



# FEPS

## Federation of European Physiological Societies

### FEPS NEWSLETTER

April 2006, #8

<u>Letter of the Secretary General</u> of FEPS.	1
Report of the European Young Physiologist Symposium in Munich, March 26, 2006	2
Information about the <u>Joint meeting of the Slovak Physiological Society, the Physiological Society and FEPS</u> in Bratislava 2007.	4
List of contents of the March issue of <u>Acta Physiologica</u>	5

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## Letter of the President of FEPS

Dear Colleagues,

Yes, Munich - March 26-29, 2006 - was the place to be! The joint German Physiological Society – FEPS meeting in Munich was indeed a great success. For the numbers, more scientists than usual participated – around 1,300 in total – and of them 500 were from ‘abroad’!

Thousands of thanks are due the Local organizing Committee with Ulrich Pohl as chairman.

In the next issue of the Newsletter we will give a broader account of the highlights of the meeting. Here I will only make a few notes, specifically in relation to the events with the strongest inputs from FEPS. On Sunday, March 26 – on the day of the evening Opening Ceremony of the main meeting - the European Young Physiologists (EYPS) had arranged a Symposium with highest quality and with a large participation – a grand success described elsewhere in this Newsletter. This activity will be continued at future Joint FEPS meetings. In parallel with this symposium FEPS had arranged a meeting on teaching – “*Innovative methods in Teaching Physiology - Experiences with Problem Based Learning*”. These ‘Teaching Symposia’ are also initiatives that will be repeated in the future. The Annual FEPS Lecture was given by Professor François Verrey from Zurich on “*New Epithelial Amino Acid Transporters*” – one of the many highlights of the meeting.

During the Munich meeting there were several FEPS Business Meetings as well. Further account of these meetings will be given later; some major news emerging from these meetings will be mentioned here. At the FEPS Council meeting on March 29, it was reported that the FEPS President-Elect Heini Murer had resigned from that post and from the Executive Committee, since he had been appointed Vice-President of Research at Zurich University – an important task implying he had to resign from most other time-demanding duties. Congratulations to Heini Murer and Zurich University, and many thanks for his invaluable contributions to FEPS made during past years! The Nominating Committee, chaired by Ole Holger Petersen, had therefore been asked to propose a new candidate as President-Elect: they proposed Professor Ulrich Pohl, Munich. His candidacy was unanimously approved by the Council. A heartily welcome to Ulrich Pohl as President-Elect of FEPS!

The Council also decided to initiate a new Task Force for Physiology Teaching in Europe. This will be discussed in later issues of the Newsletter. Here it shall just be stated that Carlo di Benedetta (who has chaired the Educational Training Program, ETP), the Executive Committee as a whole and the Council all agreed that it is an important task for FEPS to follow up on the physiology curriculum in a period when classical curricula of physiology are changing to curricula integrated with other fields and to curricula based on Problem Based Learning (PBL), disappearance of Departments of Physiology – all resulting in loss of visibility of Physiology as discipline on its own right.

The publication of the Munich abstracts in the new official Journal of PEPS, *Acta Physiologica*, was successful. At a business meeting of FEPS and *Acta Physiologica* it was decided to enlarge the Editorial Board with non-Scandinavian members to reflect the status as the official FEPS Journal, as well as to start several other initiatives to strengthen the Journal. More about that later will be published later.

Hans Hultborn  
President of the Federation of European Physiological Societies



## Looking back at the European Young Physiologist Symposium Munich, March 26, 2006



*Marienplatz Munich*

After months of preparations finally the date of the European Young Physiologist Symposium 2006 (EYPS 2006), Sunday, March 26, had arrived.... And to our relief this day turned out to be a big success!!

So how did it all start... Exactly 5 months before, on October 26, a "young" international committee had been formed, consisting of Heike Beck from Munich (chairmen), Katarina Likavcanova (Prague), Jörg Niehüser-Saran (London), Adam Steensberg (Copenhagen) and myself (Birgit Teunissen, Maastricht). Our assignment was to organize a scientific day for European young physiologists on the topic of "Molecular Biology as a tool in Physiological Research". Next to the scientific part we were also asked to organize a party for the young physiologists in the evening. FEPS and the organizers in Munich would support and partially sponsor this day. For the rest it was up to us....

We started of writing numerous emails.... First we set up a framework for a program and searched for companies interested to sponsor the EYPS. Next to this we immediately tried to spread the news of a great upcoming event for European young physiologists.... And it worked... In December already more than 200 abstracts from all over Europe were submitted. Finally, the number of abstracts submitted for the EYPS reached nearly 400 in February. It was a hard job, especially since we never met each other, but finally we managed to put the program of the meeting together. Slightly different from other years was that we also had to include the Young Investigator Award session into the EYPS

program.

The final scientific program consisted of a "molecular biology" morning session with two invited speakers (Esther Lutgens, Maastricht and Diether Lambrechts, Leuven) and several moderated orals, two moderated poster sessions, three workshops respectively on quantitative PCR (by Biorad), RNA interference (by Invitrogen) and Stem Cells (by Prof. Götz, Institute of Stem Cell Research, Munich), and the Young Investigator Award session. Prizes for the best oral, best three posters and the best young investigator were kindly sponsored by Biorad, Invitrogen and Roche.

