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My dear colleagues and friends, hardly a day goes by without news from the White House. Now our American colleagues are confronted with the President’s budget proposal for 2018. The proposal provides $361 million for the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, a decrease of $105 million from the FY 2017 level – a 22.5% cut. It is to be expected that the majority of Republicans and Democrats at the Congress will not take this budget proposal seriously but high on the White House Agenda is a substantial increase in defense and therefore the Government needs money. In fact on Trumps’ agenda “America First: A Budget Blueprint to Make America Great Again” the aim is to increase defense spending substantially and then offset that by stripping money from more than 18 other agencies. As a result, whatever the congress will decide there will be serious cuts for the NIH and for alcohol research in the US. Take your time and read a 62-page document outlining the proposal obtained by The Washington Post some weeks ago. It starts with a message from the president: “Our aim is to meet the simple, but crucial demand of our citizens? A Government that puts the needs of its own people first. When we do that, we will set free the dreams of every American, and we will begin a new chapter of American greatness.” The president’s message continues in saying: “The core of my first Budget Blueprint is the rebuilding of our Nation’s military without adding to our Federal deficit. There is a $54 billion increase in defense spending in 2018 that is offset by targeted reductions elsewhere. This defense funding is vital to rebuild and prepare our Armed Forces for the future. We must ensure that our courageous servicemen and women when called upon to fight, do only one thing: Win.”

Maybe I am biased towards negative headlines from the White House and in fact 98% of German media do report only negatively about Trump’s activities, something that could be easily explained by our historical background in this respect, but American media have also a very strong negative bias for their President. CNN, NBC, CBS and New York Times have at least a 90% bias for negative headlines and even Fox has even more negative to say than positive (for more statistics see https://de.statista.com/infografik/9524/). We, especially scientists around the globe, have to stand up, have to raise our voice not only to set free the dreams of each American but to set free our dreams for a better world. A better world – whatever it comprises - is certainly driven by better knowledge and even if the contribution of a single alcohol researcher is so minor to the global knowledge is remains a mosaic stone. Alcohol researchers provide many mosaic stones being it new e-health tools such as wearable alcohol biosensors that allow longitudinal in vivo monitoring of blood alcohol concentrations, new neurostimulation therapies such as neurofeedback, approved medications that work at least as good as antidepressants are real highlights of our research activities. Yes, we are contributing to a better world and we should say it loudly! On April 22nd, 2017 I participated at The March for Science held in Heidelberg and more than 600 other cities across the world. It was the first time that scientists stood up and raised their voice – we should do this more often.

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As was announced in the previous issue of this newsletter, the next ISBRA meeting will be held in Kyoto, Japan in 2018. The outline of the meeting is as follows:

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
<th>September 9th (Sun) - September 13th (Thu), 2018</th>
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<tr>
<td>Venue</td>
<td>Kyoto International Conference Center, Kyoto, Japan</td>
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| Host Organizations | • The Japanese Medical Society of Alcohol and Addiction Studies (JMSAAS)  
• The Science Council of Japan (to be confirmed) |
| Main Theme         | Global Alcohol Research: expanding our knowledge - supporting our members (tentative title) |
| Joint Meetings With| • The 53rd annual meeting of the Japanese Medical Society of Alcohol and Addiction Studies (JMSAAS) (Congress president, Prof. Yoshiyuki Takei)  
• The 40th annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Alcohol-Related Problems (Congress president, Dr. Shiro Tsujimoto)  
• International Symposium on Alcoholic Liver and Pancreatic Diseases (ALPD) and Cirrhosis |
| Joint Program      | • ISBRA-WHO Joint training sessions for young investigators |

The website for the meeting is now open at: http://www.congre.co.jp/isbra2018/

The Congress venue is located in Kyoto, one of the most ancient and famous cities in Japan. Together with an innovative and exciting scientific congress program, you will have an opportunity to experience firsthand authentic Japanese culture including magnificent ancient buildings, the arts, and delicious cuisine during your stay in Kyoto.

