



VENTURING INTO OUR PAST

NEWSLETTER OF THE JEWISH GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
OF THE CONEJO VALLEY AND VENTURA COUNTY (JGSCV)

Volume 6, Issue 5

February, 2011

President's Letter:

Our January meeting was a display of the extraordinary talent of our members. Six JGSCV members who published genealogically relevant books talked about their adventures in writing and telling their stories. We heard about mystery, treason, harrowing tales of escaping the holocaust, researching techniques, publishing options and more . . . all important discussion items for those of us who would also like to publish our family stories and learn about researching techniques. We are privileged to have such talented members!



Sara Borczuk Applebaum (left) related her story of family fleeing the holocaust, immigrating to the US and how she discovered the answers to what happened. *Lost and Found: A Family Memoir*

Warren Blatt; A book on techniques and resources for doing Jewish Genealogy. *Getting Started in Jewish Genealogy* (Original version- co-authored with Gary Mokotoff)

Werner Frank researched his multi-generational family history on the German-Jewish experience going back 800 years including the impact of the holocaust. *Legacy: The Saga of a German-Jewish Family Over Time and Circumstance*

Erica Miller, Ph.D (right) took us from her childhood in Romania, to her life under a brutal Nazi regime, her emigration to Israel, to her eventual emergence as a dedicated mental health professional in America.

The Dr. Erica Miller Story: From Trauma to Triumph



Helene Rosen created a family book for her children with copies of family photographs. Any one can use this technique for their family photographs! *Our Family in Pictures*

Mark Abbott Stern (left) wrote a biography of a US colonial Jewish businessman, David Franks, from his beginnings in a prominent Jewish family to his trials for treason and his exile in the post revolutionary period. *David Franks; Colonial Merchant*

(More photos from the meeting on page 6)



If you haven't renewed or joined JGSCV yet, a membership/renewal application form is on page 9 of this newsletter and on our website under membership. Remember we are a 501-C3 corporation. Therefore, your membership dues are eligible for tax deductibility—best to check with your tax advisor.. For those of you who have not yet renewed or joined here are some of the **membership-only** privileges you are missing by not being members:

- Members only-day at the LA Family History Library—March 6, 2011
- Members only (new) - "ASK THE EXPERT" opportunity- can ask Warren Blatt up to one question per month
- Members only borrowing privileges from Traveling Library for Book Report-our library is otherwise non-circulating
- Members only borrowing privileges of How To Begin Your Genealogy Series on CD and other select DVD and CDs.
- New member kit with resource lists on websites, suggested books and local resources, and information on programs

These are in addition to:

- 10-11 monthly meetings featuring expert speakers, tutorials, discussions, materials, research methods, ideas and more
- Subscription to *Venturing Into Our Past* our monthly electronic newsletter with meeting notices, genealogical hints and items of interest
- Opportunity to network with other people interested in Jewish genealogy –you never know- an unknown cousin could be sitting in the audience
- Information exchange with others who are researching families from the same towns as your ancestors
- Guidance from local experts to help you with your research
- Access to the JGSCV permanent library located at the Agoura Hills Public Library.

Looking forward to seeing you on Sunday, February 13 when Hal Bookbinder will present "Why Did Our Ancestors Leave a Nice Place Like the Pale?" (see page 7).

Jan Meisels Allen

FUTURE MEETINGS NOTICES PAGES 7, 8

ABOUT JGSCV.....

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County meets once a month, usually on a Sunday. Meetings are oriented to the needs of the novice as well as the more experienced genealogist. Members share materials, research methods and ideas, as well as research success or failures. Members have access to the JGSCV library located on special shelves at the Agoura Hills Public Library. Members also receive our monthly newsletter which is circulated by email.

2011 dues are \$25.00 for a single membership and \$30.00 for a household unit. To join, please send appropriate amount in check made out to JGSCV and addressed to Helene Rosen at 28912 Fountainwood St., Agoura Hills, CA 91301. Obtain the new/renewal membership form on our website at www.jgscv.org by selecting the membership button.

