



ICOMBO
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF
Multiple Birth Organisations



*Join us at the 2014
Congress in
Budapest
November 2014*

News From Around The World

July 2014

Chairperson Report



Monica Rankin

Greetings!

Welcome to the latest edition of the ICOMBO newsletter. I have been busy planning the ICOMBO/ISTS congress for November, as well as planning my trip to Central Europe. My husband and I will be spending 4 weeks in the region prior to congress.

In this issue of the newsletter you will read more about the congress and what we have planned for ICOMBO during the congress. In addition there is news about our exciting survey on post-natal depression (or postpartum mood disorder). We have had a good response rate to the survey and are hoping for more responses in the near future. The greater the response rate, the more reliable the results will be. I am looking forward to comparing the data from the various countries where data has been collected. We have been fortunate to have the survey translated into French and Czech, so I hope this enables more families to participate. It has been great to see the survey details being circulated within some of our member groups. I would ask that if you have not yet circulated the information, please do so and encourage your member families to participate?. If you have already circulated the information, please send a reminder to your members letting them know how much we appreciate their participation.

This month we are highlighting articles from two member groups - Germany and the United States. I love reading about how the various groups were formed, how they are structured and how they operate.

I am looking forward to seeing some of you in Budapest at this year's Congress. For those who cannot join us this year, we will provide an update in a future newsletter.

Regards,

Monica Rankin

Note from the Editor

We apologize for the delay in publishing this edition of the ICOMBO newsletter due to a hardware failure. If you submitted an article that was not printed, please resubmit that article for publication in the next edition. (See page 8 for contact information)

ICOMBO/ISTS CONGRESS 2014



By now we hope that all our members are aware that the 2014 Congress will be held in Budapest from November 16 - 19, 2014. The congress website, www.twin2014.eu has the Scientific Program, online registration forms, and links to accommodations at the congress venue.

Please note that Early Bird Registration closes on July 15. After this date, the cost of registration will be higher.

Registration costs are -

	Early Bird Cost (up to July 15)	After July 15
Level One Members (ICOMBO ISTS Members)	€100,00	€150,00
Level Two Members (ICOMBO non-ISTS Members)	€180,00	€230,00

If you use the booking form provided for the hotel accommodations, you can order lunch for each day. As the Sunday workshop does not commence until after lunch, and the congress concludes prior to lunch on Wednesday, it might be a good idea to order lunch for Monday and Tuesday only (at least that is what Monica will be doing!)

We will organise dinner for each evening, and everyone is invited to participate. Partners/spouses/accompanying friends would also be welcome to join us for dinner each evening.

We are excited to announce that we are hosting a pre-Congress Workshop on Sunday afternoon from 1:30 - 3:30pm, prior to the Opening Ceremony and Welcome Reception. Tamba have been very generous in sponsoring this workshop, so that we can spend time discussing some of the issues that concern our organisations. If you have any topics you would like to see discussed at the workshop, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

There are two sessions specifically for ICOMBO during the main body of the congress that include the business meeting, which will be held at 8:30am on Tuesday, and a presentation session commencing at 1:30pm on Tuesday. Abstracts should have been submitted to the Congress by those wishing to make a presentation as the deadline was June 13, 2014. If you have any questions, please contact Monica Rankin at chair@icombo.org



ICOMBO NEWS

ICOMBO ON FACEBOOK

ICOMBO public Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/InternationalCouncilofMultipleBirthOrganisations?ref=hl>



We are gaining more interest from individuals around the world. Have you taken a look and “liked” the page?

Do you have any information you would like to see posted on this page? If so, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

ICOMBO also has a members-only closed group on Facebook. The concept behind this group is so that members can discuss issues about their organisations with some privacy, rather than post comments and questions publically. There are up to 4 or 5 individuals from each of our member groups who are members of this ICOMBO Facebook group. For more information, please contact Monica at chair@icombo.org

Save the Dates!



INTERNATIONAL MULTIPLE BIRTH AWARENESS WEEK 2014

The ICOMBO Board has decided that International Multiple Birth Awareness Week (IMBAW) will coincide with Congress this year. It will be held from Sunday 16 November until Saturday 22 November. The theme will be: “Helping our multiples shine as individuals”

Please note the dates in your calendar.

We will be asking for your assistance in promoting the week as we get closer to the time.

NATIONAL CONFERENCES

The following members are busy planning their 2014 national conferences.



Multiples of America national conference will be July 20 - 26, 2014. Attendees will be travelling "Deep in the Heart of Texas".

http://www.nomotc.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=321&Itemid=373



New Zealand Multiple Birth Association conference will be October 3 - 5, 2014 and is titled "Beyond the Toddlerdome".

