



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:  
MAY 28, 2025**

## **HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS' RESILIENCE INSPIRES SHARPSBURG**

**SHARPSBURG, PA** – Edith and Kurt Leuchter were just children when World War II broke out in Europe. Eight decades later, the couple continues to serve as a symbol of love and resistance.

"The saying is, 'Never again.' Sharing my family's story is of the utmost importance so that nothing like this unparalleled event ever happens again," said the Leuchters' daughter, Deborah Stueber. "It's now my generation's responsibility, and the next, to carry their torch."

Stueber, a Blawnox resident and 30-year volunteer with the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh, is passionate about sharing her parents' story with all who will listen. She said her latest presentation at the Sharpsburg Community Library was an opportunity for attendees to "be witnesses" and "impart to others" what it meant to be "hidden children" during the Holocaust.

The Holocaust was the "systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million European Jews by the Nazi German regime and its allies and collaborators," as defined by the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh's website. "The Holocaust era began in January 1933 when Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party came to power in Germany. It ended in May 1945, when the Allied Powers defeated Nazi Germany in World War II."

During that time, thousands of Jewish children survived by hiding in concealed locations, such as attics and barns, or under the protection of non-Jewish families, churches or underground resistance organizations. Some assumed false identities and many lived in constant states of fear, hunger and disease, as they awaited unpromised reunions with their families post-war.

Edith and Kurt Leuchter; born in Bruchsal, Germany, and Vienna, Austria, respectively; were two such children.

"As hidden children, their paths crossed briefly in a French orphanage. This is just a part of their story, separately and together – surviving the Holocaust, fighting Nazis in the French Resistance, and making a new life in America," Stueber said. "My parents are 96 and 97. Three of my grandparents and my uncle, along with other relatives, were murdered in Auschwitz."

Born and raised in Long Island, N.Y., Stueber said growing up as the daughter of Holocaust survivors was "a challenge" and "quite a unique experience," as her parents were "very strict, understandably so."

"I definitely suffer from intergenerational trauma. I believe I have a type of anxiety that others do not. I get excited and anxious over small things, like noises and challenges. Studies have shown that the DNA of descendants of survivors was impacted," she said. "I have my own guilt, as I will never really know what my parents went through. I always missed having grandparents as a child. I also appreciate the small things in life a great deal, since my parents' childhood was cut off when they were quite young, and I try not to take things in life for granted."

Sharpsburg Community Library Branch Manager Sara Mariacher said her community was “proud to host” Stueber, as an area local and patron of nearby Cooper-Siegel Community Library.

“We always enjoy sharing local history with our communities. More importantly, as survivors like Debbie’s parents age, it is paramount that their stories and legacies live on, especially at a time when antisemitism is on the rise,” Mariacher said. “We hope this program will provide context for folks about lived Holocaust experiences and remind them that these were and are real people, not characters in a drama. 80 years is a drop in the river of time and, though much has changed since then, unfortunately, prejudice and fascism have not. After this program, we encourage folks to use the library to learn more not only about the Holocaust and World War II, but also about current geopolitical events.”

Stueber said studies show many people “don’t have much awareness” of the Holocaust, and she hopes her presentations inspire them to learn more.

“Very few people get to meet Holocaust survivors, and this may be their only chance to meet those who survived, as most of them have passed away at this point,” she said. “I also hope that people understand more clearly how prevalent antisemitism is and has always been; and that they become allies of the Jewish community.”

*Deborah Leuchter Stueber studied elementary education at the State University of Oneonta, N.Y. She is a senior customer service representative for a Pittsburgh-based electronics manufacturer and was named the Holocaust Center of Pittsburgh’s Volunteer of the Year in 2021. When she’s not volunteering, Stueber enjoys spending time with her spouse, sister, three sons and granddaughter.*

To hear more about the Leuchter family or schedule a presentation, email Stueber at [Nat1315@comcast.net](mailto:Nat1315@comcast.net). To learn more about World War II and the Holocaust, visit [www.hcofpgh.org](http://www.hcofpgh.org)

For more information about Sharpsburg Community Library, including upcoming programming, visit [www.coopersiegelcommunitylibrary.org/sharpsburg/](http://www.coopersiegelcommunitylibrary.org/sharpsburg/).

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*For media inquiries, contact Communications & Marketing Specialist Kaylie Glaze at 412-828-9520, ext. 5012, or [glazek@coopersiegelcommunitylibrary.org](mailto:glazek@coopersiegelcommunitylibrary.org). Sharpsburg Community Library, a branch of Cooper-Siegel Community Library, serves all Fox Chapel School District communities.*