YAD VASHEM LIST REACHES 4 MILLION

Yad Vashem has now identified two-thirds of the Jews murdered in the Holocaust. Of the 4 million names currently known, some 2.2 million come from Pages of Testimony and the remainder from various archival sources and postwar commemoration projects. In the past decade, Yad Vashem has successfully concentrated its efforts in names recovery in areas where most of the unnamed victims lived, including Eastern Europe, the Former Soviet Union and Greece. For more information go to <http://tinyurl.com/5r4f5ny>

NBC's "WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?" ANNOUNCES 2ND SEASON CELEBRITIES

NBC announced that Vanessa Williams will be the subject of the 2011 season's first airing of "Who Do You Think You Are?" on Feb. 4 at 8PM. Other celebrities to be featured this season (listed alphabetically) will be Steve Buscemi, Kim Cattrall, Ashley Judd, Tim McGraw, Rosie O'Donnell, and Lionel Richie. Gwyneth Paltrow's Jewish roots will also be uncovered.

LA PUBLIC LIBRARY HISTORY AND GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT CLOSURE

The History and Genealogy Department of the Los Angeles Public Library (630 W. 5th St.) will be closed to the public from February 15 - 18. While genealogists will not have access to the book collection, access to Ancestry Library Edition, HeritageQuest, American Ancestors and other databases will continue to be available in any of the other subject departments. This is part of a larger project to upgrade the data cabling throughout each library department. There are no Sat. closings. A full schedule of closures for all departments is available at: <http://www.lapl.org/central/btop.html>

1890 BRITISH REPORT ON JEWISH PERSECUTION IN RUSSIA

A sister JGS in Willamette Valley, Oregon (JGSWVO) shared this link with JGSCV via Reeva Kimble. The Russo-Jewish Committee issued "THE PERSECUTION OF THE JEWS IN RUSSIA" in 1890 in London. Its contents provide an appropriate backdrop for Feb. 13's JGSCV presentation by Hal Bookbinder "Why Did Our Ancestors Leave A Nice Place Like The Pale" (see page 7). The entire document is available at <http://tinyurl.com/665nrhs>

ANTWERP (GALICIA) FOREIGNER INDEXES 1840-1930

Jackie Schwarz, a researcher in Antwerp, Belgium, reports to the Gesher Galicia SIG that the Felix Archive which contains files of foreigners who lived in that city between 1840 and 1930, is now available online. During that period many of the foreigners were eastern European Jews. Previously, those files were only accessible directly from the Archives but are now available through familysearch at <https://www.familysearch.org> Click on Europe, then Belgium, Antwerp Police Immigration Index, 1840-1930.

FREE WEBINAR: FINDING FEMALE ANCESTORS

Locating the names of our female ancestors can be difficult – principally because their names changed upon marrying. However, women historically haven't produced as many records as their husbands, since women's suffrage largely didn't exist until the twentieth century. This adds to the difficulty of finding their names, let alone the details of their lives.

This free webinar, presented by Leland K. Meitzler is very "source" oriented and will give detailed information on a wide variety of sources, starting with the obvious, and working its way through sources that you may not have thought of using previously. It is not specific to Jewish genealogy but will be very useful nonetheless.

Hosted by Legacy Family Tree, the webinar will take place Feb. 16th at 11 AM. Registration is limited to the first 1,000 to sign up at <http://tinyurl.com/2cteagk>

SIGN UP AT RALPHS and HELP JGSCV

Remember to sign up for the Ralphs Community Contribution Program. Ralphs requires annual registration on their website www.ralphs.com. Sign in and scroll down to community contribution. JGSCV is number 84732 that you insert under charity of choice. Even as an occasional Ralphs' shopper, it helps JGSCV with no cost to you!

Reprinted from . . .

Holbrooke's Jewish Past Shaped His Passion for the Displaced

Appreciation

By Stuart Eizenstat

Published December 15, 2010, issue of [December 24, 2010](#).



Washington — With the tragic passing of Richard Holbrooke, the world has lost a man who devoted his life to resolving intractable conflicts; our nation has lost the premier diplomat of his era in the midst of one of his most challenging assignments as special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan; and I have lost a dear friend and longtime colleague.

It is less well known that the Jewish people have lost a great champion of justice for Holocaust survivors and for refugees the world over.

