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HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & LEARNING CENTER

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JEWISH FEDERATION OF ST. LOUIS

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A DEPARTMENT OF THE JEWISH FEDERATION OF ST. LOUIS Holocaust survivors and descendants gathered for a group photo at the 2017 annual HMLC Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon



Front Row (Lt to Rt): George Spooner, Siegfried Adler, Szyfra Braitberg, Sofia Kent, Hilda Lebedun, David Halpern Middle Row (Lt to Rt): Gloria Feldman, Ann Lenga, Lina Melamed, Felicia Wertz, Marie Cuttler, Lory Cooper, Rachel Goldman Miller Back Row (Lt to Rt): Wally Mayer, Mimi Fiszel, Jim Lowe, Matt Berman, Bob Gummers, Vera Emmons, Margi Lenga Kahn



YOM HASHOAH P.5



SPRING/SUMMER 2017



n Memoriam



Sara Najman Wolf

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Cover photo: Taylor Wolf, Yom HaShoah, 2017. Photo courtesy of The St. Louis Jewish Light.

Upcoming Events

Rosenberg Sunday Film Series

St. Louis Premiere Karski and the Lords of Humanity Sunday, July 30, 2017 1:00 to 3:00 pm (see story on page 2)

Glickman

Introduction by Andrew Goldfeder Sunday, August 27, 2017 1:00 to 3:00 pm

I Accuse (Ich klage an) Introduction by Professor Warren

Rosenblum Sunday, September 24, 2017 1:00 to 3:00 pm

Exhibition Opening Untold Sacrifices: The St. Louis Jewish Community In World War I Sunday, November 5, 2017 1:30 pm Adult Day Care Center at the Staenberg Family Complex (see story on page 5)

Learn more at HMLC.org.



*Of Blessed Memory



From Our Chair

Our mission is to inspire those whose lives we touch to make the world a safer, kinder, more tolerant place. How do we know we are succeeding? By asking and listening.

Ninety-two percent of students surveyed tell us that learning how unchecked intolerance fueled the rise of Nazism has heightened their awareness of social injustice today.

Eighty percent of teachers say their knowledge of the Holocaust increased after a visit.

Parkway Northeast Middle School credits us for contributing to being named a National School of Character.

We have become a trusted resource in our community and beyond. We serve students in more than 100 zip codes and dozens of the entries to our annual Art & Writing Contest are from schools outside our region-as far away as California.

We are deservedly proud of our Holocaust Museum & Learning Center. And 22 years after it opened, we want to do more.

It is time to refresh, renew and modernize our Museum space. Specifics are still being discussed and the scope of the project will be determined by the amount of money raised.

As we shared earlier, renovations to the Kopolow Building, where we are housed, begin this summer and will include an elevator that will reach the Museum level, making us even more accessible. Changes to our space won't start for at least a year.

Our goal is to remain relevant, to extend our reach to include more families, organizations and "virtual" visitors through our website. As plans progress, we will keep you informed.

Educating about the causes of the Holocaust remains at the heart of what we do.

Understanding the forces that led to the largest crime in history will continue to inspire others to reject all forms of hate, intolerance, racism and bigotry.

None of this would be possible without the leadership of our outstanding professional staff - Jean Cavender, Dan Reich and Andrew Goldfeder-and the dedication of dozens of volunteer speakers, survivors and docents, many of whom serve tirelessly on committees.

Nor without our donors, whose financial backing enables us to welcome visitors free of charge and to host speakers and exhibits that attract broad and diverse community interest.

We hope you share our excitement about the Museum's next chapter. By using the lessons of the Holocaust, we inspire empathy, deepen understanding and illustrate how what happened during this tragic period in history relates to our lives today.

If you haven't been to the Museum, please plan to come soon. If it's been a while since your last visit, we look forward to seeing you again.

Sincerelv

Mvrna Mever Chair, Holocaust Museum & Learning Center



winner Nidhi Kumpati and family.

24 Teens Win in 15th Annual Holocaust Museum Art & Writing Contest

More than \$3,000 in cash prizes was awarded to 24 winners of the Holocaust Museum & Learning Center's 15th annual Art and Writing Contest at an awards ceremony Monday, May 15 in the Holocaust Museum theater in the Jewish Federation Kopolow Building.

There were nearly 850 submissions to the contest, from students in middle schools and high schools throughout the United States. Numerous awards went to submissions from Lenexa, KS and Akron, CO and submissions came from Chicago, New York City, Los Angeles and Golden, CO.

"We are thrilled to mark the 15th year of this important outreach program, which gives young people the opportunity to respond creatively to what they have learned about the Holocaust at the Museum or in their classrooms," said Rachel Katzman, chair of this year's contest. "Many of the submissions show an amazing insight into the history and lessons of the Holocaust, as well as an awareness of issues in the world around them. This important outreach program was established with the support of Dr. Ira (Of Blessed Memory) and Judy Gall, and we are so appreciative of Judy's continued participation."