The two keynote speakers Esther and Diether gave both outstanding and exciting presentations on their work, respectively "Atherosclerotic plaque rupture" and "VEGF in neurological disease", which were well appreciated by the audience. Moderation of the oral presentations was done by Dr. Richard Siow (London) and Dr. Frans van Nieuwenhoven (Maastricht), who also chaired the sessions, together with the organizers. The award for best oral communication (€1000 product coupon Biorad ) was won by Isabelle Frey (Munich), who gave an excellent presentation on "Transcriptome, proteome, metabolome profiling of *Pept<sup>-/-</sup>* mouse kidney tissue".



*Große Aula, LMU*

For the poster sessions we decided, due to the enormous amount of submitted abstracts, to pre-select 16 posters (8 in each session), based on the quality of the abstract, to be assessed again by Dr. Siow, Dr. van Nieuwenhoven, and the organizers. The presenters did all an excellent job to "sell" their posters to the jury. But we had unfortunately only three awards available, so a tough decision had to be made. We decided to award Eiko de Jong (Groningen), Adriana Stan (Dusseldorf)

and Hayo Castrop (Regensburg) with product coupons from Biorad and Invitrogen.

It should be noted that there was an impressive audience present at all the talks and poster sessions. The atmosphere was informal, with vivid discussions. Also the workshops had a good turn-up as they were of practical relevance for many of the participants.

Prof. Draguhn (University of Heidelberg) chaired the Young Investigator session and together with Jörg and me assessed the competitors in this session. Although we came to a clear agreement about the winner of this award, again all speakers proved to be highly competitive on an international level. Winner of the Young Investigator Award (a digital camera sponsored by Roche) was Werner Klingler from Ulm with a presentation entitled "Motor endplate as a physiological target of the illicit drug ecstasy".

After such a long day of listening to scientific talks and getting involved in scientific discussions, it was not only the organizing committee but also most of the participants who were looking forward to the EYPS party in the Institute of Physiology in the evening. And indeed it was a PARTY!! It was a great opportunity to chill out (I never knew physiologists are such a good dancers....) and make new friends. Sitting together with the other members of the organizing team that night we felt not only relieved that everything went smoothly but also a bit proud about the success the symposium had obviously been. Certainly, looking back there are a few things we would do better a next time, we learned doing.... and we will be keen to share our experiences with the next EYPS organizing committee (Bratislava, 2007). Although it was a tough job, I can say I absolutely enjoyed it!

Finally I would like to thank everybody who helped to make the EYPS 2006 such a nice success! Special thanks to Prof. Pohl, who provided for the facilities in Munich, the Physiological Society UK, the Deutsche Physiologische Gesellschaft, FEPS, Biorad, Invitrogen, Roche and everybody else who assisted us before and during the EYPS.

### **Birgit Teunissen**

*University of Maastricht*



*Left from front: Diether Lambrechts, Jörg Niehüser-Saran, Birgit Teunissen, and Esther Lutgens. Right from front: Frans van Nieuwenhoven, Katarina Likavcanova, Richard Siow, Adam Steensberg, and Heike Beck.*



*Prof. Draguhn (left) in discussion with Werner Klingler (right, winner Young Investigator Award).*



*Prof. Pohl (2<sup>nd</sup> right) and Birgit Teunissen (left) with the awardees*

(photos by David Rowlands and Jörg Niehüser-Saran)

**Joint Meeting**  
of  
**The Slovak Physiological Society**  
and  
**The Physiological Society**  
and  
**The Federation of European Physiological Societies**

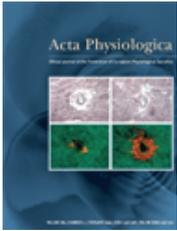
**BRATISLAVA, September 11-14, 2007**

Dear colleagues,

We are delighted to invite you to this Joint Meeting in the capital of Slovakia.

With your help, suggestions and participation the most rapidly developing areas and hot topics in Physiological Sciences will be adequately represented in plenary lectures, symposia, and open oral & poster presentations. Prompted by the overwhelming success of the European Young Physiologists Symposium in Munich, a special symposium will be organized by and for young European scientists. You will be informed on registration, abstract submission and hotel reservations soon. We hope you will enjoy the science presented at the Joint Meeting and the friendly atmosphere in Bratislava, as well as its history, cultural life and beauty.

On behalf of the local organizers, Vladimír Strbák



## List of contents of Acta Physiologica March 2006, Volume 186 Issue 3

Frank B. Jensen <b>Nitric oxide availability affects microvascular O<sub>2</sub> tensions</b>	169
Chris Moore <b>Optical tracking during vocalization reveals a complex pattern of respiration</b>	169
F. Markos, H.M. Snow <b>An investigation into the physiological relevance of the vagal tachycardia in the anaesthetized dog</b>	179
H. J. M. Meijer, G. C. Baan, P. A. Huijting <b>Myofascial force transmission is increasingly important at lower forces: firing frequency-related length-force characteristics of rat extensor digitorum longus</b>	185
G. A. Eppel, S. Ventura, K. M. Denton, R. G. Evans <b>Lack of contribution of P2X receptors of neurally mediated vasoconstriction in the rabbit kidney in vivo</b>	197
D. Baran, O. Tenstad, K. Aukland <b>Localization of tubular uptake segment of filtered Cystatin C and Aprotinin in the rat kidney</b>	209
L. F. Ferreira, D. J. Padilla, J. Williams, K. S. Hageman, T.I. Musch, D. C. Poole <b>Effects of altered nitric oxide availability on rat muscle microvascular oxygenation during contractions</b>	223
B. Binazzi, B. Lanini, R. Bianchi, I. Romagnoli, M. Nerini, F. Gigliotti, R. Duranti, J. Milic-Emili, G. Scano <b>Breathing pattern and kinematics in normal subjects during speech, singing and loud whispering</b>	233