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# Press Release

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## **Survivor of “*Voyage of the Damned*” To Speak At Holocaust “Days Of Remembrance” Event**

### **Denied asylum, Jewish passengers returned to an unknown fate in Europe**

**Prescott , AZ** - A full house is expected at the Yavapai College Performance Hall Monday, April 20<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 P.M., when Liesl Joseph Loeb speaks at the Greater Prescott Days of Remembrance Event – a commemorative ceremony to remember those who perished during the Nazi reign of terror from 1933 until 1945. Ms. Loeb is one of the few remaining survivors of the perilous sailing seventy years ago, in May 1939, of the M.S. St. Louis.

In the late 1930's, escalating Nazi persecution led many German Jews to seek refuge in more tolerant countries. That was no easy task, and perhaps no story from the Holocaust illustrates the hopeless plight of Jews fleeing Hitler's terror better than the voyage of the M.S. St. Louis. In April of 1939, Germany's Hamburg- America Line announced a special voyage to Havana, Cuba on the luxury liner St. Louis. Most of the 937 tickets sold were purchased by German Jews desperate to leave Germany, but these fugitives did not know that the landing permits they had purchased to enter Cuba were invalid. Upon their arrival in Cuba, the refugees discovered they were as unwanted abroad as they were in Germany. Denied entry into Cuba, the St. Louis sailed to Miami hoping that the United States would allow the passengers to enter, but the U.S. State Department refused to intervene on behalf of the passengers and the Coast Guard denied the St. Louis entry into U.S. waters. The passengers of the St. Louis were turned back to an unknown fate in Europe.

What happened to the Jewish passengers? Did they find safety on their return to Europe or become victims of Hitler's death camps? The answers will come from Ms. Loeb's personal memories, as seen through the eyes of a ten-year-old child passenger and daughter of the chairman of the St. Louis passenger committee. Ms. Loeb provides details about the voyage lost in the history books.

Other speakers throughout the evening will include; Holocaust Scholar and Professor of History at the University of Arizona, Leonard Dinnerstein, Ph.D., Rabbi Billy Berkowitz of Temple B'rith Shalom, Reverend Dan Spencer of Granite Peak Unitarian Church, and Pastor Lee Wiggins of Heights Church. Sponsors of the event are Yavapai College and Foundation, Helken & Horn Advertising Agency, Cable One, Arizona Hometown Radio Group, Temple B'rith Shalom, and Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Prescott. The event is free to the public and seating is open with no tickets required. For further information contact the Jewish Community Foundation of Greater Prescott at 717 – 0016.

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