

New Holocaust Memoir 'The Boy in the Back' Breaks Eight Decades of Silence with a Story the World Urgently Needs to Hear

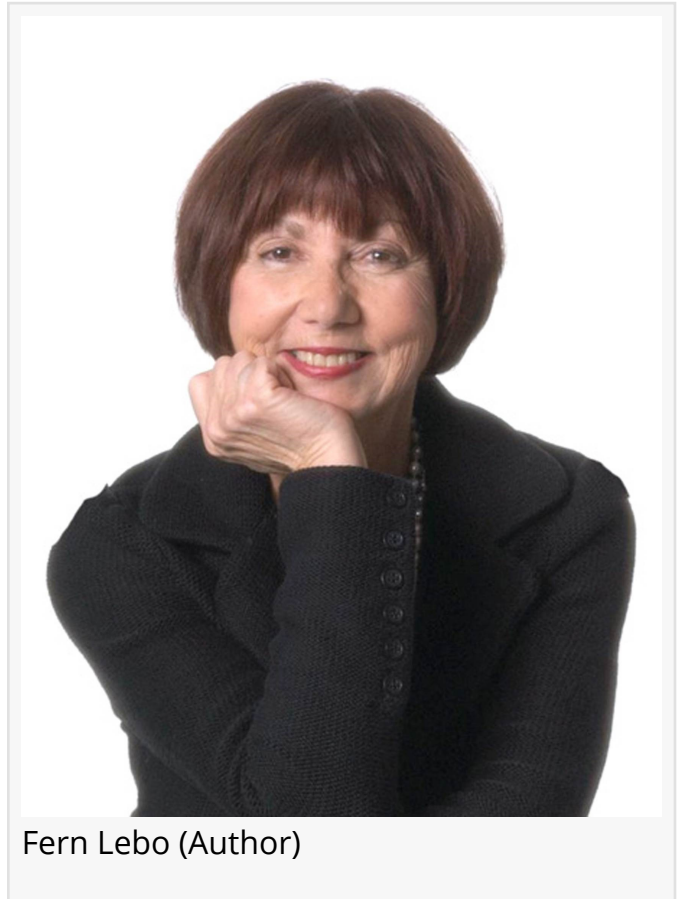
TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, December 4, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [The Boy in the Back](#): A True Story of Survival in Auschwitz and Mauthausen by Fern Lebo is a rare firsthand account that brings to light the long-buried memories of Holocaust survivor Dr. Jan Blumenstein (prisoner B6164), a man who spent most of his life avoiding the subject that defined him.

At sixteen, Jan entered Auschwitz with nothing but his wits, will, and the instinct to make himself invisible. His quiet strategy was to stay in the back, never draw attention, and survive one more day. This strategy kept him alive inside a system built to erase him. Through hunger, brutality, terror, and forced labor, he clung fiercely to his humanity.

Jan died last May and was never able to hold the book in his hands, but at ninety-six, after a lifetime as a respected Canadian physician, husband, father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, he finally chose to speak.

His decision came as he watched alarming surges of antisemitism around the world—an atmosphere so reminiscent of his youth that he felt history pressing in on him again. “The Nazis stole my childhood,” he says in the opening pages. “I never talked about this before... but the same presence of antisemitism is in the world today.”

For eighteen months, author Fern Lebo sat with Jan, drawing out memories he had spent eight decades suppressing. She listened, asked, coaxed, and helped him reconstruct a world that no longer exists—its families, neighborhoods, rhythms, and everyday tenderness—before showing how quickly it was destroyed.



Fern Lebo (Author)

Lebo writes Jan's testimony with historical context and modern parallels, creating a narrative that is both deeply intimate and clearly urgent. The book speaks not only to what happened, but to what is happening now.

[The Boy in the Back](#) is more than a Holocaust memoir. It is a meditation on memory, silence, and the cost of forgetting. It is a reminder of how easily a society can fracture. It is an emotional call to conscience at a moment when the world once again faces the dangers of polarization, hatred, and indifference.

Jan's story stands out because, unlike historical accounts told at a distance, this one comes from a man who was still here, still watching, still pleading: "Never again."

About the Author

Fern Lebo is a lifelong storyteller, corporate trainer, and author whose work spans poetry, business literature, and journalism.

She was trained as a psychiatric occupational therapist and knows how important it is to speak through pain rather than hold it in. So when Jan revealed, "I'm reliving my childhood," as he watched the October 7 news, she recognized immediately that he needed to talk. His testimony was so gripping that what began as a simple kindness soon became a commitment—and although Jan was reluctant at first, he quickly understood how important it was to tell his story, and that the world needed to hear it.

Fern is the founder of a company that trained Fortune 500 corporations in writing and presentation skills for sales and leadership communication.

[The Boy in the Back](#), is her most personal and consequential work to date. The book is now available on Amazon and Barnes & Noble in paperback, hardcover, and eBook formats.

She is also the co-author of *The Talent Revolution*, the definitive guide to maximizing workforce value, published by University of Toronto Press.

Fern Lebo

The Boy in the Back

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