



The Holocaust Stamps Project

Foxborough Regional Charter School
131 Central Street, Foxboro, Massachusetts 02035



Welcome!



Here is what our Holocaust Stamps Project Open House on April 30, 2017 looked like!

- ❖ Welcome

- ❖ Guest Speaker: Mr. Sam Weinreb, *Survivor of confinement at Auschwitz-Birenau Concentration Camp*

- ❖ Meet the Project Leaders
 - Mrs. Jamie Droste, Student Life Advisor
 - Mrs. Charlotte Sheer, retired fifth grade teacher, originator of the project

- ❖ Meet some of the students and volunteers!

- ❖ Help us complete our ongoing community collage. Complete a small “person” collage to be added to the “I am a Shoe, I am the Last Witness Collage” Each little person is a tribute to an owner of one of the millions of shoes left behind. We are nearly complete and are looking for the last few little people to be added to the collage—be a part of one of our collages! All collage material is at the front of the room.

- ❖ Thank you for coming. Do you want to help make our project a total success? Do you want to be a part of something bigger than just yourself? Please ask Mrs. Droste or Mrs. Lewis how you too can become a part of history!

How Can Postage Stamps *Teach Tolerance*?



One million of anything is tough enough for school children to conceptualize, but the idea of 11 million people being killed, because of intolerance, prejudice, and discrimination, all of which are forms of bullying, is totally beyond their comprehension.

At Foxborough Regional Charter School (FRCS), in Foxboro, Massachusetts, the Holocaust Stamps Project has become a significant component of the Community Service Learning (CSL) curriculum. Since mid-2009, the school community has sought donations of cancelled postage stamps in their quest to visually represent, and honor the memories of, the six million Jews and five million other “enemies of the (Nazi) state” who were subjected to the hatred and evil acts of Hitler’s regime.

The Holocaust Stamps Project at FRCS, a kindergarten to grade 12 public school-of-choice, began as an enrichment activity connected to the fifth grade students’ viewing the DVD story of the *Paperclips Project* and their reading of Number the Stars by Lois Lowry, set in Nazi-occupied Denmark. Holocaust-related studies continued with middle school and high school readers discussing the Diary of Anne Frank and Maus.

Collecting used postage stamps, which would otherwise be discarded after mail has been delivered, has become a Project metaphor for retrieving items of value destined to be tossed out as worthless trash. The Nazis did exactly this with 11 million human beings. Every stamp collected for the Holocaust Stamps Project helps the children to feel they are honoring one life tragically thrown away as having no value.

Postage stamps provide the children with windows into the world community’s cultures. As they handle the thousands of stamps donated to the Project - trimming, counting, and sorting – the boys and girls learn of the extraordinary diversity represented by the images of people, places, events, and values.

Some stamps lead the children to make personal connections, while others generate questions that lead to new learning taking place. Foxborough Regional Charter School draws its multicultural student population from more than 25 communities, bringing together a diverse mix of children in an environment where demonstrating respect for each other is one of the school’s six core values.

The young people are using thousands of the collected stamps to create 18 by 24 inch framed collage artworks that represent their growing knowledge of Holocaust-related events and related ethical lessons. Holocaust Stamps Project participants have completed six of 18 planned pictures using a combination of old and contemporary, domestic and international, stamps. In Jewish tradition, the number eighteen represents the Hebrew word for “life”.

Every time a student at Foxborough Regional Charter School handles a single postage stamp as part of the Holocaust Stamps Project, he or she is being reminded of how important it is that every single person be permitted to live, without being disrespected, bullied, or mistreated in any way, because unique and special differences are what make all people part of our one, diverse world community.

As the Holocaust Stamps Project is in its eighth year, the total number of stamps collected is **OVER 9 million**, a significant milestone. The volume of stamps is visually overwhelming. However, each innocent Holocaust victim deserves to be memorialized and we will keep clipping and counting until all 11 million are recognized.

The Holocaust Stamps Project especially welcomes the support of those who may have the means to reach large numbers of individuals, businesses, and organizations with news about the Holocaust education initiative underway at Foxborough Regional Charter School. It is hoped that, prior to Project completion, a public venue will be found for the 18 student-created collages and the millions of collected stamps which are currently slated to be housed in a custom-designed acrylic display. Such an outcome to the years of work going into the Holocaust Stamps Project will allow the massive collection of 11 million postage stamps to continue to be an ongoing visual source of understanding about why it is so vitally important to “Never Forget” the evil that was the Holocaust.

