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## Mengele experiment survivor Eva Kor speaks to Mundelein students

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DANNY SPUNGEN, PROVIDED PHOTO

James Schuster, chairman of the social studies department at Carmel Catholic High School, introduces Eva Kor, one of the two known remaining survivors of the infamous Mengele experiments during the Holocaust.

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By Dan Waters, Chicago Tribune reporter

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Eva Kor, a survivor of the infamous experiments of Nazi doctor Josef Mengele at Auschwitz during the Holocaust, left several life lessons with students at Carmel Catholic High School in Mundelein during a recent presentation: Never give up, don't succumb to prejudices and be quick to forgive.

Kor, believed to be one of two known remaining survivors in America of the Mengele twin experiments, elicited laughs, cheers and chills from the roughly 300 people in the

Carmel auditorium during her the first of her two talks about life during and after her time in the notorious concentration camp.

"Most of my guests are afraid if they talk about it, and I'm sure it's true for many liberators of the camp, that if they talk about it, they somehow will fall apart," Kor said. "My theory is: We only remember as much as we can cope with."

The high school dedicated the entire day to teaching students about the horrors of the Holocaust, said Kathleen Sinclair, director of institutional advancement for Carmel. Every class took a different spin on the event, she said: Accounting classes focused on how Nazis hid money in Swiss bank accounts, for example, and gym classes examined how students would have fared physically in a concentration camp.

This was the first time the school dedicated an entire day's curriculum to the Holocaust, Sinclair said, but was the second year in a row Kor spoke to students.

Kor, 79, was 10 years old when she arrived at Auschwitz with her family in 1944. She recalled her and her twin sister, Miriam, being separated from her mother, father and two other sisters upon arriving at the concentration camp, and described the horror of wondering each day whether she would make it to the next.

She also recalled the humiliation of standing naked in front of Mengele day after day, being poked, prodded and measured as part of his experiments.

She and her twin sister survived the ordeal, though their family did not. Her sister passed away in 1993 after a battle with cancer that Kor said was at least partially a result of a drug Mengele gave her that stunted the growth of her kidneys.

Kor said the twins didn't talk about what happened to them in Auschwitz until 1985, 40 years after Soviet troops liberated the concentration camp.

"The only way I could cope with it was to block it out of my mind," Kor said.

In 1995, Kor opened the CANDLES Holocaust Museum and Education Center in Terre Haute, Ind., where she has lived since 1960, to try to reunite survivors. CANDLES—which stands for Children of Auschwitz Nazi Deadly Lab Experiments Survivors—was firebombed by an arsonist in 2003. The museum was reopened in 2005.

Students in Mundelein also had the opportunity to browse a large collection of Holocaust artifacts. Danny Spungen, of the Florence and Laurence Spungen Family Foundation, brought some of his collection of letters, currency and even a Nazi armband to the high school gymnasium. It was Spungen's 10th time bringing the exhibit to Carmel, he said.

Spungen, 51, of Lincolnshire, emphasized the importance of using the interactive, roaming exhibit to give people a different perspective of the atrocities that occurred during the Holocaust. Spungen said he has given hundreds of presentations since he began touring with the artifacts in 2008, including during trips to China and Greece.

Kiel Majewski, executive director of the CANDLES museum, said the combination of artifacts and the presentation give an insight into the Holocaust that many otherwise wouldn't get.

"A big theme is creating a link back to history," Majewski said, "and making history come alive for these kids to make it meaningful for them."

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