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**GIHON RIVER PRESS RELEASES *URSULA'S PRISM***

A COMPELLING STORY OF CHILDREN WHO ESCAPED BERGEN-BELSEN

Contact: STEVE FEUER, GIHON RIVER PRESS 917-612-8857 or [gihonriverpress@msn.com](mailto:gihonriverpress@msn.com)

Anna Block tells her mother's powerful story of how a group of six children escaped from the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp, struggled to survive the winter in the forests of Germany as they worked their way toward the Dutch border and safety.

*Ursula's Prism* is told from the point of view of Ursula Swartz, a six-year old who was one of five children in the Swartz family, the story describes how she and her siblings were taken with their parents from their privileged home in Glasshutte, near Dresden, to Bergen-Belsen, where her mother and baby brother were murdered soon after their arrival; where one sister disappeared, and one sister chose to collaborate with the Nazis.

Before he died of typhus, her father, Fredrick Swartz, managed to give away his watch to a mysterious gypsy woman, in an attempt to save his remaining four children. He did save Ursula and her twelve-year-old brother, Ludwig.

The dramatic narrative traces the children's odyssey from the camp with their new-found friends, Kurt, Nikki, Petr and Lise. Tragically, only four of the six children survived the harrowing journey to safety and freedom.

Maureen McNeil, Director of Education at the Anne Frank Center in New York, wrote in the book's introduction, "Stories of children suffering during the Holocaust are difficult to read, yet often inspire the human spirit to take action. Survivors' stories teach us that if society fails, we are all responsible."

*Ursula's Prism*, she notes, is based on a true story, imaginatively retold by Ursula's daughter. Her mother's crystal necklace, which is the key to the title, was used to teach strength and values—to think positive thoughts, to examine things from different perspectives, to be kind, to have an open mind, and to be strong. Ursula keeps the necklace with her throughout her voyage through hell. It offered her and the other children resilience and hope in their darkest moments. Indeed, Ursula still has the necklace.

Written in a clear style, the book, while intense, is a compelling page turner and appropriate for all ages from middle school students, high school students and adults.

*Ursula's Prism*:

172 pages with black and white illustrations.

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