BY JNS STAFF

(JNS) – Israel plans to formally reject the International Criminal Court probe into alleged war crimes perpetrated by the Israel Defense Forces against Hamas in Gaza as part of “Operation Protective Edge” in the summer of 2014, based on the fact it lacks authority over Israel, said Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on April 8.

The ICC’s intention to open an investigation was announced in March by ICC Chief Prosecutor Fatou Bensouda.

Netanyahu held discussions with Defense Minister Benny Gantz, Attorney General Avichai Mandelblit and others before the April 9 deadline to respond to the ICC, Ynet reported.

The option of Israel launching its own investigation was rejected by senior military officials, fearing that it would set a precedent and inherently recognize the jurisdiction of Bensouda, who will soon leave the position. Criminal lawyer and human-rights expert Karim Khan was elected in February to take over, and is slated to begin his nine-year term on June 16.

Netanyahu said, “It will be made clear that Israel is a country with rule of law that knows how to investigate itself,” according to Reuters. He also mentioned that Israel “completely rejects” any allegations that it carried out war crimes.

The Palestinian Authority, which requested the probe, welcomed the ICC decision.

In partnership with AJC, hundreds of U.S. mayors sign pledge to combat antisemitism

BY DEBORAH FINEBLUM

(JNS) – The world marked Yom Hashoah – Holocaust Memorial Day – on April 7-8 with attention on the 80th anniversary of a campaign against the Jews of Eastern Europe that was nothing short of mass murder.

This deadly Nazi plot would put the close and loving Jewish family to the most painful of tests. The tensile and enduring strength of the Jewish family is on full view in a new online exhibition of the 2021 Jewish Federation of Northeastern Pennsylvania Annual Campaign!

The Onset of Mass Murder: The Fate of Jewish Families in 1941.”

“Operation Barbarossa,” an organized rout of Jews; the Germans gave the locals the freedom to express their own murderous designs to grasp the idea, points out Katz. “The Germans gave them the freedom to express their own antisemitism in the most deadly way.”

The exhibition, reveals a dozen never-before-published stories of Jewish families caught in the web of the Nazis’ “Operation Barbarossa,” an organized rout of Jews; the Germans gave the locals the freedom to express their own murderous designs to grasp the idea, points out Katz. “The Germans gave them the freedom to express their own antisemitism in the most deadly way.”

Jewish families caught in the web of the Nazis’ “Operation Barbarossa,” an organized rout of Jews; the Germans gave the locals the freedom to express their own murderous designs to grasp the idea, points out Katz. “The Germans gave them the freedom to express their own antisemitism in the most deadly way.”

Yad Vashem online exhibit emphasizes the power of family

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The wedding of Zalman Jerzhsow and Luba Pilshik in Zilupe, Latvia, on December 26, 1937. (Photo courtesy of Yad Vashem)

Yad Vashem online exhibit emphasizes the power of family

By the end of 1943, more than 1.5 million Jews from the region — representing one-fifth of the six million Jews who perished during the years of the Holocaust — had been murdered. The grisly routine, repeated over and over around the region, consisted of rounding up a community’s Jews, taking them to a spot on the outskirts of town or the local Jewish cemetery, and forcing them to strip and surrender their valuables before gunning them down. They were then shoved into one of thousands of mass graves, many of which historians say have yet to be discovered. The most famous of these killing sprees was Babi Yar near Kiev on orvy Yom Kippur of 1941, where 33,771 men, women, and children were massacred.

“We want to show their faces, give their names, remember them as human beings, as part of our Jewish family,” says AJC CEO David Harris.

The statement, Mayors United Against Antisemitism: Harambee, the U.S. Conference of Mayors and the U.S. Conference of Mayors announced on March 29 that more than 255 mayors across the United States have signed a pledge or gift 2021 to combat antisemitism.

“By signing this statement, more than 255 mayors registered their opposition to the dramatic increase in antisemitism we have experienced in our country and pledged to work together to reverse it,” he said.

