



Contents

- 1** Editorial
- 2** 2005 Annual Meeting of the SSN
- 3** The Best clinical presentation Award
- 3** Elections in 2005
- 3** SSN-IBRO fellowship for Young Investigators
- 3** The 2008 FENS meeting in Geneva?
- 4** Symposia on "Animal Experimentation"
- 4** Feed-back from the SSN website

Editorial

The table of contents of this Newsletter denotes the multiple activities in which the SSN is currently engaged. The Society is developing steadily, and the number of members approaches 670, in spite of the rapid turnover of student-members. The 700th member will be offered a special gift, in the hope that we might one day reach a four-digit membership.

The three manifestations organized for the first time this year (PhD-student day and Symposia on animal experimentation) have been successful and denote the interest of the members for these activities. In particular, the two symposia have been very well attended, and the participants showed that they were not coming just to collect a certificate. On the contrary, a genuine interest for the lectures could be perceived. A special thank goes to the eight lecturers for their excellent presentations.

In the immediate future, a major development will be the 2005 annual meeting, which will be held jointly with the USGEB and the SSBP, during three days in February 2005. The success of this venture depends above all on a large attendance. The program is available on the meeting's website and on-line registration is open until November 15th, 2004 (see p. 2).

On the horizon is the possibility (and challenge) to organize the 6th FENS Forum in Switzerland. The SSN has decided to present a bid for the year 2008, with Geneva being proposed as host city. The FENS will make its selection during its next general council meeting, to be held in November in Budapest. Should we receive this great responsibility, it would be a clear sign that the SSN has reached an unprecedented recognition. It will be up to us to show that we have the resources and imagination to foster the standing of Neuroscience Research in Europe.

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MOLECULES TO MIND

A Joint Meeting of the
Swiss Societies of Experimental Biology
Swiss Society for Neuroscience
Swiss Society of Biological Psychiatry

February 17th to 19th, 2005, ETH Zurich-Hönggerberg

<http://www.usgeb-ssn-ssbp.ethz.ch>

2005 Annual Meeting of the SSN

The next annual meeting of the SSN is breaking several traditions. For the first time, we are joining forces not only with a clinical Society, but also with the USGEB, the Federation of Swiss Societies of Experimental Biology. This unique joint meeting will extend over three days (Thursday – Saturday, February 17th – 19th 2005) and will take place at the Hönggerberg campus of the ETHZ, in a beautiful setting that can accommodate hundreds of participants.

A major accent is set on the concept of a joint meeting, with a single local organizing committee, single registration site, and single abstract book. This is reflected in the title of the meeting “**Molecules to mind**”. The organizing committee is led by Prof. Mathias Peter, ETHZ, representing the USGEB, and includes members of the three organizing societies. The format and program of the meeting have been designed to be attractive to the largest possible number of scientists engaged in basic and clinical research. Great care was taken to select themes of interest for a wide audience, and internationally renowned speakers will hold the plenary lectures. Clinical research will focus on psychiatry and clinical neuroscience, with presentations scheduled on Friday and Saturday. As last

year, the accreditation of the meeting for clinicians will be sought.

The program includes six plenary lectures, 11 symposia, three poster sessions, and five award ceremonies (Friedrich Miescher Award, Morphology Award of the SGAHE, SSBP Young Investigator Award, SSN Best Publication Award, and the Robert-Bing Award from the Swiss Academy of Medical Sciences). The business meeting of the SSN will take place, as usual, on Saturday during the poster session. All details can be found on the website of the meeting, which is linked on our home page.

Registration and abstract submission are on-line. On each abstract, at least one author has to be a member of one of the organizing societies, and each member can present only one abstract (but be co-author on several presentations). Registration is recommended even if you do not plan to present an abstract. However, on-site registration will also be possible. The meeting is free of charge.

Each day, a datablitz session will take place, to present highlights of the up-coming poster session. Authors of abstracts selected for the datablitz will be informed well ahead and will be expected to give a 2-minute presentation (max. 3 slides) of their work. Similarly, each symposium will include two 15-minute presentations selected from the submitted abstracts.

Deadline: On-line registration and Abstract submission: November 15th 2004

SSN Best clinical presentation Award

Due to the unusual format of the next annual meeting, the Best clinical presentation Award had to be changed. A joint Award will be given by the SSBP to two investigators working in the field of psychiatry and clinical neuroscience, respectively. The Awardees will be asked to give a presentation during the clinical symposium “Psychiatry meets clinical neuroscience” on February 19th. A call for applications will be announced this autumn.

