Nori did it keep him from competing in the Trans-Pacific Yacht Race from Los Angeles to Honolulu three times.

But it’s on Ventura County’s land that Jack’s impact will be felt for generations to come. Rancho Guadalacasa, the Mexican land grant Jack’s family purchased in 1880, sits adjacent to what is now California State University, Channel Islands. A private man, Jack tried to make a $5 million anonymous donation to establish a library at the university in 1999—one of the largest in Ventura County history. He was persuaded to go public only after trustees argued that his donation would spur others. It did. The university named the library after him.

Jack also was an original initiator and supporter of Casa Pacifica, a home for neglected, abused and emotionally disturbed children; founder of the Conejo Savings and Loan Association; chairman of the Ventura County Harbor Commission; chairman of the Camarillo State Hospital Board of Trustees (where the university is now sited); and member of the boards for Pepperdine University and the House Ear Institute in Los Angeles, among others.

Madam Speaker, I know my colleagues will join Janice and me in offering our condolences among others.

CELEBRATING THE GRAND OPENING OF THE ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM AND EDUCATION CENTER

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 21, 2009
Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, on Sunday, April 19th, over 10,000 people gathered in Skokie, Illinois, joining special guests President Bill Clinton, Elie Wiesel, and Governor Pat Quinn to celebrate the grand opening of the new Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center. President Obama personally offered his congratulations on a recorded video. I had the great opportunity to participate in the opening of this beautiful new museum, which will share the history of the Holocaust and teach the importance of combating hatred, indifference, and genocide to current and future generations across the Midwest.

Skokie, located in my district, is a community that knows the importance of preserving memories and teaching history. In the wake of World War II, the community offered an attractive haven to Jewish families, including Holocaust survivors searching for a new life in America. Between 1945 and 1955, an estimated 3,000 Jewish families came to Skokie, building a vibrant Jewish community.

Children who grew up in Skokie during this time recall daily life carrying an underpinning of trauma. They share stories of parents unable to sleep, panicking when their children returned home late, and refusing to take show-up. However, while they describe seeing tattooed numbers on arms as commonplace, the Holocaust wasn’t something survivors wanted to talk about. Many Skokie Jews remember not knowing which of their friends had survived gas chambers.

That changed in the mid-1970s. In 1976, neo-Nazi Frank Collin threatened to march in Skokie. Many residents of Skokie and surrounding towns for decades of organizing and fighting hatred through education. The group has educated school and community groups since 1981, and the first museum was opened in 1985. In large part due to the organization and advocacy of the survivor community, in 1986 Illinois became the first state where Holocaust education is mandatory.

Today, there are an estimated 7,000 Holocaust survivors still living in the Chicago area, and as many as 1,000–2,000 of them currently live in Skokie. Most are now in their 70s, 80s, or 90s. Like the town of Skokie itself, the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center would not have been possible without their active involvement and input. Its permanent exhibits show hundreds of artifacts, many which have been collected in recent years from local residents. The museum also present thousands of video interviews with survivors, conducted and donated by Steven Spielberg and his Shoah Foundation.

Madam Speaker, the Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center may be one of the best Holocaust museums to be built in collaboration with survivors. The new 65,000-square foot museum will have the capacity to serve over 250,000 annual visitors, and will teach countless people, young and old, the importance of actively fighting hatred and prejudice. In a world where genocide continues, despite decades of promising “never again,” these are priceless lessons.

The people of Skokie, led by the survivor community, fought back against Collin. The case ultimately went to court and, after uproar from around the world, the march was held elsewhere.

In the wake of those events, Chicago-area survivors founded the Holocaust Memorial Foundation of Illinois, a group dedicated to fighting hatred through education. The group has educated school and community groups since 1981, and the first museum was opened in 1985. In large part due to the organization and advocacy of the survivor community, in 1986 Illinois became the first state where Holocaust education is mandatory.

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