



Beth Haverim

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A letter from Marc Appelbaum's daughter to her grandmother...

Dear Grandma :

This past weekend marked the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Concentration Camps. This past weekend me and my father helped commemorate Yom Hashoa, by traveling to our, as a Rabbi on this trip put it, “The capital of the world” Washington DC . We didn’t go alone, we went with other Jews from Canada to Florida . We all went on our motorcycles. My father is a member of Hillels Angels. If you can believe it, this is a Jewish Motorcycle Club, and as I came to find out, is not the only one.

We met up with other Jewish clubs along the way. King David Bikers from Florida , Chai Riders from New York , YOW (Yidden on Wheels) from Canada and others from as far away as Michigan . We shared something amazing. We rode into DC with police escorts, literally **stopping** traffic on the busy afternoon streets of Washington DC . Stopping traffic on interstates and beltways, so that two miles of Jewish “Bikers” would be able to enter our capital without interruption.



Try if you can to imagine what that was like. Here we are, two miles of beautiful people, beautiful Jews. FREE, ALIVE and THRIVING!

Fortunately, I was not in a concentration camp, but I too felt like a survivor. We rode into Washington , to the Holocaust Museum , to gather in a group, as one, to remember.

As we came past the Washington monument, all two miles of Jewish “Bikers”, I thought to myself, “See us and hear us”. Apparently, I had inadvertently said it aloud, for my father heard me say the words. I will never forget, for as long as I live, and my children are alive, and their children’s children live, we will never forget. “They”, will have no choice, but to see us and hear us.

I was overwhelmed with a variety of emotion. I was proud. I was happy, and at the same time, I was angry. How dare “they” say, “It never happened”. I rode next to children of survivors. Let “them” talk to my brother, my new riding brother Gil, and see what he has to say. Gil, is the child of a survivor. Let them talk to Wilhelm Zauderer, or Thomas Ivani, friends of my dads and survivors.

Let them read the testimony of generals George Patton, Omar Bradley and Dwight Eisenhower as they reflected on their visit to the liberated camps, Eisenhower later a two term President of the United States . Let them read their words and feel the horror and anger and total disbelief in them

For, it never happened?

I am not a practicing Jew; however this trip got me back in touch with my roots. I felt more a part of something than I have in a long time.

To try and find words that would convey the overwhelming experience, to find words that would come close, would be next to impossible. I hope somewhere in my words you got a small taste of this amazing experience.

See us and hear us!

Next year in Washington !

Love, Charleen