

# The Planned Giving Newsletter of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

# Generations



Legacy of Light Guardians Sky and Linda Sylvers on their recent trip to the Canyonlands National Park in Utah.

Photo courtesy of Sky and Linda Sylvers

## INSIDE

Letter from the Director

Confronting College Campus Antisemitism

Gift Annuities: Doing Well by Doing Good

Museum Receives Artifacts from Former POW

Exceptional Day at the Museum

Additional Ways to Give to the Endowment

International Travel Program

## Enriching Their Lives Through the Power of Giving

Schuyler (“Sky”) Sylvers of Ventura, California, feels fortunate that all of his grandparents came to the United States in the early 1900s. Growing up in Brooklyn, he recalls his parents mentioning the Holocaust but only infrequently. Linda, his wife of 40 years, who grew up in Miami and moved to California in the late 1960s, also considers herself blessed. She, too, lost no family members in the Holocaust.

Sky’s first real contact with the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum came in 1991 when he and Linda visited its then-future site, which he described as “a hole in the ground.” Both he and Linda sensed this would be an important institution in their lives, and they began making regular membership gifts to the Museum before contributing a more significant gift in support of the Miles Lerman Center for the Study of Jewish Resistance.

And with the alarming rise in Holocaust denial and antisemitism, they began to have a greater appreciation of the Museum’s role in the world.

Their connection to the Museum deepened further in 2003 after they received information about the benefits of charitable gift annuities. Sky, a CPA, and Linda, an accountant, who together run a busy accounting firm, planned a trip to the Museum, where among other things they learned more about the benefits of a gift annuity. By donating to the Museum in this way, they would receive a current income-tax charitable deduction; steady income, a portion of which would be tax-free; and the comfort and satisfaction of knowing they would be supporting the Museum’s ongoing needs by ultimately funding its Endowment.

Following that visit Sky and Linda established their first gift annuity and became members of the Museum’s

Legacy of Light Society. Over the years they have grown so enamored with the power and simplicity of this giving method that they have now established 21 Museum gift annuities—with still more planned for the future. They are thrilled to have the opportunity of utilizing this type of gift to make larger lifetime donations—on an ongoing basis—that would otherwise not have been possible.

The more they learn about the Museum’s global reach, the deeper their connection.

“Supporting the Museum helps give my life purpose and meaning—it’s probably the best feeling I have about anything,” Linda says. Sky likes that their annuities enable them to be smart about how they utilize their assets, providing ongoing payments that in turn allow them to provide yet more support to the Museum through the funding of additional annuities.

*Continued on page 6*

## From the Director of Planned Giving



George Hellman

With the end of the year upon us, many people naturally reflect on their personal and financial goals—for both now and the future. Continued uncertainty about tax laws, fluctuations in investment markets, and other factors may make it especially important to weigh financial decisions even more carefully than ever.

There are many ways to make charitable contributions while also maintaining, or even enhancing, your personal financial well-being. Whether you choose to create a charitable gift annuity, which provides supplemental income for life along with current tax benefits, or to donate property, such as life insurance or retirement plan assets, you will find that you may be able to meet your financial goals as well as your philanthropic objectives.

We hope this issue of *Generations* provides you with ideas for how best to fulfill your current and future charitable goals. For more information about how to complete your gifts in appropriate, tax-wise ways, please call or e-mail me.

*George E. Hellman*

George E. Hellman  
202.488.6591  
ghellman@ushmm.org

## In Memoriam

The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum mourns the passing of the following Legacy of Light Society members:

**Miriam Benjamin**  
**Herbert Robinson**  
**Eric F. Ross**

**Norman Rubinstein**  
**Alan J. Shepherd**  
**Sam Silberstein**

The purpose of this publication is to provide general gift, estate, and financial planning information. It is not intended as legal, accounting, or other professional advice. For assistance in planning charitable gifts with tax and other financial implications, the services of appropriate advisors should be obtained. Consult an attorney for advice if your plans require revision of a will or other legal document. Deductions vary based on applicable federal discount rates, which can change on a monthly basis. Some opportunities may not be available in all states. ©MMX RFSCO, Inc. All Rights Reserved. All photos courtesy of U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum except as otherwise noted.

# Confronting Rising Antisemitism on College Campuses

As antisemitism threatens to infiltrate the culture of higher education, and the study of the Holocaust as a singular event is increasingly contested, the Museum is arming faculty with resources to effectively teach this history and its relevance today. To increase our understanding of the sources and manifestations of antisemitism on college and university campuses, the Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies held a major workshop on the subject at the Museum this past summer. Over the course of two weeks, 11 scholars from the United States and Israel analyzed the possible reasons for the increase of campus antisemitism and potential university responses to this growing threat. The Museum is also expanding its outreach on college and university campuses, sending scholars for lectures, seminars, and public presentations, which assist faculty working to develop Holocaust Studies programs and to combat Holocaust denial and antisemitism. Last year, Museum scholars visited more than 70 campuses.

