

INTERNATIONAL NEUROTOXICOLOGY ASSOCIATION - INA -

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Dear colleague,

this is your third newsletter: a little bit late, but full of mostly good news. For the fun of being a pest, I would like to start by the not so good news. Firstly, I have not yet fully arrived to get nice print-outs from the INA member data base. That is why you get the lengthy "INA PROFESSIONAL REGISTER" containing the raw entries instead of a worked-out directory like the "INA SPECIAL INTEREST REGISTER" or the "INA COLLABORATION REQUEST REGISTER" (all of them enclosed with this letter). I do hope that I will be able to overcome some drawbacks of "OPEN ACCESS" by writing some dedicated software until the end of April. In the meanwhile you could perhaps throw a glance at your data in the professional register; the entries are not always identical with your answers on the application form. The problem is that when you run a data base you have to find a common denominator for similar items, otherwise you will end up with a lot of keywords which look different to the computer but really mean the same thing. So if you feel I did you wrong, just ask for corrections. Another point along that line is that some of you were not very specific on what they are doing or planning to do. I would imagine that it could be of general interest to know about the substances (or substance class, e.g. "organophosphates somebody is dealing with, the method(s) he is using (e.g. "tissue culture"), and the field he is working in (instead of "neurotoxicology", which is self-evident, one could mark "basic research", "toxicological screening", "industrial toxicology", just to name a few). I am afraid I will have to use a more elaborated questionnaire for the updating next year.

WHAT IS INA GOOD FOR?

Secondly, I have to bother you with some organisational problems. Otto Wolthuis, who was recommended to us by Ulrich Schaeppi, and a colleague of his, Jacob Hooisma, asked me some very simple questions, which nevertheless I found very hard to answer without having the opinion of the club members. For instance, they wanted to know about the people and the aims of INA. As this is a question of common interest to all new members, I hastily designed a welcome letter which is also enclosed with this newsletter. It is mostly based on the points from the first questionnaire which were approved by the majority of members, together with some points which I tacitly held self-evident, but which perhaps are not. What we need is a

definition of our goals not only to give some orientation to new members, but also to introduce ourselves to institutions and companies from which we hope to get funds for our activities, e.g. the Duesseldorf meeting this autumn and the behavioral toxicology book. These statutes would serve as some sort of a visiting-card on many occasions; with respect to the weight of the first impression I would wish that somebody who is a native speaker of English provided us with a draft which could be circulated among members for general approval.

Another question was about limitation of membership. I still think that the chance of bringing people with various backgrounds together in order to allow for integrated approaches to toxicological problems weighs more than the risk of growing exponentially, and eventually being left with a bulk of people who do not know each other and are unable to discuss problems on a common basis. This problem could be circumvented by forming subgroups for various disciplines, and still maintain the organisational background and the feeling of solidarity which both are necessary for fruitful cooperations and mutual help. Otto Wolthuis proposed a three-papers-criterion for new applicants. I think it is a good idea, but instead of using it as a selection criterion I would like to practice this as a means of introducing new members to the rest of the club.

DUTCH INVASION: IS IT COMING?

Jacob Hooisma founded a Dutch Neurotoxicology club in parallel to ours, and he asked if perhaps we were interested to join. They are about 25 people having meetings three or four times a year. Even though we cannot have as many meetings due to our international composition, I felt free to invite them in, because their aims appear to be congruent with ours, and because we may hope to get some experts on fields not covered by our own experts.

HOW ABOUT FOUNDING A TRANSATLANTIC JOURNAL?

The last point raised by the Dutch colleagues was the foundation of a neurotox paper. They want it European, whereas I think a joint venture of European and American scientists would be closer to the intentions of INA. Even though there is already a respectable number of papers on the market, there could be a chance for a paper on applied neurobehavioral toxicology, mainly because EPA has accepted these methods as screening tests for the safety assessment of drugs and chemicals. As nobody knows me outside of my family, I am definitely not the right person to start a journal. But as INA has a sufficient number of renowned experts, it is not totally absurd to give it a thought. Anybody going for that?

