Meetings, transactions and society news

Out of Africa ...

The First ever “International Congress on Dermatological Care for All—a Basic Human Right” was held in Addis Ababa and Mekele, Ethiopia from November 1st to 4th, 2006. Those who have known Ethiopia for its infamous famines and poverty would have been surprised to see the basic and small but very clean and efficient International airport in which we landed from so many different parts of the world.

I should begin the description of the congress by expressing my immense gratitude to the International Society of Dermatology for sponsoring this congress wholeheartedly which was held under the patronage of various agencies of the Government of Italy like the Ministries of Health, Interior, Justice, Italian Embassy in Ethiopia, to name a few. I would like to thank the ISD for choosing me as the recipient of the Travel Award to attend this wonderful conference. The ISD was represented by Luttgard Wiest of Germany who serves the organization in the capacity of Executive Vice President. For those of us who are wondering as to what the connection is between Ethiopia and Italy, there is commendable work being done with a very generous support from the Italian government in many developmental programs of Ethiopia as Italy had occupied Ethiopia for a few years in the 1940s and has since maintained cordial relations with it and its people.

Prof. Aldo Morrone of San Gallicano Institute of Rome who is known far and wide for his invaluable and selfless help and support to the marginalized populations of Italy like the illegal immigrants, beggars, prostitutes and other unfortunate individuals, has set up a dermatological department in Mekele, Tigray region of Ethiopia. He and his team of two wonderful charming young Italian women dermatologists serve a population of 4 million for their dermatological needs. Interestingly they are the only dermatologists in the entire region, a region suffering severely from the usual and also the most exotic of dermatological diseases which Prof. Morrone and his team effectively tackle with the help of teledermatology too at times when the going gets tough! It would be impossible to describe Prof. Morrone’s contribution to community dermatology in this short report but let me state candidly that if every country produced just one Aldo Morrone; the dermatological world would be a better place to live in! Bravo!

The conference was inaugurated in the presence of H.E. the Health Minister of Ethiopia, H.E. The Health Bureau Chief of Tigray, Ethiopia, H.E. The Italian Ambassador to Ethiopia, etc. Well-known ambassadors of community dermatology and champions of low cost and effective dermatology in developing countries like Terence Ryan and Prof. Paul Buxton attended the conference imparting their sagely advice and wisdom in many areas. Dr Luttgard Wiest gave a crisp presentation of the aims and activities of International Society of Dermatology. The conference was attended by dermatologists and specialists from all over the world like Italy, USA, UK, Germany, France, Mexico, Sweden, Luxemburg, Kenya, and of course Ethiopia. I had the honor of representing India. The conference was marked by superb scientific material, lectures and discussions on topics ranging from health care issues of Ethiopia and the rest of Africa to the global problems of managing skin diseases in resource poor countries, infectious skin diseases, dermatological rarities, epidemiology to telemedicine and digital imaging in dermatology. There was a good mix of dermatoveneroerology topics related to Ethiopia specifically, of Africa as a continent and with an international perspective. Issues related to HIV and leprosy too were discussed both by locals and international faculty. Aldo Morrone and his team had called many live cases in his department, an envious array of rarities with striking morphology! It was a veritable live atlas of tropical dermatology with different presentations of cutaneous leishmaniasis, cutaneous tuberculosis, oncocerciasis, deep mycoses etc. There was much discussion and exchange of ideas and opinions, which contributed significantly in making the conference truly a learning experience for all.

This conference was a living example of the advantages of simplicity and compactness. The group was dedicated, interested, coherent and interactive. There was an atmosphere of bonhomie and camaraderie. The social programs organized with the help of the local Ethiopian doctors and politicians were memorable. We will never forget the Circus Mekele, an amazing show of acrobatics, agility and beauty of Ethiopian children! Also equally memorable was the last night in Mekele when the whole group went to a local restaurant for a cultural evening and danced with abandon to the haunting and energetic music of Ethiopia. People of Ethiopia won everyone’s hearts by their friendliness and willingness to help, qualities which are not easily found in today’s world! It was also a unique gastronomic experience! Ethiopian food with its wonderful pungent spices and a variety of tender meats is a gourmet’s delight and everybody partook of it with gusto! The pungency of this cuisine was punctuated by two wonderful Italian meals at the residence of the Ambassador of Italy and at the residence of Prof. Morrone’s team. The latter will be remembered all the more fondly for an interesting development that took place postprandially! After a long and thought provoking discussion with Prof. Morrone I made the official proposal to form a new society of Community Dermatology
headed by Prof. Morrone and myself. I gave a short talk explaining the need and the goals of the society and it was received very well by all. The next day, that is on the concluding day of the conference I recapitulated the ideas to the audience and that marked the birth of “Community Dermatology International” or CDI. A committee has been formed and the first conference of CDI will be held in Mekele, Ethiopia next year followed tentatively by India and Mexico. The goals of this society will be to provide dermatological care to the poor and disadvantaged, to train health care workers in providing dermatological care and to spread the message of dermatological health in communities of the entire world.

