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The PSNews is the official newsletter of the PSRC, an affiliate of the American Association for Respiratory Care.

Editor, Spring 2010

Eileen Censullo, RRT, MBA

Editorial Policy

The PSNews will accept all manuscripts, photos, and other items of interest for review. Articles and photos published become the sole property of the PSRC. The editor reserves the right to edit for clarity and space requirements. Opinions expressed by the authors are not necessarily those of the PSNews editor, the PSRC, or the AARC.

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## 2010 PSRC Calendar of Events

April 8-9, 2010	PSRC Eastern Regional Conference – King of Prussia, PA
April 28, 2010	PSRC Sleep Seminar – York, PA
April 30, 2010	PSRC NW District Seminar – Erie, PA
May 5-6, 2010	PSRC Spring Pulmonary Seminar – Wilkes-Barre, PA
May 24, 2010	PSRC PFT / Diagnostics Seminar – Lewisburg, PA
June 5, 2010	PSRC SE District Seminar at Abington Hospital – Abington, PA
June 26, 2010	PSRC / Reading Hospital News & Views Seminar – Reading, PA
August 23, 2010	PSRC SE District Seminar at Grand View Hospital – Sellersville, PA
September 23-24, 2010	PSRC Western Regional Conference – Pittsburgh, PA
October 15, 2010	PSRC Conference in the Capital – Harrisburg, PA
October 27, 2010	PSRC/TJUH RC Week Seminar – Philadelphia, PA
November 6, 2010	PSRC SE District Seminar at Abington Hospital – Abington, PA

*Check the PSRC website ([www.PSRC.net](http://www.PSRC.net)) for a list of all 2010 PSRC educational event dates which are posted as soon as they are finalized!*

# The PSNews

Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care

ISSUE 5

SPRING 2010

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## Mission

Represent Respiratory  
Therapists in  
Pennsylvania

## Greetings from the President



*Thank goodness for Spring!!*

I am Steve Mosakowski, the 2010-11 President for the PSRC. I was installed as your new president during the PSRC's 2009 4th quarter Board of Directors

meeting last December. I have the privilege to serve all Pennsylvania RTs in this role and am honored to be the PSRC's first-ever President to serve for a two-year term. During these next two years, there are many things I will be working to accomplish with the PSRC Board of Directors and all members of the PSRC. The PSRC's last two Presidents (Ann Wilson, RRT, RPFT in 2009 and Eileen Censullo, MBA, RRT in 2008) did an excellent job of creating a momentum in the progress of the Respiratory Care profession in Pennsylvania. I look forward to continuing their work and to building a bigger and better profession than where we are today!

The 2010 PSRC goals I have presented to the PSRC Board of Directors for the coming year will include a few that are ongoing (and some new ones as well) which include:

### **1. Develop and execute strategies that will increase membership and participation in the PSRC and AARC.**

Pennsylvania is currently the largest AARC state affiliate in the nation! We need to continue in that position and although we are number one, we must continue to grow. It is only through this growth that we can increase our voice in areas such as government, education and to the public in general. I have charged the PSRC's Board of Directors and, specifically, the PSRC Membership Committee, with developing strategies to increase PSRC membership to specific targets by the end of 2010 and 2011.

### **2. The PSRC will continue to be the leading provider of high-quality continuing education in this state.**

The recent change to the Respiratory Care Practice Act has increased the required number of Continuing Education hours to

30 biannually for all licensed RTs in the state. The PSRC will continue to provide affordable high quality seminars and conferences to our members in as many locations throughout the state as possible.

### **3. Develop and implement a new PSRC Strategic Plan to include three core elements: Education, Advocacy, and Networking.**

The process of developing a new Strategic Plan began back in 2009 and the PSRC Board will continue this process with the goal of completing the development in 2010 followed by full implementation of the new plan in 2011.

### **4. Develop and implement a Leadership Mentoring Plan.**

The success of any volunteer organization is the successful development of new leaders to carry on the work of those who served before them. The PSRC will continue to work on the development and implementation of a Leadership Mentoring Plan that was initiated in 2008 when "elect" positions were added to the PSRC Board of Directors. This process allows new board members one year to learn about their position and to prepare for their term on the Board. We will continue this process and look for other methods of developing future leaders of the PSRC.

### **5. Increase our service to our communities while educating the public about our profession.**

The public continues to be largely unaware of the Respiratory Care profession and the role of the RT. The PSRC will work to increase the public's knowledge of our profession while also providing services to the public such as educational seminars and health screenings.

### **6. Continue to advocate for our profession both locally and federally.**

During the past several years, the PSRC has experienced tremendous legislative successes under the guidance of PSRC Governmental Affairs Committee Chair, Garry Kauffman, MPA, RRT, CHE, FAARC, and the Winter Group, the PSRC's lobbying firm. We have successfully lobbied for respiratory therapists to be licensed in

*(continued on page 2)*

## Sputum Bowl "Re-Boot" 2010!

Over the past few years, participation in the PSRC's practitioner and student sputum bowls has declined. Although we've been fortunate to send some very good teams to the national competitions, the number of teams competing at the state level has dropped and in 2010, the PSRC is taking action! In addition to the new buzzer system that was purchased in 2008, a brand new scoreboard/timer system was purchased. The new scoreboard can be seen by everyone and is a welcomed addition!

Also new in 2010, the PSRC addressed the problem of teams submitting questions for the event. This has been a big complaint of teams in the past and is one of the biggest reasons RTs cite for not competing. The PSRC's Sputum Bowl Committee, led by the newly appointed chair, David Wacker, went to work writing questions and as of the time of this article, over 400 questions have been written!

