

EDMONTON JOURNAL Oct. 6, 2006 A museum with impact

Students journey to Washington to see the Holocaust exhibits



Silverman

viewing of a children's tile wall. In the afternoon, we toured the permanent exhibit.

The elevator ride up to the beginning of the exhibit prepares you for what you will be seeing next. The inside of the elevator resembles a cattle car and a short video is shown until the elevator doors open.



Philip Weiss

There it is, slightly dark and very silent, artifacts hanging everywhere you turn. A room full of shoes, torn and worn out, covered in dust. All the shoes share something in common; each shoe used to belong to someone.

A tower of pictures. Hundreds of pictures. Mothers, fathers, children, grandparents, all from one community that was totally lost, wiped out.

A wall of pictures of people's forearms. All with numbers tattooed on them. A different number on each arm. People's names and identity taken away and replaced by these digits permanently imbedded on their skin.

At that moment, I feel a need to be responsible and stand up for what I believe in. Your name is who you are and it should never be taken away.

On the last day of the trip, we're in the Canadian Embassy. We listen to Philip Weiss, a Holocaust survivor who entered concentration camps when he was only 14. His words are powerful as the whole room listens intently. He speaks about his experience in the Holocaust, but more than that he speaks about becoming educated.

Weiss tells us people sit in front of the box (his name for technology), and do not learn about anything. Denial is starting to kick in, as the new generations do not think it is their responsibility. Listening to his strong words ends an overall powerful trip.

This experience inspired me. I will stand strong for what I believe in and will take on the responsibility to educate other people in the future.

I encourage everyone to visit the Holocaust Museum in Washington if you are given the opportunity.

For more information on this trip you can visit the Asper Foundation website at <http://humanrights.asperfoundation.com>.

Staci Silverman is in Grade 10 at Strathcona high school

STACI SILVERMAN

A tour of Washington, D.C. is exciting, even if you only see the Smithsonian, the Capitol, the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the White House and the Washington Zoo.

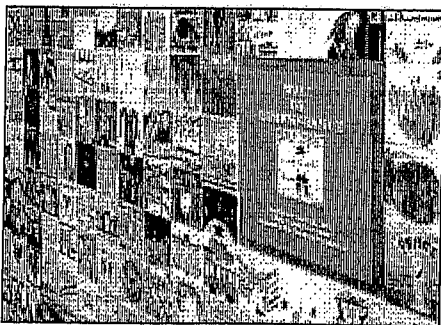
For me, a four-day trip in May was more than exciting. It changed me.

Nine other Jewish students and I travelled to Washington through the Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies program. Accompanied by two fantastic chaperones, Jay Carins and Jen Lander, we met up with about 800 Jewish and non-Jewish students from across Canada.

In Washington, we found our days jam-packed with things to do. But it was the day we spent at the Holocaust Museum that really affected me the most.

I cannot think of a word to describe the impact this day had on me and will have on me for the rest of my life.

That day began with the non-permanent exhibits, followed by a walk through a memory room and



CALGARY HERALD, CANWEST NEWS SERVICE

Children's artwork forms part of the display at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington.

SUPPLIED
Her Quebec City student card identifies Rachel Williamson as "non-francophone."

ing, being unable to put into words a question or concern and having "en français" shouted at you as a few of those unspoken words claw their way out in your native tongue.

Silence is the worst stage in this "learning process."

The funny thing about human nature is that our need for communication and interaction overcomes even the deepest stubbornness. We find ourselves reaching out, striving to adapt.

The silence is broken as you timidly respond to a friendly "Bonjour."

This slight confidence boost triggers the desire to break down the language barriers that plague our bilingual country. The determination is rewarded.

My light at the end of the tunnel came on my return flight to Edmonton. I was sitting on the airplane, inert from the routine clogging my arteries, half-listening to the prerecorded voice of a woman explaining where the emergency exits are, when I realized that it was the French version I was hearing and understanding.

The words *urgence* (emergency) and *masque d'oxygène* have never given me so much comfort and satisfaction than in that moment just before takeoff.

It is neither fun nor easy being the linguistic pariah, especially in an unfamiliar place. I can attest to that, but I can also guarantee that the reward surpasses every ill feeling and somehow makes the whole experience worthwhile.

For anyone who has conquered a second or perhaps even a third language, you have my eternal respect. And for those still lost in translation, take heart, your moment of triumph will come.

Rachel Williamson is in Grade 12 at W.P. Wagner

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What do you feel thankful about when you celebrate Thanksgiving?

sgiving is a time to appreciate everything a n has been blessed with. I think of how lucky I be able to have food on the table, while other y age in other parts of the world might not be so

ani, Old Scona

7 things I could say without thinking, just because posed to be thankful for them: my family, friends, of me. I shy away from saying that's what I am because it's so easy to say. Saying all the right nothing at all. Going past the expectations of to my heart and look only at emotions, I have to

say the thing I am most thankful for this year is opportunity. Opportunity — it's been knocking non-stop this year: my first job, my first year in high school, theatre, even NextGen. This year I am going to determine what I am going to do with my life, and all the doors and windows are wide open. Those opportunities are what I'm thankful for this Thanksgiving.

Cara Oakley, Eastglen

I'm sure you're getting plenty of e-mails stating that 'I'm so thankful for my family and God and all that He has blessed me with.' So here's a switch from an agnostic. I'm still thankful for my family, the food, the happiness and so on and so forth, but I thank my mother and my grandmother for this. Because I know they

work extra hard to make life for me and the rest of my family easier than what they had. I love them for it, and I thank them every day of the year, not just on Thanksgiving. (But it makes it easier, because they're all there.)

Danielle Sather, Beaumont

I dislike the cold weather when it comes to this time of year, but I do feel grateful for the wonderful food that my lovely parents get to make for me! And of course I'm thankful for having a loving family, kind friends, great teachers, getting parts in plays, and all that jazz! So when you're having a great feast this weekend, don't forget to say thanks!

Dallas Holmes, Eastglen