

INTERNATIONAL The *March* Report OF THE LIVING

Teach your children כולנו מחויבים לשמר ולהפיץ את זיכרון השואה, כפי שנאמר: ושננתם לבניך

Issue 2, Fall 2018

A DAY LIKE NO OTHER

On Yom HaShoah, the presidents of Israel and Poland lead thousands in 30th anniversary March of the Living procession at Auschwitz-Birkenau



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Foreign diplomats join MOTL • Float in NY parade for Israel • New project to fight hate
Survivor spotlight • Regional wrap-up • Calling all alumni • MOTL mother/daughter duo

A Commitment to Move Forward

Due to new law in Poland, MOTL's activities there are more vital than ever in teaching the world about the Holocaust

This past spring, the International March of the Living organization celebrated its 30th anniversary. Since its inception in 1988, our core ideas and vision have remained constant – to teach Holocaust history, combat Holocaust denial and promote tolerance among people of all faiths and backgrounds.

Over the years, our organization and its activities have grown tremendously, developing in many directions. MOTL has added new Regions and Chapters around the world and initiated related programs, including conferences, seminars, marches and study missions. Cooperation with international and local institutions has become an integral part of what we do, adding to our influence as a highly-respected Holocaust remembrance and human rights organization.

Earlier this year, Poland's government created a new,

unwelcome and complicated situation for MOTL, the Jewish world and others who care about respecting facts and open historical exploration. Warsaw passed controversial legislation that criminalized references to Polish guilt in Nazi atrocities. The anger it caused went far beyond Israel and the Jewish

Diaspora. There was widespread criticism of the law which many saw as an attack on freedom of expression for its ban on stating an indisputable fact – that some Poles took part in Nazi Germany's crimes on Polish soil.

Sadly, the new law and the dispute it triggered opened the door to expressions of hatred, anti-Semitism, discrimination and attacks, especially in Polish social media and in extremist movements.

In June, Poland and Israel reached an agreement to improve but not rescind the offensive legislation. It did not resolve the situation which will continue to be a source of negativity and perpetuate ill-feeling about Poland among many people around the world.

Two months earlier, the continuing controversy and bitterness about the law made for a more charged atmosphere for all of us involved in the MOTL in Poland. It demonstrated the vital importance of our presence and activities teaching the world about the Holocaust by way of educational events and presenting unimpeachable facts.

Despite the complexity and hard feelings created by the law, we continued our close contacts and excellent cooperation with official educational organiza-



Greeting crowds on NY's 5th Ave. from MOTL float during pro-Israel parade

tions and institutions in Poland, such as the Polin Museum, the Auschwitz-Birkenau Museum, and various Polish government agencies with whom we've worked closely for many years. Auschwitz-Birkenau is the most important site of all our visits and activities in Poland.

Our mutual relations and cooperation are rooted in a high level of understanding, based on shared similar goals, values and vision. In a warm gesture, reflecting the special contacts and extensive cooperation between MOTL and Poland, the country's Culture Minister, together

with the Museums Council and Board of Directors, nominated a March of the Living representative to the Auschwitz-Birkenau Board of Directors.

In April, in yet another example, Poland's president, Andrzej Duda, presented the nomination and certificate to the March of the Living at the main ceremony at Birkenau. We're hopeful these excellent relations will continue and that ultimately the unfortunate legislation will be canceled entirely, to everyone's benefit.

Aharon (Aharale) Tamir
Deputy World Chairman, MOTL

CALENDAR

Dates Worth Noting in 2018

- **April 11 – Krakow, Poland**
Yom HaShoah ceremony at the Krakow Philharmonic, with Ron Dermer, Israel's Ambassador to the United States
- **April 12 – Krakow, Poland**
30th Anniversary March of the Living from Auschwitz to Birkenau
- **April 12 – Krakow, Poland**
Diplomatic dinner with Ambassadors to the United Nations
- **April 18 – Warsaw, Poland**
Participation of MOTL in Warsaw Ghetto Uprising commemorations
- **April 19 – Jerusalem, Israel**
30th Anniversary March of the Living in Jerusalem, followed by Mega Event at Latrun
- **May 8 – Toronto, Canada**
Canadian PM Justin Trudeau attends MOTL's 30th anniversary event
- **May 9 – Oswiecim, Poland**
MOTL takes part in Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum meetings
- **June 3 – New York, NY**
MOTL float in annual Celebrate Israel Parade in New York City
- **July 1 – 8 – Poland**
Joint Seminar at Polin and Auschwitz Museums and in Krakow
- **July 2 – Jerusalem, Israel**
Elie Wiesel Commemoration with Limmud FSU
- **August 3 – 6 – Johannesburg, South Africa**
MOTL participation in Limmud South Africa
- **October – Sighet, Romania**
Celebration of what would've been 90th birthday of Elie Wiesel, Nobel Laureate and Holocaust survivor, in his hometown and the launch of a campaign against anti-Semitism and Holocaust denial
- **November – Plonsk, Poland**
Commemoration of Israel's first prime minister David Ben-Gurion
- **November – Warsaw, Poland**
Launch of the Polish version of Witness book at Polin Museum
- **November 2 – Lvov, Ukraine**
Elie Wiesel Memorial Conference with partners
- **December 15 and 16 – Amsterdam, The Netherlands**
New Horizons Conference with Anne Frank House

Outreach on Wheels

MOTL figures prominently in NY celebration of Israel

As part of MOTL's efforts to build an alumni network and engage people in creative ways beyond the March experience, the organization sponsored a float in the annual Celebrate Israel Parade in New York City on June 3.

Especially meaningful was the participation of two Holocaust survivors who've previously taken part in the March of the Living. Irving Roth, born in 1929 in Kosice, Czechoslovakia, survived Auschwitz and Buchenwald, and Celia Rapp Kener, born in 1936 in Lwów, Poland, survived the Lwów Ghetto as a hidden child. Also in attend-

ance were alumni spanning our evolution, from the first MOTL in 1988 through our 30th anniversary this past spring.

