

President's Perspective



Leipzig: What a treat! The 12 th WAIMH World Congress in Leipzig Halle, June 29-July 3, was a great success and a very exciting time indeed, thanks to a wonderful Local Organizing Committee, headed by Kai von Klitzling, and a great Program Committee, headed by Neil Boris. We were helped by fair weather and an exciting World Cup Soccer ambiance. Leipzig is a special city, with an incredible "Mittle Europa gemütlich" German ambiance that conveys the feeling of being at the junction of the Eastern and Western cultures. It is also the cradle of scientific psychology and of the 18th and 19th century philosophy and science.

More than 1300 people attended the Congress, with many newcomers to WAIMH. The program was crammed with good presentations and it was indeed difficult to make choices! People met, caught up with one another, and made unique exchanges, as was the case for Charley Zeanah and teams from all over the world, such as the Hungarian Loczy team who have been working since WW II with institutionalized infants (see this issue). A WAIMH World Congress is definitely the place for such "cross fertilizations." Quite often, people from the same country meet in at a conference and discover they could share some experience or techniques or even work together when they are back home!

The WAIMH Executive Committee met for two days prior to the Congress. Executive Committee members worked hard in preparation for the next WAIMH Congress in Capetown, securing a core professional organizing committee for future congresses, reflecting on ways to plan for a training institute which could profit from the huge expertise of WAIMH members and affiliates.

The Affiliates elected their representatives to the WAIMH Board during a meeting at the Congress. It took several rounds, as candidates were very close, which is good news for WAIMH. People value membership and are willing to serve! Martin Saint André, from Montreal, Quebec, is the newly elected Affiliate Chair, and Mary Folee from New Zealand, is the newly elected Associate Affiliate representative. As we have promised in our new by-laws, both will attend WAIMH Board meetings and bring the Affiliates' points of view. The election process itself was impressive; both candidates received many votes. Not less impressive is how quickly and enthusiastically they have started to work, as you can see in the Affiliate Corner of this issue

After this summer break, back to business. Our next task is to launch an Affiliates' survey about members' needs and fields of expertise, with the aim of building WAIMH Training Institutes in order to make use of our shared expertise across the world and also to make WAIMH financially stable.

The survey will be prepared by the WAIMH office. I have asked Marit Bergum Hansen and Vibeke Moe to write a report on the existing trainings in infant mental health throughout the world, in terms of tools, techniques, settings, and so on, that could make the basis for WAIMH pre- congress institutes or even courses in between the congresses for those Affiliates interested in local training. This survey will be sent to the Affiliates' presidents and published in the Signal.

The CEDJ presented in this issue is a good step in that process. It is the best data base available on evidence based literature on infancy. It is free and exists in three different languages (soon in German, too). Richard Tremblay has been the initiator and WAIMH is happy to help spreading its use by infant mental health professionals.

I wish you a nice autumn for those who have been through summertime and a nice spring for those who have just gone through wintertime!

By Antoine Guedeney

WAIMH president