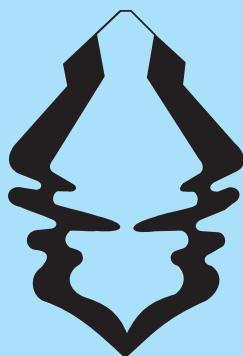


## INTERASMA News



As some readers of *ACI International* may be unfamiliar with INTERASMA, the International Association of Asthmology, it seems appropriate to start this new section in *ACI International* by describing the Association's aims, in terms of its mission statement, indicating who its current officers are, and detailing some of the benefits that membership involves. To this end, we have also included here brief personal statements by some of the Association's Officers. In further articles, Prof. Albert Oehling provides some historical background about the organization, Prof. Philippe Godard describes some of the recent advances in the use of the Internet (including the new Asmanet®), and Dr. F. Muñoz López reports on the forthcoming activities of the European Chapter, including the meeting that will take place in Las Palmas in December 1997. Details about the XVIth World Congress of Asthmology, due to take place in Buenos Aires, October 17–20, 1999, are also presented.

### Mission Statement

- INTERASMA is an international health organization completely focused on all aspects of asthma which bridges the gap between academia and the world of clinical practice.
- INTERASMA is a forum for interdisciplinary discussions where pneumologists, allergologists, pediatricians, and general practitioners have the opportunity to discuss and exchange information between these specialties on asthma research, practice, and management. In this regard the Association supports a broad range of cooperative endeavors.
- INTERASMA is devoted to encouraging asthma education programs all around the world for physicians, as well as for other health professionals, educators, and administrators.

- INTERASMA is engaged in the international crusade to improve the quality of life of asthmatics and to decrease the prevalence, morbidity, and mortality of asthma.

During the XV World Congress of Asthmology, held in Montpellier (France), April 24–27, 1996, the General Assembly unanimously approved the following new Board of INTERASMA:

President	Charles Banov (USA)
Secretary-General/ Treasurer	Hugo E. Neffen (Argentina)
1st Vice-President & President Elect	Gaetano Melillo (Italy)
2nd Vice-President	Paul O'Byrne (Canada)
3rd Vice-President	Philippe Godard (France)
Past President	Julio Croce (Brazil)
Historian	Albert Oehling (Spain)
Assessors	Alain L. de Weck, Ronald Dahl, Israel Glazer, Manuel Barbosa

As part of INTERASMA's efforts to meet the goals outlined above, and the challenges of the future, it was decided that a new professional secretariat was needed. The publishers of *ACI International* will take over this role.

### The Next World Congress

Three countries presented proposals to organize the next World Congress of Asthmology. The Executive Board considered Argentina to be the optimal choice, and the decision that the Congress should take place in Buenos Aires, on October 17–19,

1999, was unanimously approved by the General Assembly.

### Future Meetings

Congresses and meetings which are currently being planned include:

INTERASMA '97: Eastern European Chapter, Budapest (Hungary) — September 2–5, 1997: Organized by Prof. P. Szemere (further details to be announced)

INTERASMA '97: Western European Chapter, Las Palmas (Gran Canaria, Spain) — December 3–5, 1997 (for details, see page 196)

INTERASMA '98: Maghreb Chapter, Marakesh (Morocco) — December 3–5, 1998: Organized by Prof. M. Bartal (further details to be announced)

XVI World Congress of Asthmology: Buenos Aires (Argentina) — October 17–20, 1999 (for details, see page 195)

### Membership Benefits

All INTERASMA members are entitled to receive:

- A free subscription to the *Journal of Investigational Allergology & Clinical Immunology* (six issues per year), which includes INTERASMA News.
- A free subscription to *Allergy and Clinical Immunology International*, which includes INTERASMA News.
- Reduced fees for participating in INTERASMA Congresses around the world.

### Activities of the Western European Chapter

by Dr. Francisco Muñoz López

The scientific activity of the Western European Chapter is centered at present on the meeting that will take place December 3–5, 1997, in the city of Las Palmas (Gran Canaria, Spain), the organization of which has been entrusted to Prof. Anselmo Sánchez Palacios. Details on this meeting, including the scientific program, are given on page 196.

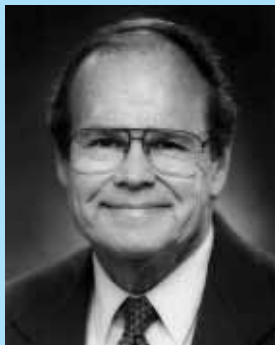
The other main activity of the Chapter is the promotion of INTERASMA among medical specialists whose main interest is asthma, whether in clinical practice or research. Although our initial efforts in this regard concentrated mainly on Spain and Portugal, they are now being extended throughout all the countries that comprise the Chapter.