Tens of thousands of spectators who came out to celebrate this year's parade which honored Israel's 70th birthday, witnessed the MOTL float march up New York's 5th Avenue. To see photos and videos from the event, go to motl.org.

MOTL's first-ever participation in the Celebrate Israel Parade is part of a series of new alumni initiatives, with more on the horizon. The goal is to strengthen the global network of alumni.



All smiles, all generations, all in blue for MOTL's debut at annual event for Israel

Stronger Together

Engagement of foreign diplomats shows MOTL's message is vital, its impact universal

In the turbulent times in which we live, I believe it's comforting to our participants and alumni that the March of the Living organization offers continuity and consistency of historical education. Our mission remains true to our communal past, to the memory of our ancestors and to the veracity of our survivors' testimony.

Last winter, the formal celebratory recognition of our 30th anniversary year began with an outstanding event in New York at the United Nations headquarters on January 29, hosted by Israel's UN Ambassador, Danny Danon. Speakers included Irving Roth, representing our survivor community and Jordana Lebowitz, representing our alumni.

In addressing the gathering of more than 400 guests, Ambassador Danon's comments about the March of the Living's important role in the future of the Jewish world were patently clear to all in attendance.

Special musical performances by David D'Or, Miri Mesika and Amir Benayoun enhanced this wonderful tribute



Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon at MOTL's 30th anniversary at UN in NY

to the work we do, the success we've had and the impact we've made on countless people.

Our excellent photographic exhibition "Witness" remained on display in the halls of the UN for two weeks and was viewed by staff and visitors, pointedly delivering our own message and that of the Holocaust to viewers from around the globe.

A few months later, Ambassador Danon, in cooperation with the American Zionist Movement, led a delegation of UN ambassadors on the 2018 March of the Living. In Poland, they marched with us from Auschwitz to Birkenau, feeling our commitment to memory and history.

"As we witness an increase in anti-Semitism around the world and dangerous attempts to rewrite history, now more than ever we must ensure the memories of the survivors pass on to the next generation," Ambassador Danon told those assembled at Auschwitz. "By joining us on this meaningful March, these ambassadors spoke out against anti-Semitism and sent a message to all those who peddle hatred."

The participation of international diplomats made a lasting impression on Ambassador Danon, who later said:

"UN ambassadors from around the world joined me on the March of the Living to preserve the memory of the

Holocaust and proclaim that anti-Semitism will not be tolerated. With dark regimes seeking to spread horrific violence, the international community must ensure that 'never again' serves not as a slogan, but as a guiding principle. By later continuing on to Israel and celebrating 70 years of independence, the UN ambassadors learned about the historic connection to our beautiful land and the contributions our vibrant country makes to the international community."

It's clear the MOTL message is strong, our lessons are essential for all and our impact is universal.

Partnerships such as those we've established with Keren Kayemeth LeIsrael/Jewish National Fund, Keren Hayesod/United Israel Appeal, George Washington University School of Education, the Robert Miller Center at Rutgers University and the American Zionist Movement have proven vital to expanding our outreach into the world community. We are stronger together... and together may we all go from strength to strength for many years to come.

Phyllis Greenberg Heideman
President, International MOTL

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The International March of the Living Report is published several times a year by the International March of the Living. We welcome letters/comments from readers. Please send them to motl@motlmail.org or International March of the Living, Attention: Editor-in-Chief, 2 West 45th Street, Suite 1500, New York, New York 10036 USA. Tel: 212-869-6800 www.motl.org.

Reflections on a Formative Trip

Ari Kwitkin-Close takes stock of what he experienced on this year's March of the Living

When I registered for the 2018 March of the Living, I didn't really understand what I was signing up for. Sure, I had long been told it was a life-altering trip but still I didn't comprehend its full potential.

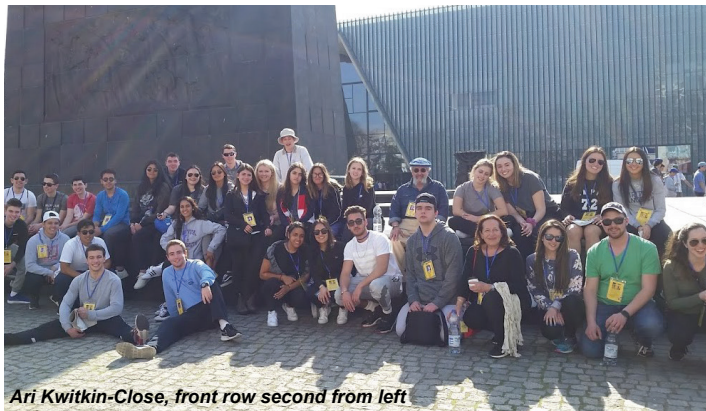
I often like to speak about formative moments. A moment in time you never forget which has the power to change the way you think or even the way you live your life. I want to share a few such moments I experienced with MOTL.

If I told you to think of a concentration camp, your mind probably first goes to Auschwitz. You see the ominous gate and imagine all that lies behind it. On MOTL, I received a new sense of the camps.

Before I left, I made sure I knew where my relatives had lived. For example, my great grandmother's family had lived close to Lublin. We went a few miles from the heart of Lublin but ended up at – and I quote our group leader Joel Katz – “hell on earth.”

Right in the middle of the city was Majdanek. All my years of Holocaust education barely prepared me for what lay there. Visiting the camp, we saw barracks with shoes, rows of ovens and gas chambers we walked through. The scariest part? It almost looked like Majdanek could be made operational within 24 hours.

I walked through a killing factory that day but was somehow emotionally okay, thanks to our amazing leaders. After our group of 60 kids worked our way through the camp, we met at an enormous circular monument with a domed top. Looking over the ledge with the dome above you, there are more ashes than you've ever seen. They're the ashes of Jews



Ari Kwitkin-Close, front row second from left

murdered in this camp.

This was my first moment: In the Jewish faith, there are many mitzvot to carry out. One of them is to be buried in Israel. Those people, now represented

only by ash, had that opportunity taken from them. They never got the chance to see Israel. With that in mind, every member of our group took turns sprinkling soil from Israel onto

the ashes in Majdanek.

