

## **Washington State Survivor Graphic Novel Project: The Life & Story of Steve Adler**

The Holocaust Center for Humanity has had a long and successful history of using the stories of local Holocaust survivors to teach the lessons of the Holocaust, inspiring students to confront bigotry and indifference and take action.

For several years, the Center's Teacher Advisory Board has recommended that we create a graphic novel based on the stories of our survivors. In 2021, the Center is creating and self-publishing a short, 50-page graphic novel about a local survivor's story, which will engage and bring a more interactive resource to our students. The book will be aimed at middle-grade (6-8) readers.

### **Why Graphic Novels?**

Graphic novels level the playing field for readers of all abilities. Students who may be reluctant to read a traditional novel are able to meaningfully contribute and learn with their peers. Through graphic novels, once-challenging content for students can foster rich historical perspective and discussion. Graphic novels are proven to be highly engaging and to promote empathy. A good graphic novel gives students a true feeling for the characters and the story.

Martin Luther King chose a graphic novel written in 1957 to educate students about the Civil Rights Movement and encourage nonviolent protest in the sixties. He understood the disparities in education, and the draw that graphic novels have for all students. Our teachers recommended this resource because they, too, understand the interactive power and universal draw found in the pages of a graphic novel. We are thrilled to bring this project to life.

### **Project Next Steps**

Starting with the life story of beloved Seattle Holocaust survivor [Steve Adler](#), who passed away in 2019, the Center will bring his story to life into a graphic novel that will be distributed as a free ebook to teachers as a resource for their students. Students will be able to access these copies at school or at home. Additionally, the graphic novel will have a short run of print books published by a local printer to be distributed as needed -- onsite at the Center, and with limited supply at several local bookstores and online. A teacher guide will accompany the graphic novel for educator use.

### **Project Timeline**

Holocaust Center staff members Julia Thompson and Paul Regelbrugge wrote and edited the book's manuscript in 2020. The Center has hired an artist, Sean Dougherty, who will bring these stories to life. As of May 2021, Sean continues artwork and lettering as Julia and Paul consult, and continue to finetune text content for the book. This pilot graphic novel is intended to be completed by mid-August 2021 for the next school year, and a launch event is tentatively scheduled for late Summer or Fall 2021.

We hope for additional graphic novels to be created in the future, using other local survivor stories.