Sara’s comments on final draft:

I appreciate the Pew data and the Harvard source; would like to hear more from him. Anything from the rabbi worth including?

I like that this story is within word count!

However, I’d like more detail on her as a person - why she converted in the first place (you took out everything about her dad - is that necessary?) - and what her daily life is like (keeping kosher, for example, is a huge commitment)

UPDATE (word count: 727):

In April 1945, Mary Hartigan’s father Richard Hartigan serves as a G.I. in the U.S. Army. He is of one of the soldiers sent to liberate Dachau, the first Nazi concentration camp for political prisoners, and sees first-hand the atrocities of the Holocaust. The emotional toll sticks with Richard for the rest of his life and plays a significant role in his relationship with Mary.

She remembers hearing stories from an early age about his time in the war and the photo he carried in his wallet as a reminder of what he saw in Dachau. The black and white photo shows Richard looking at the pile of dead bodies with his fellow soldiers.

Hartigan’s initial interest in Judaism stems from these talks with her father about the Holocaust.

“I’ve been pro-Israel since I was 16,” she says.

The oldest of three children, Hartigan was born in 1951 in St. Joseph, Mo. She grew up practicing Catholicism, but changed her understanding of faith while in high school.

In November 1983, she met Rabbi Harvey Rosenfeld by chance. Still interested in the Jewish faith, she got in touch with him while trying to find information about Judaism classes. He suggested they meet in person, and after an hour-long conversation, she knew she wanted to convert. Hartigan agreed with the moral viewpoint of Judaism.

“Jews do the commandments because it’s the right thing to do ethically; it’s the right thing to do vis-à-vis your fellow human,” Hartigan says. “There’s no doing something because you’re going to get a reward in heaven.”

According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, the national Jewish population is 1.7 percent sampling more than 35,000 Americans. Missouri is 1 percent Jewish and northeastern states such as New York and New Jersey have the largest population at 6 percent.

(Summer, site where I got sample size: <http://religions.pewforum.org/reports>)

Conversion involves “a lot more obligations, a lot more duties and a big change in one’s lifestyle,” says Jon Levenson, Harvard professor of Jewish studies. “Rabbis don’t traditionally go out and seek converts. They often try to in fact dissuade converts because they want to make sure they’re up to the challenge.”

As a part of Jewish dietary laws known as kosher, Hartigan doesn’t mix meat and dairy at meals or eat shellfish or pork—bacon was the hardest. She observes Shabbat, the holiest day of the week, from sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday. Hartigan lights candles and recites a blessing with her husband, Rick Diamant, Friday evenings.

When she first converted to Judaism, Hartigan felt at home in various community organizations such as Hillel, the Jewish organization on campus. She met her second husband Diamant during one Hillel social gathering at her apartment.

“He had to be at work at 8 o’clock the next morning. He didn’t leave till like 3 or 4,” Hartigan recalls. “Something like that?”

“Something like that,” Diamant says with an indulgent smile.

It was their love of baseball that caused a spark. At the time, Diamant attended synagogue services about three times a year. He stopped regularly attending synagogue after he left for college. It was Hartigan that motivated him to return to Saturday morning services, and together they became more involved in the Jewish community.

At 61 and retired, Hartigan also enjoys volunteering with local Jewish organizations. She used to be the treasurer for the local Hadassah chapter, a Women’s Zionist group. Now she serves as treasurer for Sisterhood, an organization that fundraises for the synagogue and community’s needs.

“It’s not just a belief in God. It’s a part of who you are; it’s a people-hood that you embrace,” Rabbi Rosenfeld says.

The photos that adorn her living room shelves show how deep the connection is. Several are of Rabbi Yossi Feintuch and his family, with whom Hartigan and her husband are close friends.

“We don’t have family in town, so we make our family out of our friends,” Hartigan says.

Since 2003, Hartigan has been to Israel seven times, including a recent trip for Rabbi Feintuch’s son’s wedding. She even has a favorite falafel restaurant and juice place. She also pays a visit to Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust museum.

Hartigan gained more than a renewed faith; she gained love and a sense of belonging in the Jewish community.

**Reporter byline**: Anna Seaman

**Reporter contact info**: 217-299-6184

**Assigned word count: 500-600 vs. ACW**: 526

**Single word that sums up this story (use a noun):** Reinvention

**Print Hed & Dek (give at least 3):**

Dreams of her father - Mary Hartigan’s journey to faith through her past

The Reinvention of Mary Hartigan - Finding Mary

The Conversative Jew - the Mary Hartigan story

**Web Hed & Dek (give 1)**:

Hed: Local Jewish woman speaks about relationship with faith

Dek: Religion’s role in her life and as a member of a minority group

**Story Links:** (at least 3 that could be embedded into story on website)

<http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005214>,<http://religions.pewforum.org/maps>, <http://urj.org/life/conversion/>

**Suggested Tweet**: #COMO Mary Hartigan offers a look into her private and religious life.

**Suggested Facebook post**: Mary Hartigan found herself in her 30s and hasn’t looked back

**Suggested Web Excerpt**: (25-35 words)

Mary Hartigan converted to Judaism for herself and wound up with a family and community.

**Best version of lede**:

Mary Hartigan went to Catholic school because of her parents. She moved to Columbia because of her ex-husband’s job. She became Jewish for herself.

I think we’ll want to change this because brings up topics you don’t address (the ex-husband, why she left Catholicism)

**Body of the story**:

In November 1983, she met Rabbi Harvey Rosenfeld by chance. When trying to find information about a Judaism class, she got in touch with him and he suggested they meet in person. After an hour-long conversation, she knew she wanted to convert to Judaism. Hartigan agreed with the moral viewpoint of Judaism.