After the visits to death camps and learning about Polish Jewry during the Holocaust, we left for Israel to celebrate its 70th year of independence. Exiting Ben Gurion Airport, the entire mood of our trip changed. We all seemed happier, the air seemed sweeter and life was just better.

This year, I was fortunate to have gone to Poland and Israel with a survivor. Unfortunately, that won't be possible much longer. That's why I urge people to go on the March as soon as you can. Having a survivor travel with you is priceless. The stories they share and the insight they provide is unparalleled by any other experience I've had.

SURVIVOR SPOTLIGHT

Everything Can Be Taken from You

Survivor Gabriella Karin shares hard lessons she learned during the Holocaust with a new generation

As part of her commitment to teaching young people the lessons of the Holocaust, Gabriella Karin has participated in the March of the Living trip to Poland and Israel every year since 2012.

In Los Angeles, where she's lived since 1960 and works as a sculptor, Gabriella devotes considerable time to educating Jewish and non-Jewish youth in schools, synagogues and camps about the horrific period of history she lived through in Europe. Today, at age 88, she also takes part in programs at the Los Angeles Museum of the Holocaust and the Museum of Tolerance.

Born in Bratislava in Slovakia, Gabriella's childhood was marked by the Nazi persecution of Jewish residents. During World War II, she spent three years hiding in a Catholic



Gabriella Karin, wearing blue, holding flag

convent with the help of false papers. Then, in 1944, at age 14, she joined the rest of her family when her aunt's boyfriend, Karol Blonar, took them all into hiding in a one-bedroom apartment. They hid there until the Russians liberated Bratislava in April 1945. For his courage and compassion, Karol was later awarded the title of Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem in Jerusalem.

After the war, Gabriella went to school for design, pattern making and busi-

ness administration before meeting her husband, Ofer Karin, also a survivor. They married and moved to Israel to start a new life. They later moved to Los Angeles where Gabriella began sculpting and designing art in which she incorporates her Holocaust experiences as a principal theme.

“Everything can be taken from you, even the clothes you wear,” she tells students. “But no one can take away what's in your head. So, put good things in there.”

Educating Educators Against Hate

MOTL helps with new initiative to combat all forms of prejudice in society

Hatred is once again on the rise and with it so are hate crimes against the Jewish community. According to the Anti-Defamation League's study of 2017, there was a 57% increase in anti-Semitic incidents in the United States. Even more shocking, most of these incidents occurred on K-12 school grounds.

“We know that hate is learned,” says New York Congresswoman Carolyn Maloney. “Our children are not born with prejudices and it's up to us to make sure they never learn them.”

Children learn prejudice from their parents and adults around them. Much of this is due to ignorance and lack of proper education. This is why the International March of the Living's Holocaust Education for Deans of Schools of Education and Law is extremely relevant. It's being done in partnership with The Miller Center for Community Protection and Resilience at Rutgers University in New Jersey.

The program, created by Professor David Machlis, Vice-Chairman of the International March of the Living, will empower Deans of Schools of Education and Schools of Law to include in their course curriculums material related to the Holocaust and genocide. This in order to help combat all forms of hatred and intolerance in society.

In the U.S., as only 11 out of 50 states have mandatory Holocaust education, the International MOTL is taking appropriate action. To also combat a marked increase in harassment and hatred in K-12 grades and on college and university campuses, students have to be taught otherwise. What better way than educating the educators.

Holocaust Education for

Deans of Schools of Education and Schools of Law was created to ensure that leaders of educational institutions are well informed of the wrongdoings of

mankind during the Holocaust.

“Learning about the Holocaust – and the lessons of anti-Semitism and racism – is one of the best ways to fight prejudice and discrimination,” says Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the Anti-Defamation

League. “It helps ensure that genocide and other such atrocities never happen again.”

With neo-Nazis marching in the U.S., there's need to ensure a secure future for the country's children. Implementing a program which will stir passion among participants and inspire them to share their teaching is to combat hatred in



Program creator Prof. David Machlis

a peaceful manner.

The program will begin with a day-long seminar at Rutgers University, just ahead of the deans traveling to Poland to participate in the MOTL. After the deans complete their educational travel experience, the program will visit the faculty of each dean's school to motivate them to include Holocaust material in their curriculum.

Twelve deans will partake in the 2019 Deans programs. Conducting such an educational mission each year will pay dividends far into the future. Not only will the program educate deans about the Holocaust, it will also enable them to take their learnings back to share with students and colleagues alike.

This should contribute to a better educated and more tolerant society. Only by remembering the past can we assure a better future for humankind. We cannot expect a moral society without educating future leaders on the immoralities of the past.



Calling All Alumni

MOTL is now reaching out to alumni to ask for their ideas and vision for how to make the MOTL alumni network more engaging and effective for them. If you're interested in becoming more involved and playing a role in the International March of the Living Alumni Committee, please email Ariana@motlmail.org.

A Sad Moment

MOTL leaders condemned the recent anti-Semitic defacing of the late Holocaust survivor and Nobel Laureate Elie Wiesel's memorial house in his native Romania. “This blatant attack on Prof. Wiesel's memory is unconscionable and an assault upon all for which he stood,” the MOTL statement said.



Passing the Torch

After going on the first March of the Living as a teenager in 1988, Toronto resident Eynat Katz, whose grandparents were Holocaust survivors, returned on the March this year with her daughter on the same journey

This year, as in the past, family history contributed greatly to the decision of many to take part in the March of the Living. For some, it was all about their relatives. For others, it was not.