As in previous years, the contest is dedicated to the memory of the 1.5 million children who perished during the Holocaust and in honor of the Galls' grandchildren.

Winning submissions are displayed in the Holocaust Museum theater and at other locations to be determined. Marla Wild served as Co-Chair for the Art & Writing Contest committee. Judges for the visual art entries were members of the arts community, David Brinker, Pam Hellwege and John Lesser. Judges for writing were Andrea Brownstein, Susan Fadem and Sandy Snodgrass.

Documentary Karski & the Lords of Humanity Premieres in St. Louis

As part of the Sunday Afternoon Film Series sponsored by Sandra and Mendel Rosenberg, the HMLC will host the St. Louis premiere of the documentary Karski & the Lords of Humanity on July 30, 2017. The showing begins at 1:00 pm and is free of charge.

This powerful documentary, interspersed with graphic animation, tells the story of Jan Karski, the Polish underground courier who traveled across occupied Europe to inform the Allied powers of Nazi war crimes against the Jews of Europe. To thwart the Holocaust, Karski carried his dreadful eyewitness report to Britain and the United States hoping it would shake the conscience of the powerful leaders, or as he would call them, the "Lords of Humanity."

The film will be introduced by Mr. Robert V. Ogrodnik, Honorary Consul Emeritus of the Republic of Poland in St. Louis from 2001 until the end of 2015, when he retired from his post.

Saint Louis Polonia Inc. is supporting this program. To reserve tickets, RSVP at 314-442-3711 or by emailing AGoldfeder@JFedSTL.org. For event information, call 314-442-3714 or email DReich@JFedSTL.org.

Exhibit Showcases U.S. Army Signal Corps Images from World War II Europe

On April 2, 2017, the HMLC opened an exhibit highlighting the role still photographers from the U.S. Army Signal Corps played in capturing images of World War II Europe. The exhibit featured hundreds of images taken by the U.S. Army Signal Corps during the war and in its immediate aftermath, with emphasis on 1944 and 1945. During World War II, U.S. Army combat camera photographers, operating as part of the U.S. Signal Corps, documented all Army operations. Since many U.S. soldiers did not carry personal cameras, the Signal Corps photos are the primary, if not only, source of U.S. Army combat images of those events. This program was generously supported by the Harlene & Marvin (Of Blessed Memory) Wool Endowment Fund and the Regional Arts Commission.



In Memoriam



Sara Najman Wolf (deceased May 12, 2017)

Sara Najman Wolf, matriarch of the Holocaust survivor community, was born in Lodz, Poland. Sara, her sisters and a cousin survived Auschwitz and Bergen Belsen. Sadly, her mother perished in Auschwitz. Sara often said that they survived because they stayed together. "If one of my sisters or my cousin got sick, the others would lift her up and help her walk."

Reconnecting with the Museum's patriarch, Leo Wolf, in a displaced person's camp they married in 1948. They created a partnership that endured close to 70 years. Together they rebuilt their lives and created a wonderful family and a thriving business. For Leo and Sara, family always came first.

Sara was at Leo's side every step of the way when he worked with Bill Kahn and Tom Green to establish our Museum in St. Louis. After surviving something as horrific as the Holocaust, Sara lived her life with good humor and grace.

Leo and Sara's legacy will live on through the generations of their family and the Holocaust Museum & Learning Center.

Lisa Hellman (deceased December 9, 2016)

Lisa was from the city of Brest-Litosk, which was in Poland during WWII but is now in Belarus. She was the youngest of five daughters and believed she was the only one to survive from her very large family until her granddaughter found a cousin living in Israel through Yad Vashem's registry.

Lisa was a blond child with blue eyes and she easily snuck out of the ghetto to find food for her family. When the ghetto they lived in was liquidated, her father and two brothers-in-law were immediately sent to the forest where they dug their own grave and were murdered.

She and her mother, grandmother and sisters went to Auschwitz. Her mother and grandmother were immediately taken to the gas chamber. She and her sisters were sent to build Birkenau. Her sisters were taken away one by one as their toes froze and got gangrene and they could no longer work. Lisa liberated herself from a train taking them to their death right before the war ended. They were let out to get some water but when she saw there was no water, she just kept walking.



Lisa is survived by one son, seven grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.



Bea Wyllie (deceased March 12, 2017)

Bea would often tell our students about how in 1938, the Nazis occupied Romania, followed by the Communists in 1943. During that time, she was repatriated to the United States, and became an American citizen living in Romania.

