

President's Letter
May, 2009

Spring is in full and wet bloom and another month has passed in the State of Arkansas. The bi-annual legislative session for Arkansas is now completed and we have a new practice act. The Annual 2009 APTA Conference and HOD is in Baltimore in about one month and we have just had another spring conference for the Arkansas Physical Therapy Association. Let's bring the membership up to speed.

The legislative session is now concluded. The next session will not be until the year 2011 and we are just a bit exhausted and distracted from the process. The final activities allowed the State Board of Physical Therapy Practice to pass a sweeping modernization of the practice act. We finally got two of the Chiropractic groups, the Osteopathic Association, and the Medical Society to support our bill to insure passage. This took a lot of time from the legislative committee of ArPTA combined with time from the appointed officials of the Arkansas State Board of Physical Therapy Practice and lots of lobbying to get through both the Senate and the House. Even at the last day of session, the bill (SB 844) had opposition from the Arkansas Chiropractic Council but made it through to the Governor's desk for his signature. There are many positive actions that have come from this session. First, there have been stronger liaisons with all of the other medical groups in this State and we have learned to create legislative bonds to oppose the one chiropractic group still in opposition to everything we do (the Arkansas Chiropractic Council or ACC). This is a positive for our profession and may lead to much less rancor in the future. Second, we now know we will be unable to reach a compromise with the ACC while the leaders of this group are still in office and will no longer attempt to do so. Our new practice wording allows us to be part of one of the most modern practice acts in the nation and we are envied by many of the states surrounding Arkansas.

Other bills pending before the legislature were held up in committee only to die or will be discussed below. The massage therapy board bills did not make it through both sides and died in committee. The only other bill which may affect PT in this State did pass (HB 2244) and will require insurance written in this state to include provisions for reimbursement for orthotics and prosthetics prescribed and fitted through orthotists and prosthetists. We wanted other providers to be included but the bill passed so quickly that no terms could be added. I will keep you informed of anything that may change for PT from the passage of this bill. Overall, this was a great legislative session thanks to many individuals...including Seth Coulter, Rob Jordan, Bill Bandy, Nancy Reese, and some activity by myself. We need to thank these people personally if you get a chance to run by them in the future.

The Spring Meeting at the Comfort Inn and Suites in Little Rock was successful but less attended than we would have liked. Friday evening hosted the Board meetings for ArPTA and the Student Special Interest Group followed by platform presentations and our first annual PAC Wine and Cheese gathering at Crush. We ended up with about 50 persons at the PAC event and were able to gain \$1000 in additional PAC funds.

Everyone seemed to really enjoy the evening and the social interactions and we may plan something like this again. The Saturday course offered on Diagnostic Imaging by Mike Ross was well received and was enjoyed by all attendees. Vicki McNeill brought in another outstanding speaker and this was another quality continuing education event for our Association.

Our next two major gatherings will be our fall 2009 conjoined meeting with Rehab Net from September 12-13 in Hot Springs Arkansas featuring one of the foremost sports medicine experts in the USA. Our spring meeting in 2010 will feature Stanley Paris coming out of retirement to teach his S1 course and this will be followed by additional continuing education in Central Arkansas at a site to yet be determined. The spring course will be from March 24-29, 2010, so keep these dates open on your calendar.

Finally, we are preparing for another national meeting and exposition in Baltimore, MD for the second week in June. The House of Delegates will meet and there will again be great educational programming during this time. If you have issues you wish to pass on to our delegates, please bring those to my attention so I can give them to Nancy Reese and the delegation to take to National on your behalf.

I would be remiss in not welcoming the new Chair of the new DPT program at ASU to our fair State of Arkansas. Trish King, PT, PhD is this new director and will be moving here permanently from Tennessee (and previously from Florida) in the month of June. She has been very active in other components and we expect her to bring more enthusiasm and experience to ArPTA. She has big plans for the ASU program and we have great hopes for more student and NE District involvement through her actions. Welcome to Arkansas, Trish!

Have a wonderful end of spring and we will connect with you in June just before the APTA Conference and HOD.

Respectfully submitted,

[Steven W. Forbush, PT](#)

Steven W. Forbush, PT
President of ArPTA