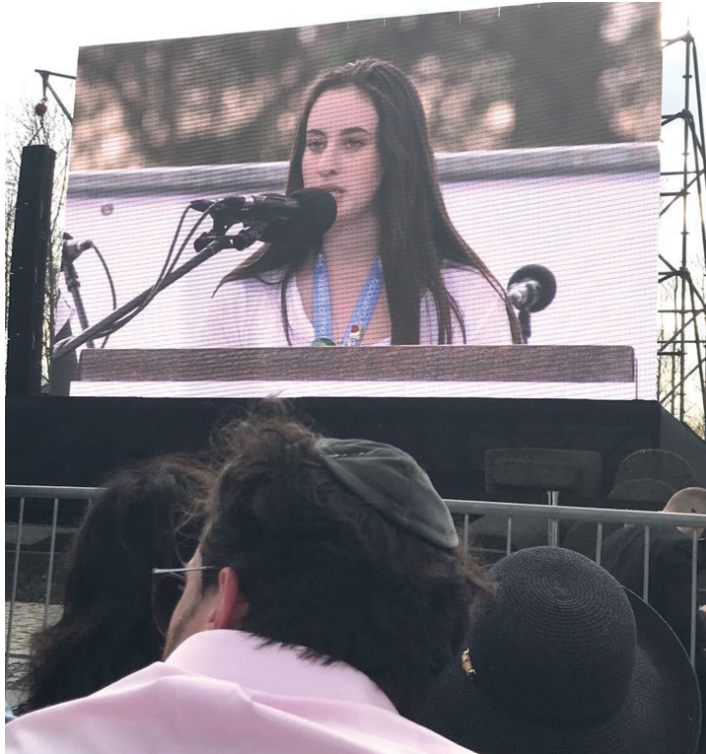
Canadian Eynat Katz had multiple personal reasons to come on the March. A resident of Toronto, her grandparents were Holocaust survivors from Poland. They were a central factor when, as a teenage high school student, she chose to be part of the first-ever MOTL in 1988, an experience that would end up changing her life.

This year, she returned, with her daughter Tali, who at 17 was the same age Eynat was when she came on the March 30 years earlier. Making it even more powerful, both mother and daughter were part of the official ceremony at Auschwitz, addressing the crowd following the somber walk from Birkenau.

In her speech, Eynat told of how when she first heard of the creation of MOTL and she told her grandparents of her interest in going on it, they were strongly opposed.

“Much to my surprise,” she recounted to the crowd, “my grandparents, who were the pivotal forces in my life, said: ‘absolutely not!’ I was not to go ‘back there’ because there was no reason for me to ever set foot in Poland or to be witness to the atrocities they had survived.

“To them, I was the grandchild of Holocaust survivors and there was nothing more that I needed to know beyond that,” she continued. “But to me, that was the exact reason why I had to go back and see for myself. Even at that young age, I understood that who I was and who I was going to



(Top photo) Eynat Katz with Holocaust survivor Ed Mosberg at Auschwitz ceremony. (Bottom photo) Eynat's daughter Tali followed her mother to the podium.

be, were tied up in those very tragic experiences.”

Little did she know then what would be the full impact

of the trip during which she visited some of the same concentration camps her grandfather survived. She also went to the

Lodz Ghetto, where her grandmother hid in an underground bunker to survive.

“What I didn’t realize at the time, was that the March was going to open a Pandora’s box of emotions and questions that would take me years to deal with,” Eynat recalled. “I had no clue then that I would devote the next 30 years coming to terms with what I’d seen on that trip and allowing me to finally connect the past with my present.”

She added that today, all these years later, she can see how her grandparents and her first MOTL experience shaped the person she became.

“It molded my personal outlook on life and my deep commitment to my own Jewish community,” Eynat said. “In fact, I’m still connected to the March 30 years after my initial experience. And indeed today, I’m passing the torch to my own daughter to be the next witness, a fourth-generation great-granddaughter of Holocaust survivors.

Tali followed at the microphone, making for a strong mother-daughter image as they stood next to each other at the podium.

“My participation in the March of the Living is, in many ways, an example of the strength of the Jewish people,” Tali said in her speech. “Just a few minutes ago, I marched from Auschwitz to Birkenau with my classmates, with other Jewish teenagers from around the world, with my family and with Holocaust survivors from around the world. If I could go back in time to ask my grandfather and my great-grandfather if they could ever have imagined such a thing, I think I know what the answer would be: ‘Impossible!’”

By its very nature, every March of the Living – especially the annual gathering at Auschwitz-Birkenau on Yom HaShoah – is a highly poignant, emotional event. This year, it had an added dimension, being the 30th anniversary of MOTL and the 70th anniversary of the establishment of Israel in the wake of the Holocaust.

In mid-April, surrounded by barbed wire fences and led by Israel’s President Reuven Rivlin, some 12,000 marchers – from dozens of countries, from elderly Holocaust survivors to teenagers to members of Israel’s security services – took part in the 3.2-kilometer procession from the Auschwitz dormitories to the Birkenau death camp.

They were joined by international diplomats, including Israel’s ambassador to the United Nations Danny Danon and 45 of his counterparts from other countries.

The Chelsea Football Club from London sent several members, as part of its initiative against anti-Semitism, including its Israeli former coach Avram Grant, who is the son of a Holocaust survivor.

Also present were relatives of Sempo Sugihara, the late Japanese diplomat who saved 6,000 Lithuanian Jews during the Holocaust by issuing them visas. A video was shown in tribute to his heroism.

“Today we meet at a place which is a symbol for the whole world, for all of humanity, the synonym for the Holocaust,” said Polish President Andrzej Duda in his speech. “We come here together, Jews, the nation of survivors, and Poles, the nation that was also brutally

COVER STORY

A Day Like No Other

Spending Yom HaShoah at Auschwitz-Birkenau as part of March of the Living is always a powerful experience. This year, even more so.



persecuted by Hitler’s Third Reich, in order to jointly pay tribute to the victims of the Holocaust. We come together because we do remember and want to pass on the truth about what happened here, to future generations.”

His Israeli counterpart Reuven Rivlin said it was at Auschwitz where German efficiency was exploited to the fullest, all in the pursuit of mass murder. At this one death factory alone, the Nazis killed some 1,100,000 people, the vast majority of them Jews, gassed and cremated, forever erased from the face of the earth.