Visit the Facebook page for more information.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/NZMBA-National-Conference-2014-3-5-October-2014/1398538953700585>



Australian Multiple Birth Association convention will be October 31 - November 2, 2014.

<https://www.facebook.com/AMBA.Convention/photos/a.390601717670926.90842.293911680673264/608658472531915/?type=1>

Is your organisation having a conference in 2014 that you would like to mention also?

ORGANISATION NEWS



*Submitted by: Melodie Wisniewski
Multiples of America - Executive Vice President*

After fifty-three years as a successful, ever-growing and ever-changing organization, the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs (NOMOTC) began a new adventure: rebranding their professional image with a new trade name, Multiples of America, also known as the National Organization of Mothers of Twins Clubs, Inc.

Why did we take this on? With over 20,000 members, we are the premier organization for all things relating to multiple births in America. We provide not only support to clubs and members, but also provide education and research to the public, the media, to researchers, to education professionals and other multiple birth organizations. Rebranding our image offers a more sophisticated and professional appearance to all of the aforementioned groups. We are excited to explore new opportunities for donations and sponsorships and the opportunity to grow our membership by making our brand more attractive and appealing to a new generation of prospective parents and our communities.

What is a trade name? A trade name is a name allowing a company to do business as a name other than its charter name. Multiples of America is an exciting and modern brand to infuse new energy into the organization and to refresh our image in the current marketplace. Although the brand name is new, our tagline remains consistent with our mission: "Connecting and Supporting Multiple Birth Families." Our new trade name allows us to attract advertisers and companies who wish to collaborate with us, and our tagline offers the intent and purpose of our organization. Many times we have heard from companies that we "seem like a small moms' club" because of the Mothers of Twins Clubs name. As honored as we are by that name, we also know that to have others take us seriously; we must have a "serious" name to reflect our purpose. Since we debuted the name in the fall of 2013, we have heard many positive comments from companies and other multiple birth organizations on the image we portray. We look forward to ongoing success in spreading the word about our organization and its mission by ensuring our new brand is well known in the multiple birth community.

So how did we get here? A rebranding process can be challenging and daunting. The Board of Directors did their due diligence in all aspects of the rebranding process. Contacting a lawyer and an auditor, they inquired about the 501(c)3 group exemption and other tax questions. Both legal professionals confirmed that a name change whether via a charter amendment or by a trade name registration would require us to make such a change by notifying the IRS on the next annual return, but would not change the non-profit status or our organization. This was a huge concern since many of our member clubs rely on their connection to Multiples of America to proffer them benefits of a non-profit corporation.

The Board created a webinar entitled "Rebranding Our Organization" and posted it to the website, sending out notices to club officials to watch and fill out a survey afterwards on their opinion of the rebranding. A surprising 87% of the respondents felt the new trade name and logo would give our organization a more contemporary feel, and the same percentage felt that Multiples of America was easier to say. This encouraged the Board to continue with their plan and rebrand the organization.

There are many aspects of rebranding that one knows need to be done, but may not realize how quickly they need to be done. At the beginning of the term, the newly installed Board agreed that all brochures, forms, and items referring to the organization would need to be updated with the new rebranded name. They also agreed this could be done over time. Imagine their surprise when in the first couple of months of doing business, they found that almost everything they touched needed to be updated ... now! Each department was tasked with reviewing forms and brochures and providing a timeline to the President on when they would need items updated.

CONTINUED....

ORGANISATION NEWS



Those timelines were pretty much lost in that first month! It was overwhelming for the newly elected Board members, but also an exciting feeling to watch the transformation of the rebranding occurring around them. As they revised and refreshed their work inventories, the rebranding became "real." The revitalization of forms, brochures, and research study reports and tip sheets continues, but the Board is confident that it will be completed in a reasonable time.

So what's next? The next item on our list to incorporate in the rebranding is a refreshed website. Consequently, the platform that the website was initially created on is being discontinued in the next few years, making this a good transition time. This is the perfect opportunity to rebrand and renew the site. The Board appointed a committee to review the needs of the membership, researchers, supporters, and others that may visit the site. After several conference calls, the committee created a list of items important to the new site. They created an RFP (Request for Proposal) and posted it for companies to review and submit proposals to Multiples of America. Upon receiving the proposals, the committee reviewed them all and discussed the options provided. As they reviewed, they found more items that they would like to change or offer on the website. Posting a second RFP, the committee is now reviewing their options and will have a choice made soon. They are looking forward to presenting a new website for the members, researchers, supporters, and guests late this Fall.