Photos, links to newspaper stories about the Holocaust Stamps Project, video clips of students working on collages, contact information, and additional details may be found on the Project website at <http://www.foxboroughrcs.org/student-families/frcs-holocaust-stamp-project/> For more information on donating stamps, or volunteering to help make this project a success, contact Jamie Droste, Student Life Advisor jdroste@foxboroughrcs.org

Originally Prepared by Charlotte Sheer 11/4/12 (updated 4/27/17 by J.L. Droste)
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Some interesting facts about the Holocaust Stamps Project artwork:

- ❖ *We use German Nazi stamps in many of our collages to underscore the origins of the intolerance that led to the Holocaust.*
- ❖ *We try to incorporate important history and civics lessons into the designs and themes.*
- ❖ *A single dove, and sometimes more, can be found in every HSP collage, symbolizing the importance of striving to attain peace in all aspects of life.*

FAQs about the Collages...

How and when did the HSP begin?

- During the 2009-2010 school year, Mrs. Charlotte Sheer and her fifth grade students read Number the Stars by Lois Lowry and viewed a documentary DVD about *The Paperclips Project* in which the six million Jewish Holocaust victims were represented by as many paperclips being collected from all over the world. It culminated in the creation of *The Children's Holocaust Museum*, housed in an actual freight car that was used to transport victims to their deaths in the concentration camps, and today is located on the small campus of Whitwell, Tennessee Middle School. The FRCS students started collecting stamps from around the world to represent not only the 6 million, but also the millions of others whom they learned had been persecuted and killed by the Nazis because of their differing beliefs.

Where did the idea come from to make the series of 18 collages?

- Mrs. Sheer was familiar with the postage stamp collage artwork of Joseph and Harry Jagolinzer of Rhode Island and developed the idea for using thousands of the collected stamps to provide a venue for students to learn history and civics lessons by creating pictures that would reflect the events and effects of the Holocaust. In Hebrew, the language of the Jewish people, the two letters that form the numeral 18 also spell the word "chai" which means "life". Thus the 18 collages will served to honor the lives of the millions whose lives were lost.

What will you do when you reach 11 million stamps?

- It is hoped that a public venue, such as a museum or Holocaust Education Center, will be found in which the entire collection of stamps, collages, and various materials connected to the years-long Project, can be permanently displayed. The Holocaust Stamps Project could potentially become the centerpiece for a site dedicated Holocaust study and research. A custom designed, clear acrylic or glass sculpture would be designed and fabricated to house the stamps.

What does 9 million stamps look like?

- Our school media center is presently storing about 9.3 million stamps. For a glimpse of about ½ to a million stamps come visit Mrs. Droste's office on any given day! 😊

Collage #1:



With Liberty and Peace for All sums up the rights of all people in the world community to enjoy freedom and a peaceful way of life.

Collage #2:



Eleven Million Reasons to Never Forget gives an overview of the evil during the Holocaust perpetrated by Hitler, with hearts broken in so many European countries, until Allied leadership came in to put a stop to it.

Collage #3:



Immortal Butterfly honors the memories of those who suffered and died in the Terezin (Czechoslovakia) ghetto/concentration camp, including Pavel Friedman, whose poem "The Butterfly" survived, though he did not.

Collage #4:



Love Thy Neighbor is a tribute to the Danish fishermen who helped to save 6000 of their Jewish countrymen by smuggling on their boats from Denmark to freedom in Sweden.

Collage #5:



The Forest that Saved Lives represents the story of how the Bielski brothers of Poland demonstrated resistance against the Nazis for about two years, by successfully hiding more than a thousand Jewish men, women, and children in the forests of Poland.

Collage #6:



Eva Paddock: Holocaust Survivor is a portrait-in-stamps to honor this amazing woman who visited FRCS in April, 2012, telling her personal story of how the Kindertransport from Czechoslovakia to England saved her life.

Collage #7



L'Zachor-To Remember and Never Forget The Hebrew word, "L'Zachor" calls on each of us to learn about, "to remember, and to never forget" that 11 million precious, irreplaceable lives were destroyed by countless incomprehensible acts of inhumanity that occurred during World War II. A single, yellow candle featured in the collage specially commemorates the lives of the 6 million Jewish people who were killed.