Another famous ancient city, Nara, is located close by and you will also be able to visit this city, which offers an additional flavor and manner of elegance. We look forward to welcoming a large number of investigators to Kyoto to contribute to the advancement of knowledge in the reduction of alcohol-related harm. We are also confident that the involvement of so many scientific societies will serve to create a congress program of the highest quality.
Welcome to Kyoto, the thousand-year capital of Japan.

Susumu Higuchi, MD, PhD, Japan
Congress President
The 2018 ISBRA Congress in Kyoto

ESBRA Congress 2017

The 2017 ESBRA Congress will take place on the beautiful Mediterranean island of Crete/Greece near the Capital Heraklion. Professor Iannis Mouzas is the president and has organized a brilliant program including all aspects of alcohol research under the umbrella of the Greek Minister of Health, who is going to open the congress. Among others numerous joint symposia between the various societies are scheduled including an ISBRA/ESBRA joint symposium entitled “Neuroimaging Consortia in Alcohol Research”, chaired by Rainer Spanagel and Mickael Naassila, a LASBRA/ESBRA joint symposium entitled “New Approaches for understanding alcohol disorders and potential new treatments” chaired by Rosana Camarini, a JMSAAS/ESBRA joint symposium entitled “Comorbidities of alcohol dependence” chaired by Toshi Saito as well as an EASL/ESBRA joint symposium entitled “New molecular insights leads to new therapeutic concepts” chaired by Felix Stickel.

In addition, The Charles Lieber Memorial Lecture will be given by Prof. Yedy Israel from Santiago de Chile entitled “Alcohol Intake: From Initiation to Relapse Binge-drinking. Mechanisms and Translational Opportunities? Other Plenary Lectures include Vasilis Vasilou (USA), Giovanni Addolorato (Italy), Bo Söderpalm (Sweden), Christos Kouimtsidis (UK), Otto Lesch (Austria), Edward Riley (USA) and Marsha Morgan (UK).

One of the high lights of the congress will be the Award ceremony for the 6th European Alcohol Research Award sponsored by Dr. Manfred Lautenschläger.

In addition to excellent science the island of Crete is well known for its great hospitality, culture and history. Knossos closely located to the conference has a history of more than 3500 years and a visit to the ruins of King Minos is a must.

The local organizing committee under the presidency of Prof Mouzas as well as Tomas Zima, the president of ESBRA together with the board of directors of ESBRA invite everybody interested in Alcohol Research to Crete in early October.

Helmut Seitz, MD, PhD, Germany

Golden Pavilion
The 2018 Annual Meeting of the Research Society on Alcoholism (RSA) will take place in San Diego, California. The 41st Annual Meeting will begin on Saturday, with satellite sessions, the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Study Group and the RSA Opening Reception. On Sunday-Wednesday, there will be full days of plenary sessions, symposia, poster sessions, special workshops and events, including the annual Student Networking Lunch, Post-Doc Dinner, Legislative Workshop and Grantsmanship Workshop.

The meeting will end on Wednesday evening, with the Closing Ceremony – dinner, award presentations and slideshow. The research areas that will be covered include biological/preclinical, medical/clinical and psychosocial. The primary goal of the meeting is to provide a forum for alcohol researchers - from all disciplines - to present their latest findings and to learn about new research developments in an environment that will promote interaction at both the professional and personal level. Note that the 2018 annual meeting of The College on Problems of Drug Dependence (CPDD) will also be held in San Diego, just prior to the RSA meeting. With this being a great opportunity to interact with CPDD attendees, there are plans to hold joint sessions with RSA and CPDD.

This is a city of great cuisine, shopping, and nightlife. When not busy at the meeting, explore this city that is known for beaches, parks and warm climate. You can explore Balboa Park, Belmont Park, the Museum of contemporary Art, San Diego Zoo and SeaWorld. Check out the Gaslamp Quarter or eat your way through Little Italy. Mark your calendars for these future RSA meetings: June 22-26, 2019 Minneapolis, MN; June 20-24, 2020 New Orleans, LA (joint meeting with ISBRA); and June 19-23, 2021 San Antonio, TX. I look forward to seeing you next year in San Diego.