“We stand here and we know that from this place we cannot hope for justice,” President Rivlin told the audience. “In this place where the ashes of our brothers and sisters were swallowed by the soil, no justice will grow. We don’t expect justice in Europe that seeks too quickly to forget, to eradicate the memory, to deny, to destroy evidence. But our memory, the

memory of the Jewish people, is the antithesis of the hatred of the Nazis.”

Dr. Shmuel Rosenman, who helped conceive the original March of the Living 30 years ago, made an impassioned plea to everyone in the audience, Jews and non-Jews.

“I ask that each one of you make a sincere pledge – that you will help create a better world for all humanity, so that no nation, no people, should ever have an Auschwitz, a Majdanek or a Treblinka built for their destruction,” said Dr. Rosenman in his speech. “Let us join hands with our brave survivors, who have traveled on this long and difficult trip from all over the world, and pledge to them this: We will always remember your stories, your pain, and your suffering – and we will pass on the lessons you have so eloquently taught us, to the next generation.”

Ed Mosberg, who was born in Krakow, Poland in 1926, survived two concentra-

tion camps although he lost his entire family in the Holocaust. A resident of the United States, he returned to his native country to take part in the March of the Living ceremony, as he’s done several times in previous years. Dressed in the drab uniform he had to wear in concentration camps, he said it was his duty to recount the Nazi atrocities against the Jews, citing the famous statement by the late Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel. “When you listen to a witness, you become a witness.” He also praised the Polish government for its commitment to preserving Holocaust memorial sites scattered throughout Poland.

At the end of the ceremony, popular Israeli singer Shlomo Artzi, whose parents were Holocaust survivors, and the HaShalom youth choir from the Holocaust Education Center in Japan, provided moving musical performances.

Earlier, Abraham Hirschson, who together with Dr. Rosenman, founded the March of the Living 30 years ago, lit a special torch in honor of this milestone.

After reciting the Shehechayunu, Hirschson recalled that when he first came to Elie Wiesel with the idea of the MOTL, Wiesel said: “You have to do it because you are building a wall against the deniers of the Holocaust.” Hirschson went on to say, “You youngsters, that are marching here every year, you are the stones in the wall, you are the bridge from the generation of the survivors to the generations to come, [so] that no-one can deny the Holocaust... You will be those who say, we swear to remember and to never forget. Please say with me, ‘Never again!’”



🇯🇵 JAPAN: Holocaust Education Center Leads the Way

The Holocaust Education Center (HEC) in Japan is one of the few non-Jewish places in the world dedicated to the over one million Jewish children murdered by the Nazis. Created in 1995 in the unlikely location of Fukuyama City, 95 km (60 miles) from Hiroshima, it contrasts with the usual places in Japan that focus on World War II. They tell a much different story, concentrating on the country's own tragedy after the United States dropped two atom bombs on Japan to end the war in 1945.

Through its exhibitions, the HEC has opened the eyes of thousands of Japanese who learn little or nothing about the Holocaust at school. In Japanese history books on World War II, Hitler's genocide of European Jews receives scant attention.

According to a recent article in *Tablet*, only about 500 Jews live in Japan which produced one Righteous Among



the Nations. Chiune Sugihara, Japan's ambassador to Lithuania, saved 6,000 Jews in 1940 by providing them with transit visas. Last December, MOTL organized a conference and exhibition honoring Sugihara.

This year, the HEC arranged for its Hashalom youth choir, which previously performed in Israel, to travel from

Japan to Poland to sing at the March of the Living ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau on Yom HaShoah. Singing in impeccable Hebrew, it was the only non-Israeli choir taking part in the official proceedings. In addition, its 20-member delegation marched with Holocaust survivors and Jewish groups from almost 50 countries.

Since 2002, the HEC owners and operators who are part of an organization called Beit HaShalom, have had a close relationship with the International March of the Living. They've sent a delegation to Poland to participate in the MOTL several times over the past 10 years.

During that same period, MOTL has organized three visits to the HEC in Fukuyama City where it launched joint activities such as exhibitions, conferences and visits to other communities in Japan, Hong Kong and elsewhere in Asia.

Adding to the Japanese connection with the March of the Living, another excellent organization in Japan called Bridges for Peace has developed a growing involvement with MOTL. This year, for the third time, it sent a delegation to Poland for the March. Its 70-member contingent, coupled with the group from HEC, made for a strong Japanese presence.

🇵🇱 POLAND: Joint Seminar for Educators

This summer, for the first time, educators from eight countries took part in a Holocaust-related joint seminar in Poland at the initiative of the March of the Living (MOTL). The six-day program, conceived by MOTL's Aharon (Aharale) Tamir, focused on the Nazi genocide of European Jews and explored a thousand years of Jewish life in Poland.

The seminar, which was organized and sponsored by the Polin Museum in Warsaw and the Auschwitz Museum in Oswiecim, took place in early July. It attracted 18 participants from the United States, Holland, Austria, Hungary, Greece, Poland, Israel and South Africa. In addition, seven



Participants in joint seminar in Poland

Polish educators and guides from the Polin Museum and the Auschwitz Museum took part in the program.

Participants went to various institutes, exhibitions and lectures in Poland including sites not accessible to the general public. They also met with researchers and historians at the Polin and Auschwitz Museums. Throughout the seminar, delegates valued the opportunity to share experiences, showcase their respective activities, present common objectives in their work and discuss ways in which their organizations can work together.

MOTL officials are now assessing the impact of the seminar with an eye to conducting another such initiative next year.

🇭🇺 HUNGARY: Thousands March in Budapest MOTL Event



Making tracks in Budapest march

On May 13, on a sunny spring day, the sound of 20 shofars marked the start of the 16th annual March of the Living in Budapest. A quiet crowd, including politicians and diplomats, walked on the beautiful Elisabeth Bridge under a blue sky. That same sky saw horrors 74 years ago when Jews were forced to their deaths in the Danube River.

In 2003, when the March of the Living first took place in Budapest to commemorate the Holocaust, only a few hundred people took part in the silent march with torches. This year, that same event attracted many thousands of participants.

