

# Honoring Those Who Perished

Sharon Kenigsberg | Director of Community Development



Shimon Peres once said, “Six million people live on in our hearts. We are their eyes that remember.”

It is our custom at the Annual Yom HaShoah Community Observance for the Long Beach Jewish community to join together and honor the memory of those who perished. This important and very moving event will take place on **Sunday, April 11 at 2:00 pm**. This virtual event can be accessed by Zoom or Facebook Live. For details, visit [www.alpertjcc.org](http://www.alpertjcc.org).

This year’s program will be created by local college students from Long Beach Hillel at CSULB. Beach Hillel Executive Director ChayaLeah Sufrin explained, “Getting Jewish students involved in planning the memorial event is a way to ensure that programs like this continue into the future. These young adults know that it will soon be their responsibility to commemorate the Shoah and to educate the world about the horrific events of the Holocaust. We are training the future Jewish leaders how to create meaningful experiences that make a difference.”

The student committee has been hard at work creating an experience that will include music, a

greater Long Beach community. It is truly exciting to have the engagement of Hillel in this year’s event. Their participation is our insurance policy ensuring that the truth will continue to be told and retold.”

## Helping Ensure Community Observances – Gerda Seifer Yom HaShoah Fund

The Yom HaShoah Community Observance has been part of our community life for decades, largely due to the tireless work of Gerda Seifer and other Holocaust survivors and their families.

Jewish Long Beach honored Gerda by naming the Yom HaShoah Fund in her honor. The fund makes possible the annual Community Yom HaShoah Observance Program, as well as other Holocaust education activities and programs.

If you wish to continue the important work of memorializing the Holocaust, please consider a donation to the Gerda Seifer Yom HaShoah Fund. Make your tax-deductible donation payable to Jewish Long Beach and mail to 3801 East Willow Street, Long Beach, CA 90815, or call 562.426.7601 ext. 1314. To make your donation online, visit our website at [www.jewishlongbeach.org](http://www.jewishlongbeach.org).

## A Tale of Two Days of Remembrance

Many of you may have heard about International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which was commemorated on January 27, and wondered how it differs from the Yom HaShoah events, which take place this year on April 8 (our community observance is on April 11).

International Holocaust Remembrance Day is the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, when we remember those who perished and celebrate those who survived. In 2005, on the 60th anniversary of the liberation, January 27 was designated by the UN General Assembly as International Holocaust Remembrance Day for people around the world to reflect on the lessons of the Holocaust.

Yom HaShoah, the anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising which is observed after Passover, has been a day for commemorating the Holocaust since 1951. Some countries also hold their own Holocaust commemorations on other dates. But it is nonetheless an amazing accomplishment to have a worldwide, secular day dedicated to remembering the victims of the Nazis and promoting Holocaust education.

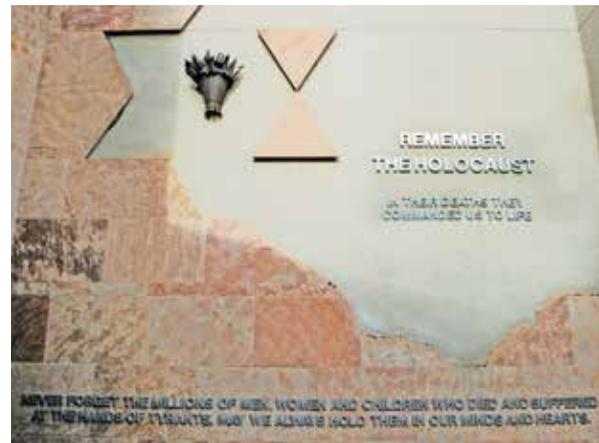
## The Federations’ Commitment

Locally, nationally and internationally we have many agencies working tirelessly to make sure that Holocaust survivors receive the dignity and care they deserve. Mark Wilf, chair of the Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) Board of Trustees recently

remarked in a letter to all federations:

*As the son and grandson of Holocaust survivors who instilled in me the critical importance of Jewish community and continuity, I am strongly committed to the cause of Holocaust education. I’m proud of the advocacy work of Federations across North America – including a grassroots effort by Holocaust survivors themselves – on behalf of the Never Again Education Act, which was signed into law in May 2020. This legislation will help ensure that the lessons of the Holocaust are taught for generations to come.*

*My special passion, though, is for remembering and caring for those survivors who are still among us. Our communities, locally and globally, work hard to ensure that Holocaust survivors receive the care they need. JFNA’s Center on Aging and Trauma, a project of our Holocaust Survivor Initiative, has served over 15,000 survivors and provided nearly 150 grants to agencies around the U.S. to develop innovations in person-centered, trauma-informed care. Through our*



Our community home, the Weinberg Jewish Long Beach campus, has two memorials that allow us to reflect and remember. The Schlesinger memorial is pictured above, the Seifer Holocaust Memorial is to the right.

brief memorial service, interviews with survivors, commemorative candlelighting and more. Members of the Jewish Community clergy will participate alongside the students in the event. There will also be a special message from Long Beach Mayor Robert Garcia.

The Alpert JCC Yom HaShoah Committee is responsible for planning the annual observance. Committee Chair Ken Schlesinger remarked, “This event is important not just to survivor families,



Yom HaShoah Committee Chair Ken Schlesinger.

but to the greater Long Beach Jewish community as a whole. We have seen dramatic increases in antisemitism both locally and nationally. We must continue to come together as a community in remembrance for ourselves and to educate the



Gerda (in front) and Harold (standing with sunglasses) Seifer along with their family.

*international partners The Jewish Agency for Israel and American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), we provide services to tens of thousands of Holocaust survivors in Israel and the former Soviet Union.* 🕊️

### Yom HaShoah Committee

- Ken Schlesinger, Chair
- Rosecarrie Brooks
- Nina Rajander
- Joan Einstein
- Harriette Ellis
- Lee Shoag
- Ariela Laibson
- Scott Newman
- ChayaLeah Sufrin, Long Beach Hillel
- Ally Levine, Long Beach Hillel
- Susan Paletz, Alpert JCC
- Dana Schneider-Chanzit, Alpert JCC
- Sharon Kenigsberg, Jewish Long Beach