## Gift Annuities: Doing Well by Doing Good

What if there were a way to make generous charitable gifts and support the Museum Endowment while enjoying increased income for life?

The good news is there actually is a way to do this. Through the Museum's gift annuity program you can make a meaningful gift and arrange for a dependable source of income that will continue for as long as you live.

Not only do gift annuities provide increased income, you can also enjoy both immediate and future tax benefits. Because a portion of your gift annuity can ultimately be used to support the Museum's Endowment, you are entitled to deduct a portion of the amount used to fund your gift annuity in the tax year that you establish it.

In addition, part of each payment you receive will be completely free of income tax for a period of time equal to your life expectancy—and there generally will be no estate tax due on your gift annuity.

As an added benefit, if you fund a gift annuity with securities that yield little income but have increased in value since you have owned them, you can unlock additional income while you partially avoid and/or delay payment of the capital gains tax that would be due on a sale.

Many donors are so pleased with their first Museum gift annuity that they establish additional ones. This can be a practical way to make gifts to the Museum while increasing your income in retirement years. (See our cover story to read about one couple who has chosen to give in this way.)

To learn more about how you can enjoy the benefits of a Museum gift annuity, please contact Naomi Katz, Associate Director of Planned Giving, at 202.488.2681 or [nkatz@ushmm.org](mailto:nkatz@ushmm.org).

# Former WWII POW Donates Unique Artifacts to Museum

by Kyra Schuster, Curator, United States Holocaust Memorial Museum

As a curator at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, I've spent the past 16 years helping to build the Museum's unparalleled collection of Holocaust artifacts.

Every day, curators like me race against time to find and preserve this crucial evidence. To do so, we rely on the generosity of survivors, liberators, and their families who donate their materials to the Museum.

One of my most meaningful projects involved former American POW Anthony "Tony" Acevedo, who recently donated his precious World War II materials to the Museum. For the past two years, I've worked closely with Tony and his family to preserve these invaluable artifacts in perpetuity.

Now, thanks to Tony's generosity, students, researchers, and people all over the world will know a little more about the truth of the Holocaust.

Tony, who is Mexican-American, was a medic with the U.S. Army's 70th Infantry Division, which sailed to France in 1944 for the Battle of the Bulge. After a weeklong siege, they were ordered by the Germans to surrender and Tony became a prisoner of war.

In the months that followed, he endured torture, forced marches, and near starvation before he and several hundred fellow soldiers were eventually transferred to Berga am Elster, a section of the Buchenwald concentration camp for political prisoners.

As a medic, Tony was charged with caring for his fellow prisoners, and he began to record the names of those who died

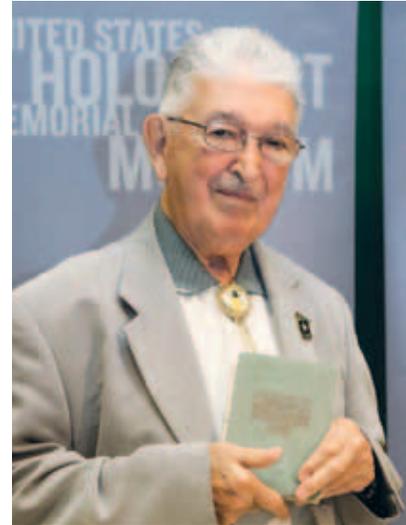
to ensure their sacrifice would be remembered. To this day, there is very little evidence from Berga, making Tony's story even more important to share.

In spring 1945, Tony and his fellow prisoners were on a death march when their German guards abandoned them in the face of approaching American soldiers. After an unimaginable ordeal, they were free.

Decades passed before Tony began to talk about his captivity, but now he travels around the country sharing his experiences with young people. I am honored that he donated his diary and other materials to the Museum so we can continue to tell his story and teach its lessons.

Building the Museum's collection is such rewarding work. Not only do I help educate new generations, I also form close relationships with those who contribute their personal treasures to the Museum—people like Anthony Acevedo.

If you have artifacts you would like to donate, please contact me at 202.488.2649 or [kschuster@ushmm.org](mailto:kschuster@ushmm.org).



Anthony Acevedo visits the Museum to present his artifacts.



The Museum's continuing commitment to build the world's most comprehensive collection of authentic evidence of the Holocaust extends to more than 40 countries on six continents.

This expensive, time-consuming, and urgent work serves as the foundation for all of the Museum's exhibitions, educational programs, and scholarly endeavors—the single most powerful way to confront Holocaust denial.