We did it! The rebranding may have been challenging, but the experience has been positive for Multiples of America as a whole. We are excited about the opportunities ahead, and look forward to watching our organization continue to grow and flourish as our rebranded name brings us new opportunities and members.



New look for Notebook, the quarterly magazine



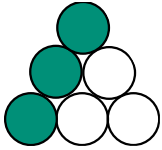
Letterhead, brochures, and forms are part of the total rebranding



Rebranding won Multiples of America an APEX Publication Award



A new Masthead was created for the current website



ABC-Club e.V. - The Multiple Birth Organisation in Germany

I am very pleased to introduce to the ICOMBO members, the ABC-Club e.V., the official multiple birth organization in Germany, Europe. Since our non-profit organisation has been in existence for more than 30 years, it is not easy to find the right starting point for the introduction. However, as we are very often asked, what does "ABC" stand for? And where does our organisation's name come from? Therefore I will start by addressing these questions.

It goes back to 1982, when our founder, Helga Gruetzner, started the initiative to get together and build a community with other triplet- (and more) families in Germany. During this time, her triplets Arndt, Bernd and Christian were at the age of 16 when Helga decided to get in touch with other families being in the same situation as she was - having triplets.

Taking the first letters of her triplet sons names, the name of her initiative was born - ABC - and this name is still standing for our community today. We have since given further meaning to our name, reflecting our mission and objectives:

- A - Answers to questions for families expecting or who have triplets
- B - Backing to support and providing a network between triplet families
- C - Chances to be taken to benefit for the difficult situation of triplets in our society

In Germany there are approx. 250 triplet births a year. Today with approximately 1200 member families, the ABC-Club e.V. is the biggest organisation for multiple births - triplets and more - in Germany. As we believe, that having triplets is even more complex, more challenging and very different in regard to group specific and dynamic processes and behaviors, all our members are triplet (or more) families.

The management of our organization is lead by the board, consisting of president, vice president, treasurer, reporter and medical / scientific advisor.

We are currently in the process of inviting dedicated subject matter experts (e.g. for Internet and Social Media) to the extended board.

As the board members are located across Germany, most of our communication is by email or conference calls. Two years ago we started with a regular board conference call, every 2-3 weeks to synchronize with each other and discuss and agree upon dedicated actions.

All board members have triplets themselves and are volunteers in our non-profit organisation.

However, we also have a central office in Hannover, where we have two paid employees in the office/ secretary function.

Beside the activities and management by the board, we have also set-up a decentralized organisation across Germany by introducing so called county- and regional dependencies / contact points. These contact points, themselves are all members of our organisation and help us to be as close as possible to our member families and potential new members across Germany.

Focusing on the networking between our members, our major service is related to the communications, discussions and talks to and between all of us. Our membership brochure / magazine is released quarterly and contains news from the board as well as articles from our membership families.

Continued.....



ABC-Club e.V. continued

Besides the magazine, we offer information documents regarding specific topics for our members, e.g. breast feeding, school enrollment, government assistance and others. Our primary service is to provide contacts for triplet families in Germany where the families can talk, get answers to specific questions or to know support is available and you are not alone.

As the assistance from the government in Germany is rather limited and differs in the regional counties in Germany, we stay in contact with government and political parties at both the regional and central level. Our focus in this area is on triplet families and their daily routines.

Unfortunately we are currently faced with cancellations of members, when their triplets reach the age of 10 to 13. Therefore our current priorities are on membership stability and growth. We hope to achieve this by bringing more responsibilities and activities through our decentralized contact points.

To strengthen public relations, as well as finding a way to increase how we communicate with our members, we are starting a stronger use of social media (internet, facebook etc) and we will initiate more press releases in the future.

The ICOMBO organisation helps us stay in contact with other multiple birth organisations internationally. We are very pleased to be a member of this international organisation. We want to increase our International contacts and networking efforts; therefore, we are looking forward to new contacts and friendships with other multiple birth organizations or triplet families abroad.

To get more information please visit us at <http://www.abc-club.de> and on our Facebook page [abcclubev](#). For direct contacts please write an email to abc-club@t-online.de or contact me directly via ulf.koester@abc-club.de

*Submitted by: Ulf Koester
ABC-Club e.V. -Vice President*

We hope you enjoyed this edition.

Do you have organisation or event news to share?

We want to hear what is happening in your organisation! Articles are welcome for the next edition of the ICOMBO newsletter. Deadline: September 30, 2014

Send to: vicechair@icombo.org (Terri Gillis, Editor)

Would you like to become an ICOMBO volunteer? All members are encouraged and welcomed to become an ICOMBO volunteer. chair@icombo.org