In an attempt to increase student participation, the PSRC has planned three regional student sputum bowls in the west, central and east regions. Pennsylvania currently has over 20 RT schools but over the past 4 or 5 years, only a few programs have participated in the event. The main problem has

been the size of our state. The student Sputum Bowl has traditionally been held as part of the PSRC Eastern Regional Conference held in King of Prussia, PA (in the southeast part of the state). While this location is a short drive for the programs from the Philadelphia, Harrisburg and surrounding areas, it's a 5-6 hour drive for the programs located in Erie and Pittsburgh. The regional events bring the competition closer to home for many schools. In addition, the top teams from each regional event earn the chance to compete in the PSRC Student Sputum Bowl Finals competition. The winner of the finals competition will then represent Pennsylvania in the AARC's National Student Sputum Bowl this December in Las Vegas, NV.

The West Regional Student Sputum Bowl was held during the Cambria-Somerset Council's "Conference at the Slopes" and it was a smashing success! Seven teams competed from FIVE different schools which is the largest turnout of schools from the west that anyone can remember! Read more about the event in the Southcentral District article on page 4 of this edition!

The East Regional Student Sputum Bowl picked up where the western



The "Pink Frothy Ladies" (left to right) Kelly Harrison, Ashley Miller and Jennifer Eck.

event left off! Nine teams from three schools competed at the event including Gwynedd Mercy College, Reading Area Community College and West Chester University. In the end, it was the "Pink Frothy Ladies" including Ashley Miller, Jennifer Eck, Kelly Harrison and alternate Cindy Tascione from West Chester University who won the event. The runner-up team, "The Snot Shots," also came from West Chester University and included Tom DePeppe, Janna Sweeney, Mary Muhlenberg and alternate Jordyn Trusty.

The Central Regional Student Sputum Bowl is scheduled for April 5, 2010 in Harrisburg. Following that event the top student teams from each region will compete at the PSRC Student Sputum Bowl Finals scheduled for April 8, 2010 in King of Prussia.

### The PSNews

#### Deadlines for 2010:

Fall 2010: September 3, 2010

#### Email:

[2009PastPresident@psrc.net](mailto:2009PastPresident@psrc.net)

The PSNews is the official bi-annual newsletter of the PSRC, an affiliate of the American Association for Respiratory Care.

#### Editor, Spring 2010

Eileen Censullo, RRT, MBA

#### Editorial Policy:

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## Greetings from the President *(continued from page 1)*

Pennsylvania (passed into law in 2008) and have supported numerous legislative initiatives related to our profession such as the Clean Indoor Air Act and a bill to allow students to carry their inhalers and epi-pens in schools. We must continue to be proactive legislatively both at the local (state) and national (federal) levels.

### **7. Build relationships both within our profession and with other healthcare professions.**

The Respiratory Care profession is a big part of the overall Healthcare Team. As such, the PSRC must reach out to other professional associations including those that represent physicians, nurses, perfusionists, paramedics and more. We have a lot to offer those organizations and they have much to offer us in return. It is imperative that we build strong relationships with these organizations in order to grow as a profession.

The PSRC is mostly a volunteer organization with hard-working respiratory therapists giving of their free-time to try to better the

Respiratory profession in Pennsylvania. We are no different than you. We need you to not only be a member in the only professional Respiratory organization but to also step up and work with the PSRC when you are ready. Your talents would help us continue to grow the profession into all that it can be!

My vision for the Respiratory Care profession is for RTs to be experts working alongside physicians and nurses to achieve the goals set for the patient...EVERY patient! I do not see Respiratory Care as a group of "task-masters" doing this-or-that because someone told us to do so. We are independent critical thinkers working with the healthcare team for the patient's benefit.

I look forward to working for you now and with you in the future. Please feel free to contact me or to discover all that is happening in Pennsylvania Respiratory Care via [www.PSRC.net](http://www.PSRC.net). With your help we will accomplish all of our goals and continue to advance our profession to heights that we can only imagine!

# 3 1/2 Years?

**“I heard that I can earn my B.S. and become a  
Respiratory Therapist at Millersville University in 3 1/2 years!  
Is that true?”**

**YES!** You now have two curriculum choices:



**BS Biology** – 4 1/2 years (148 credit hours) a strong science/math-based curriculum

**BS Allied Health Technologies** – 3 1/2 years (120 credit hours)  
a basic science/math-based curriculum

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## Where To Ask A Question Or To File A Complaint...

*by Tom Lamphere, BS, RRT, RPFT  
PSRC Executive Director*

In my position as Executive Director for the PSRC, I receive numerous emails and phone calls from therapists across the state who have a question or want to file a complaint about something or someone. If the question or complaint is related to the PSRC, then the person calling or emailing has reached the right place! However, often times the question or complaint is about something over which the PSRC has no control and, in fact, is completely unrelated to our association.

Listed below are agencies which are related to our profession, a description of what they do and how to contact them to ask a question or file a complaint. (Oh, and if you have a question about the list, yes, I'm the person you should contact!)

**WHO:** PA State Board of Medicine/PA Osteopathic Board of Medicine

**WHAT:** Licensing agency for respiratory therapists in Pennsylvania. Responsible for all aspects of licensure including temporary permits, reactivation of inactive license, renewal of licenses and more. This agency also determines the regulations and enforces the requirements for renewals including continuing education.

