

Margaret Hailstone Sather

Just after WWII in search of the American Dream; my parents moved to New York City. Dad went to graduate school and worked at a settlement house. Mom took in ironing to help pay my Dad's tuition. I was raised with love and an emphasis on education in an atmosphere of limitless hope.

In the early 1970s I belonged to the Model United Nations. Our delegation represented Albania. We tried to learn to think as Albanians reading and researching what it would mean to allow Communist China into the United Nations, the big issue of that day.

The Regional Conference took place in Portland and our delegation was hosting the event so I was given Presidency of the Economic and Social Council and I knew Albania. I understood her positions of each issue. I thought I was astute enough to represent someone else's truth because I studied hard.

Until the opening of that conference I had never seen hatred. My sheltered life of hope and love had never seen the eyes of a young man I met the first day, whose family made a desperate journey to Palestine at the end of the war. He had lost his grandparents to the Nazis and his father to an Arab attack on the compound where they felt they had finally found safety.

The look in his eyes and the tone of his voice challenged me. From that day forward I recognized the dimensions of truth.

I have met Palestinians with stories similar to my Israeli friend and Serbs and Croatians, Irish from both states. My heart's desire is to bring those trapped in fear and hate across the bridge to hope.

I believe in hope.