Anthony Acevedo's Red Cross Arm Band and diary that he donated to the Museum.



Legacy of Light Society members attend the Day at the Museum program, including: (from left to right) Donald J. and Anita Cowan, Arlene Herson, David H. Enzel, Miriam F. Morris, Rebecca Knaster, Maryla Korn, Lila O. Asher, Dr. Alfred Munzer, Dr. Diane S. Isaacs, Gayle Union, Helen Marshall, Devorah Russak, Helene Stolker, George Hellman, Timothy Murphy (seated), and Naomi Katz.

## Another Exceptional Day at the Museum

The Legacy of Light Society welcomed nearly 80 friends for a special behind-the-scenes experience at this year's **Day at the Museum** program on October 18. Highlights included Dr. Suzanne Brown-Fleming, Director of the Museum's Visiting Scholar Program, discussing her latest research project, "The Vatican-German Relationship Reexamined, 1922-1939," and Archivist Rebecca Erbelding sharing the extraordinary story behind the Museum's acquisition of an invaluable diary written by one of only two female survivors of the Sobibor death camp. The Society also presented its newest members with certificates of appreciation for their commitment to the Museum.

Brandon Holden, an Ambassador in the Museum's Bringing the Lessons Home program, describes the impact the Museum has had on his personal growth. The program is designed to help D.C. high school students explore the lessons of the Holocaust and the responsibility they have as citizens of a democracy.



As part of a group exercise, Day at the Museum participants analyze historical photographs of Holocaust perpetrators, collaborators, and bystanders.

## Additional Ways to Give to the Endowment

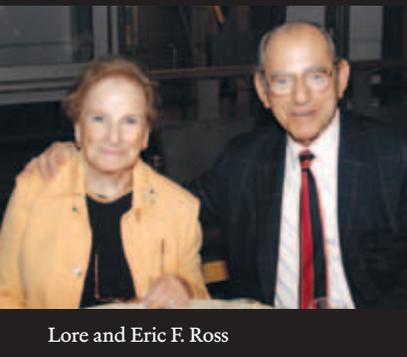
Many people are pleased to learn that after first providing for family and other loved ones, there are a number of ways to arrange for future charitable gifts to the Museum's Endowment, which are vital to securing the impact of this living memorial as we face an uncertain future.

While a charitable gift through a will is often the first that comes to mind, there are other ways to accomplish your philanthropic goals. For example, if you have a living trust, you may want to direct, through a simple amendment, that a portion of the assets eventually be used for the Museum's programs.

You can also name the Museum to receive all or a portion of life insurance policy proceeds that you no longer need. Or you may decide to purchase a new policy and name the Museum as the owner and/or charitable beneficiary.

Many people choose to use retirement plan assets to make charitable gifts because retirement accounts can be subject to more taxes than other assets when ultimately received by those other than a surviving spouse. It may therefore be best to make charitable gifts from those assets and leave other, less heavily taxed assets to non-spousal heirs. This type of gift can usually be made by completing a simple change of beneficiary form.

If you choose to remember the Museum in your long-range financial and estate plans, the funds will help the Museum continue its efforts to confront hatred, prevent genocide, and promote human dignity. To learn more about any of these gift vehicles, please contact Sara Eigenberg, Planned Giving Officer, at 202.479.9733 or [seigenberg@ushmm.org](mailto:seigenberg@ushmm.org).



Lore and Eric F. Ross

## Eric F. Ross 1919-2010

It is with deep sadness that the Museum acknowledges the passing of our dear friend, generous benefactor, and former Council member Eric F. Ross of Palm Beach, Fla., and South Orange, N.J.

Born in 1919 in Dortmund, Germany, Eric fled Europe in 1938 without family, money, or knowledge of English, arriving in New York on November 9, the day of *Kristallnacht*. Most of his family, including his parents, did not survive the Holocaust. In 1942, he married Lore Blumenthal, a native of Frankfurt whom he had met in Germany years earlier and reconnected with in New York.

Upon returning from their honeymoon, Eric was called into service in the U.S. military and sent to Europe, where he earned his lieutenant bars and a Bronze Star Medal for meritorious service.

Eric went on to become a successful businessman and an avid gardener, and he and Lore, who passed away in 2009, had three children, ten grandchildren, and three great-grandchildren. In the same way that he methodically built his business, Eric approached philanthropy. The largest individual contributor to the Museum, he gave millions during his lifetime—including four challenge grants that enabled the Museum to recruit thousands of new supporters—and, as Lore had done before him, he included a generous bequest for the Museum's Endowment in his estate plans. He is, and forever will be, greatly missed.

