

Tulare County Office of Education

Jim Vidak, County Superintendent of Schools

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For Immediate Release

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**Tulare County Office of Education announces:
Three Sessions of “Remembering the Holocaust”
Presentations Scheduled for Tulare County This Spring
Teachers Invited to Workshop on Teaching About Genocides January 13, 2006, in Visalia**

The California State History/Social Science Framework requires students to engage in: “thinking about why one of the world’s most civilized nations participated in the murder of millions of innocent people mainly because of their religious identity.” The framework is referring to the crimes committed during the World War II Holocaust by leaders of the Nazi regime in Germany.

The study of the Holocaust will come alive for students attending high school in Visalia Unified School District February 21-24, 2006 with the visit of Holocaust Survivor, Elane Geller. Ms. Geller travels to Porterville Unified School District Schools March 28-30, 2006, and completes her tour to Tulare County high schools with visits to smaller districts from April 18-21, 2006.

Tomorrow, teachers from Tulare County will attend a workshop on teaching about genocides with Drs. Samuel and Carole Edelman from Chico State University. The workshop will be held on January 13, 2006, from 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. in the Multi-Purpose Room of the Doe Avenue Complex. Teachers will receive free materials to use in the classroom.

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Elane Norge Geller was born in a Polish town not too far from the birthplace of the late Pope John Paul II. When rumors started that the Nazis were coming to Poland, her father began to prepare Elane – age four – to live with a Christian family until the crisis passed. That never occurred, and instead she survived life in a Nazi concentration camp, imprisoned for nearly five years.

She shares her message of human dignity, compassion, and remembrance for those who gave their lives during World War II. “You would do well to ask yourself why a sane person would relive this story about such great pain,” she told one audience of high school listeners. “It’s about prevention of racism and bigotry and anti-Semitism.” She emphasizes this message and makes it relevant by connecting it to our current modern dilemmas such as gang violence, and ethnic, cultural, and international conflicts.

“The opportunity to hear the personal experience of a Holocaust survivor is becoming rarer and rarer,” says Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak. “Ms. Geller’s story is both an inspiration and a solemn cautionary tale about what happens when human beings dehumanize one another. It certainly has relevance for students studying world events today.”

Tulare County Office of Education proudly sponsors this event each year in appreciation to the Holocaust Committee and B’Nai David Temple for their support in expanding this crucial program.

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