



## Holocaust Education Report

Since the last AGM, the committee has planned and presented a variety of events and worked to amend the structure and guidelines of the committee in an effort to clarify member's responsibilities, streamline our work and increase membership.

Holocaust Education Week took place the week of November 3 with four events, beginning with an evening with author Kathy Kacer, who gave an excellent presentation about her book, *Shanghai Escape*, and other stories of the Holocaust for children and youth.

For the second event, we tried something we haven't done before - An Evening of Personal Stories. Five heroic women who survived the Holocaust spoke in small groups about their experience and its impact on their lives. More than 100 people attended. The conversational format made for a powerful experience for both presenters and participants. The feedback was universally positive and we plan to use this format again, including second generation survivors.

The third event was an interview with Holocaust Survivor Leslie Mezei, who spoke about his experiences in Hungary. The interview was done in conjunction with the Azrieli Foundation, who generously donated copies of his memoir, *A Tapestry of Survival*.

The week culminated with our annual community commemoration of Kristallnacht, provided through the generosity of Margaret's Legacy in conjunction with the Federation. We presented the Canadian premiere of the film 'Warsaw: A City Divided', with a special introduction by the Dean of Humanities at McMaster University, Dr. Pamela Swett. The event was a fundraiser for the 2020 Asper Foundation Human Rights & Holocaust Studies program and the March of the Living.

In January, through the generosity of our many sponsors, we presented the documentary 'Who Will Write Our History', about the secret archive buried in the Warsaw Ghetto. Afterwards, we had the pleasure of listening to the writer, producer and director of the film, Roberta Grossman, being interviewed by Tom Weisz.

With the advent of the pandemic, our plans for our local annual Yom Hashoah commemoration at City Hall were cancelled. The March of the Living trip (4 students and 6 adults) and the Asper Foundation trip to Winnipeg, with 26 students from both the Catholic and Public board of education, were also cancelled due to COVID-19. The Federation participated in the national online commemoration, including greetings from the committee.

Extensive plans for the student and teacher's seminars, normally held in the spring, have also had to be placed on hold. As we better learn what the fall will hold in terms of the pandemic and social gathering restrictions, we will adjust our events accordingly.

**Arlie Singer, Chair**