

The 57th International Conference on the Bioscience of Lipids (ICBL) Chamonix - Mont Blanc, France, September 4-8.

Social Report

The Chamonix valley is located in the heart of the Alps, on the Italian and Swiss borders. Being 88 km from the international airport of Geneva, most people from abroad arrived to Geneva and reached Chamonix by shuttle bus. As we approached our final destination, the mountains grew more and more fascinating, especially for someone coming from a so-called “flatland”. We finally arrived in a beautiful small town enclosed by huge snow and ice covered summits, full of tourists, and a sky full of colorful gliders. Above all, there was the Mont Blanc, which for most of us was the symbol of inaccessibility. As the weather was wonderful, pleasant, and sunny, the beauty of the surrounding nature was just too obvious.

The conference itself was held at the beautiful congress center LE MAJESTIC and the hotels we stayed at were at walking distance.



The building was very much suitable for organizing meetings, had a good audio-visual equipment, several smaller halls to organize poster sessions, coffee breaks and lunch-time meals as well as a very efficient and friendly staff. It promised to be a comfortable and enjoyable 4 days.

The meeting was officially opened at Sunday evening by Michel Lagarde and Laszlo Vigh. They introduced the van Deenen lecturer, Professor Charles N Serhan (Boston) who spoke about previously unrecognized chemical mediators derived from polyunsaturated fatty acids which were shown to control the acute inflammatory response by activating local resolution programs. Among these are the so-called specialized pro-resolving lipid mediators that include lipoxins, resolvins, protectins, and maresins. After this excellent presentation, we had a welcome cocktail with deservedly world-famous wines, the special drink kir (Crème de Cassis with dry white wine), and snacks.

The scientific program on Monday morning started at 9 and did not end until 7 pm. At the beginning and end of both morning and afternoon sessions there was an invited lecture and oral presentations in between. During one hour coffee breaks in the morning, during lunchtime, and in the afternoon, there was the poster session (altogether around 3 hours). The lunch was delicious and very well organized. During the coffee breaks and lunchtime we all enjoyed the beautiful view and sunshine at the terrace of the congress center.

The structure of Tuesday's scientific program was the same as on the previous day except that before the poster session at evening Christian Wolfrum presented the plan of the 58th ICBL, held in Zurich in 2017.

Wednesday's scientific program was planned as a half-day session since we planned to visit one of the summits, the Brévent. At only a few minutes' walk from the Congress center there were the lifts which took us fast to the middle station "Plan Praz" at 2000 m, which offered a small buffet as well as nice possibilities for a short walk. Most of us took the lift to go even one level higher, to peak Brévent at 2525 m which offered us a

beautiful view on the other side of the valley, the Mont Blanc, and the Aiguille du Midi. The gorgeous view was something that most of us never had experienced before. The weather was bright, sunny, and very pleasant. As there were different tracks to go, everybody decided which way to wonder around, and at every turn the mountains showed different faces, whereas at some point another summit (Aiguille du Midi, altitude above 3800 m) appeared. At some shady corners there was snow under our feet; however we all wore sleeveless tops.



Views from Mont Brévent

From the top, there was a path leading down to Plan Praz and quite some people enjoyed walking back. The ones who preferred to stay enjoyed the views and, at 5 o'clock, took the last lift heading back to town. We went to the hotels, changed until when the buses were waiting to take us to Les Praz, a village close to Chamonix. There, the Conference dinner was organized in a beautiful local house which also functioned as the restaurant of the Chamonix golf club. In the garden we had welcome drinks (first of all exquisite champagne) accompanied by the beautiful views of the sun lighted Aiguille du Drus and Aiguille Verte.



The restaurant was very spacious and vibrated a warm and friendly atmosphere; the delicate food and wines served surpassed our expectations of the *French Cuisine*.

During the dinner, awards for the best posters and young speakers were announced. The president of the ICBL thanked the organizers for all their efforts to make the 57th ICBL such a well-organized meeting.

Thursday's scientific program was scheduled with invited lectures, oral presentations, and posters similar as during the previous days.

At 17:40 the conference was concluded and closed. After thanking the local organizers Professor Michel Lagarde and his colleagues, Nathalie Bernoud-Hubac and Marie-Caroline Michalski and Mrs Evelyne Roudier from Bureau des Congrès de Chamonix for arranging a great and interesting meeting, we all said goodbye and look already forward to participate at the next ICBL next year.

László Vígh
President of ICBL