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It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart.

~ Anne Frank, July 15, 1944

[Learn more about Anne.](#)

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Southern Cayuga Central School District is one of 11 sites nationwide to receive an Anne Frank Tree sapling from the Anne Frank Center USA! Explore our website to learn more about Anne Frank and our efforts through the Tree Project to ensure that her unbridled spirit and message of love and hope live on.

“It's a wonder I haven't abandoned all my ideals, they seem so absurd and impractical. Yet I cling to them because I still believe, in spite of everything, that people are truly good at heart. (Anne Frank, July 15, 1944)”



Anne Frank Center Sapling Project



What do the White House, Central High School in Little Rock, the Boston Commons, and the World Trade Center Site have in common with the Southern Cayuga School District? How do Anne Frank, Harriet Tubman, Emily Howland and William Seward fit into this equation? The answer lives in a small group of tree saplings cultivated from one of the most famous horse chestnut trees in history.

During World War II, Anne Frank, a Jewish teenager hiding from the Nazis in Amsterdam, kept a diary for two years before being exposed. This diary was published by her father, the only family survivor, after Anne's death at the age of 15 from Typhus in a concentration camp. During those years of concealment, one of the few things that Anne could see from the window was a large horse chestnut tree. The tree survived until 2010 when fungus and a wind storm brought it down.

In October 2009, the Anne Frank Center announced that it was giving 11 saplings cut from this tree to sites in the US that represented social justice and freedom. Some of the places selected include obvious choices such as the World Trade Center site and Central High School, home of the Little Rock 9, but on the surface Southern Cayuga may seem a strange choice: a little rural school with seemingly no claim to fame. In fact, with the exception of Central High School, Southern Cayuga is the only school district on this prestigious list.

Actually, the school's grant application for the tree makes a strong case. To the north of the school lies Fort Ontario that housed Jewish refugees during World War II. The school is located near the homes of Harriet Tubman and William Seward, both abolitionists who lived in Auburn. Poplar Ridge, where the school is located, was strongly influenced by Quakers who believed in the equality of all men and women. The Women's Hall of Fame is located in nearby Seneca Falls, and the school's elementary school is named after Miss Emily Howland, who not only worked side by side with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, but also founded many schools for freed blacks and their children in the South. Finally, what better way to promote tolerance than to have the tree sapling in the care of other children, our future.

Author Jack Mayer Visits the Southern Cayuga Anne Frank Tree Site

Published May 10, 2017 | By Meghan Littlejohn



The Southern Cayuga Anne Frank Tree Project was proud to welcome author Jack Mayer to Southern Cayuga. Dr. Mayer was the keynote speaker at our Annual Difference Makers' Dinner which took place on May 5th, 2017. Difference Maker Awards were presented to Jesse Platt and Dick and Cathy Burns.

Jack Mayer is a pediatrician and a writer. Dr. Mayer was a National Cancer Institute Fellow at Columbia University researching the molecular biology of childhood cancer. He is the author of the award-winning non-fiction [Life in a Jar: The](#)

[Irena Sendler Project](#), which tells the story of a Polish Catholic social worker who organized a rescue network of fellow social workers to save 2,500 Jewish children from certain death in the Warsaw ghetto.

In addition to giving an inspirational speech at the Annual Difference Makers' Dinner, Dr. Mayer lectured to Southern Cayuga School District students. Dr. Mayer also had the chance to tour the SCCS Anne Frank Tree Site. We were honored to host his visit to Southern Cayuga.



The tree in the June 2017

Southern Cayuga
Anne Frank Tree Project



Annual Difference
Makers' Night

Immigration & Agriculture

ECONOMIC & HUMAN REALITIES

FRIDAY MAY 11TH · 6:00 PM

Panel Discussion with Q&A Session

Presenters:

Bill Cook

Dairy Farm Owner/Manager of Aurora Ridge Dairy

Zach & Gopini Nelson

SCCS Graduate, Peace Corp Volunteer in Nepal

Mary Jo Dudley

Director of the Cornell Farmworker Program

Spanish Translation Available



Tours of the Anne Frank
Tree Site will be available.

Southern Cayuga High School
2384 State Route 34B
Aurora, NY

6:00 PM

Difference Maker Dinner
by Kendra's Culinary Cuisine

\$5 Suggested Donation

7:00 PM

Panel Discussion &

Award Presentation to our
2018 Difference Makers:

Andrew Simkin &
Brittney Meade



www.sccsannefranktree.org

Holocaust Survivor Marion Blumenthal-Lazan visits Southern Cayuga Anne Frank Tree Site

Published May 23, 2016 | By Meghan Littlejohn



The Southern Cayuga Anne Frank Tree Project was honored to welcome back Marion Blumenthal-Lazan and her husband, Nathaniel, to our sapling tree site on Friday, May 13, 2016. Marion and Nathaniel were in our area on a 9 day visit, in which they lectured at 10 separate school districts in Central New York. This is the 15th consecutive year that Marion and Nathaniel have lectured in our region, sharing their message of how to make this world a better place by promoting hope, respect, education, hard work, acceptance of others, courage, and the need for us all to be good to each other.

Marion's visit was especially meaningful, as our tree site, created by Phil Donovan, contains references and images inspired by Marion. Eleven boulders surround the tree site, representing the number of Anne Frank trees given to the United States. There are also 4 small round boulders of the same type of stone placed amongst the other boulders. These four boulders reference Marion's metaphor of the four perfect pebbles used in her book of the same name. Witnessing Marion walk around our tree site and search for the "four perfect pebbles" was a very meaningful and emotional experience for us all.

Marion was present at, and participated in, the planting ceremony of our sapling tree on June 12, 2013. She was also the keynote speaker at the "standing room only" ceremony held later that evening. You can view the video of the planting ceremony at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZLp87ziTJI>.

Marion Blumenthal-Lazan travels internationally as a holocaust speaker. Over one million students and adults have listened to Marion's lectures. You can visit her website at www.fourperfectpebbles.com.

Posted in Uncategorized

THE SAPLING PROJECT

As Anne wrote about her own hopes and dreamed of a better future, she often looked out upon a large horse chestnut tree in the garden behind the Secret Annex. For her, the tree symbolized freedom as well as nature, which she longed to enjoy once again.

Sadly, the aging chestnut tree behind the Secret Annex collapsed from disease in 2010. However, in the few years before the tree's demise, the stewards at the Anne Frank House wisely created saplings that have since been distributed to numerous locations around the world.

Anne Frank Center for Mutual Respect received 11 of the saplings to donate to worthy educational organizations across the US.

Following a three-year safeguard quarantine, the saplings were cleared for planting in January 2013. Currently there are 11 sites that host the saplings.

The following organizations are the recipients of Anne Frank Tree saplings.

- U.S. Capitol, West Front Lawn, Washington, D.C.
- The Children's Museum of Indianapolis, Indiana
- Sonoma State University, California
- Southern Cayuga School District, New York
- Washington State Holocaust Resource Center Washington, Washington
- Boston Common, Massachusetts
- Central High School, Arkansas
- Holocaust Memorial Center, Michigan
- Idaho Anne Frank Human Rights Memorial, Idaho
- William J. Clinton Presidential Center, Arkansas
- Liberty Park, Commemorating 9/11, New York City

There are currently no available sapplings. For more information on the Sapling Project please email saplingproject@annefrank.com