In the summer of 1976, while serving as policy director for Jimmy Carter's first presidential campaign, I recruited Dick Holbrooke to be our in-house foreign policy adviser. I did so at the recommendation of virtually every major foreign policy expert upon whom we relied, from Cyrus Vance and Zbigniew Brzezinski to W. Averell Harriman. Holbrooke was already a rising star of the next generation. In the foreign service, he took on the most difficult assignments and worked for six years directly in Vietnam or on Vietnamese issues. This included serving in the treacherous Mekong Delta; in Saigon as assistant to Ambassadors Maxwell Taylor and Henry Cabot Lodge, and, at the tender age of 24, on a special

White House team of Vietnam experts appointed by President Johnson. In 1968 he served on the U.S. delegation to the Paris peace talks, headed by former New York Governor Harriman and former Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance. This directly led to them recommending Holbrooke to me.

Holbrooke had an office just two doors from mine in the Carter campaign headquarters in Atlanta, so I saw up close the remarkable talents he brought to every job — indefatigable energy, tireless determination, and a brilliant capacity to meld domestic political considerations with a deep understanding of foreign policy. He helped me prepare Jimmy Carter for three presidential debates. And it was he who immediately understood the huge gaffe President Gerald Ford had made in one debate with Carter in asserting that the Soviet Union did not dominate the Communist East Bloc. With his wide press contacts and credibility, he helped shape the message that turned the presidential campaign around, neutralizing the greatest advantage the incumbent president had over a one-term governor from Georgia: namely his supposed foreign policy expertise and ability to keep America safe.

(Continued on page 4)

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During the Carter administration, Holbrooke became the youngest person ever to hold the position of assistant secretary of state for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. He was responsible for some of the most difficult policy challenges in the administration, including managing relations with our most important Asian ally, Japan, and with Communist China. He was deeply involved in the secret negotiations leading up to the normalization of relations with China in December 1978, and in preparing the historic first visit by a Chinese leader, Deng Xiaoping, to the White House. In fact, Holbrooke was in the Cabinet Room when Deng, who wanted Most Favored Nation status for China, told President Carter that he knew the Jackson-Vanik law had prevented the Soviet Union from receiving MFN status because of Soviet restrictions on Jewish emigration. With a smile, Deng declared, "Mr. President, we do not restrict Jewish emigration. Here is a piece of paper and a pencil; you write on it the number of Chinese you would like us to send you each year –1 million, 10 million, 20 million!"

But Holbrooke's heart was especially given over to one issue: helping to bring hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese and Indochinese refugees from great danger in their homelands to safety in the United States after the Vietnam War. I thought I knew Holbrooke well, but I did not understand why he had such a passionate interest at that time. It was in learning about Holbrooke's life-long interest in helping refugees around the world years later that I appreciated his Jewish connection.

During our time together in Carter's campaign headquarters and then in Washington I had not known that both his mother and father were Jewish refugees, his mother from Germany, his father born to Russian Jewish parents in Warsaw. Perhaps this was because Holbrooke had not been raised Jewish. His mother, I learned later, had gravitated for a time to Quakerism. And Holbrooke himself was raised thoroughly secular.

My first realization came during the Clinton administration, when he was serving as U.S.

ambassador to Germany at the same time as I was serving as U.S. ambassador to the European Union in Brussels. Holbrooke organized a dinner in honor of my wife Fran and me in his official residence in Bonn. When we arrived, I noticed at the entrance an old photo of a German in World War I military uniform, with full regalia, including the distinctive sharp pointed hat of an officer. Who was this, I asked him, and why was his picture placed so prominently at the residence's entranceway?

"Stu, that is my Jewish grandfather," he said. "He served as an officer in the German army in World War I. I keep it here, so all of the Germans who pass through this U.S. residence will damn well realize what they lost when they killed all the German Jews."

Holbrooke's deep interest in the development of post-War Germany, including his role in creating the American Academy in Berlin, which he later chaired, was undoubtedly due to this history.

His Jewish connection deepened shortly thereafter, when Secretary of State Warren Christopher appointed him assistant secretary of state for European and Canadian affairs. History will remember Holbrooke most of all for his remarkable negotiation of the Dayton Peace Accords during this time, ending the Bosnian civil war. I believe he came out of private life then at President Clinton's request because he saw it as a way of stopping "ethnic cleansing" and another European genocide.