As part of signing the pledge, the mayors agree to condemn antisemitism in all its forms, including hatred and prejudice directed toward Jews; stereotypes or conspiracy theories about Jews; Holocaust denial or distortion; and anti-Israel animus that crosses a line to target Jews or deny the Jewish state’s right to exist. Additionally, the mayors also will support national, state and local efforts to eradicate antisemitism; reject notions that Israel’s actions can justify or excuse antisemitic acts; and affirm that a climate of mutual understanding and respect among all citizens is the bedrock of pluralistic communities.

In 2019, the Conference of Mayors adopted policy condemning the disturbing increase of violence toward individuals and institutions based on faith.

That resolution specifically condemned antisemitism.

See “Mayors” on page 5

The Onset of Mass Murder: The Fate of Jewish Families in 1941.”

Summer camps

Jewish camps get $10 million to expand enrollment and incorporate COVID protocols.

Story on page 2

Ed. for girls in Ghana

World ORT has launched a STEM project for girls in Ghana with UNESCO’s backing.

Story on page 5

nr

In partnership with AJC, hundreds of U.S. mayors sign pledge to combat antisemitism

BY JNS STAFF

(JNS) – American Jewish Committee and the U.S. Conference of Mayors announced on March 29 that more than 255 mayors across the United States have joined in a national effort to combat antisemitism.

The two organizations are calling on mayors across the country to sign a statement declaring that antisemitism is incompatible with fundamental democratic values.

“Antisemitism is a growing societal menace, it comes from multiple sources, and mayors are uniquely positioned to lead their cities in taking concerted steps to fight it,” said AJC CEO David Harris.

The statement, Mayors United Against Antisemitism, in part reads: “In a world of global communications, where anti-Semitic ideas spread rapidly, a concerted and principled response is required to raise awareness, to educate and to ensure de-cency prevails. As mayors and municipal leaders, we have a unique responsibility to speak out against the growing menace of anti-Semitism.”

Louisville Mayor Greg Fischer, president of the U.S. Conference of Mayors, said his organization has always called on mayors to speak out against hate crimes.

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Faculty fix으로 보는 캠퍼스 비행

BY MITCHELL BARD

(Chabad of Northwestern Pennsylvania) – There is a new organization being heralded as a champion of free speech that instead is a potentially dangerous group that many may help further entrench and reinforce academic negligence.

The Academic Freedom Alliance is “dedicated to protecting the rights of faculty members at colleges and universities to speak, instruct, and publish without fear of sanction or punishment... to design curricula and programs as they see fit,” according to its website.

The AFA website says, “what we defend is intellectual freedom; that advocates typically ignore the “academic” component of academic freedom and, hypocritically, apply it based on their own personal beliefs or loyalty.”

What is supposed to distinguish university research from research that is baseless claims, personal agendas or one-sided views? The main deficiency is that it is intellectually hollow and that, in the “academic” component of academic freedom and, hypocritically, apply it based on their own personal views.

It is for this group, for example, really prepared to defend whatever any professor believes to be true? How about that Blacks are better at math or that, that the homogeneity is a choice, that the IQ hypothesis is correct, that the 2020 election was rigged? We know from experience that the professors’ claims are not considered as part of the debate and the issue is whether or not they get to voice their opinions. There are lots of examples, but one that comes to mind is when Harvard University president Lawrence Bacow reprimanded two professors writing a book for discussing theories that underplayed discrimination against women and suggesting that few women were in the higher echelon of science because of “issues of intrinsic aptitude.”

When faculty members object to the views of a professor, they have no problem arguing against the university giving them a “little house.” Take the case of controversial professor Charles Murray. His views on race and immigration have been re-rejected and his opposition to government intervention to correct social problems are anathema as the “academic freedom” the “academic” component of academic freedom and, hypocritically, apply it based on their own personal beliefs or loyalty. That is the case for the University of Michigan where Avi Fisher, a professor at the College, faculty objected to the president introducing him: “Rather than lend legitimacy to this event, we respectfully request that the university reconsider any plans that are intellectually open and culturally diverse, but one that does not fall prey to the idea that it is the university’s job to defend partisan propaganda in the guise of “public scholarship.”