As they neared the end of the walk along the shores of the Danube, a choir from the city's Sándor Schreiber Jewish

School greeted marchers with a moving musical performance. Several speakers addressed the crowd. One of the main messages was that the Holocaust was both a Jewish and Hungarian tragedy.

Among the speakers were Gábor Gordon, President of March of the Living Hungary; Aharon Tamir, Deputy World Chairman of the International March of the Living; József Székelyi, actor and founder of MOTL Hungary; Yossef Amrani, Israel's Ambassador in Budapest and Majgull Axelson, author of the Swedish book *My Name is Not Miriam*.

"We must be careful," Aharon Tamir told the audience. "A tragedy like the Holocaust could happen again if we don't remain vigilant while movements, organizations and even states stir hate, intolerance and violate the fundamental

human rights of other people."

A part of the International March of the Living, MOTL Hungary is extremely active, (see article below). Besides participating in the Auschwitz-Birkenau march in Poland, it organizes the Budapest march, stages charity concerts in Budapest's Dohány Street Great Synagogue, holds Holocaust remembrance events, and runs a unique Railcar Exhibition in an original cattle-wagon (from the Nazi deportations) that travels across Hungary.

Each year, MOTL Hungary's delegation to the March of the Living events and activities in Poland usually consists of about 300 people, from both Jewish and public high schools. They travel from Budapest by bus.

— **Eva Vadasz**

• For information on March of the Living Hungary, go to www.eletmenete.hu

🇭🇺 MOTL Hungary a Vital Part of the Community

Founded with the motto "Don't let our grandfathers' past become our children's future," March of the Living Hungary held its first march in Budapest in 2003. The next year, the first Hungarian delegation traveled to Poland to take part in the MOTL events there.

Today, with thousands of participants including important political and academic figures and opinion makers, the March of the Living event in Budapest is one of the largest annual demonstrations in Europe against racism and anti-Semitism.

With its office in Budapest, MOTL Hungary also organizes various exhibitions. The main one is called the Wagon Exhibition, which is installed in a cattle wagon that was used during the train trans-

ports of Jews to Nazi death camps. It presents the history of the European and Hungarian Holocaust through personal stories. An effective educational program, it uses traditional, digital and interactive installations that are especially popular with schools. Since its launch in 2005, the exhibit has reached more than 160,000 people in more than 100 Hungarian cities and towns across the border.

MOTL Hungary also offers other traveling exhibitions for schools throughout Hungary that focus on the following issues:

- The history of the mass deportation and mass murder of Hungarian Jewry.
- Crossroads: the impact of history on people's everyday lives, showing possible crossroads during the Holocaust in Hungary.



- Parallel fates: the impact of history on people's lives and fate depending on one's birth and race in 20th century Hungary.

- Remaining humane: even during the cruelest periods of history, like the Holocaust, extraordinary, brave women and men do their best to save lives while risking their own. This exhibit recalls their stories.

Other activities include seminars, lectures and workshops organized for volunteers, teachers, and guides for MOTL exhibits, along with a wide range of cultural events and performances, and the publishing of children's books and educational materials for schools.

Recently, MOTL Hungary created a Tolerance Meter, which has become a popular computer-based training tool that allows you to measure your level of tolerance and openness. There's also a tolerance quiz, an online game dealing with questions of racism, discrimination, openness and tolerance.

Lastly, MOTL Hungary organizes traveling history lessons. These are walking tours and visits to emblematic historical sites and meetings with Holocaust survivors, with specialized guides.

S. AFRICA: An Important Step in Jewish Journey

Despite its modest beginnings in South Africa, the March of the Living is now well known and is a permanent fixture on the country's Jewish calendar. It benefits greatly from the support it receives from the Holocaust and Genocide Centers in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.

I attended my first MOTL in 1994, with my husband. I was so impressed and impacted by the experience that I took on a leadership position. Since then, we have sent a delegation of youth almost every year. A smaller group of adults also participates, as part of an international delegation of older marchers, made up of Americans, Canadians, Australians and South Africans.

Every year, to help attract participants, I visit South Africa's three major Jewish communities (Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban) where I promote the program. By way of an in-person presentation, along with a DVD that explains what the MOTL tour consists of, we market it to Grade 10 students who will be in Grade 11 when the trip leaves. MOTL alumni who went the year before also offer their perspective.

Non-Jewish students are welcome to join the trip, although to date, there's only



Members of the South African MOTL delegation during visit in Israel

been one such participant. This is worth pursuing as is appealing to university students in their 20s.

Due to a lack of resources and staff, we take only one bus of a maximum of 50 students. The cost to go on MOTL is a big issue for many people as it's a dollar-based program, making it more expensive due to South Africa's weak currency. With the exchange rate fluctuating so much, we quote the final price only six weeks prior to leaving.

When students express interest in MOTL, we always stress that no student should refrain from applying due to financial constraints as we strive

to make it possible for anyone that wants to participate. To that end, we've always found support from donors to help students take part.

Almost all participants come from the Jewish day school system, and already have extensive Holocaust knowledge. Many if not most have been to Israel at least once. As a result, we don't have many lessons before leaving. We run a seminar on three Sundays, focusing on three main topics: Poland before World War II to understand what was lost; the question of 'Where was God?' which includes listening to a survivor; and the critical dates and events from

1933 to 1945.

We engage an educational psychologist to help prepare students emotionally for what they're about to experience. We also have a rabbi speak to them about the religious response to the subject at hand. These two professionals accompany us, and assist in the daily debriefing about what they've seen that day.

Coming from the tip of Africa, and often not having an opportunity to engage with Jews from around the world, much time and energy are spent arranging interaction and dialogue with as many delegations as possible. This helps our students realize they're part of something much bigger than themselves. In the process, it enhances their Jewish identity and understanding of the Jewish diaspora.

After we return home, all the schools have an assembly, during which MOTL participants report back to the rest of the student body, recounting what they experienced in Poland and Israel. Based on feedback we receive, it's clear that for participants, MOTL is an important step in their Jewish journey.