During the Nazi regime, the soldiers came for her, her mother and her brother one night while her maid was at the front door telling them that they were not home.

Bea was prompted by her mother to take their coats off the hangers, and they ran out through the back window and went to her aunt's home. The next day, her mother went to the Swiss Legation, which took care of all allied citizens, and told them that the soldiers had come for her family the previous evening. Someone from the Swiss Legation called the police and told them that they could not be touched, since they were American citizens.

Bea remembers enduring prejudice, the air raids–which came twice a day–and, of course, the hunger. In spite of the hardships, Bea always spoke about how fortunate she, her mother and her brother were to have survived at all. Bea told her story to thousands of students at the HMLC over many years. She was very active with the local Child Survivors and Descendants group and helped to plan programs for that organization.



Thirteen Washington University Students Dive Deep into the Study of the Holocaust

From February through April, the HMLC hosted a new exhibit called Thirteen Washington University Students and their Deep Dive into the Study of the Holocaust.

This exhibit included reflections and images from 13 Washington University students, along with faculty and staff, who traveled on a 12-day trip across Germany, Poland and Lithuania in May 2016 after a year of intensive study in Washington University's FOCUS program for first-year students. As part of their studies, the 13 students visited the HMLC, where they met Hedy Epstein (1924-2016), a local Holocaust survivor who in 1939 escaped Nazi Germany in a Kindertransport and later settled in St. Louis.

The Rubin and Gloria Feldman Family Education Institute sponsored the exhibit, which featured critical perspectives on the history, memory and representation of the Holocaust alongside video interviews and first-person reflections of the 13 students.



Washington University students Gina Vellequiette (left) and Rachel Berger participate in a panel discussion opening an exhibit at the Holocaust Museum about a yearlong class taking an in-depth look at the Holocaust. Photo: Sid Hastings / WUSTL

Remembering Tom Green

The HMLC lost a dear friend with the passing of Thomas Green on March 27, 2017. Tom was instrumental in the founding of the Museum.

Twenty two years ago, Tom believed in the importance of establishing a Holocaust Museum in our city. He, Leo Wolf and Bill Kahn worked tirelessly to raise the necessary funds to make it happen. Through the years, Tom and his wife Karole have made certain that our Museum has continued to be the outstanding learning institution that it is today. He will be missed.



Role of German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields

Dr. Wendy Lower, author of *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*, was the featured speaker at an event held at the HMLC on March 16, 2017. Dr. Lower is Acting Director of the Jack, Joseph and Morton Mandel Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies and the John K. Roth Professor of History at Claremont McKenna College. Her research and teachings focus on the history of genocide, the Holocaust, and human rights.

Drawing from wartime documents, postwar trials, private letters, diaries and interviews, the lecture focused on outstanding cases of women who became direct witnesses, accomplices and perpetrators of the Holocaust. In the colonial outposts of the Nazi East, German women were an integral part of the society of perpetrators. They enjoyed privileges as members of the new ruling elite, and they possessed extreme power over the lives of Jews and other victims of the Holocaust. Dr. Lower's presentation focused on what some of these women chose to do with this newfound power during the war and how they distorted their criminal behavior after the war.

Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields was a finalist for the National Book Award and has been translated into 23 languages. The program was supported by Devy and Jerry Goldenberg and Julia and Scott Williams in honor of Dr. Steven Lauter's retirement.

Special Thanks

A special thanks to Murray Kalina and family for underwriting the beautiful stone memorializing Gerald Gordon located in our Holocaust Museum garden. It was Mr. Kalina's special efforts that made the placement of the stone possible. We forgot to mention this in our last newsletter and we wanted to be sure they received the recognition.

HMLC Sponsors Citywide Yom HaShoah Commemoration to Remember Victims of the Holocaust



Kurt Herrmann, Liesel Aschenbrand and Fran Poger

HMLC sponsored a citywide commemoration of Yom HaShoah on April 23, 2017, at Congregation B'nai Amoona, in a tribute to the six million Jews who died during the Holocaust and to honor the survivors. Hundreds of St. Louis community members were in attendance to hear eyewitness accounts of the Shoah from witnesses, who included survivors Eva and Kenneth Wilde. The program included a traditional candle-lighting service, Holocaust Torah procession, liturgical readings and prayers, as well as a tribute to survivor and best-selling author Elie Wiesel, who passed away last summer.

Yom HaShoah corresponds annually to the historical beginning of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in 1943. In 1951, the Israeli Knesset formally established the date as the 27th day of the Jewish month of Nisan. On the solar calendar, that date falls between late April and early May. Yom HaShoah is recognized around the world as a time to remember the victims of the Holocaust, many of whose date and place of death is still unknown.

