

## **John Weil\***

I was born in Moenchengladbach, Germany on April 2, 1920.

My childhood was happy and normal. I went to public school, played soccer and had many friends both Jewish and Christian. My family lived in Germany since 1720 and my father was a veteran of W.W. I.

I was Bar-Mitvah in 1933 - the year Hitler came to power. Our lives changed dramatically. I remember the Nazi parades, the boycott of Jews, the Nuremberg Laws in 1935, the anti-Semitic slogans, the window smashing and my families' search for a way to get out of Germany.

During Kristallnacht in November, 1928, my father was arrested by the Gestapo and taken to Dachau. Three days later I fled to England through Holland to meet my brother. A bribe from my Mother got my Father released and my parents joined us in December. In June 1940, we came to the U.S. I was very angry when Americans did not believe our tales of horror.

I joined the U.S. Army and served in the Pacific. Later I learned that my Mother's two sisters were killed in the camps.

While visiting my hometown in Germany, I related my experience to high school students. Whenever I tell my story, I urge people to learn from history and "never forget".

My wife, Faye, and I have four children, six grandchildren and one great-grandson.

\*Deceased