The last piece of bad news is that the Duesseldorf conference scheduled for summer has to be postponed to autumn, partly because only few people are able to come this summer, but also because we would like to find some more authors for the behavioral toxicology book. Gerhard Winneke and I thought it might be a good idea to see the presentations at the Copenhagen conference and possibly invite some people to contribute. This procedure requires a time lag between the end of the conference and the Duesseldorf meeting, because we cannot expect people to change their travelling plans on the spot.

GOOD NEWS:

And now the good news. I have obtained permission to make use of the "INTERNATIONAL VERTEBRATE MORPHOLOGISTS DIRECTORY". In case you require the help or advice of an anatomist, just drop me a line. Possible search keywords are animal groups, organ systems (including sensory organs and nervous system, of course), and special techniques (e.g., think of histochemistry).

INA BY STATISTICS:

51 people have returned the application forms; their data are contained in the register. 32 members have returned the second questionnaire, and these are the results:

- 24 want new members to be acquired by old members;
20 voted for official announcements; 17 want INA to be open to all applicants
- 25 prefer INA as a name for our club, 5 go for NSG, and 2 for ING
- 19 would like to receive abstracts of member papers, 13 are happy with titles, and 2 would like to have a copy
- 12 would be able to attend a neurobehavioral toxicology workshop in 1986, 9 this summer, and 7 this autumn

In summary, everybody is entitled to invite neurotoxicologists (in a broad sense) to join INA. Concerning official announcements, I have to come back to the point that we need a leaflet containing most of the relevant information about INA; it could be sent to newly acquired members, and it could also be handed over to congress participants or placed on top of the registration desk. For instance, I have the consent of professor Ellen, organiser of the next NATO ASI course in Marseille, to bring the existence of our club to the attention of the participants, but I do not yet have an advertising leaflet for that purpose. So once again, please help designing a representative leaflet, and may-be even a logo! The printing could be done at my institute.

As far as the circulation of abstracts is concerned, this means a lot of extra typing work unless the original abstracts are photocopied. So please, you authors, provide one original reprint or at least a clearly readable copy of your abstract in a compressed format (as used by most journals) which is technically adequate for being copied for the rest of the members.

INA READING LIST

A new feature of the INA newsletters is the INA reading list. For this edition, it is merely composed of titles submitted by Ulrich Schaeppi and Otto Wolthuis. In the future it will contain abstracts of the latest member publications, and 3 titles or abstracts of papers published by new members.

THE BEHAVIORAL TOXICOLOGY METHODS BOOK

A number of INA experts have offered their help in summarizing the state of the art in behavioral toxicology. Since my last newsletter, a review covering 500 titles has been finished by Gerhard Winneke and Frank Elstermeier at my home institute. After translation into English, it could be a start-point for those of the contributors who prefer making good things better over starting from zero. For practical reasons, american authors will be coordinated by Zoltan Annau, and European Authors by Gerhard Winneke. Depending on the availability of funds, I will nevertheless try to bring all authors and those members who work in the same field together for a workshop in Duesseldorf. From time to time I shall report on the progress of the book in my newsletters.

LAST POINT: INFORMAL MEETINGS

There were not too many questionnaires returned, and so the number of multiple participations at congresses is low with the exception of the Copenhagen meeting. May-be those who were still undecided where to go when they filled in the questionnaire make up their minds when they read this list:

MEETING

Behavioral Toxicology Conference,
Copenhagen, Aug.85

sot. of Toxicology,
San Diego, March 85

PARTICIPANTS

Bogo, Csicsaky, Discalzi,
Hooisma, Ladefoged,
Schaeppi, Simonsen, Wolthuis

Costa, Crofton

Soc. of Neuroscience, Dallas, Oct.85	Costa
XII Int.Symp. on Cerebral Blood Flow, Sweden	Lefauconnier
Symp. on the Blood Brain Barrier, Denmark	Lefauconnier
Int. meeting of the Int. Soc. for Neurochemistry, July 85	Lefauconnier
Same title, Riva del Garda, May 85	Bondy
ESOT, Finland, June 85	Sarginson
In-Vitro Toxicology, U.K., Sept.85	Sarginson, Spencer
World Congress on Neurology, Hamburg, Sept.1-6, 1985	Spencer
Peripheral Nerve Study Group, Bern, Sept.9-12, 1985	Spencer

Before I close, I would like to state that the best way of saying thanks for the register is to make good use of it.

Best personal regards

Duesseldorf, 3-15-85