• **Rene Pozniak leads the March of the Living program in South Africa**



CANADA: PM salutes MOTL at event in Toronto



Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addresses guests



MOTL Canada National Director Eli Rubenstein



Ruth Ekstein, Tammy Glied and Jenn Green, all descendants of Holocaust survivors, co-chaired the evening



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau gives warm greeting to survivor Nate Leipziger with whom he visited Auschwitz in July 2016



Holocaust survivor Max Eisen

In early May, 400 people gathered at the Shaarei Shomayim synagogue in Toronto to celebrate the 30th anniversary of the March of the Living. The festive event honored the 100 Holocaust survivors from Canada, including nearly half from Toronto, who've taken part in the MOTL since its inception in 1988. The evening raised \$2,000,000 to fund future MOTL scholarships in the names of the 47 Toronto survivors and for program enhancements.

Longtime National Di-

rector of MOTL Canada, Eli Rubenstein, was honored for his 30 years of dedication and leadership in connection with the March. Among his achievements is having extended participation in MOTL to include native Canadians, visually impaired Israelis, Christians, Muslims, Rwandans, Polish Catholics, Hindus, Buddhists and many other non-Jewish groups.

The lead sponsor of the evening, the Ben and Hilda Katz Foundation, created a \$250,000 scholarship fund in

Rubenstein's name.

Among those in attendance were numerous MOTL alumni, survivors, educators, chaperones, community leaders and donors, all of whom welcomed the presence of Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. In his remarks, he thanked survivors for their courage in reliving their nightmares while educating Canadians about the Holocaust. He complimented MOTL for its educational work and paid tribute to Eli Rubenstein for his decades-long dedication to the

March.

Prime Minister Trudeau also addressed Canada's shameful policy toward Jewish refugees fleeing persecution under the Nazi regime when Ottawa refused most of them entry into Canada in the years before and during World War II. He announced his government will make an official apology for Canada having turned away more than 900 German Jews on the MS St. Louis ship in 1939, forcing them back to Europe where many were later killed by the Nazis.

Fellowship Program Targets Lack of Holocaust Education

New initiative to introduce relevant course at colleges and universities in the United States

Addressing the dearth of Holocaust education at many U.S. universities, the International March of the Living has partnered with George Washington University (GWU) through the MOTL Fellowship program. This pilot project, launched in the spring of 2018, helps history and education professors develop a Holocaust course at their respective college or university.

Its inaugural roll-out made a strong impact on participants. Along with seminars taught by distinguished scholars at GWU and the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, the program included a weeklong educational mission to Poland. The Fellows visited memorials and historical sites and met with leading Holocaust scholars and museum directors to gain a deeper understanding of the subject. The six faculty members, recruited from various campuses in the U.S., will introduce a new course at their respective institutions next year and are expected to enroll some 450 students.

One Fellow has success-

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Starting with the next issue of The March of the Living Report, we will feature a selection of letters and comments from readers.

Tell us what's on your mind in connection with the March of the Living or any related issues.

Please send your letters to The March of the Living Report Attention: Editor-in-Chief 2 West 45th Street, Suite 1500, New York, New York 10036 USA or motl@motlmail.org.

Please note: Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



Holocaust memorial at Auschwitz showing photos of people deported to the notorious Nazi death camp

fully worked with his dean to make his new Holocaust education course a requirement for the Masters in Education/Social Studies track. Another Fellow is cultivating an online course – in addition to his traditional course – to reach a higher number of students.

An estimated two-thirds of universities and colleges fail to offer a course on the topic and in a recent study, cited in the New York Times, 49% of millennials couldn't name a single Nazi concentration camp.

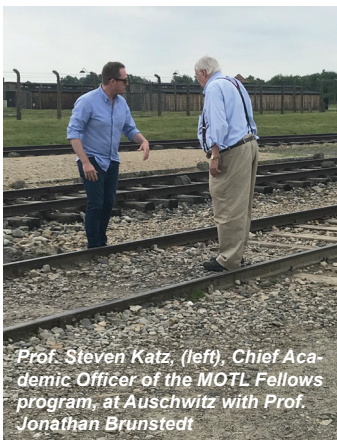
The March of the Living Faculty Fellows program, created and designed by Prof. David Machlis, Vice-Chairman of the MOTL, identifies those institutions lacking Holocaust courses and recruits professors with expertise in World War II or Education. The program's academic component was developed by a committee of world-renowned Holocaust scholars led by Prof. Steven Katz.

Over the next five years, the objective is to introduce a Holocaust course at a minimum of 100 colleges and universities not currently offering such a

course.

"The most powerful part of our Poland trip was the visit to various death camps and killing sites where the Holocaust took place," says Prof. Machlis. "It's no exaggeration to claim this experiential component was life-changing for me. I now see it as my mission as an educator to assure that students fully grasp that such wickedness was not alien to Western civilization — and human societies everywhere — but an inherent part of it. Now more than ever, I want students to take away from my classes the knowledge that if we are to prevent such tragedies in the future, we first must grapple with the limitations of human reason and be wary of utopian visions that claim simple solutions to vastly complex problems."

After the educational mission to Poland, Fellowship activities will resume with additional exchanges, culminating in a weekend this fall and a six-week webinar lecture series to provide more historical and pedagogic training on deliver-



Prof. Steven Katz, (left), Chief Academic Officer of the MOTL Fellows program, at Auschwitz with Prof. Jonathan Brunstedt

ing their new courses.

"The March of the Living Faculty Fellowship has fundamentally altered my approach to teaching my existing classes," says a participant. "But more importantly, it has laid the intellectual foundation for me to establish a new, stand-alone course on the Holocaust, now currently lacking from our curriculum. I strive for such courses to become a permanent fixture of our curriculum and that students at Utah State University will gain a deeper understanding of the origins, development, and consequences of this singular event in human history."

Lawyers Learn from Holocaust Lessons

New program by MOTL vice-chair offers continuing legal education program

During the 2018 International March of the Living, more than 40 American lawyers gathered for the inaugural MOTL Robert H. Jackson Continuing Legal Education (CLE) program. The event was co-sponsored by the Miller Center for Community Protection and Resilience at Rutgers University, the New Jersey State Bar Association and Rutgers School of Law.