Put simply, the campus must be open to everyone and every thought with whom they disagree. If peddling partisan propaganda is the litmus test, then much of the Middle East studies field teaching about the non-existent country of “Palestine” should be disqualified from the classroom. Many of these free-speech advocates are quick to defend their views are attacked, but happy to engage in their own self-appointed borderlands. Professors who want to express what they believe to be true have the First Amendment right to speak on the street corner, but should not be allowed to pontificate in the classroom.

Faculty may object to outside pressure, but, as in the case of police departments, as a result of the unwillingness to discipline themselves.

The last week we need is an organization of faculty foxes guarding the university henhouse.

Mitchell Bard is a foreign-policy analyst and an authority on U.S.-Israel relations who has written and edited 22 books, including “The Arab Lobby, Death to the Infidels: Radical Islam’s War Against the Jews” and “After Anavestaka: Tveye in Palestine.”

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Celebrating Israel Day at Camp Yavneh in New Hampshire (Photo courtesy Camp Yavneh via Facebook)
The Yiddish Book Center will hold the virtual event “2021 Me-May is Jewish American Heritage Month.” Information for the above organizations for the Humanities, the National Park Service and a variety of exhibits and documents from the Library of Congress can be found at https://ajhs.org/programs.

The American Jewish Historical Society will present a virtual lecture “Israel in Black & White: The Centrality of Judaism for the Jewish Museum” on Tuesdays, May 4, 11 and 25, from 7-8:30 pm. Among the sites to be visited at the JCC of Manhattan, Congregations B’nai Jeshurun and Rodeph Sholom, Lincoln Square Synagogue, the Society for the Advancement of Judaism and the Jewish Center. For more information or to register, visit https://www.museumwonders.org/event-log/jewish-upper-west-side-virtual-talk-on-zoom.

The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual program “Contextualizing the Jewish Orphan Experience: Bernice Lerner’s ‘All the Horrors of War’ and Marlene Trestman’s ‘Most Fortunate Unfortunates’” on Monday, May 10, at 4 pm. For more information or to register, visit https://programs.cjh.org/event/contextualizing-2021-05-10.

The Pardes Summer Program will be held virtually this year. There will be two sessions: July 12-22 and July 26-August 5. The program will include the study of Talmud, Bible and Jewish thought, and seek to read and analyze classic Jewish texts to explore their relevance.

Students age 19 and older from all Jewish educational backgrounds are welcome. To register interest in the summer program and receive more information, visit www.pardes.org.il/program/shortterm/summer-program.

The Jewish Museum will hold a three-part class titled “Scenes from the Collection: Exploring Identity at the Jewish Museum” on Tuesdays, May 4, 11 and 25, from 2-3 pm. The classes will discuss 19th and 20th century painting, contemporary photography and sculpture, and broader themes of immigration and identity within the Jewish community. For more information or to register, visit https://thejewishmuseum.org/calendar/events/2021-05-04/art-in-context-may-2021.

For additional resources, see previous issues of The Reporter on its website, www.thereportergroup.org.

Jewish online resources

### By Reporter Staff

A variety of Jewish groups are offering educational and recreational online resources. Below is a sampling of those. The Reporter will publish additional listings as they become available.

- HUC Connect 2021 will hold several virtual classes and lectures in April and May, including “Transcendent Melodies: Exploring the Music and Cultural Context of Ishay Ribo” on Tuesday, April 20, at 6 pm; “The Presidents, the Press, and American Jewry” on Tuesday, April 27, at 4 pm; “Intersectional Jewish Identities” on Thursday, May 13, at 1 pm; “Reflections on the Significance of Holocaust Memory in the 21st Century” on Thursday, April 15, at 3 pm; “Every Book Has a Story: The Story of Alpha Betah of Ben Sira” on Thursday, May 20, at 1 pm; and “The World of the Cairo Genizah: The Jews of Medieval Islam” on Tuesday, April 27, at 6 pm.

- For more information or to register, visit https://huc.edu/huc-connect/huc-connect-2021.

- Tablet Magazine now offers a digital recipe box at www.tabletma.com/recipes. The box can be searched by dish, diet or holiday.