Ken Sher, PhD, USA
USA President, Research Society on Alcoholism
For the first time the International Society of Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ISBRA) and the European Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ESBRA) had a joint meeting in Berlin in September 2nd – 5th, 2016. This formed the first “World Congress on Alcohol and Alcoholism”. Both societies are promoting excellence either on the European or international level in biomedical research on alcohol and alcoholism. ISBRA was founded in 1982 and ESBRA in 1988 as non-profit scientific organizations and the executive boards of both societies felt that it is time to join forces. The venue was the Technical University Berlin, where visitors from abroad could get a nice impression of Berlin’s scientific culture.

During this World Congress key opinion leaders shared with us the recent innovations in their respective fields which impact on basic and preclinical knowledge on alcoholism and alcohol-related biomedical phenomena, as well as on diagnosis, treatment and quality of life of our patients. State of the art scientific sessions were organized: 9 plenary lectures, 58 symposia, and many interactive and educational workshops and debates. Therefore our World Congress could offer a wide range of outstanding findings in scientific fields from the biomedical basis of alcoholism in animal and human experimental models to alcohol-related treatment issues, all the way to alcohol-related psychosocial aspects and epidemiology and health economics. Cross-fertilization, so to speak mutual exchange, as between dissimilar findings, concepts and ideas were the motto of this meeting.

The World Congress was opened by George Koob (Director of the NIAAA, US) with “Historical aspects and research highlights of the last 50 years”. In total, 822 participants from 43 countries all over the world (55% from Europe) took the opportunity to discuss new scientific findings in their respective field of interest in the following four days. Only, 37% of the participants came from Germany which shows the true international level of this meeting.

For supporting the scientific publication and presentation skills of our young researchers, we offered a workshop on effective preparation of power point presentations and manuscripts for publication and a Lunch Debate (Publish or Perish). In total we had:

- 58 Symposia @ 1.5 hours with 236 Speakers
- 3 Poster sessions with 209 posters in total
- 9 Plenary Lectures from Keynote Speakers like Antonello Bonci, Karl Mann, Hans-Ulrich Wittchen and Norman Ohler (famous for his book “Der Totale Rausch – Drogen im Dritten Reich”)

A special honor was given to Prof. Dr. Karl Mann, who was awarded with the James B. Isaacson Award for Excellence in Alcohol Research 2016.
All information about the program, all abstracts and a photobook are available at our website http://isbra-esbra-2016.org/.

Rainer Spanagel, PhD, Germany Congress President

Photographs from the 2016 World Congress
2016 World Congress Meeting
2016 World Congress Award Ceremony

ISBRA 2016 CONGRESS YOUNG INVESTIGATOR Awardees:
Coleman Jr, Leon G.; Kärkkäinen, Olli; Grahn, Alexander; Marit-Prats, Lucia; Farris, Sean P.; Domi, Esi; Vrettou, Maria; Vallöf, Daniel; Price, Michael E.; Even-Chen, Oren
Dear Colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that we invite you to participate in the VIII Latin American Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (LASBRA) scientific meeting. The event will take place in Puerto Varas, Chile, on November 20th -22nd, 2017.

Registration web-site:  https://form.jotformz.com/71073874339665

Instruction for submission of abstracts, registration and fellowships: https://goo.gl/WxXZMv

We are very enthusiastic about the next LASBRA meeting, entitled “Neurobiological basis of alcoholism: from molecules to behavior”. The program features internationally renowned speakers and an interesting line-up of symposia. The event is a satellite of the Annual meeting of the Chilean Society of Pharmacology (“Sociedad de Farmacología de Chile –SOFARCHI”; http://www.sofarchi.cl/). You can, therefore, take the opportunity to enjoy two great scientific meetings in a fascinating place, the city of Puerto Varas.

What to do in Puerto Varas? No one gets bored in Puerto Varas. There are lots of attractive places, both natural and man-made. You can find enchanting natural beauty that includes lakes, river falls, mountains and volcanos, for contemplative or more adventurous tourism. Not to mention the wide array of great typical Chilean foods and great wines!