The program was developed by March of the Living Vice-Chair Prof. David Machlis who believed MOTL was an appropriate venue for offering CLE credits to members of the legal profession while potentially generating new friends and supporters of the organization. He enlisted John Farmer, former Attorney General of New Jersey, Dean of Rutgers Law School and Senior Counsel to the 9/11 Commission, to be the program's Educational Coordinator and help craft an innovative curriculum.



The participants traveled to Krakow and took part in the March before gathering with more than 50 colleagues from Poland and the Ukraine for the legal colloquium on April 13. The day was split into three units. The morning focused on the role of lawyers and judges in the Holocaust and its aftermath. Among the morning presenters were prominent international human rights attorney Richard Heideman who addressed the legalization of hate in the Third Reich and Professor John Barrett of St. John's Law School who

spoke about the role of former Supreme Court Justice Robert Jackson in leading the U.S. Prosecution at the Nuremberg Trials.

The afternoon dealt with how to prevent future genocides and atrocities from occurring. The first session focused on modes of direct intervention. Among the speakers was William Shawcross, bestselling author and former Charity Commissioner of the UK, whose father Sir Hartley Shawcross was the chief British prosecutor at Nuremberg.

The third and final session

was a roundtable discussion about community lessons of protection and resilience from the U.S. and Europe. It blended lessons from the ground and meshed directly with the mission of the Miller Center for Community Protection and Resilience. Participants heard from Russ Deyo, former Acting Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security; Elie Honig, Director of the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice; Paul Goldenberg, former director of the Secure Communities Network; and Jonathan Biermann, Deputy Mayor and Director of Jewish Community Security for Brussels.

After a break, participants gathered for Shabbat dinner to hear from John Batchelor, renowned nationally syndicated radio host; Malcolm Hoenlein, Executive Vice-Chairman and CEO of the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations; and Dr. Monica Crowley, prominent media figure and bestselling author.

Learning Important Lessons

While participating in this year's MOTL, Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Ron Dermer, put things in perspective

In April, I had the privilege and honor to host Israel's Ambassador to the United States, Ron Dermer, and his wife, Rhoda Dermer on the 2018 March of the Living. In Poland, he delivered the keynote address during the Erev Yom HaShoah Memorial Program in Krakow. While in Israel, Ron and Rhoda led the Jerusalem March from Safra Square to the Kotel. Below is a brief excerpt from his address in Krakow. — Phyllis Greenberg Heideman

"For me, this March of the Living has been a March of Memory, a March of Defiance and a March of Hope. It has been a march to remember our people's dispossession, deprivation, and desperation, to remember the individuals behind the statistics and the mothers and fathers whose families were wiped out, the sisters and brothers separated from their loved ones forever,

the boys and girls, toddlers and infants, who never had a chance to grow up.

It has been a march to remember that the Holocaust was not perpetrated by aliens on another planet, but by real people in the real world. It has been a march to remember the most important lesson of the Holocaust — that the Jewish people must never be powerless against their enemies or rely on others to defend them...



Ambassador Ron Dermer leads March of the Living procession in Jerusalem

I am privileged to serve as an Ambassador of Israel [in the US]. I am privileged to represent a Jewish people that is once again a sovereign people.

Sovereignty has given us many things. It has given us a shield. No longer do the Jewish people beg foreign kings, presidents and prime ministers to defend us. Today, we defend ourselves. Sovereignty has given us a refuge. No longer do we

depend on foreign governments to open their gates to welcome in Jews fleeing persecution. Today, we open our own gates and welcome Jews home to Israel from across the world.

And sovereignty has also given us a voice. No longer do we ask others to plead our case before the sovereign nations of the world. Today, we plead our own case and have a place among those nations..."

Telling the Story Around the World

Snapshots of interesting moments in the life of Holocaust education and remembrance near and far



The Search is On: Members of the 1988 March of the Living delegation from Broward County, Florida are tracking down other fellow MOTL Alumni from that year and presenting them with a small gift in honour of the 30th anniversary of their participation in the first-ever MOTL. So far, organizers have given gifts to alumni in Florida, New York, Cincinnati and Jerusalem and continue to search for other alumni from that historic year.



Tee-Off Time Again: Calling all golfers and supporters of MOTL. On Dec. 16, the 14th Anniversary Golf Tournament will take place at the Miami Beach Golf Club. Proceeds from the event, including the Awards Ceremony and dinner, will support student scholarships for participation in the MOTL program.



Better Late Than Never: Holocaust survivor Johnny Jablon finally had his Bar Mitzvah after 79 years during the 2018 MOTL. He originally began preparing for his BM in his native Poland in the summer of 1939. A month later, the Germans invaded and occupied his country, and started their murderous pursuit of Jews. Now 92 years old and a resident of Montreal, Johnny returned to Poland for the first time since WW2 to celebrate his long-awaited milestone.



Against All Odds: Survivor Martin Baranek, (right), who has participated in the March of the Living 20 times, tells his harrowing, improbable story of surviving the Nazis in his recently published memoirs titled *Determined: One Boy's Holocaust Survival Story*. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of the book will be donated to MOTL.



An important database: Since the March of Living began in 1988, some 300 Holocaust survivors have traveled to Poland and Israel on a highly emotional trip. The International MOTL is now compiling a master list of all of them with the names as provided by local MOTL delegations. Featured on the MOTL website (www.motl.org/survivors), the listing for each person includes their home towns and the delegations they traveled with. For more information, please write to Ariana@motlmail.org.

PLEASE... AND THANK YOU

Donor support helps International March of the Living continue its vital work teaching Holocaust history to people around the world while strengthening Jewish identity and connections to Israel.

Please consider making a donation to International March of the Living, a non-profit charity organization. All contributions are deductible to the fullest extent of applicable tax law. (Our Tax ID is #22-326-1085).

To donate to the International March of the Living, please go to www.motl.org/donate or call +1.212.869.6800.

Please. And thank you.