

Welcome

I am delighted that Martina Vandebroek has agreed to be an associate editor reporting on the activities of local networks.

Thank you Martina. I am now seeking associate editors to report on interest groups (see bottom of right hand column) and of proENBIS. Will you do it? There will be more about Barcelona in the next issue.

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Three new awards

ENBIS Council has approved three new awards, two proposed by Fabrizio Ruggeri.

The **Young Researchers** award will recognise the work of young people in introducing innovative methods, promoting the use of statistics and/or successfully using it in the daily practice. The recipients, three at most each year, should present their work at the annual ENBIS conference in a special session. Benefits of this award are still to be decided but they should include the waive of the conference registration fee and a one-year subscription to the electronic version of a journal of statistical applications in industry and business.

The **Best Presentation** award will recognise the best contributed paper at the annual ENBIS conference and will be an invitation as a keynote speaker the next year. The third prize, proposed by Ron Kenett, will recognise **managers who have contributed** significantly to the spread and the practice of statistics in their companies. The details of these prizes will be illustrated in the ENBIS website.

Barcelona: message from George Box

Sadly, George Box and his wife, Claire, were unable to attend the Barcelona conference. His health is now such that his doctors strongly advised against the trip. He sent a message which was read at the awards ceremony. Here is a much abridged version. The full version is on our website.

At last we see the coming of age of industrial statistics.

I remember when to be a statistical consultant was extremely frustrating. Some enthusiasts (engineers, chemists and business associates) made remarkable progress in the solution of many problems using statistical techniques. Higher management had little or no interest in such matters. The Japanese devastated this complacency of higher management. Dr Deming was called in to help the automobile industry. He refused to talk to anyone but the CEOs and their associates. This was the beginning of the change in many industries in Europe and the United States in the way that management viewed our subject.

My late colleague Bill Hunter took his class to see how the local Motorola TV factory was doing under new management using quality methods. At first, the defect rate of TVs going through the line had been 130%. That is, every set that came off the line had to be individually fixed once and some had to be fixed twice. A huge graph hung from the ceiling. It showed the progress they had made. In two or three years they had reduced the defect rate from 130% to 3%. Production workers were the same as before and so were most of the managers. We talked to them individually and they told us how much happier they were with the new quality systems and participatory management. Motorola became one of the founders of the six-sigma movement.

You must be vigilant that your society remains interested in the solution of real problems. Statistics is a catalyst for science. But in many ways mathematical thinking and scientific thinking are in some ways antithetical. I believe you can never know too much mathematics but I also believe that the more you think only like a mathematician, the more difficult it will for you to be to be a good scientific statistician

Conference prizes

At the recent ENBIS3-ISIS3 conference, the Scientific Committee awarded prizes to some of the participants who presented their work. John Wiley and Sons kindly provided three prizes worth 100 euros towards the purchase of books. The recipients of these awards were Talia Figarella (Eurandom), Anja Schleppe (Autoliv GmbH) and Jaap van den Heuvel (Rode Kruis Ziekenhuis). Wiley gave a one-year subscription to the journal *Quality and Reliability Engineering International* for the best poster; the recipients were Nicola Fletcher and Robin Nicolson (GlaxoSmithKline).

Course and study plan endorsements

ENBIS will endorse study programs and courses that supply the European business and industry with graduates that have acquired a sound knowledge of statistical and related methods. The scheme was proposed by Martina Vandebroek.

Any organisation offering such courses can apply for ENBIS-endorsement. Benefits will include permission to use the ENBIS logo on all course publicity materials. Full details of benefits, requirements and the application procedure will be on our website.

Benefits

The benefits of ENBIS to our members are many. Each month we describe one. This month's benefit is:

Local networks

Statistical practitioners anywhere in Europe may like to form a local group, or network, whether in a region or in a country. They are then able to join ENBIS collectively as a local network.

At present there are three local networks in ENBIS:
bENBIS (Belgium): 24 members
dENBIS (Denmark): 44 members
nENBIS (Netherlands): 109 members

Benefits of local networks include meetings and other events. Their activities will be reported in *ENBIS News* by associate editor, Martina Vandebroek.

ENBIS council has declared some rules to ensure uniformity of structure across all the local networks. You can read these in full on the ENBIS website. Briefly, they require that every network should have at least 20 members and that every network will work closely with ENBIS although its membership administration will be a local responsibility. The president of each local network will automatically be a member of the ENBIS council. Local networks will support ENBIS financially, through activities, in return for some benefits for its members.

Interest groups

Working groups, described under members' benefits last month, have been renamed **Interest groups**. This may encourage members to join the groups because they are interested in the topics rather than in the expectation of having to do any work.