



IFSSH Newsletter – April 2014

2014 Delegates' Council Meeting

The annual IFSSH Delegates' Council Meeting will be held on Thursday 19th June in Paris, in conjunction with the FESSH meeting (June 18-21). We invite the IFSSH delegate of each member society to participate in this meeting. If your society's delegate is unable to attend, he/she should inform the secretariat (email: administration@ifssh.info) and provide the contact details of an alternative member who will be present.

We look forward to meeting with the delegates in Paris to discuss the news, events and future of the IFSSH.

The Magic of Hands: India's IFSSH Legacy in Schools

All of us know that our hands are very valuable but in most countries, people are not aware that there are specially trained surgeons to take care of the problems of the hand be it an injury or a deformity.

When India played host to the 12th Triennial Congress of the IFSSH and 9th Triennial Congress of the IFSHT, the Organising Committee wanted to increase the awareness of Hand Surgery amongst the public. Though Hand Surgery in India existed ever since the work of Paul Brand, it has not become a household name. The responsibility for popularising it lies also on the individual Hand Surgeon and the Hand Society. We thought that we needed some 'out of the box' idea to make a rapid and lasting impression among the masses. The Organising Committee thought that the best way was to introduce it to school children and through them to their parents and families.

An idea of a national level painting competition for the children was thought of. It was organised for children between Standard VI to Standard IX (11 to 15 years) and we asked them to paint the hands they saw. We offered fabulous prizes. We announced that the first 50 paintings chosen will each be awarded Rs.10,000/- and the school to which the first prize winner belonged will get a lofty prize of Rs. 500,000/-. The prize money to the school was to be used for building up a library or laboratory and for the promotion of arts and science in the school for the benefit of the children. The prize money offered was very substantial by Indian standards.

The programme had to be done in a short time frame and so we sought the services of a famous Advertising Agency M/s Stark Expo from Trivandrum. To get the newspaper publicity we requested Mrs. Sonia Gandhi, the Chairperson of the United Progressive Alliance, the ruling party of India to launch the competition. Mrs. Gandhi was very kind enough to do it on 28th January, 2013. We sent an information kit, which in addition to the rules of the competition and the application form also contained a note about Hand Surgery and the congress.

Over 2000 schools were contacted in 3 weeks and a total of 1800 participation kits were mailed. The response was overwhelming and 4250 entries were received from 512 schools from across the country in 15 days! 200 entries were shortlisted by 2 Professors of the Arts College in Trivandrum. The selected entries were brought to Coimbatore, the Head Quarters of the Organising Committee. Three notable artists were asked to judge. The judges had a tough time in placing the merit list. Two paintings were awarded the joint first prize of Rs.2,50,000/- each, one by Mast P.P. Midhun., Azhikode High School, Kannur, Kerala and the other by Miss Rupali Goel, of Vishwa Bharati Public School, Noida, Uttar Pradesh. Each of them was asked to give a note on the painting and Mast. Midhun captioned his painting as “Rural Scenario - A lump of clay in the potters hand is tomorrow’s earthenware” and Miss Rupali captioned her painting as “Puppet Show Painting – Just like puppets in the hands of the controller, the world too is a puppet in the hands of common man”. The first 50 prize winning paintings and another 100 were mounted and adorned the walls of the congress halls and it made a spectacular show. At the end of the congress, the paintings were auctioned and the President of IFSSH Dr Mennen and the President Elect Dr Tonkin bought the first prize winning paintings.

After the congress was over, the Dr Raja Sabapathy visited the Azhikode High School at Kannur, Kerala to hand over the cheque to which Mast. Midhun belonged. It was a great day of rejoicing for the whole school. The students had decorated the school with flowers, festoons and balloons. Their art teacher spoke with a lot of enthusiasm about the students and their capabilities. Dr. Sabapathy gave a talk to the students in simple terms about the intricate nature of the human hand and it was well received by the audience. At the end of the talk the 1000 students raised their hands which were a spectacular sight to see. Mast. Midhun said that he had used his prize money to buy a laptop computer. The prize had enthused him to take up arts as his career. Dr. Rakesh Khazanchi the Organising Secretary, visited the school in Greater Noida to which the joint prize winner Miss Rupali Goel belonged and handed over the prize. Both the schools have planned to set up an arts school and library and also and enhance their laboratory facilities.

Hand Surgery is basically about touching lives and through this project the Surgeons attending the international congress touched the lives of children by improving the facilities for their study. The first 50 winning entries were made into a book and it is available for a price of US\$ 20. In addition to the paintings the book also contains interesting facts about the hands. The book is becoming popular and many people consider it a worthy gift to give. If you are interested in getting a copy, please contact Dr. S. Raja Sabapathy at rajahand@vsnl.com. You can rest assured that this amount goes to the cause of promoting Hand Surgery.



Left: Mrs Sonia Gandhi launching the 'Magic of Hands' campaign, with Mrs Nirmala and Dr Raja Sabapathy and Dr Meera and Dr Rakesh Khazanchi.

Centre: Joint first prize winners - Rural Scenario by Master Midhun: 'A lump of clay in the potter's hand is tomorrow's earthenware'; Puppet's Show by Ms Rupali Goel: 'Just like puppets in the hands of the controller, the world too is a puppet in the hands of the common man'.

Right: Enthusiastic children of the winning schools meet with Dr Sabapathy

Ezine

Prof Ulrich Mennen, the IFSSH immediate past-President, continues to produce quarterly issues of the ezine – an electronic publication distributed to hand surgeons, therapists, allied health, associated trade, etc. This publication is free of charge and provides updates of the IFSSH events, news of its member societies, reports from the Scientific Committees, journal highlights and upcoming national congress details.

The February issue is now available on the IFSSH website - <http://ifssh.info/ezine.html>

We ask each society delegate distribute this ezine to society members. However, individuals may also subscribe directly via the IFSSH website. The ezine readership continues to grow, with over 4800 direct subscriptions and countless more indirect readers via the distribution by society delegates.

Please remember to submit relevant news from your society to the ezine – ezine@ifssh.info.

Educational bursaries and grants

Delegates are asked to read the guidelines on the website (www.ifssh.info) and encourage applications from their societies.

Dr Raoul Tubiana (1915-2013)

The IFSSH Executive acknowledges the sad passing of a giant in hand surgery, Raoul Tubiana from France. Dr Tubiana's contribution was enormous, nationally and internationally. Our sympathy is extended to Dr Tubiana's family and to our French colleagues.

Future Meetings

A detailed list of national and regional hand surgery meetings is available on the IFSSH website.

The triennial **IFSSH Congresses** are as follows:

XIIIth IFSSH – Xth IFSHT Congress – Buenos Aires, Argentina
October 24-28, 2016
www.ifssh-ifsht2016.com

XIVth IFSSH – XIth IFSHT Congress – Berlin, Germany
May, 2019

FESSH Congress:

XIXth Federation of European Societies for Surgery of the Hand Congress – Paris, France
June 18-21, 2014

APFSSH Congress:

10th Congress of the Asia Pacific Federation of Societies for Surgery of the Hand
– Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
October 2-4, 2014

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