

# SPACE MEDICINE BRANCH REPORT

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## President's Message

Next month the Annual Meeting of the Aerospace Medical Association will be held in Reno, Nevada. This year is extra special as it marks the 50th anniversary of the Space Medicine Branch as a constituent organization of the Association. This year also marks the 40th anniversary of manned spaceflight, a new century, and a new millennium. Yet along with these milestones, it seems even more incredible that the year is 2001, a date associated with space and space travel for decades thanks to Arthur C. Clarke. However incredible, this date seems only fitting as the year to mark these occasions on.

Now at the end of the year, I look back on the great work done and tasks we have accomplished. The Branch now has a draft of a new Constitution and By-Laws. My thanks and gratitude goes to the Constitution and By-Laws Ad-Hoc Committee and its chair Dr. Robin Dodge. The Branch now has before it a governing structure, which I believe will allow greater flexibility and a better reflection of our current operations. It should serve us well into this new century.

As mentioned, this year marks a half-century of the Branch. With many thanks to the History Committee chaired by our Historian Dr. Wyck Hoffer, the committee has made a special effort this year to identify, gather, and organize our Branch archives. With appreciable strides, we have been able to accomplish much of this. Several historical articles and a complete list of our archives are now published on the Branch's web site. Current and future members may now be able to locate and research the history of the Branch, a capacity that was not available a year ago. However, the archives are not complete and gaps still remain. Gaps that may be lost forever without all our help.

The Branch web site ([www.asma.org/smb/](http://www.asma.org/smb/) <<http://www.asma.org/smb/>>) has been updated and expanded. It has grown to be a wealth of information for and about the Branch. New sections on History, Education, and Membership have been added. The site not only serves our members but also provides visibility to an ever increasingly interested worldwide audience. As a result, the site helps strengthen our role as the leading authority of space medicine throughout the world. It also has begun to be used as a resource for disseminating space medicine knowledge and stimulating research. Core functions of the Branch hoped for by the Branch's founders.

Many of our international members have been active in promoting space medicine and the Branch worldwide. This year the chair of our International Committee, Dr. Chrysoula Papadeli, was instrumental in sponsoring the very successful 13th Humans in Space Symposium held in Greece. Also this year, international membership on the Executive Committee has been well represented by the

addition of leaders in space medicine such as Dr. Volker Damann of ESA and Dr. Chiharu Sekiguchi of NASDA.

This year's AsMA meeting in Reno is shaping up to be another outstanding conference. The Space Medicine Branch will be sponsoring three scientific sessions, co-sponsoring one of these with the Associate Fellow's Group. The sessions should prove to be very timely, interesting, and informative. More details about these sponsored sessions may be found on the Branch's web site or on the March SMB page.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to our annual Space Medicine Branch Business Meeting and Luncheon on Thursday, May 10th at noon in the John Ascuaga's Nugget Hotel in Reno. Our speaker will be Dr. Baruch Blumberg, director of NASA's Astrobiology Institute and senior advisor to the NASA Administrator for the Office of Biological and Physical Research. Dr. Blumberg, the 1976 Nobel Prize winner for medicine/physiology for inventing the Hepatitis B vaccine, will speak about NASA's work in exobiology and about NASA's biological research programs.

In addition to the speaker, we will again be presenting the annual Hubertus Strughold Award for excellence in space medicine as well as presenting the Young Investigator Award to a young researcher new to the field of aerospace medicine. I truly wish to thank Dr. Jeff Myers for resuming the chair of the Young Investigator Award committee and Dr. Smith Johnston for chairing the Strughold Award committee. We will also have an excellent group of candidates for Branch offices this year and I wish to thank Dr. Melchor Antunano for his efforts in putting a great ballot together.

This has been an exciting year in the space arena. The International Space Station is now manned on a continual basis. Barring any major problems, this year should prove to be the year humanity began its permanent presence in space. Another milestone was the delivery to the station of the U.S. Laboratory, Destiny. Although only one of several research modules to be installed, the station can now hope to begin fulfilling its role as a platform for space-based research. Another significant event this year included finding evidence of possible liquid water on Mars and Ganymede, a moon of Jupiter. These findings, in combination with suspected oceans on Europa, further increase the hope that suitable environments for current life, or at least past life, exist. Similarly, discoveries this year by NASA's Astrobiology Institute have indicated that liquid water may have occurred soon after our planet's formation. This suggests that liquid water, and possibly life could have been part of other planet's early history but have since been lost. Planets such as Mars. These are truly exciting findings and I hope to hear more about these from our speaker.

It has been an honor to serve the Branch as President this year. I sincerely wish to thank all the Branch Officers, Members-at-Large,

**NOTE:** The SMB website has been updated and is found at:  
<http://www.asma.org/smb/>

Branch Committees, and Members for their dedication and work in support of the Branch throughout this year. I particularly wish to thank Mr. Lloyd Tripp for his activities as Secretary-Treasurer. Having held this position myself, I can appreciate the level of activity necessary to allow this Branch to function so well as it does. As I look forward to the next year, I would like to welcome Dr. Mel Antunano as your new President. Mel is an avid supporter of space medicine and has been active in the Branch for many years. He will be a capable President and I ask that you give him your full support.

I wish to thank you again for the opportunity to serve as your President over this year. I hope to see you all in Reno and look forward to a great and memorable meeting.

**Philip J. Scarpa, M.D.**  
2000-01 President

## SPACE MEDICINE BRANCH YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD

The Space Medicine Branch's Young Investigator Award is presented to a young investigator who is the primary author of an outstanding presentation in the area of Aerospace Medicine presented at the current Annual Scientific Meeting of the Aerospace Medical Association. In addition to being the primary author, the work must be original and the young investigator must be presenting at the Annual Scientific Meeting for the first time. The Award is intended to encourage young investigators new to the field of Aerospace Medicine.

The applicant must submit a draft manuscript of their presentation to the chair of the Young Investigator Award sub-Committee. To be considered for the 2001 award, manuscripts must be submitted by the end of March, 2001 to:

K. Jeffrey Myers, M.D.  
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Young Investigator Award Chair  
P.O. Box 540305  
Merritt Island, Florida 32954  
Phone: (321) 867-2026  
[jeffrey.myers-1@kmail.ksc.nasa.gov](mailto:jeffrey.myers-1@kmail.ksc.nasa.gov)

## Reminder for Prospective Associate Fellows

The Chair of the Associate Fellows Group reminds prospective Associate Fellows that their applications must be received by August 1 each year in order to be considered for the annual selection.

Update forms are available from the Home Office.