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### Call For Content

We request contributions from all societies and individuals about important events, changes in the law in your country or region, conferences, annual meetings, board changes and the like from your society. You can submit articles or announcements to the editor or use the form on the website at the following address: [www.lesi.org/les-societies/les-global-news/submission-form](http://www.lesi.org/les-societies/les-global-news/submission-form).

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# Over The Hump

By *Kevin Nachtrab*,  
President, *LES International*



Endurance athletes often speak of that moment when they finally get “over the hump” in a race or other event—that moment when they realize that the hardest part of the trial is behind them and the rest of the race is “all downhill.” Of course it isn’t, for they also speak of suddenly “hitting the wall” and the onerous effort needed in the final sprint to the finish.

And so it is with LESI Presidents and the LESI Annual Conference. Traditionally, the LESI Annual Conference has marked the psychological (if not physical) half-way point in the President’s term. But for the President, it was a half-way point which meant that, with the imminent arrival of the summer holidays, what you had achieved was going to be all that you were going to achieve during your term. In reality, the home stretch was uphill all the way.

In effect, entering the summer months in the Northern Hemisphere was the LESI equivalent of “hitting the wall.” Often, all momentum was lost and finding enough energy for the final post-summer sprint to the Fall IMDM at the LES (USA & Canada) Annual Meeting, which marked the end of your term finish, was often the most that one could hope for.

All of this will end in this the 40th year of our founding; as starting in 2014, LESI switches to a new calendar with the President’s term starting and ending with the LESI Annual Conference. The end of the term will come during the winter months in the Northern Hemisphere. This should provide the impetus to assure that the fatigue that one can feel at the end of a term is not augmented by entering into the lazy months of summer (with my apologies to those of you reading this from the Southern Hemisphere).

The LESI Community was certainly given the energetic boost it needed to help it cope with the effects of “hitting the wall” of summer by the LESI Annual Conference in Rio de Janeiro. Our gracious hosts demonstrated an extraordinary ability to combine an outstanding educational program with an unparalleled (and, I might add, unparalleled) social program that will be remembered for years to come. As a conference attendee wrote to me in an e-mail following Rio, “Probably the first time I really had FUN at a conference... .”

A hearty thanks and congratulations to the conference organizers: Rodolfo Martinez, Eduardo de Souza e Mello, Tatiana Campello, Marcella Trigo, Raul Hey, Candida Caffé and Juliana Viegas, ably assisted by Claudia Antonaccio and her team.

Between that and the surf off of Ipanema, one could not have asked for more.

Within LESI, the next few months will be spent finalizing the various initiatives which have been conducted during the past year.

The four President’s Taskforces: Education, Corporate Initiatives, Outreach Programs and Mentoring will be finalizing their initiatives. In doing so,

each of the Task Forces will take the next two months to consult extensively with the Members and Member Societies, so look for their calls for comments. The goals for each will be to have their deliverables finalized for placement before the International Delegates at the Fall International Management and Delegates Meeting in Philadelphia.

The transition of the LESI Administrative Office into a “virtual” office, will head into high gear as we finally launch ourselves into the 21st century with the virtual administrative office. Administrative assistance has been engaged and we expect to be fully operational “virtually” by the Philadelphia meeting. It will also mark a break with our U.S. heritage in that many member services will be moving to Europe.

The continued development of a Knowledge Management (KM) System for LESI will be moving into a phase for implementing some of its early propositions. Tasks such as getting the knowledge storage system in place, arranging to permit key stakeholders to deposit their materials and starting to arrange for the gathering of what documents and information can be gleaned from primary stakeholders is well under way. At the same time, the System is being further refined to meet the evolving needs of LESI. The LESI KM Project will roll out by sending invitations to the established DropBox structure from [knowledgemanagement@lesi.org](mailto:knowledgemanagement@lesi.org). Member societies will load documents and images and a KM liaison will be appointed by the Presidents.

In addition, and arising out of a proposition made during the IMDM in Rio by LES Italy, we are pushing to look into the economics and feasibility of an experiment with the e-publishing of *les Nouvelles*. More on this proposition can be found in the minutes of the IMDM. This exciting development could revolutionize the delivery of the content of *les Nouvelles* and provide considerable savings.



LES Brazil members and staff for the LESI Annual Conference in Rio.



Dancing with the stars and the President in Rio.

Finally, I wish to note that in Rio we also received a glimpse of the future for LESI and, in particular, what the next phase of LESI will be like as it enters its next 40 years. LESI President-Elect Yvonne Chua presented her project “Joining Hands” and its accompanying logo (see below). As explained by Yvonne, “Joining Hands” is a project to encourage more active collaboration among LESI Member Societies, groups within Member Societies and between LESI Members themselves as they plan their activities to continue to build a stronger LES, internally and externally. It will start off by gathering and sharing among the entire LES community stories and experiences that demonstrate the strength of the LES family. I invite you to read more on the Joining Hands initiative in these pages.



Now all of this is fine, but it is not useful if the average member of LESI does not take part. We would still like to hear your views on matters. What can we do better and how? What would you like to see LESI do that it is not doing now? Be involved. No one ever achieved anything by sitting on the sideline.

While we are “over the hump,” we also acknowledge that we are still quite a distance from the finish line. Much remains to be done, but energized by the gentle rhythms of samba from Rio and beckoned by the calls to join us in the City of Brotherly Love for our Fall International Management and Delegates Meeting, we will not hit the wall before crossing the line on Market Street in Philly in September. ■