

IAJGS Board Report from the Board of Director's meeting relating to the  
27th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy

July 15-20, 2007  
Salt Lake City, Utah  
Salt Lake City Hilton City Center

As always, those attending the annual international conference had to make difficult choices among a great many activities: from inspiring and knowledgeable speakers, SIG and BOF luncheons/meetings, watching films, socializing, to doing research at the Family History Library. Here are a few highlights:

There was a great photo exhibit called Lives Remembered: Photographs of a Small Town in Poland 1895-1939 put together by Mike Marvins from numerous pictures Marvin's grandfather, Zalman Kaplan, took as the photographer in Szczuczyn from 1895-1939.

Paul Shapiro, of USHMM, gave an extremely moving opening ceremony speech about his years of work that have led to the opening of the ITS archives at Bad Arolsen.

Dan Rottenberg, author of the first guidebook on Jewish genealogy research, *Finding Our Fathers*, spoke at the banquet and wowed us all by announcing that he was relinquishing his copyright to the part of his book with the alphabetical list of family names with information on each entry. I'm sure it will be up available on the web before too long.

The banquet festivities also included the awarding of the 2007 IAJGS Lifetime Achievement to Mathilde Tagger of Israel for her many years of Sephardic research and the 2007 IAJGS Award for Outstanding Contribution to Jewish Genealogy via the Internet, Print or Electronic Product to Lars Menk for his remarkable book, *Dictionary of German-Jewish Surnames*.

At the IAJGS annual meeting, Alexander Avraham, on behalf of Yad Vashem, presented a certificate to Donald Hirschhorn of the JGS of Palm Beach County, in recognition his activism, dedication and outstanding volunteerism as coordinator for the Shoah Victims Names Recovery Project. The IAJGS member organizations approved the granting of the 2007 Stern Award of \$2000 to the US Holocaust Memorial Museum to be used for its upcoming project to index materials it receives from the International Tracing Service (ITS). The Board announced that in the future the name will be changed from Stern Award to Malcom Stern Grant to clarify that it for a proposed project. Jan Meisels Allen gave an excellent report on the activities of the Public Records Access Monitoring Committee. A bylaws amendment was passed adding the following language to IAJGS Objectives: "To promote public access to genealogically relevant records." The following officers were re-elected: Anne Feder Lee, President; Michael Brenner, Vice President; Joel Spector, Secretary; and Mike Posnick, Treasurer. Consensus was reached on creating

a new IAJGS committee for Strategic Planning. Member organizations were encouraged to submit posters for our Jewish Genealogy Month competition (see [www.iajgs.org](http://www.iajgs.org) for more).

The IAJGS Management Seminar on Fundraising and Grant-writing for Non-profits with presentations by Ron Arons and Shelly Weiner was excellent and included much practical information. All IAJGS member organizations received a CD with their power-point presentations.

At our preview of the Chicago 2008 conference, we announced that some of the special items will include lunch kiosks, free wi-fi in attendees' guest rooms, free use of the hotel health club and the possibility of cooking classes given by the hotel chef... The Chicago Marriott Downtown Magnificent Mile Hotel, the location of the conference is in a wonderful location. It has a spacious lobby, and a fantastic pastry chef. The room rate is: single and double \$199 (excluding tax) and an additional person is \$30 (excluding taxes). There will be special focus on Jews in the Midwest, Jews in Latin America, and immigration to the US via Canada as well as many many other sessions. The hotel is offering a special bonus of a free week for a conference attendee – details of how the winner will be selected will be announced as soon as they are finalized. For those who want to get a head start on research possibilities in Chicago are urged to go to Mike Karsen's excellent website: [www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Chicago](http://www.jewishgen.org/InfoFiles/Chicago). A Google search for "Jewish Chicago" will also lead to many interesting items. Mark your calendars now: August 17-22, 2008.

No words can express our thanks to all the wonderful volunteers under the able direction of conference co-chairs Michael Brenner and Hal Bookbinder. A sincere thanks to: The Generations Network for sponsoring for sponsoring the Ancestry.com Resource Room; to the Family History Library for providing extended hours for attendees, speakers, and special maps for the resource room; and to Genzyme for a substantial educational grant and for sending Gary Frohlich to share important information on Ashkenazi genetic diseases, particularly Gaucher Disease. Thanks also for support from Harvey Krueger, Alan Rinsler, Rochelle Kaplan, E. Randol and Pamela Schoenberg, Marty Mazner, Bob Spinner, the Center for Jewish History, the Czech Torah project, Jossey-Bass publishers, The Jacob Rader Marcus Center, Congregation Kol Ami of Salt Lake City, JGSs, SIGs, individuals and many vendors.