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all of you to the VIII LASBRA Meeting.

Organizers: Luis Aguayo, Rosana Camarini, Ricardo Pautassi

Rosana Camarini, PhD, Brazil
The Japanese Medical Society of Alcohol and Addiction Studies (JMSAAS) was established in May, 2016, by combining the Japanese Society for Neuroscience of Dependence (JSND; established in 2012) and the Japanese Medical Society on Alcohol and Drug Studies (JMSAS; established in 1964), with Dr. Toshikazu Saito elected as the 1st President of JMSAAS. The fields of expertise of the approximately 1,000 JMSAAS members vary widely, including psychiatry, internal medicine, forensic medicine, pharmacology, pathology, hygiene, public health, and psychology. The 2016 annual meeting was the 1st of the newly established society, and as such, it was considered important to make the “theme” of the meeting one which allowed every member from all fields to actively participate. It has been recognized that issues surrounding substance-addiction, as well as nonsubstance-addictions, are causing a variety of mental and physical disorders, with the core symptom being psychological dependence. Since the elimination of the disorders are difficult, not to mention their attendant social burdens, one logical approach would be to develop harm-reduction strategies. The main theme of the annual meeting was thus determined to be “Addiction science: from the perspectives of harm reduction – multi-disciplinary approach”.

Over the 2-day meeting, various sessions were conducted including 23 symposia (6 featuring harm reduction, 9 relating to alcohol problems, and 8 relating to dependence syndromes), 5 workshops, 10 educational lectures, and 43 oral and 31 poster presentation sessions. The 23 symposia included two sponsored symposia, one on new treatment strategies for alcohol dependence, and one on tobacco harm reduction. The educational lectures and workshops were held as a part of the Special Training Program Commemorating the birth of the New Society, the expected audience being mainly medical staff members. In addition, lectures open to the public entitled “New forms of dependence – current status and counter measures” were also given, on alcohol dependence and internet addiction. The total number of participants at the annual meeting was about 670, an unprecedented number and a pleasant surprise. However, the majority of these participants were nonmembers, which was puzzling considering the number of JMSAAS members mentioned above. The reason for the smaller number of participants than members was not clear, but perhaps the time limitations for submitting symposium/presentation proposals were not sufficient for maximal participation.
Thus, one lesson learned was to facilitate exchanges among various fields further. On a brighter side, the large number of nonmember participants may lead to those non-members eventually becoming contributing members that make the new society vital and prosperous. It was also considered important that future programs be tailored to attract medical staffs.

Although this was the 1st meeting of JMSAAS, it was decided that it should be numbered “51”, as that would be the number of annual meetings of JMSAS which had a longer history than JSND. The 52nd annual meeting of JMSAAS will be held on the 8th and 9th of September, 2017, at Pacifico Yokohama (Yokohama, Japan), with Dr. Tomonori Okamura (Professor, Department of Preventive Medicine and Public Health, School of Medicine, Keio University) as the President. The 52nd meeting will be jointly held with the annual meeting of the Japanese Society of Alcohol-related Problems (President: Dr. Susumu Higuchi, Director, National Hospital Organization Kurihama Medical and Addiction Center). Please come join us in Yokohama!

Kohji Takada, PhD, Japan
President, 51st Annual Meeting of JMSAS

5th APSAAR-TSAS 2017 Conference

The 5th Asia Pacific Society for Alcohol and Addiction Research (APSAAR) meeting was held jointly with the Taiwan Society of Addiction Science (TSAS) 2017 meeting.

Host city: Taipei, Taiwan.
Venue: Tri-Service General Hospital.
Dates: 31 May to 3 June 2017.