- The Jewish Theological Seminary will hold the virtual event “Dangerous Religious Ideas: The Deep Roots of Self-Critical Faith in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam” with Rabbi Dr. Rachel S. Mikva on Monday, April 26, at 7:30 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.jsfa.edu/dangerous-religious-ideas.

- The Center for Jewish History will hold a “A Tradition of Talent: Jewish Opera Singers and Patterns that Shaped Their Careers,” featuring Samantha M. Cooper, on Wednesday, May 5, at 4 pm. For more information or to register, visit https://programs.cjh.org/event/tradition-of-talent-2021-05-05.

- The Yiddish Book Center will host the virtual event “The Dead Man” by Sholem Asch, translated by Carole O’Brien, with Asch’s play as a radio drama, on Sunday, April 25, at 7 pm. For more information or to register, visit www.yiddishbookcenter.org/events-and-store/virtual-public-programs-calendar.

- The event “Virtual Unpacking the Book: Rachel Bloom and Tovah Feldshuh—a conversation” will take place on Thursday, April 29, from 7-8 pm; on Zoom; the two women will discuss humor, family and writing. For more information or to register, the event www.jewish-bookcouncil.org/events/virtual-unpacking-the-book-rachel-bloom-and-tovah-feldshuh-a-conversation.

- The Lower East Side Jewish Conservancy will hold a #SoundtheCall for Climate Change program “An Evening of Reflection” with Rabbi Dr. Rachel S. Mikva on Tuesday, April 20, from 7-8:30 pm. Among the sites to be visited at the JCC of Manhattan, Congregations B’nai Jeshurun and Rodeph Sholom, Lincoln Square Synagogue, the Society for the Advancement of Judaism and the Jewish Center. For more information or to register, visit www.nycjewishwonders.org/event-log/jewish-upper-west-side-virtual-talk-on-zoom.

- The Jewish Museum will hold a virtual “Book Talk: The Soul of Judaism-Jews of African Descent” with author Dr. Bruce D. Haynes on Thursday, April 22, for Earth Day. For more information or to register, visit https://chel-bloom-and-tovah-feldshuh-a-conversation.

- The Center for Jewish History will hold the virtual program “Clinicalizing the Jewish Orphan Experience: Bernice Lerner’s ‘All the Horrors of War’ and Marlene Trestman’s ‘Most Fortunate Unfortunates’” on Monday, May 10, at 4 pm. For more information or to register, visit https://programs.cjh.org/event/contextualizing-2021-05-10.

- The Parades Summer Program will be held virtually this year. There will be two sessions: July 12-22 and July 26-August 5. The program will include the study of Talmud, Bible and Jewish thought, and seek to read and analyze classic Jewish texts to explore their relevance.

- Students age 19 and older from all Jewish educational backgrounds are welcome. To register interest in the summer program and receive more information, visit www.pardes.org.il/program/shortterm/summer-program.

- Judy Batalion, author of “The Light of Days: The Untold Story of Women Resistance Fighters in Hitler’s Ghettos,” is holding virtual speaking events in April, May and June. For information about specific events, visit www.judymbatilon.com/events.

- You can purchase your gift by adding the JEWISH FEDERATION OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA to your will, or by making the Federation a beneficiary of your IRA. All contributions to establish a PACE are tax deductible.

### Deadline

The following are deadlines for all articles and photos for upcoming Reporter issues:

**DEADLINE**

**ISSUE**

Thursday, April 15 ................. April 29
Thursday, April 29 .................. May 13
Tuesday, May 11, early .......... May 27
Thursday, May 27 .................. June 10

**Your gift to the Annual Campaign \DOES A WORLD OF GOOD\**

Endowing your gift allows you to be there for the Jewish community of NEPA forever.

A Perpetual Annual Campaign Endowment (PACE) is a permanent fund that endows your Jewish community Annual Campaign gift as a lasting legacy. A PACE fund will continue to make an annual gift in perpetuity on your behalf.

To determine the amount you need to endow your entire campaign gift, multiply your current annual gift by 20.

You can fund your PACE by adding the JEWISH FEDERATION OF NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA to your will, or by making the Federation a beneficiary of your IRA. All contributions to establish a PACE are tax deductible.

