

# Willmar's class about Holocaust draws hate mail

WILLMAR (AP) — A Willmar high school teacher who designed and teaches a course on the Holocaust says he is shocked by hate mail he received following publicity about the 13-week course on the extermination of Jews during World War II.

Bill Borth said local response to his course has been positive and that he has received favorable comment from other school systems and instructors across the country.

But he said hate mail has taken some of the joy from the praise. Borth said he received newsletters boosting white supremacy and anti-Semitism, along with notes accusing him of misinforming innocent students.

Hate letters also have gone to the school principal, the superintendent and the student council, he said.

One newsletter, "The Special Report," published in California, claims the Holocaust was a hoax. Jews were not exterminated, the newsletter contends; they died instead of a typhus epidemic. And the gases were used only for fumigating barracks.

"Why people go to such great lengths to distort history — that bothers me," Borth said of the publication.

Overall, Borth said, he found the hate mail interesting but shocking.

He believes the hate mail is all the more reason for the class to continue, to educate students about what hatred and prejudice can lead to.

The Willmar School Board agreed, also reacting with surprise that so much hatred exists.