Elections 2005

Elections take place every second year during the SSN business meeting to choose the President-Elect and to replace the members of the SSN Council who have finished their four-year term. At this occasion, the Council has also decided to change the Secretary and Treasurer of the Society. Nicole Schaeren-Wiemers and Markus Rüegg will replace Dominique Muller and Claudio Bassetti, respectively. In addition, Jean-Marc Fritschy, Hans-Rudolph Lüscher, and Peter Sonderegger will step down. Therefore, five Council members need being replaced. According to the by-laws of the SSN, the membership elects up to four Council members. The other(s) are co-opted by the Council.

The by-laws also state that: “*Nominations may be submitted in writing by any Ordinary or Student Member up to three (3) months before a Regular Meeting in an election year. An Ordinary or Student Member may nominate up to four (4) persons, one for each Council position to be filled.*” The Council has set-up a nominating committee, led by Eric Rouiller, vice-president of the SSN. Please send him your suggestions for the post of President-elect and for the four Council members to be elected (**Deadline, November 17th, 2004**). Nominations can also be submitted via the “contact page” on the SSN website. The list of nominees will be announced in the next issue of the Newsletter.

SSN-IBRO fellowship for Young Investigators

This fellowship is sponsored by the SSN, the International Brain Research Organization (IBRO) and the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNF). It is awarded yearly on a competitive basis, and supports a foreign post-doctoral fellow for one year, to perform basic or clinical research in a Swiss academic institution. The awardee becomes an alumnus of the IBRO.

Applications are made by the candidates, with the support of their host laboratory. Please send a letter of application, CV, list of publications, and letter of support by the host laboratory to the president of the SSN before the end of the year. Four Council members will pre-select the best applications to be submitted to the SNF, which will make the final selection.

Deadline: December 31st, 2004.

Will Geneva host the 2008 FENS Forum?

The feedback received from the membership was unanimous in favor of submitting a bid to organize the 6th Forum of European Neuroscience in Geneva in 2008. A local organizing committee has been established, headed by Ann Kato (president) and Pierre Magistretti (vice-president), and is supported by a patronage committee composed on pre-eminent colleagues from throughout Switzerland.

The SSN council unanimously stands behind this initiative, and the bid will be submitted to the FENS at the end of September. The Governing Council of the FENS (formed by the board and one representative of each member society) will meet in Budapest on November 26-27th, 2004 and make the selection. Thanks to the support of the Geneva Convention Bureau, we are in an excellent

position to present a very attractive bid with a reasonable registration fee. A special effort will be made for supporting the participation of students from across Europe. Let's keep our fingers crossed.....

SSN Symposia on animal experimentation

The two symposia organized by Eric Rouiller on September 17th in Fribourg and Isabelle Mansuy a week later in Zurich attracted a large number of participants (> 100 in Fribourg and >85 in Zurich). In both cases, the active participation during the symposium demonstrated the interest of the audience. The Council feels it is of great importance that the SSN, as a professional society, contributes to continuous education in animal experimentation. The SSN is seeking feedback from participants in order to know how these symposia could be improved, and which topics should be addressed in the future. Please send us your comments via the contact page on the SSN website.

Feed-back from SSN website

The new SSN website was launched almost five months ago. This portal has proven extremely helpful to manage the membership of the society and the inscriptions to the PhD student day and the Symposia on animal experimentation. Most pages can be kept up-to-date with a minimum of effort and we did our best to post information of general interest for SSN members.

The statistics of the number of visits reveals, however, that the website remains little visited (on average 50 "hits" per day). It is only occasionally that members make use of its interactive features. For example, the "job market" page remains almost unused, and we receive very few announcements (such as future meetings) for the "News" page. Do not

hesitate to use these features for advertising your own group.

Furthermore, we would like to stress the importance of keeping your membership data up-to-date. Most trouble comes from members who change their address without keeping us informed. If a colleague of yours leaves the department, please remind him not to forget to tell the SSN! We spend an enormous amount of time trying to trace members with an obsolete address. In the future, we will setup a page "lost members". If you happen to know the address of any of them, please notify us.

Finally, an important change, which concerns specifically the members from Zurich, is the change of area code number from 01 to 043. The present and next secretaries of the SSN are very grateful to all members who will update their phone number without delay. The procedure is very easy and should not take more than a couple of minutes.

Advertising for the SSN

The SSN is presenting itself in a flyer, which was produced for advertisement purposes. Copies of the flyers are available to any member who has an opportunity to advertise for the SSN (for example during a workshop or a local meeting). Please send a short message to the SSN e-mail address when you need flyers. They will be sent to you by regular mail as soon as possible.