**HOW:** BOM Website: [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state\\_board\\_of\\_medicine/12512](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_board_of_medicine/12512)

Phone: 717-783-1400, Email: <mailto:ST-MEDICINE@state.pa.us>

OST Website: [http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state\\_board\\_of\\_osteopathic\\_medicine/12517](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/state_board_of_osteopathic_medicine/12517)

**WHO:** Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC)

**WHAT:** The organization responsible for the accreditation for the respiratory therapy schools.

**HOW:** CoARC Website: <http://coarc.com/> Phone: 817-283-2835, Email (Tom Smalling, Executive Director): [Tom@coarc.com](mailto:Tom@coarc.com)

**WHO:** National Board for Respiratory Care (NBRC)

**WHAT:** National credentialing board that issues respiratory therapy credentials including: CRT, RRT, CPFT, RPFT, NPS, SDS.

Responsible for all credentialing exams and the credentials earned by them. Also has it's own continuing education requirement for certain credentials above and beyond the state requirement.

**HOW:** NBRC Website: <http://www.nbrc.org> Phone: 888-341-4811

**WHO:** American Association for Respiratory Care (AARC) / Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care (PSRC)

**WHAT:** National and state professional associations for respiratory therapists committed to enhancing the professionalism of respiratory therapists, improving their performance on the job, and helping broaden their scope of knowledge. The AARC is the parent organization of the PSRC and deals with issues on a national scale while the PSRC deals with issues on a local level. Membership in the AARC includes membership in the PSRC at no additional charge.

**HOW:** AARC Website: <http://www.AARC.org> Phone: 972-243-2272 Email: [info@aarc.org](mailto:info@aarc.org)

PSRC Website: <http://www.PSRC.net> Phone: 215-687-2904 Email: [ExecutiveDirector@psrc.net](mailto:ExecutiveDirector@psrc.net)

## News from the Disaster Preparedness Committee



### *Take Your Best Guess!*

On August 19, 2009, the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), in conjunction with the AARC, undertook a joint effort to determine the number of ventilators in the United States. The purpose of this venture was to aid disaster planners in preparedness efforts for the impending swine flu. While the swine flu was severe it did not impact our health infrastructure as badly as it could have. Regardless, the response was unprecedented and the results are invaluable.

So, without looking up the results at: <http://www.aarc.org/headlines/10/02/nvs.cfm>, do you have any guesses on the total number of full-feature critical care ventilators there are in the nation? How about the Commonwealth? What about those with pediatric capabilities? Which state has the most? I'll make a deal with you—I'll give you the answer to the first question if you promise to go to the website above and get the rest. So, last chance, is it 50,000? 75,000? 100,000? Believe it or not, there are approximately 62,274 full-feature critical care ventilators in the United States. While it may seem like a factoid that would be the answer to a Sputum Bowl question, this information has already paid dividends.

In closing, I would like to offer my thanks to you. Yes, you as you read this. For without you the overwhelming response may have never happened. I am proud to say that Pennsylvania was one of a handful of states that achieved a 100% facility response rate. For any of you that have ever conducted a survey, you know that even a 10% response is admirable; 100% is unheard of. To achieve 100% is a testament to the dedication that you have as a therapist. On behalf of the PSRC, I thank you for your efforts.

*Randy Solly, MS, RRT, CPFT  
Disaster Preparedness Committee Chair  
and Junior Delegate for the PSRC.*



## *Nominations are now being accepted for positions on the 2011 PSRC Board of Directors*

The positions open for nomination include:

- **President-Elect:** 4-year term (includes 1 year as President-Elect, 2 years as President and 1 year as Past-President)
- **Vice President:** 1-year term (Note: This a great position to gain BOD experience!)
- **Secretary-Elect:** 3-year term (includes 1 year as Secretary-Elect and 2 years as Secretary)
- **Delegate:** 4-year term (includes 2 years as Junior Delegate and 2 years as Senior Delegate)
- **Capital District Director-Elect:** 3-year term (includes 1 year as District Director-Elect and 2 years as Capital District Director)
- **South Central District Director:** 3-year term (includes 1 year as District Director-Elect and 2 years as SC District Director)
- **Northeast District Director-Elect:** 3-year term (includes 1 year as District Director-Elect and 2 years as NE District Director)

Professional involvement is important in any career. It allows you to share your ideas, brainstorm, and network with fellow respiratory therapists from around the state. Since you are the voice, you will find your role in the profession more rewarding. As the healthcare environment continues to change, it is imperative that we remain strong as a state society. Collectively, we can shape the future of our profession.

If you are energetic and willing to volunteer some time to our profession, please consider running for election to the PSRC Board of Directors. Job descriptions for all of the Board positions are available on the PSRC website at the following link: <http://www.psrc.net/PSRCBoardJobDescriptions.htm>

To nominate someone for a position (members can nominated themselves as well), go to the following web-page and complete the online form: <http://www.psrc.net/Nominations.htm>

***All nominations must be received by July 9, 2010.***

## PSRC Northwest District

by Ken Kraut, RRT – NW District Director

The PSRC's NW District is coming out of the winter doldrums and showing signs of life. Our big event is the 30th Annual PSRC NW District Seminar scheduled for Friday, April 30, 2010. Registration for this event is now OPEN and available on the PSRC's website:

[www.psrc.net/Conferences/2010NW\\_Seminar.htm](http://www.psrc.net/Conferences/2010NW_Seminar.htm). We have moved to a bigger venue this year but are still limited to 150 registrations so don't wait to register if you plan to attend!