## WHAT KIND OF WORLD WILL FUTURE GENERATIONS INHERIT?



The Holocaust compels us to ask that question... and above all, **TO ACT ON IT**. We are proud to recognize as Legacy of Light Guardians supporters who have made **SAFEGUARDING TRUTH** their personal legacy through a deferred gift to the Museum's Endowment. To learn more, please call George Hellman, J.D., at 202.488.6591 or visit [ushmm.org/endowment](http://ushmm.org/endowment).

# Legacy of Light **GUARDIAN**

## Enriching...

*Continued from page 1*

And their generosity does not end there. They have also included a bequest in their wills for the Museum's Endowment, joining the Chairman's Circle of the Legacy of Light Society, so that they can support the Museum in perpetuity at an even greater level.

When Sky and Linda are not busy with their accounting practice they love to travel. On a recent visit to the site of the Mauthausen concentration camp in Austria, they were struck by how peaceful a setting it was and how that serenity belied the horrific events they knew had transpired there.

It also reminded them of the importance of never forgetting the lessons of the Holocaust and how timeless those lessons are for all humanity. It made them acutely aware that while establishing 21 charitable gift annuities with the Museum may seem like a lot, for them it is just the beginning.



Marty Weiss, a Museum Survivor Volunteer, shares his personal experiences at Auschwitz-Birkenau during the Museum's mission trip to Poland in July

2010. Marcin Olesinski for U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum

### Museum International Travel Program Upcoming Trip

**Vienna and Ukraine  
September 8-18, 2011**

Don't miss this unique opportunity to go behind the scenes with Museum experts and gain unparalleled access to historical sites, officials and other leading figures. For more information, please contact Nadia Ficara, Director of Special Events, at 202.488.0470 or [nficara@ushmm.org](mailto:nficara@ushmm.org).

## Museum Exhibitions Around the Country

**The Nazi Olympics: Berlin 1936**  
Beachwood, Ohio

Maltz Museum of Jewish Heritage  
October 19, 2010–January 23, 2011

**Deadly Medicine: Creating the  
Master Race**

**Boston, Massachusetts**

Harvard Medical School  
Francis A. Countway Library of  
Medicine

April 7–July 17, 2011

**Nazi Persecution of Homosexuals:  
1933–1945**

**Louisville, Kentucky**

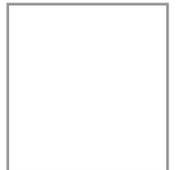
University of Louisville  
William F. Ekstrom Library  
September 19–November 28, 2011

For a complete listing of all traveling  
exhibitions, visit [ushmm.org](http://ushmm.org).

**EVERY WILL  
MATTERS.  
Put the Museum  
in yours.**

UNITED STATES  
**HOLOCAUST**  
MEMORIAL  
**MUSEUM**

100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW Washington, DC 20024-2126 [ushmm.org](http://ushmm.org)



# SAFEGUARDING TRUTH FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The **Legacy of Light Society** recognizes individuals who have made a commitment to secure the Museum's future and its timeless cause by including the Museum in their estate plans. Individuals who direct any type of deferred gift to the Museum's Endowment are recognized as **Legacy of Light Guardians**. Make a bequest or other planned gift today to the Museum's Endowment, and let your commitment live forever.

**YES, I'm ready to safeguard truth for future generations.** I would like to receive more information about the Museum's Endowment fund and how I can secure the future work of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum with a gift that can also help enhance my financial security today.

I would also like to receive complimentary materials about:

- Gifts through my will
- Gift opportunities from retirement plans
- Giving through charitable remainder trusts
- Giving through life insurance
- Giving through gift annuities

Please send me payment and tax benefit information based on the following amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_ and the birthdate(s) \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ (second individual optional).

- I have already included the Museum in my will or other estate plans.
- Please enroll me as a member of the **Legacy of Light Society** and send me information about the benefits of being a **Legacy of Light Guardian**.
- I would consider including the Museum in my estate plans.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (please print)

\_\_\_\_\_  
E-mail (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone (optional)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City, State

\_\_\_\_\_  
Zip

*This information will be kept strictly confidential.*

**United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
Planned Giving  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126  
202.488.6591**



FOLD AND TAPE CLOSED, DO NOT STAPLE

PLACE STAMP HERE

## BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

United States Holocaust Memorial Museum  
Planned Giving  
100 Raoul Wallenberg Place, SW  
Washington, DC 20024-2126



Who will be at their side tomorrow?  
**THROUGH YOUR LEGACY GIFT  
TO THE MUSEUM, YOU WILL.**

EVERY WILL MATTERS. PUT THE MUSEUM IN YOURS. [USHMM.ORG/ENDOWMENT](https://ushmm.org/endorowment)