Examples of sessions include (Chair, Title): Kulnaree Hanpatchaiyakul, Thailand, Barriers to Alcohol Addiction Treatment in a Thai Context; San-Yuan Huang, Taiwan, Molecular Genetic Effects in Patient with Alcohol Use Disorder; Tsui-Mei Hung, Taiwan, Addiction Treatments in Taiwan; Kenichi Ikejima, Japan, Update on the Pathophysiology of Alcoholic Liver Injury; Andrew Lawrence, Australia, Preclinical Studies of Alcohol-Seeking: Models, Circuits, and Treatments; Esther Ching-Lan Lin, Taiwan, Alcoholism and Substance Abuse; Asheeta Prasad, Australia, Molecular Biology, Neuroscience, and Psychology; and Cheng-Fan Yen, Taiwan: Internet Addiction: From Children to Adults. Sessions were on Tobacco and Psychiatry and Drug Abuse and Sexual Dysfunction, amongst other topics.

Peter Dodd, PhD, Australia
President of APSAAR
In Memoriam of Professor Jean Pierre von Wartburg

On April 11th 2017 Professor Jean Pierre von Wartburg passed away in his home in Bollingen near Bern, Switzerland. He was not only one of the pioneers in Alcohol Research, he was one of the leading scientist in the field of Enzymology and Alcohol Metabolism between 1965 and 1990, a real giant who dominated the field during his time. Jean Pierre was born on May 25th 1931 in Bern, Switzerland. He received his MD degree 1958 from the University of Bern. Jean Pierre was a research fellow at McGill University Montreal General Hospital Research Institute, Montreal, Quebec, Canada and at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital, Biophysics Research Laboratory, Harvard University, Boston, Massachusetts, USA between 1961 and 1963. From 1967 until 1990 he was Professor of Biochemistry at the University of Bern, Switzerland. Here he studied primarily alcohol metabolism through oxidation by alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH).

Jean Pierre identified and characterized various ADHs in the liver and in other tissues and their role not only in ethanol metabolism. In 1965 he was the first to describe an atypical ADH in the liver (later called pi ADH) (v.Wartburg JP, Papenberg J, Aebi H, Can J Biochem 1965;43:889-98; von Wartburg JP, Schürich PM, Ann NY Acad Sci 1968;151:936-46). Since this time Prof. von Wartburg published countless papers dealing with multiple aspects of ADHs including their polymorphisms and their role in alcohol mediated diseases.

From 1982 until 1988 Professor von Wartburg guided multiple societies as president. He was the first President of the International Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ISBRA), and he was member of the Board of directors of the European Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism (ESBRA). He also was the first President of the Swiss Foundation for Alcohol Research, the Swiss Society of Biochemistry. He was member of the Swiss Federal Committee for Alcohol, and honorary member of various scientific societies.

Professor von Wartburg received in 1968 the First Jellinek Award for excellence in genetics and biochemistry Research, in 1970 the first F. Miescher Award of the Swiss Biochemistry Society, and in 1978 the Medal of the American Medical Society on Alcoholism.

In 1990 Jean Pierre retired from his position as Professor of Biochemistry at Bern University. He could then spend more time with his family, especially with his wife Pia with her he was married more than 50 years. Professionally he turned his interest and thus most of his time towards art. He enjoyed sculpturing and developed his sculpture technique to high standards becoming an outstanding artist.

The scientific community has lost a great scientist, who was a pioneer and co-founders of modern alcohol research, a world citizen dominating the international scene in his field. We are mourning for Jean Pierre with his wife Pia, his family, and his friends and we will keep him in our hearts as the great gentleman he was.

Helmut K. Seitz, MD, PhD, Germany
Applying for ISBRA Membership

If you are already a member in good standing of one of ISBRA’s affiliated regional societies (ESBRA, JMSAS, RSA, APSAAR or LASBRA) you need only complete the online ISBRA Membership Application Form, which can be found at http://isbra.com/membership (if you have questions, please contact Ms. Lintz at isbra@isbra.com). Annual dues for these members are $45. If you are not a member of an affiliated Society, you must submit an up-to-date Curriculum Vitae and the Membership Application Form. Annual dues for these members are $60, and all information can be submitted online at http://isbra.com/membership. The Membership Committee reviews applications 4 times a year. Application deadlines are: January 2, April 1, July 1 and October 1. You will be notified in writing of your formal acceptance into ISBRA.