

MIAMI-DADE JEWISH NEWS

Community assists Holocaust survivors, plans Yom HaShoah commemorations

By Sergio Carmona

Jewish Journal • Apr 15, 2022 at 2:02 pm



Randy Colman, president and CEO of Goodman Jewish Family Services of Broward County, delivers kosher Passover Seder food to Moshe and Sofia Vorona, Ukrainian Holocaust survivors, as their son, Vladimir, watches. (Susan Stocker / South Florida Sun Sentinel)

With *Yom HaShoah* (Holocaust Remembrance Day) taking place from April 27-28 this year, South Florida Jewish organizations are emphasizing the importance of caring for survivors, remembering them and carrying on their legacies.

The **Miami Beach Holocaust Memorial**, a Committee of the Greater Miami Jewish Federation, hosts a community observance of *Yom HaShoah* at 6 p.m. on May 1. Attendees can attend the event in-person at the Memorial, 1933-1945 Meridian Ave in Miami Beach, or view it online at jewishmiami.org/yomhashoah.



With the Holocaust survivor population dwindling due to age, Sidney Pertnoy, the Holocaust Memorial's chair, said, "There will be survivors at the *Yom HaShoah* observance, so we need to show them that we are committed to preserving their memories through education about the Holocaust."

"We hope it will be meaningful for the survivors, and we hope it will be meaningful for people who choose to remember," Pertnoy continued.

Holocaust survivor Allan Hall will be the event's keynote speaker. Hall, who lives in Miami Beach, is the brother of the late-Andrew Hall, Pertnoy's predecessor as chair of the Memorial. He will speak about his family's escape from Krakow.

When asked what he hopes attendees can take away from his story, Hall responded, "Whether you're Christian, Jewish or Muslim, be aware, it [Holocaust] can happen anywhere at anytime to anyone."

Hall said, regarding the importance of younger generations hearing his and other survivors' stories, "Those who don't learn history or don't remember it are destined to repeat it."

The program also will feature prayers led by local clergy, music by cantors, a candle lighting by Holocaust survivors and other elements.

People who attend the event should park at the garage on 17th St. off Meridian Ave.

Congregation Shaarei Kodesh in Boca Raton will dedicate a new Torah scroll that was saved from Europe after the Holocaust during its *Yom HaShoah* program at 7 p.m. on April 27. Guest speaker will be Irving Berkowitz, dean of academic affairs for Palm Beach State College, and Palm Beach County Commissioner Bob Weinroth is expected to be in attendance and speak as well. Congregants who are children and grandchildren of Holocaust survivors will also be honored. Visit shaareikodesh.org for more information on the event, including registration.

The **Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies'** national online commemorative service of *Yom HaShoah* at noon on April 28 will include participation from South Florida Jewish agencies. Event will feature a candle-lighting ceremony in memory of victims and survivors of the Holocaust as well as a presentation by keynote speaker, historian and author Wendy Lower. Visit facebook.com/NJHSA for more information.





Moshe and Sofia Vorona, Ukrainian Holocaust survivors, receive a kosher Passover Seder meal from Bernice Weissbart-Frank of Goodman Jewish Family Services of Broward County. (Susan Stocker / South Florida Sun Sentinel)

A local organization participating in the service is **Goodman Jewish Family Services of Broward County**, which showed its commitment to local survivors for Passover. In celebration of the holiday, Goodman JFS delivered 650 kosher seder meals to Holocaust survivors throughout Broward.

Randy Colman, president and CEO of Goodman JFS, said, “As our Holocaust survivor population continues to age, the need to care for them emotionally, socially and financially continues to grow.”

“Assisting survivors overcome challenges like social isolation, food insecurity and the need for medical attention continue to be of the utmost importance to us,” Colman continued. “These individuals have suffered enough for one lifetime. It is our priority to lighten their burden. Whether that be a special holiday gift delivery or providing financial support for dental treatments or necessary home improvements, it is our honor and responsibility as an organization to do it.”

Colman delivered a kosher seder meal and gift bag containing traditional Passover meal essentials to Ukrainian Holocaust survivors Moshe and Sofia Vorona at their home in Hollywood.





Sofia Vorona, 87, a Ukrainian Holocaust survivor, receives a kosher Seder meal for Passover from Goodman Jewish Family Services' Bernice Weissbart-Frank, Rami Spiegel and CEO Randy Colman. (Susan Stocker / South Florida Sun Sentinel)

Vladimir Vorona, son of Moshe and Sofia, said, "To my parents, the Passover meal delivery was an extremely important event."

"They said it was one of the best and most memorable moments in their lives, not only because of its material value, which is important, but because it shows that they are not forgotten, and they are important not only to their family, but also to people and organizations that keep the chain of Judaism strong and unbreakable," he continued.

With *Yom HaShoah* coming up, Vorona said, "There is nothing more important than teaching the younger generations about the tragedy of the Holocaust."

"Every day there are less and less Holocaust survivors remaining and soon we will be left with only the memories of what happened 80 years ago," he continued. "These memories and stories must be preserved and retold in order to prevent it in the future. Unfortunately, what is happening today in Ukraine is all too similar to the unthinkable acts of Nazi Germany during World War II."

Visit [jfsbroward.org](https://www.jfsbroward.org) for more information on the agency.



More than 500 volunteers delivered Passover food and personal hygiene baskets to 650 Holocaust survivors and other homebound seniors throughout Miami-Dade County during **Jewish Community Services of South Florida's annual Matzah Mitzvah event.**

Miriam Singer, JCS' president and CEO, said, "This event is especially timely with *Yom HaShoah* upon us, as we continue to support and care for our community's Holocaust survivors."

Visit <https://jcsfl.org/matzah-mitzvah-donate/> for more information.

Contact other local organizations for information on their assistance to Holocaust survivors and other possible *Yom HaShoah* events.

