

# **A Second Generation to Remember**

**Seminar to train children and grandchildren of  
Holocaust survivors to preserve their family legacies**

*By Raphael Sugarman*

Marcel Segal, a longtime Calgarian, has spent more than two decades educating local high school students about his family's horrific experiences at the hands of the Nazis in WWII.

Marcel, along with his parents, Josef and Suzanne, and sister, Anna, spent two years in hiding in a tiny shack in the small French city of Nancy. "We had no water and the toilet was in the backyard," said Marcel. "There was no bedding either, we slept on the floor."

All five of Josef's brothers, as well as four of Suzanne's five sisters were murdered in the Shoah.

Marcel considers it his responsibility to share his history in order to teach students about the importance of democracy and respect for diversity. Though intrepid as ever, Marcel, now 84, is not sure how long his health will afford him the strength to make the crucial, but difficult, school visits

But he is not concerned. Thanks to his devoted niece, Sylvie Hepner, and a new program designed for children and grandchildren of survivors, the Segal family story will continue to be told.

On Remembrance Day, Monday, November 11, at 1 p.m., the Calgary Federation will sponsor a presentation by

Houstonian Sandy Lessig, a survivor's daughter, and a member of the advisory board of the Holocaust Museum Houston. Lessig worked with the museum to create an interactive, multi-media presentation, titled *Through Their Eyes: A Survivor's Story*. Houston was faced with the same challenge other communities face – how to tell survivors' stories and continue the important work of Holocaust education when the survivors themselves are no longer able to speak. In response, Lessig developed a presentation of her father's story, using his taped testimony to create a "conversation" between father and daughter. At the November 11 event, Lessig will share her presentation and discuss how local children and grandchildren of survivors might piece together a similar talk, using taped testimony, documents and photographs

Over the past 30 years, Calgary's Holocaust survivors have taught at least 65,000 high school students about their experiences and the importance of human rights, according to Ilana Krygier Lapidés, the Federation's Director of Holocaust and Human Rights Education. "All of this teaching will come to a halt if there is no one to tell the survivors' stories, said Krygier Lapidés. "Our community has no intention of giving up on the valuable work we do in Holocaust education, so we're launching a program and encouraging children, grandchildren and interested people to address the challenge," said Krygier Lapidés.

Sylvie Hepner, who has accompanied Marcel Segal on his school visits and facilitated for him at the annual Holocaust Education Symposium for six years, said she has no intention of letting her family's story be forgotten.

“I believe that second generation has to take it on,” said Hepner. “People need to learn from [the Holocaust], not to be racist, not to discriminate against people.”

**The November 11 event will also include a moment of silence in commemoration of Remembrance Day.**