Since the NW District is geographically a very large district, many of our members may not know much about the medical facilities. Starting with this issue of the *PSNews*, we are going to highlight one of the facilities in our district. Our first facility is St. Vincent Health Center in Erie, PA. Sue Sheakley, BS, RRT, is the Manager of Respiratory Care and submitted the article next column.

*NOTE: If you'd like to have your facility highlighted in an upcoming edition of the PSNews, send an email to: [2010NWDistrict@psrc.net](mailto:2010NWDistrict@psrc.net) along with your name, phone number and the name of your facility.*



NW District "In the Spotlight"  
Saint Vincent Health Center, Erie, PA

by Sue Sheakley, BS, RRT – Manager, Respiratory Care Services

We have a very stable and wonderful group of therapists here at Saint Vincent and I am proud to say that we recently hired our last therapist this summer (the first one in four years!) We are responsible for general floors, ICU, CVICU, CCU, IMCU, Level III NICU & NICU transport, ED & the Pulmonary Lab.

Along with your everyday "normal" respiratory services, several years ago we became much more involved in our NICU and created a NICU core of 13 of our 33 therapists. This has allowed us to become much more involved in the NICU along with L&D as we now attend all high risk deliveries. We are now oscillating, neo-puffing and SiPAPing!

In the Pulmonary Lab, we will be venturing into some new territory as well, as we move towards implementing a new "GPS" system for bronchoscopies. This will allow all those patients who are "watching and waiting" for small lesions in the lungs to have a much quicker diagnosis.

## From the Treasurer

by Karen Engle RRT, CPFT  
PSRC Treasurer

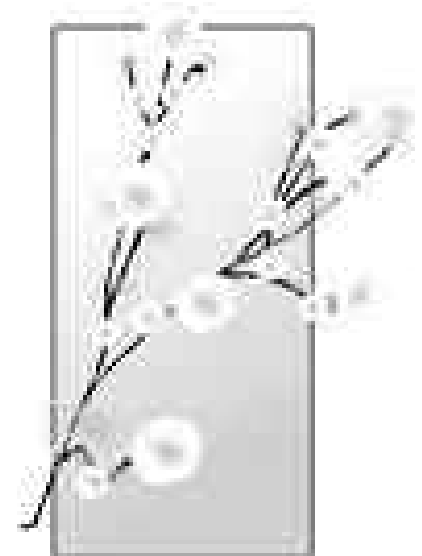
We are in the final year of our two year period to obtain 20 continuing education credits to maintain our state license. The PSRC Board of Directors is working very hard to provide affordable educational opportunities throughout the state of PA. Check the PSRC Website often for this year's upcoming events.

As your Treasurer, I have learned that it takes many volunteers to organize, prepare and carry out these educational opportunities while trying to keep them affordable for our members and stay within the projected budget. The PSRC is always looking for ideas and volunteers to help with all aspects of these events.

Your society and the events are not only a great place to obtain quality

educational information but also a great place to network and see what new products are available for our patients. Become involved—volunteer to assist with an event in your area. If you do not have any educational opportunities in your area and are interested in developing a program, we can assist you. Please contact any board member, district director or executive director for more information. Contact information can be found on the PSRC website.

As a member of the AARC/PSRC you are offered a significant discount for attendance at all educational programs. Register early for additional savings and to ensure your admission to the events. Not a member? Don't worry; you can also obtain a discounted membership by joining through the PSRC website.



## Southcentral District

by Jackie Oravec, RRT, RPSGT, CPFT



The highlight of the long, cold, snowy winter in the Southcentral District was the Student Sputum Bowl held in conjunction with the Conference at the

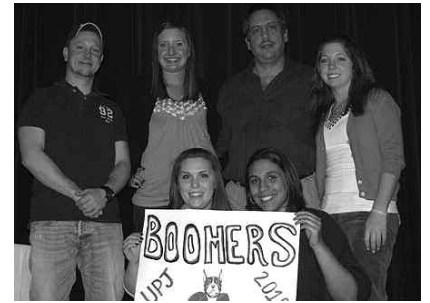
Slopes on March 3, 2010. The committee for the Cambria Somerset Council was gracious in offering us a venue to hold the first Sputum Bowl competition in several years in this part of the state. Judging by the response, it is a tradition that is well on its way to being revived!

A total of 7 teams participated representing 5 different schools. Programs represented include: Laurel Business Institute, Tri-State Business Institute, Community College of Allegheny County and 2 teams each from Indiana University of Pennsylvania /West Penn Hospital and the University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown. It was

amazing to see the enthusiasm these students showed for the competition and in return for our profession. They came decked out in team t-shirts, with very original names, and some even had fans complete with signs.

After several hours of heated competition, the Boomers of UPJ emerged victorious defeating Mr. Malley's Monkeys of IUP/West Penn. Both teams will represent the West at the State Sputum Bowl to be held April 8, 2010 at Valley Forge as part of the Eastern Regional Conference. Representing the winners from UPJ were Matt Maddy, captain, Tim Cameron, Heather Motter and Courtney Slagle. The second place team from IUP was comprised of Kelsey Scott, captain, Gwen Sirochman, Brittany Campbell, and Jamie Banyai. Congratulations and thank you to all the teams and their schools for a very entertaining event! It was a great evening of competition and camaraderie.

This event would not have been



The Boomers of the UPJ

successful without the support of Tom Lamphere, Matt VanCamp, Dave Rubisch, Dave Wacker and Renee Dennis for all their help and expertise, as well as Walgreens/Mosso's, Draeger, and Med Graphics who generously provided us with refreshments for the event.

