

ArPTA President's Message June, 2009

The summer is almost upon us and many of us are experiencing changes and hardships because of the downturn in the economy. We should all be grateful that we are here in Arkansas where there have been much less severe problems when compared to the rest of the Nation. Of course, this is of little consolation if you are the one that lost a job or lost retirement accounts to this recession. Through all of this, there are several bright things happening in the physical therapy community here in Arkansas.

The fall meeting of the ArPTA is now ready to go. We are working on the final details of a facility where we will have all our activities, but the meeting will definitely be in Central Arkansas and will have Terry Malone, a renowned sports physical therapist, presenting material on the shoulder with both lecture and lab sections over a one and one-half day presentation. We are also honored to be meeting in combination with the Rehab Network, Inc. group for this meeting. Please come and spend time with all of your peers in the physical therapy community while we learn a bit and fellowship a lot. The dates for this event are September 12-13, 2009. Please add this to your personal calendar and spread the word to all of your colleagues. More details will be available in our July message.

There are only two physical therapist programs here in Arkansas and until this fall, only one of the programs was at the DPT level. This is now changed as the Arkansas State University program will be converting to the doctoral level with the incoming class in the fall of 2009. The new Chair of the program at ASU is Patricia King (known as "Trish" to those who know her well). She will be relocating to our State during this month and bringing her family here to join us after a term of commuting back and forth from Tennessee. We are all excited to have her here and the positive changes in the ASU program. In order to emphasize this change in the fall, there will be a lot of activities going on in Jonesboro. The formal kick-off of the new program will be on August 27-29, 2009. The program is bringing in a nationally recognized lecturer and scholar in Bill Boissannault, who will be talking on many subjects over three days. Bill will be talking on *Primary Care for the PT, Keys to Clinical Success: Effective Professional Communication, Screening, Referrals and Dx Interpretations*, and will be having a day long course on manipulation on Saturday, Aug 29th that is open to the PT community. The ArPTA will be well represented at these events and the school hopes to attract many more PT and PTA members to their activities.

In May, representatives from around the nation gathered in Washington, DC for our annual Federal Advocacy Forum. Two hundred physical therapists, physical therapist assistants, and students of physical therapy marched on Capitol Hill Tuesday to educate lawmakers about the critical need for patients to have improved access to physical therapy services. This group of members conducted approximately 350 visits with Representatives and Senators. The ArPTA supported the travel of three members from Arkansas to allow visits to our very supportive group of elected legislative representatives. They met with Sen. Lincoln, Sen. Pryor, Rep. Vic Snyder, Rep. Berry, Rep. Ross, but were unable to meet with Rep. Boozman. During their meetings with congressional representatives, the physical therapy providers emphasized three key issues: the need to remove therapy caps on Medicare part B outpatient rehabilitation services, the benefits of direct access to physical therapy services, and the importance of debt repayment for physical therapy students who choose to practice in underserved areas.

The delegation of the ArPTA to the House of Delegates (HOD) will be leaving this weekend for Baltimore, MD. The HOD will meet just before the APTA Annual Meeting. During the HOD, new officers of the APTA are interviewed and elected and many motions concerning the actions of the APTA and our interactive community are addressed. As you may already know, Bill Bandy, one of our ArPTA members, was elected to the Board of Directors of APTA three years ago and is up for re-election this year. Wish him success as he goes to Baltimore to campaign for one more term in this prestigious body.

If you have any concerns about the direction of our profession, and wish to have these addressed in this national gathering of over 400 elected representatives (the HOD), please contact me through e-mail at sforbush@uca.edu in the next few days and I will make sure the delegation has your concerns and input.

The ArPTA wishes all of you a wonderful summer of fulfillment and accomplishment. Keep in touch and make plans to attend the continuing education opportunities available to all members in the late summer and early fall.

Respectfully submitted,

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