

Politicians remember Holocaust history

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**Governor, mayor declare
Sunday through May 8
days of remembrance.**

By Cara Froedge

State and local leaders proclaimed next week throughout Wyoming and Jackson Hole as a time to remember Holocaust victims.

Gov. Dave Freudenthal and Jackson Mayor Mark Barron both issued proclamations to remember victims of the World War II genocide in which millions of Jews were killed. Both leaders declared a weeklong remembrance, already recognized nationally and in most states, to begin Sunday and run through May 8.

"We're delighted the governor and the mayor were both glad to acknowledge the Holocaust and remember those days," said Victoria H. Hess, executive director of the Jackson Hole Jewish Community. "I think any proclamation like this helps to bring future awareness to some of the genocides that have affected the world, the Holocaust only being one of those."

During the Holocaust, six million Jews were murdered by Nazi soldiers as part of a systematic program of genocide during 1933 and 1945, the governor's proclamation states.

His proclamation states the Holocaust offers an opportunity to reflect upon the moral responsibilities of individuals, societies and governments.

"The people of the state of Wyoming should always remember the terrible events of the Holocaust and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution and tyranny," the proclamation states.

Freudenthal's proclamation urges

state residents to fight for individual freedoms and respect for all people.

Mayor Barron's similar proclamation asks town residents to observe the week of remembrance.

"This is a time when we remember with great sadness the Nazi war crimes perpetrated against the Jewish people and the attempted genocide of the entire race," Barron's proclamation states.

It also states that residents should honor individuals who risked their own lives to protect the Jewish people, especially following the death of Catholic Pope John Paul II, who supported the Jewish people.

"These days of remembrance ... are an effort to remind the world what can happen when a dictator or a group of people, seeing their race as superior, chooses to take away the right, property and lives of others," Barron's proclamation states.

Hess said the organization, which has about 100 single and family memberships in Teton County, is pleased with the proclamations.

In honor of the week, the Jewish Community donated several documentary films to valley schools to use in the World War II curriculums and to keep in school libraries.

The films also will be available to all of the local churches, Hess said.

Jackson Hole Jewish Community is hosting a showing of the film *Choosing One's Way: Resistance in Auschwitz/Birkenau* at 7 p.m. on May 26 at Teton County Library. A discussion will follow.

"The Holocaust is not about religion," Hess said. "The Holocaust is about an atrocity that was perpetuated on the world just as any genocide is."