The PSRC has revamped the state competition to include three regional contests that will send finalists to the state final with the winner going to compete at the National Sputum Bowl Competition.

## In the Capital District Spotlight: Fulton County Medical Center

A Capital District Respiratory Care department recently experienced growing pains. However, these were really good troubles. Fulton County Medical Center, previously located in a constrained area of the Allegheny Mountains, has built a new medical care complex relieving cramped quarters and improving service to the community of 15,000 residents.

Fulton County Medical Center (FCMC) is nestled in a valley of the Alleghenies in a town named McConnellsburg, PA. To reach McConnellsburg, you may choose to race your vehicle on the Old Lincoln Highway as the road gently twists up to a summit like a corkscrew. Once you reach the summit, you should release the tension on the steering wheel that was previously forcing blood out of your knuckles after realizing you did not plunge off the side of the road where a skeletal appearing guardrail separated you and the several hundred foot fall from the cliff you just drove on. From this crest, looking downward into the valley where FCMC is located, you appreciate the beauty of the area. Or, you may simply approach Fulton County on a more civilized route, not immensely far from the PA turnpike.

FCMC is a Critical Access Hospital providing quality, short- and long-term care of the well or less sick and stabilizing care for those persons that require advanced care via transport to acute care facilities. The earlier medical complex sat adjacent to the western border of the borough and had little growing space. The facility was severely undersized and required significant repair. Deb Mellott, CRT, manager of Cardiopulmonary services, offered the example of ECG exam rooms that were barely large enough to hold the patient and therapist.



Deb Mellott

The patient rested his or her arms on the windowsills to ensure enough space in the room. Deb also described using camouflage tape on windows to decrease the draft in the winter.

Deb's department of seven respiratory therapists has a brand new facility to call home. Located on a 22-acre field situated on top of a hill supervising the town, the new FCMC morphs the preceding facility less than a mile away. The only objects higher than the hospital are the frosted mountain ranges to the east and west. Deb's

response when asked to comment on the move to the new facility was one of near laughter and release. There is no doubt that a new facility was the right move for this RT department and the patients of Fulton County.

The RTs keep busy in this facility with 20 Acute Care beds, a 9 bed ER, 65 bed LTC facility and Outpatient services. Along with all RT modalities and PFTs, this department completes ECHOs, stress tests, EKGs, EEGs and holter monitors. Deb also manages a 2 bed Sleep Lab. Since they do not have enough work to do in house, FCMC RTs organize coat drives and also raise money via auctions and an annual "Jail Bail." All dollars raised fund medical scholarship programs for three local high schools.

We congratulate the staff of FCMC on their new facility and wish continued success to our Capital District RTs in Fulton County.



Fulton County Medical Center

## PSRC RTs Participate in 2010 AARC PACT in Washington, DC

by Garry W. Kauffman, MPA, FACHE, RRT, FAARC

As part of the AARC's Political Action Contact Team (PACT), two respiratory therapists invested some vacation time to represent over 6500 respiratory therapists in Pennsylvania. On March 9th, Barb Soly and myself were among over 100 members of the AARC's PACT from across the United States who traveled to Capitol Hill to educate lawmakers on the Medicare Respiratory Therapy Initiative (Senate Bill 343 and House Bill 1077), advocating for the inclusion of COPD in the CDC's Chronic Care Commission, and enlisting our senators and representatives to join the Congressional COPD Caucus.



Garry Kauffman, Barb Soly, Ryan Bendinelli (Leg. Consultant, Rep. Jim Gerlach)

After a briefing session on Monday evening, we headed out early Tuesday to start our journey to meet with our senators and representatives and their

staff. At day's end, we met our goal of educating them on the importance of co-sponsoring this legislation that will provide an enhanced level of quality, access, and cost-effective care for the patients we serve.



Barb Soly, Rebecca Wolfkiel (Leg. Dir. Rep. Todd Platts), Garry Kauffman

What helped gain the attention of our senators and congressmen was that they had received nearly a thousand emails from RTs throughout Pennsylvania in the two weeks prior to our visit. While all of the staff that we met with were impressed with what we presented (and two are co-sponsoring this legislation) we still have a lot of work to do to convince them to make this a priority of this legislative session.

As RTs, we understand the value in terms of quality, patient access, and cost-effectiveness. However, the elected officials in DC need to hear from thousands of us to move our legislation to the front burner.



Regina Campbell (Leg. Correspondent Sen. Specter), Barb Soly, Amber Albanese, Garry Kauffman

We are asking all 6500 RTs in PA to email both senators and their Representative to reinforce our message and to get all 19 of our federal Representatives and both senators to commit. To help with the effort, please click on the AARC's Capitol Connection to learn more about the RT Medicare legislation, then go here for a menu of the types of e-mails you can send requesting support from your Senators and Representative. If you've done this already, please do it a second time. If you haven't done this, you'll find that it requires only two minutes. Your patients will thank you.