But for me, he will be remembered for something else then: changing my life, and that of millions of Holocaust victims and other victims of Nazi oppression. When Holbrooke took up his post as assistant secretary in 1994, I was still U.S. Ambassador to the European Union in Brussels. "Stu, you were my boss in the Carter years, and now I am yours," he joked when he called (Continued on page 5) me from Washington.

"I have a request to make."

(Continued from previous page)

I was floored by what came next. He told me that Edgar Bronfman and Israel Singer, leaders of the World Jewish Congress, had come to his State Department office and told him that the emergence of new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe since the collapse of Communism offered the United States an historic opportunity to rectify the injustices of World War II. They had urged him to select a special envoy on property restitution to encourage the new democracies to return synagogues, schools, community centers, and even cemeteries to the remnants of the Jewish communities of Europe now finally able to practice their religion after decades of Communist repression. Holbrooke noted the special urgency this held for Europe's Jews, who had lived through the 20th century's twin evils, Nazism and Communism. He wanted me to take on this task.

I am certain that his already deep interest in helping Holocaust survivors was enhanced by his relationship with Kati Marton, the talented writer he wed in 1995. Born in Hungary, she had only recently discovered her own Jewish roots, which her parents had kept from her after they survived the Holocaust, the advent of Communism and the 1956 Hungarian revolution, and then fled to the United States with their children.

I asked for a few days to consider Holbrooke's offer, given my full-time job as ambassador. My staff at the United States Mission to the European Union unanimously objected, saying the additional duties would divert time from my already stressful work and that the position would be unlikely to succeed. The governments with whom I would be dealing would object to returning properties they controlled, my staff warned, and even America's ambassadors to those countries would be unhappy about my intrusion on their turf regarding an unpopular issue. But just as I had grown to know Holbrooke, he had come to know me. He knew, among other things, of my own deep interest in Holocaust justice and of my recommendation to Carter of a presidential commission on a Holocaust memorial in Washington, headed by Elie Wiesel, which led to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Fran and I felt I could not turn this assignment down. I called Holbrooke back and told him I would take the job, but that I would need his full support with our own ambassadors and the European governments with whom I would be dealing. He gave me his word, and once I took the job, he always backed me up. This eventually led to \$8 billion dollars in restitution for some 1.5 million victims, Jewish and non-Jewish, of the Third Reich, for slave and forced labor, unpaid insurance policies and the return of property and looted art. None of this would have been possible without the initiative of Richard Charles Albert Holbrooke.

Nor, for that matter, would Israel be enjoying enhanced stature at the United Nations today absent his labors. In 2000, it was Holbrooke's advocacy as U.N. ambassador in the Clinton administration that secured Israel's inclusion in the regional grouping of European countries at the U.N. This came after decades in which Israel had been excluded from the Middle East group by hostile Arab states. Israel's membership in the European group has increased its role at the world body since much of the work there goes on in these regional groupings. As Israel's U.N. envoy, Meron Reuben, confirmed to me, Holbrooke's tireless effort made this happen.

We are immeasurably saddened by Holbrooke's death on December 13, but thankful for his lifelong commitment to justice for refugees and victims, Jewish and non-Jewish, and for using his enormous talents to help make this a better world.



Stuart E. Eizenstat was President Jimmy Carter's chief domestic policy adviser and served in senior roles in the Clinton administration, and as special representative of the president and secretary of state on Holocaust-era Issues. He is special adviser to Secretary of State Clinton on Holocaust-era Issues.

**JGSCV
UPDATES . . .**



The **SCHMOOZING CORNER** is where you will find a JGSCV expert who can help you



overcome a genealogical brick wall or maybe just answer a question. In a genealogical discussion before the Jan. 9 meeting is (left to right in photo right) Dr. Erica Miller, Steven Weinstein, Warren Blatt (facilitator) and Jerry Escover. The Schmoozing Corner is open for 15 minutes immediately prior to the start of the meeting. Marion Werle will be the facilitator on February 13th.