“Jews do the commandments because it’s the right thing to do ethically, it’s the right thing to do vis-à-vis your fellow human,” Hartigan says. “There’s no doing something because you’re going to get a reward in heaven.”

The oldest of three children, Hartigan was born in 1951 in St. Joseph, Mo. She grew up practicing Catholicism, which has a large following in the United States.

According to the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 24 percent of Americans are affiliated with Catholicism, behind only Evangelical Protestant at 26 percent. The national Jewish population is 2 percent; Missouri is 1 percent Jewish and northeastern states such as New York and New Jersey have the largest population at 6 percent.

Conversion involves “a lot more obligations, a lot more duties and a big change in one’s lifestyle,” says Jon Levenson, Harvard professor of Jewish studies.

[talk about Kosher style]

When Hartigan converted to Judaism, she felt at home in various community organizations such as Hillel, the Jewish campus organization. She met her second husband, Rick Diamant, during one Hillel social gathering at her apartment.

“He had to be at work at 8 o’clock the next morning. He didn’t leave till like 3 or 4,” Hartigan recalls. “Something like that?”

“Something like that,” Diamant responds with an indulgent smile.

It was their love of baseball that caused a spark, rather than their shared religion. At the time, Diamant attended synagogue services about three times a year. Despite growing up in an Orthodox Jewish household, he stopped attending synagogue after leaving for college. It was Hartigan that encouraged him to return to Saturday morning services, and together they became more involved in the Jewish community.

She gained more than a renewed faith in Judaism; she gained a partner in Rick and a sense of belonging in the Jewish community in Columbia.

Looking at the photos that adorn her living room shelves, it becomes apparent how deep the connection is. Several of the photos show Rabbi Yossi Feintuch and his family, with whom Hartigan and her husband are close friends.

“We don’t have family in town, so we make our family out of our friends,” says Hartigan.

Since 2003, Haritgan has been to Israel seven times, including a recent trip for Rabbi Feintuch’s son’s wedding. She has a favorite falafel restaurant and a juice place where she can get fresh orange juice. Every trip also includes a visit to Yad Vashem, the Israeli Holocaust museum.

At 61 and retired, Hartigan enjoys volunteering with local Jewish organizations. Previously, she was the treasurer for the local Hadassah chapter, a Women’s Zionist group. Now she serves as treasurer for Sisterhood, an organization that fundraises for the synagogue and community’s needs.

Hartigan’s journey into Judaism fundamentally changed her life. She found faith and love, a community to embrace her and an identity to call her own.

**Sidebar or Info Box if needed**:

**Sources**: Make sure you include their Facebook pages, Twitter handles, websites etc. in addition to phone and email. Include when, where and how you interviewed the person. (By phone, email, in person; at the office, home, etc.)

Mary Hartigan

March 15, 2013, Mary’s home, in person

449-0254

maxmax@mchsi.com

Rick Diamant (husband)

March 15, 2013, Mary’s home, in person

884-1508

diamantr@umsystem.edu

Rabbi Harvey Rosenfeld

March 17, 2013, my apartment room, phone

201-287-1532

hrosenfeld@optonline.net

Babara Rosenfeld (Harvey’s wife)

March 17, 2013, my apartment room, phone

201-287-1532

[hrosenfeld@optonline.net](mailto:hrosenfeld@optonline.net)

Rick Hartigan

April 8, 2013, my apartment living room, phone

816-390-0393

[r.hartigan@sjsd.k12.mo.us](mailto:r.hartigan@sjsd.k12.mo.us)

Jon Levenson (Professor of Jewish studies, Harvard)

April 9, 2013, my apartment room, phone

617-495-5955

[jon\_levenson@harvard.edu](mailto:jon_levenson@harvard.edu)

**Documents as Sources**: (links or copies of data, reports, records; must include statistical support for your story)

* <http://urj.org/life/conversion/>
* <http://religions.pewforum.org/maps>
  + 1 percent Jewish affiliation in Missouri
  + 2 percent Jewish affiliation in U.S.
  + 6 percent Jewish affiliation in New York and New Jersey
  + 2 percent Mormon affiliation in U.S.
  + 24 percent Catholic affiliation in U.S.
  + 26 percent Evangelical Protestant affiliation in U.S.
* <http://www.ushmm.org/wlc/en/article.php?ModuleId=10005214>
  + Provided information on Dachau as the first Nazi concentration camp for political prisoners.

**Media Support**: (news articles on your general topic)

* [ITIM to court: Accept Orthodox conversions Jerusalem Post February 22, 2013 Friday](http://www.lexisnexis.com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?lni=57VD-F2X1-JDKD-P50J&csi=10911&hl=t&hv=t&hnsd=f&hns=t&hgn=t&oc=00240&perma=true)
* [Who Is a Jew? A Struggle Over Religious Identity The New York Times July 23, 2010 Friday](http://www.lexisnexis.com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?lni=800T-NWK1-2PBB-21PB&csi=6742&hl=t&hv=t&hnsd=f&hns=t&hgn=t&oc=00240&perma=true)
* [The letter that Netanyahu should, but won't, send Jerusalem Post January 25, 2013 Friday](http://www.lexisnexis.com.proxy.mul.missouri.edu/lnacui2api/api/version1/getDocCui?lni=57WG-D6B1-JDKD-P1VM&csi=10911&hl=t&hv=t&hnsd=f&hns=t&hgn=t&oc=00240&perma=true)