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Chapman University Media Relations

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## "Buchenwald and Beyond": A Teen Holocaust Survivor Speaks, Aug. 29

**ORANGE, Calif., August 16, 2007** Robert Waisman, who as a teenager survived the horrors of the Buchenwald concentration camp, will share his story with Chapman University students on Wednesday, August 29 at 7 p.m. in Memorial Hall. The award-winning documentary film *The Boys of Buchenwald*, directed by Audrey Mehler, will also be screened. The event is part of Welcome Week and is aimed at students, although the entire Chapman community is cordially encouraged to attend. Free advance tickets for students will be available Monday, Aug. 27 through Wednesday, Aug. 29 from 11:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. in the Argyros Forum lobby. Students can also contact the Associated Students Office for tickets. Remaining tickets will be available to guests (the general public included) at 6:15 p.m. on Aug. 29 at will call.

On April 11, 1945, soldiers from the Sixth Armored Division of the U.S. Third Army liberated the Buchenwald concentration camp. Among the 21,000 survivors of Nazi genocide were some 1,000 Jewish children and teenagers, including 14-year-old Romek Wajsman now Robert Waisman born in Poland, who had been sent to Buchenwald in 1944 after years of slave labor in Nazi munitions factories.

Two months later, 426 of the boys of Buchenwald were sent to group homes in France. Experts who evaluated them were pessimistic about their future, proclaiming them too psychologically damaged ever to recover. They labeled them beyond redemption. Yet with patient and kind teachers and mentors, Romek and the other boys of Buchenwald resumed their education, learned new languages and began to come to terms with the terrible realization that they were orphans, now on their own. The older boys became surrogate fathers to the younger, creating bonds of love and friendship that have now lasted more than 60 years.

In December 1949, Romek was granted permission to move to Canada a land where, he had heard, no one went hungry. He continued his education, becoming an accountant and later a successful businessman, first in Saskatoon and later in Vancouver. He married, became the father of two, and is now a grandfather. He became a community leader, a philanthropist and a dedicated educator, sharing his experiences with thousands of students each year and teaching them the perils of hate, racism and indifference. Today, Robert Waisman is the immediate past president of the Vancouver Holocaust Center for Remembrance and Education.

This event is presented by Chapman University's Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education and co-sponsored by the Associated Students of Chapman University, the Schwartz Holocaust Lecture Series and the Stan Ross Visiting Scholar in Holocaust History, and is part of the 2007-08 series of Holocaust lectures at Chapman, under the theme Saving Memories: History as Witness to the Future. Chapman University's Schwartz Holocaust Lecture Series is funded by the Jerry and Sally Schwartz Holocaust Education Fund, managed by the Community Foundation of the Jewish Federation of Orange County, in cooperation with the Jewish Community Center of Orange County. The Stan Ross Visiting Scholar in Holocaust History program is made possible by a generous gift from Stan Ross.

**Upcoming Events in  
Chapman University's 2007-08 Holocaust Lecture Series  
Saving Memories: History as Witness to the Future**

**Call (714) 628-7377 or go to [www.chapman.edu/holocausteducation](http://www.chapman.edu/holocausteducation) for more information**

**Sept. 25, 2007 at 7 p.m. Must We Still Remember? The Armenian Genocide as Prototype,** lecture by **Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian**, professor of Armenian and Near Eastern history and holder of the Armenian Educational Foundation Chair in Modern Armenian History at UCLA. Bush Conference Center, 404 Beckman Hall. Admission: free.

**Oct. 9, 2007 at 7 p.m. Don't You Know That Yiddish is Dead? How the Last-Minute Rescue of Yiddish Books is Breathing New Life into Modern Jewish Culture,** lecture by **Aaron Lansky**, founder and president of the National Yiddish Book Center, MacArthur Fellow and author of *Outwitting History: The Amazing Adventures of a Man Who Rescued a Million Yiddish Books*. Memorial Hall. Admission: free.

**Nov. 13, 2007 at 7 p.m. They Were My Neighbors: Jewish Survivors and Their Rescuers in the Holocaust,** lecture by **Douglas Greenberg**, professor of history and executive director of the Shoah Foundation Institute for Visual History and Education at USC. Memorial Hall. Admission: free.

**Feb. 12, 2008 at 7 p.m. Screening of the documentary *Swimming in Auschwitz*,** followed by conversation with writer/director/producer Jon Kean and Auschwitz survivor Rene Firestone. Memorial Hall. Admission: free.

**March 7, 2008 at 11 a.m. Awards Ceremony: The Ninth Annual Holocaust Art and Writing Contest.** Hundreds of Southern California middle and high school students and their teachers and parents gather at the culmination of the annual student writing and art contest presented by Chapmans Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education in partnership with The 1939 Club. Following the awards presentation, participants have the opportunity to meet and converse with Holocaust survivors. Memorial Hall. Admission: free (public seating extremely limited).

**April 29, 2008 at 7 p.m. An Evening of Holocaust Remembrance.** Solemn commemoration in music and words, remembering the victims of the Holocaust, including a candle-lighting ceremony representing the Chapman community's commitment to remembrance and to witness. Memorial Hall. Admission: free.