My special thanks again to ISD for their support in making this conference possible, to Prof. Aldo Morrone for organizing the entire event and to all the delegates for making it such a pleasurable experience with their willingness to teach, share and learn, all at the same time. I truly hope more and more of us are able to attend such conferences in the future, which help us grow in more ways than one.

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XXV Central American and Caribbean Congress of Dermatology, San Pedro Sula, Honduras, November 11–16, 2006

Located in the northern part of the country, San Pedro is only a few miles from the coast and has always played a major role in Honduran history. The city was founded on June 27th of 1536, by Don Pedro de Alvarado.

The Spanish conqueror founded it with the name of “Villa de San Pedro de Puerto Caballos” and within the next 5 years
it was known as San Pedro Sula, with the name Sula deriving from the local dialect Usula, meaning “valley of birds”.

A rail line was built between San Pedro and the coast, connecting the banana plantations with the ports of Tela and Puerto Cortes. Today San Pedro has a population over a million people, and is officially the second largest city in Honduras.


There were registered over 300 Dermatologists and fifty seven professors from USA, Mexico, Central America, Dominican Republic, Colombia, Chile, Argentina, Belgium, Italy, France and England.

Seven workshops: peeling, materials of filling, esclero-therapy, Botox, laser, Cryosurgery and tensile threads.

Five Conferences: Dr Fernando Latapi by Roberto Arenas, Phootherapy in Dermatology by Dr Orlando Jaramillo, what’s new in the treatment of nail disorders by Dra. Antonella Tosti, Cosmetic Dermatology by Enrique Hernandez Perez, and Red Faces by Dra. Yolanda Ortiz.

Three Scientific breakfasts, the topics of discussion were: alopecia, advances in face photo aging and, liposuction.

The topics of the symposia were mainly about: New technology in the restoration of the coetaneous barrier, toolbox concept, acne and atopic dermatitis, the different facets of herpes virus and its treatment, post inflammatory hiper-pigmentations, pediatric dermatology, mycology, What is new?, dermatologic surgery, internal medicine and skin, acne, contact dermatitis, nail and hair, Dermatoscopy, laser and Cosmetic dermatology.

There were 50 scientific presentations, among free communications, minicases and poster exhibits.

The next Central American and the Caribbean Congress of Dermatology will be in Nicaragua in the year of 2009.

Respectfully submitted
Eduardo Silva-Lizama, MD
Announcement for nominations for the 2007 Maria M. Duran Fellowships

The Maria M. Duran Committee is seeking nominations for the remaining 2007 Maria M. Duran Fellowship. The fellowships allow young dermatologists to attend regional and international meetings and priority is given to those who have never attended an international meeting and are in need of financial assistance.

For 2007, the remaining fellowship will be awarded for The Egyptian Women’s Dermatological Society in Cairo, Egypt (in conjunction with the ISD), to be held October 29–November 2, 2007. The organizer is Prof. El-Gothamy.

The amount of the award is US$1000.

To apply for the fellowship, please complete the fellowship nomination form on the ISD website (http://www.intsocdermatol.org/) and have a letter of support from the Director of the training program or the President of the local dermatological society sent to Evangeline B. Handog, MD email: handogmd@pacific.net.ph

• Deadline for receipt of nominations for 2007 fellowship is January 15, 2007.

Meetings with: ISD Young Dermatologist Travel Awards available
April 19–21, 2007, Global Dermatology, Genoa, Italy
July 22–27, 2007, Munich International Summer Academy of Practical Dermatology, Munich, Germany
October 29–November 2, 2007, International Meeting of Egyptian Women’s Dermatological Society and the ISD, Cairo, Egypt

Research Grant Announcements

The Council for Nail Disorders is accepting grant applications for nail research. Details are available through Cindy Froehlich at cfroehlich@Bellsouth.net

European Nail Society (ENS) is accepting grant applications for nail research. Details are available through Dr Matilde Lorizzo at matildeiorizzo@hotmail.com

ANTONI DE GIMBERNAT FOUNDATION GRANT 2007 CAMBRILS (Tarragona) Spain

The Antoni de Gimbernat Foundation is pleased to announce the call for Entries and Submissions, for the annual grant related to laser application in medicine and surgery.

Subject: “Advances in Clinical Applications of Lasers in Medicine and Surgery.


For further information and submission regulations, please log on to the following web page: imv@laserspain.com“FOUNDATION”. 