**Let your name be remembered as a blessing.**

Endowments can be created through a variety of vehicles, some of which do not necessitate funding during your lifetime yet still provide your estate with considerable tax benefits. They also enable you to perpetuate your commitment to the Annual Campaign in a way that best achieves your own personal financial and estate planning goals.

**Examples Of Ways To Fund Your PACE Are:**

- outright contribution of cash, appreciated securities or other long-term capital gain property such as real estate
- charitable remainder trust
- charitable lead trust
- gift of IRA or pension plan assets
- grant from your foundation
- reserved life estate in your residence
- bequest

Using appreciated property, such as securities or real estate, allows you the opportunity to eliminate the income tax on the long-term capital gain, will in some instances generate a full income tax charitable deduction and will remove those assets from your estate for estate tax purposes.

For more information contact Mark Silverberg at Mark.Silverberg@jewishnepa.org or call 570-961-2300, ext. 1.
Archeologists discover evidence medieval Jews in Britain kept kosher

BY NAAMA BARAK
(Israel21C via JNS) – Archaeologists have discovered the first evidence that Jews living in England in the 12th and 13th centuries observed Jewish dietary laws, reported The Jewish Chronicle on March 25.

The findings revealed that week are from a 2016 project on the site of demolished shops that overlapped Oxford’s old Jewish quarter. A team of archeologists was digging at a centuries-old outhouse and an area where waste materials were dumped when they made the discovery.

Julie Dunne, a biomolecular archaeologist at Bristol University who worked on the project, said that 171 animal bones were found at the site – 136 were from poultry, and there were no bones from non-kosher food, such as pigs or shellfish.

More than 2,000 fragments of ceramic cooking vessels were also discovered. Using organic residue analysis, archeologists identified the kinds of fats that were absorbed into the pottery and sealed in it through constant use. There were no traces of non-kosher fats in the pottery, and no evidence of meat and milk being used in the same vessels, wrote the Chronicle.

According to Dunne, this is also “the first time a religious dietary signature has been identified using pottery fragments.”

“The opportunity to search the excavation site almost did not happen because commercial developers were nearly complete in gaining planning permission to build over the area, said the newspaper. Only after intervention by historians Pam Manix and Evie Kemp, members of the Oxford Jewish Heritage Committee, was development of the site put on pause for four months so that archaeologists could excavate the area.”

THE REPORTER ■ APRIL 15, 2021

Jerusalem’s archeological tunneling efforts win top award

BY JNS STAFF
(Israel21C via JNS) – Jerusalem’s Old City can now add another global feather to its cap: The archeological tunneling to explore and excavate its history has just won worldwide recognition by the International Tunneling and Underground Space Association (or ITA).

Coming in at first place in the “Oddities of the Underground” category in the ITA’s sixth annual contest, the Old City digs were noted as “Tunneling in the service of archaeology,” and beat Norway’s Spiral Tunnel (Drammen) to the top spot.

“The sensitive environment demands great dexterity and flexibility. Unexpected finds can lead to sudden changes in the direction of excavation, often accompanied by low overburden heights and difficult ground conditions,” the ITA says of the Jerusalem digs.

“Due to site complexity derived from small excavation area and risks of shallow tunneling in urban area, special excavation technologies are executed, such as custom-made drill machines adapted to small spaces,” it added. “In addition to that, special measures are to be taken in order to consider the archeological findings and to protect them during excavation. Unlike conventional excavation in which the muck is being moved away, the nature of this project is to keep the muck for further research by scientists.”

Winners in other categories focused on construction and railroads, such as the Sydney Metro City and Southwest Project in Australia, and the Chengdu-Guizhou High-Speed Railway in China. The Young Tunneller of the Year was Josh Barry from Australia.

Overall, the online competition received 52 entries from 23 countries. This article was first published by Israel21C.

Tool pre-dating modern humans identified in northern Israel

BY DANIEL SIRYOTI
(Israel21C via JNS) – The oldest tool identified to date, found in northern Israel, was revealed by a group of academics at the University of Haifa to have been used by hominids before the advent of modern humans.