**What Benefits Does INTERASMA Bring?**

*There are of course various reasons for joining a professional or scientific organization. We thought that readers might be interested in the motivation of some of the leading figures in INTERASMA, several of whom have been members of the Association for many years now. The following individuals were asked to briefly summarize their opinions about the merits and role of the organization. — (Eds.)*

**Prof. Charles H. Banov, MD  
Charleston, SC (USA)**

I see an important role for INTERASMA. In this one organization, physicians from many disciplines meet to understand and treat a single disease — asthma.



Allergologists, pulmonologists, primary care physicians, and other health care professionals interested in asthma can pool their expertise. The shared experiences of physicians from many countries have helped greatly in disseminating the knowledge of recent advances. A unique fellowship among these physicians from different countries and varied disciplines makes membership in INTERASMA most productive and interesting.

**Dr. Hugo E. Neffen, MD  
Santa Fe (Argentina)**

I have been an INTERASMA member since 1980. I believe that asthmatic patients have been receiving different treatments depending on the specialist who

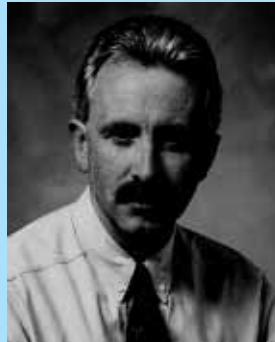


treats them. This has led to confusion among patients and their families, since they do not know which is the right treatment — especially as some treatment modalities are controversial. INTERASMA can help in this regard, since it is the only association that allows pediatricians, pneumologists, allergologists, and health care providers to discuss different approaches and treatments with the aim of providing the best possible manage-

ment for asthmatic patients and improving their quality of life.

**Prof. Paul M. O’Byrne, MB, FRCPI,  
FRCP(C), FCCP  
Hamilton, Ontario (Canada)**

In my view, the chief significance of INTERASMA is its remarkably international nature, with the involvement of individuals from a large variety of backgrounds who are interested in the pathogenesis and treatment of asthma. These members come from a large number of different countries and have different views and opinions on various aspects of asthma. This gives an opportunity for individuals from many countries to participate and learn about advances made in this area.



**Prof. Philippe Godard, MD  
Montpellier (France)**

INTERASMA is a very interesting organization for asthmologists, a fact which is very well illustrated by the success of the last World Congress in Montpellier. Clinicians who are involved in asthma care and research need to meet, regularly, and INTERASMA provides the right framework for this. The Asmanet® is also a success: this network’s Web site has had more than 11,200 visitors so far, and numbers are increasing.



**Prof. Ronald Dahl, MD  
Aarhus (Denmark)**

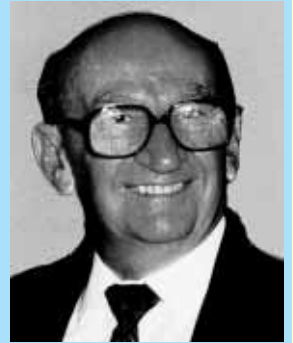
Even at the very first INTERASMA meeting that I attended, the atmosphere was appealing, with interesting and fruitful discussions of all aspects of



asthma. This was true not only during the official scientific program, but also during dinners and social events, without spoiling the good humor and chance to gossip. The Congress venues have always been chosen with great care, and so it was not difficult to decide to become a member of INTERASMA.

**Dr. Israel Glazer, MD  
Tel Aviv (Israel)**

INTERASMA should be active in promoting asthma awareness among the general public, as well as among health professionals, including of course physicians. This can be done through publications geared towards the needs of the different groups. Such a policy is already being implemented through the regional annual meetings, and especially the triennial World Congresses, such as the latest one in Montpellier (1996) and the previous one in Jerusalem, at which it was my honor to preside.



**Prof. Albert Oehling  
Pamplona (Spain)**

When my supervisor, Prof. Hansen, explained the reasons for founding INTERASMA to me in 1957, just after the first Congress in Lübeck, I



understood and agreed with its philosophy and aim, to combine all the specialties that are relevant to the clinical pathology and treatment of bronchial asthma. INTERASMA was and is a society that asks internists, pediatricians, allergologists, and chest physicians to come together to help solve the problems of asthma patients. Despite the long way that we have come since those days, much still remains to be done for these patients, who are ultimately the ones who must suffer the consequences of any friction between the different specialties.