### Educational CRCE REMINDER!

PSRC Western Regional Conference  
 September 22-24, 2010  
 Four Points by Sheraton  
 Pittsburgh North – (Cranberry/Mars, PA)

2 Hours of Safety and Ethics  
 Evening of September 22

7 Hours of Sleep Medicine Topics  
 September 22

14 Hours of Respiratory Care Topics  
 September 23-24, 2010

## What's Happening in the AARC—Your Delegate's Viewpoint

by John M. Hughes, M.Ed, RRT, AE-C, FAARC

The AARC House of Delegates with its 100 representatives from the 50 chartered affiliates met in San Antonio in December. Here are some of the substantive bits of news and developments:

- AARC goal is for members to aspire to become Disease Managers—we should all be thinking along these lines. Serving our patients and physicians in this role will have great impact on their health and potentially on reducing the cost of healthcare.
- COPD Educator Course will be available on-line (the Asthma Educator Course is already on-line). This is a supportive equipping effort consistent with our serving as a Disease Manager.
- The World Health Organization has declared 2010 "The Year of the Lung." Let's get on board with activities and related public awareness efforts this year.
- AARC is approaching 50,000 members.
- AARC House of Delegates and International Congress included a salute to respiratory therapists serving in the military.
- Tim Myers, AARC President, met with the American Society for Sleep Medicine (ASSM) and American Society for Sleep Technologists

(AAST) to discuss Respiratory Therapists and Sleep Medicine. The outcome was that the ASSM will issue a moratorium on requiring RRTs to obtain an additional sleep credential to continue practicing in sleep medicine. This follows previous attempts to require RTs to sit for an additional credential. If you work in sleep medicine, this advocacy on your behalf will potentially save you thousands of dollars over your career.

- Summer Forum – July in Marco Island, FL
- Upcoming National Conferences: December, 2010 – Las Vegas, NV  
November, 2011 – Tampa, FL

The AARC has been a powerhouse leader for our profession. You can be quite proud to be a supporter of the work that is going on every day by volunteers just like you. Our legislative representatives work tirelessly to establish us as key players in managing patients with respiratory disease and make every effort to get us recognized for reimbursement. Please get behind every letter/email writing request that comes your way. It all helps more than you may know.

You can be proud of your chartered affiliate the PSRC. Not only are we the largest (membership) affiliate—substantially larger than Texas, California, and New York—we are the most active politically, always topping the list of those who respond to calls for political action.

The PSRC is well regarded in the House of Delegates. Particularly this year we are well represented in the leadership of the House:

- Tom Lamphere will serve as the 2010 Speaker of the House (not to be confused with Nancy Pelosi). That means he works with the elected president of the AARC and other House officers to set the meeting agendas and keep the meetings on track.
- Garry Kauffman will serve as House Parliamentarian, which means he sits at Tom's left at the head table where he keeps Tom on track and assures that the meeting is conducted according to Robert's Rules.
- Randy Solly is serving his second year as our Junior Delegate and has been unofficially appointed as chair of the unofficial House of Delegates SIC (Social Intercourse Committee)
- John Hughes, your Senior Delegate, also is serving a second term as the Chair of the House of Delegates Resolutions Committee. This committee screens and helps authors of resolutions (like bills in congress) improve and prepare their resolutions for presentation and debate to the full House body.

Please contact me at any time if you believe the AARC needs to hear your voice on an issue. That is what your delegate is here to do for you.

## In Memoriam

by Jackie Oravec, RRT, RPSGT, CPFT

It is with great respect that I mention the passing of one of the therapists in our district. Winnie Horner, manager of the Cardio-Pulmonary Department at Windber Medical Center, died on November 19, 2009. Winnie was also the project director for the Pennsylvania Black Lung COALition and a dedicated

leader at her facility.

Winnie was instrumental in the implementation of the Pulmonary Rehab program at Windber Medical Center, as well as adopting the Planetree philosophy that her institution has become renowned for.

Outside of her professional life, she was a Girl Scout leader, member of her church choir, and a Sunday School teacher. She is survived by

her three children, Joshua, Katherine and Abigail.

Winnie had a way of reaching out to her patients and staff with compassion and a personal touch that will never be forgotten. I had the opportunity to know Winnie on a professional level, as well as a personal one, and I know she will be missed by her patients, her staff, and her family and friends.

## Executive Director Report

by Tom Lamphere, BS, RRT, RPFT  
PSRC Executive Director



2010 has arrived and the PSRC is already busy planning for upcoming events and addressing the three major aspects of our Strategic Plan—Education, Advocacy and Fun!

### Education

Our first event of the year is also our largest—the PSRC Eastern Regional Conference in King of Prussia, PA. This two day event will host over 700 RTs and includes a large exhibit hall where the latest in technological advances will be on display. By the time you read this edition of the *PSNews*, the event will no doubt be sold out! Fortunately, our members received priority registration from mid-December to mid-January which gave them the opportunity to register and not be turned away!

Check the calendar on the back of this edition for a list of all the upcoming educational events. We have them planned in all four corners of the state and in the middle too! Don't miss out on your opportunity to complete your continuing education hours at these high-quality, reasonably-priced events.

### Advocacy

The PSRC is once again leading by example and has been extremely

active advocating for our patients and our profession including:

- PSRC PACT member's visit to Washington, DC (see page 9 of this edition).
- Support of PA House Bill HB1336—allows school students to carry epi-pens and inhaler medication.
- Support of strengthening PA's Clean Indoor Air Act.

In addition, we continue to monitor the progress of the regulations concerning the revised continuing education requirement for respiratory therapists which was created by the passage of House Bill 1804 back in 2008. This is the law that now states that respiratory therapists are licensed in Pennsylvania (previously, RTs were "certified" and held a certificate). The regulatory process is a SLOW one, however, we are hopeful the regulations will be completed later this year. As a reminder, the old regulations that require 20 hours of approved continuing education with 1 hour each of ethics and safety and a minimum of 10 hours from "live" events are still in effect for the current licensing period that ends 12/31/10.