In an article in the Journal of Human Evolution, Dr. Ron Shemesh, Prof. Iris Groman-Yoslavski, Professor Mira Weinstein-Evron and Professor Danny Rosenberg – all from the university’s Zinman Institute of Archaeology – described the artifact as a round dolomite grinding tool identified to date, found in northern Israel, was revealed by a group of academics at the University of Haifa to have been used by hominids before the advent of modern humans.

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World ORT launches STEM project for girls in Ghana, backed by UNESCO

BY JNS STAFF

World ORT is leading an innovative training project in Ghana to promote computer courses led by women for young girls. Backed by a UNESCO grant, the Women STEM Trainers program in the coastal town of Elmina will bring in to aid the younger learners, receiving college credits and internship experiences in return. The courses will utilize a range of online learning programs, such as E-Learning for Kids, Duolingo and Coding for Kids.

The project is also backed by the Nduom Group and Coconut Grove Hotel, whose philanthropic and operational support ensure the Nduom Community Library’s continued operation.

Elmina, in the central region of Ghana, has a population of around 35,000. It is marked by widespread poverty with many children not attending school or completing their education, moving instead into income-generating activities such as fishing or salt-mining. Even with low numbers of secondary-school students, there are not enough classrooms to accommodate all those who do attend, so schools operate in shifts.

AJC-USCM initiative comes as incidents of antisemitism that are contradictory to the values that define the people of the United States.”

The AJC-USCM initiative comes as incidents of antisemitism, some of them violent, continue to rise across the United States, confirmed in FBI reports and AJC public-opinion surveys. American Jews, who make up less than 2 percent of the U.S. population, were the victims of 60.2 percent of anti-religious hate crimes, according to the FBI 2019 Hate Crimes Statistics report.

AJC’s 2020 State of Antisemitism in America report found that 88 percent of Jews considered antisemitism a problem today in the United States, 35 percent had personally been victims of antisemitism over the past five years, and 31 percent had taken measures to conceal their Jewishness in public.

Continued from page 1

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Mayors... Continued from page 1

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Continued from page 1

“antisemitic acts and statements as hateful expressions of intolerance that are contradictory to the values that define the people of the United States.”

The AJC-USCM initiative comes as incidents of antisemitism, some of them violent, continue to rise across the United States, confirmed in FBI reports and AJC public-opinion surveys.

American Jews, who make up less than 2 percent of the U.S. population, were the victims of 60.2 percent of anti-religious hate crimes, according to the FBI 2019 Hate Crimes Statistics report.

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The isolation imposed upon us

BY RABBI PEG KERESHENBAUM, B’NAI HARIM
Tzara’/Metzorah, Leviticus 12:1-15:33
Tzara’/Metzorah are joined this year, as they often are, because it allows us to trace the earliest origins of the serious plague that afflicted people, clothing, objects and houses – and from the relatively mild cases of tum’ah – ritual impurity contracted after childbirth, menstruation or seminal emissions – to the isolation imposed upon those bearing the pollution. Imagine the first case: that of a woman who has given birth. Although she may be free of impurity in time for a newborn son’s brit milah, she won’t be able to rejoin her community for much longer if she bears a daughter. I know how I felt having my first child when my mother came to visit me in the hospital to hold her grandchild and me. And I remember how upset my mother-in-law was not to be there because of a fire in her home on the same day! We craved the shared joy and support of family and friends at such times.

Now we all can tell stories of missing hugs, births and birthdays, weddings, even funerals. We, like those afflicted with tzara’at, wear masks and physically distance ourselves, and we, like those bearing the affliction, have a little over 300 daily COVID cases. This is a very significant decline. Most of the localities in Israel have low morbidity. Meanwhile, there are almost no significant virus concentrations and no hotspots at all,” said Alroy-Preis, according to Ynet. The health official said that this would allow the further opening of the economy, as well as events such as weddings and concerts. She attributed this success to “the ancient stone was uprooted and ground of soft materials, although we do not yet know which ones exactly,” said Groiman Yosevski. This article first appeared in Israel Hayom.
Six of the Bernstein siblings, photo taken in Ylakiai, Lithuania, February 1953. Top row (l-r): Aye-Leb, Ida and Ben Zion. Bottom row: Rivka, Menachem and Hinda. They were all murdered in the Holocaust except for Ida, who immigrated to Erets Israel ( Mandatory Palestine) on February 5, 1953, taking this photo with her. (Photo courtesy of Yad Vashem)

by the Germans when their ship was stranded in Yugoslavia.