Collage #8



The Metamorphosis of the Pink Triangle The GSA of the high school completed a stamp collage commemorating the lives of people who were imprisoned and sentenced to death who were accused of or suspected of homosexuality. The upside down pink triangle was worn to stigmatize, now the pink triangle is righted, and worn with pride.

Collage #9



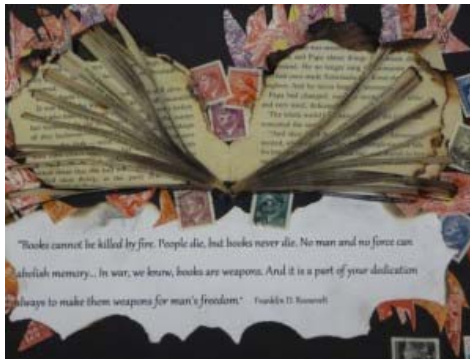
Kindertransport created by two 8th grade students from Foxborough Regional Charter School. This collage features a train, leaving the destruction of Nazism and pointed toward England and respite from war. A line of children and their parents await the train.

Collage #10



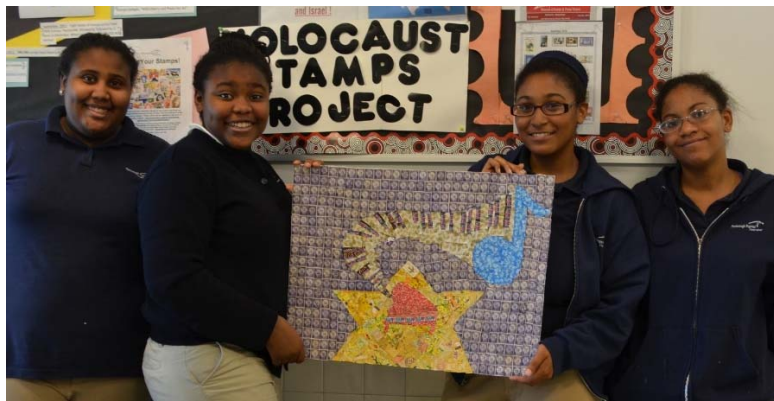
Kristallnacht This artwork commemorates *Kristallnacht*, the *Night of Broken Glass*, the well-organized November 9, 1938 overnight attack on Jews living under the rule of the Third Reich. It became the trigger event for the Holocaust in which six million Jews, and five million others considered to be “enemies of the State”, died as the victims of the Nazis’ atrocities against humanity.

Collage #11



Books Cannot be Killed by Fire, in progress, nearly done!. This collage features books and authors from our own FRCS curriculum that were burned by the Nazis. Number the Stars, a book read by the 5th grade and inspired the Holocaust Stamps Project is centermost.

Collage #12



Music is a Dream, completed October 2015. To celebrate Alice Herz-Sommer's 110 birthday FRCS students started a collage to honor her life. Her death was even more reason for our students to create a wonderful testament to her indomitable spirit.

Collage #13

PEACE MUST BE DARED



Righteous Among Nations, ~~Ideation stage~~ This collage will commemorate the members of the Christian community that supported the Jewish people during the Holocaust. Some hid families, cared for children, fed, spoke out and opened their homes despite the risks. Some paid the ultimate price for their moral stance. One thought is to use only LOVE stamps in the creation. Inspirations: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Nicholas Winton, Oskar Schindler, Suzanne Spaak and the grandparents of our guest speaker from 2016—Martha and Waitstill Sharp.

Collage #14



I am the Last Witness, ongoing, nearly complete. This collage recognizes another school's Holocaust awareness project—"The Holocaust Shoe Project" This project collects shoes and distribute them to the needy. Shoe piles from the concentration camps are a haunting reminder of the millions who no longer occupy them. Students and volunteers from the community will work on this collage collaboratively. Begun: April 28, 2014

Collage # 15



The White Rose Resistance, In progress. What better way for our young people to learn about the power of youth. The White Rose Resistance was a non-violent opposition to Hitler and the Nazis led by college students, who distributed leaflets opposing the war. True heroes our children can look up to. Children in our Middle School Holocaust Stamp Club are working on this tribute.

Collage # 16



Different People, One World Community – Celebrating Our Diversity!
Completed June 2016 Foxborough Regional Charter School's youngest students are learned about diversity and tolerance with the newest HSP collage.

For more information or to contribute to the Holocaust Stamps Project please contact:



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