Traveling Library Books classification A and D will be at the February 13th meeting along with any books relevant to Pale of Settlement. Visit our website at www.jgscv.org under library traveling for the list of books in these categories. If you would like an unscheduled book to be brought to the meeting please notify Jan Meisels Allen at least 5 days in advance (president@jgscv.org)



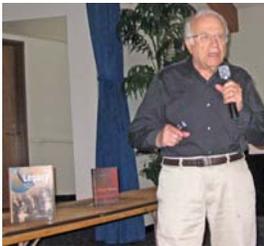
ANCESTRY.COM TO END 'EXPERT CONNECT' SERVICE
Ancestry's Expert Connect began in 2009 as a means to connect experts with genealogists seeking to pay professionals for that expertise. Expert Connect will cease effective March 18th. Postings, bidding and awards will be discontinued Feb. 3.

JGSCV OFFICERS

Per JGSCV By-laws, officers are selected annually at the January board meeting. JGSCV officers for 2011:

- President- Jan Meisels Allen
- Vice President-Membership- Helene Rosen
- Secretary- Dorothy Drilich
- Treasurer- Sara Hyman

From the Jan. 9 Meeting . . .



Werner Frank



Panel of authors



Helene Rosen

Warren Blatt



JGSCV BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- | | | | |
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| Mailing address: 6052 Hackers Lane, Agoura Hills, CA 91301 Phone: 818-889-6616 | | | |
| Website: www.jgscv.org | | | |



Come to the Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County*

(* and surrounding areas)

Sunday, February 13, 2011 1:30 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
at Temple Adat Elohim 2420 E.Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

"Why Did Our Ancestors Leave a Nice Place Like the Pale"***

In 1880, fully 80 percent of our ancestors lived in Poland and western Russia's Pale of Jewish Settlement. We all know of the pogroms (organized violence) and mass exodus of our ancestors to points west over the next generation. This talk will provide background on the 120 years of the Pale from its formation at the turn of the 19th century to its dissolution during the First World War. It will provide some context to our ancestors' lives in the Pale, and of course, their decision to leave everything they had known to make new lives in the West.



Speaker: Hal Bookbinder has been researching eight family lines for over 27 years, identifying 4,000 relatives and tracing two of these lines into the mid 1700s. A founding member of JGSCV, and former president of JGSLA and IAJGS, he created and continues to edit the annual Jewish Genealogical Yearbook. In 2010, Hal received the IAJGS Lifetime Achievement Award for his various contributions to Jewish Genealogy. Hal was recently elected the JewishGen Board of Governors. He has spoken at numerous conferences, synagogues and society meetings on topics from computing to geography to brick walls.

And Sara Applebaum, who presented her experiences in writing "Lost and Found: A Family Memoir", will explain how to self-publish your genealogical findings.

** The Pale of Settlement was the term given to a region of Imperial Russia [it included much of present-day Lithuania, Belarus, Poland, Moldova, Ukraine, and parts of western Russia], in which permanent residency by Jews was allowed, and beyond which Jewish permanent residency was generally prohibited. It extended from the eastern *pale*, or demarcation line, to the western Russian border with the German Empire and Austria-Hungary. [Wikipedia.org]

The Jewish Genealogical Society of the Conejo Valley and Ventura County is dedicated to sharing genealogical information, techniques and research tools with anyone interested in Jewish genealogy and family history.

Meeting co-sponsored with Temple Adat Elohim. There is no charge to attend the meeting.
Anyone may join JGSCV.

JGSCV Welcomes New Members

Nancy Borelli

Teri Reynolds

2011 JGSCV Meeting Dates

All Meetings are held at Temple Adat Elohim
Unless Otherwise Noted
2420 E. Hillcrest Drive, Thousand Oaks

ALL MEETINGS SUNDAY 1:30-3:30 PM (Except March 6th, see below)

2011

February 13 Why Did Our Ancestors Leave A Nice Place Like the Pale? Hal Bookbinder gives background of the 120 years of the Pale.

March 6 1:00 -5:00PM Exclusive Research Day at the LA Family History Library Personal genealogical help is available from LAFHL volunteers and senior JGSCV members.

April 3 Jews of the Pacific Coast Ava F. Kahn Jewish experience in Seattle, Portland, SF, LA and small western towns. Program Co-sponsored with the Western States Jewish History.

