Lighting the fifth candle in memory of those who survived and died in the Holocaust are Laurel Reza and her grandfather, Jack Gun, of West Bloomfield, during a past Yom HaShoah Commemoration Day event at the Holocaust Memorial Center.

'A salute to their lives'  

BY SHERRI KO LAD

FARMINGTON HILLS — Eli Mayerfeld knows how powerful memories are, especially if they are kept alive.

The Holocaust Memorial Center's executive director said that memories are such an integral part of honoring Holocaust victims that it’s the HMC’s middle name: memorial.

The Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus, 28123 Orchard Lake Road, will host a free event

HMC Yom HaShoah event recognizes Holocaust victims

at 2 p.m. April 23, known as Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom HaShoah.

The event will feature several readings, a candle lighting by local survivors, and a reading of the names of individuals lost in the Holocaust.

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Mayerfeld said that there are about 4.5 million names recorded of Holocaust victims — out of the 6 million total who died.

"I'm sure we won't even be reading a quarter of them," due to time constraints, he said. "Every name deserves to be remembered; each one of the 6 million is an individual."

He added that the event is a platform to provide an opportunity to memorialize the people who were lost during the Holocaust.

"And those who survived the Holocaust," Mayerfeld said, "the point of the day, our mission — obvious from our name — is the basic act of remembering."

The annual communitywide Holocaust Remembrance Day commemoration is part of the national observance of the Umtro Every Person There Is a Name ceremony, according to a press release.

A Postcard from the Jewish War Veterans, Department of Michigan, will also be featured.

According to a press release, this year's commemoration will feature free museum admission 1-5 p.m. that day and complimentary valet parking.

Mayerfeld said the HMC has hosted the program for more than 30 years.

Sarah Saltzman, manager of events at the HMC, said the guests who attend the commemoration always look forward to the candle lighting portion.

"We have survivors and their families who are asked to light a candle to remember and honor the 6 million Jews who perished — but also to remember those who survived," she said. "And we think about those ... who have come to America and have built their lives here, and so it is really an important part of the commemoration."

Mayerfeld said that the Day of Remembrance honors those who survived and those who perished.

"[It's] a salute to their lives," he said.

For more information, call Laura Williams at (248) 536-9065 or go to www.holocaustcenter.org.

Volunteers who are interested in participating in the national observance of the Umtro Every Person There Is a Name with 15-minute increments of reading Holocaust victim's names 10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m. should email laura.williams@holocaustcenter.org.

Call staff/Writers Sherri Kolade at (586) 936-1916.

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ABOVE: Oakland University students Kara Sutter and Jessica Sheenka look at art by Samuel Prochov at the Holocaust Memorial Center. LEFT: During a past Holocaust Remembrance Day, Guy Stern, director of the Farmington Hills-based International Institute of the Righteous at the Holocaust Memorial Center, speaks to the crowd.

File photos by Donna Agans

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