With so many men taken to work in forced labor camps, much of the family's life-and-death decision-making fell squarely on the women. "It was a time when the job of the women became enlarged, they had to be the ones to keep their families alive and ensure that Judaism would continue," says Rebbetzin Esther Farbstein, an Israeli historian who founded and directs the Center for Holocaust Studies at Michalalah–Jerusalem College and is author of "Hidden in Thunder: Perspectives on Faith, Halachah and Leadership during the Holocaust.

"Where did their hope and strength come from in such a horrible place? How did they do it?" she asks. By keeping their traditions as best they could, she says – by lighting candles on Friday nights and saying the candle-lighting blessing over them, by fasting on Tisha B'Av even when they knew they didn't have to – by "by keeping pictures of their past in their minds and envisioning meeting their loved ones again and going home together when all this was over."

In a trial by fire that forged strong women, enriching those who survived with knowledge well beyond the generations of Jewish women before them, empowering them to teach and transmit Jewish tradition to their children and communities.

This doesn't surprise historian Katz. "All the jokes made about Jewish mothers don't recognize the truth," she says. "The Jewish mother has made the survival of the Jewish people possible. In fact, more than anything, since the destruction of the Second Temple – when we had no temple and no state anymore – the rabbi knew the Jewish home would be the key to our survival."

Tragically, there were times when family love and loyalty actually cost lives. The exhibition features the invitation and group photo for the wedding of Zalman Bernshten and Luba Pilschik on December 26, 1937. Four years later, all the Jews of their hometown of Zilupe, Latvia, including this photo, were ordered into the market square. From there, they were taken out of town and shot by members of the local home-guard militia. On the way to the killing fields, Zalman, with his wife and two small sons, was recognized by a local policeman with whom he'd served in the Latvian army who offered to pull him out of line and save his life. A member of the militia reported that Zalman refused, saying he would remain with his family and the others, including his brother Yisrael and his family. Within minutes of that fateful decision, they were all dead.

"Stay together," my mother said. We wanted to stay together, like everyone else," Nobel Prize-winning author and human-rights advocate Elie Wiesel wrote in "All Rivers Run to the Sea. "Family unity is one of our important traditions – and this was the essential thing – families would remain together. And we believed it. So it was that the strength of our family tie, which had contributed to

Check out the Federation's new, updated website at www.jewishnepa.org or find it on Facebook
From JNS.org

The Undergraduate Student Government at the University of Iowa passed a bill on April 6 to establish a Jewish constituency senator who will begin in the fall semester, reported the student-run publication The Daily Iowan. The legislation was first rejected on March 24 but brought back for a vote after Jewish students caused an uproar over the need for representation in student government. It passed with 95 percent voting “yes” on April 6. “At its core, this is anti-discrimination legislation,” said Sen. Prakruti Pancholi while introducing the legislation. “It’s our job as USG to condemn all forms of discrimination on campus that undergraduate students face.” The original bill was amended to include the working definition of antisemitism by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance. Another modification, proposed by Pancholi, moved the implementation of the new position from the 2022-23 school year to the current academic year so that a Jewish constituency senator will take office by the fall semester. The Jewish constituency senator will be appointed by the school’s Hillel. Mollie Chez, the president of Iowa’s Hillel, said there will be an internal election for the position.

Exhibit 2. ............. Continued from page 7

the survival of our people for centuries, became a tool in the exterminator’s hands.” But 80 years later, the Jewish family lives on. “When I think of the power of family,” says curator Kobo, “I can’t help but remember my mother, who survived the Holocaust and told me before she died that the proudest moment of her life had been when I joined the Israel Defense Forces. ‘Now we’re no longer powerless anywhere,’ she said. ‘And my daughter is one of the soldiers protecting us.’”

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