May 1 Yom Hashoah Day Commemoration, The First Massive Jewish Deportation: To Camp de Gurs in 1940 Werner Frank Thousands of Jews were expelled to Camp de Gurs on the way to the 'Final Solution'. Frank describes these actions and others as they relate to his family in Baden.

June 5 Wrongful (Jewish) Wraskals of the West Ron Arons West coast criminals including research tools and methodology.

July 17 Genealogy in the Round: Share you Successes, Failures, Artifacts and Brick Walls

**August 14-19 IAJGS hosted by JGS Greater Washington
No JGSCV meeting in August**



2011 Membership/Renewal Form
Jewish Genealogical Society of the
Conejo Valley and Ventura County (JGSCV)*

*Member of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies (IAJGS)

www.JGSCV.org

Check one:

This is a New Membership_____ Renewal_____

Single \$ 25.00_____ + \$1.00 Family* \$30.00 _____ + \$2.00****

*Family defined as two people living in the same household

** \$1 per person is a voluntary donation to the IAJGS Stern Award, granted annually when it recognizes institutions for outstanding work in the creation and availability of resources for Jewish Genealogy.

Additional voluntary contributions:

Library Acquisition Fund \$_____ Programs Fund \$_____

(Suggested minimum voluntary contribution for either fund \$5.00)

Make check payable to JGSCV and send with this completed form to:

**Helene Rosen
28912 Fountainwood St.
Agoura Hills, CA 91301**

Name (Print) _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____

Zipcode + 4 _____

Day telephone _____ Evening telephone _____

E-mail address _____

Please tell us what talents you can share (language skills, computer skills, translation, etc.).

The Jewish Folk Style in the Wooden Wall Paintings of Eastern Europe

A new online exhibition entitled "The Jewish Folk Style in the Wooden Wall Paintings of Eastern Europe" is now available for viewing at the Museum of Family History. This exhibition should be of interest to those of you who are interested in art history, or simply the old wooden synagogues that once existed throughout Europe, particularly in the Ukraine.

You will find many black and white and color photographs, including a number of the exteriors of some wooden synagogues and more of the interior wall paintings of others. This exhibition comes to you courtesy of an associate professor of art history in Kharkov, Ukraine. Professor Kotlyar gives interesting insights into the paintings, as well.

Most of the photos of wall paintings presented are of synagogues associated with the Ukraine. They represent such towns as (in alphabetical order): Drohobych, Gorodok, Gvozdets, Khodrov, Kopys, Mikhalpol, Moghilev on the Dnieper, Norinsk, Novomirgorod, Smotrich, Talne, Targoritz, Unterlimpurg and Yaryshev. You may view the exhibition by clicking [here](#).

31st IAJGS Conference Registration Open



Registration is open for the 31st IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy hosted by JGSGW, August 14-19, 2011 in Washington DC at the Grand Hyatt Washington DC. The website is www.dc2011.org.

The conference is offering reduced registration fees for those who take advantage of the EARLY Bird Registration. (Early bird registration is Jan 4-April 30) Anyone registering by January 31 will be eligible for 5 FREE nights at the luxurious Grand Hyatt Washington during the conference with your choice of a room with a king or two double beds. Drawing to be held during the first week of February.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to attend great lectures by top-notch speakers on topics of interest to genealogists. The conference co-chairs are making a concentrated effort to attract fresh lectures on subjects that have not been previously addressed such as programs at the hotel conference center by the staff of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, National Archives, and Library of Congress. Also, there will be evening programs and a great Vendor Showcase.

The Conference will offer a variety of workshops, including a special track of workshops and classes for beginners, as well as sessions for intermediate and advanced researchers. Workshops will be held in one of the two computer classrooms - PC or Mac.

To keep abreast of what is happening with and ask questions about the 31st IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy hosted by JGS of Greater Washington, sign-up for the conference discussion group by logging in to www.JewishGen.org click on "my profile" (directly under your name upper right hand after you log in) under "mailing lists" select view/edit --it will take you to a list of groups (SIGS) that you may already be registered for--click on "To subscribe to other JewishGen Mailing Lists [click here](#)" and select 2011 DC conference- scroll down to "JewishGen Hosted Projects".

And don't forget the conference blog. You can connect to the blog through the DC2011.com conference web site, or go to www.dc2011conference.blogspot.com .