

HISTORY CORNER

Hosting the WFNMB: A Memoir and a Modest Proposal

At 6:00 AM on the morning of September 17, 1978, I dialed room service at the Washington Hilton, knowing that if there was an answer, the threatened strike of the unionized hotel employees would have been settled—and there would be no problems for the Second World Congress of the World Federation of Nuclear Medicine and Biology (WFNMB) that was to begin in 2 hours. What a sigh of relief I breathed when the phone was answered.

Preparations for the meeting began when Washington, DC, was selected for the 1978 meeting during the First World Congress, held in Tokyo and Kyoto in 1974. The World Federation was born on October 26, 1970, in San Jerónimo Lidice, Mexico. Professor Hideo Ueda, president of the Japanese Society of Nuclear Medicine, was elected president, with Masahiro Iio as secretary general and Sadatake Kato as treasurer.¹

In the WFNMB articles of federation that were approved in 1970, the first objective was “to unite national societies or groups in the field of nuclear medicine and biology throughout the world with equal representation in an international association, in order to promote the development of nuclear medicine and biology.” Each national society or group had 1 vote (1 per country). According to the articles of federation, the WFNMB was to “hold international congresses of nuclear medicine and biology every 4 years” and “the Congresses shall be convened by the President of the Federation and shall take place at a designated site in his home country.”

The first meeting of the group that was planning the 1978 congress in Washington was held in Philadelphia on June 17, 1975, during the SNM annual meeting. I served as president, James J. Smith as secretary general, John Kuranz of G.D. Searle & Co. as treasurer, Richard C. Reba as chair of the Local Arrangements Committee, and John P. Ryan of 3M Company as chair of the Industrial Affiliates Section.

On July 2, 1975, the executive committee met in Washington in the offices of several candidate organizations and selected the management services of Courtesy Associates (CA), with a major role being played by Sheila A. Stampfli, the firm’s public relations manager. It was also decided to ask Judy Glos, SNM’s executive director, and the SNM to be responsible for commercial exhibits. This was subsequently approved, with a fee of \$25,000 to be paid by the WFNMB to the SNM for running the

commercial exhibits, which would be recruited by the WFNMB.

To avoid conflict with the SNM annual meeting, the second World Congress was scheduled for September. (The idea of a joint meeting of the SNM and WFNMB had been rejected by SNM leadership.) SNM’s Midwestern Chapter agreed to cancel their fall meeting for 1978 and encourage their members to attend the congress.



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It was stated early on that the “major thrust of the WFNMB congress, is to help nuclear medicine achieve a clearer identity in the mind of the public, government, colleagues in other specialties and people within the specialty of nuclear medicine itself.” At a meeting of the executive committee at the Sheraton Park Hotel on August 25, 1976, James Adelstein (who cochaired the Scientific Program Committee with Alfred Wolf) further clarified and summarized the purposes of the World Congress:

- To present aspects of “atoms for health” to the general public;
- To enhance public relations with an emphasis on defining the field and sharpening the identity of nuclear medicine;
- To identify career potentials in nuclear medicine for young people;
- To provide a scientific program with a focus on the interests of developing countries;
- To present a scientific program that would attract agencies to provide research support; and
- To provide a scientific program of sufficient excellence to attract eminent nuclear medicine scientists from around the world.

The meeting was a tremendous success, with 1,655 registrants from 58 countries, among them 922 from the United States, 135 from Japan, 53 from France, and 55 from West Germany. More than 290 students were in attendance.

A coincidence that increased the international flavor of the meeting was the simultaneous holding of meetings

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derwent combined chemo- and radiotherapy. In a third patient, no sentinel node was identified. The authors concluded that, "Laparoscopic detection

of sentinel nodes using ^{99m}Tc -labeled colloid is feasible in patients with primary and recurrent vaginal cancer

and may provide important information to direct further management."

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of the likely dose. This, however, is beyond the scope of this case report.

All licensees should expect the NRC to perform dose calculations using state-of-the-art dosimetry methods that result in realistic and not overly conservative dose estimates. This is especially important because these dose estimates are used for risk assessment. The large discrepancies in methodology, criteria used, and estimated dose demonstrated in this case raise important issues. We therefore recommend that the NRC Commissioners consider a case-by-case review of staff dose calculations by an outside expert panel to gain valuable perspectives and appropriate calculation strategies to assure that these dose estimates are realistic and represent values that not only comply with regulatory requirements but also can be used for appropriate risk assessment.

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at Camp David that would result in an accord between Egypt and Israel. Attendees at our meeting were fascinated by glimpses of Senator Ted Kennedy, Israel's Prime Minister Menachem Begin, and other dignitaries passing through the hotel lobby.

As would be expected from a meeting in the nation's capital, the opening ceremony included a letter from President Jimmy Carter and talks by Nobel laureate Rosalyn Yalow and Donald Frederickson, director of the National Institutes of Health. On September 18, the Preservation Jazz band gave a special Kennedy Center concert for the attendees, followed by a rooftop reception. On September 20, the National Gallery of Art opened its doors for a private showing, with a performance by the National Gallery Orchestra.

The meeting was an overwhelming success and was greatly rewarding for attendees, individuals presenting scientific papers, and the dedicated organizers, which, in addition to those mentioned already, included: Anne Wagner and Arlene Reba, who chaired the Social Program Committee;

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Cecil Barrett, the Hilton employee who "made the trains run on time" throughout the meeting; and Beatrice Smith, who kept detailed minutes during the planning.

Is It Not Time Again?

An important question is whether it is time again for the United States to host the World Congress of the WFNMB. Six years before the date of each Congress, the WFNMB assembly meets to choose a host city. Should the SNM submit a proposal to the assembly for the meeting to be held in the United States in 2014? At that time, 36 years will have passed since the meeting in Washington in 1978. Some believe that the World Congresses of the WFNMB should be held only in developing countries. Others believe that, with respect to nuclear medicine, we are all developing countries and that the goals of the Second World Congress are as worthy today as they were in 1975.

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