Emotional Reunion

Our member **Fran Schaff** was among the fifty people who gathered at the Ghetto Fighters House in Israel for a very emotional reunion. She, along with the others who attended, was one of “Lena Kuchler’s Hundred Children”. Lena, who was born near Cracow one hundred years ago was a courageous woman who escaped from the train heading to Belzec. She established a place for one hundred Jewish children in the resort town of Zakopane and eventually smuggled them out of Poland to France and then to live in Israel. She wrote a book about the experiences of these children during the Shoah entitled “My Hundred Children”. Seven years ago it was made into a documentary and was awarded Best Documentary in the Jerusalem Film Festival. Although Lena passed away twenty-three years ago the children had an emotional reunion to mark her one hundredth birthday. ❖



Fran Schaff in Israel at the reunion of 100 children



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