### Fun Events & Programs

2010 started off with a return visit to the Land of Oz and the musical "Wicked" in Philadelphia. 100 PSRC members and their families and friends attended this spectacular show and enjoyed GREAT seats at a

discount! Watch for an announcement of a PSRC Night at the musical "Jersey Boys" this November. These tickets will be extremely hard to get once they go on sale and we're expecting to sell out of our supply within days of the announcement so act fast! Keep an eye on the PSRC's website at [www.psrc.net](http://www.psrc.net) and watch your email for an announcement of this exciting event!

In addition, the PSRC's very popular Discounted Hersheypark Ticket Program has returned! Order your tickets to Hersheypark at the lowest price you'll find anywhere! Don't believe me? Take a look around the internet and see if you can find a better deal. I'll bet you can't find one!

We're working on other "fun" events and programs for 2010. We had planned to once again offer discounted Philadelphia Phillies tickets. Unfortunately, the team raised ticket prices quite a bit this year and this caused many people who were purchasing lower level tickets to move "up" and a lot of the games have already sold out! We're looking into having a PSRC Night at the Iron Pigs, the minor league team of the Phillies. Tickets are inexpensive and the team plays in a beautiful stadium in Lehigh Valley. We'll pass along more information as we receive it!

All in all, it's shaping up to be another tremendous year for the PSRC! Check the PSRC website ([www.PSRC.net](http://www.PSRC.net)) for a list of upcoming events!

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## PSRC Capital District

by Tony Ruppert, RRT, CHT  
District Director

A membership survey performed in 2009 indicated that earning education credit in sleep topics at local seminars is not always easy and our members requested a seminar. The PSRC's Capital District is proud to announce an opportunity to earn CRCE in the realm of SLEEP medicine! The event will be held on April 28, 2010. Load the address 1135 South Edgar Street, York, PA into your GPS unit since we know

you are probably too tired from doing sleep studies to look at a map. Five hours of AARC-approved CRCEs are anticipated for this event. Registration is now open and is limited to the first 70 registrations received. More information, including a program agenda and registration, is available on the PSRC's website at: <http://psrc.net/Conferences/2010SleepSeminar.htm>

**NOTE:** According to the Board of Registered Polysomnographic Technologists (BRPT), individuals

holding the RPSGT credential may use AARC-approved courses in topics related to sleep to count towards their 50 hours of continuing education required by the BRPT to re-certify every five years. Many people believe that the courses must be approved by the AAST or AASM to count, however, this is not the case.

To read more about the continuing education requirements for the RPSGT credential go to the following page on the BRPT website: [http://www.brpt.org/RPSGT/about\\_conted.htm](http://www.brpt.org/RPSGT/about_conted.htm)

## PSRC Southwest District Update

by Gail Varcelotti, RRT, FAARC

This year will be my last as District Director for the PSRC Southwest District. It has been a great time and while I will still be involved in the PSRC/AARC, and may even run for something else on the Board of Directors, it is time to bring in some new faces and ideas for the SW district. Twice a year the District Director is requested to submit an article of some sort to update and engage our membership. This time around, I have decided to introduce you to Matt VanCamp, BA, RRT who will be new SW District Director beginning in 2011.

The District Director (DD) role is important to each district as they serve as a conduit for members in a region of the state to the PSRC Board of Directors. The role includes representing the therapists in their respective district along with implementing projects for the PSRC; educating the public about the profession; and providing various educational activities. The most difficult part of the "job" is to find enough volunteers to help out with things like membership, sputum bowl, public relations, seminars, legislative issues and even some fun activities. I hope that you will think about joining Matt and some of the other volunteers to keep the Southwest District active.

*GV: Where do you live currently and where did you grow up?*

MVC: I live outside of Pittsburgh in Oakdale. I moved around a lot as a child but basically grew up in Canton, OH, and then moved to Follansbee, WV at age 12.

*GV: Where did you do your Respiratory Therapy education?*

MVC: I actually had a very interesting start prior to respiratory therapy. I originally earned a Bachelor's Degree in Music Education from West Liberty University outside of Wheeling, WV. Then I went to West Virginia Northern Community College in Wheeling, WV to complete my Bachelor's degree. I also completed a MBA in Healthcare Administration in 2006.

*GV: Why did you choose Respiratory Therapy?*

MVC: A little bit by default and a great bit because of my interest. My mother is an LPN and she was one of the original OJT respiratory therapists. I remember going to work with her a couple times and seeing the equipment and meeting her boss and staff. I always thought it was interesting and was interested in the knobs, buttons, electronics, etc. As I grew up, I was always wanted to do something with my life that could "give something back" to society. This is why I went for a four year degree in teaching in a discipline in which I excelled. Unfortunately, upon graduation and after a year of searching, there were no teaching jobs available. I filled in as a substitute at one or two schools and then decided to go back to school.

*GV: Where was your very first respiratory related job?*

MVC: Massillon Community Hospital in Massillon, Ohio as a "Floor Therapist."

*GV: Where have you worked over the years and in what capacity?*

MVC: After working in Massillon, OH for a year, an opportunity came about in the greater Pittsburgh area to help setup and start Respiratory departments in Skilled Nursing Homes. I did this for a few years until Medicare cut reimbursement for respiratory services for that level of care. Coming into that end of the Respiratory Therapy spectrum, I obtained a per diem position at Kindred Hospital Pittsburgh (LTAC). When the nursing home layoffs began, Kindred offered me a full time position as an ICU therapist. It was there I grew into the night shift Supervisor role, and after five years with the company, was offered the Director's position. Two years later, Uniontown Hospital recruited me. Since I had wanted to get back into short-term acute care, I accepted the position at Uniontown.



