

# Holocaust National Days of Remembrance

April 15-22, 2012



Fort Belvoir Equal Opportunity Office



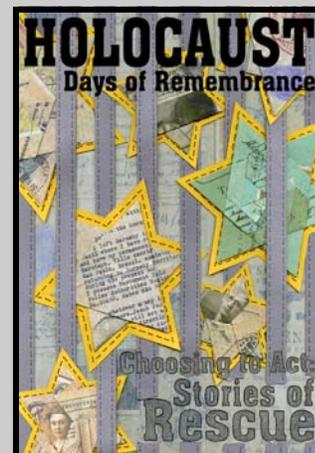
## Choosing to act.....**STORIES OF RESCUE**

Confronted with the persecution and murder of Europe's Jews, witnesses had a choice of whether or not to intervene. Getting involved meant running the risk of severe punishment, and most people—even those who disagreed with the Nazis' policies and practices—opted to do nothing.

Some well-known people who made the choice to act were the German industrialist Oskar Schindler at his factory in Poland; Miep Gies, who hid Anne Frank in Holland; and the Danish resistance fighters who ferried almost all of Denmark's Jews to safety in Sweden. Most stories of rescue are less familiar. These rescuers were ordinary people who acted in extraordinary ways: a government official who forged identity papers, a Benedictine monk who helped establish an extensive network of hiding places for children, a housewife and her daughter who hid a family in their attic. The risks associated with their actions were real, and the consequences could be severe. In many places, sheltering Jews was a crime punishable by death.

Today we think of these individuals as heroes, but many rescuers did not see themselves this way. The motivation of rescuers varied widely, from opposition to Nazi racial ideology, to compassion, to religious or moral principles. Some even had antisemitic prejudices but still chose to rescue Jews. In their uniqueness, stories of rescue remind us of the wide range of choices that we as individuals are capable of making. And that our actions in the face of injustice or hatred always matter, as examples from recent genocides demonstrate.

We must never forget, however, that for each person who was rescued and survived the Holocaust, countless more were killed. As we remember stories of rescue, therefore, we must first honor the memory of Holocaust victims by countering indifference with vigilance and apathy with action.



### Movies

Schindler's List (1993)- Liam Neeson and Ben Kingsley

Anne Frank Remembered-(1995) Kenneth Branagh and Glenn Close

### Books

*Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank (Prentice Hall, 1993)

*Surviving Hitler: A Boy in the Nazi Death Camps* by Andrea Warren (Harper Collins Publishers Inc, 2001)

## WHAT DOES DAYS OF REMEMBRANCE MEAN TO YOU?

### More People Who Chose to Act

-**ALFRED ROSSNER**, a German businessman saved the Jewish forced laborers working in his factory, by issuing them work permits that exempted them from deportation.

-**ANTON SCHMID**, Austrian born and drafted into the German army, used his access to resources to provide Jews with provisions, transport to safer areas, and forged papers.

-**TATYANA AND ANIA KONTSEVICH**, a housewife and her daughter, sheltered the family of Shimon Redlich. Shimon hid with his mother, aunt, and uncle. Ten-year-old Ania was in charge of bringing them food and water.

