

# MACOMB DAILY LIFESTYLE

## Anne Frank art and writing contest expanded to include Macomb County students



Pictured here are the founders of the Kappy Family Anne Frank Art & Writing Competition, Garry and Viola Kappy, who met after World War II and are both Holocaust survivors. This year, the contest hosted by the Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus has been expanded to include Macomb County schools as well as Oakland County. Photo courtesy of the Kappy Family.

By **Gina Joseph**, *The Macomb Daily*

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The [Kappy Family Anne Frank Art and Writing Competition](#) hosted by the [Holocaust Memorial Center](#) last year was so successful among Oakland County students organizers have invited Macomb County students to participate.

“We are looking forward to seeing Macomb County get involved this year,” said Robin Axelrod, director of education for the Holocaust Memorial Center in

Farmington Hills. “Governor (Rick) Snyder signing a law requiring Michigan public school students in grades eight through 12 receive education in the Holocaust and other genocides, has made a tremendous impact on enlightening our youth. The Kappy Family Anne Frank Art and Writing Competition is a wonderful opportunity for teens to use their individual creative expression to convey the lessons learned during their classroom instructions. Submissions from the first year’s entrants were inspiring and thoughtfully crafted. We look forward to seeing how the students will interpret this year’s theme into original art and writing entries.”

The power of hope is this year’s theme.

Inspired by the words of [Anne Frank](#), it is her story that often resonates with many high school students who learn she was around the same age as them when she died.

She and seven other people hid themselves away in a secret apartment annex in order to escape the Nazis’ persecution of Jews during World War II. After hiding for more than two-years, she was discovered and hauled away to her death. Her story of hope, however, did not end with her death in a concentration camp. It has been retold over and over through the diary she kept while in hiding.

It’s also through this competition that Garry Kappy hopes to make young people advocates for combating intolerance currently and in the future.

One compelling reason being, as the last surviving member of his family, he too has a story to tell.

As a young man, born and raised in a small town outside of Warsaw, Poland, Kappy found himself swept up in a wave of Jews imprisoned in a Nazi labor camp.

“He was about the same age as Anne Frank,” said Kappy’s son, Dr. Irvin Kappy of Orchard Lake and a pediatrician with Henry Ford Health System. Through a lot of lucky circumstances and a few fortuitous incidents, Kappy managed to survive the horrors of Buchenwald and Auschwitz concentration camps. After the war, he made his way to America where he met his wife, also a



Montessori School in Amsterdam photo of Anne Frank in 1940. Photo By Collection Anne Frank House.

Holocaust survivor, and started his own retail clothing business.

Today, Kappy is 93-years-old and while he recognizes the importance of memorializing the victims of the Holocaust, he and his family believe that engagement and education of well-meaning individuals is still the best way to combat hatred and future genocides.

“The students portray their own experiences with discrimination and are inspired by the heroes that have shaped their lives, creating pieces that reflect their hope for a better future and an abiding faith in the goodness of human nature,” Irvin Kappy said, reflecting upon last year’s submissions.

The competition includes three art categories: drawing, painting and photography. Submissions must be two-dimensional and not exceed 18-inches by 24-inches mounted on black or white mat board and accompanied by a 150 to 200-word artist statement. Categories for writing entries include poetry, fiction or nonfiction. All writing entries must be submitted electronically (.doc or .docx files) and under three, single-spaced pages.

All entries must be received by April 9.

Writing submissions must be emailed to [competition@holocaustcenter.org](mailto:competition@holocaustcenter.org).

Art submissions must be postmarked on or prior to April 9.

“I heard about the Kappy Family Anne Frank Art & Writing Competition from my school secretary. I like art contests for my students that I feel are meaningful, and through which they can learn a historical lesson or express empathy and emotion about an important issue through their art,” said Patti Fields, an art teacher at Stevenson High School in Sterling Heights.

Prizes will be awarded for first (\$250), second (\$125) and third place (\$75) in each of the categories.

Axelrod said what is also nice is that the teacher and school of all first place winners receive a \$200 Amazon gift card, in appreciation of their participation.

“I have never been so touched by the message and feeling behind a competition. (It) was a celebration of life and diversity, empowering students to share their talents and thoughtfulness about a very relevant and important topic,” said Kimmi Dukes, an art teacher at Harrison High School in Farmington Hills, remarking on last year’s contest and the student’s personal interpretation of the power of one, which was last year’s theme.

Among the guests in attendance for the May 17 awards presentation will be Garry Kappy, who currently resides in Florida.

“He was part of the ceremony last year,” said Irvin Kappy. “Everyone wanted to have their picture taken with him. He was overwhelmed by the response. It was quite humbling and a wonderful experience.”

*For more information rules and guidelines visit [holocaustcenter.org/competition](http://holocaustcenter.org/competition) or call Aliza Tick at 248-553-2400, ext. 141.*