Matt VanCamp

*GV: What is your best memory about respiratory therapy?*

MVC: I remember a specific patient from Kindred who had Guillain-Barre Syndrome. This patient and his wife were the kindest, nicest folks you could meet. I remember how devastating this was for this gentleman's family and friends. He spent a long time with us, had a partial recovery, and was eventually discharged to a long-term care facility. Ok, finally the good part...approximately 1 year later, this patient and his wife showed up at the hospital with candy, thanking everyone for their time and good care. He was walking on his own, even out cutting his grass, clipping the hedges, etc! A few of us were brought to tears at how healthy this guy was after being SO paralyzed with multiple infections, a code, and extended wound care. What a miracle! (Reminds me of my Dad...but that's a whole different inspirational story!)

*GV: What is your worst memory about respiratory therapy?*

MVC: Don't like to talk about this much...but I remember a "blue" infant brought to the ER during my first year as a therapist at Massillon Community Hospital. It was a case of nothing but pure stupidity on the part of a mother too young to have a child. The baby didn't make it. It took weeks for me to get past it but it thickened my skin to what we see in our ERs and actually helped me to deal with the "care/treatment" of the patient and not why they are there. Very difficult sometimes to separate the two!

*GV: Would you do all this again?*

MVC: Absolutely! This profession has been good to me and I have grown immensely both as a person and a practitioner.

*GV: What would you fix in Respiratory Therapy if you could change something?*

MVC: There isn't a whole lot I would change on the clinical side. I think we do a good job, and are finally very well represented at the national and governmental level. I just wish we didn't have so many people in our profession who seem

## PSRC Southwest District Update *(continued from previous page)*

to not care about their chosen profession. Over the years I have noticed more and more therapists are looking for the easy way out and only “work.” They are missing some passion to their role in healthcare. For lack of a better way to say it they are just swiping the time clock, and are working in Respiratory Therapy for nothing but the paycheck. They are not advancing themselves, are uninvolved and do as little work as possible. They resist new practices,

equipment and basically resist change.

*GV: When did you get involved in the PSRC?*

*MVC: In 2005, not quite a year before the Uniontown position.*

*GV: Why did you get involved in the PSRC?*

*MVC: Actually, I originally joined the AARC to support the profession and get access to valuable information for*

my staff. I didn't become very aware of all the PSRC does until around 2006.

*GV: What benefits to you see about the AARC/PSRC?*

*MVC: Many! Professional representation at the state and national level, best practice, legislative representation, continuing education, an international presence for our profession, patient advocacy...and more!*

## HUP Recognizes One of Our Own

*by Angela D. Hedgman, MBA, MHM, RRT-NPS – PSRC Southeast District Director*

Respiratory therapists (RTs)—also known as Respiratory Care Practitioners—assess and care for patients with cardiopulmonary disorders. Practicing under the auspices of a physician, respiratory therapists assume primary responsibility for all respiratory care therapeutic and diagnostic procedures. They consult with physicians and other healthcare staff to develop individualized patient care plans.

Respiratory therapists evaluate and treat all types of patients—ranging from premature infants to elderly people—in hospitals, clinics, long term nursing care facilities and the home. RT's must be attuned to the total patient including his/her family and support team because the patient's physical and psychological needs have a huge impact on therapeutic outcomes.

A colleague received the distinction of Therapist of the Year at the Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania (HUP). Pamela Dickerson has been a practicing respiratory therapist in the Pennsylvania Health System since 1996 and at The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia since 1998. Pam is a member of the American Association for Respiratory Therapy (AARC) and the Pennsylvania Society for Respiratory Care (PSRC). I was not surprised to hear Pam had

won this award as she is a therapist who exemplifies the qualities I attribute to a respiratory therapist.

Bimonthly, therapists at HUP have the opportunity to vote for Super Therapist. At the end of the year the six winners are considered for Therapist of the Year by the management staff.

The decision is based on qualities such as: clinical practice, resourcefulness, collaboration, accountability, customer service and versatility, to name a few.

David Moore, Director of Respiratory Care at HUP states: “Pam embodies these qualities and more. She consistently shares her knowledge and experience, especially in pediatrics, with co-workers. She never complains about an assignment and takes on extra projects with exuberance. Pam participates in staff development initiatives providing education and serving as a clinical resource to her peers.”

Pam serves as liaison for therapists at HUP and CHOP. She shares her knowledge and experience with both teams to facilitate excellent patient care. In 2009 Pam served as hostess for the PSRC International Fellow during her visit to HUP and CHOP. Although Pam does not spend the same amount of time at CHOP she brings the same tenacity and willingness to provide the very best care possible to the patients entrusted to her care. Pam is truly a **SUPER** therapist.



*Pamela Dickerson, RRT, pictured with her award for Therapist of the Year*

- ★ Strategic thinker capable of making complex decisions in diverse circumstances
- ★ Utilizes all resources in caring for patients with complex medical problems
- ★ Provides expert patient care using intuitive reasoning and experience
- ★ Empathetic to patient needs while advocating for his/her care
- ★ Resourceful in acquiring the data necessary to identify potential therapeutic modalities

I have the good fortune of working with Pam as a peer, the family member of a patient (my husband) entrusted to her care in the ICU, and a member of the Education Planning Committee at CHOP. Pam was a speaker at CHOP's Annual Respiratory Care Week Conference in 2005 & 2006.

Kudos to you Pam! I cannot think of anyone more deserving of the honor of Therapist of the Year.