*Sara and the late Leo Wolf and family sponsored the event, which featured performances by Andrew Ruben, Mischa and Tova Braitberg of Elegant Ensembles, the son and granddaughter of survivors Szyfra and Gregor (Of Blessed Memory) Braitberg, in addition to music by Chazzan Sharon Nathanson, Alison Fox and Sarah Shulman and the St. Louis Israeli Scouts.

Annual Rubin Feldman Memorial Lecture Addresses Role American Cartoonist Played in Alerting U.S. about Nazi Genocide

Dr. Rafael Medoff served as guest presenter at this year's annual Rubin Feldman Memorial Lecture, which took place on May 8, 2017. Dr. Medoff shared compelling insights about anti-Nazi political cartoons in the American press during World War II. He recounted amazing stories of a handful of American cartoonists, including Dr. Seuss (Theodor Seuss Geisel), who tried to alert the American public about Nazi genocide.

Dr. Medoff is founding director of The David S. Wyman Institute for Holocaust Studies, which focuses on America's response to Nazism and the Holocaust. He is the author or editor of 16 books about the Holocaust and Jewish history, has authored Holocaust-related comic strips for the Washington Post, the Los Angeles Times, The New Republic, and Marvel Comics, and is co-creator and lead writer for the Disney Educational Productions animation project They Spoke Out: American Voices Against the Holocaust.

Aish St. Louis and the Rubin and Gloria Feldman Family Education Institute of the HMLC supported the lecture, after which Medoff signed copies of his new book, Cartoonists Against the Holocaust.



Untold Sacrifices Exhibit: The St. Louis Jewish Community in World War I

Untold Sacrifices: The St. Louis Jewish Community in the Great War will be open November 5-December 17, 2017 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the U.S. entering World War I. The exhibit will show the greater St. Louis community the extent of the Jewish community's involvement in the war and will honor the effort and sacrifices men and women of the Jewish community made, both at home and in military service.

In 2016, the Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) awarded a \$2,500 grant to the Jewish Federation of St. Louis in support of this project. "We would like to express our deepest thanks to the Missouri Humanities Council," said St. Louis Jewish Community Archivist Diane Everman. "The support of the MHC not only shows the importance of this original exhibit, but the funds will allow us to reach a greater audience with the untold story of the Jewish community's role in World War I."

Dr. Petra DeWitt, Assistant Professor of History at Missouri University of Science and Technology in Rolla, will provide the keynote address on the exhibit's opening day. Dr. DeWitt's lecture will begin at 1:30 pm at the Adult Day Care Center at the Staenberg Family Complex. The exhibit will be on view in the wellness center hallway on the first floor of the Staenberg Family Complex.

For more information or to RSVP, call Andrew Goldfeder at 314-442-3711 or email AGoldfeder@JFedSTL.org. The exhibit is also being underwritten by the Harlene and Marvin Wool endowment fund.



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School of Character award Myrna Meyer Devy Goldenberg Marilyn & Arnold Goldman: On the occasion of your son David's Ann & Marty Epstein

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Edward & Betty Rudolph Dan Reich Shirley Snitzer Dan Reich: Thank you for your time and efforts preparing us to be docents! 2016 HMLC New Docent Class Rabbi Carnie Rose: Refuah Shleima, thinking of you Maxine, Roark, Joseph & Samantha Weil Betty Rosenbaum's 75th Birthday Carol & Steve Latz Suzie & Bob Fuchs Carol Fox Diane & Harvey Stone Mendel Rosenberg Stephen & Darien Arnstein Martin Ruben's 90th Birthday Mark & Joy Goldfeder John Russell Jan Huneke & Josephine McDonald Raymond Sevett's Very Special Birthday Myrna & Jay Meyer Adrienne & Al Sher on the occasion of Granddaughter's Wedding Phyllis & Howard Loiterstein Sara Silverstein: We are so excited for your big wedding day! Cheri Lasky & Bridal Shower Hostesses Dr. Harold Sitrin becoming a docent at the HMLC Emily, Rob, Will & Eve Mason A Speedy & Complete **Recovery for Shirley** Snitzer HMLC Staff & Friends Nanette Stevenson Lynn Spewak Irl & Myra Solomon Jerry & Rosalie Brasch Marilyn Cohn Irl Solomon receiving the Israel Advocacy Award from Nusach Hari B'nai Zion Myrna & Jay Meyer

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Survivors, veterans and descendants: Please consider donating memorabilia relating to the Holocaust or pre-WWII life, documents, immigration papers or artifacts brought back from the war. Those crumbling papers and military souvenirs, so important to a parent or grandparent, would be a welcome addition to the HMLC's archival collection. Documents and artifacts would be respectfully preserved.

Some limitations based on size and volume. Contact Dan Reich at 314-442-3714 or DReich@JFedSTL.org for further information.

