



good works
by Celia Shatzman

EVERYDAY WAYS WE CAN
ALL MAKE A DIFFERENCE

NAME **Alan "Woody" Morawiec** AGE **43**
CAUSE **Holocaust Shoe Project**
HOMETOWN **Littleton, CO**
FAMILY **Son Jakob, 15; and daughter Sydney, 11**

AS THE SON OF A HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR, Alan "Woody" Morawiec always wanted to share his father's story because his dad, Chaim, found it too difficult to speak about himself. When Alan, a technology teacher, heard about the national Holocaust Awareness Week in 2000, he realized it was an opportunity for him to address the topic with his middle school students. Since his dad wouldn't be with him, Alan wanted something of Chaim's to show to the kids. "I asked him to send me his shoes because they're so personal," Alan says. "Shoes have become symbolic of the Holocaust. When the Allied troops liberated the camps they found piles and piles of shoes belonging to those who had perished." Alan

created the Holocaust Shoe Project (HSP) when he asked students and teachers to bring a pair to the presentation to donate. That year he collected 300 pairs for Colorado's needy.

The next year Chaim flew from New York to join Alan for what was to become an annual school event. Alan continued to speak on his dad's behalf, but Chaim sometimes answered students' questions and attended every lecture until his death last summer. "I promised him I'd continue sharing his story so people would never forget what happened," Alan says.

Alan has been invited as a guest speaker throughout Colorado—at schools, universities, churches, synagogues, libraries and civic centers—and in other states.

HSP has sent 31,000 pairs of shoes all over the globe. Alan hopes his project will inspire people to spread the message of tolerance and the importance of helping others. "It's our differences that make this such a wonderful world," Alan says. "Through each pair of shoes I'm trying to take something horrible and turn it into a redemptive act of love and kindness." ●



Visit holocaustshooproject.org to learn more; if you'd like Alan to speak in your community, e-mail him at mrwoodyz@yahoo.com.



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