

ArPTA President's Message
August, 2009

August 1, 2009

Dear Members:

I appreciate the membership allowing me a break from the monthly messages in July. Of course this gives us much more to discuss in this monthly message.

As always, the APTA has been incredibly active on the National level as we have cooked through the summer months. The National Health Care debate has been occurring in both the House and Senate under the Obama administration's watch. Sen. Blanche Lincoln and Sen. Mark Pryor have been in the forefront of the debate on the Senate side and Representatives from Arkansas have also created headlines as "Blue Dog" democrats on the House side. The early bills have been created in both chambers and each is over 1000 pages. Believe it or not, the staff of APTA has read both bills and has been very active in creating legislation and amendments supporting PT in this legislative process. Sen. Lincoln has been asked to place a trial of Direct Access to PT in the Senate version and she is attempting action as this is written. If you are confused by the rhetoric coming out of the multiple media outlets, the APTA will help you understand the specifics of the bills. Spend some time each week going to the APTA website to see the latest on this legislative push and how you might be able to help in creating a PT friendly environment in whatever comes out of committee. If you want to know more, hit the following link or copy and paste in your browser:

<http://www.apta.org/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Advocacy&CONTENTID=57806&TEMP LATE=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm>

Along these political lines, your Legislative Co-Chair (Bill Bandy) and your Chapter President (Steve Forbush) attended the State Democratic fundraiser in Little Rock this past week to get the opportunity to meet with our federal and state legislators on the democratic side and mention health reform initiatives. We were able to sit near the entrance for the dignitaries and Sen. Lincoln immediately noticed Bill and gave him a big hug on her entrance (explain that to Bill's wife). Governor Beebe also recognized the persons at our table and had a chat with us. All in all, it was a productive weekend though the rhetoric was more than I personally could stand for long. We are well connected here in our State and in most national discussions and will use these connections to ensure a seat at the table in the present and future discussions on health care reform.

Our fall meeting of the ArPTA is just around the corner on September 12-13, 2009. You will be receiving the brochure in the mail in the next week and please make time to join us for some great fellowship with the best professionals in the medical field, education by a nationally renowned speaker (Terry Malone), and a generally good time to be had

by all who attend. The brochure is posted on the ArPTA website at www.arpta.org. Remember that we will be sharing this speaker and this time with members of RehabNet. When you see these members, thank them for their co-sponsorship of this event. Specifically, I wish to thank Becky Sewell (Executive Director) and Bo Renshaw (President of RehabNet) for their support and enthusiasm to our profession.

Arkansas State University will begin a new era of physical therapy education this fall with their first-ever DPT class. The transition to the DPT from the MS program was finalized this year and the whole university and the city of Jonesboro are excited to welcome in these changes. As part of the groundbreaking for this new doctoral program, the PT Program is hosting a wonderful speaker, Bill Boissonnault, to speak about differential diagnosis, manual therapy, and other topics on August 28-29, 2009. Please make time in your busy schedules to support ASU and this wonderful speaker. More information can be found at the ASU website.

Finally, we would like to welcome some new volunteer committee chairs for the ArPTA and thank a member for service. Joe Fernicola has been acting as Membership Chair for the ArPTA for the past year and brought new excitement to the position. Because of family illnesses and issues, he has tendered his resignation. If you see him, please thank him for his service to our Association. With bad news there is always some good news to come. We now have two "new" volunteers to fill this leadership position. Becky Keith and Ashley Mott, both from the Jonesboro area, have stepped up and offered their services as our new Membership Committee Co-Chairs. They are excited about this position and are already working hard for you in their new position. You will see more from them in the near future.

Thanks for your continued support of our Association through your membership dollars. There is no one entity working more diligently on your behalf to ensure your continued worth to the health care arena or to advance your profession.

Sincerely submitted,

Steven W. Forbush, PT

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