

HOLOCAUST: A nun helped him and a friend escape a camp

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Some in the Bob Clapp Theatre looked shaken at Taiblum's description of that horrific day. The silence was thick. Taiblum went on in his lilting Yiddish accent.

The next few years in his life held enough drama, suspense, pain, trials and occasional tribulation for a Hollywood blockbuster. But this wasn't fiction.

The boy obtained a fake Polish identity from a police official who had known his family. Now his name was Marian Redlitzky. He got work on a farm. He attended Catholic services and learned "The Lord's Prayer." Eventually, though, even his fictional identity didn't matter.

The Nazis sent Polish citizens, including Taiblum, to be laborers in a lice-infested detention camp surrounded by barbed wire. Taiblum worked in a coal mine and later peeled potatoes in the kitchen.

Taiblum said a nun helped him and a friend escape. She told them when the guards would be drinking in their barracks, gave them a pair of rubber-handled pliers and told them how to cut the electrified barbed wire to make their way through. The nun instructed the teenagers to throw the pliers into a stream so the soldiers and guard dogs wouldn't find them and link them to her. The boys cut through the fence, threw the wire cutters into the water and started running.

Taiblum returned to the

ghetto to join in a resistance movement called the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. The group held off Nazi soldiers for about three weeks.

As a member of the People's Army, he helped blow up bridges, dynamite railroad tracks and cut telephone lines. Taiblum held up his left hand to show that grenade shrapnel had sliced off a finger during an attack.

Taiblum said he's had a rich life that included immigrating to Israel to train as a cantor and working as a journalist in Brazil. He and his eventual wife, Sara Rosencranz, moved to the United States where he worked as a cantor, ran a hotel for a time and even tried his hand as a Yiddish comedian and singer on stages in Miami and California.

Throughout the years, he searched for answers about what happened ultimately to his family, but found nothing.

"It's as if they didn't exist," he said.

Taiblum continues to share his memories in an effort to keep the past from repeating. He wrote a book, "With G-D at My Side: A Child's Story of Survival," describing his life in detail.

Taiblum quoted himself from his book jacket.

"I will not be here to speak to you this story forever," he said. "Don't let the lessons from this evil fade away. Remember. Remember. Remember."

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CENSUS: Average Hermiston family size is 3.35 people

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at 5 a.m. compared to 4 percent in Pendleton.

And seven percent of households in Umatilla County do not own a vehicle.

Workforce: Although a high-school diploma is increasingly seen as a must-have for Americans, more Umatilla County residents over age 65 are high school graduates than residents between the age of 25 and 34, at 85 percent and 83 percent respectively.

The median annual salary for women in Umatilla County is \$31,733 and for men is \$41,310.

Family life: The average family size in Hermiston is 3.35 people while the average in Pendleton is 3.11 people.

While 20 percent of Umatilla County families with children are below the poverty line, only 7 percent of married couples with children are living in poverty.

In Umatilla County 48 percent of residents over the age of 15 are married and not separated. Fifteen percent are divorced.

Only 1 percent of Umatilla County women over the age of 65 have never been married, and 3 percent of men over 65.

Cultural diversity: Nine percent of people in Umatilla County are categorized as speaking English less than "very well."

Ten percent of people in Umatilla County were not born in the United States. Of those, 83 percent were born in Mexico. The other top countries of origin in subsequent order are Canada, Guatemala, the Philippines, El Salvador, Vietnam, and China.

Veterans: Eleven percent of Umatilla County's civilian population over age 18 are veterans. Forty-two percent of them served in the Vietnam War era.

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COUNCIL: Rohde grew up in Pendleton, spent many years in Umatilla

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local government for the past 26 years.

Having grown up in the Gresham area and lived in Salem, Chalmers moved to Umatilla County to work for the county.

Chalmers has been the department's director for the past 20 years and counts reducing property tax appeals as one of his achievements during his tenure.

Chalmers wasn't completely unfamiliar to city politics when he decided to run for the seat — he's a member of the Pendleton Development Commission's advisory committee.

Chalmers said the council's main priorities should be public works and public safety and it needed to work toward building trust with the community.

"The Round-Up shouldn't be the end-all be-all. We can do a lot better than that."

— Paul Rabitaile, on the city's need to do more to attract businesses

"We need to create victories," he said.

Rick Rohde has taken a more circuitous path to a council campaign.

Rohde grew up in Pendleton but spent many of his working years living in Umatilla while employed as a freight processor for the Wal-Mart Distribution Center near Hermiston.

After moving back to Pendleton, Rohde was arrested for drunk driving, a development he said was one of the best things that happened to him.

Rohde went through a rehabilitation program and began volun-

teering with the Pendleton Parks and Recreation Department.

Rohde's issues with the city's solar program led him to council meetings and stoked his interest in city politics.

Rohde said the city should work more with the school district to share multi-use facilities and emulate Pendleton's neighbor to the west.

"They don't want to look at it, but there's some good lessons to be had from taking Hermiston's ideas," he said.

While Rabitaile might be a less familiar face at meetings than his opponents, he wants

to bring some new blood to the council.

A longtime salesman and short term amusement park clown, Rabitaile eventually retired and settled in Pendleton.

In addition to expending more resources toward the homeless and veterans, Rabitaile said the city needs to do more to attract businesses.

"The Round-Up shouldn't be the end-all be-all," he said. "We can do a lot better than that."

Among his more ambitious ideas was placing a larger emphasis on the city's western heritage in the downtown area and attracting a theme park to the city near Wal-Mart.

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