

## Mount Vernon Ceremony Pays Tribute To Area Holocaust Survivors



Jeanne Muchnick\_05/11/2016



Holocaust Survivors Arthur Citrin and Esther Elstein light candles at the Mount Vernon event. Photo Credit: *Submitted*



Survivors pay tribute to the resilience of those who survived the Holocaust. Photo Credit: *Submitted*

MOUNT VERNON, N.Y. -- Memories of the darkest era in modern history echoed through Mount Vernon's City Hall on Monday, May 9 when Mount Vernon Mayor Richard Thomas and City Council officials joined 11 Holocaust survivors, their families, Jewish clergy and community members in paying tribute to the resilience of those who lived through the horror of the systematic genocide the Nazis called the Final Solution.

The annual Holocaust Remembrance Observance was also a night of reaffirmation.

After welcoming remarks by Louise Challop of the Jewish Community Council of Mount Vernon, a visibly moved Mayor Thomas said he was truly humbled to be in the presence of those who are such clear examples of "endurance and perseverance."

The Mayor went on to draw a connection between the lessons learned from the Holocaust and present day Mount Vernon. Pointing out that when the Nazis rose to power, few voices were raised against them, the Mayor promised that "Mount Vernon is a voice that will always speak up...to take the right stand on the right issues."

All the survivors in attendance at the event had been children during the War. Their heart-wrenching stories of survival were brought to life in the vivid telling by Tania Weiss and Halina Rosenkranz, both from Westchester Jewish Community Services.

Rabbi Morris Barzilai from Sinai Free Synagogue and Rabbi Gedalyah Berger of Fleetwood Synagogue spoke about the triumph of the human spirit.

Also sharing experiences was Ira Korner, a son of survivors.

The survivors in six canals representing the six million Jewish men, women and children who perished in the Holocaust.

Violist Lydia Leizman underscored the evening's theme of loss, remembrance and resilience.

The survivors in attendance included Ellen and Jerry Kaidanow, Hyman Mendelowitz, Danuta Rottman, Rose Winterfeldt, Esther Elstein, Hannelore Hecht, Helen Levenson, Minnie Osher, Arthur Citrin and Dora Zyndorf.

The evening was sponsored by the Jewish Community Council of Mount Vernon and the Mayor's office, with assistance from Westchester Jewish Community Services.

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